The Gospel By Which We Are Saved

First Annual Dumas Drive Lectures — July 29-August 3, 2001

Dumas Drive Church of Christ Amarillo, Texas

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Introduction to Galatians

Galatians 1:1-12

I. Introduction:

A. Time of Writing––

1. Written about A.D. 53-56.
2. From either Ephesus during 3rd Missionary Journey or Corinth on 2nd Missionary Journey.

B. Paul's Apostleship & Commission (vv. 1, 10-12)––

1. Paul's apostleship through Jesus Christ and God the Father, v. 1.
   a. An apostle is one who has been given orders (Acts 9:15-16; 22:14-15 21; 26:16-18. See also Galatians 2:9 – apostle to the Gentiles).
   b. An apostle has the full authority of the Sender (Matthew 16:18; 18:18)
   c. Paul defended his apostleship to uphold the genuineness of his Gospel. It came from the *resurrected* Christ Who now is Lord of lords and King of kings (see: Acts 2:35-36).
2. Other possibilities? (v. 1)
   a. **From** (Gk., *apo* – originating) men: not sent *as an apostle* by Antioch (see: Acts 13:1-3) nor Ananias (Acts 9:17).
   b. **Through** (Gk., *dia* – agency) man: No man stood between God and Paul's apostleship.
   c. **Through** (Gk., *dia* – agency & source here) Jesus Christ and the Father.
3. Paul's aim was to please God as His bondservant (v. 10).
   a. Had he received his apostleship *from* man, this would not be the case.
   b. He was Christ's bondservant, and none other's (Matthew 6:24).
   c. "Bondservant" (*doulos*).
4. Paul's duty was to *persuade* men, not please men (v. 10).
   a. Had he received his apostleship *from* or *through* men it would not be so.
   b. Though he sought to make the Gospel *easier* to receive by becoming all things to all men (1 Corinthians 9:19-22), he did not *change* the message.
5. Paul's Gospel was *not according to man* (v. 11).
   a. "I *certify*" [KJV] (*gnōrizō*): solemn affirmation making known the truth.
      (1) Certified Name: "Christian" (Acts 11:26)
      (2) Certified Church: "Church of Christ" (Matthew 16:18)
      (3) Certified plan of salvation: "Gospel" (Romans 10:15)
      (4) Certified steps: Hear (Romans 10:14), Believe (Acts 16:31), Repent (Acts 2:38), Confess (Matthew 10:32-33), Be baptized (Acts 22:16)
   b. "Not according to man": not according to man's will, thought, or manner (1 Corinthians 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 2:13).
   c. It was not received from man (v. 12a).
      (1) Not even from the Apostles.
      (2) If this were the case, it would make him of *secondary* importance.
   d. It was not taught by man (v. 12b).
      (1) He was not *taught* the Gospel.
      (2) It was *revealed* to Him (Ephesians 4:3-4).
   e. It came through Divine revelation (v. 12c).
      (1) A disclosure of truth from the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:10).

II. Discussion:

A. The Galatian Churches Saluted (vv. 2-3)—

1. "To the churches of Galatia" (v. 2).
   a. Those in Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, etc. (Acts 13-14; 16:6; 18:23).
   b. *Less possibly* Ankara, Pessinus, Tavium.
   c. These churches had been invaded by Judaizing teachers who demanded circumcision for salvation (Acts 15:1ff compared to Galatians 1:6-9).
2. The problem in Galatia:
   a. Apostasy occurred quickly (1:6).
   b. Apostasy attempted to bind Mosaic Law on the Galatians (5:2; 2:16-17).
   c. Heretics charged Paul's gospel originated with man (1:10-21).
   d. Apostates reverted to observing days, months, years (4:9-10).
   e. Some accused Paul of preaching circumcision (5:11).
   f. They used their new liberty to promote carnality (5:13).
   g. Attempted to circumcise Gentiles for their own glory (6:12-13).
3. "Grace to you and peace…" (v. 3).

B. Jesus Christ, the Author of the Gospel (vv. 3b-5)—

1. Jesus gave Himself for our sins (v. 4a).
   a. In *direct contradiction* to the Judaizers who demanded compliance with the Law of Moses to be saved (Acts 15:1).
   b. "Gave" (*dontos* – aorist participle) – action is a *once for all* sacrifice for sins (cf. Hebrews 10:4; 1 Peter 1:18-19).
   c. "For" (*huper*) – in behalf of; atonement.
   d. "Sins" (*hamartiōn*) – the cause of Christ's death (Hebrews 9:14).
2. Jesus desires to deliver us from this present evil age (v. 4b).
   a. "Deliver" (*exaireō*) – set free, rescue.
   b. "Present evil age" = the great mass of humanity who stands in opposition to God and truth. It is evil (*ponēros*): wicked, base, worthless, degenerate (Romans 12:1-2; cf. Hebrews 6:5).
3. God the Father wills the same salvation and deliverance (v. 4c).
   a. John 3:16
   b. Romans 8:32
   c. 2 Peter 3:9
   d. 1 Timothy 2:4
4. Glory to God forever and ever (v. 5).

C. Only One Gospel (vv. 6-9)

1. Galatians quickly turning from God through the grace of Christ to *another* Gospel (v. 6).
   a. "Marvel" (*thaumazō*): great surprise due to their blame.
   b. "Turning away" (*metatithēmi*): They had turned away and were continuing to do so. As turncoats, they were to be blamed for their actions.
      (1) "So soon:" The short time between their conversion and departure.
      (2) From God's calling in the grace of Christ (Ephesians 1:18; 4:4; Philippians 3:14).
      (3) God calls us *into* the grace of Christ (place) *by* the Gospel (means). Nothing else.
   c. "A different gospel" = *no* gospel
      (1) *Doctrinal* apostasy is still apostasy *from God.*
         (a) Consider the unity-in-diversity concept.
         (b) *Any attempt to add* to the true message is a *perversion*: instrumental music, the Sabbath, tithing, infant baptism, human institutions, etc.
      (2) The contrast is salvation by grace versus perfect law-keeping.
      (3) "Different" (*heteros*): of a different class, kind; therefore, no Gospel.

2. There is only one Gospel—all else is *perverted* (v. 7).
   a. "Another" (*allos*): of the *same* kind; such did not exist!
   b. "Some who trouble (*tarassō*) you": to stir up, agitate *mentally.*
      (1) False teachers are the *troublers*, not Gospel preachers
      (2) See: 1 Kings 18:17 and 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9
   c. "Some who ... pervert (*metastrephō*) the gospel of Christ": Changing good into evil, light into darkness, laughter into grief (Isaiah 5:20).
      (a) *Pervert* suggests changing something into another form, kind, or other character.
      (b) The Judaizers did this to the Gospel.
3. The Galatians *received from Paul's preaching* the true Gospel (vv. 8-9).
   a. "Preached to you": True gospel cannot be altered (Revelation 22:18-19; Acts 2:42; Ephesians 2:20).
   b. "You have received": originally received the truth from the apostles; what was preached.
   c. Today, men add *creeds* to the Bible *thereby* changing it to a *false message*.
4. No living being—angel or man—can preach another Gospel (vv. 8-9).
   a. "We" includes the *apostles* who were heaven-sent! As *ambassadors* for Christ, if anyone could have *changed* the Gospel, it would have been them, 2 Corinthians 5:20. But Paul said the apostles had no such authority.
   b. "Angel from heaven" had no authority to change the Gospel. (Angels carried God's Word to Abraham, Mary, Joseph, Elizabeth, John.)
   c. "Anyone" makes the prohibition *absolute.* No power in heaven or earth can *change* the Gospel.
   d. "Any other gospel" = false gospel; preacher *accursed* for preaching it.
   e. "Accursed" (*anathema*): delivered up to Divine wrath for destruction.

III. Conclusion:

A. Galatians 1:1-12 give us an introduction to this epistle of Paul—

1. From it we learn to appreciate two religious extremes to be avoided:(1) Salvation by perfect law-keeping and (2) salvation that ignores all law.
2. Do not be ignorant of its contents. God preserved it for you and me for a *reason!* (2 Timothy 2:15; 3:16-17).

B. The six lessons this week will give you a good appreciation of the letter—

1. Listen intently
2. Study diligently
3. Apply personally

—Wayne Goff
Kansas City, MO

Paul: Apostle or Impostor?

Galatians 1:13-2:14

I. Introduction:

A. Design & Purpose of this Section of Scripture:

1. Character of Galatians
2. Problem of Judaism
3. False Accusations against Paul
4. Necessity of defending his credentials as an apostle

B. Compare Epistles Where Apostleship Was Challenged & Where It Was Not:

1. Romans, 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, etc.
2. See the value of autobiography, not religious pedigree
   a. Acts 22:1-5
   b. Acts 26:1-5
   c.. Philippians 3:1-8
3. Reason for writing letter plain: Judaizing teachers had come into Galatia & endeavored to undermine the influence of Paul by questioning his apostleship that they might further their heresy that Gentiles had to be circumcised and keep the law in order to be saved.

II. Discussion:

A. Paul's Defense of His Apostleship—

1. His Manner of Conduct In Judaism Before Conversion (1:13-14).
   a. Judaism personified in Saul of Tarsus
   b. A religious fanatic (Acts 8:1-3; 9:1; 22:4,5; 26:9-11; 1 Timothy 1:13 etc.)
   c. His prominence in Judaism - Acts 9:1,2; 26:12; 22:3; Philippians 3:4-6 etc.)
   d. He "profited" 4298 prokopto- in Judaism (v.14)
      (1) to beat forward
         (a) to lengthen out by hammering (as a smith forges metals)
         (b) metaphorically, to promote, to forward, to further
      (2) to go forward, to advance, to proceed
         (a) used of time: the night is far spent
         (b) metaphorically, to increase, to make progress
2. In all of this Saul had a religious motive. He thought he "ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth". He was "zealous for God" (Acts 22:3)
3. Something obviously wrong with Saul. Not his energy, zeal & passion—his faith was wrong, he was on the wrong side (1 Timothy 1:13). And when the Lord called Saul by his grace, he did not destroy the spirit of Saul, but simply directed it into new channels.

2. His Conversion (vv.15,16a)
   a. "Separated me from my mother's womb "
      (1) Some think this to refer to Paul being predestined to be an apostle from birth such as John the Baptist, Isaiah and Jeremiah etc., but more likely an expression of gratitude for life (cf. Acts 17:28, etc.).
   b. "And called" means a definite summons to action (cf. Acts 9:15,16).
   c. "To reveal his Son in me," not "to me" but "in me."
      (1) Many have had Christ revealed to them—Pilate, Agrippa, etc.

(2) Paul's revelation was "in" him (cf. Galatians 2:20; Philippians 3, etc.).
(3) Paul's life now depicts a totalitarian life in Christ.

3. Some Lessons:
   a. Not Every Religion Is Right—
      (1) Paul had been deeply devoted to Judaism (religious) but his faith was wrong and he learned he was on the wrong side.
      (2) Our "broadminded and tolerant" age tells us that so long as one believes in Christ, God, Holy Spirit, etc. one religion is as good as another.
   b. Can be Zealous For A Cause And Be Wrong In It—
      (1) Paul had been "exceedingly zealous" for the traditions of the fathers.
      (2) Offers the manner of persecution of the church as proof of his zeal (Galatians1:13)
      (3) Zeal for the Lord's work is needed (Revelation 3:15,16) but must realize that zeal may be misguided (Romans10:1-3).
   c. Not Always Wrong To Change Religions—
      (1) Though Paul was sincere, honest, zealous, he was brought face to face with the fact that he was wrong.
      (2) It has been observed that one may be honestly mistaken until he hears the truth, then he will (a) cease to be mistaken or, (b) cease to be honest.

B. An Independent Revelation (1:16b-24)

1. Independent of Human Teaching (v.16b), "conferred not with flesh and blood."
2. Independent of the Other Apostles:
   a. The reconstruction of Paul's ministry from his conversion to 3 years later found him immediately preaching the gospel from Damascus (cf. Acts 9:19-22) to Arabia and back again to Damascus.
   b. His point is that for 3 years following his conversion he did not journey to Jerusalem. Thus he preached for 3 years before seeing any of them. Obviously, the apostles could not have been his instructors in the gospel.
   c. When he came back to Jerusalem, he was there for only a brief time and saw only Peter and James.
3. Independent of the Churches of Judea:
   a. The line of argumentation reveals that the Judaizers claimed Paul had been further educated in the gospel after his conversion by the apostles and/or the churches of Judea rather than having a full revelation of the gospel from Christ as did the original apostles.
   b. But since he had been preaching for three years before meeting with any of the apostles, and inasmuch as the Judean churches would not even know Paul if they saw him, it is clear that he didn't receive any instruction from them.
   c. This information is given by Paul to prove his claim to have received his gospel by direct revelation from Christ and not from any human agencies and would thus regain the confidence of the Galatians that Paul indeed was a called apostle.

C. Paul's Endorsement by the Other Apostles (2:1-14)

1. To prove that the other apostles recognized Paul's apostleship (vv.1-5)
   a. 14 years later, he with Barnabas (Acts 15), went to Jerusalem "by revelation" and took Titus, uncircumcised and confronted these false brethren .
   b. The other apostles added no new revelation to him regarding circumcision (v.6) but saw that God worked through him, as He did Peter, and gave him and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship (vv.7-9), requesting that we remember the poor, a matter of which we already were zealous (v.10).
2. His Confrontation with Peter (2:11-14)
   a. Having shown that the other apostles recognized him as an equal, he now proceeds to show that he once rebuked Peter, whose apostleship was unquestioned. When this incident

happened is not related but most commentators think that it was shortly after the events of Acts 15.

b. Peter's inconsistency/hypocrisy (vv.12,13)
   (1) Initially, Peter ate with the Gentiles (v.12)
   (2) Later, Peter pretended the Law still Binding (vv.12,13)

c. Apostolic Rebuke (v.14)
   (1) Peter was an apostle. His actions therefore carried much weight with the church. If his hypocrisy were to go unchallenged, the incident could take on the appearance of an apostolic precedent.
   (2) Though God made special provision for the "words" of the apostles, no such provision was made for their lives. Peter knew and taught the truth concerning their freedom from the law of Moses (circumcision) but his conduct was a contradiction and was inconsistent and thus constituted an attack on the truth of the gospel of Christ.

3. Some Lessons:
   a. How to deal with factions in the church - 2:4,5
   b. The importance of practicing what we preach - 2:12,13
   c. The necessity & value of reproof - 2:11, 14
   d. Public rebuke for public offense -2:14

III. Conclusion:

A. Paul Established His Credentials as an Apostle of Jesus Christ by Showing in this Section of Scripture:

1. His manner of conduct both before & after his conversion
2. He received revelation independent of:
   a. Human teaching (1:13-17)
   b. Judean churches (1:18-24)
   c. Judaizing brethren (2:1-10)
   d. Apostolic pressure (2:11-14)

B. Remember the Great Lessons We Have Learned from this Text.

—David Goff
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Justification by Faith

Galatians 2:15 – 3:29

I. Introduction:

A. How May the Guilty Be Just Before God?

1. This is an old & debated question.
2. The need for understanding the meaning of "justified" and "faith" and "works."
   a. "Justify"—to acquit, declare righteous. God justifies!
   b. "Faith"—Scriptural use in two senses, subjective and objective.
      1. Subjective—belief, trust (Galatians 2:16).
      2. Objective—the object of trust, or body of truth in which one believe, trust (see: Acts 6:7; Galatians 1:23; Jude 3).
3. Neither faith, or works justifies the sinner.
   a. God justifies upon certain conditions.
   b. There is nothing meritorious in either faith or works.
4. Does "faith" exclude all works? Does "works" exclude all faith?

B. The Principle Text for this Study Is Galatians 2:16—

"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

II. Discussion:

A. We Are not Justified by the Law, Any Law (2:15-21)—

1. The Old Testament Law did not provide forgiveness (Galatians 3:21). A given law could not justify.
   a. Righteousness did not come by the law of Moses or any other law system (Galatians 2:21).
   b. Paul, knowing this by inspired knowledge, knew to attempt to be justified by the law, would make a sinner of himself (v. 17).
2. "We have believed in Jesus," that is, trusted in Him.
3. "That we might be justified by <u>*the faith*</u> of Christ," or the Gospel of Christ.
   a. "No flesh," neither Jew nor Gentile, can be justified by the law.
4. "If I build again that which I destroyed," the Law, I am a transgressor (2:18).
5. "I am crucified with Christ" (see: Romans 6:1-6).
   a. "Nevertheless I live" a new life in Christ (Romans 6).
   b. "I live by <u>*the faith*</u>, the Gospel of the Christ (v. 20).
      (1) Made alive by THE FAITH (Colossians 2:13).
      (2) Continued to live by THE FAITH (Galatians 2:20).
   c. To live by the law, be justified by the law, frustrates the grace of God (v. 21).

B. Paul's Defense of the Faith (3:1-7)—

1. Paul had so fully preached <u>the Cross</u> that it was as if they had seen Christ crucified in their midst (Galatians 3:1).
   a. Perhaps, "before whose eyes" connects with bewitch.
   b. Bewitched by Judaizing teachers, perverters of the Faith.
2. Challenge: "I brought the true Gospel, and you received it with gratitude."
   a. "Who hath bewitched you?" This kept them from continued *obedience* to the Faith.

b. "Did you receive the Spirit by the law, or by the preaching of the Gospel?"
c. "If by the law, you have suffered in vain" (v. 4).

3. Example: "Even as Abraham believed...counted (credited) to him for righteousness" (v. 6).
   a. Note: "it was counted to (eis—in order to) him..."
   b. Abraham was not an alien when this incident of Genesis 15:6 took place.
      (1) Had already obeyed the call from Ur (Genesis 12 :1-3; Hebrews 11:8).
      (2) Built altars (Genesis 12:6-7).
      (3) Called on the Name of the Lord at Bethel (Genesis 12:8).
      (4) Blessed by the priest of the Most High God (Genesis 14:18).
      (5) God was already his Shield (Genesis 15:1).
      (6) None of the above is the language to an alien.
   c. He believed God, that is, he believed God's word—trust—therefore, he did what God said do.
      (1) Romans 4:2
      (2) James 2:23
   d. James and Paul:
      (1) Works without faith—void (James 2:16 and Ephesians 2:9).
      (2) Faith without works—dead (James 2:26).
4. Therefore, "they which are of faith...are the children of Abraham" (v. 7).
   a. Seed of Abraham no longer inheres in flesh.
   b. The true children of Abraham are children of Abraham's faith.

C. Further Proof that Justification Is by Faith (3:8-18)—

1. Their own Scriptures (v. 8, cf. the Old Testament promise, Genesis 12:3).
2. "Justify the heathen"—impart righteousness to Gentiles in same way as to Jews (Acts 15:9).
3. "Preached the gospel before to Abraham" (Genesis 12:3; Galatians 3:16). This is the gospel promise.
   a. Promise made before circumcision and the law (Galatians 3:17).
   b. Genesis 12:3 was then a fore-statement of gospel justification.
4. The Law provided condemnation (curse), not justification (vv. 9-13).
   a. Verse 10, "continueth not in all things..."
   b. Continue without violating once. But all had sinned, both Jew & Gentile (Romans 3:23), therefore, all under the curse.
5. "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law" (v. 13).
   a. By being made a curse for us (cf. Isaiah 53; 2 Corinthians 5:21).
      (1) Man condemned (cursed) for violation of law (v. 10).
      (2) All had violated law, sinned, (Romans 3:23).
      (3) The law did not provide a remedy. So Christ became a curse on our behalf. He tasted death for every man (Hebrews 2:9).
   b. "That the *promise* (Genesis 12:3) might come on the Gentiles through Christ."
      (1) The PROMISE: v. 16—*"all nations"* to be blessed (Genesis 12:3).
      (2) The LAW came 430 years after the promise (v. 17) and could not disannul the Promise.
   c. If the inheritance is of the law—*no more* of promise, that is, if inheritance is in the law, it is not in the promise. However, God gave it to Abraham by promise.
      (1) Therefore, neither circumcision nor the law necessary to Gentile justification.

D. The Purpose of the Law (3:19-25)—

1. The purpose of the law discussed in vs. 19-25.
   a. Added because of transgression.
2. For how long was it to continue? "Till the Seed should come..." (v. 19).
3. Was the law against the promise of God? God forbid! (v.21).
   a. It was a given law, but could not give what the Jew sought, justification!
   b. Romans 8:1-4.
   c. Scripture concluded all under sin - but the law could not give relief.

d. "That the promise by faith of Jesus Christ (the gospel of Jesus Christ) might be given to them that believe" (v. 22).
   (1) Therefore, the law a schoolmaster (tutor) to bring them unto Christ.
   (2) That the believer may be justified by faith, believing in the faith (Romans 1:16-17).

4. Then, after faith (the Faith) came, they were no longer under the schoolmaster, the Law.

E. Their Present Condition (3:26-29)—

1. "Ye are (present tense) children...by faith..." Why?
   a. "For (gar) as many of you as *have been (*past perfect tense) baptized into Christ..."
   b. As many of you, Jew or Gentile, as have been, any time in the past up to the present, been baptized *into* Christ..." (vv. 26–27).
2. This is why you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.

III. Conclusion:

A. Justification Is by Faith and Not by the Works of the Law.

B. Will You Be Justified by Faith Today?

1. Believe, trust, in Christ
2. Be baptized into Christ
3. Receive the promised blessing (Acts 3:26).

—A.W. Goff
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Our Relation to the Law

Galatians 4:1-31

I. Introduction:

A. The Title of This Lesson Might Well Be: "Why Go Back?"

1. Paul sets forth in this chapter two chief arguments *against* living under the Law of Moses:
   a. #1: For Jews, the Law represented the "childhood" stage of development.
   b. #2: For Gentiles, the Law represents "bondage" to "weak and beggarly elements."
2. What is true of the Law of Moses *specifically* can be applied today *generally* to justification under any system requiring perfect law-keeping.

B. This Lesson Will View the Main Arguments in Galatians Four Against the System of Law.

II. Discussion:

A. The Law: Though Heirs, Not Redeemed (4:1-7)—

1. Previously (3:26-29), Paul explained that *sonship to God* comes through the system of faith in Christ Jesus.
2. Now (4:1-7) Paul argues that sons are not *masters of their inheritance* until they reach maturity.
   a. V.1: *Heirs* in childhood do not differ from *slaves* – they have no control over their inheritance (legal *minors*).
      (1) V. 2: Guardians and Stewards appointed by the Father control them (Galatians 3:23-25)
      (2) V. 3: "We" (Jews) were *like children* under the Mosaic system – "in bondage under the elements of the world."
         (a) "Elements of the world:" see Colossians 2:14-17; Galatians 3:11
         (b) "The Mosaic dispensation was a foreshadowing, a germ of the Gospel: and thus, when Christ came, its spiritual element was of necessity extinguished or rather absorbed by its successor. Deprived of this, it was a mere mass of lifeless ordinances, differing only in degree, not in kind, from any other ritualistic system." [*Lightfoot*, p. 172]
   b. Vv. 4-5: God sent Jesus to *redeem* those under Law *in order to receive* full sonship.
      1. Done "in the fullness of the time" (the time *appointed* by the Father)
         (a) God is in control, as fulfilled prophecy attests (cf. Daniel 2:44-45; Isaiah 40:3).
         (b) World social conditions were *perfect* for the coming and spread of the Gospel.
      2. Done by God – "sent forth His Son" (Divine Son)
      3. Done by Jesus - "born of a woman, born under the law" (Human Son, Jewish)
      4. Done to redeem those under law.
         (a) "Redeem" (*exagorazō*): by perfectly obeying it, being sacrificed under it, to free all others from its obligations. Hence, come to *majority* in spiritual age.
      5. Done that Jews might receive the adoption as sons.
         (a) "Adoption" (*huiothesia*): "adoption as sons," Ephesians 1:5; Romans 8:15.
   c. Vv. 6-7: "You" (Gentiles) having already received adoption as sons have no need to return to the condition of a slave (the condition of Jews under the law, v. 1)!
      1. Sons in whom the spirit of Sonship dwells already.
         (a) Not the Holy Spirit, but the spirit of adoption as sons.
      2. "Crying out, 'Abba, Father!'" = realization of true, intimate sonship, (cf. 1 John 3:1-2).
      3. Sons who are *mature* heirs of their inheritance already through Christ (Galatians 3:29).

3. Implied Conclusion: It would be absurd to return to *childhood* as *adults* since that is an *inferior* stage of development. Likewise, it would be absurd to return to the Law system when you are *spiritual adults in Christ already!*

B. The Law Brings Bondage to the Flesh (4:8-11, 21-31)—

1. As Gentiles (4:8) who formerly served idols, you had no true knowledge of God (thus, no true relationship with Him), Acts 17:30; Romans 1:18-32.
   a. "Served" (*douloō*) as *slaves*.
   b. "By nature are not gods," see: Isaiah 44:9-19; 46:5-11; etc.
2. As Christians (4:9) who "know God" (relationship with God) or "rather are known by God" (emphasizing God's initiation of the process), *why return* to "the weak and beggarly elements" of "bondage"? (cf. 4:3)
   a. Proof: (4:10): "You observe days and months and seasons and years."
      (1) If so (4:11), then I have labored for you in vain, 2 Corinthians 6:1.
      (2) "Weak and beggarly elements" suggest the Law's inability to save (Galatians 3:10-11).
3. [Vv. 12-20 are an *interjection* of Paul's line of reasoning appealing to the Galatians to remember his time among them and admonishing them to become *like* him—a converted Christian. See Section D.]
4. Returning to the thought of the Law system being carnal bondage (4:21-31), Paul uses an *allegory* to illustrate and further argue his point.
   a. Abraham had two sons: Ishmael (bondwoman's son *symbolizing* the Law's entrapment) and Isaac (Sarah's son *symbolizing* freedom and heirship of the Gospel's liberty), vv. 22–
   b. Sons are *symbolic* of the two covenants (systems Hebrews 8:8-12): Law of Moses (bondage due to inability to perfectly keep the Law) & Gospel (freedom due to forgiveness through Christ's blood), vv. 23–
      (1) Ishmael: born according to flesh, bondage; Matthew Sinai in Arabia (Hagar), fleshly Jerusalem.
      (2) Isaac: born according to promise, free; (Sarah), spiritual Jerusalem (Hebrews 12:22-23)
         (a) "Mother of us all" (v. 26) – Christians, Jews & Gentiles
         (b) Prophecy of Isaiah 54:1 (v. 27) fulfilled
   c. *Warning and Application:* Though sons of promise, like Isaac, the fleshly sons of bondage, like Ishmael, seek to persecute and harm the *spiritual,* vv. 28-29.
      (1) Judaizing teachers are meant (as in Acts 4, 5, 6, 7; 13:50; 14:2), with the following solution for them.
   d. *Solution?* Cast out the bondwoman and her son since they are not heirs (v. 30; Genesis 21:10). *Application:* Cast out the Judaizing teachers since they seek to enslave you in bondage again!
   e. *Conclusion?* The sons of promise and freedom are the true spiritual heirs, v. 31. *Stay put in your Christian liberty! (5:1)*

D. Other Points in the Chapter (4:12-20)—

1. V. 12: *Become* like Paul, who once *became* like them!
   a. 1 Corinthians 9:19-21; 11:1
2. Vv. 13-16: When Paul traveled to Galatia, they did not despise him due to his physical infirmity (eye disease?). Instead, they received him "as an angel of God, *even* as Christ Jesus"!
   a. The blessing they enjoyed was to be recipients of the Gospel and its rewards!
   b. Why now are they rejecting him because of these false teachers?
3. V. 17: The Judaizing teachers zealously seek to enslave the Galatians for their own benefit.
   a. "Exclude" (*ekkleiō*): to shut out, withdraw fellowship.
   b. V. 18: Zeal is good if it is properly directed, cf. Romans 10:1-4
      (1) Personal jealousy was not the issue.
4. Paul's agony (v. 19) is as a mother laboring in birth until the child comes forth ("Christ formed in you" Galatians 2:20)
   a. Have they truly been *converted* (v. 20), or are they lost?

III. Conclusion:

A. We Live Under the Spiritual System of Faith & Not the Carnal System of Law—

1. It provides forgiveness and hope
2. A law system, which is a carnal system of Law-keeping enslaves to certain death.
3. The only *logical* reason anyone would prefer the *carnal* system over the *spiritual* system is *deception* by the Devil and his ministers (2 Corinthians 11:13-15).
4. Don't be deceived! Stand fast in the liberty found *only* in Christ Jesus, (Galatians 5:1; Acts 4:12; John 14:6).

B. Will You be Justified by Faith Today?

– Wayne Goff
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Called to Liberty

Galatians 5:1-26

I. Introduction:

A. "Stand fast therefore"—

1. "Therefore" connects the subject of liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free" in chapter five with what was said in the concluding verses of chapter four:
   a. Judaism and Christianity respectively personified by the allegory.
   b. Judaism was materialism and Christianity spirit. Bitter war raged between them.
   c. He that was born after the flesh was persecuting him that was born after the Spirit. The struggle would end in the casting out of the handmaid and her son (overthrow of Judaism and the triumph of the Gospel).
2. Now, Paul proceeds to show the consequences of returning to Judaism (an abrogated law).

II. Discussion:

A. The Consequences of Apostasy (5:1-4)—

1. Entangled Again with the Yoke of Bondage (v.1)
   a. The Galatians had been freed (cf. Acts 15:10).
   b. "It was against the danger of returning to this yoke of the law of Moses that Paul warned them…"
   c. "Many 'misapply' this language and warn against rigid obedience to the laws of the New Testament.
      (1) Certainly Jesus did not die to release men from the laws that He sealed as laws at His death.
      (2) The laws of Jesus are adapted to children, not slaves. A child ought to be more zealous of the observance of the laws of his father than a slave of the laws of his master. One acts from love, the other from fear. The service of love is a joyful service; the heart, the feelings are in it. The service of fear is a burdensome, unwilling service.
      (3) This passage in no wise releases from the implicit obedience to the law of faith. It frees from the law of Moses that we may obey the "law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (*Commentary on Galatians* by David Lipscomb).
2. Christ Profits You Nothing or You Loose the Blessings to Be Had in the Promised Seed (v.2).
   a. Not condemning circumcision (Acts 16:3), but circumcision a sign between God and Israel.
   b. To receive it as taught by Judaizers as essential to salvation (Acts 15), was to keep something null and void and thus acknowledge the law of Moses as binding even though it had been taken away. To a man who did this, Christ could bring no blessing.
3. If You Keep Part of It, You Are Obligated to Keep All (v.3).
   a. Circumcision is one point of the law.
   b. He who does one point of the law to be saved recognizes the law as a means of justification, so he is obligated to keep every point of the law.
   c. This is Paul's argument on being consistent.
4. You Fall from Grace (v.4).
   a. Grace—an acceptance with God, a state or condition of favor with God and being justified.
   b. Galatians 2:16—how does justification come? By "the works of the law" or "the faith (gospel) of Jesus Christ?"

c. To be justified by the works of the law is to fall from grace. To fall from grace implies that one has been in this state of favor, but left it.
   (1) The reason given here is that they were abandoning the system of justification that came through "the faith of Jesus Christ" (the gospel) and what His atoning death accomplished to go back to a system that had been abrogated.
   (2) To a Christian who did this, Paul says: "Christ is become of no effect…"

B. The Alternative Course (5:5-12)—

1. We Wait for the Hope of Righteousness by Faith (v.5)
   a. The word "we" refers to all who abide in Christ as opposed to those who turn from Christ to find justification in the law of Moses.
   b. Through the medium of the Spirit (teaching) we are led to exercise our faith in waiting for the hope which accompanies justification by faith.
   c. Those who turn back to the law for their justification have no such hope; only doubts & fears.
2. Faith Working by Love (v.6)
   a. That which secures a blessing from God is not circumcision or uncircumcision, but a faith that works through or by love. To work through love is to work from a principle of love.
   b. A faith that does not work is dead and no value (James 2:14-24).
   c. Some are so opposed to "works" having anything to do with our salvation they reject it.
3. Finish the Course (vv.7-10)
   a. Paul views the Christian life as a race. They started out running well.
      (1) Proof they were children of God yet Paul afraid that these "children of God" would fall away!
      (2) Hindrance of obeying the truth equated with falling from grace. Thus, some already apostatized.
   b. Paul informs them that the hindrance they were experiencing did not come him (v.8)
      (1) As the one through whom God called them, Paul vindicates his apostleship by showing he was not responsible for their apostasies but false teachers were.
   c. Through the universal principle of leaven, Paul shows that a few evil persons in the churches of Galatia had caused this apostasy in turning them away from Christ to the law of Moses. As small an influence as these seem to have, they must realize what a little leaven can do and purge themselves of it.
      (1) *Lesson:* A little trend can become a big apostasy if it is left to work unhindered in the Lord's church.
      (2) *Remember:* False teachers will answer for their perversions of truth and its effects upon the body (v.10).
4. Identify the Source of the Problem (vv.11,12)
   a. Don't be deceived by the Judaizers into thinking that I preach circumcision (cf. Acts 16:3).
   b. Two questions will answer this accusation:
      (1) Why am I still persecuted? Paul would not have been persecuted if he had preached circumcision as essential to salvation.
      (2) Why is the cross still an offense to some? If the cross as Paul preached it allowed for circumcision as a means of justification, then why is that preaching offensive or a stumbling block to the Jews?
   c. The fact that the Jews still persecuted him and that they still rejected the story of the cross was sufficient answer to their accusations that Paul preached circumcision.
   d. Paul's Sarcasm (v.12), cf. Deuteronomy 23:1.

C. Liberty And The Flesh (5:13-21)—

1. Called to liberty (freedom) but freedom is not without restraint
   a. Our liberty must not be used as an occasion to the flesh (v.13).
   b. "But by love…serve," the Gospel is based on love—love of Christ and in that love we become servants of each other—a mutual bondage of common service.

c. Talk about keeping the law, this is how we do it (v.14), not by biting and devouring one another (v.15).

2. Conflicts between flesh and Spirit will be encountered and you can't always do the things you wish (v.17), but if you will follow the teaching of the Spirit, you will not yield to the lust of the flesh (v.16).
   a. And to be led by the Spirit does not put you under the law (v.18).
   b. The works of the flesh and their danger are clearly revealed (vv.19-21).
      (1) Some of these are acts of immorality, others of false religions, others of attitudes and dispositions, etc.

D. The Spirit-Filled life (5:22-26)––

1. Paul has encouraged the Galatians to "walk in the Spirit" (v.16) and to be "led of the Spirit" (v.18).
2. Those who do this will show to others that the "live in the Spirit" (v.25) by:
   a. Bearing the fruit of the Spirit (vv.22,23)
   b. Putting to death the flesh with its affections and lusts (v.24)
   c. Not seeking vain glory or provoking or envying one another (v.26)

E. Applications:

1. This freedom enjoyed only in the Church. The Church allows more Christian liberty than any religious institution or denomination.
   a. Congregational liberty—each congregation is independent of others. Eldership can exercise its own power in the congregation without consulting some presiding elder, arch bishop, or board of directors. They can make decisions without waiting to see when the Conference, Council or Synod meets. We are not dominated by any Potentates, District Superintendents, Vicars, Cardinals, or Popes. Nor is the controlling voice of authority the journals or editors of journals among brethren.
   b. No Creed but the Bible—(2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Corinthians 2:17; Jude 3) Having the N.T. as our rule of faith and practice, we are not bound to defend a position that would violate our consciences—e.g., manuals, catechisms, articles of faith, false doctrines etc. Cannot believe Bible and catechism at same time—must forsake one or the other. Which?
   c. No Voting—We enjoy liberty because the Lord adds to church without our casting a vote (Acts 2:47).
   d. No Taxation—(1 Corinthians 16:1,2; 2 Corinthians 8&9) taxing members destroys liberty.
2. Liberty Destroyed:
   a. False Doctrine—(Galatians 1:6-9) freedom in Christ only when practice truth (John8:32)
   b. When Show Partiality & Respect of Persons (Galatians 2:11-21)—binding where God has not bound is as sinful as loosing where God has not loosed.
   c. Using Old Law as Justification for Religious Practices—Paul uses the word freedom in the sense of freedom from sin, death, and the law of Moses, not freedom from any standard of authority whatsoever (cf. faith only—instrumental music, etc.).
   d. Practicing Works of the Flesh (Galatians 5:16-26)—freedom not license— must live according to teachings and revelation of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit offers great spiritual freedom.

III. Conclusion: No religious people enjoy more spiritual freedom than the Church of Christ.

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Paul's Farewell

Galatians 6:1-18

I. Introduction:

Having shown the superiority of the gospel of Christ over the law and the consequences of going back to the abrogated laws of Judaism, Paul now tells them how Christians are to live under the directions of the Spirit and how to treat the weak and erring.

II. Discussion:

A. Mutual Dependence––

1. Mutual dependence of brethren (vv. 1-5).
   a. "Overtaken in a fault"—To surprise, detect—Thayer.
   b. "Fault"—misdeed, sin.
   c. "Ye which are spiritual"
      (1) "Spiritually gifted men, those who had spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 14:37), thus specially qualified to instruct"- Foy Wallace, Jr.
      (2) "The spiritual man is one who walks by the Spirit (Galatians 5:16, 25), and who himself manifests the fruit of the Spirit in his own life"—Lipscomb.
         (a) Could be either, both have the responsibility to restore (James 5:19).
   d. "Restore"—he is guilty no matter how he fell into sin (Leviticus 5:17).
      (1) Restore in the spirit of meekness, proper attitude, gentleness.
      (2) Spiritual could also fall into sin, so in need of same consideration.
2. The need for mutual burden bearing (v. 2).
   a. One another—communion in burdens.
   b. "Burdens"= weakness and shame. Not a reference to want or need.
      (1) Both the rich and poor may have burdens—help to either of them.
      (2) Hebrews 3:12-13 "exhort one another" (cf. James 5:16).
3. The danger of self-deceit (vv. 3-5).
   a. "Prove his *own* works..." = test, examine, by implication, to approve.
   b. Then rejoice in the fact that he "walks after the Spirit", and not in the idea that he is superior to the other (cf. 2 Corinthians 10:12).
   c. "For every man shall bear his *own burden…*" = responsibility.

B. Collective Responsibility––

1. "Let him that is taught in the word communicate…" (v. 6).
   a. The "taught" (student) is obligated to maintain the teacher (1 Corinthians 9:1-14).
   b. The fact that Paul "made tents" to support himself does not furnish an exemption. His was a personal choice for certain situations.
2. "Be not deceived…" (v. 7).
   a. By obvious neglect of Galatian churches in liberality toward teachers.
   b. Deceives self when thinks he can do as he pleases in this matter regardless of what God says.
   c. "Mock"—by ignoring God's will.
   d. "Reap as you sow." True in both the natural and the spiritual realm.
      (1) "Sow to the flesh" (v. 8)—purpose in living is carnal, indulgences. Will reap corruption—moral and spiritual ruin.
      (2) "Sow to the spirit "—to "walk after the Spirit" in seeking the Kingdom of God first, communicating to those who do the same—life everlasting (v. 9).

3. "Unto all men" (v. 10).
   a. Not an authorization to do whatever men decide is "good."
   b. The context is spiritual in import and must be understood as such.
   c. Some use v. 10 as a "catch all" for benevolence.
   d. "Do good unto all men" must be defined by what was written before if the construction of language means *anything*.
   e. We do good when we:
      (1) Restore a fallen brother (v. 1)
      (2) Bear one another's burdens (v. 2)
      (3) Bear our own burdens (v. 5)
      (4) Communicate with those who teach God's word (v. 6)
   f. In this way we can do good to all, both rich and poor.
4. "As we have opportunity" = "a fixed and definite time, season"—Vine.
   a. Not a continuing thing in regard to a specific opportunity, but one that comes to a child of God at a definite time
      (1) For an example the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-36).
      (2) He did not seek the opportunity. Cared for the victim, paid at the inn, did not pay for future victims, or call on the church for funds to help future victims.
   b. To suddenly turn "do good" into benevolence is a mistake. It would be out of harmony with the context, and every rule of interpretation.
   c. The greatest good any can do is to do spiritual good.

C. A Final Rebuke to the Judaizing Teachers—

1. "Shew in the flesh," that is, to please men.
   a. They were making converts to keeping circumcision, etc.
   b. By compromising they avoided "persecution for the cross."
   c. Their inconsistency was that they did not keep the law themselves.
2. "Glory in your flesh," glory in how many they could bring under the law.
3. "Glory in the cross," all that the cross stands for and implies.
4. "Walk according to this rule" as a new man (cf. Philippians 3:16).

III. Conclusion:

"Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ…let us do good unto all men, especially unto them that are of the household of faith."

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The Need to Develop Preachers

Mark 16:15

I. Introduction:

A. Great Tasks Have Been Given Unto Men, Such As:

1. Erecting great buildings; the Suez & Panama canals.
2. Writing great documents, laws, etc.
3. Exploration of space, Moon, etc.

B. The Greatest Task Ever Was Preaching the Gospel to the Whole World (Mark 16:15,16).

C. Why Is It The Greatest Task?

II. Discussion:

A. It Was Assigned by the Greatest Being—

1. He is Almighty (Genesis 17:1); Infinite (Isaiah 66:1; Jeremiah 23:24; 1 Kings 8:27); Eternal (Isaiah 57:15); Omnipresent (Psalm 139:7-12).
2. Even the foolishness of God is wiser than men (1 Corinthians 1:15).
3. Because of His greatness, we cannot question His method of carrying it out.
   a. Note the success (Colossians 1:23).
   b. The Church of Christ is "pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15; cf. Acts 13:14-27).
   c. Acts 8:4 tells who, and how.

B. It Manifests the Greatest Love—

1. Salvation not limited to His friends & family, but to enemies & sinners (see: Romans 5:7-8; Colossians 1:21; cf. John 15:13; Jeremiah 2:32).
2. All have sinned (Romans 3:23) and the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23).
   a. Notwithstanding, God gave his Own Son, Only Son, to die in our stead.
   b. Did it while "we were enemies..."
   c. Made "him who knew no sin to be sin for us" (2 Corinthians 5:21; Isaiah 53).

C. It Makes Available the Greatest Power—

1. The Gospel is His power to save (Romans 1:16).
2. He has many other powers, but they are not His power to save.
3. Note: Corinthians saved by it (1 Corinthians 15:1-2).
   a. Very ungodly (1 Corinthians 6:9-11), yet saved by the gospel.
   b. 1 John 1:7 shows the continuous power of His blood to keep us saved.
   c. Therefore, His word is powerful (see: Jeremiah 23:29; Luke 8:5-15).

D. It Covers the Greatest Territory—

1. To be preached to "every creature" and "all the world."
   a. Not limited by distance, color, station in life.
   b. The Gospel unites men—king & peasant, rich & poor, slave & master, male & female, Jew & Gentile…
2. By it all can be "of one heart and soul" (Acts 4:32).
   a. Consider the Lord's Prayer (John 17:20-21).
   b. See: Galatians 3:28-29; Ephesians 2:12-19; 6:5-9; Colossians 3:18-24.
3. Hence, Paul to go to the Gentiles, kings, etc. (Acts 9:15-16; 26:16-18). He preached the Gospel to Felix, Festus, Agrippa and Caesar's household (Philippians 4:22).

E. It Can Have the Greatest Results—

1. It saves souls from an eternal hell, the greatest death (Revelation 14:11; 20:10).
2. It also affects the lives of men in their earthly relationships.
   a. The Gospel turns men from darkness to light; from superstitions and ignorance to life, peace and joy.
   b. It begets newness of life (Romans 6:3-4 ; cf. 1 Corinthians 6:11).
   c. Preaching this Gospel can fill hearts with joy now, and in the world to come (John 14:13; cf. Philippians 4:1-4).

F. It Requires A Great Number Of Workers—

1. It is for all (Mark 16:15; Titus 2:11) because all need it.
2. Then for the converted to carry it to all others in every generation.
3. But, "whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (Isaiah 6:8).
   a. Note the Lord's love, compassion for the lost (Matthew 9:36-38).
   b. To be like Him, we must have the same love for souls, & pray with sincerity of heart.
      (1) This implies a willingness for God to use us in this harvest field.
      (2) Implies that we are really committed to the work He was committed to.
         (a) Not, "Lord send somebody else to do all the hard work, and let me do little or nothing."
         (b) Suppose one should give nothing, withhold all his means, suppress all efforts, only he says he will pray.
         (c) If one refuses to go, or give, will his prayer be heard?
3. What is implied in the prayer for more laborers?
   a. A sense of personal responsibility.
   b. An honest & consecrated heart willing to do any sort of toil, bear any burden.
   c. A love for lost souls - like His love. John 3:16.
   d. A sense of the value of souls. Matthew 16:26.
   e. What the church can do:
      (1) Pray! God expects it. Text. Also examples. Acts 4:23-30; 12:12
      (2) A willingness to put our sons into the field of labor.
      (3) Some must say, "Lord, here am I, send me."
      (4) A willingness to make personal sacrifices.
      (5) Willingness to do all you can to prepare others to go.
      (6) Adequately support those who do go into the field of labor (see: Galatians 6:6; 1 Corinthians 9:6-1-4; Philippians 4:15).

III. Conclusion:

A. It Is God's Will that the Gospel Be Preached to All.

1. Necessity is laid upon us all to preach the word, or support those who do.
2. It is our responsibility to train up men for that work. If we don't, who will?
3. Are you willing to pray for more laborers, and then do all you can to see that more are sent into the field?

B. Remember, "The Field Is White unto Harvest."

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The Need for Distinctive Preaching

Matthew 11:6-9

I. Introduction:

A. The World & the Lord's Church Have Ever Been in Need of Distinctive Preaching Because It Is the Kind that Saves Men's Souls—

1. Jesus highly commended John the Baptist as a distinctive preacher (Matthew 11:6-9).
2. Paul warned *against* those who would clamor for *ear-tickling preachers* because people would not endure "sound doctrine" (2 Timothy 4:3-4).
   a. Fable-preaching is the opposite of distinctive preaching.
   b. Ambiguous preaching is the opposite of distinctive preaching.
3. People rebellious to the Lord cry out for "smooth preaching" (Isaiah 30:9-10).

B. What Do We Mean by Distinctive?

1. *Distinctive* is that which may be clearly seen and understood.
2. Synonym: evident, obvious.
3. Opposite: ambiguous; unclear; not distinct.
   a. Ambiguous: "doubtful or uncertain… Capable of being understood in two or more possible senses" [*Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, p. 28]
   b. See: 1 Corinthians 14:7-9.

II. Discussion:

A. What Distinctive Preaching Is Not:

1. It is not mean-spirited preaching (cf. Ephesians 4:15).
   a. It is humbly rebuking false teachers & their teaching (2 Timothy 2:24-26).
   b. It does include *reproving (convincing)* and *rebuking* (2 Timothy 4:2).
   c. It equips elders to do the same (Titus 1:9-11).
2. It is not preaching what is *popular* because it is popular (Matthew 11:6-9)
3. It is not preaching due to ulterior motives (1 Thessalonians 2:3).
   a. Error
   b. Uncleanness
   c. Deceit
4. It is not *ear-tickling* preaching to please the audience (1 Thessalonians 2:5a,6).
5. It is not preaching for *financial gain* (1 Thessalonians 2:5).

B. Distinctive Preaching Is:

1. Preaching the truth at all times, plainly, to the needs of the audience because you love God and the souls of men (cf. Acts 20:26-27; Ephesians 4:15).
2. Preaching the *truth* because Jesus is the King of Truth (John 18:37).
   a. Those who desire truth will *hear* and *follow*.
   b. Distinctive preaching is done by speaking "sound doctrine" (1 Timothy 1:10; 2 Timothy 1:13; Titus 2:1).
   c. Preaching the truth *with all authority* because that is all Jesus has authorized (Titus 2:15; 1 Timothy 2:2; cf. Matthew 28:20).
   d. Preaching the truth, because anything else is a lie (cf. John 8:44 to 2 Corinthians 11:13-15).
      (1) Those who *believe* lies are *damned* (2 Thessalonians 2:11; Revelation 22:15; see: 1 John 2:21,27).

3. Preaching the truth *at all times*, because there is never a right time to preach something else: "in season and out of season" (2 Timothy 4:1-2).
   a. It has been said that *a half-truth* is a *whole lie!*
   b. One can preach hard against those who are *not present*, while failing to preach hard to those *who are present.*
   c. Paul said that he was "innocent of the blood of all *men*" (Acts 20:26). How could he say this if he had not preached to the *needs* of all men? (See: Ezekiel 3:17-21).
4. Preaching the truth at all times, *plainly*, because *ambiguous preaching* is neither plain nor convicting.
   a. Ever hear a preacher "beat around the bush" and wonder what he said?
      (1) Difference between using *tact* and *deliberately being obtuse*.
   b. Heard a liberal preacher once in a 30-minute sermon spend 15-minutes preaching the truth and another 15-minutes taking it back lest he offend (cf. John 6:61-63).
5. Preaching the truth at all times, plainly, *to the needs of the audience* because true preaching is designed to save the souls of men.
   a. Each congregation has its own distinctive personality, needs, problems.
   b. Jesus came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10).
   c. Ezekiel preached the truth and the people loved to hear it, but they did not do it (Ezekiel 33:30-33). Still, a prophet had been among them!
   d. Isaiah bemoaned the fact that not all who heard, obeyed (Isaiah 53:1 & Romans 10:15-16).
      (1) This does not indict the Gospel message was weak, or ineffective (Romans 10:15, 17).
      (2) This does not mean the Gospel should not be preached to the whole world (Romans 10:18; Colossians 1:6,23).
      (3) This does not mean that man's ignorance due to his rejection of truth is an excuse (Romans 10:19-21; cf. Ephesians 4:18, 2 Timothy 3:7).
   e. Truth saves those who are lost (2 Thessalonians 2:9-10; 2 Timothy 2:24-25).
6. Preaching the truth at all times, plainly, to the needs of the audience *because you love God*— "we ought to obey God rather than man" (Acts 5:29).
   a. A preacher has a *Divine charge* to preach the truth (2 Timothy 4:1; 1 Corinthians 9:16).
   b. A preacher must please God over men (Galatians 1:10; 1 Thessalonians 2:4).
   c. As Abraham's love was *tested* in offering Isaac, so the preacher's love is *tested* when he stands before his audience.
7. Preaching the truth at all times, plainly, to the needs of the audience because you love God *and the souls of men* (1 Peter 1:22; 1 Thessalonians 2:8, 11).
   a. Men can tell the difference between a preacher who *loves* to tell men they are lost and a preacher whose heart is *broken* because they are lost.

C. Biblical Examples of Distinctive Preaching:

1. Jesus as He taught the greatness of the spiritual over the material (John 6).
   a. It offended some, but it was the truth (vv. 60-63).
2. The twelve apostles on Pentecost (Acts 2:14-36).
   a. It *cut to the heart* because they were guilty! (V. 37).
   b. They had murdered the Son of God and stood in great jeopardy.
   c. Still, honest souls were saved (vv. 38-41).
3. Stephen, as he denounced the wicked, hard-hearted Jews (Acts 7).
   a. Distinctive preaching cost him his life (vv. 51-52,59).
4. Paul as he preached the Christ on Mars' Hill in Athens (Acts 17:22-31).
   a. He preached to their *need*—the knowledge of One God.
   b. He preached it *immediately*—for some there was no other opportunity.
5. Paul as he spoke to Felix (Acts 24:24-26).
   a. He reasoned about righteousness, self-control, judgment to come.
   b. Felix *trembled*—nothing here about "feeling good about yourself" without repentance.

6. The one consistency in all these examples is that the *needed* truth for the person or the moment was spoken with conviction, proof, and love.
   a. "A gospel preacher is a man, redeemed by grace through faith, standing in Christ's stead, by his authority, and in obedience to his command; proclaiming, illustrating, making clear and strong and urgent God's word; so that responsible men and women may accept it unto life; or reject it unto death—all of this; because he loves God, Christ, the church, and the souls of men"—*Jesse P. Sewell.*

III. Conclusion:

A. What Kind *Of Preaching Do You Ask For Where You Attend?*

1. Ear-tickling, as a "lovely song," or "speak the truth in love"?
2. Preachers – are you *convicted* with the charge given by Paul (2 Timothy 4:1-2)? Or are you a "reed shaken by the wind"?
3. May God give us the wisdom to see the *battle for men's souls* going on today, and the *courage and conviction* to face it head on (2 Corinthians 10:4-5; Ephesians 6:12-13,17).

B. Will You Yield to Distinctive Preaching Today?

—*Wayne Goff*
Kansas City, MO

Enduring Sound Doctrine

2 Timothy 4:3

I. Introduction:

A. The Church Will Be Safe From Apostasy Only as Long as It Endures Sound Doctrine (1 Timothy 4:16)—

1. We must abide in sound teaching lest we lose that for which we have worked (2 John 8,9).
2. While preachers and preaching must "hold fast the form of sound words" (2 Timothy 1:13), it is the duty of the church to conform to sound doctrine that it might be saved.

B. How Shall We Achieve this Laudable Goal?

II. Discussion:

A. A Converted Membership—

1. What is it?
   a. Elementary meaning is to change a thing or person into something else.
   b. Biblically, conversion is the mental or moral change in a person that begins with belief of the gospel and ends with obedience.
2. Some scripture:
   a. Psalm. 19:7
   b. Acts 15:3 - conversion stands for whole gospel plan
   c. Matthew 18:3 - put between person and kingdom of God
   d. Matthew 13:13-15 - Made to proceed from hearing & understanding, and is based on knowledge, not mysterious.
   e. James 5:19,20—conversion a prime duty of the Christian and supreme work of the church.
3. Conversion denotes a total change in the man turning from his sins to God.
   a. Psalm 51:13—God is the Author of this change, and the word of God is the means of the change (Psalm 19:7).
4. What is changed in conversion?
   a. Change of heart (Romans 10:10)
   b. Change of conduct , by repenting and reformation that follows (Acts 26:20)
   c. Change relation or state (Galatians 3:26,27)
5. The church weakened by unconverted members:
   a. Many still serving devil, the world.
   b. Need to turn "completely" (e.g., 1 Thessalonians 1:9)

B. A Convicted Membership—

1. "Conviction," a "strong persuasion, convinced" or "the state of mind of a person who is sure that what he or she believes or says is true".
   a. Christians are people convicted by faith (Hebrews 11:1).
   b. Conviction grows out of conversion. If convictions are shallow, what does that indicate about their conversion?
2. Convicted members move the world—not moved by the world (Acts 17:6).
   a. The example of Paul (Philippians 3:7,8; Galatians 1:10; 6:14; Acts 20:4).
3. God honors and respects those who are true to their convictions:
   a. The Rechabites (Jeremiah 35:5-16)
   b. Young prophet (1 Kings 13:7-10)

c. Joseph (Genesis 39:7ff)
d. 3 young Hebrews (Daniel 3:16-18)

4. World needs examples of convicted people:
   a. Christians to stand for right (Ephesians 6:10-12)
   b. How be an example for purity unless pure? For honesty unless honest? For Christ and His church unless faithful? (Philippians 2:12-16)
5. God gave the scriptures to "convict" and "assure" (Ephesians 4:11-15).
   a. Make sure our religion is one of conviction and not "convenience"!

C. A Confirmed Membership—

1. "firmly establish"; "to make firm together".
   a. Not a sacrament or ceremony where priest lays hands on head of child, confirms it in faith and then adds confirmed one to church.
2. Confirmation in the N.T. is "teaching."
   a. Acts 14:22; 15:32,41; 16:4,5; 18:23; Colossians 2:7; etc.
3. An example of how Paul "confirmed" the church:
   a. 1 Corinthians 3:10, Paul laid the foundation and others followed. Because of their folly Paul warned that every "man take heed how he buildeth." They did not build wisely on the foundation laid by Paul and as a result the church at Corinth was divided, sinful, and had a reputation of ill repute!
   b. Doctrinally weak preaching produces doctrinally weak members—morally weak preaching produces morally weak members, etc.
4. Balanced preaching confirms/strengthens/establishes the Church.
   a. Positive & negative (cf. 2 Timothy 4:2 which is 2/3rd negative; Jeremiah 1:10).
   b. How preach? A farmer cannot plant without first plowing & a builder does not build without first excavating.
5. God's way to build up the church set forth in Colossians 1: 10 (cf. Psalm 127:1).
   a. Church not strengthened by petting, pastoral visitation or entertainment.
   b. Confirmation is knowing what you believe and why (1 Peter 3:15).
   c. Sometimes reproof, correction, as well as encouragement, and indoctrination.

C. A Consecrated Membership—

1. "Separated from common to sacred use," as in the hymn, "Take my life and let it be, consecrated Lord to Thee."
2. The Christian belongs to God—separated from the world (2 Corinthians 6:17; Titus 2:14; Romans 12:1,2, etc.).
3. World has no claims on you for you're dead to it (Colossians 3:1-3).
   a. Steer clear of the world, remember your influence.
   b. Don't try to live on the borderline (Proverbs 6:27; 1 Corinthians 15:33).
4. Consecration solves problems of indifference, apathy, lukewarmness.

D. A Consummated Membership—

1. This means "to bring to completion: perfection."
   a. Illustrated (Hebrews 5:12-6:6)
   b. Paul (Philippians 3:13-15)
2. Also, the climax of life comes at judgment—completed journey—how will it fare with you?

E. An Uncompromising Membership—

1. Problems that arise in local congregations over various issues are rarely the problem itself, it is rather a symptom of a deeper problem called attitude.
   a. Illustrate with Instrumental music, institutionalism, premillenialism, Calvinism, materialism. These are only symptoms that resulted from the change in attitude toward the authority of the New Testament and respect for the attitudes toward the ordinances as given by the apostles of Christ.

b. Changes of attitude result in compromising our convictions (cf. how this has changed the church in areas such as preaching.
(1) Various issues that have confronted the church in the past two decades.

2. The need of the hour is that of an uncompromising spirit like:
   a. Naboth (1 Kings 21:3)
   b. Young prophet (1 Kings 13)
   c. Nehemiah (Nehemiah 6:3)
3. Some are like Baalam (Numbers 22:18,19)

III. Conclusion:

A. Enduring Sound Doctrine––

1. All boils down to our attitude toward the Bible and our acceptance of the N.T. as our rule of faith and practice.
2. Will the church accept it? Depends on the attitude––reception of truth (any truth) depends on the attitude we take toward truth.

B. How Precious Is Truth To You?

––David Goff
Vilonia, AR

The Need for Qualified Elders

I. Introduction:

A. The need for qualified elders is seen in…

1. The fact that the Chief Shepherd has authorized the same (1 Peter 5:1-4)
2. The work the Holy Spirit has assigned them.

B. A congregation without elders is "wanting."

1. Falling short of the New Testament ideal
2. It is, therefore, imperfect (see: Titus 1:5).

II. Discussion:

A. The Need of Government:

1. Acts 20:28, the Holy Spirit made them overseers of the church of God.
2. 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, elders "labor among you...over you in the Lord."
3. 1 Timothy 5:17, the elders that "rule...labor in word and doctrine."
4. Hebrews 13:17, "submit your selves: for they watch for your souls."
5. 1 Peter 5:1-4 Elders "take the oversight."

B. Modern-day Apostasies:

1. Some are due to unqualified elders and some due to a lack of elders altogether.
   a. Centralization of authority - Mother church, or sponsoring church idea.
   b. Preacher (pastor) - manager system.
   c. Majority rule. The evils of such. The Church is not a democracy.
   d. Anarchy.
   e. Elders lording it over the flock. Assuming to much authority.
      (1) Are not to legislate.
      (2) See: Psalm 119:89, "...thy word...settled in heaven."
2. How long can a church scripturally work & worship without elders?
   a. If elders are optional, why is a church "wanting" without them? (Titus 1:5)
3. God has always required certain qualifications in overseers (Exodus 18:21; 1 Timothy 3).
4. Objections:
   a. "Can't find qualified men."
      (1) If truly can't in a church of this age & size, then have poor example of a New Testament church.
      (2) Truly the case sometimes (cf. Hebrews 5:12-14).
   b. Must search for men who meet requirements in some appreciable degree.
      (1) May be weak in some particular quality, yet qualified.
      (2) Example: "apt to teach." Some more "apt" than others. Like some preachers.
      (3) Let us not make such a bugaboo out of the "qualifications" that we frighten those away who are qualified.
   c. Must not be afraid of petty, or malicious, or misguided opposition. "Quit (behave) you like men" (cf. , 1 Corinthians 16:13).
   d. "Qualifications" do not indicate perfection, nor does the possession of them guarantee perfect living and performance as an elder.
   e. Even if men are qualified to serve, they cannot do so if the people will not accept them. If you have objections to offer, think seriously - are your misgivings a matter of faith, or opinion.

C. The Work of Elders—

1. Not an honorary office—but a *work!*
   a. 1 Timothy 3:1 "desire the office (overseership), he desireth a good work."
   b. Paul's instruction to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:28-35:
      (1) Take heed:
         (a) to self
         (b) to all the flock
      (2) The Holy Spirit made you overseers.
      (3) Feed the church of God.
      (4) Watch! Why?
         (a) Grievous wolves shall enter in among you.
         (b) Of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things.
   c. Hold fast the faithful (trustworthy) word…convince the gainsayer.
      (1) The success of the Lord's work rests greatly upon the elders.
      (2) If they succeed, the church will succeed. If they fail, the church is hindered.
         (a) No organization can rise above its leadership.
         (b) Not unmindful of the work of the preacher, but it is the elders who select the preacher.
2. Elders are overseers:
   a. The word implies supervision. They get the job done.
   b. Duties: lead, show, keep in touch with the work.
      (1) Must have sufficient knowledge to see that the work is properly done.
      (2) Lead the flock because the flock needs leading.
         (a) Unfortunate when misguided zealots usurp the authority of the elders.
         (b) Also unfortunate when the flock must push the leadership.

D. The Problems of Elders—

1. There are threats to the welfare of any congregation.
   a. Lack of leadership. Or an inadequate leadership.
   b. Ill-advised or contentious behavior by immature and unseasoned zealots(2 John 9).
   c. Undisciplined or unchecked fleshly desires (Galatians 5:20).
   d. Lethargy or failure in congregational responsibilities or functions.
2. The consequences when these conditions exist:
   a. Discourage individual Christians
   b. Turn away prospective members
   c. Thwart the congregation's purpose, and destroy the usefulness of the local body
   d. Depresses some preachers and talented workers
   e. Many young people are disappointed, and back off from any desire to serve

E. Every Local Church Needs Qualified Elders—

1. Elders who will…
   a. Oversee singing, Lord's supper, giving, preaching, the teaching program, and individuals.
   b. Tackle problems with mature reflection, strong will, and vigorous wielding of the Sword of the Spirit.
      (1) Not needed: some cocky, ambitious neophyte to "knock heads together."
      (2) Needed: Humble, God-fearing, heaven-bound, stout-hearted and sacrificing men who can absorb abuses, be patient with the weak, and administer the rod of correction with loving determination.
2. In order to have such men we must…
   a. Teach the word of God on the need and work of elders.
   b. Not lament over conditions without seeking remedies.
   c. Grant opportunities for experience in various works.
   d. Set good examples and create desire in the hearts of the young.

(1) How many young men do you know who are planning their lives so they will qualify as elders some day?
(2) How many parents would be willing to see your son become an elder, preacher, or see your daughter marry one?
(3) Unless we work at the job, and train the young, we will continue to have spiritual misfits as elders and preachers.

III. Conclusion: "Is It Nothing To You, All Ye That Pass By?"

—A.W. Goff
Russellville, AR

The Need for Godly Women in the Church

Titus 2:3-5

I. Introduction:

A. This lesson's title ought to be* self-evident: *consider this title—"The Need for* Ungodly *Women in the Church."

B. Ungodly women in the world's history have often been the undoing of people:

1. Before the universal flood of Noah, man's destruction was led by "the daughters of men" (Genesis 6:2).
   a. Physically beautiful; encouraged polygamy.
   b. God was distressed greatly by this (Genesis 6:3).
   c. Terrible wickedness resulted (Genesis 6:5-7).
2. Rebekah, Isaac's wife, was made weary by such women her son, Esau, married (Genesis 27:46). [When you marry the *girl,* you marry her *family*!]
   a. Remember Hebrews 12:16-17.
3. The *worldly* Moabite women led Israel to commit harlotry, Numbers 25:1-18 (1 Corinthians 10:8)
   a. 24,000 died as a result of this sin (V. 9)
4. The great judge Samson's life was *undone* by the Philistine, Delilah (Judges 16:4-30).
   a. Her evil intentions (v. 5) were disguised by her physical beauty (vv. 10, 13, 15).
   b. She was truly a *nagging* woman (vv. 16-17).
5. *Immodest* Bathsheba led a righteous man to commit adultery and murder (2 Samuel 11:1-27 & 12:1-15).
   a. The *fruit* of this matter: (1) Sword never left his house; (2) Adversity from among his own family; (3) Enemies of God found occasion to blaspheme, (4) a child died, (12:10-14)
6. Who can forget the *reprobate* Jezebel? (1 Kings 16:30-31)
   a. An idolater of the worst kind.
      (1) Led the massacre of untold numbers of godly prophets (1 Kings 18:4).
      (2) Tried to kill God's prophet, Elijah (1 Kings 19:2-3).
      (3) Plotted the death of righteous Naboth to get his vineyard (1 Kings 21:7-16).
   b. Would anyone like to die like her? 1 Kings 21:23-24 (2 Kings 9:10, 30-37)
   c. Her reputation (1 Kings 21:25-26).
   d. Jezebel best represents the ***evil*** of ungodly women in the church (see: Revelation 2:20ff).
      (1) "Profane and old wives' fables" are the *opposite* of godliness (1 Timothy 4:7).
      (2) "It seems that there were current among the Jews at this time many 'fables' (ch. 1:4; 2 Timothy 4:4; Titus 1:14; 2 Peter 1:16), childish legends and doctrines, some of them directed especially to enforcing certain rules about eating and drinking, and other 'bodily exercises,' which St. Paul utterly discountenances, and contrasts with that 'good doctrine' which he directs Timothy to continually teach...." [*Pulpit Commentary,* "The First Epistle to Timothy," Vol. 21, p. 71]
      (3) "Gullible women loaded down with sins" are *sitting ducks* for false teachers (2 Timothy 3:5-6). How much damage does this do to a local church?

II. Discussion:

A. Ungodly Women Can Change—

1. Rahab the Harlot is a wonderful example of one who lived wickedly, repented, and changed her life (Joshua 2:1-24).

a. Her faith in God was manifest, vv. 9-13
b. Her *obedient* faith is duly noted, Hebrews 11:31
c. She saved the lives of her family, vv. 14-21 (Joshua 6:17, 23, 25)
d. She became an *ancestor* of Jesus, see Matthew 1:5.
e. Wicked Rahab was *justified* and became righteous Rahab! James 2:25

2. Ruth a Moabitess whose heart was turned to Jehovah by her mother-in-law, Naomi (Ruth 1-4).
   a. Ruth 1:16-17 is one of the greatest *confessions* ever made!
   b. Ruth was an obedient daughter-in-law, adopting the Israelite laws and customs, respecting God's will in her life, Ruth 2:19-20; 4:10.
   c. She was better to Naomi than 7 sons! Ruth 4:15.
   d. She is also an ancestor of King David and Jesus Christ!

B. What Do We Mean By "Godly"?

1. "Godly" has been variously translated as "religious," "pious," "devout," and "worshiper."
   a. According to *Harper's Bible Dictionary,* in the Old Testament the term stood for "covenant loyalty, steadfastness, faithfulness, kindness, goodness and holiness."
   b. In the New Testament, *godly* is linked with righteousness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. It suggests *a way of life.*
   c. From the Bible's use of the term, we may truly say that *godly people* have a deeply reverent fear and respect of God, and are determined to obey Him at all times, and are aware of the need to please Him in their lives.
   d. 2 Corinthians 7:9-11; 11:2; 1 Timothy 1:4; Titus 2:12.
   e. Those who only have the "form of godliness" do not *allow the attitude to shape their lives* (1 Timothy 6:5; 2 Timothy 3:5).
2. . "But know that the Lord has set apart for Himself him who is godly; The Lord will hear when I call to Him" (Psalm 4:3).
   a. God desires *godly offspring* (Malachi 2:15).
   b. God delivers the *godly* out of temptations (2 Peter 2:9).
3. The Bible reveals *certain truths* about the one who is "godly:"
   a. Psalm 12:1— synonymous with *faithful.*
   b. Psalm 32:6—the godly pray to God.
   c. 2 Timothy 3:12—the godly suffer persecution.
   d. Hebrews 5:7 &11:7—godly fear leads to obedience even in the most difficult times.
   e. Hebrews 12:28—it is the only way to serve God acceptably.
4. Godly women adorn themselves "with good works" (1 Timothy 2:9-10).
   a. "Good works" (1 Timothy 5:10) includes child-raising, hospitality, benevolent deeds to the needy, and following *every* good work.
   b. We might also infer that the conduct of godly women *excludes* such troublesome things as being idle, gossiping, busybodies, and wanderers (1 Timothy 5:13).
   c. They avoid foolish and ignorant disputes (2 Timothy 2:23).
5. Godly women purify themselves and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace (2 Timothy 2:22).
6. Godly women, mature in the faith, are reverent, not slanderers, not given to much wine, and teachers of good things (Titus 2:3).
   a. They are *teachers* of the younger women. They teach them to love their husbands, love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their husbands (Titus 2:4-5).
   b. Hence, godly women are *knowledgeable women* – a tremendous asset to the church, the community, and the circle of influence which they have!
      (1) Consider the teaching power of Priscilla, along with her husband (Acts 18:2-3,24-26; see also Romans 16:3-4).
   c. They constitute some of the *strongest members* of the church (Acts 16:13-15, 40).
      (1) Lydia, Euodia, Syntyche, along with others in the Philippian church, constituted Paul's "joy and crown" (Philippians 4:1-3).

(2) Mary, John Mark's mother, provided the house where saints prayed for the release of imprisoned Apostles (Acts 12:12).
(3) "Leading women" gladly heard the Gospel in Thessalonica and obeyed (Acts 17:4).
(4) Prominent Greek women in Berea made up the church (Acts 17:11-12)
(5) Damaris obeyed at Athens (Acts 17:34).
(6) Phoebe was a *servant* of the church in Cenchrea (Romans 16:1).
(7) Mary labored much for Paul and his companions (Romans 13:6).
(8) What of those others in Rome—Tryphena, Persis, Julia, etc. (Romans 16:12,15)?

d. Such women are the *supporters* of the church's elders and deacons (1 Timothy 3:11).

7. Godly women are those who live humble, moral, pure lives. Women whose lives are busily spent raising children for the Lord, as did Lois and Eunice (2 Timothy 1:5), loving and supporting their husbands by their own knowledge of the truth, and their love for it, the Lord, and the Lord's people. Women who are modest in dress and demeanor, carrying themselves with the dignity and grace befitting those whose hearts rest in the Lord. Godly women are those who *seek out* opportunities in the Church—teaching women and children in Bible classes, preparing the building, the communion, and the classrooms. Women who are cognizant of the benevolent needs of other families and who remind us all of the importance of caring for others.
8. Godly women have often *quietly led* their husbands to obey the Gospel by their devoted conduct (1 Peter 3:1-4).
   a. Consider Ethel Smelser, the wife of Herbert Smelser, an elder in the church at Searcy, Arkansas. *She* converted her sons—Herb, Dale, and Jim— and *afterwards* led her husband to the Lord. He became an elder in the church and *greatly honored* her for this.
   b. Others have conducted themselves in a godly manner before their families *alone* and have suffered much persecution for it, never converting their mates! God will bless them for their suffering in this life.
9. Godly women are those who have been a tremendous asset and support of the Lord's church down through the centuries and who have been content in receiving the praise of God because they have too often gone without praise among us!
   a. "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world!" How much more so is this true of the godly women who mightily strengthen the church?!
   b. Beloved, God knows and rewards them. Let us magnify their positions and pray that the Lord will increase their tribe!

III. Conclusion:

A. The Church Always Needs the Godly Woman—

1. Time has not allowed us to speak of Judge Deborah, Abraham's wife, Sarah, and others.
2. But without godly women in the church, the church would not be here today. There have been many great men who have led the church down through the ages, but they have all been *supported* by godly women.
3. So long as the church is on earth, it will be in great need of *godly women* who love the Lord and do everything they can to help Him in the church. Let us praise and honor their works down through the centuries.

B. Are You a Godly Woman?

1. Begin today by obedience to the Gospel.
2. Continue by a committed faith to Jesus and His Church.

—Wayne Goff
Kansas City, MO

Maintaining Our Unique Identity

I. Introduction:

A. The strength of the church has always rested upon it's identity and distinction from denominationalism—

1. Adopting human names, creeds, practices and organizations causes it to lose it unique identity and thus ceases to be the church God would have it to be.
2. It is the responsibility of every faithful Christian to uphold the distinct character of the Lord's Church.
3. With so many cults, sects, and denominations (divisions) in religion, how can we determine which is the New Testament church?

B. The Church to be measured by the word of God—

1. Consider Revelation 11:1 in this connection.
   a. The temple of God (church)
      (1) It's origin (Matthew 16:18)
      (2) It's foundation (Isaiah 28:16; cf. Matthew 16:18; 1 Corinthians 3:10; Ephesians 2:20)
      (3) It's organization (Philippians 1:1; Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:8-13; Ephesians 3:21)
      (4) It's name: As a universal body (Hebrews 12:23) Local congregations (Romans 16:16)
      (5) Laws of admission: Faith (Hebrews 11:6); Repentance (Acts17:30); Confession (Romans 10:10); Baptism (Galatians3:27)
   b. The Altar (Worship)
      (1) Apostles Doctrine (Acts 2:42)
      (2) Prayer (1 Timothy 2:8)
      (3) Kind of music (Ephesians 5:19; Hebrews 13:15)
      (4) Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:23-25)
      (5) Plan of raising money (1 Corinthians 16:1,2; 2 Corinthians 8,9)
   c. The Worshippers ("them that worship therein")
      (1) Name: saint, elect, sons, children, etc.
      (2) "Christian" (Acts 11:26) "called Christians"
      (3) Character: holy priesthood (1 Peter 2:5); Obedient to God (1 John 5:3); kind, patient, long-suffering with one another (Ephesians 4:2)
      (4) Attitude (John 4:23,24)
   d. If right in these things then we cannot be wrong church.

II. Discussion:

A. Dangers that Threaten the Identity—

1. Modernism:
   a. Very common among denominationalists
   b. Devil has enlisted governments, educators and religionists in his cause to destroy fundamentals of Bible (e.g., virgin birth, atonement, inspiration of Bible, etc.).
2. Sectarianism:
   a. Loyalty to man or group
   b. The term "sect" but who or what is sectarian?
3. Calvinism:
   a. Includes all the false tenets of Calvin and the dangers of members adopting any or all of them.
   b. More to Calvinism than just TULIP.
4. Pentecostalism:
   a. Emphasizes the Holy Spirit in miraculous manifestations such as tongues and healing.

b. Attributed to the cold formalism—ho-hum in worship services (cf. Revelation 2).

5. Tendency to lose sight of our distinctive plea:
   a. 1 Peter 4:11
   b. How can we plead for such if we are ignorant of the oracles of God?
6. Tendencies toward inherited membership:
   a. Should bring up children in admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). This requires the impartation of knowledge which produces conviction.
   b. Many are what they are religiously on no other basis than parents were before them.
   c. We follow God, others, or self.
7. Worldliness within the church:
   a. Romans 12—yet, church has accepted the common standard of the world.
8. Tendencies toward Compromise:
   a. Lack of personal courage
   b. Modify truth in order to protect others' feelings in order to be considered popular.
9. Lack of Personal Consecration:
   a. Preaching "canned" sermons
   b. Laziness of Bible class teachers
   c. Unwilling to make necessary sacrifices

B. Some Remedies—

1. Maintain our Identity of Separation (2 Corinthians 6:17)
   a. In Speech: "Speak where Bible speaks" (1 Peter 4:11)
   b. In Doctrine: "Sound doctrine" (Acts 2:42 ; Titus 2:1)
   c. In Work, Worship & Organization
2. Maintain our Identity of Warfare (2 Corinthians10:4,5)
   a. Cases—Paul, Peter, Stephen
   b. "Is there not a cause?"(1 Samuel 17:29)
   c. Rejection of false teachers and teaching —taking a stand (Ephesians 6:10-17)
3. Maintain Our Identity of Sound Preaching
   a. Paul's example (Acts 20:26,27)
   b. Some who think we should not preach that which will drive away those who visit.
      (1) Pulpit not to be used to expose false doctrines of various denominations, popular social practices (immodest dress, social drinking, gambling, unscriptural divorce & remarriage).
   c. Preaching the whole counsel of God not only means to talk about the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22,23) but also condemning the works of the flesh. I'm not so much worried about whether my message is judged positive or negative, so long as it is truth.

III. Conclusion:

A. The Church Of Christ Is a Divine Organization Built by a Divine Pattern Which Must Not Be Corrupted—

1. We are laborers together with God (1 Corinthians 3:9)
2. But let every man take heed how he builds (1 Corinthians 3:10)
3. "If any many defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy" (1 Corinthians 3:17)

B. How Are You Helping to Maintain the Identity of the Church of Christ?

—David Goff
Vilonia, AR

"According to the Scriptures"

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

I. Introduction:

A. The Divine Plan of the Gospel—

1. The apostle Paul, in speaking of the surety of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, commends to our minds the fact that the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ—the foundation facts of the Gospel— was according to God's design and foretold through ancient holy prophets (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).
2. This is exactly what was preached in the First Gospel Sermon on the Day of Pentecost, A.D. 33, Acts 2:22-24.
3. So the same *claim* was made to Jew and Gentile alike.

B. The Appeal of the Gospel—

1. The Gospel appeals to intelligent, sober-minded thinkers as a reasonable, intelligent message from Heaven to Earth, from God to men, as *credible revelation* to the all-important questions: (1) Who am I? (2) Where did I come from? (3) What am I doing here? and (4) Where am I going?
2. What we are dealing with here today is the *internal, biblical argument* that the New Testament **is** a credible revelation from God based on the *infallible proof of* ***prophecy.***
3. This lesson focuses on the *prophecies* concerning Jesus' death, burial and resurrection.
   a. This argument is a valid one. How impressed would intelligent men be today if someone among us could *predict and foretell* 5 years in advance the *facts* surrounding his death – how, why, where, and by whom?
   b. Intelligent, reasonable people among us have called far lesser things than that a "miracle"!

II. Discussion:

A. The Internal Argument of Bible Prophecy—

1. What is "prophecy"?
   a. It involves two complementary meanings: forth-telling and fore-telling.
   b. This lesson deals with the *proof* of *fore-telling.*
   c. Such a prophecy must be more than a good guess. It must have sufficient accuracy as to be capable of verification.
   d. It is *not* like scientific predictions—they deal with *causal* order.
   e. C.P. M'Ilvaine, in *The Evidences of Christianity,* defines prophecy as "a declaration of future events, such as no human wisdom or forecast is sufficient to make; depending on a knowledge of the innumerable contingencies of human affairs, which belongs exclusively to the omniscience of God; so that, from its very nature, prophecy must be divine revelation." [7th edition, 1847, p. 185]
   f. According to Howard Russell, in *A Lawyer's Examination of the Bible:* The Christian religion is the only religion that has dared to rest its claim upon either miracle or prophecy.
      (1) "If the prediction antedates the event; if the event is such as could not be humanly foreseen; if it is unambiguous, if uttered by or in the name of God, then the realization of it in the event crowns it as genuine." [pp. 137-167]
2. Deuteronomy 18:9-22 gives the *stringent* requirements of a true prophet and true prophecy.
3. God, through Isaiah, challenged the false gods to prophesy (Isaiah 41:22-23).

B. Prophecies Concerning Jesus' Death, Burial & Resurrection

1. Jesus would be betrayed by a disciple, Psalm 41:9 (Answered at Matthew 26:14-15)
2. Jesus' betrayal price was clearly stated, Zechariah 11:12 (Fulfilled in Matthew 27:3-7)
3. The betrayal money would be returned, Zechariah 11:13 (Satisfied in Matthew 26:31, 56)
4. The betrayal money would buy the potter's field, Zechariah 11:13 (See: Matthew 27:7)
5. Jesus' disciples would forsake Him, Zechariah 13:7 (Fulfilled in Matthew 26:59-61)
6. During Jesus' trial, false witnesses accuse Him, Psalm 35:11 & Psalm 27:12 (Mark 13:55-61)
7. Jesus would suffer abuse, Isaiah 50:6 (See Matthew 26:67)
8. Jesus would suffer in silence and patience, Isaiah 53:7 (See Matthew 26:63 and 27:12-14)
9. Jesus would be stripped of His clothes, Isaiah 53:5 (Matthew 27:28-29)
10. Jesus would be beaten and spit upon, Psalm 35:15; Isaiah 50:6 (Mark 14:65; John 19:1 record the pain and insults)
11. Jesus would be struck or smitten on His face, Micah 5:1 (Matthew 27:30)
12. Jesus' hands and feet would be pierced, Psalm 22:16 (Fulfilled per Luke 23:33; John 20:24-28)
13. Jesus' suffering would be intense, Psalm 22:14-15 (Luke 22:42-44 records the suffering)
14. Jesus' appearance would be greatly marred, Isaiah 52:14; Isaiah 53:3 (John 19:1-5)
15. Jesus would be given gall and vinegar to drink, Psalm 69:21 (Performed according to Matthew 27:34; John 19:28-29)
16. Jesus would be numbered among the criminals of His day, Isaiah 53:12 (Mark 15:27)
17. Jesus died that He might take away our sins, Isaiah 53:4-6; Daniel 9:26 (Matthew 20:28; 26:28)
18. Jesus became a "curse" and a "reproach" for us by hanging on a tree, Psalm 22:6; Psalm 79:7; Psalm 9:20 (Romans 15:3; Hebrews 13:13; Galatians 3:13)
19. In spite of all this, Jesus made intercession for His murderers, Isaiah 53:12 (Luke 23:34)
20. Men would divide Jesus' garments at His death, Psalm 22:18 (Matthew 27:35; John 19:23-24)
21. None of His bones would be broken, Psalm 34:20 (John 19:33-36, but see *how close* this came to being missed)
22. His body would be pierced, Zechariah 12:10 (John 19:33-37)
23. The crowds who viewed His crucifixion would rebuke Him, Psalm 22:6-8 (Matthew 27:39-44)
24. Both Jew and Gentile would combine to put Jesus to death, Psalm 2:1-4 (Luke 23:12; Acts 2:23; Acts 4:27-28)
25. Darkness in the daytime would signal His crucifixion, Amos 8:9 (Came true, Matthew 27:45)
26. Jesus was cruelly mocked, Psalm 22:7-8; Psalm 35:15-21 (Matthew 27:39-44)
27. Jesus suffered alone—even the Father's Presence was withdrawn, Psalm 22:1; Isaiah 53:1-3 (Read Matthew 27:46)
28. He would be buried with the rich in His death, Isaiah 53:9 (Matthew 27:57-60)
29. His fleshly body did not see corruption, Psalm 16:8-10 (Acts 2:31)
30. He would be raised up from the dead, Psalm 16:8-10; Psalm 30:3 (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:6, 31, 34; Acts 2:22-32; 13:32-37)
31. Jesus would ascend back to Heaven, Psalm 68:18; Psalm 24:7-9 (Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9; Ephesians 4:8-10)

B. These Fulfilled Prophecies Are Sufficient To Convince Any Honest, Truth-Seeker––

1. The mathematical probability of all the prophecies concerning Jesus coming to pass would be "one chance out of a thousand trillion" [Dr. Hawley O. Taylor in *I Believe Because...* by Dr. Batsell Barrett Baxter, p. 195]
2. Your *acceptance* of Jesus as the Son of God and the Bible as the Word of God depend upon certain things:
   a. The weight of the evidence—which is *very heavy!*
   b. The clarity in which the evidence is produced—*clear as crystal!*
   c. The honesty of the examiner—you answer.
   d. The logical ability of the hearer to evaluate what he has heard—you answer.
   e. The background prejudices of the hearer—may you be unencumbered with such.

f. In other words, other than your own personal shortcomings, there is no logical reason to reject the obvious truth—Jesus Christ is the Son of God & the Bible is from Heaven.

3. The follower of Jesus believes that faith in Jesus and His Word is *more rational* than unbelief.

C. The Apostles' Use of Prophecy—

1. On the Day of Pentecost (A.D. 33), Peter and the other apostles *appealed* to inspired prophecy to **prove** their claim that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, in spite of the fact that He had just been crucified (Acts 2:23-36).
   a. Jesus was delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, v. 23a.
      (1) This would be substantiated by the fulfilled prophecies.
      (2) Jesus' death, burial and resurrection was part of a Divine Plan.
   b. Jesus was raised up by God because it was not possible for Him to remain in the grave. He is Deity! V. 24 (See: Ephesians 1:19-20; Romans 1:4)
   c. Evidence seen in David's psalmic prophecy, vv. 25-28.
      (1) Psalm 16:8-11 – Jesus' soul would not remain in Hades (the realm of disembodied spirits), nor would His body see physical deterioration.
      (2) David did not prophecy of himself, evidenced by his death and burial, v. 29.
   d. David was a true prophet from God and spoke the promise God made to him, vv. 30-31 (see Deuteronomy 18:20-22 again).
      (1) A reference also to 2 Samuel 7:12-16
      (2) God raised up Jesus Christ, with numerous witnesses as proof, v. 32.
      (3) If Jesus was raised up, then He was raised up to sit on David's throne in heaven, v.33.
         (a) Fulfillment of Psalm 110:1
   e. ***Logical conclusion?*** V. 36—"Therefore (based upon these *infallible proofs*) let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."
      (1) 3,000 people *believed* and *obeyed* the Gospel on the spot.
2. The apostle Paul makes the same argumentation before the Gentiles, 1 Corinthians 15:1-11.
   a. Jesus died for our sins according to the Scriptures (see the prophecies above).
   b. Jesus was buried and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures (John 2:19-22; Matthew 12:39-40; 20:19).
   c. Jesus was seen alive *after* His crucifixion by Peter, the rest of the apostles, 500 brethren at one time, by James, all the apostles again, and by the apostle Paul himself, vv. 5-8.
3. Today, we *quote* the inspired writers (apostles and prophets) and appeal to you on the same basis to *believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that the New Testament is His final revelation to mankind.* It is logical, reasonable, and Scriptural.

III. Conclusion:

A. If You Accept the Evidence In a Reasonable Way, There is One Conclusion to Reach.

B. If You Reject The Evidence In An Unreasonable Way, You Stand Opposed To God .

1. "'Prepare to meet your God, O Israel!' For behold, He who forms mountains and creates the wind, Who declares to man what his thought *is,* and makes the morning darkness, Who treads the high places of the earth – the Lord God of hosts *is* His name" (Amos 4:12b-13).
2. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:31).

—Wayne Goff
Kansas City, MO

The Death Of Jesus Christ

1 Corinthians 15:3

I. Introduction:

A. The Text—

1. *"...how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures."*
2. Death of Christ an important fundamental of "belief" of the gospel.
3. Cannot be a resurrection unless previously a "death."
4. An argument used to deny the resurrection of Christ.

B. Importance of Christ's' Death

1. Revelation 13:8—It was in the mind of God from the beginning.
2. His death is foreshadowed in all the animal sacrifices made during Patriarchal & Mosaic periods.
3. Fundament theme of importance in the N.T. (R.A. Torrey, in *What The Bible Teaches,* claimed there are 175 direct references to the death of Christ in the New Testament.)
   a. There are 7,959 verses in the N.T. and if Torrey was right, one of every 53 verses refers directly to the death of Jesus.
4. Essential to our salvation (John 3:14,15; cf. Numbers 21:9)
5. Supreme interest in heaven (Luke 9:30,31; Revelation 5:8-12)
6. Increasingly important because of recent controversies of the nature of Jesus.

II. Discussion:

A. False Concepts Of Christ's Death—-

1. An Accident?
   a. cf. Auto accident - no reason, just happened
   b. Jesus lived in advance of His time and taught that which people unwilling to accept. In reaction to His doctrine, they killed him. Just one of those unfortunate incidents that fills pages of history. To many, Jesus just another one of those "starry eyed messiahs' like Jones, Koresh, etc., who met a violent farewell.
   c. Yet, Christ's death was "according to the scriptures" i.e. it was prophesied (e.g. Matthew 16:21; Acts 2:22,23). It was God's plan not an accident.
2. A Martyr or Example?
   a. This view called "Socianism" reveals some truth (1 Peter 2:21), yet there is more to the Lord's death than a sacrificial example., e.g. Isaiah 53:11 where His death satisfies the nature of God.
   b. If Jesus died as a martyr, how explain His unmartyr-like conduct in the garden and on the cross? (Matthew 26:39; 27:46) cf. these two statements with Stephen's dying remarks.
      (1) Did he ask God to spare him? That God had forsaken him? Not characteristic of true martyrdom. Why? Because there is a fundamental difference between their deaths and Christ's death.
      (2) The Lord's words on the lips of a martyr could be interpreted as cowardice, but no follower of Christ would make that charge against the Savior.
3. To Fulfill Law?
   a. Yes, Christ fulfilled the Law's demands, died to receive punishment of Law in our place.
   b. Yet, He also satisfied the justice of God (Isaiah 53:11).

(1) Illustrate stealing money - repay and pay fine. Demands of law met and satisfied. But are we any closer together? Has atonement been produced because I have fulfilled the law's requirements? No. Jesus did fulfill the demands of the law but He did more. He reconciled God and humanity.

4. God Arbitrarily Chose Death for Christ?
   a. If God arbitrarily chose to save us by means of death, why did He not "choose" some other way?
   b. Matthew 26:39, "if it be possible..." It was not possible for Him to avoid death and men to be forgiven of their sins.
5. That Christ Did Not Die:
   a. Evidence that He did die.

B. Death Foretold—

1. Isaiah 53, A man of sorrows the Suffering Servant.
   a. Of all prophecies declaring the death of God's Son Isaiah 53 the center.
   b. An analysis of this chapter reveals not only the fact of His death but also the reason
2. A comparison of Isaiah 28:14-18 with Matthew 16:18

C. Fulfillment—

1. Death by crucifixion - all accounts.
2. Matthew 27:50; Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46; John 19:30 cf. James 2:26 (concrete evidence).

D. Retold—

1. Acts 2:23; Philippians 2:8; Hebrews 2:9
2. 1 Peter 3:18 "...being put to death in the flesh..."

E. Remembered—

1. 1 Corinthians 11:26, "...the Lord's death."
2. Bible replete & abundant affirming & confirming that Jesus died. Why so much emphasis if no death actually occurred?

F. Then Why Did He Die?

1. Take Away The Law (Colossians 2:14-17)
2. Ratify New Covenant (Matthew 26:28 cf. Hebrews 9:18-20)
3. For The Church (Acts 20:28)
4. Propitiation (1 John 2:2; 4:10)
5. Love (John 15:13)

III. Conclusion:

A. We Accept the Testimony of Credible Witnesses that Jesus Died and Therefore Believe (John 20:29)

B. What of Those Who Reject The Facts & Accomplishments of His Death? (John 8:24)

—David Goff
Vilonia, AR

Christ Died For Our Sins

1 Corinthians 15:3

I. INTRODUCTION:

A. The Gospel Of Christ Includes The Fact That Jesus Christ Died—

1. "Gospel," means good news, or good tidings.
2. How is the news that Christ died "good news"?
   a. Normally, death is not good news.
   b. The "good news" is the fact that He died for our sins.

B. Why Was Christ's Death Necessary?

1. May never <u>know</u> all of the **why** God required the death of his Son as an atonement for sin. Fact remains He did.
2. One reason why:
   a. Penalty for sin is death (Genesis 2:17; Ezekiel 18:20).
   b. All have sinned (Romans 3:23), therefore all must die.
   c. God's love intervened (John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 1 John 4:9-10).
   d. Yet, God's law cannot be ignored and God remain just, righteous, sinless.
      (1) Sin required death.
      (2) Sin demands atonement (Romans 3:25-26; Hebrews 9:22; 10:4).
      (3) Jesus is the answer (1 Peter 2:24).
      (4) God can then remain *just* and be the *Justifier* of the believer.
3. Another reason:
   a. Love begets love. "We love him, *because* He *first* loved us" (1 John 4:19).
      (1) If could understand terribleness of sin, might help to understand God's great love. (Ephesians 2:4-5).
      (2) Animal sacrifice insufficient (Hebrews 10:4)
      (3) God not satisfied with these sacrifices (Hebrews 10:5-9).
      (4) Better sacrifice required (Hebrews 9:23).
   b. The *perfect* sacrifice, "a body hast thou prepared me" (Hebrews 10:5, 9).
   c. "By the which will we are sanctified..." (Hebrews 10:10).
   d. Cf. Matthew 20:28, "...his life a ransom for many" (see: Luke 24:26,44-47).
   e. This sacrifice accomplished the will of God, and provided all man needs (Colossians 2:10).
   f. Therefore, He who was God (John 1:1), was made flesh (John 1:14). Why?
      (1) For the suffering of death (Hebrews 2:7-9; 2 Corinthians 8:9).
      (2) A partaker of flesh and blood, like his brethren (Hebrews 2:14).
      (3) To make reconciliation for the sins of the people (Hebrews 2:14, 17, 18).
   g. Christ was God's great gift to the world (John 3:16).

C. The Sacrifice Christ Offered—

1. It was a self-sacrifice.
   a. Jewish priest offered bulls, goats, etc.
   b. But Christ offered himself. He was a willing sacrifice (John 10:17-18).
      (1) Was the outcome of love. Is the nature of love to *give.*
      (2) "Greater love hath no man..." (John 15:13; Romans 5:8).
2. It was a self-sacrifice for sin.

a. His death not mere martyrdom, nor to pacify an angry God. But "to put away sin... " (Hebrews 9:26).
b. 1 Peter 3:18, He "suffered for sins, the just for the unjust."

3. This self-sacrifice for sin is of perpetual efficacy.
   a. Hebrews 10:12, "one sacrifice for sins **forever...**"
   b. Because…
      (1) "He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14).
      (2) For "where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin."

D. His Qualifications As A Sacrifice—

1. His mission to earth:
   a. To seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10, Matthew 1:21).
   b. The promise of Genesis 3:15; 12:3. Fulfilled in Acts 3:25-26; Galatians 3:16ff.
2. His qualifications:
   a. "Made lower than the angels for the suffering of death" (Hebrews 2:9).
   b. Made "perfect through suffering" (Hebrews 2:10).
   c. Therefore, a partaker "of **flesh and blood"** (Hebrews 2:14).
      (1) Purpose: "that he might destroy…the devil."
      (2) And that he might be a "merciful and faithful high priest" (Hebrews 2:17-18).
   d. God prepared for him a body (Hebrews 10:5). V. 12, "But this man…"
      (1) This body prepared for suffering and death.
      (2) So, he suffered, was tempted, and can be touch with the feeling of our infirmities (Hebrews 4:15).
      (3) "In the days of his flesh" (Hebrews 5:7). [See: John 1:14; 2 John 7].
   e. Was made perfect through obedient suffering. Hebrews 5:8-9.
      (1) He was "obedient unto death" (Philippians 2:8).
      (2) Having assumed human nature he was capable of suffering and death.
      (3) Thereby was made perfect (in his relationship to God and man as Savior, Mediator, High Priest).
3. A perfect man was needed, but he must be a man (Hebrews 2:11).
   a. He made a perfect atonement for sin (Hebrews 10:14).
   b. He was perfectly qualified to sympathize (Hebrews 4:14-16).
   c. He became a perfect example (1 Peter 2:21-23).
   d. He was perfect in his triumph & glory.
      (1) Therefore, he was highly exalted (Philippians 2:9).
      (2) He was crowned (Hebrews 2:9; 1:8).
      (3) Will reign to the end (1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

E. The Great End Of His Sufferings And Death—

1. He became a great Savior.
   a. He became the author and finisher of our salvation (Hebrews 5:8-9).
   b. He is the great cause of our salvation (John 3:16; Matthew 20:28).
   c. He is the only Savior (Acts 4:12).
   d. He saves all who obey him (Hebrews 5:9; 7:25).
2. Some of the many titles given him because of his suffering and death:
   a. **Lamb:** A sacrifice for our sins. John 1:29; 1 Pet. 2:24; Romans 4:25.
   b. **Deliverer:** (For the law-breaker).
      (1) Man unable to escape penalty. Can't hide.
      (2) Blood of animals insufficient (Hebrews 10:4)
   c. **Ransom:** (Price paid to redeem one from bondage).
      (1) Sinner had nothing with which to purchase his redemption (cf. Micah 6:7-8; Romans 5:6).
      (2) But Jesus could and did purchase our freedom for us (Acts 20:28; Romans 6:18).
   d. **Redeemer:** (He is the price paid & the one who paid the price).

(1) Galatians 3:21, "redeemed us from the curse of the law." And from sin, ignorance, superstition, etc.
(2) Forgiveness through his blood (Ephesians 1:7).

e. **Mediator:** (1 Timothy 2:4-5; See also 2 Corinthians 5:19-20; Hebrews 7:25).
f. **Shepherd:** (John 10:14-15; 1 Peter 2:25).
g. **Light:** (John 1:4; cf. John 3:19).

III. Conclusion:

A. Truly, the Death of Jesus Is Good News!

1. His death has made us free from sin and condemnation.
2. By it we learn to love God and one another.
3. Through it we are confident toward God today and always.

B. Will You Trust in the Death of Christ?

—A.W. Goff
Russellville, AR

"And That He Was Buried"

1 Corinthians15:4

I. Introduction:

A. Hoax or History?

1. The resurrection of Jesus was either the greatest hoax of history or the greatest event ever. How can we, living two thousand years later know whether such an event took place.
2. Answer found in the credible testimony of witnesses of who saw Him crucified and His body placed in the tomb.
3. Facts are hard things to deal with for those who would deny these fundamental, yet important events.
   (a) Having reliable evidence concerning the crucifixion, burial, entombment, sealing and guarding of Christ's tomb make it very difficult for critics to defend their position that Christ did not rise from the dead.
4. Burial of Christ a mater of prophecy (Isaiah 53:9) "And he made his grave..."
   (a) Importance of fulfilled prophecy.
5. No need to prove He was buried to the believer. The resurrection of Christ the hope that urges us on. But what about the unbeliever, critic, skeptic?

B. We Offer the Proof for All to Consider—

1. We will consider the historical facts concerning Jesus' burial as recorded by eyewitnesses.
2. We will reply to every popular theory used to explain away these facts.
3. We are confident that the facts will speak for themselves and convince all honest seekers that Jesus was truly "three day and three nights" in the heart of the earth.

II. Discussion:

A. The Facts—

1. Harmony of the Gospels (Matthew 27:57-60; Mark 15:43-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:38-42)
2. The Witnesses:
   a. Numerous people witnessed the death of Christ
   b. Some even saw the place where they buried him
      (1) Joseph of Arimathaea
      (2) Nicodemus
      (3) women
3. Details:
   a. Jewish burials
   b. Solid Rock Tomb
   c. Body preparation
   d. The "great stone"
   e. Roman security guard
   f. The Roman seal (it's purpose)

B. The Theories—

1. Unknown Tomb
   a. Jesus body dumped in common pit for executed criminals instead of private tomb.
   b. Does not agree with recorded facts
2. Wrong Tomb

a. Women went to the wrong tomb by mistake. A young man tried to show them the right tomb, but in their excitement and fear, they ran off and told the other disciples that Jesus was raised from the dead.
b. Does not agree with record (Matthew 27:61; Mark 15:47 show the women saw where He was buried). Did they forget so soon? What about Peter and John, Jews & Romans? Did they also go to wrong tomb? That no one remembered absurd!

3. Only A Legend
   a. Gradually arose over they years.
   b. Legends take time to develop - what about 500 witnesses? (1 Corinthians15:6) Too early!
4. Spiritual Resurrection
   a. Christ's body still in the grave and the resurrection of body only spiritual.
   b. cf. Luke 24:39; John21; Matthew 28:9
   c. Also ignores empty tomb, grave clothes and bribing the guards to say body was stolen.
5. Hallucination
   a. Disciples wanting to see Jesus again so badly they hallucinated
   b. All disciples hallucinate?
      (1) Luke 24:13ff, 2 men that talked with Jesus also hallucinate?
      (2) Luke 24:41-43, disciples eat with a hallucination?
      (3) 1 Corinthians 15: 6, more than 500 witnesses only dream they saw Him?
   c. Solve the problem, produce the body of Jesus.
6. Body Stolen By Disciples
   a. Most popular theory
   b. The record (Matthew 27:62-66)
   c. Did the authorities stead the body of Jesus? If so, why not produce body when claim of resurrection began?
7. Swoon Theory
   a. That Jesus only passed out and did not actually die.
   b. Must disprove all events leading up to His death and death itself.
   c. Easier to believe in a resurrection!
8. Passover Plot
   a. That Jesus planned to fake His own death - plan failed - Joseph hid Jesus' body
   b. Again, must ignore all facts related.

C. Important Circumstantial Evidence––

1. The Church
   a. The origin and success of the early church must be explained. It's origin can be traced to Jerusalem in 33 A.D. It spread so quickly throughout the Roman empire that Paul could say that that the gospel (death, burial & resurrection) "was preached to every creature which is under heaven." (Colossians 1:23) How could the church have begun and prospered in the very city where Jesus was crucified and buried if there was no resurrection?
   b. Cf. Acts 2:41; 4:4; 5:14; 6:7 etc.
2. Sunday Worship
   a. What caused many of the Jews of the first century to change their day of worship from the 7th day to the 1st day of the week?
   b. If that tomb was not empty, why attach any significance to that day?
3. The Lord's Supper
   a. A memorial to the death of Jesus.
   b. It's meaning (1 Corinthians11:26)
4. Baptism
   a. Romans 6:1-11; Colossians 2:12
   b. How did this meaning ever get attached to baptism if no resurrection?

5. Changed Lives
   a. 1 Peter 1:3, "hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."
   b. Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ."

III. Conclusion:

A. If possible, someone would prove that Christ neither died, was buried and rose again.

1. The evidence provided "according to the scriptures" is sufficient for those whose faith rests upon testimonies of inspired writers and testimony that would hold up in any court of unbiased and unprejudiced judges and jurors.
2. You can know with certainty that Christ was crucified, buried and resurrected.

B. The question now is not whether true or untrue, but whether or not you believe!

1. 1 Corinthians 15:19
2. If you believe it, will you obey Him that descended into the grave and ascended into heaven that you might have eternal life?

—David Goff
Vilonia, AR

The Resurrection Of The Dead

1 Corinthians 15:35

I. Introduction:

A. "How Are The Dead Raised Up?"

1. Many talk of the resurrection of the dead who do not really believe it.
2. This lesson is designed to show that there will be a resurrection of the body, or there will be no resurrection at all.

B. The Resurrection of Jesus the Only Resurrection We Know Anything About.

1. What does the Bible say about His resurrection?
2. Whatever is true of His resurrection will be true of our own.

II. Discussion:

A. "Body Fashioned Anew" (Philippians 3:21)—

1. Note the stated facts of this verse.
   a. The present body is "our vile body," ("the body of low estate," *Thayer*).
   b. This body is to be "changed," not exchanged for another.
   c. This "vile body" is to be "fashioned…conformed" to His glorious body.
2. What of His <u>*glorious*</u> body?
   a. His earthly body was not in its *glorified* state.
      (1) John 1:1,14, the Word was God, and was "made flesh" (human nature).
      (2) Hebrews 10:5, "…a body hast thou prepared me"
      (3) "Like unto His brethren" (Hebrews 2:16-17; 4:15; Philippians 2:6-8).
   b. Not yet glorified (John 7:39)
      (1) He entered into His glory after His resurrection (Luke 24:26, "Ought not Jesus to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?")
      (2) Then He "manifested" to the apostles "eternal life" (1 John 1:1-2).
         (a) When did John *see* eternal life but in the resurrected Lord?
         (b) Now He was "alive forever more" (Revelation 1:18; Romans 6:9-10).
         (c) He appeared unto Cephas, the twelve, to Saul, and exhibited eternal life (1 Corinthians 15:4-9).
      (3) "Life" consists of a united body and spirit (cf. James 2:26; Genesis 2:7).

B. "The Body Of His Glory (John 2:19-21)—

1. Was He clothed with the same body after His resurrection?
   a. Matthew 12:40, "So shall the Son of man be in the heart of the earth…"
      (1) What part of Jesus was in the "heart of the earth," grave?
      (2) John 2:19-21, "Destroy this temple…in three days I will raise it up…but He spake of the *temple of his body."*
      (3) Another body would not have been a resurrection, but a creation.
      (4) If he appeared unto the disciples in a new body, what would cause them to remember His promise to raise the fallen temple (v. 22)?
   b. Luke 24:39, "Behold my hands and my feet."
      (1) Then He said, "A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have."
      (2) Luke 24:43, "He did eat before them."

(3) So, He convinced them that He was the "same Jesus" (Acts 2:36) by calling attention to His physical body.

2. Jesus appeared to His Disciples in the same body, the only body he ever possessed. The body that was crucified and buried is the body that came forth from the grave.

C. A Natural And a Spiritual Body (1 Corinthians 15:44)—

1. "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body" (1 Corinthians 15:44).
   a. Jesus is our only example of a spiritual body.
   b. A *spiritual* body is one suited for heavenly environment.
   c. It is an *immortal* body, or deathless.
2. Jesus' body was *changed* from natural to spiritual by the resurrection.

D. Was Jesus Raised?

1. Let's study Acts 2:23-36 and note the facts:
   a. Jesus was taken and slain (v. 23).
   b. God "loosed the pains of death" (v. 24).
      (1) Did that not also include His body?
   c. "My *flesh* shall rest in hope" (v. 26).
   d. Not "leave my *soul* in hell" (Hades), the abode of departed spirits.
   e. Nor, "suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (v. 27).
   f. God had sworn that "of the fruit of his (David's) loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his (David's) throne" (v. 30, see: 2 Samuel 7:12ff.).
   g. He was speaking of Christ: "His flesh did not see corruption" (v. 31).
   h. "This Jesus hath God raised up" (v. 32). What Jesus?
      (1) The "same Jesus whom ye have crucified" (v. 36).
      (2) Not surprised at Revelation 5:6, "beheld a lamb as it had been slain"
      (3) Compare to the arguments of the anti-Christs in 2 John 7.

E. We Shall Be Like Him (1 John 3:2)—

1. 1 John 3:2, "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."
   a. There are many things unclear about the spiritual, immortal body, but we shall be like Him, Christ.
   b. But first must become like Him in this life.
      (1) Some object that this is "materialism."
      (2) But all of God's dealings with man have been through the material realm.
         (a) Created man with a material body housing a living spirit.
         (b) We can have no proper conception of things outside the material realm.
   c. See: Romans 8:23, "waiting for the…redemption of the body."
      (1) Believers are adopted into the family through faith and obedience.
      (2) In this way the inner man feels the effects of the adoption (cf. Galatians 4:4-5).
      (3) But redemption is not confined to the inner man alone.
         (a) God has a high regard for the body also.
         (b) In fact, victory over Satan includes a resurrection of the body.
         (c) 1 Corinthians 6:13, "The body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body."
         (d) The inner man becomes like Him by regeneration and righteous living in this world; the body by death and the resurrection (1 John 3:2; Philippians 3:21).
2. Does God Care For Our Bodies?
   a. See: 1 Corinthians 6:13-20, "your bodies are members of Christ"
   b. 1 Thessalonians 5:23, "your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless"
   c. Matthew 10:28, "destroy both soul and body."
      (1) God is as much interested in the body as He is the soul. He is the maker of both, and man is not man without both.
      (2) Not in conflict with Ecclesiastes 12:7.

F. How Are The Dead Raised Up (1 Corinthians 15:35)?

1. 1 Corinthians 15:35, "and with what body do they come?"
   a. Both the living and the dead will undergo the same change, but in different manners.
   b. 1 Corinthians 15 does not teach a rejection of the body.
      (1) If the old body is discarded, how will "this mortal put on immorality?" (v. 53).
      (2) Vs 42 – 44, "So also is the resurrection of the dead"
      (3) Note: The same <u>it</u> that is sown is the same <u>it</u> that is raised.
2. Natural Body and a Spiritual Body: 1 Corinthians 15:44.
   a. A spiritual body is one raised and made suitable for heaven through the change pictured in Philippians 3:21.
   b. A "spiritual body" is not a "spirit" or ghost (see: Luke 24:39).
   c. "Flesh and blood cannot <u>inherit</u> the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 15:50).
      (1) Having been flesh & blood does not insure entrance into the Kingdom any more than corruption insures incorruption.
      (2) You "inherit the Kingdom" by being born anew (John 3:3-5).
      (3) Then our bodies must be changed (Philippians 3:21) to be like Him (1 John 3:2).
      (4) Paul outlines how we are changed into the incorruptible.
         (a) Through the valley of death, and by the instant change (1 Corinthians 15:51-52).
         (b) Then we will be "clothed upon with our house from heaven" that mortality might be swallowed up of life" (2 Corinthians 5:3-4).
         (c) Then "will be brought to pass the saying" of Isaiah 25:8.

III. Conclusion:

A. Are You Prepared For The Great Event?

B. Remember, We Reap As We Sow:

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting"(Galatians 6:7,8).

—A.W. Goff
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"And That He Was Seen"

1 Corinthians 15:4-8

I. Introduction:

A. The Text—

1. "...and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, **and that He was seen** by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that **He was seen** by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After **that He was seen** by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all **He was seen** by me also, as by one born out of due time." (1 Corinthians 15:4-8)
2. This lesson impresses upon us the *importance* of the *eyewitnesses* to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. ***If*** Christ was raised from the dead, ***then*** He would be seen by credible witnesses and our faith is validated.

B. Is this so? Let us see...

1. Paul gives us a *chronological* listing of *some* of the appearances of Jesus.
2. Denoted by the use of the terms "then" (Gk., *eita*) and "after that" (Gk., *epeita*) in vv. 5-6.

II. Discussion:

A. The Witnesses:

1. The resurrected Jesus was seen by Cephas (Peter), Luke 24:34.
   a. The appearances to the women are omitted, Matthew 28:9f; Mk. 16:9f; Luke 24:10f; John 20:14; Acts 1:14.
   b. Peter *testified* to what he saw (Acts 2:22-32; 3:15; 4:10; 1 Pet. 1:3).
2. Jesus was seen by "the twelve" (*office* of the apostles), John 20:19, 26; Luke 24:34-43.
   a. Judas was dead; Thomas was absent; hence "the twelve" is a term of office.
   b. A requirement to the apostleship was to see the resurrected Jesus (Acts 1:22; 2:23; 3:15; etc).
      (1) See also Acts 10:39-41.
3. Jesus was seen by over 500 brethren at one time (1 Corinthians 15:6.)
   a. We are not sure if this was in Jerusalem, Galilee, or elsewhere.
   b. Possibly on the Galilean mountain (Matthew 28:16-17, cf. Matthew 28:7, 10)
   c. Most of these brethren *were alive* at the time 1 Corinthians were written! (55/56 A.D.)
      (1) The resurrection of Jesus was not a thing "done in a corner" (Acts 26:26).
   d. "At once" = at one time, at the same time.
4. James, the Lord's brother, saw Jesus risen (1 Corinthians 15:7).
   a. No mention of this appearance is in the Gospel records.
   b. This James was prominent in the early church (Galatians 2:9; Acts 15:13; Acts 21:18).
   c. Prior to the resurrection, Jesus' brothers did not believe (John 7:5; Mark 3:20-21).
   d. After the resurrection and establishment of the church, James is an important figure in the church at Jerusalem (Galatians 1:19; 2:9).
5. Jesus was seen by *all* the Apostles (Acts 1:3; Luke 24:50).
   a. Thomas was present.
      (1) Not likely the one in John 20:24-29 because of the chain of events.
   b. This would be His last appearance on earth, after which He was taken up into heaven.

6. Jesus was seen by the apostle Paul, *as of one born out of due time* (1 Corinthians 15:8; Acts 9:5).
   a. Saul of Tarsus saw Jesus on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:5; 22:14; 26:16).
   b. "As of one born out of due time" is *literally* "as to the abortive-born."
      (1) Referring to a child born at the improper time, not during the natural course.
   c. Paul always insisted on the validity of his apostleship (Galatians 1:11).

B. This Is an Impressive List of Eyewitnesses to the Resurrected Jesus. Their Testimony Would Stand Up in a Court of Law in America Today! What Logical Conclusion?

1. Christianity is *not* founded upon human reason.
2. Christianity is *not* founded upon human imagination – neither ingenious hypothesis nor poetic myth.
3. Christianity is founded upon facts!
   a. These facts are *personal* – relating to the history of Jesus Christ.
      (1) "Seen" (1 Corinthians 15:5, from Greek verb *oraō,* implying an objective appearing).
   b. These facts are *few* – Jesus died, was buried, and rose again. The resurrection of Christ involves them all, and Paul uses the term this way in the chapter.
   c. These facts are *well-attested* – the point of this lesson.

C. Jesus Trained His Apostles to Be Witnesses While on Earth, and then Perfectly Equipped Them to Get the Facts Correct.

1. Jesus *appealed to the Old Testament Scriptures* as proof of the facts (Luke 24:44-49).
   a. He taught these things to the apostles while on the earth (v. 44).
      (1) The prophecies written in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms.
   b. Jesus opened their understanding (v. 45).
   c. The death, burial and resurrection led to repentance and remission of sins for all men (v. 47).
   d. They were witnesses of these things (v. 48).
2. The Holy Spirit was given to them to guide them into all truth, and to perfect their memory of the important events and facts (John 14:26; 15:26-27; 16:13; Acts 1:8).

D. The Apostles Carried Out Their Mission to the Whole World, Repeatedly Testifying to the Resurrected Jesus (Acts 2:32; 3:15; 4:33; 5:32; 10:39-41; 13:29-31; 22:15).

1. 3,000 souls believed and obeyed the Gospel on Pentecost (Acts 2).
2. The number of men increased to 5,000 shortly thereafter (Acts 4:4).
3. The church became a "multitude… of both men and women" (Acts 4:32-33 & 5:14).
4. The message was preached to Jew *and* Gentile (Acts 10:39-41).
5. The apostle Paul was chosen by Christ to be His witness (Acts 22:15; 23:11; 26:16-18; 26:22-23).
6. The apostle Paul argued that it would be an *incredible* thing for all the apostles to be false witnesses (1 Corinthians 15:15).

E. The Results:

1. J.W. McGarvey wrote over a century ago: "By the leading skeptics it is now admitted, first, that Jesus actually died and was buried; second, it is admitted that on or before the third morning His body disappeared from the tomb; third, that the disciples came to believe firmly that He arose from the dead. The exact issue has reference to the last two facts, and may be stated by the two questions: Did the body disappear by a resurrection, or in some other way? And did the belief of the disciples originate from the fact of the resurrection or from some other cause?" (*Evidences of Christianity,* Part 3, pp. 117-118).
2. McGarvey went on to argue for these witnesses: "The force of human testimony depends on three things: first, the honesty of the witnesses; second, their competency; and third, their number" (*ibid.*, p. 146).
   a. **Honesty.** They speak in unimpassioned tones, with candor to their own discredit (relating events that might discredit them - Peter's denial [Matthew 26:69-75], the apostles' ambition [Matthew 20:20-28]), and they *never* recanted their story under persecution and death.

(1) Motives? False testimony is led by *fear, greed, or ambition.*
(2) The apostles are above all of these.

b. **Competency.** Consider their opportunities to obtain the information, and the mental capacity to observe and remember the facts.
(1) The apostles had multitudes of competent opportunities (Acts 1:21-22).
(2) Mentally competent: Matthew was a tax collector, well-versed in Hebrew law, Roman law, and human nature. Peter was not gullible. John shows an aptitude for details (see: Mark 9:30-32; Luke 24:25).
(3) Some skeptics attribute the resurrection to the *enthusiasm* of His followers – a vision, a dream, a ghostly appearance.
(a) But Jesus was seen not by one person but many; not only separately but together; not only by night but also by day; not just at a distance but near; not just one time but many; they not only saw but touched Him, conversed with Him, ate with Him, and examined Him (1 John 1:1-3).
(4) Others attribute Jesus' resurrection to His body being stolen away.
(a) Consider that great improbability – the disciples' fears for their own safety, not expecting such to succeed, the difficulty of true success in lieu of the Roman soldiers and Jewish leaders, and the terrible consequences of detection and failure - make this *incredible!*

c. **Number.** Two or three are all that are necessary in a court of law – more than this duplicates the *proof.* More than enough witnesses testified.

F. The Evidence of the Changed Disciples—

1. Though Jesus repeatedly told them He would go to Jerusalem, die, and be raised again the third day, they did not believe Him because of their *prejudicial* view of an earthly kingdom (Mark 8:31-33; 9:31-32; 10:32-34; John 2:19).
2. After the resurrection, they still did not comprehend Jesus' words, and were slow to believe the truth, Matthew 28:17; Mark 16:7-8,10-14; Luke 24:6-12,36-43).
3. Most had given up hope that Jesus was the Christ (Luke 24:19-21a).
4. Peter had returned to his old occupation (John 21:3ff).
5. However, on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) and thereafter, a *tremendous change* in attitude, demeanor, message and conduct occurs (Acts 2:14, 22-24,36).
   a. See also Acts 3:13-15; 4:8-13; 5:28-32; etc.
   b. How can we *explain* this change? The apostles attributed it to the fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

G. The Evidence of the Enemies—

1. So *irrefutable* was the resurrection of Jesus Christ that His enemies had to bribe Roman soldiers to lie about the matter! Matthew 28:11-15
2. The Lord's church began in Jerusalem at the *feet of Jesus' enemies* (Acts 2). Can you imagine the *devastation* to the Cause of Christ if His enemies *could have* produced His body? But read Acts 4:17-20.
   a. Christianity *began* in the presence of those who had the best opportunity to *discredit* it!

III. Conclusion:

A. It Is More Reasonable to Believe that Jesus Christ Rose from the Dead, Based on the Credibility of the Eyewitnesses, Than not to Believe (1 Corinthians 15:15).

1. Canon Westcott, scholar at Cambridge: "Indeed, taking all the evidence together, it is not too much to say that there is no historic incident better or more variously supported than the Resurrection of Christ. Nothing but the antecedent assumption that it must be false could have suggested the idea of deficiency in the proof of it." [taken from *Paul Little's Why & What Book*, p. 67]
2. Are you willing to stake your *soul's destiny* on the belief that Jesus *did not rise from the dead?*

B. Doubting Thomas, as He Has Come to Be Known, Refused to Believe Unless He Could See the Empirical Evidence as a Scientist (John 20:24-25).

1. Jesus *gave* Him such evidence because he was to be a *witness* of what he had seen and heard as an apostle (John 20:26-27).
2. Thomas' faith was based on *empirical evidence,* and he concluded with "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28).
3. Jesus pronounced a beatitude of blessing on those who would believe the *evidence* of *eyewitnesses* (John 20:29). That, my friends, is you and me!

C. "Lord, I believe. Please help my unbelief!"

– by Wayne Goff
Kansas City, MO

Establishing A Valid Faith

Romans10:17

I. Introduction:

A. Faith Is Of Supreme Importance:

1. The just live by it (Romans 1:17).
2. Without it one cannot please God (Hebrews 11:6).
3. More precious than gold (1 Peter 1:7).

B. These Things, of Course, Are True Only of a Valid Faith—

1. By a "valid faith" I mean one that can be justified and defended.
2. It is possible for one to have believed in vain:
   a) 1 Corinthians 15:1,2
   b) May honestly and sincerely believe something but be mistaken in it
   c) May believe out of fantasy or for personal advantage
   d) May believe something merely because others have believed it (this is how superstitions are handed down from one generation to another.
3. Since it is possible for one to believe and yet his faith not be valid, we should be concerned about learning the things that will make a valid faith so we can make ours such.

C. Five Basic Requirements in Order to Establish a Valid Faith:

1. Must Be Based On Revelation
2. Must Be Placed In The Right Person
3. Must Purify The Heart
4. Must Be Accompanied By The Right Acts Of Obedience
5. Must Be Steadfast Or Endure

II. Discussion:

A. Must Be Based On Revelation—

1. Romans 10:17, "hearing the word of God" (see context: 10:13-16).
   a. Revelation is necessary in order to perform an act by faith (cf. Hebrews 11:4).
   b. Faith stands on revelation and revelation is infallible, therefore, faith is infallible when stands only on the word of God.
   c. Philosophy based on human reasoning is as fallible as mind that gave it origin.
   d. Many think they may choose what they may do in religion and justify it by "faith."
2. Some who think that the important thing in life is to "believe in something"
   a. It is not *believing* that saves, but *what* you believe. Therefore, faith in order to be valid must be based upon correct testimony.
   b. The idea that it doesn't matter what you believe, just so you believe something is false because it:
      (1) Makes the validity of faith depend merely upon the act of believing in which case no faith could be in vain.
      (2) Yet, Paul's lesson to the Corinthians when some denied the resurrection from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:12-17) shows that if there is no resurrection, then Christ was not raised and if this is the case, then it follows that:
         (a) His preaching was false (13)
         (b) If false, their faith was vain for they had believed it (14)

(c) If their faith were vain, they were still in their sins, vain faith cannot save (17)
(3) Such a view places as much virtue in error as in truth—yet, the Bible says that those who believe a lie will be damned (2 Thessalonians 2:11,12).
(4) Overlooks the fact that one can honestly and sincerely believe something but be mistaken.

3. A valid faith has its foundation in God's word (John 20:31) which is truth (John 17:17)

B. Must Be Placed In The Right Person—

1. That person is Christ and one must believe that He is the Son of God.
   a. Some who say Christ never claimed to be "the" Son of God but only "a" son of God.
   b. Yet, Jesus taught men:
      (1) To believe in Him as they had believed in the Father (John 14:1)
      (2) That He is the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6)
      (3) That if they did not believe that He is the Son of God they would die in their sins (John 8:24).
   c. Peter was blessed by the Lord for confessing that "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16,17).
   d. This is the substance of apostolic preaching (Acts 8:5, 35; 9:20; 1 Corinthians 2:2, etc.)
2. It is difficult to understand how that one can place his faith in Christ as the Son of God and not believe they things which He taught, yet there are some who do this.
   a. They claim to believe that Christ is the Son of God and to trust Him as Savior yet deny some of the things which He said:
      (1) Baptism's connection with salvation (Mark 16:16).
      (2) One church (Matthew16:18; Ephesians 1:22,23; 4:4).
3. To be valid, faith must be placed in the right person and must honor and respect what that person says (Luke 6:46).

C. Must Purify The Heart—

1. What is the heart and how does God purify it? (Acts 15:9)
   a. Intellect - Will - Emotions
   b. Through obeying the truth (1 Peter 1:22)
2. The connection: A faith that leads one to obey.

D. Must Be Accompanied By The Right Acts Of Obedience—

1. Faith that stands alone is indefensible.
   a. Three times James says that such is dead (James 2:17,20,26).
   b. A valid faith is one that is accompanied by works.
2. A valid faith is one that works by love (Galatians 5:6).
   a. However, just any kind of works will not suffice.
   b. Jesus said that in the day of judgment some would claim to have prophesied, cast out devils and done many wonderful works in His name, but that He would say, "I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:22,23).
   c. Iniquity is from "anomia" meaning that which is without law or divine authority.
   d. A valid faith is one that is accompanied by works that have been authorized by the Lord (Colossians 3:17).
3. Many today, like those of Matthew 7:22,23, are working but their works will not be accepted because they are not the things the Lord has commanded.

E. Must Be Steadfast Or Endure—

1. The faith that is valid is one that does not fail or draw back in time of adversity.
   a. Paul points out that some of the Israelites believed and started to the land of promise but they failed to enter into it because along the way their faith failed (Hebrews 4:1-11).
   b. He urges his readers to be careful lest they fall after the same example of unbelief.
2. Again Paul urges his readers not to cast away their confidence which he says has great recompense of reward, not to draw back to perdition but to develop patience and believe to the

saving of the soul, for the promise, he says, is received after we have done the will of God (Hebrews 10:35-39).

a. A valid faith will move its possessor to be steadfast and always abounding in the work of the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58).
b. Example: Paul (2 Timothy 4:7,8).

III. Conclusion:

A. Faith that is valid is more precious than gold that has been refined in fire (1 Peter 1:7) for man cannot be saved by gold but he can by the kind of faith that comes by hearing and hearing the word of God.

B. Study carefully the characteristics of a valid faith and check yours to see if it meets them.

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Without Faith It Is Impossible

Hebrews 11:6

I. Introduction:

A. Why Is Faith Essential?

1. Because God made it so according to our text (Hebrews 11:6).
2. God created all things according to his own *purpose* (Ephesians 1:11).
3. All things were created by him and for him (see: Genesis 1:1; John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16).
4. Therefore, he has the right to legislate according to "his own purpose."

B. What Must Man Believe?

1. Fundamentally, two things:
   a. That "God is," the being or existence of Deity.
   b. That He rewards those who seek Him.
3. This faith indispensable in every dispensation.
4. Cannot believe in the Son and not believe in God, the Father (Matthew 10:32).

II. Discussion:

A. The Beginning Point—

1. A universal principle belonging to human nature, the power to believe.
   a. Faith in the one true God was lost in the rubbish of idolatry (Romans 1:21ff.)
   b. This condition suffered for many years (Acts 14:16-17).
2. The Gospel founded on true faith, and distinguished for its excellent morals, and supreme motives, did in a few years for society, what the wisdom of the world had failed to do (see: 1 Corinthians 1:21-31).
3. Hence, He makes faith so important that it is impossible to please God without it (cf., Mark 16:15-16).

B. Substitutions For Faith—

1. Evil to substitute any thing in the room of faith.
   a. Jews were "broken off because of unbelief. Romans 11:20.
      (1) It is "*faith*" that eminently distinguishes the Gospel from the Law.
      (2) The whole institution of "Christianity" is styled, "*the Faith*" (see: Acts 6:7; Galatians 1:23; Jude 3).
      (3) Circumcision, observing the law, avails nothing (Galatians 2:21; 5:6).
   b. "Substitution" is one of the greatest errors in modern religion.
2. Examples of substitution in modern religion:
   a. Sprinkling children:
      (1) The moment a child is sprinkled "in the name of Christ," that instant the principle of Christianity is changed from ***faith*** to ***flesh***.
      (2) The member added, not on account of remission of sins, or by the influence of faith, hope, love, etc.
      (3) Then "faith" is instantly transformed into law.
   b. Direct Operation of the Spirit in Conversion:
      (1) Contradicts a revealed truth that ***faith*** comes hearing (Romans 10:8,17).
      (2) Breaks down the whole evangelical testimony concerning the Son of God (Mark 16:15-16; 1 Corinthians 1:21; Galatians 3:2).

c. "Feelings" substituted for "Faith" is also a modern error.
   (1) Such not recognized in Scriptures. [Cf. Cases of conversion].
   (2) The result of what is called "an experience."
   (3) Must remember, "without faith it is impossible to please God."
d. Repentance Before Faith Is Another Absurd Doctrine.
   (1) Repentance toward God without a knowledge of Him transcends the utmost stretch of the imagination of man.
   (2) But "without faith it is impossible to please God" even in repentance.
   (3) Therefore, faith must go before repentance, baptism, remission of sins. It is in fact the first of all.
e. So, infant sprinkling, direct operation of the Spirit, feelings and repentance before faith must be thrown out and the truth of Mark 16:15-16 preached.

C. The Gospel And Faith—

1. The Gospel "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that *believeth.*"
2. How marvelously abused has been this great truth!
   a. From the most potent organ of reformation among mankind, it has, in the hands of its *professed* friends, become the most powerless and inefficient good that can be named.
   b. The "Gospel" preached by these friends leaves the hearers precisely where it found them—in sin. Because they have deranged, inverted, maimed, confounded the truth.
3. Idolatry was invented to supply the deficiency of a state of unbelief, and to bring man back to a natural & sensible relation with their god.
   a. See Romans 1:21-25 for the results of unbelief.
   b. God: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3).
   c. Man: "Make us gods to go before us" (Exodus 32:1; Acts 7:40).
      (1) An example: Hebrews 3:19, "they could not enter in because of unbelief."
      (2) Same fate to all who will not believe the Gospel (Mark 16:16).

D. The Power To Believe—

1. The wisdom of God is seen in selecting this principle because it is incident to all mankind.
   a. The rich & poor, prince & peasant, king & beggar are all on an equal level (Galatians 3:26-29).
   b. A proud characteristic of the Gospel is that it is equally adapted to men of all ranks, professions, and talents (Mark 16:15; Colossians 1:23).
2. A sound argument is found in this very fact.
   a. A principle of universal nature.
   b. A more limited & partial principle would not apply to all men.

E. Faith And The Law—

1. Jews in general did not perceive the purpose of the law (cf. Romans 9:1-5).
   a. "Wherefore then serveth the law?" (Galatians 3:19ff).
2. "Ye are...children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:26).
   a. When this faith influences the affections or, changes the heart, results in repentance (change of will), leads to change in conduct (obedience); and leads to baptism (a change of relationship).
   b. This change of state leads to a change of feelings, innocence replaces guilt; joy replaces misery & doubt (cf. Acts 8:39).

F. Faith Is Indispensable—

1. The facts of the Gospel are indispensable (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4).
   a. Revelation is the only way man could become acquainted with this (see: 1 Corinthians 2:10; Galatians 1:12; Ephesians 3:3).
   b. By faith in this revelation we understand the riches of Christ.
   c. Thus, faith is primary in respect to understanding (Romans 10:8,14ff).
2. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3).

a. The heart is brought to repentance only with the facts in the case.
b. But one can know these facts only by faith.
c. To this end was the Gospel preached to all (Colossians 1:23).

3. Without faith it is impossible to please God.
   a. But faith comes by hearing (Romans 10:17).
   b. Therefore, if there is no word from God, then no faith in a given act.
      (1) Apply to instrumental music, Missionary Society, Institutionalism, Fellowship halls, etc.
      (2) Must remember that "we walk by faith, not by sight." [Discuss]

III. Conclusion:

A. No Man Can Come to God Without Faith.

1. Faith comes from hearing God's word.
2. So, "By what authority doest thou these things…" (Matthew 21:23ff).
3. "We walk by faith," that is, according to revelation.
4. So, our worship must be "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24).

B. Will You Please God Today?

1. Do you have faith?
2. Will you submit to the faith?

—A.W. Goff
Russellville, AR

"Except You Repent"

Luke 13:3

I. Introduction:

A. The Text in Context:

1. Luke 13:3 records Jesus saying, *"I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."*
2. Perish like who?
   a. Like the Galileans whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices (vv. 1-2).
   b. They didn't perish because they were *worse sinners* than others.
   c. Those who do not repent, will perish like they did.

B. Jesus Christ Commands All Men Everywhere To Repent (Acts 17:30-31)—

1. Why? Because the Judgment Day before God is coming.
2. Jesus will judge the world in righteousness by His Word (John 12:48).
3. We are *guaranteed* a future Judgment Day on the basis of the *past* resurrection of Jesus Christ. If one happened, then so will the other.

C. What Right Does Jesus Have To Command Us To Repent?

1. He has *all authority* in heaven and earth (Matthew 28:18; cf. Luke 24:47).
2. He *commands* all men to *repent* or perish.
3. Therefore, those who do not repent will die and lose their souls in hell eternally!

II. Discussion:

A. Repentance Is a Difficult Command—

1. Repentance is difficult, not because it is hard to understand, but rather because it involves ***the will of man.***
   a. The heart of man is a thing that is very often stubborn, unyielding.
   b. *J.W. McGarvey* once said: "Of all the gifts I crave, if I had my wish, the first would be that I might have the power to bring men to repentance by my preaching." [*Chapel Talks,* p. 73]
3. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, found the same difficulty among men while He was on earth:
   a. Jesus induced a *great many* to **believe** (John 12:42-43).
      (1) Believing in God, trusting in Jesus as His Son, and reading the inspired word of the Holy Spirit are not difficult.
   b. But Jesus often failed to bring men to *repentance* (Matthew 11:20-21 & 12:41).
4. What was true for Jesus then is equally true for preachers today:
   a. People in the world *cling* to their sins.
   b. Like concrete setting with time, it becomes harder to prick the *sin-laden* conscience and bring about *change* in life!

B. Why Are Men Impenitent?

1. The **pleasure** of sin (Hebrews 11:25; James 4:3-4).
   a. The pleasure is fleeting but still able to be felt, enjoyed, experienced
   b. In Hebrews 11:25, the literal meaning is "to have pleasure of sin."

c. Friendship with the world is enmity with God.
   (1) "It is like the ivy with the oak. The ivy may give the oak a grand, beautiful appearance, but all the while it is feeding on its vitals."
   (2) Sin is to be *hated* and *repented of*, not *justified* and *practiced!*

2. Man's **stubborn** will (James 4:5-8).
   a. Since repentance involves the will, even the best of pleas can be cast off by stubbornness and sinful pride.
   b. *Longview News-Journal* [Longview, Texas] once carried an article entitled "Why You Are Dying" listing nine *preventable* chronic diseases and the mortality rate per state. Dr. Robert Hahn, a CDC epidemiologist said: "We know what the risk factors are. We know less about how you get people to act on them." [1/19/90, p. 1a]
      (1) Some people would rather *die* than change their eating, smoking, drinking habits!
3. Comfortable **indifference** paralyzes man.
   a. Repentance requires *change,* change is *uncomfortable,* and so we refuse!
   b. It is easier *not* to do what we should, or substitute a religion which requires little or no change!
   c. Cf. New Year's resolutions. Where are they? Gone, because it required too much change.
4. So, "many are called, but few are chosen." It is a gruesome fact that the vast majority of people in the world would rather die and go to hell than to repent.

C. So What Is Repentance?

1. "To change one's mind, i.e. to repent (to feel sorry that one has done this or that, Jonah 3:9), of having offended someone, Luke 17:3ff…used esp. of those who, conscious of their sins and with manifest tokens of sorrow, are intent on obtaining God's pardon…" [*Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament,* p. 405]
   a. Simply put, to have another mind about sin and return to God (see: Mark 1:15; Acts 2:38; cf. with David, Psalm 51:1-2, 10-14).
   b. Judas: his *repentance* (Greek, *metamelomai*) was nothing more than *regret* and *remorse,* Matthew 27:3. This is not true repentance.
   c. True repentance (Greek, *metanoeo*) is both change of feeling and purpose (Matthew 21:28-32).
      (1) Harlots, tax collectors believed and changed. They would be granted a place in the kingdom.
      (2) Those like the first son will be given the same blessing.
   d. True repentance involves change of…
      (1) knowledge (Romans 3:23; 7:7)
      (2) emotions (2 Corinthians 7:9-10)
      (3) will (Luke 15:17ff)
2. Examples of true faith and repentance:
   a. The murderous Jews on Pentecost (Acts 2:37-41)
   b. The Philippian jailer (Acts 16:27-34)
   c. Nineveh (Jonah 3:4-10)
   d. Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:1 compared to Acts 9:4-6, 9,18-19)
   e. All have three things in common:
      (1) a great awareness of their sin
      (2) a great fear of eternal condemnation
      (3) lives that have been changed [*Changed* lives are the *fruit* of repentance (Matthew 3:8)]
3. Repentance is **produced** by preaching the Goodness of God (Romans 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9)
   a. Jesus contrasted sin with righteousness
   b. God's Fatherly compassion
   c. The Son's love.

III. Conclusion:

A. What Should You Do?

1. Where do you stand before God tonight?
   a. Are you an *alien* sinner?
      (1) An alien sinner is someone who has never been in a covenant relationship with God (see: Ephesians 2:12).
      (2) You must believe, repent, confess your faith in Jesus, and be baptized for the remission of sins (Romans 10:9-10 & 6:3-5).
   b. Are you an erring *saint?*
      (1) Repent, confess your sins, and pray that God will forgive you!
      (2) See: Acts 8:21-23; 1 John 1:7-9
2. Each of us must examine *ourselves* (2 Corinthians 13:5) in the light of God's Word (2 John 9).

B. Whose Fault Is It If You Are Lost?

1. If you are not saved in eternity, it will not be God's fault, the preacher's fault, the church's fault, or anyone else's fault—it will rest with you alone (2 Peter 3:9-10,14-15,17-18).
2. "Except you repent, you will all likewise perish"(Luke 13:3)

—*Wayne Goff*
Kansas City, MO

Confessing Christ

Matthew 10:32-33

I. Introduction:

A. This Lesson Teaches the Confession Required by God of All Men to Be Saved—

1. "Confess" basically means to *speak the same thing*. In the biblical context of the New Testament, it means *to agree with God* in mind and *speak that agreement* with the mouth, Romans 10:8-10.
2. Two things in the New Testament are to be confessed:
   a. Our faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God.
   b. Our sins.
3. This lesson deals with the first of these two – confession of faith in Jesus Christ.

B. A History of the Confession of Faith—

1. "Confess" (Greek, *homologeo*): "to assent, agree with" [*Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*]. To speak the same thing.
2. It is used by Jesus in Matthew 10:32-33.
   a. The construction of this verse (EN [in] followed by the dative of a personal pronoun) has special significance.
   b. The gist is this: to confess in Jesus' Name is a public acknowledgment of your allegiance to Jesus as Lord and Master **with** a return acknowledgment by Jesus that the faithful one is indeed His worshiper and servant, His loyal follower! [*Vine,* I:224]
3. Again, Mr. Vine says it means "to declare openly by way of speaking out freely, such confession being the effect of deep conviction of facts." [*ibid.*]

II. Discussion:

A. What Are We to Confess about Jesus? What Is Our Conviction Concerning Him?

1. We are to confess that Jesus is the Christ, or Messiah (John 9:22 & 12:42)—
   a. Even the *early* references to Jesus as the "Son of God" evidenced acknowledgment of Jesus as the Messiah of Old Testament promise and prophecy, John 1:34, 50 to Psalm 2:7.
   b. It represented the *dividing line* between belief and unbelief at the time, John 9:22, 34 and John 12:42.
   c. Later, a more full awareness of Jesus' Deity was recognized by the apostles as they were taught by God, Matthew 16:16; John 6:69.
      (1) His Divinity recognized and confessed represented the "high water mark" of faith during Jesus' earthly ministry.
2. After His resurrection, the confession *included* faith in Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God, and belief in His resurrection from the dead (Romans 10:9, cf. John 20:28-29).
   a. The resurrection is the evidence of His Deity (Romans 1:4-5)
   b. Believers are baptized upon this confession (Acts 8:16, 37)
3. Later discussions regarding the Gnostic heresy of Jesus coming in the flesh and Christ being the *spiritual* Son of God required a *more specific* confession of faith, 1 John:
   a. "Jesus Christ has come in the flesh" (1 John 4:2-3; 2 John 7)
   b. "Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (1 John 4:15)
   c. But to *require* more of a confession than the Scriptures do is dangerous.

(1) Example: *Ignatius' statement:* "Be ye deaf therefore, when any man speaketh to you apart from Jesus Christ, who was of the race of David, who was the Son of Mary, who was truly born and ate and drank, was truly persecuted under Pontius Pilate, was truly crucified and died in the sight of those under heaven, and those on earth, and those under the earth, who moreover was truly raised from the dead, His Father having raised Him, who in the like fashion will so raise us also who believe on Him – His Father, I say, will raise us – in Christ Jesus, apart from whom we have not true life." (Trallians, ch. 9; as found in *Hastings' Dictionary of the New Testament,* vol. 3, p. 297)

4. So *what* confession is required today of the believer in order to be saved?

B. The Confession of Faith unto Salvation––

1. We are to confess our faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God (Acts 8:37).
   a. This embodies all the aspects of faith heretofore mentioned: (1) Jesus is the Messiah; (2) Jesus is God, (3) Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, and (4) Jesus Christ was resurrected.
   b. It also requires of us the *obligations* of a relationship with God and Jesus Christ to follow Him as Lord and Master in all that He requires of us.
   c. It comes *after* faith (Acts 8:37), or the confession is meaningless.
   d. It comes *before* baptism (Acts 8:37-38), as per the biblical example.
2. Some have attempted to claim that the confession contained in Acts 8 is spurious. Rather than *disprove* this contention with laborious arguments, we can show that this confession is found *in content* in the rest of the New Testament on the subject.
   a. God bore witness to the Divine character and mission of the Son with His Divine confession at Matthew 3:17
   b. This is what the Pharisees tried to legislate against, John 9:22
   c. This is what Divine revelation taught Peter and the apostles, Matthew 16:16-18
      (1) This is why we are under obligation to follow Jesus. His right as Head of the church is founded upon the truthfulness of that which we confess!
      (2) Confession is more than mere assent and recognition.
   d. So the arguments against the confession of Acts 8 do not mitigate against the truth to be confessed.
3. How are these truths to be confessed? (Philippians 2:10-11; Romans 14:11)
   a. It is to be made with the tongue.
   b. It *must* be made by every soul – to their salvation or condemnation!
   c. Romans 10:9-10 teaches us:
      (1) It is to be made with the mouth, not a *nod of the head.*
      (2) It is a condition of salvation, so it must precede baptism, Mark 16:16.
         (a) There is no point between one's baptism and salvation to make a confession.
         (b) There is a point between one's belief and baptism to make a confession.
4. The confession of faith is to be made and kept unto eternal life (1 Timothy 6:12-13).
   a. **NOTE:** "lay hold on *eternal life,* to which you were also called and *have confessed* the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."
      (1) *Anderson's Version:* "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life to which you have been called, and for which you confessed the good confession before many witnesses."
   b. The "good confession" consisted of a stated conviction that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, is evident from the following verse (1 Timothy 6:13).
   c. The same phrase is used in reference to that which Jesus affirmed in the presence of Pilate:
      (1) Jesus admitted to being "King of the Jews" [Christ], (Matthew 27:11, 22).
      (2) John tells us more completely that He confessed to being King of a spiritual kingdom, and a King of truth, to bear witness to truth (John 18:36-37).
      (3) That He was the Son of God was obvious from the words of His enemies while He was on the cross(Matthew 27:40-43).
   d. So this is the "good confession" of Jesus Christ, and was spoken by Timothy.

e. Jesus Christ is "the Apostle and High Priest of our confession" (Hebrews 3:1; 4:14).

5. For this to be so, our obedient submission to the Gospel's demands is a *form* of that confession (see 2 Corinthians 9:13).
   a. We cannot be saved without it.
   b. Read again Hebrews 4:14 and 10:23.
   c. We *confess* Jesus as Lord when we put His Kingdom ***first*** in our lives (Matthew 6:33).
   d. Confession is not without a price (Matthew 10:16ff).

III. Conclusion:

A. Can We Be Saved & Not Confess Christ?

1. If the belief of the fact that Jesus is the Son of God is what is to be confessed with the mouth unto salvation, will we get that salvation without confession?
2. If Timothy made this good confession for eternal life, may we dispense with it and still get the same thing he got?
3. If God has determined that "every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord," to the glory of God the Father, and we fail to make it to our salvation, will we not *have to make it* in the final day to our eternal condemnation?
4. If Jesus has promised to confess before His Father such as confess Him before men, will He still confess us if we fail to confess Him?

B. Will You Confess Christ Today?

1. Have **you** made the "good confession?" Are **you** ashamed of the Lord and His worthy Cause? Do you blush when speaking His Name to others?
2. Make the good confession unto salvation, and keep it unto eternal life.

—*Wayne Goff*
Kansas City, MO

"Baptism Doth Also Now Save Us"

1 Peter 3:21

I. Introduction:

A. The Text in Context:

1. In the midst of a section in which Peter discusses Christ's suffering and why we need to prepare for suffering, Peter has some revealing comments on the subject of baptism (1 Peter 3:21).
2.. First, Peter refers to baptism as "the like figure" (antitype NKJV)
3. Then he makes the statement that baptism "saves us"
4. He describes baptism as "the answer of a good conscience toward God"
5. But he also says that baptism saves us "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

2. Anyone of the four points may be perplexing to those who read it.

1. Some wonder what "the like figure" or "antitype" is.
2. Others take issue with any idea that baptism has anything to do with our salvation.
3. Many question what is meant by "the answer of a good conscience."
4. How does the resurrection of Christ have anything to do with salvation, since it was Christ's' death that provided forgiveness of sins?

II. Discussion:

A. Baptism as an "Antitype"—

1. The "like figure" Gk. antitupon {an-teet-oo-pon} which means "a thing formed after some pattern; that which corresponds to a type." So you have two things that somehow relate to or correspond to each other; one is a type, the other is the antitype.
2. How baptism is an "antitype"?
   a. In our text, the waters of the flood are the "type" and the waters of baptism are the "antitype" (1 Peter 3:21)
   b. Barnes comments: "The meaning here is, that baptism corresponded to, or had a resemblance to, the water by which Noah was saved; or that there was a use of water in the one case which corresponded in some respects to the water that was used in the other; to wit, in effecting salvation" (Commentary on 1st Peter)
   c. "The apostle does not say that it corresponded in all respects; in respect, e.g., to quantity, or to the manner of the application, or to the efficacy; but there is a sense in which water performs an important part in our salvation, as it did in his." (ibid.)
3. Objections:
   a. Baptism only a "figure"
      (1) Reply: Noah's salvation by water became the figure of our salvation by baptism - "the like figure" (after a true likeness) whereunto baptism now saves us.
   b. Saved "out of the water"
      (1) Then whole world lost by getting into water - lost if baptized! What this does for denominations who baptize?
4. The Comparison:
   a. God used water to save Noah from the old world of destruction. God uses water, in baptism, to save us from the world of sin now.
      (1) Water drew the line of separation between the old world and the new.
      (2) Water delivered them from the old world into the new world
      (3) Water cleansed and purified the earth.

(4) Water brought them into the new sacrificial covenant with God.

b. Likewise:

(1) Baptism separates us from sin

(2) Delivers us from the old world

(3) Cleanses us from sin

(4) Brings us into the new covenant of Jesus Christ

B. Baptism And Salvation—

1. "…doth also now save us…"
2. Many statements of Jesus that emphasize the necessity of baptism for salvation:
   a. Matthew 28:18-20
   b. Mark16:15,16
   c. John 3:3-5
3. Apostolic preaching of commission (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:3-6; Galatians 3:26; Colossians 2:11-13; Titus 3:4,5; etc.)

C. Baptism and The Resurrection Of Christ—

1. "...baptism doth also now save us… by the resurrection of Jesus Christ…"
2. Connects baptism with the resurrection of Christ in salvation
   a. An illustration—Romans 6:18 - "obeyed that 'form' of doctrine..."
   b. A "form of a thing is not the thing itself but a likeness"
   c. Romans obeyed the "form" of doctrine (gospel - 1 Corinthians 15:1-3)
      (1) Death - Burial - Resurrection (Romans 6:3-5)

D. Baptism and The Answer Of A Good Conscience—

1. What Baptism Is Not: "the putting away of the filth of the flesh…"
2. What Baptism Is: "...answer (interrogation of , an appeal to) a good conscience toward God…"
   a. The word "interrogation" in the Gk. is *eperotema.* Thayer observes that "as the term of inquiry and demand often include the idea of desire, the word {*eperotema*} thus gets the signification of earnest seeking, i.e. *a craving* and *intense desire."* His translation of the phrase in this verse that includes *eperotema* is "have earnestly sought a conscience reconciled to God."
   b. "The earnest seeking of a conscience that is clear in God's presence."
   c. The penitent soul earnestly seeking salvation inquires, "What shall I do to receive the power of Christ's blood in the remission of my sins, to make my conscience void of offense toward God".
   d. Peter affirms that water baptism is the answer to the question.

III. Conclusion:

A. Tragic that so many will reject & dodge these simple but important statements of inspiration.

B. Do you believe the O.T. narrative of Noah and the flood? If so, why not accept the antitype of it in Peter's application to baptism in water that saves?

—David Goff
Vilonia, AR

Be Faithful Unto Death

Revelation 2:10

I. Introduction:

A. A Critical View Of The Word Faithful—

1. "Dependability, loyalty, and stability particularly as it describes God in His relationship to human believers.
2. The faithfulness of God and His Word is a constant theme in the Bible. It is particularly prominent in Psalms 89 and 119.
3. God is "the faithful God who keeps covenant" (Deuteronomy 7:9) and chooses Israel (Isaiah 49:7); great is His faithfulness (Lamentations 3:23)" (from *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary*).

B. What Is Faithfulness?

a. The source of faithfulness is the truth.
b. Faithfulness is a characteristic of a man of faith.
c. As faith includes trust, faithfulness includes trustworthiness.
d. As faith involves conviction and assurance, so faithfulness involves abiding and steadfast adherence to that of which we have assurance.
   (1) Simply believing, living and stranding for the truth.
   (2) In Titus 2:10 "purloining" is used as a direct opposite of fidelity, faithfulness.
   (3) Same word is translated "Keep back" in Acts 5:3.

II. Discussion:

A. Faithfulness In Our Time—

1. Some present dangers:
   a. Because of outstanding world conditions some pertinent applications of "faithfulness" needed.
      (1) Modernism pervades society, affects denominationalism, invaded the church.
      (2) "Higher education," the spawning ground of modernism, is the ambition of most people today.
         (a) What it did for college students in Theistic evolution, etc.
         (b) Some have gone all the way, others are in various stages of departure.
   b. "Faithfulness" demands that we stand for the complete inspiration of the Bible, for the complete man of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:2-4).
      (1) Must be on guard against apparently innocent intrusions (2 Timothy 1:13; Titus 2:1-8).
      (2) Such may be found in Bible class material, the press, popular magazines, T.V. and other forms of entertainment.

B. The Present Situation—

1. Empty pews and crowded pleasure spots.
2. Indifferent church members and aggressive attacks of atheists.
3. Anxiety, hate, greed, envy, strife, vile sins of passion, wholesale departure from the truth, tolerance (acceptance) of anything "religious."
4. It is high time for Christians to "awake out of sleep" (Romans 13:11-14).
   a. The "works of darkness" reflect upon the church and upon Christ.
   b. Faithfulness to Christ cannot exist apart from faithfulness to his church.

c. Unfaithfulness in any relationship ordained by Christ is unfaithfulness to him (cf., Business, home, etc.)
d. Faithfulness is a product of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22) and exists when one walks after the Spirit (Galatians 5:16).

5. "Time" has become extremely scarce to man.
   a. So much business, community affairs, commitments. Must have immediate attention. Luke 8:14, "… choked with care and riches and pleasures…"
   b. One can loose his faithfulness quickly.
   c. Loyalty requires purposed devotion of time, effort, attendance, study (cf. Psalm 122:1; 84:10).
6. Some of the demands:
   a. "Working that which is good to all men " (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
   b. A willingness to "spend and be spent" for his cause.
   c. Determined effort to study and learn.
   d. Willingness to teach on any problem facing the Church.
   e. Giving as prospered. Think of spiritual embezzlement.

B. Causes of Unfaithfulness—

1. Ignorance of the need and/or the requirements.
   a. Much like the wayside, or rocky soil of Luke 8.
   b. Emotionalism is utterly inadequate to maintain it.
2. Secularism.
   a. Concerned with "the cares of this world" (see: Matthew 13:18-23).
      (1) The cure for this is discussed in (Matthew 6:31ff).
      (2) Too much concern for "what we shall eat…" prevents concern for the soul.
      (3) Surprising to hear Christians arguing for it: "What shall we have..." (Matthew 19:27-30).
   b. Creature comfort often given first place in the program of the Church.
   c. Argue "people want come unless place is comfortable."
      (1) What about a football game?
3. Attitudes toward the Word of God.
   a. This the decisive thing determining faithfulness (see: Matthew 7:21-27).
   b. Moral purity must be sought.
      (1) Adultery, divorce the common practice of the day.
      (2) Faithfulness demands discipline be administered (1 Corinthians 5).
         (a) Popular to condone drunkenness as a sickness, lasciviousness as changing customs.
         (b) Blame others! No such thing as old fashioned sinner.
   c. Treating more cases of alcoholism and creating more drunks than we cure.
   d. More sexual perverts and more lewdness and nakedness.

III. Conclusion:

A. Need to take more earnest heed (Hebrews 2:1).

B. Let us:

1. Therefore, fear (Hebrews 4:1).
2. Therefore, labor (Hebrews 4:11).
3. Therefore, pray (Hebrews 4:16).

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