

The Life and Writings of Paul The Apostle

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I. The Life and background of Saul (Paul the Apostle):

A. Paul had some regrets concerning the early years of his life before his conversion.

1. I Corinthians 15:9 – **“For I am the least of the Apostles that am not meet to be called an Apostle because I persecuted the Church of God.”**
2. I Timothy 1:15,16 – **“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance; that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting.”**

B. Birth and birthplace:

1. In 27/28 A.D. he was spoken of as a young man at the stoning of Stephen in Acts 7:58.
 - a. The term, “young man” had a great latitude in Greek from something under 20 to something over 30.
2. Many think he was a member of the Sanhedrin because of his commission to persecute the Church, but the New Testament does not actually mention that he was a member.
 - a. If he was a member he would have had to be 30 years old or over.
 - b. Tradition holds that as a member of the Sanhedrin, he would have had to be married., but I Corinthians 7 indicates that he was not, nor had he ever been.
3. In 62 A.D. when Paul was in prison for the first time in Rome he refers to himself as an “old man,” Philemon Vs 9. (There is a great latitude here also). Because of the hardships he had undergone he could possibly been as old as 60. He hardly would have used the term before the age of 60.
4. We conclude that Paul was born a few years after Jesus since he was evidently finished with the College of Rabbis in Jerusalem and was already in the work of a Rabbi in Tarsus when Jesus was crucified at the age of 33 ½ .
5. His birthplace was Tarsus, the capital of the province of Cilicia in Asia Minor, (today, Turkey).
6. Geographical data:
 - a. Located in southeast Asia Minor just north of the Island of Cyprus.
 - b. It was the Capital of the province of Cilicia.
 - c. Tarsus was located in a fertile coastal plain on both banks of the Cydnus River which flows from the Taurus Mountains,
 - d. Tarsus was located on major trade routes, with one of the largest sea ports in the entire Roman Empire.
 - e. The people spoke many languages and were of many races.
 - f. Tarsus had extensive trade in timber, goat’s hair, and tents.
 - g. It was a center of transport trade, located just southeast of the Cilician Gates, a pass through the Taurus Mountains in central Asia Minor.
7. The Inhabitants: Most of the large population were native Cilicians and

wealthy. The wealthiest were the Greek merchants. Tarsus was self-governing, but subject to Roman rule.

8. Tarsus was one of three great University Centers in the Roman Empire: Tarsus for Asia Minor; Athens for Greece; Alexandria for Egypt.
 9. Tarsus' bearing on Saul's background: Living in such a city prepared him to be at ease with every class, race, custom, culture, habit, and language. He seemed to be more at home in cities in his Christian ministry, and his ministry carried him from one major city to another. Being exposed to so many different languages gave him the opportunity to master many of them even before going to the College of Rabbis in Jerusalem. While Jesus spoke of sheep, shepherds, grain fields, water, wind, etc, Paul spoke of armour, races, buildings, etc.
- C. Saul's home: Acts 21:39 (A citizen of no mean city) refers to Tarsus, but his patriotism was for his homeland. (He was an alien in the land of his birth), Tarsus in Cilicia. His parents were Jews, but had moved to the place where business would have been best. While the area of Palestine was under Roman rule, the Jews were free to move about within the Empire. Saul was a Hellenistic Jew, a Jew by birth who was born outside of Palestine, born in a Roman City, and thus, a Roman citizen. This gave Paul Roman citizenship by birth. Being born into the home of Pharisees, they stayed true to their culture, dress religion, and food.
- D. Religious background: Saul's father, and thus, Saul were of the strictest sect of the Pharisees. Although Saul's parents had left Palestine before Saul's birth, Saul called himself a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a name usually reserved for those Jews dwelling in Judea. We know nothing of Saul's mother except that she must have been able to read and write, and she must have taught Saul faithfully in the strictest presentation of their religion. The influence of his mother is seen in the fact that, while he was raised in a most hostile environment, his heroes were those of the Old Testament characters, and his allegiance was to Jerusalem.
- E. Saul's education: No doubt his parents would have thought it a violation of Psalm 1 to have let him attend the University of Tarsus. Much of the street influence rubbed off on him, however. (Note his quotation from the Greek Poets). The style and vocabulary are not those of the Greek Literature, but that of the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, done in Alexandria Egypt in the fourth century B.C. and widely used by the Jews. His address to the Greek philosophers at Athens shows his command of Greek methods of debate, reason, and logic. He also avoided the lengthy nothingness and the verbose nature of Greek reasoning. We know that there was a Jewish Synagogue in Tarsus, for Saul served as a Rabbi there before his conversion. The early formal education of Saul would have taken place there until he made his choice to be a Rabbi. This decision would have taken him to the College of Rabbis in Jerusalem, where he studied under "The Beauty of the Law," Gamaliel, referred to, to this day as the "Great Rabbi." Gamaliel was a Pharisee strongly given to the tradition of the Jewish Fathers, but tolerant toward Greek Culture.
1. Methods of Teaching: Usually the Rabbis used rapid fire questioning, extensive memorization of Scripture, study of the words of the Sages and the Wise, and memorization of their sayings.
 2. What this produced: An abundance of ideas, an originality in presentation,

keenness of logic, marvelous memory, an ability to base one's presentation on an authority recognized everywhere by the Jews, and, later, the ability to ground all of Christian teaching in the Old Testament doctrine and prophecy.

- F.** Saul's educational environment: Saul studied in Jerusalem in an environment that encouraged young men to seek the benefits of the religious life without the responsibility, and which was shot through with hypocrisy. However, Paul was able later to say that he had lived in all good conscience. In obtaining the goal of a religious life lay his personal hopes, and the hopes of his nation. It was widely believed in Paul's day that if one man could live a sinless life for just one day, it would hasten the coming of Messiah. They believed that the Messiah would only come to a nation keeping the Law. Saul set out to be that one who would keep the Law perfectly. In so doing, he found that it could not be done. He was chosen of God to teach the world that perfection could not be obtained by works. He probably went back to Tarsus and served in one of their synagogues. This would have been about the time of John the Baptist's ministry, or the beginning of Christ's ministry. If Saul had been in Jerusalem at this time he probably would have been involved with Jesus as friend or foe.
- G.** Saul returned to Jerusalem: Probably soon after the Crucifixion, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. The reports he received were probably from his Pharisee contemporaries. Though he still believed in salvation by the works of the Law, at this time he had conflict of soul, (Romans 7). He probably thought that he had no real peace because he had not struggled enough with the evil of his nature, or had not done enough to satisfy the demands of the Law. This led him to persecution of the Christians whose numbers were growing rapidly when he arrived back in Jerusalem.
- H.** The condition of the Christian Church: The main leaders were still in Jerusalem. Most of the believers had been scattered upon the martyrdom of Stephen, and had gone to other parts of the Roman Empire carrying the Gospel message. Acts chapters four through nine picture a time of persecution from the Jewish religious leaders. The Priesthood rested in the hands of the Sadducees at that time, and they were the ones who were pushing the persecution the most, but this was one thing on which the Pharisees agreed with the Sadducees. Persecution of Christianity has always united strange bed-fellows. It was the counsel of Gamaliel in Acts 5:33-42 that temporarily brought a lull in the persecution, but it was not until the conversion of Saul that a period of real peace came to the Church. The period of peace following Gamaliel's counsel allowed a period of growth, and the establishment of a foothold for the young Church. Then came the martyrdom of Stephen in Acts chapter seven, and the stirring of Saul's hatred for the Christians that scattered the Church of Jerusalem, and left little more than the Apostles in Jerusalem. Stephen debated with the most learned Doctors of the Law of the College of Rabbis in Acts 6:8-7:53, bringing a brilliant recounting of how Israel had a history of resisting the will of God, concluding with a blistering application of this same rebellious spirit to those to whom he spoke. Furious, they rushed upon him and actually gnashed on him with their teeth, took him out of the city, and stoned him. Saul held the coats of those who did the stoning, and the sight of Stephen's peace and forgiveness of their deed must have haunted him from that moment on, see Acts 7:54-8:4. Saul began his reign of terror for reasons unknown to us, but there are some good possibilities: (a) He may have been seeking for peace with God, thinking the persecution of Christians would please the Lord and gain him favor. (b) It may have been frustration over not being able to answer Stephen's arguments. (c) It may have been that, in Saul's eyes the

rapid growth of Christianity may have constituted a threat to the Law of God. One thing we do know: Paul stated that what he had done before his conversion, he had done in all good conscience, for he did what he did because he thought he was pleasing God.

- I. The first Deacons were chosen in Acts 6:1-15 because of friction which arose between the widows who were Hellenistic Jews and the widows who were Palestinian Jews. Sadly, too many Pastors in small and medium sized churches in our country are not free to do what the Pastor should be doing. Acts 6:4 says, **“But we will give ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word.”** If you will look carefully in the Book of Acts, you will find that a group of believers did not become a recognized, independent, local Church without the recognition of an Apostle. Up until that time they were under the care of an established Church with a Bishop or Elders, and Deacons. When a Church has godly men who can meet the criteria for the office of Deacon, and they can elect enough of them to take care of what Deacons do, and if they have a sufficient number of people to support an independent local Church, then, with the blessing of their mother Church, they can organize as an independent Local Church. The Pastor should not have to do all the sick calls, counseling, resolving of problems, etc. He should be free for the work of the ministry. Deacon means servant.

1. The first two of the seven deacons chosen by the first Church at Jerusalem certainly made a name for themselves and brought glory to their Lord. Stephen was stoned to death by the Jewish Religious leaders at the close of Acts chapter seven. In Acts chapter eight we find Philip going down to Samaria and ministering in the role of an evangelist with great success. I do not know why Philip chose to go to Samaria, but it certainly was not an area where the Jewish religious leaders were likely to show up. The Jews had nothing to do with the Samaritans. Saul would have hated what Philip was doing, but after Saul met Jesus on the Damascus road, this is what he loved doing the most: Evangelizing the lost. Peter and John went down to Samaria to make sure the work there was valid. It was of God.

II. Saul's conversion and preparation: Acts 9:1-9

- A. Saul, as we see in Acts chapter eight, had been granted permission from the Sanhedrin to apprehend, persecute, imprison, and to even kill Christians wherever he could find them. He was on his way to Damascus, the capital of Syria, to arrest as many Christians as he could. As he and his party neared Damascus, the following things happened to him:

1. An extremely bright and blinding light shone upon him. Light is used in the Scriptures to represent Truth. When an Angel appeared to Peter in prison in chapter twelve of Acts, a bright light preceded him. Jesus is called the Light of the World, and was introduced by John the Baptist as the true light that lights every man that comes into the world. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. When Saul saw this light it blinded him and he fell to the ground on his face, blinded.
2. Saul heard a voice speaking to him by name, and saying, **“Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?”** Saul responded, **“Who art thou, Lord?”** Christ said, **“I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.”** In great fear and trembling, Saul said, **“Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?”** And the Lord said to Saul, **“Arise, and go into the city, and it**

shall be told thee what thou must do.” The men who journeyed with him heard a voice, but saw no one. The message was for Saul alone, as was the bright light, for the men who were with him were not blinded, nor did they know what the Lord said to Saul. When Saul opened his eyes, he could not see, and was blind for three days. The men who were with him took by the hand and led him into the city.

3. The Lord spoke to a Christian of Damascus by the name of Ananias and told him, **“Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.”** Ananias protested to the Lord because he had heard of how Saul of Tarsus persecuted the Church at Jerusalem, and how he had authority in Damascus to bind all that called on the name of Jesus, but Jesus said to him, **“Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and Kings, and the Children of Israel: for I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name’s sake.”** Ananias did as he was told, and when he found Saul, he said, **“Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.** Immediately, Saul could see, and he arose and was baptized. Now the question arises, when was Saul actually converted? In Acts 22:14-16 Paul recounted this experience, and said that Ananias said to him, **“The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know His will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of His mouth. For thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now, why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”** We know that water cannot wash away our sins. John the Baptist baptized with water unto repentance, but he said that there would be one who came after him, Jesus Christ, who would baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire. That happened to the Church as a whole on the Day of Pentecost, and to the household of Cornelius when they believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, but Acts 22:16 seems to indicate water baptism. Only Paul the Apostle knew when the conversion took place, but I would have to say that his actual conversion took place, based on Romans 10:13, when he called on the name of the Lord for salvation. God gave Saul three days in total darkness to think about what he had seen and heard. I believe, in those three days, knowing the Old Testament Scriptures as he did, Saul saw without doubt, that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, and believed. He arose and was baptized to demonstrate his belief, and called on the name of the Lord for salvation, and to wash away his sins in the Blood of Jesus Christ. After all, it was the Apostle Paul who, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote Romans 10:13 – **“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”** The initial experience on the Damascus Road was to give Saul the proper credentials to be an Apostle. He had seen, and had talked with the risen Christ. The voice from Heaven that was Jesus speaking with Saul represents the place of the Word of God in salvation. Without the Word of God there is no conversion. All of the Pauline Epistles place tremendous emphasis on the importance and necessity of the Word of God. Paul tells Timothy in II Timothy 4 to **“Preach the Word...”** The Word of God must be read, quoted,

paraphrased, put in one's own words, but without the Word revealing the true way of salvation there can be no salvation.

B. Saul's preparation for service:

1. At the beginning and the close of every one of Paul's Epistles he emphasizes Grace. Grace is God's undeserved favor; it is what God does for us that we do not in any way deserve. Because of his past in persecuting the Church, and his bitterness toward Christianity, though done in all good conscience, it would still have been a constant reminder of the enormity of the Grace of God exercised toward him. Justification by grace through faith alone for salvation, was the foundation of the Reformation. Martin Luther's stand on that doctrine that sparked the Reformation called attention to the departure of the Roman Church from this foundational doctrine. It was Luther's study of the Pauline Epistles that brought him to his conclusions.
2. When we compare this basic doctrine with Paul's frustrations over not being able to keep the Law, we see why Paul later preached salvation had to be by grace, or not at all.
 - a. Ephesians 2:8, 9 – **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast."**
 - b. Titus 3:5-7 – **"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."**
 - c. Romans 3:20; and 4:16 – **"Therefore by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the Law is the knowledge of sin." "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the Law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the Father of us all."**
3. Part of Saul's preparation was in his background:
 - a. Contributing largely to Saul's preparation for the ministry God had for him was his exposure as he was growing up in Tarsus to the variety of languages, cultures, and philosophies. In his travels, as well as during his time in prison in Rome, he would have encountered a great variety of each of these. Tradition tells us that during the period of time during which he was free between the two imprisonments in Rome he may have traveled as far as the British Isles, a part of the Roman Empire at that time. He also is said to have visited Spain during that time.
 - b. His up-bringing in the home of a strict Pharisee, and having been trained under Gamaliel in the College of Rabbis in Jerusalem would have given him a ready platform for the Gospel in any place where there was a synagogue. It would have been most difficult to have planted a Church where there were no Jews who, when converted, would have been ready leaders for any new Church which was largely

made up of Gentiles. The farther he went in his ministry from Jerusalem, the fewer Jews he would have found, but wherever there were enough Jews there was always a synagogue. In every place where Paul went he ministered first in the synagogue in order to win a few Jews to be the leaders of a new Church.

- c. As strange as it may seem, Saul's love for the Law of God contributed significantly to his ability to preach the grace of God. Chapter seven of Romans shows us clearly how he used the Law to show why salvation had to be by grace, or not at all. It was grace contrasted with the Law in the Old Testament that made his message so clear and logical. There was not an orthodox Jew then, nor is there one now who, at one time or another, has not been frustrated by their inability to keep the Law of God. Of course, now, without a temple, there is no way to make atonement for inability to keep the Law.
- d. His training in the College of Rabbis in Jerusalem, already mentioned, would have given him a marvelous knowledge of logic which, applied to the prophecies concerning Christ in the Old Testament Scriptures, would have made his preaching more convincing.
- e. Several times his Roman Citizenship saved him from harsh punishments, and, perhaps, even death. God had prepared Saul's birth and upbringing with the same kind of detailed precision, that excludes chance, as is found in that of Jesus Christ Himself.
- f. His constant effort to keep the Law of God perfectly, and his failure to do so, would have worked together with his Damascus Road experience to solidify his faith in Christ, and his assurance that salvation could never be by any other means but by the Grace of God.

III. Saul's/Paul's Gospel:

- A. Following his conversion, he ministered briefly with the brethren at Damascus, Acts 9:10-31. We have what seems to be a contradiction between the Acts 9 account and that in Galatians 1:15-18.
 - 1. Acts 9:19-28 – **“And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he bring them bound unto the Chief Priests? But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ. And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him: But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket. And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the Apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. And he was with them coming in and**

going out at Jerusalem.”

2. Galatians 1:15-18 – **“But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were Apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.”**
 3. The only way we can harmonize the two is as follows:
 - a. After his conversion Saul preached boldly in Damascus until his life was in danger; then he was let down by the wall in a basket by the disciples at Damascus.
 - b. He then went to Arabia (Arabia at that time included the Arabian Peninsula and the Sinaitic Peninsula). He could have gone back to Mt. Sinai which is also called “The Mt. of God” where God could have given him his Gospel of grace.
 - c. He then returned to Damascus for three years before going up to Jerusalem.
 4. We do not know how long Saul was in Arabia in the desert with God, but we know from the Book of Galatians that Arabia was the place where God showed Him the Gospel of Grace which he was to preach to both Gentiles and Jews, Galatians 1:16-21.
- B.** Any other gospel is no gospel at all, Galatians 1:6-9
1. His Gospel was not received from men, Galatians 1:11-19
 2. His Gospel was given to him by God, Galatians 1:15-23
- C.** The outline of Paul’s Gospel: I Corinthians 15:1-23
1. Paul preached the only Gospel by which we can be saved, and which can enable us to stand, I Corinthians 1:1, 2
 2. Paul preached the Gospel which he had received, I Corinthians
 3. Paul’s Gospel had four parts (not three).
 - a. Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures. Isaiah 53:5, 6 (The only Scriptures they had to preach when Paul wrote this in First Corinthians chapter 15 were the Old Testament Scriptures.)
 - b. And that He was buried. (The witness of those who buried Him, the guards who stood watch at the tomb, and the women who watched where they buried Him.)
 - c. And that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures. Psalm 16:10
 - d. He is coming back again in the Rapture (resurrection) to catch the Church up to be with Him forever. I Corinthians 15:51-58 We will be perfectly conformed to the image of God’s dear Son. Romans 8:11,

4. Outline of Paul's Gospel: I Corinthians 15:1-23

- I. Paul preached the only Gospel by which we can be saved and which can enable us to stand. Vs 1, 2
- II. Paul preached the Gospel which he himself had received. Vs 3
- III. Paul's Gospel had four parts.
 - A. Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures. Vs 3
 - 1. Christ – The only one qualified to die for our sins.
 - 2. Died – The wages of sin.
 - 3. For our sins – The reason we need a Savior.
 - B. He was buried. Vs 4
 - 1. Proof of His death.
 - C. He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures Vs 4
 - 1. A dead Christ could not save anyone.
 - 2. He rose again for our justification. Rom. 4:25
 - D. He is coming back for His own in the rapture. Vs 23
 - 1. This is the hope of the believer. Vs 19
- IV. Paul's mission field: Acts 9:15 and 13:42-46
 - A. The entire Roman Empire
 - 1. Mediterranean means "Middle of the Earth." If we include the British Isles, the Roman Empire included most of the then known world.
 - 2. Three main cities represent the types of people to be reached:
 - a. Athens – Represents the Greeks and intellectuals.
 - (1) People of cleverness and genius.
 - (2) Masters of Commerce, Literature, and Art.
 - (3) Greatest influence when under Alexander the Great.
 - (4) Greek Cities-Antioch in Syria, and Alexandria in Egypt.
 - (5) Koine Greek Language-Language of commerce.
 - b. Rome – Represents Romans and Roman Empire.
 - (1) People of war and government.
 - (2) Qualities were strength and justice.
 - (3) Compelled nations to be friendly and thus united the then-known world.
 - (4) Built a great highway system for rapid transportation.
 - c. Jerusalem – Represents Israel
 - (1) At the close of the Old Testament they were confined to Jerusalem and the immediate area.
 - (2) Their pursuits were agriculture and animal husbandry.

- (3) At the beginning of the New Testament period they were scattered and involved in commerce.
- (4) While the Jews were a hated people, they were free to move about the Roman Empire and engage in commercial undertakings.

V. Events leading to the first missionary journey: We first saw Barnabas at the close of the fourth chapter of Acts. The young Church at Jerusalem had decided to practice a pure form of socialism. Everyone who chose to do so had sold their belongings, put it all into a common store, and met everyone's needs out of this store daily. Pure socialism is, "What is mine is yours, and what is yours is mine." This would be a wonderful system were it not for human nature. Before long, pure socialism becomes, "What is yours is mine, and what is mine is mine;" or, "What is mine is the government's, and what is yours is the government's." Eventually it bred problems. Barnabas sold a piece of property and gave the money to the Church for the common fund. At the beginning of the fifth chapter Ananias and Sapphira, a couple in the Church, sold a piece of land and kept back part for themselves, but they told the Church that they had given the whole price of the land. It cost them their lives because they lied to the Holy Spirit. The next problem that came from this plan was that which necessitated the choosing of the first Deacons in Acts chapter six. There was friction between the Hellenistic widows and the Palestinian widows over the slighting of the Hellenistic Widows in the daily ministrations. It took the stoning of Stephen to get their minds off their own problems and scatter the disciples everywhere preaching the Gospel. Some like Barnabas, his sister, and her sister's son, John Mark were from the Island of Cyprus and returned there to evangelize. Barnabas found himself in Antioch in Syria, on the mainland just east of the Island of Cyprus. A strong Church sprung up there, and as it grew there was a need for more help with leadership. Since Saul had returned to Tarsus, Barnabas traveled there and brought Saul back to help at Antioch. We find these facts recorded at the end of Acts chapter twelve and the beginning of chapter thirteen. Chapter thirteen relates the beginning of the first missionary journey. Acts 13:1-3 - Herein is an often missed formula for finding the will of God for one's life. See also Proverbs 3:5, 6; Psalm 37:4; Job 22:26-28; and Proverbs 16:3

A. Antioch in Syria – The place where the commissioning took place is located near the northeast coast of the Mediterranean Sea, just a couple of miles inland from the coast. We are often told that things not clearly spelled out in the Scriptures as the will of God should be prayed about, and then left with the Lord. That is good advice, but there is more than that which can be done.

- 1. Acts 13:1-3 They were waiting on the Lord. This indicates in the context here that they were praying together as a Church for the guidance of God for clear direction as to what to do next.
 - a. They were fasting. In this case, they were probably literally fasting (going without eating – this sharpens the mind to discern the Lord's will). The principle of fasting, however, is to put everything in one's life secondary to finding what God's will is for you to do.
- 2. Psalm 37:4, 5 – As we put the Lord's will first, ahead of everything else, He will cause us to desire the thing that is His will.
- 3. Job 22:26-28 – We should delight ourselves in the Lord, and pray, He will hear you, make sure all sin is confessed, ask for God's will and God will enlighten you as to what He wants.

4. Proverbs 16:3 – Commit thy ways (your whole life) unto the Lord, and your thoughts will be established (He will cause you to want what He wants).
 5. Matthew 6:33 – Seek ye first the Kingdom of God (be sure you are a child of God), and His righteousness (be sure you are living in keeping with the Word of God), and God will give you a desire for the thing He desires.
- B. Conclusion:** When we are all taken up with the Lord and His will ahead of everything else, and sincerely pray for God's will in a matter, willing to do it, no matter what it is, what He causes us to want will be what He wants.
1. It was highly unusual, but God called Barnabas and Saul to the work of foreign missions through the Church, not individually. As they prayed, putting everything else secondary to the will of God, the Holy Spirit said (put on the hearts of the whole Church) **“Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.”**
 2. The Church at Antioch did not, however, tell Barnabas and Saul where to go on the first missionary journey. They went as they were led by the Holy Spirit of God. Barnabas was originally from the Island of Cyprus, so they went there first. There may have been an invitation for them to come to Cyprus to officially recognize the organization of an already started work as being an organized body of believers.
 - a. There were some Christians already there, however, since some of the people who were helping to build the Body of believers at Antioch in Syria were from there. Saul was from Tarsus in southeast Asia Minor, so from Cyprus, they went to Asia Minor. The first missionary journey did not take them far from familiar territory. Seleucia, a port city just west of Antioch in Syria was the point from which they embarked on their first journey, Acts 13:4. They sailed west southwest to the port city of Salamis, toward the east end of the Island of Cyprus just under the panhandle. Here they preached the Gospel in the Synagogue, Acts 13:5. Having been a Rabbi trained in the College of Rabbis in Jerusalem under Gamaliel, Paul would have had an automatic open door and ready pulpit in every town and city that had a synagogue. As we mentioned before, they visited the synagogue first in hopes of winning some converts who, morally and educationally would have been ready leaders for a new Church. There is no mention, however, of an organized Church in the town of Salamis, nor is there any mention of Barnabas and Saul starting one. Since there were already Christians from Jerusalem on the Island previous to Barnabas and Saul's arrival, it may have been unnecessary, in the minds of Barnabas and Saul, to start one. They had also taken young John Mark with them on this first journey. When they began their journey, Barnabas was the leader and was given first mention, but we must remember that Saul outranked Barnabas since Saul had been made an Apostle by Jesus Christ Himself.
 - b. They preached their way west through the Island to Paphos on the west end of the Island where we are given a little more detail about their activities. It was here that in Acts 13:9 we see Saul's name changed to Paul and Paul taking the leadership. This may or may not have been at Barnabas' request. The personalities of these two men

were born out by the meaning of their names. Barnabas means “Son of Consolation;” Saul means “Desired;” and Paul means “Small or “Little.” Both Saul of Tarsus of the New Testament and King Saul of the Old Testament were from the Tribe of Benjamin. The name Paul may have been given to Saul because of his new humility.

- c. Paphos was a town well acquainted with the occult. It was fabled to be the place where Aphrodite (Venus) had risen from the sea. Here Paul and Barnabas met a sorcerer named Bar-jesus (Elymas), who was a Jewish false prophet. He was with Sergius Paulus, the deputy (assistant to the ruler) of the country, who called for Paul and Barnabas because he wanted to hear the Word of God. 13:6, 7 When Elymas heard about it he tried to oppose Paul and Barnabas, but Paul pronounced a curse of blindness upon Elymas, and said, **“O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?”** Vs 10. When the deputy saw what happened, he was immediately converted, **“...being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.”** Once again, there is no record of Paul and Barnabas establishing a Church at Paphos.
- d. Acts 13:13 reads, **“Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem.”** Perga was a seaport on the south coast of Asia Minor. It is here that John Mark deserted the evangelistic party and headed for his mother’s home in Jerusalem. For him, however, it was out of the frying pan and into the fire. While missionary work in those days was extremely difficult, facing the persecution of Christians that was going on in Jerusalem was far worse. Paul had no time for quitters, as we will see later on, but Barnabas, “Son of Consolation,” seemed to specialize in taking the ones who seemed to be failures, and seeing what he could make out of them. Again, there seems to be no record of a Church being started in Perga.
- e. Acts 13:14-52 From Perga, Paul and Barnabas went north some one hundred or more miles to the City of Antioch in Pisidia. Pisidia was the province where the City was located. Later, the four Churches which were planted on the first missionary journey were referred to as the Churches of Galatia. There was a difference between the geographical province of Galatia and the political province of Galatia. All four of these Churches were considered to be in the political province of Galatia. The reason there were more than one Antioch was that Antiochus Epiphanies, the worst of the Seleucids that warred so many years with the Ptolemies of Egypt, and who was a type of the antichrist because of his hatred of the Jews and his defilement of the Temple in Jerusalem during the inter-testamental period, had been headquartered in northern Syria and southeastern Asia Minor. These cities were named for him. The rule of the Seleucids was the last of the great Grecian Empire which had been defeated by the Roman Empire. One may read the details of this period long before it took place in the prophecy of Daniel, chapter eleven.

- f. Acts 13:14-52 As far as we know, the **Church at Antioch in Pisidia was the first Church established on the first missionary journey.** Paul preached the Gospel from the Law and the Prophets in the Synagogue on the Sabbath Day at the invitation of the ruler of the Synagogue. Remember, Paul always preached the Gospel at the Synagogue first since the men gathered there, when saved, would already know the Old Testament Scriptures and were morally qualified to be leaders in a mostly Gentile Church. Many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas and believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. Many of the Gentiles (who often stood outside the Synagogue and listened) expressed a desire to hear the Gospel the following Sabbath. The next Sabbath almost the whole town came together to hear the Gospel. When the Jews saw the great multitude of Gentiles who came to hear the Gospel, they were moved to envy and opposed Paul and Barnabas. When the Jews got stirred up against them, Paul and Barnabas left Antioch and went to Iconium, stating that they would turn to the Gentiles, saying, **“for so hath the Lord commanded us, saying I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.”**
- g. Acts 14:1-7 At Iconium, (Acts 14:1-5), about one hundred miles east of Antioch, both Paul and Barnabas went into the Synagogue and preached the Gospel, with a great number of both Jews and Greeks believing and trusting Christ as Savior. The unbelieving Jews stirred up opposition against Paul and Barnabas. The city was divided, with half holding with Paul and Barnabas and half with the unbelieving Jews, who planned to stone them, so they departed for Lystra and Derby. A great number of both Jews and Greeks had believed **at Iconium, and that became the second Church on the first missionary journey.** They taught the Word many days before departing for Lystra and Derby.
- h. Acts 14:8-20 Lystra was located about eighty miles southeast of Iconium in the geographical province of Galatia, Acts 14:6-20. At Lystra God used Paul and Barnabas to heal a man who had been crippled from birth. The people thought Paul and Barnabas were two of their gods come to them in human bodies, and they were about to worship them and make sacrifices to them. In Acts 14:14-18 we have them in human bodies, and they were about to worship them and make sacrifices to them. In Acts 14:14-18 we have Paul’s address to the people which barely kept them from doing so. Paul, with God-given wisdom and Divine inspiration, gave a brief message to the people about God’s blessings upon all peoples in general. Certain unbelieving Jews came from Antioch in Pisidia and stirred up the people against Paul and Barnabas, and having stoned Paul, they dragged him out of the city and left him for dead. While the disciples stood around him, God raised him up, and contrary to what any other person would have done, he went back into the city. We can be certain that until his departure the following day, he and Barnabas were busy teaching the believers and organizing the structure of a local Church.
- i. Acts 14:20, 21 The following day Paul and Barnabas departed for

Derbe, just about 40 miles to the east southeast of Lystra. Here they preached the Gospel and taught many. While we are not clearly told that local Churches were organized in these four cities as they went along, we are told that when they were finished in Derbe, they returned through Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch in Pisidia, confirming the brethren and encouraging them to continue in the faith. Then we are told that they established Elders in every Church, prayed and fasted for them, and then began their return trip to Antioch in Syria. So far as we know, these believers were those addressed as the Churches of Galatia in the Epistle to the Galatians. As we will see later on, Timothy and his family must have been converts from that first missionary journey, somewhere in the area of Lystra, and Derbe. So far as we know, there were none of the Divinely inspired Epistles of Paul written during this first journey, and four local Churches established: Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe.

- j. Acts 14:24-28 The return trip: After Paul and Barnabas had passed through Pisidia they passed through the province of Pamphylia on their way to the south coast where they had entered Asia Minor. This time they preached the Gospel in Perga before proceeding to Attalia which was another sea port near Perga and departed from there to sail back to Antioch in Syria where they informed their sending Church of what God had done among the Gentiles, and stayed to help in the preaching and teaching for quite some time.

VI. Acts 15 The Second Church Council: The first Church Council had taken place in Acts chapter eleven following Peter's ministry in the home of Cornelius, the Roman centurion where he, his family, and all his friends had come to Christ as Peter preached the Gospel. These were the first Gentiles to believe on Christ and be filled with the Spirit as the Jewish believers were on the Day of Pentecost.

- A. The second Church Council was held to settle the matter of what was to be required of the Gentile believers in relation to their Christian living following their conversion. These things are not to be confused with the keeping of the Law. No one was ever saved by the keeping of the Law. The Law was given to show mankind their inability to keep it. The Law is perfect and holy, but man is not.
 - 1. Acts 15:1-6 Certain brethren (believers) came from Jerusalem to Antioch in Syria teaching the Gentile believers that they must be circumcised in order to be saved. Paul and Barnabas debated with them until it was decided that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go to the Apostles at Jerusalem and get this settled. On their way they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria sharing the news of what God had done among the Gentiles, which made the brethren to rejoice. At Jerusalem, certain believers who were Pharisees debated with them, holding that the Gentiles must be circumcised and keep the Law to be saved.
 - 2. Acts 15:6-22 The Apostles and Elders came together to consider the matter and determine just what should be required. Since the Gentiles had not grown up under the Law, covenants, Prophets, and ordinances, they knew nothing of what was acceptable unto the Lord.
 - a. Peter was the first speaker, and he said, **"Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the**

Gentile by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our Fathers nor we are able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.

- b. While everyone kept silence, Barnabas and Paul declared what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.
 - c. James, who was the half brother of Jesus, and, at that time the Bishop of the Church at Jerusalem, then spoke, saying, **“Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name. And to this agree the words of the Prophets, *After this I will return, and will build again the Tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all of the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world.* Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: but that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath Day.**
3. This satisfied the brethren, and they wrote letters to the Gentile believers at Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia from the Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem, informing them as to what had been decided by the Church Council, and sent them by the hands of Barnabas and Paul, men who had hazarded their lives for Christ, as well as Judas (a half brother of Jesus and brother of James) and Silas, assuring you that we have not required the Gentile believers to be circumcised and keep the Law in order to be saved. Dear reader, you may wonder why these four things were asked of the Gentile believers; here is the reason:
- a. Abstain from pollutions of idols – Obviously, a Christian would not want to be involved with idolatry.
 - b. To abstain from fornication – Fornication (Greek “pornea” refers to any immorality). Fornication was also automatically associated with all forms of idolatrous worship. Obviously, Christians would want to stay away from this evil.
 - c. To abstain from things strangled – When an animal was strangled in order to kill it, and the meat not bled, one would be eating the flesh with the blood. This also was associated with all forms of idolatrous worship. Also, the Old Testament made it clear that the life of the flesh was in the blood. Christians should want to abstain from anything that associated them with heathen worship.

- d. To abstain from drinking blood – This also was directly associated with all forms of idolatry and heathen worship.

Christians should want to abstain from all forms of sin, but especially those things that are associated with heathen practices. It is quite common in this post-Christian era to see professing Christians attending the public movie theater, or going to dances, smoking, even drinking alcoholic beverages, or going to places that serve alcohol. Some even compromise their convictions to take a job dispensing it.

- 4. Acts 15:31-35 Paul, Barnabas, Judas, and Silas carried the letters to Antioch and delivered them to the brethren there. Judas returned to Jerusalem, while Silas decided to stay in Antioch ministering there with several others. As we will see in the next section, God had it planned that way so that Silas could be Paul's companion on the second missionary journey.
- 5. Acts 15:36-41 Paul and Barnabas part ways: Paul and Barnabas decided to go on a second missionary journey and Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with them as they did on the first part of the first journey, but Paul did not think it would be advisable since John Mark quit and went home to Jerusalem early in the first journey. The contention became so strong between them that they decided to part ways. Barnabas took John Mark and went back to the Island of Cypress since that had originally been their home. Paul took Silas as a companion and helper and departed overland through Tarsus, Paul's birthplace.

VII. Acts 16:1-18:22 Paul's second missionary journey:

- A. Acts 16:1-5 Paul and Silas continued through the pass in the Taurus Mountains to Derbe and Lystra, checking on how these churches were doing. In the region of Derbe and Lystra they found a disciple by the name of Timothy whose mother and grandmother were believing Jews, but his father was a Greek. He evidently made quite an impression on Paul and Silas because they took him with them on this second journey.
 - 1. Because Timothy's father was a Greek; and because they would be working among some Jews, Paul thought it best for Timothy to be circumcised. Paul did not want to intentionally offend the Jews and close the doors of opportunity with them, but wanted to keep that door open so that he and Silas would have a ready pulpit with the Jews in every town in which they ministered. Later, Paul writes that circumcision was nothing, and uncircumcision was nothing, but it was done to keep the door open with the Jews who were still under the Law.
- B. Acts 16:6-10 Paul, Silas, and Timothy continued on west through The regions of Galatia and Phrygia, establishing the Churches and delivering them the decrees which had been decided by the second Church Council. The Churches were not only well grounded, but they were increasing in number. The Great Commission was being fulfilled. Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria had received the Gospel, and Paul, Silas, and Timothy were being used to start the fourth phase of a Great commission by carrying the Gospel to all of the world.
 - 1. Acts 16:11-40 The Holy Spirit would not give them freedom to continue preaching in Asia Minor. It was time to break new ground. When they came to Mysia they sought to go into Bithynia, but the Holy Spirit did not give

them peace to do so and they came down to Troas, a port city on the northwest coast of Asia Minor, just across the Aegean Sea from Greece. To cross the Aegean would take them into Europe. As they waited here, God gave Paul the Macedonian Call to cross over into Macedonia, Northern Greece. Wasting no time, they sailed to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis, both seaports on the coast of the land bridge between Asia and Europe. To this point there had been no new Churches established on the second missionary journey that we know of. The next day they traveled to Philippi, the location of the first Church established on the second missionary journey. This would have placed them in Europe, (Macedonia – northern Greece). This Church, according to the Book of Philippians written many years later from prison in Rome, was destined to be the only Church which consistently ministered to Paul's needs, no matter where he was, or what his circumstances might have been. I have often maintained that Paul had three favorite Churches: The Church at Jerusalem, which was the first and original Church, The Church at Antioch in Syria which was his sending Church, and Philippi which was the Church he dearly loved. Many events led to the establishment of the Philippian Church:

- a. Philippi was a major city of that region, and was a Colony. Philippi was one of those cities made up of Roman citizens deported to this location when Greece conquered Rome. When The Roman Empire conquered the then-known-world, The Roman colonies were given the right to vote in Rome, and anyone born in the Roman colonies was given automatic Roman citizenship, just as those born in Rome. This was also the case where Paul was born (Tarsus), since it also had been one of the Roman colonies. Paul, Silas, and Timothy spent several days in Philippi, but since there was no Synagogue there, they went to the riverside to worship on the Sabbath Day. Here they found a group of women who were Jewish or proselytes to Judaism, meeting for prayer. As Paul preached and taught them, one of their number, a wealthy business woman, a seller of purple cloth (usually worn only by royalty or government officials), was converted, along with her entire family, was baptized, and made her home available for a place for Paul, Silas, and Timothy to headquarter. Her house later became the meeting place for the Church at Philippi. Often times our needs are met by winning someone to Christ. God often uses that to take care of a particular need that we have. That is certainly not the reason for winning people to Christ, but it is often God's means of getting us to see how endlessly varied are His ways of supplying our personal needs. When the Gospel went to Europe we begin to see the greater prominence of women in the Bible narrative.
- b. Acts 16:16-34 For the next several days there was a young woman who followed Paul, Silas, and Timothy, saying, **“These men are the servants of the Most High God, which show unto us the way of salvation.”** She did so because she was possessed of a demon of divination, and was used by her owners to tell fortunes and bring them a tidy income. It would seem that Paul and his companions would not resent this assist to their ministry, but it is difficult to express the way things are said, on paper. Whatever clue was given Paul, we do not

know, but when he discerned that she was demon possessed, he turned and cast the demon out of her. This, of course, ended her owners' income from her services. Enraged, they turned to lying to the rulers of the city, accusing Paul and Silas by saying, **"These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, and teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans."** Paul and Silas were then stripped of their clothes, beaten, and thrown into prison. The jailer was charged to keep them safely. Being so charged, the jailor cast them into the inner prison with no access to the outside. We cannot imagine their situation, for prisons in those days were cold, dark, damp, and infested with all kinds of vermin. The floors, walls and, sometimes, the ceilings were of stone. Not only were they cast into prison, but their feet were locked in stocks.

- c. Acts 16:25-34 As was mentioned before, God has strange ways of meeting our needs. They were extremely sore and bleeding from their beating; they were cold and extremely uncomfortable on the stone floor; their ankles were probably rubbed raw from the stocks, but they **"Prayed and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them."** We would probably have been groaning and crying to God for deliverance, but they used their circumstances to win more to Christ. Although the text does not say it, when the earthquake came which could have set them free, the prisoners all stayed in their cells and Paul and Silas did not try to escape. The jailer, charged with the safe keeping of the prisoners, was just about to kill himself by falling on his sword, when Paul cried out, **"Do thy self no harm: for we are all here."** The jailor obtained a light and sprang in before Paul and Silas. As he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas, he brought them out of the cell and said, **"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"** We do not know what the jailer meant by his question; whether he meant, "what must I do to be saved from be executed by my superiors by letting my subjects escape?" or whether he meant, "What must I do to be saved spiritually. Whatever he meant, Paul and Silas took advantage of the opportunity by replying, **"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."** The Scriptures tell us that the following opportunities were afforded them because they walked by faith and not by sight: (1) They preached the Gospel to the jailer, and to his whole household. (2) The jailor took them that night and washed their stripes. (3) The jailer and his household were baptized. (4) The jailer and his household fed them at their own table. (5) The jailer and his household all rejoiced, believing in God.
2. Act 16:35-40 The next morning the magistrates (rulers of the City) sent the sergeants to tell the jailer to let Paul and Silas go free, and the jailer told Paul, **"Now therefore, depart and go in peace,** but Paul said to them, **"They have beaten us openly, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out."** The sergeants told the magistrates what Paul had said, and they feared greatly when they heard that they were Romans. The

magistrates then came and begged them to come out and to leave the city. Paul, Silas, and Timothy then came out of the prison, went to the home of Lydia, comforted the brethren, and departed.

- C. Acts 17:1-9 Paul, Silas and Timothy at Thessalonica: Thessalonica was originally called Therma, but the name was changed to Thessalonica, named after the sister of Alexander the Great. It is the second most important City in European Turkey today, second only to Constantinople. It was situated on the Aegean seacoast southwest of Philippi, on the main highway from Rome to the whole region north of the Aegean Sea; thus, most important to the spread of the Gospel.
1. After passing through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica where they ministered in the Synagogue for three Sabbath Days. After Paul preached the Gospel for three Sabbaths, a number of the Jews, a multitude of the Greeks, and several of the chief women became believers. Both I and II Thessalonians indicate that the Church at Thessalonica was made up predominantly of Gentile believers. Immediately the Church was subjected to great persecution; both from unbelieving Jews, and from the unbelieving Greeks.
 2. Acts 17:5-10a A number of the unbelieving Jews consorted together to oppose Paul and his party by stirring up the people. They gathered unto them a number of people of the baser sort to do their bidding. They found a man named Jason who was a follower of Christ, and drew him out before the people crying, **“These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.”** They thought to have found Paul, Silas and Timothy at Jason’s house because Jason had received and housed them, but when they did not, moved by envy, they settled for Jason and a few other believers. In order to get the people stirred up, they simply lied by saying that the Christians taught there was another King other than Caesar. Of course, Jesus is King of Kings, but Paul did not set Jesus against Caesar. While the Jews hated Caesar and the Roman oppression, the unbelieving Jews knew that this was something that would stir up the Greeks and Romans. They finally took security (similar to bail money) and let Jason and the others go. The new believers sent Paul, Silas, and Timothy away by night for their safety. When we deal with first and second Thessalonians we will find that the Thessalonian Christians, in spite of terrible persecution, stayed true in every respect, except that they had trouble understanding the doctrines of the rapture and the second coming of Christ.
- D. Acts 17:10b-15 Paul, Silas, and Timothy at Berea: The brethren at Thessalonica sent Paul and his evangelistic party away to Berea by night for their safety.
1. In Berea, Paul and Silas preached in the Synagogue and were well received, the Bereans being more noble (diligent and knowledgeable) in that they searched the Old Testament Scriptures daily to make sure that what they were hearing from Paul and Silas was in perfect keeping with the Scriptures.
 2. Notice in each of these three cities, the mention of the women who believed, as well as the men. A great number of both Jews and Greeks received Christ at Berea, but when a great number of unbelieving Jews from Thessalonica heard that Paul and his party were at Berea, they came and stirred up the unbelievers as they had at Thessalonica. All the new believers at Berea sent Paul away by sea at night to Athens, alone, while Silas and Timothy stayed in

Macedonia to help get these three new Churches well grounded and leadership appointed.

E. Acts 17:16-34 Paul at Athens: Athens was located in southern Greece which was called Achaia at that time. It was the most “superstitious” (religious) city of the entire Roman Empire. They had built and worshipped at altars to every known god. They had even built an altar to the “Unknown god.” For the documented story of the altar to the unknown god, read “Eternity In Their Hearts” by missionary, Don Richardson, author of “Peace Child” and “Lords of the Earth.” Paul was so moved by the wholesale idolatry of Athens that he disputed with the Jews in the Synagogue, and with the devout Greeks daily in the streets. Hearing of this “new religion,” the philosophers of the Stoics and the Epicureans took Paul to Areopagus so they hear for themselves what this new doctrine was. It is important to note that Paul preached **Jesus** and the **Resurrection**. At this point we need some definitions:

1. **Stoics** – The Stoics and the Epicureans were opposite philosophies which had resulted from the fall of higher speculation during the height of the Age of Philosophy in Greece before their fall to Rome. The Stoics were organized by Zeno about 280 B.C. The Stoics derived their name from the painted “portico” (stoa) at Athens where he taught. “They held that God and the earth were power and its manifestation, matter being a passive ground in which dwells the divine energy. Their ethics were a protest against moral indifference, and to live in harmony with nature, conformably with reason and the demands of universal good, and in the utmost indifference to pleasure, pain, and all external good or evil was their fundamental maxim.” *“American Encyclopedia”* As far as Christ and the Gospel were concerned, they believed that Jesus Christ was something more than man, but something less than God. The doctrine of the resurrection was rejected by them and thought impossible. Their teachings were very much in keeping with the present-day New Age movement.
2. **Epicureans** – They derived their name from Epicurus (342-271 B.C.). His teachings found wide acceptance in Asia Minor and Alexandria, Egypt in the period from 95 to 50 B.C. The objective of Epicurus was to find in Philosophy, a guide to happiness. True pleasure, and not absolute truth was the end at which he aimed; experience, and not reason the goal on which he relied. It is obvious that a system thus framed would degenerate by a natural descent into materialism; and in this form Epicurism was the popular philosophy at the beginning of the Christian era. When Paul addressed the Stoics and the Epicureans in Athens, these two antagonistic philosophies were the generally accepted explanation of what life was all about. We can understand how foreign the Gospel of Christ sounded to these philosophers. This philosophy could be boiled down to, “Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die.” Of the two, it seems that, for lack of the Gospel, the second philosophy is that which America has accepted and called the “good life.”
3. **Areopagus** – This is just another name for Mars Hill where the Philosophers of Athens met to discuss any new idea or teaching which they had encountered. It was, and the ruins are, located on the top of a high hill in the midst of the City of Athens.
4. Paul stood in the midst of Mars Hill and told the philosophers that they were

too superstitious. He had beheld all the multitudes of altars to false gods, and had sighted the one to the unknown god. This he took and used to introduce them to the unknown God in the person of Christ. He denounced idols and gods made with men's hands. He was fairly well received until he came to the subject of the resurrection of Christ from the dead, but some mocked at that point and others said, **"We will hear thee again of this matter."** At this point Paul departed from them. However, some believed and followed Paul, such as Dionysius, the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris, and others.

- F. Acts 18:1-18 Paul at Corinth: There is no Scripture record of a Church being established at Athens, nor is there any record of any Pauline Epistles being written to the believers at Athens. The first verse of chapter 18 simply says that Paul left Athens after these things and went to Corinth. I may very well be wrong, but I believe that Paul was very discouraged at this point. The reasons I believe this are as follows: (1) Paul was by himself, although he met and got acquainted with Aquila and his wife Priscilla. (2) He reverted back to a trade he had learned from his father when he was young, tent-making. (3) He only reasoned (debated) with the Jews and Greeks in the Synagogue on the Sabbath days, when he was in the habit of preaching publicly daily. (4) Christ came to him in the night and encouraged him (18:9, 10) saying, **"Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city."** Prior to Christ coming and speaking to him in a vision, there were other things God had done to encourage him. When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia Paul got busy preaching daily, but I personally think he was still discouraged. He got busy preaching daily when Silas and Timothy came because he did not want to appear discouraged in their presence. No Christian leader wants to be a poor testimony before his fellow Christians. Paul could handle being stoned and left for dead; he could handle being beaten and jailed; he could handle being shipwrecked and spending a day and a night in the deep, but he was not accustomed to having people mock him and just walk away. When God came to him in the person of Christ in a vision in the night, and encouraged him, it seemed to restore his zeal and energy for the work.
1. The Jews at Corinth mostly rejected Paul's ministry, so Paul stated to them that their blood was on their own heads; he would turn to the Gentiles.
 2. Paul went to dwell at the home of a man named Justus whose house was joined to the Synagogue. Crispus, the ruler of the Synagogue, along with his whole family, trusted the Lord, and many others became believers when they heard about Crispus and his family. These were all baptized. Paul remained in Corinth for a year and a half, teaching the new believers, and Corinth became one of the largest and most influential of the Churches other than the first Church at Jerusalem. Although we do not hear of any more ministry by Paul or others at Athens, it was close enough to Corinth that believers from Athens could worship with the Church at Corinth.
 3. When Gallio was deputy (Roman appointed governor) of Achaia, some of the unbelieving Jews brought Paul before him and accused Paul of teaching contrary to the Law. Gallio cared nothing for this and would have no part with it.
 4. Then some of the unbelieving Greeks brought Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue before Gallio and beat him before the Judgment Seat, but

Gallio paid no attention to it.

5. Paul stayed a while longer, teaching and preaching, but finally took Aquila and Priscilla and sailed for Syria. We are not told what vow Paul had upon him, but he had shaved his head at Cenchrea. He left Aquila and Priscilla at Ephesus and spent some time there reasoning with the Jews in the Synagogue. Telling the Jews there that he must needs keep the feast in Jerusalem (perhaps the Passover), he sailed for Caesarea, went up to Jerusalem, reported to the Church there, and then left for Antioch in Syria. This ends the second missionary journey.

- G. **PAULINE EPISTLES #1 AND #2: While at Corinth on this second missionary journey, Paul wrote I Thessalonians and II Thessalonians. While he waited alone at Corinth, there were some questions that arose at Thessalonica concerning the rapture and the second coming of Christ. When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia they told Paul of these questions, and Paul wrote First Thessalonians. Evidently he sent Timothy back with this Epistle, but there were still some questions about the second coming of Christ. Paul then wrote II Thessalonians and sent it by Timothy. First Thessalonians deals with both issues, but is more about the rapture. II Thessalonians deals with both, but is much heavier on the second coming of Christ.**

VIII. Acts 18:23-21:17 – Paul’s third missionary journey:

- A. The turn around between the end of the second missionary journey and the beginning of the third missionary journey is so brief that it is easy to miss it. The second journey ends with 18:22 and the third begins with 18:23. Of course we do have the fact recorded that he checked in at both the Church in Jerusalem and the Church at Antioch.
 1. Dr Luke was often with Paul as both a personal physician, and a fellow worker. We can always tell when Luke is with Paul by the “we” and “us” passages. When Luke writes, “We did this or that” we know that he was with Paul. These passages are more numerous on the third journey, than on the previous two. It appears that Luke was with Paul most of the rest of the time until the end of the Book of Acts. I believe we can assume Luke was with Paul, Silas and Timothy when they began the third journey.
 2. They first visited the Churches of Galatia and Phrygia strengthening the disciples. Because of the urgency of the Epistle to the Galatians, I believe we can assume the Judaizers had not as yet reached the Galatian Churches until Paul was farther along on the third missionary journey.
 3. In the mean time, Apollos, an eloquent orator, and quite knowledgeable in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus where Paul had left Aquila and Priscilla. This man was from Alexandria, Egypt and had been instructed in the things of the Lord, but knew only the Baptism of John the Baptist. Aquila and Priscilla took him and instructed him concerning the Baptism by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ by grace through faith, and when he was inclined to go into Achaia (in particular the City of Corinth), the brethren sent letters urging the brethren there to receive him. When he arrived there, he helped the brethren and mightily convinced the Jews, showing them from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.
 - a. We may wonder why Paul, up until this point, did so little

evangelization in western Asia Minor, but most Christians are not aware of the fact that the Apostle John planted most of the Churches in western Asia Minor. He may have even been the one who planted the Church at Ephesus. Although Paul had visited Ephesus on his way back to Jerusalem on the second missionary journey, we read nothing of his having ministered there up until this point.

4. Acts 19:1-41 Paul at Ephesus: Paul and his party arrived at Ephesus at this time. Paul and his evangelistic party disputed with the Jews for some three months in Ephesus until the opposition became so great that he and his fellow workers spent two full years training disciples in the School of Tyrannus so that through them, all of Asia Minor heard the Gospel. If we include another couple of months for the other incidents in Ephesus, I think we can say Paul and his fellow workers spent at least two and a half years in Ephesus.

B. Acts 19:1-19:41 Incidents in Ephesus:

1. Paul and his company found twelve men who had believed on Christ, but had not received the Holy Spirit. This presents a situation which has been a point of controversy in Christianity throughout its history. When does a Christian receive the Holy Spirit? is it a separate act of grace? and what does a Christian do to receive the Holy Spirit?

- a. If we carefully study accurately recorded Church history we will find that, during the Apostolic Period, the Holy Spirit came upon the believer by the laying on of the Apostles' hands when a person believed. We do not read of this being the case with the believers after the death of the Apostle John, the last of the twelve to die. There were no Apostles in the New Testament sense after the end of the first century. I Corinthians 12:13 tells us, **"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."** Romans 8:9-11 also add, **"But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you."** It is clear then that during the Apostolic age the Holy Spirit was imparted by the laying on of the Apostles' hands, but after the Church was well established and all the Apostles were dead, the Holy Spirit came to dwell in the believer as soon as he or she was saved. After the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in us at the time of our salvation, He also seals us in Christ; Ephesians 1:13, 14, **"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise."** After Paul explained the difference between the water baptism of John the Baptist, and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ, these men were then baptized with the Holy Spirit and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. According to I Corinthians 13:8-10, there were three revelation gifts before the completion of the Canon of inspired

Scripture. We must remember that it was not until about 48 A.D. that any of the inspired New Testament Books were written. God used Tongues (revelation in other languages, used only with a translator), Prophecy, and Knowledge (of the Old Testament Scriptures) to enlighten the early Church. In I Corinthians 13:8-10 we find that these three gifts come to an end when “...**that which is perfect is come, then that which in part shall be done away.**” The perfect and complete Canon of New Testament Scripture was not gathered and accepted by the Church until the very early fourth century A.D. The speaking in other languages they had never learned, and the prophesying in the early Church were simply signs by which the early Christians could know that others were saved. The revelation gifts are not operative today. See Revelation 22:18, 19.

2. Paul, Silas and Timothy preached and debated with the Jews in the Synagogue for three months, but it seems that the longer they ministered in the Synagogue, the harder the hearts of some unbelieving Jews became. The opposition became so great that he finally moved the believers to the School of Tyrannus.
3. Evidently Paul had quite a following of both Jewish and Gentile Christians that he moved to the School of Tyrannus. We are not told in the Scriptures what kind of a school this was, or how Paul came to be able to use it. The presumption was that Tyrannus himself was a Greek who, before becoming a believer, was a Greek teacher of Philosophy. We do know that if a missionary today was to set aside his ministry as Paul did in this case, to teach a group of new believers for two years, his mission board would probably bring him home from the field. However, we see the results were that all of Asia Minor heard the Gospel through these whom Paul had trained. They accomplished much more than Paul and his evangelistic party could have accomplished in many years among both Jews and Greeks.
4. God worked many miracles of healing through Paul so that people began to bring handkerchiefs or aprons to Paul to touch, so that when they laid them on their bodies they were healed. Many have tried to continue this practice as a gimmick in their ministry, but this practice is not seen in Church history after the “Apostolic” period. The Book of James, in chapter 5, gives us the New Testament procedure to follow for healing today. However, few practice it, but simply go running to the doctor when they are ill. However, James does not say that the Elders of the Church go looking for the sick, but that the sick are to call for the Elders of the Church to come to them.
5. Some of the Jews who wandered from place to place acting as exorcists tried casting out demons in the name of Jesus Christ as did Paul. Seven sons of one named Sceva tried this on a man, saying, “**We adjure you by Jesus Christ who Paul preacheth.**” The demon in the man said, “**Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?**” The demon possessed man then attacked them and sent them running into the street, naked and wounded. This brought great fear to both the Jews and the Greeks nearby so that Jesus Christ was glorified. Many of those who dabbled in the occult brought their books and burned them. Many who believed on Christ came and confessed and repented. The name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

6. It must have been about this time that Paul received word by way of the household of Cloe in Corinth, of the problems that had arisen there. Paul was anxious to get to Corinth, but he was forced to write to them instead. He speaks in I Corinthians of a previous letter he had written to them. This letter was not preserved for us. Our first Corinthians is actually the second letter he wrote to them concerning these problems. If we list the Pauline Epistles Chronologically, first Corinthians is the third, I and II Thessalonians being the first two, written on the second missionary journey from Corinth.
 7. One other incident of importance leads us to Paul's departure from Ephesus: In 19:21, 22 we are told of Paul's planned itinerary. He wanted to go through Macedonia and Achaia, and if at all possible to visit Rome, but there was trouble at Ephesus. The people of the city were stirred up about Paul's preaching of the Gospel. Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought great prophets to all who were of that craft. They saw the Gospel as a threat to their income and rounded up the people of Ephesus in the theatre and shouted their opposition to Paul and the followers of Christ. The town clerk had to subdue the crowd to save the lives of the Christians.
 8. **PAULINE EPISTLE #3 I Corinthians: Written from Ephesus on the third missionary journey to meet the many problems which had arisen in the Church at Corinth. Paul wrote in I Corinthians 1:11, "For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Cloe, that there are contentions among you." Paul also wrote in I Corinthians 16:9 of the reason he had not already come to them. He said, concerning his situation in Ephesus, "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries."**
- C. Paul in Macedonia on the third missionary journey: Paul had written I Corinthians from Ephesus, but had not received a reply as to its effectiveness. Growing anxious about the situation in Corinth, he left Ephesus and went into Macedonia to see if he could meet Timothy and Erastus whom he had sent with the I Corinthian letter, returning with some word as to its effectiveness. When he met Timothy and Erastus returning with good news he wrote II Corinthians from there.
1. **PAULINE EPISTLE # 4: II Corinthians was written from somewhere in Macedonia in reply to good news brought by Timothy and Erastus as to the Corinthians' response to our I Corinthians. The news was good and II Corinthians is much more conciliatory than was I Corinthians.**
- D. Paul continued on to the south and arrived at Corinth, the last stop outbound on the third missionary journey. In Acts 20:2, 3 we read, **"And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece, and there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia."** During his three month stay in Corinth he wrote two more epistles, in some ways, the two most important ones he wrote. Although the first is much shorter than the second, they are on the same subject, and establish the theme, in some ways, for all the Pauline Epistles. They are as follows:
2. **PAULINE EPISTLE # 5: Galatians was written during Paul's three month stay in Corinth at the end of the third missionary journey. Word had come to him that the Judaisers had reached the Galatian Churches and had spread a false doctrine of a combination of Law and Grace.**

Galatians is one of three New Testament books that contain the phrase, "...the just shall live by faith." Grace became Paul's trademark in all of his epistles. The three books are, Galatians, Romans, and Hebrews. Galatians has only six chapters, but it is very strong, and very clear on the subject of "...the just shall live by faith." It and Romans are Paul's strongest books doctrinally. The emphasis is on salvation by grace through faith alone. Almost immediately after completing the Book Galatians, Paul wrote Epistle # 6, the Book of Romans.

3. **PAULINE EPISTLE # 6: The Book of Romans was also written during those three months Paul was at Corinth on his third missionary journey. It is the greatest doctrinal masterpiece of the New Testament, and in many ways, the eighth chapter is the pinnacle of the Book. Almost all of Paul's epistles are arranged the same way: the first half is doctrinal, while the second half is application of the doctrinal truths; but none so much as the Book of Romans.** We assume that Paul got the problems solved at Corinth while there for those three months, since there was not, as far as we know, another Pauline epistle written to that great, and very strategic Church.
4. From Corinth to Assos: Knowing that some of the unbelieving Jews were planning to kill him as he got ready to sail to Syria, he decided to travel overland by way of Macedonia by himself; while Sopater of Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, Gaius and Timothy of Derbe, and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia Minor went on ahead and met him at Troas. Paul took ship in Philippi and sailed to meet them at Troas. He spent seven days. On the first day of the week (Sunday) Paul met with the brethren and preached to them far into the night. A young man by the name of Eutychus was sitting in a third level window. As Paul preached late into the night, Eutychus fell asleep and fell from the window to the ground, and was taken up dead. Paul went down and fell on him, embracing him and said, **"Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him."** The young man was brought in alive, and everyone was greatly comforted. Paul, who had made his journey on foot thus far was taken in at Assos where he planned to meet those who went by ship.
5. Paul and the Elders from Ephesus: Paul planned to sail past Ephesus since he did not want to spend more time there, but he called for the Elders from Ephesus to meet him just south of Ephesus at Miletus where they put in to port. Here he had a very brief, but emotional meeting with the Elders; telling them that they would not see his face again. (They did, however, several years later during the time between the two Roman imprisonments).
6. Paul had his heart set on getting to Jerusalem in time for Pentecost. He knew that it might cost him his life to return there, but he did not seem to care. It seems, from close examination of the text, that he was set on preaching the matter of Law and Grace to the Jewish Christians. We will see later on that this is exactly what he tried to do, but did not get the chance. There were several warnings given to Paul by the Holy Spirit as he made his way back to Jerusalem, but he ignored them all. They sailed past Cyprus and landed at Tyre where they spent seven days with the Christian brethren, **(Warning #1) "...who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem."** They accompanied him out of the city where they knelt down

and had prayer. They then took ship and sailed to Ptolemais, saluted the brethren, and spent one day with them. The next day they sailed to Caesarea and entered into the home of Philip (the deacon become evangelist of Acts chapter eight) the evangelist. After they had been there a while, there came down to them from Judea, a prophet by the name of Agabus. **(Warning #2)** **“...he took Paul’s girdle and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.”** The brethren begged him not to go, but Paul answered, **“What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart?” “For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.”** And so they went up to Jerusalem where they were well received by James, the Bishop of the Churches of Jerusalem who said, **“Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are that believe; and they are all zealous of the Law: and they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews that are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come.”** There were four men there who had a vow upon them, and they persuaded Paul to purify himself and bear the Temple tax for them and for himself, and to go in with them into the Temple to fulfill their vow. Their purpose was to show the Jewish Christians that Paul, contrary to what they had heard, still walked in keeping with the Jewish customs, and kept the Law. The question arises, was it right for Paul to do what they asked of him, or did he grieve the Holy Spirit by doing that which was contrary to what he had been teaching to the Gentiles? “It is never right to do wrong in order to get a chance to do right.” Dr. Bob Jones Sr. I think we can clearly see by the events that followed, that what Paul did, was not God’s will, for God did not let him deal with this problem at this time. If Paul was the author of the Books of Galatians and Romans on the subject of salvation by Grace through faith alone, how could he, when among the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem, teach by his actions, something contrary? This cost Paul his opportunity to preach the matter of Law and Grace to the Christian Jews at Jerusalem. In his zeal, Paul had been careless with his testimony. Which one of us has not done the same? God was certainly not through with Paul, however. In fact, Paul’s greatest opportunities were still before him. One of the reasons it is thought that Paul wrote the Book of Hebrews is that he was about to be martyred, and this would be the last opportunity to teach the Jewish believers on the subject of Law and Grace; so he did it in the form of an epistle, in stead of in person. If he did write it, this is probably the reason he did not put his name on it.

7. As Paul was in the Temple with the other Jewish Christians fulfilling their vows, the unbelieving Jews thought he had brought Greeks into the Temple and defiled it and they nearly tore him apart before the Roman centurion and his troops rescued him. They were going to take him and beat him when Paul revealed that he was a Citizen of Rome, born and raised in Tarsus, a free city. With the centurion’s permission, he addressed the crowd of Jews, and they remained quiet until he spoke of being sent to the Gentiles. The Romans then took him into protective custody.

8. The next day the Centurion took Paul to the Jewish Sanhedrin where he sent the Council into a frenzy again when he cried out, **“Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.”** He had seen as soon as he entered that a good portion of the Council was made up of Sadducees, and the rest of Pharisees. The Pharisees believed in Angels, miracles, the entire Old Testament, and the resurrection of the dead. The Sadducees rejected all of these things, but they did control the Priesthood. As soon as Paul mentioned the resurrection, the Pharisees sided with him. Again the Romans had to rescue Paul.
9. More than forty Jews banded together, vowing that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. Their plan was to ask the Romans to bring him down to the council again the next day, and they would lie in wait and kill him as he was making his way. Paul’s sister’s son got wind of the plot and told the Roman centurion, causing the Romans to secret Paul out of the City by night with a heavy guard, to go to Caesarea to appear before Governor Felix. Felix was to Samaria what Pilate was to Judea. He also sent a letter, trying to show Felix what all had taken place. Felix read the letter from the Chief Captain of the Roman Garrison in Jerusalem and held Paul until his accusers could come and state their charges against him.
10. Five days later, Ananias, the High Priest, along with a hired orator named Tertullus arrived from Jerusalem and came before Felix, bringing charges against Paul that not only were not true, but could not be proven. When Paul had an opportunity to speak, he denied the allegations brought against him and turned the situation into an occasion to give his reasons for returning to Jerusalem, and to give his testimony from the beginning of his conversion. After hearing Paul’s defense, Felix decided to wait until the Chief captain from Jerusalem could come down, and assigned a centurion to keep Paul and give him liberty.
11. After a few days, Felix came with his wife, Drusilla to hear Paul. Felix was greatly convicted and said, **“Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.”** Felix hoped Paul would give him money to release him, and came frequently to converse with him, but after two years Porcius Festus came to take Felix’s position and Felix, in order to please the Jews, left Paul bound. It seems strange that none of the Christian brethren from Jerusalem sought after Paul’s welfare, or did anything to help him. Perhaps they were not given opportunity.
12. Three days after Festus arrived in the province he went up to Jerusalem where the Jews desired him to bring Paul there to be tried. Their plan was to kill him on the way. Festus insisted that Paul be kept at Caesarea and that any who would charge him with anything should come there. Several did so, making many charges which they could not prove, while Paul answered, neither against the Law of the Jews, nor against the Temple, nor against Caesar. When Festus asked Paul if he was willing to go to Jerusalem to stand trial, Paul said, **“I stand at Caesar’s judgment seat, where I ought to be judged.** This was Paul’s privilege as a Roman citizen, and it was the only thing he could do at this point to avoid being killed by the Jews. Festus replied, **“Hast thou appealed unto Carsar? Unto Caesar shalt thou go.”**

13. After a period of time, King Agrippa and Bernice came to Caesarea to greet Festus. King Agrippa was one of the Herods who had become the puppet King of the area including Samaria after the death of his father, Herod the Great. When he was told of Paul and that he had appealed to Caesar, he desired to hear him. King Agrippa, being an Edomite and descendant of Esau, would have been fairly well acquainted with the Law of God, and with all the events concerning Jesus. Paul's appearance before King Agrippa was a most dramatic incident in that Paul went into his past before his Damascus Road conversion, his conversion, and why the Jews were so strongly against him. After Paul had finished, King Agrippa said, **"Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."** Agrippa told Festus that Paul could have been set at liberty had he not appealed unto Caesar.
14. Chapter 27 of Acts contains most of the record of the trip by ship from Samaria to the Island of Melita, including the terrible storm, and the shipwreck on that Island. Today the island is called Malta, and is located just south of the much larger Island of Sicily, which, in turn, is just South of the toe of the peninsula of Italy. When they were all ashore from the wrecked ship, the people of the Island were very kind to them, and supplied their needs. The Chief man of the Island was named Publius, whose father was ill. God, through Paul, healed his father and many others on the Island. After three months on the Island of Melita, they were able to find passage on a ship of Alexandria that was going toward Rome. They put into port at a city called Putioli and went from there on foot. Some of the brethren from Rome heard of their coming and came to a place called The Three Taverns and met them to accompany them the rest of the way to Rome.
15. When they arrived in Rome they were delivered to the Captain of the guard, but Paul was allowed to stay by himself with a soldier to guard him. At the close of the Book of Acts we are told that Paul dwelt in his own hired house for two whole years, we assume, under house arrest, but all who wanted to see him were allowed to come to him freely. When Paul arrived in Rome he first called for all the Jewish brethren to come to him. To them he gave his testimony and preached Christ to them. Some believed, but many did not. Before their departure, Paul quoted an Old Testament prophecy to them from Isaiah 6:9, 10, saying, **"Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand. And seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."** He then informed them that he would go to the Gentiles with the Gospel. We assume from the closing greetings in the four Pauline Epistles written during this first imprisonment in Rome, that Paul was used of God to reach many for Christ during this first imprisonment, including many from Caesar's own household.

IX. PAUL'S FOUR PRISON EPISTLES: These were written during

- A. Paul's two full year imprisonment in Rome: #7 COLOSINIANS; #8 EPHESIANS; #9 PHILEMON; #10 PHILIPPIANS. Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon were written during the first year Paul was there and sent at the same time by the same messenger, while Philippians was written the next year and sent by a different messenger.

1. We do know that Paul was alone, and that no one stood with him at his hearing before Caesar at this first imprisonment, but he said that the Lord was with him. We also know that he was exonerated and released at the close of this first imprisonment.

B. THE PERIOD OF FREEDOM BETWEEN THE TWO ROMAN IMPRISONMENTS: THERE WERE TWO OF THE PASTORAL EPISTLES, #11 I TIMOTHY, AND #12 TITUS WRITTEN DURING THIS PERIOD. Just how long Paul was free during this time we are not certain, but we can come close. His first imprisonment in Rome was during 59/60 A.D., and his Martyrdom just outside of Rome at the close of the second time in prison at Rome was either late in 67 A.D., or early 68 A.D. At the least, he probably was free about seven years. We also know from these two epistles, some of the places he visited during this time.

1. From the first epistle to Timothy we know that Paul spent some time in Macedonia for he says in 1:3, **“As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine.”** We also learn from this verse that Paul had to have been in Ephesus to have left Timothy there as he continued on.
2. From Titus 1:5 we learn that Paul left Titus on the Island of Crete. In order to have left him there, Paul would have had to have been there himself. So we know that Paul spent some time evangelizing Crete. He may have stayed in Rome for a while after being released. By the time Paul left Rome there was undoubtedly an established Church at Rome other than in the home of Aquila and Priscilla.
3. Some suggest that Paul went on to Spain for a while, evangelizing there. We have no evidence of this in the Scripture record, but he had expressed a desire earlier to go to Spain.
4. There are even those who suggest that Paul went as far as the British Isles during this time. It is unlikely because of the time element but someone did, because the Gospel had been preached there early on in the beginnings of the Age of Grace.

X. PAUL’S ARREST AND HIS 13TH EPISTLE: #13 II TIMOTHY. If Paul wrote the Book of Hebrews it was written about the same time as II Timothy. It would have been Paul’s 14th preserved and inspired epistle.

- A.** Paul was taken into custody the second time for preaching that which did not agree with the pagan religions of the Roman Empire, and that there was another King to be worshiped instead of Caesar. The ruling Caesar at that time was the mentally deranged Christian-hater, Nero. He died not too far into the year 68 A.D., and both Paul and Peter were martyred under his reign at Rome about the same time. Peter was put to death in Rome itself, while Paul was taken out by the Tiber River, outside the City of Rome and beheaded. There is still to this day a stone arch at the place of Paul’s martyrdom that is call St. Paul’s Gate. Paul wrote at least II Timothy while awaiting the executioner. It is an expression of victory and satisfaction: it is a letter that lifts up the Lord Jesus Christ and speaks of His faithfulness.

THE PAULINE EPISTLES IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

EPISTLE	DATE	WHERE WRITTEN
I Thessalonians	51 A.D.	Written on the 2 nd missionary journey From Corinth
II Thessalonians	51 A.D.	Written on the 2 nd missionary journey From Corinth
I Corinthians	54/55 A.D.	Written on the 3 rd missionary journey from Ephesus
II Corinthians	54/55 A.D.	Written on the 3 rd missionary Journey from Macedonia
Galatians	56 A.D.	Written on the 3 rd missionary journey from Corinth
Romans	56 A.D.	Written on the 3 rd missionary journey from Corinth
Colossians	59/60 A.D.	Written from prison in Rome
Ephesians	59/60 A.D.	Written from prison in Rome
Philemon	59/60 A.D.	Written from prison in Rome
Philippians	60 A.D.	Written from prison in Rome
I Timothy	64 A.D.	Written from Macedonia between Imprisonments

Titus	64 A.D.	Written from Macedonia between Imprisonments
II Timothy	early 68 A.D.	Written from 2 nd imprisonment in Rome just before his death
If Hebrews?	Early 68 A.D.	Written from 2 nd imprisonment in Rome just before his death

*SECOND YEAR OF
NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES*
Volume II

THE PAULINE EPISTLES

Pioneer Baptist Bible College

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FIRST THESSALONIANS

Group I Book I

Authorship: The external evidence for the Pauline authorship of I Thessalonians is not as strong or as early as we might wish, but it is more than adequate. I Thessalonians is the first of Paul's Epistles which has been preserved for us in the Canon of inspired Scripture. Internal evidence is strong. The author twice calls himself Paul (1:1 and 2:18). The character of Paul is imprinted on the Epistle; his anxiety about his converts (3:1,2), his almost womanly tenderness (2:7), his joy when he hears from Timothy of the steadfastness of their faith (3:6,7), and his sympathy with them in their distress (4:13,18). The Epistle also agrees with the incidents of Paul's ministry in Thessalonica in the Book of Acts. Paul had been secreted away from Berea by night for his safety, but Silas and Timothy had remained in Macedonia. I believe he was disappointed at the reception he received at Athens when he preached on Mars Hill. Only a few were saved at Athens and, so far as we know, no Church was established there. He went on to Corinth alone where he met Aquila and Priscilla who were both tent makers and Christians and went to work making tents with them as he waited to hear from Timothy. Paul only taught in the Synagogue on the Sabbath until the rest of his evangelistic party came from Macedonia. When they came they brought encouraging news and discouraging news concerning the Church at Thessalonica: the good news was that they stood doctrinally firm in spite of the terrible persecution they endured. The bad news was that there was confusion in the Church at Thessalonica over the doctrines of the rapture and the second coming of Jesus Christ. Paul wrote I Thessalonians which deals with both issues, but is strongest on the rapture, as seen in chapter four. He sent the first letter by Timothy and waited to hear what their response was to it.

Date: This is the first of the Pauline Epistles. It was written from Corinth on the second missionary journey. Paul had crossed the Aegean Sea from Troas responding to the Macedonian call. With this came the establishment of three Churches: Philippi, where Paul and Silas were imprisoned and then released by an earthquake which brought about the conversion of the Philippian jailor, Thessalonica where unbelieving Jews stirred up trouble against Paul, and Berea where the unbelieving Jews from Thessalonica followed him to stir up more trouble against him. Paul had to be spirited away by night to Athens for his safety, but the remainder of his evangelistic party remained in Macedonia. In Athens he preached on Mars Hill and then went on to Corinth, nearby. Here he waited for his evangelistic party to rejoin him. In Corinth he was taken before Gallio, the Proconsul of Achaia in 52 AD. Gallio served as Proconsul in 51/52 AD and Paul was probably brought before him toward the end of his rule. Since the Book was written earlier, after Paul's arrival in Corinth, we date it at 51 AD. It was not until after Timothy returned with news of the effectiveness of the first letter that Paul wrote II Thessalonians, also from Corinth.

Purpose: Although they remained supportive of Paul and true to sound doctrine in other areas, the people of Thessalonica, being under great persecution, thought perhaps the tribulation period had come, and that by some means they had missed out on the rapture. Others thought the coming of the Lord for His own, was immediately at hand and had quit their jobs and were waiting for the rapture of the Church. Both first and second Thessalonians were written to address the doctrines of the rapture and the second coming of Christ. They are of great importance to the Church today.

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ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK OF I THESSALONIANS

Chapter 1 – The first chapter reveals Paul’s abundant commendation of the Thessalonians in spite of their difficulties concerning the doctrines of the Rapture and the Second Coming of Christ. Paul said that their testimony and their faithfulness to the things of God were so strong that he didn’t have to tell anyone anywhere; their testimony had gone before. He is very much moved by their faith and their labor of love in spite of the questions they had about the rapture and the second coming of Christ.

Vs 1-4 Sylus (Silvanus) and Timothy had just arrived at Corinth from Macedonia and were with Paul as he wrote. In this introduction we find two instances of the equality of the three persons in one God: (a) Paul says the Church at Thessalonica is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jesus Christ. (b) He says desires that they receive Grace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (Grace is Paul’s trademark).

Vs. 5-8 Among other things, three things stand out in this section which form a progression: (a) Paul’s ministry and entourage made such an impression on them that they (b) became followers of them and of the Lord in much affliction, but with joy (c) so that they became example to all that were in Macedonia and Achaia.

Vs. 9, 10 Two quotes bear out the message of these two verses: From Vs 9 we read, “**How ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God**” and from Vs 10 we read, “**and to wait for His Son from Heaven whom He raised from the dead.**” Vs 10 also presents us with proof that the Church will not go through the Tribulation Period when we read, “**..even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.**”

Chapter 2 – The second chapter begins with a reminder to the Thessalonians of the nature of the ministry Paul had in their midst.

Vs 1 From the very beginning of the ministry of Paul, Silus, and Timothy in Thessalonica, it had born fruit, and had not been pretentious. A ministry which bears fruit which remains has to be one which is genuine and consistent.

Vs 2-12 a. Paul reminded the Thessalonians that, even though he and the rest of his evangelistic team had suffered so much at Philippi, and had been so mistreated, they came directly to Thessalonica and preached the Gospel of Christ fearlessly. The intention here is to show them that persecution did not stop them, or turn them from their calling. (One of the problems at Thessalonica was that some thought, because of the persecution they were going through, they must be in the tribulation period of which Paul had told them, and that they had missed the rapture). Paul wanted to show them that persecution was not the tribulation period, but that it was something to be expected by those who stand for Christ.

Vs 3 Here are listed three things Paul said were not representative of their ministry among them: Deceit – At no time had they tried to deceive the Thessalonians. Uncleaness – There was absolutely nothing immoral or unclean in nature about their ministry among the Thessalonians. Guile – No one could accused Paul, Silus and Timothy of cunning or deceit or any form of trickery in their ministry; they had simply told them the truth.

Paul’s ministry had been one of selfless love for them and was marked by a devotion to others. Paul had been a model of ministerial conduct in their midst.

Vs 4 Instead, Paul says that since they were entrusted with God’s Holy and spotless Truth of the Gospel, in like fashion they delivered it to men. They did not preach to please men, but to please

God to whom they would have to answer.

Vs 5, 6 Paul said that they never used flattering words (as some preachers do with their congregations), nor did they use a cloak of covetousness; that is, they did not try to sway the hearers to gain advantage for themselves. They were not in this ministry to become rich nor obtain popularity. It was not about self, but about Christ and the Gospel. The whole of the spread of the Gospel by all the Apostles and disciples could have been brought into jeopardy by one man, or by one evangelistic team.

Vs 7, 8 The Greek word for “gentle” here means mild or careful as one would be careful in handling a new-born baby. In his preaching at Thessalonica, Paul was careful to be plain and simple so as not to leave them with misunderstanding of the important aspects of God’s Gospel. The word “nurse” in the context of this passage refers to a nursing mother starting her child, or children, as new-born babes, on breast milk. And yet there had been a misunderstanding on these two doctrines. Gently, and carefully, and patiently he is using this epistle to make it clear that his purpose is to clarify, and not rebuke. Paul demonstrates in verse eight that his purpose is not only to impart to them the Gospel, but to make known the extent of their love and concern by imparting their souls to them, that is, to not only clarify, but to do so in a motherly concern for their welfare.

Vs 9-12 Paul calls them to remember that when they were with them, they worked at night to support themselves, and worked by day at preaching the Gospel and getting the Church established so that they would not plant the Church at their expense. He wanted them to know, of course, what the Gospel cost Christ, but that the salvation they had brought to them was free. Paul calls to their memory the nature of his ministry among them in three characteristics: Holiness – All that they did among them was done in a godly manner; Justness – They were just and above reproach in all that they did among them; unblamably – Their ministry was above reproach. Previously, Paul used the relationship of mother and child; now he uses that of father and child. Here are three things which generally fall under the responsibility of the father in the family: They exhorted them – See Proverbs 22:6 (train up a child...); Comforted – Trials are often the making or breaking of a congregation, and the Thessalonians had more than their share of them. The reassure the Thessalonians again, Paul wrote this epistle; Charged – God will not demand more of His children than they are able to bear. We actually see more of Paul’s charge to the Thessalonians in II Thessalonians than in the first epistle. This is the sort of thing the coach does to his team when they are behind at half time. It is the sort of thing a commanding officer does for his troops when they face an overwhelming situation. All this, Paul says, was done so that they would walk (live) worthy of the Gospel which they had brought to them.

Vs 13-16 Paul expressed his thankfulness to God for the following things: (1) The Thessalonians had received the Word of God as such, and not as the word of man. This had brought about their genuine conversion. (2) They had become followers of the Churches with mostly Jewish congregations, however, they had also started experiencing the same kind of persecution the Jewish congregations had; that is, they were being persecuted not only by the Romans, but by their own countrymen. In the case of the Thessalonians, they were being persecuted by the unbelieving Jews and the unbelieving Gentiles. Paul reminds them that unbelieving Jews had not only killed the Lord Jesus Christ, but that they had killed the prophets before Him. He reminds them of his own experience at Thessalonica in that the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles tried to keep Paul and his team from preaching the Gospel to the Thessalonians. The whole purpose of this passage is to show the Thessalonians that persecution is to be expected when we embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, but that it does not constitute the experience of unbelievers in the tribulation period.

Vs 17, 18 Paul expressed his desire to come back to them in person, but he said, “**Satan hindered us.**” In this statement he is probably referring to the opposition Paul met with at Berea, Athens, and at Corinth. If Paul had returned to Thessalonica at that time, it would have been committing

suicide. The next best thing was to write to them and send it by Timothy.

Vs 19, 20 Paul reassures the Thessalonians by telling them that, when he stands at the Judgment Seat of Christ, they will be his hope, his joy, his crown of rejoicing. He closes this chapter by writing, **“For ye are our glory and joy.”**

Chapter 3 – Their faithfulness to the Lord and their consistent stand for Christ had been a great reward to Paul. The report which Timothy brought to him was not only a great relief, but was a tremendous encouragement. Paul then prays with thanksgiving for the faithfulness of the Thessalonians and that God might make it possible for him to go and see them soon.

Vs 1-10 Paul expressed his concern for the Church at Thessalonica, because of their persecution. For this cause, when he left Berea and went to Athens, he sent Timothy to see to their welfare. How pleasant was the news Timothy returned to him at Corinth. What a blessing it was to hear that, in spite of the persecution through which they were going, they remained doctrinally sound and true to Christ and His Word. In spite of the confusion over the doctrines of the rapture and the second coming of Christ they stayed true to the doctrines of their salvation. Paul prayed that he might soon see their face again and perfect their faith (I presume he is speaking of clarifying the doctrines that were confusing them).

Vs 11-13 In these three verses we have Paul’s prayer for the Church at Thessalonica. (1) Paul prays, **“Now God Himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.”** Paul, so far as we know, did not get back to Thessalonica until the third missionary journey. (2) Paul also prayed, **“And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:”** (3) **“..to the end He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His Saints.”** The second and third part of this prayer incorporates the greatest, and the second greatest commandments God has ever given us: To love God supremely, and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Chapter 4 – As is the case in most of the Pauline Epistles, the first part of the Epistle is doctrinal, while the last part is a practical application of the doctrinal truths. Chapter four challenges the Thessalonians to Holiness in the Lord, and outlines the characteristics which constitute a Holy life. He then emphasizes that the rapture of the Church is the believer’s hope, and that we need to live in the light of it.

Vs 1 Our walk is our manner of living. The Thessalonians had learned, both from watching Paul, Silas, and Timothy when they were present in Thessalonica, and from having read the first three chapters of this epistle. When the Christian knows what is right and does not do it, it is sin. Paul wanted the Thessalonians to not only practice what they had learned from them, but to practice it more and more. The things they had received from them were the four things the first Church Council had determined should be required of the Gentiles: (1) Abstain from things strangled. (2) Abstain from meat offered to idols. (3) Abstain from blood. (4) Abstain from fornication. The Law of God still serves two purposes for the Christian in this Age of Grace: (1) It shows us we are sinners saved by grace. (2) It gives us God’s perfect standard of righteousness which, although we cannot keep fully while in these corrupt bodies, it can still be our goal.

Vs 2-8 Paul makes a strong emphasis on holy living in these verses. Drawing upon the last of the four things the Church Council decided should be required of the Gentile believer, he makes it clear that the literal meaning of the word fornication should be used here. The Greek word is “pornea” and refers to any sexual impurity. Verse four is very impressively worded: How does one possess his vessel in sanctification and honor? Paul is sharing with us what the Holy Spirit desires of every Christian: He wants us to set our body (vessel) apart from the defilements of the world and unto

God so as to live a holy life. This honors God, and adds weight to the Christian's witness. Some newer Christians might not know what "the lust of concupiscence (passion)" is. This simply refers to anything that appeals to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. These are the only three avenues of temptation for man. See I John 2:15-17. God has "called" us to holiness (Christ-likeness). Verse eight tells us clearly that if this is not the desire of our spiritual man (new nature), then our spiritual man is still dead. There is a difference between temptation of the flesh and the desire of the new nature. The new nature is born of God and cannot sin, but the flesh wants to sin all the time. This is why the Christian needs to have on the whole armor of God all the time.

Vs 9-12 These verses have to do with brotherly love (love for all the brethren). I cannot write this next statement without turning off some hard-shelled Baptist, but, believe it or not, there are some people who are not Baptist, but are soundly saved. If they turned from their sin and trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior, and are not trusting in anything but the once for all blood atonement of Jesus Christ for their salvation, they are as saved as a fundamentalist, Biblicist Baptist who has done the same. Some of these folks put us to shame as far as holy living is concerned. I am a Baptist by conviction as long as Baptists believe and trust the Word of God for faith and practice. But I am not a Baptist. Holiness is a Bible doctrine, and God means for believers to live by it. Love is still a Bible doctrine, and God means for believers to live by it. Jesus gave this new commandment to all believers in John chapter thirteen the night before the crucifixion and He means for us to demonstrate it. There is a big lack of brotherly love in the Church today. Start loving and stop waiting to be loved. Verse twelve instructs us to live honestly before those who are without. When I was in the pastorate it was always hard for me to do business with a "Christian business man," for many times I got cheated. When an unsaved business owner knows he is dealing with a real Christian he will often make a special effort to be honest. Beloved, these things ought not so to be. Every Christian should be completely honest in every area of life.

Vs 13-18 Paul gives to the Thessalonians, and to us a beautiful picture of the rapture of the Church, what will happen, and the order in which the events will happen, in these verses. We will wait until we get to First Corinthians chapter fifteen before we discuss how we know when the rapture will take place, but let it suffice for now to say that it takes place before the tribulation period.

Vs 13 One of the problems which had surfaced in Thessalonica was that some of the Christians were troubled about loved ones who were believers, who had died since Paul was at Thessalonica, and they did not know what would happen to them when the rapture occurred. Paul wants them to be informed that they were with the Lord and their bodies were asleep in Christ. (We do not believe that the soul sleeps until the rapture. When a Christian dies physically the soul and spirit live on in a conscious state with the Lord, while the body sleeps, waiting for the resurrection which takes place at the rapture). The Christian sorrows when a loved one who is in the Lord passes away, but they do not sorrow as those whose loved one dies without Christ. See II Corinthians 5:1-9 and John 11:25, 26.

Vs 14 Our resurrection to life everlasting is dependent on our faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. According to I Corinthians 15:20, Christ is the first fruits of those who sleep in Christ. First fruits is a term used in relation to the harvest. The first fruits were brought to the Temple and given to the Levites as an indication of the quality and the quantity of the harvest. Christ's resurrection is assurance to the believer, not only of the fact that we also will have an identical resurrection to a new and perfect body, but that it will be identical to that of Christ's resurrection body in nature and extent. If Christ had not risen from the dead, we would indeed be of all men most miserable.

Vs 15 Paul, by Divine Revelation, writes that we Christians who are still alive in this life when the rapture takes place shall not prevent (precede) those whose bodies are in the grave already.

Vs 16, 17 The order of events: (1) The Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, (2) with the voice of the archangel, (3) and with the trumpet of God: (4) Those believers who have died

physically before the rapture will have their bodies raised first, then, (5) we who are still alive in these bodies will instantly get our new bodies and we will all be caught up together in (the) clouds (clouds of believers) to meet the Lord in the air, (6) and so shall we (for) ever be with the Lord.

Vs 18 This is the message Paul sent to the Thessalonians to comfort them concerning those who already had gone to be with the Lord in soul and spirit. And what comfort this is. We do not know what wonders and glories await us in the presence of the Lord, but we can rest assured that they are far beyond our wildest dreams. To God be the glory.

Chapter 5 – This last chapter is made up of exhortations to their unity and harmony, as well as their complete preparation.

Vs 1 In Chapter five Paul shifts from the rapture to the second coming of the Lord which he calls “The Day of The Lord.” I believe he makes this sudden change of subject to remind them that the Rapture must take place first, then the tribulation period, and then, the Second Coming of Christ to the Earth (The Day of The Lord). The Rapture is called “The Day of Christ,” the second coming of Christ as “The Day of The Lord,” and the Battle of Armageddon which concludes the Tribulation Period as “The Day of God.”

Vs 2 When the Day of the Lord takes place, it is sudden and without warning. Matthew 24 pictures it as being similar to the coming of the flood of Noah’s day. Foolish old Noah worked on his giant ship far from any water to float it while preaching a message of warning to the inhabitants of the earth for one hundred and twenty years. Everyone kind of got used to him and all things continued as usual. One day it started to rain and the door to the ship was closed, and Noah and his family were absent. Likewise, for who knows how long in the Age of Grace, thousands of preachers will preach salvation only through Jesus Christ, people will become accustomed to it and will take it in stride. The world will laugh and very few will heed the warning. Business will continue as usual. But one day the preachers will not be preaching any more; the church parking lots will be empty on the Lord’s Day, and those pesky Christian neighbors will evidently have moved out. Those Christians at work will not come to work on Monday and the traffic will be a little thinner on the freeway, and the news will all be about some great world leader who has arrived on the scene with a wonderful new plan for a one-world-government. The liberals will be happy because everyone was turning in their guns and all the borders were open for everyone to go anywhere. But then there was that new law that everyone had to register with the new one-world-government and get that pesky chip planted in their hand and forehead. It will all happen so suddenly; and what about all those missing people?

Vs 3 **“For when they shall say, Peace and safety...”** If we would tune our ears to the peoples of the world today we would find that they are crying out for someone who can promise them peace and safety; and most of them are willing to settle for it at any price. In the last two to three decades we have surrendered many of our freedoms to obtain safety. We are living in a violent world, but peace and safety are not worth the freedoms purchased for us in America at such a high price. We are told in this verse that when people begin to cry peace and safety, then **“..sudden destruction cometh upon them.”** The sudden destruction that is coming is the second coming of Jesus Christ to the earth. A number of years ago a famous Christian song writer wrote a song entitled, “The King Is coming,” and in it the author pictured everyone happily laying down their work to run and greet the Lord as He comes back to establish the millennial reign of Christ on earth. If we want to see how it is really going to be, let us take the time to read Revelation 19:11-21; and Matthew 24:29-51. All the redeemed will come back with Him (in clouds). This admonition is written to Israel, because the Church will have been taken up in the rapture. The warning, however, serves well for all mankind. Gentiles not in Christ, who have had opportunity to hear the Gospel before the rapture, and have spurned it, will not have another chance during the tribulation period because,

“And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”
Second Thessalonians 2:11, 12.

Vs 4, 5 Believers are not in darkness (ignorance) concerning the Day of the Lord because the Holy Spirit has warned them and they have come to Christ and are saved. Here is another verse that confirms the fact that the Church will not go through the tribulation period. Darkness always represents ignorance, while light speaks of knowledge of the Truth.

Vs 6-8 Obviously Paul is teaching in these verses that the Church is not going to go through the tribulation period. He has given every believer light concerning the order of events, and He has given every believer the faith to believe that light, and love for the one who gave it. Those who are yet in darkness (unsaved), sleep in their darkness, and are drunken with their lack of understanding. In the light of the fact that ingested alcohol attacks the frontal lobe of the brain where man makes moral decisions and retains knowledge of right and wrong, the spiritualization here is quite fitting. In ignorance of what is coming, the willfully lost ignore it and sleep through the warnings. See John 16:7-15. For the believer, here is a cross reference with Ephesians chapter six and the spiritual armor. Those who walk in the light (saved) heed the warnings and are ready. See Matthew 25:1-13.

Vs 9-11 Here is another strong verse assuring the Christians that they will not go through the tribulation period. **“For God hath not appointed us to wrath...”** The whole purpose of the tribulation period is to punish those who refused to receive the one who drank the cup of the Father’s wrath for all mankind. While there will be those who are saved in the tribulation period, the saved (Church from the Age of Grace) will not go through the out-pouring of God’s wrath. Christ has appointed us to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. Referring back to chapter four, verses sixteen through eighteen he says, **“...that whether we wake or sleep , we should live together with Him..”** The whole purpose of verses 1-11 is to

provide comfort for those who thought they had missed the rapture and were in the tribulation period because of the persecution they were experiencing.

Vs 12-24 These verses make up a list of exhortations that constitutes a parenthetical passage. The whole list is supposed to be recognized as the will of God. The Phrase, **“For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you”** applies to this whole list of exhortations. It is as though Paul stops in the middle of the list and says, “now listed to me, because I am telling you the will of God for you.” The whole Bible reveals the will of God for the saved, and for the lost, but there are certain passages which state they are the will of God.

Vs 12, 13a In the fourth chapter of Ephesians Paul writes, **“And he gave some, Apostles; and some, Prophets; and some, Evangelists; and some, Pastors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ:”** These are the office gifts of Christ to the Saints when He ascended up on high to the Right Hand of the Father.

a. These are to be known of the Saints to whom they minister. That is, they are to be recognized for their labor in the lives of the Saints.

b. They are to be highly esteemed for their work’s sake. The Saints to whom they minister should hold them in high regard for their prayer for the Saints and their labor to make the Word of God known and understood by them. (See Acts 6:4)

Vs 13b If the Saints will do these things, and will give careful attention to the ministry of these who possess the office gifts and are faithful in exercising them in their midst for their benefit, it will cause them to be at peace one with another.

Vs 14, 15 This portion of the list of things which are the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you may seem to go without saying, but all too often it goes without doing!

a. **“Warn them that are unruly.”** If Christian brothers and sisters were looking out for each other’s spiritual welfare, they would have the boldness to, in love, give a helpful warning to their brothers and sisters in Christ when they are out of order, publicly, or privately. We should not pry in the personal business of others, but we should be watchful for those who are disorderly in their Christian life.

b. **“Comfort the feeble-minded”** (not mentally incompetent, but weak in their knowledge of spiritual matters). These are those who know little about the Christian life because of being new Christians, or because no one ever took the time to disciple them after they were saved. How does one comfort them? Ignorance of spiritual truths often produces fear in the life of a new, or an undisciplined Christian. Instruction in the Word will alleviate that fear. The first way to cure that is to be in Church regularly to hear the Word of God taught. But they also need personal attention on a regular basis to show them how to become strong in the Lord. This means stronger Christians, under a Pastor’s guidance, taking on the task of discipleship with the new or weak Christian.

c. **“Support the weak.”** Help those along who are having a hard time having their personal devotional time, or who do not know how to study the Bible on their own, or any other number of reasons that a fellow-Christian might be weak in their Christian life. To support them is to help them learn how to become strong.

d. **“Be patient toward all men.”** Christians who may not have been Christians very long, or those who are weak in their faith, etc., take more patience than those who are strong. Take all the time in helping another Christian to grow as is needed. Don’t rush them or try to make them super-Christians over night.

e. **“See that none render evil for evil unto any man.”** Under the dispensation of the Law Israel was instructed in certain cases to return “an eye for an eye” and “a tooth for a tooth,” but under the dispensation of grace Jesus taught us to return good for evil: we are to love our enemies: we are to do good to those who spitefully use us, etc. When was the last time you saw that practiced? Now we even battle with road rage, and shoot up the school because our girl-friend dropped us for another. What a Christ-less society we are living in. It is way past time for Christians to get rid of a get-even attitude. I Corinthians chapter six teaches us to suffer wrong rather than to take our brother to court. The Church is to judge between brethren rather than to air differences between brethren in a godless court of godless judges.

f. **“Ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.”** Can you imagine a persecuted missionary pulling out a gun and killing someone who is giving him a hard time? “O,” we say, “that would never be right.” We are missionaries for Christ wherever we go. We should do right, and have a right attitude in every situation regardless of whether others treat us right or not. That is not weakness: that is strength. Too many Christians today have an “Old West,” “Fast on the Draw” philosophy.

Vs 16 “Rejoice evermore.” After being beaten and put in stocks in a cold, damp dungeon, Paul and Silas prayed and sang Psalms. It resulted in the conversion of the Philippian jailer and an apology from the City Council. In addition to that, all the prisoners heard them. I wonder how many of the prisoners who were in the same prison that night might be in Heaven because Paul and Silas prayed and sang Psalms that night instead of moaning and complaining. We never know who is watching and taking note of how we react to a particular situation.

Vs 17 “Pray without ceasing.” This does not mean we crawl around on our knees all day mumbling prayers; nor does it mean we drive down the freeway with our eyes closed in prayer. It means we should have a regular and consistent prayer life, not an off again, on again prayer life. Prayer is the means by which we speak to God; the Word of God is the means by which God speaks to us. We should make a time to pray each day if at all possible. We should have a specific place

where we can get alone with God; a place which is our “prayer closet,” so to speak. If we cannot pray at the same time each day, try to make it as close to the same time as possible. Make a prayer list and mark the date you started praying for each thing on the list: then mark the date when that prayer was answered. This will strengthen your faith. Try to not let a day go by without spending time with the Lord. When the alarm goes off in the morning, sit up on the side of the bed and pray for a few seconds asking the Lord to guide you through the day by His Holy Spirit. In addition to your special prayer time with the Lord each day, pray short prayers about things as you go through the day. The more time you spend with God each day, the closer your relationship will become.

Vs 18 This is the verse in which we find the parenthetical phrase which applies to the whole list. **“In everything give thanks: (for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.)”** When we get to this verse, the question always arises, “How can we give thanks for tragedies, trials, disappointments, etc.? In 1959 our chorale group went from Phoenix to California to make an album. There were several car loads of them. Two car loads stayed over for another day in Long Beach and drove home that night. Not far from Phoenix the last car load hit a bridge railing and four fine Christian young people were killed. The driver of the car was the next to oldest child in a family of ten children. His father had injured his back and this son, who was in Bible College, training for the ministry, was going to work to support the family that summer while his father was trying to recover. The director of the chorale group and I each took two of the homes to go to early the next morning to inform the parents of the death of their child. When I went to the home of the driver, the father was lying on a mat on the floor because of his back. His wife had just come home from the hospital after having their tenth child. It was a hot June morning and they only had an evaporative cooler. It was probably close to 85 to 90 degrees in the house and they had all the windows open. The mother met me at the door with their new baby in her arms and told me that he husband was in the bedroom. I did not know that they had already received news of their son’s death. I was dreading having to break this terrible news, but it had to be done. As I knelt down by him on the floor, I started to speak, but before I could say anything, He said to me, “Carl, do you know what the Lord did for us?” I said, what is that? He replied, “The Lord sent a Christian patrolman to tell us of Phil’s death. Isn’t the Lord good?” I sat with him at the funeral and watched as literally hundreds of teenagers and college-age young people came to him and they told him through their tears, “Mr. Paulson, I will take up the torch where Phil laid it down. I give my life for full-time service.” I will never forget what he said to me that morning: “Carl, do you know what the Lord did for us? He sent a Christian patrolman to tell us of Phil’s death. Isn’t God good?” **“In everything give thanks...”** (See Romans 8:28).

Vs 19 “Quench not the Spirit.” Here is the picture of throwing water on a fire. Many times the Holy Spirit wants to accomplish great things through us, but we quench the Spirit’s leading because of our reluctance, for one reason or another. This is not a request, however, it is a command. When we quench the Holy Spirit’s leading, and His desire to work through us, we are the one’s who suffer. We are like disobedient children who refuse what a parent has told them to do. Many times, although it grieves His heart to have to do so, the Spirit of God has to take us through a very unhappy experience in order to teach us what a joy it is to obey when God speaks. All these things in this list are accomplished by faith in God’s promises.

Vs 20 “Despise not prophesyings.” Paul is simply saying, “Don’t get angry with the preacher when he steps on your toes.” If we have the right kind of a pastor, when he steps on our toes, it is the Holy Spirit stepping on our toes. There was a lady in our Church years ago who used to say at the door after the service every Sunday, “If my toes haven’t been stepped on in a church service, I haven’t been to Church.”

Vs 21 “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” A companion verse to the first half of this phrase is I John 4:1, **“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”** How does one prove all

things? by placing them up against the Scriptures. Everything you hear preached, taught or promoted should be tested against the Holy Scriptures. We are then admonished to **“hold fast that which is good.”** If what we hear agrees completely with the Scriptures, hold on to it and practice it; if it does not, discard it and have nothing to do with it. If the Christian is to walk in the Spirit, he must be led by the Word of God.

Vs 22 “Abstain from all appearance of evil.” This command tells us to go far beyond abstaining from evil: it instructs us to abstain from the appearance of evil. A Christian may do something perfectly above reproach, but, at the same time, it may have a questionable appearance. My wife has been with the Lord for nearly two years now, and I am single once again after sixty five years of marriage. There are a few ladies whom I have had in my classes in Christian School long ago, or whose families were members of a Church where I was pastor years ago, who feel sorry for an old man who lives alone, and are willing to come and help me with housework, etc. That would be fine if they brought their husband along, but to have them here alone does not enhance my chances to win my own neighbors to the Lord, I can do my own housework. If a widow lady closer to my age should come by to visit, I would not think so much of it. But if there is a question about any matter, the answer is an immediate, but gracious “no.” It is not that I am in any manner attractive; I am ugly as a mud fence, but it is fodder for the devil’s mill.

Vs 23 “And the very God of Peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Before getting into what this verse says in keeping with our subject of discussion, we might mention that this verse is one of the clearest in the Bible about our being three-part beings. Our bodies are that part of us by which people know us and identify us; our spirit is our God-consciousness which is dead at birth because of our sin nature; and our soul is our self-consciousness and our consciousness of the physical, tangible world about us. However, God is making us aware of the fact that we ought to be concerned about the fact that every part of our being is clean and pleasing to the Lord unto His coming. A person can be clean spiritually by knowing and then walking in fellowship with the Lord. A person’s soul can be clean by receiving Christ as Savior, but a person’s body must be kept clean by doing what the renewed spirit (mind) dictates day by day. See Romans 12:1, 2. Complete sanctification will not be a reality until we are with the Lord. Then there will be no more temptation or desire to sin: we will be conformed to the image of God’s dear son.

Vs 24 “Faithful is He who calleth you, who also will do it.” It is not we who sanctify ourselves, but He who calls us, (God). Both in instant sanctification, the instant we are saved, and in progressive sanctification we must be willing to cooperate with the Holy Spirit who calls us by the Word of God and convicts us (II Corinthians 7:10), and guides us moment by moment in our daily lives, (I Peter 2:2).

Vs 25-28 In these verses we have Paul’s final greetings, charge, and closing salutation.

- a.** In verse 25 Paul asks for the prayers of the Thessalonians. We don’t usually ask for prayer from those who are not faithful in prayer. Paul knew that these people would really fulfill his request.
- b.** This greeting of which Paul speaks in verse 26 is still practiced in the Middle East. It is done man to man with a brief kiss on each cheek. If it is done in sincerity it is an indication of brotherly love (Phileo). If it is done in betrayal, it is the worst kind of betrayal and deceit. It is the kind of betrayal with which Judas betrayed Christ.
- c.** The charge that Paul gives in verse 27 is to make sure that this epistle is read to all the brethren. He wanted to make sure that all the brethren had a better understanding of the rapture and the second coming.
- d.** Paul closes this epistle with the salutation that is his trademark: Grace.

SECOND THESSALONIANS

Group I Book II

Authorship: The external evidence for the Pauline authorship of II Thessalonians is both fuller and earlier than that for I Thessalonians. The internal evidence is also strong.. The writer twice calls himself Paul (1:1 and 3:17). Both vocabulary and style are strictly Pauline. He makes it clear in both I Thessalonians and II Thessalonians that the second coming of Christ is in two phases: the rapture and the actual second coming to the earth with His own. He also makes the tribulation period very clear.

Date : (See I Thessalonians) Soon after Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians, word came to him at Corinth that there was still confusion on these doctrines of the Rapture and the Second Coming of Christ. He immediately writes II Thessalonians. So the date for II Thessalonians clearly would be 51 AD.

Purpose: As with I Thessalonians, his purpose would have been to clarify the doctrines of the Rapture and the Second Coming of Christ. His secondary purpose was to inform them that there were some things that must happen before these two events took place, and that the persecution they were going through was not the tribulation period.

OUTLINE OF II THESSALONIANS

I.	Introduction	1:1,2
A.	Author	1:1a
B.	Recipients of the epistle	1:1b
C.	Paul's familiar trademark of Grace and peace	1:2
II.	Comfort in persecution	1:3-12
A.	Praise for their faithfulness	1:3,4
B.	Why persecution?	1:5-10
C.	Paul's prayer for continual spiritual growth	1:11,12
III.	Instruction concerning the Rapture and Second Coming	2:1-12
A.	Admonition in the light of the rapture	2:1,2
B.	To be preceded by definite signs	2:3-12
IV.	Praise and instructions	2:13-17
A.	Be not weary in well doing	2:13-15
B.	Prayer for their establishment in Christ	2:16,17
V.	Paul's request for prayer and his confidence	3:1-5
A.	Request for prayer	3:1,2
B.	Reminder of God's faithfulness	3:3-5
VI.	Commandments to work or not eat	3:6-15
A.	Avoid the ones who wont work	3:6
B.	Follow us	3:7-9
C.	Work, or do not eat	3:10
D.	Exhort the idle as brethren	3:11-13
E.	Warn and discipline the disobedient	3:14,15
VII.	Conclusion	3:16-18
A.	Blessing	3:16
B.	Paul's signature - with his own hand	3:17
C.	Benediction	3:18

ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK OF II THESSALONIANS

Chapter 1 – In this first chapter Paul greatly praises the Thessalonians for their steadfastness and faith in the face of great persecution. He points out that what they are experiencing has made them more concerned for each other, and has increased their love. He assures them that Christ will return and that they shall see God avenge them of their adversaries.

Vs 1, 2 The author, according to verse one, is Paul. Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy are with him as he writes this letter. They had returned the second time from Thessalonica in Macedonia with word that there were some problems that had arisen over the same two doctrines with which Paul dealt in I Thessalonians: the rapture and the second coming. It is obvious in verse one that the letter is written to the Church at Thessalonica. Verse 2 gives us a typical Pauline greeting: Grace and Peace – Grace is what God does for us that we do not deserve, while there are two kinds of peace in our relationship with God. We receive Peace with God when we receive Christ as our Savior, and we have the peace of God when we are walking in obedience to His will.

Vs 3-12 Paul gives the Thessalonians encouragement in persecution in these verses.

a. Vs 3-6 Paul was moved to give thanks to God because their persecution had strengthened their faith. Persecution brings patience, and patience brings hope (faith), and hope makes one not ashamed. Be careful when you pray for your faith to be strengthened; God might let you go through trials to answer your prayer. Also, according to verse three, their love (charity) toward each other had also abounded. Persecution draws fellow sufferers even closer.

Vs 4 Two things impressed Paul as he heard of how the Thessalonians were dealing with their persecution: (1) He gloried in their patience. People whose relationship is either not real, or people who are saved but whose Christianity is only a half inch deep, though two miles wide, often fall apart in the face of persecution, but not the Thessalonians. (2) Paul also gloried in their strong faith. Persecution often strengthens our faith when our confidence is completely in the Lord. He will never abandon us in trials and tribulations.

Vs 5 Paul states in this verse that their strong faith and patience in the face of persecution is a manifestation of the fact that God is righteous in His judgment. God chooses His most faithful and His strongest to put in a place like that in which He has placed the Thessalonians. It shows to the world that they are people, not because of their works, but because of their faith, who are worthy of the Kingdom of God.

Vs 6-12 What Christ hoped to find in them when He returns:

Vs 6 In verse six, Paul promises the Thessalonians that God is always righteous to recompense the tribulation to those who are the cause of their tribulation. He has told us that vengeance is His, He will repay.

Vs 7-9 Paul could invite the Thessalonians to join him in waiting for vengeance on those who persecute them because he had been through more than his share of tribulation. He proceeds to tell the Thessalonians when the Lord would recompense their tribulation: it would be when He comes back in the second coming to earth with His mighty Angels in flaming fire, and He will revenge those believers who have suffered for His sake. This would particularly be of comfort to the Thessalonians since one of their problems was that they thought they were already in the tribulation period, and that they had missed the rapture of the Church. The punishment of those who persecuted them would be everlasting punishment through banishment from His presence and the everlasting glory of His power.

Vs 10 This will happen when He comes to be glorified in His Saints and to be admired in all them that believe in that Day (the Day of the Lord). In order for Him to be glorified in His Saints in that

Day, the Saints must stay true and faithful in tribulation. If we fail Him He will not be glorified in us.

Vs 11 There were three things for which Paul prayed concerning them: (1) That God would count them worthy of this calling. Can He count you and me worthy of this calling? (2) That they would fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness (their salvation). Will He find that you and I fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness? (3) That they would stand worthy of the work of faith with power; that is, that they would remain worthy of His commendation, bringing great joy to Him. Will we remain worthy of His commendation with great joy for Him?

Vs 12 Paul told them that he prayed that the name of the Lord Jesus Christ would be glorified in them, and that they would be glorified in Him; and that it would be because of the work of God's grace, and that of the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh that this might be true of you and me. These are powerful words of praise from Paul the Apostle, but because of their steadfastness in the time of tribulation he could say these things of them in confidence. Now when we stand before Him how will our testimony look?

Chapter 2 – We have in this second chapter a classic treatment of the rapture and the second coming. These two events are two parts of one event, the Day of the Lord. One major sign must take place before each part of this event takes place. Before the rapture there must be a falling away (spiritual apostasy), which is already upon us. Before the tribulation period there must be the appearance of the man of sin, the antichrist. Christ will destroy the antichrist and his rule with the power of His Word when He comes back to earth with His own in the second coming.

Vs 1-3 The Rapture:

Vs 1, 2 These verses are obviously referring to the rapture of the Church which takes place before the tribulation period begins. We will try to show why that is so in this chapter. When Paul beseeches someone, it is not Paul doing the beseeching, but God, through Paul. In context, the word, beseech means to get down on one's knees and beg. So here we have the creator getting down on His knees to the creation and begging us, in the light of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (in the air), and by our gathering together unto Him, to not be soon shaken about the rapture having taken place already. He says to the Thessalonians, don't be shaken by the idea that the rapture has already taken place if you entertain fear in your spirit, or if you hear it by the grapevine, or even if you should receive a letter someone else has sent in my name.

Vs 3 **“...for that day shall not come except there come a falling away first...”** The single Greek word that is translated “falling away” is “apostasias” from which we get our word apostasy. An apostasy in relation to Christianity refers to a denomination, ministry, or individual that departs from sound doctrine or practice which they once embraced. I personally believe that an apostate cannot be reversed. Many denominations which once preached the blood atonement of Jesus Christ as the propitious payment for the sins of all mankind have now stopped even mentioning the blood of Christ as being necessary for the salvation of a soul. Many preachers preach the cross and the death of Jesus, but not the blood. **“The life of the flesh is in the blood...”** **“Without the shedding of blood there is no remission.”** Some well known radio preachers and television preachers have started avoiding the Deity of Jesus Christ. Many avoid the first three chapters of Genesis as being literal. Many are following the new movement called “The New Fundamentalism.” The “New Young Intellectuals” have created a whole new theology which avoids repentance and settles for “Easy Believism.” Many who used to be strong on soul-winning now settle for baptism and church membership for anyone of any religious belief, or no religious belief. We could go on and on, but there are few genuine conversions today, and we are filling our pews with people who followed something less than the true Gospel, and which has done away with

the doctrine of repentance. There is an absence of **“godly sorrow that leads to repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of.”** I was saved in a revival meeting on Friday night on September 6, 1946, was baptized Sunday morning, and was singing in the church choir the following Sunday. It was not uncommon to see people come down the Isle to the altar weeping because of their sin. Some even ran down the isle. It was also not uncommon to see people quietly dealing with friends and loved ones during the invitation and offering to go forward with them to receive Christ as their Savior. About three generations later these things are a thing of the past and would be embarrassing in the average Church today. We are living in the Laodicean Period today, and the Church is luke warm. Since we seem to be well into a period of apostasy, should we not be carefully watching for the rapture of the Church at any moment? The sign that immediately follows the rapture is the appearance of the Man of Sin, the antichrist. It may be some time before these events happen, one the other hand, the Man of Sin may be alive and gaining in power and influence, but he has not yet been revealed as the antichrist.

Vs 4, 5 The characteristics of the antichrist given in verse four are quite contemporary with our time. They are: (1) He will oppose God. This seems, at first glance, quite general, but it seems to imply that he is not one who does not believe in God, but one who knows of God quite well, but who is set on opposing God at every point. The power behind this man, as we see in the Book of Revelation, is Satan himself. (2) He exalts himself. As we will see, he exalts himself as God by the middle of the tribulation period. He establishes himself in the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem and calls himself God. He calls for all to worship him as God. Undoubtedly, many who are looking for Christ to return and reign over all the earth will be deceived by this man, but they will be religious, but lost people because they did not go up in the rapture. When Jesus Christ was here on earth he warned of this man and his mission. Verse six tells us that he will be revealed in his time. Paul goes on to tell us when that time is.

Vs 6-8 “And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.” Who is it that holds back the coming of the antichrist in order that he might be revealed at just the right time? There is no other restraining force other than the Holy Spirit working through the Church today. The Holy Spirit is the active person of the Godhead in the world today, and He has chosen to work through the Church. See Matthew 16:13-20 and John 16:7-15. This is clearly revealed in verse seven: The middle-English word “let” has completely reversed its meaning since the King James Bible was translated in the seventeenth century. Then, it meant to restrain, or to hold back; today it means to permit. The seventh verse is saying, “He who now restrains will restrain until He be taken out of the way.” If the Holy Spirit is working through the Church of today to restrain, when will his restraining influence be removed? when the Church is removed in the rapture. The Holy Spirit is God and is omni-present, but His restraining influence will be removed when the Church is removed. In the light of these facts, note what verse eight says, **“And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.”** When does it say the man of sin will be revealed? When He who restrains is taken out of the way. The antichrist immediately comes on the scene when the Church and the Holy Spirit’s restraining influence is withdrawn. Christ will **“...consume with the Spirit of His mouth...”** This is the tribulation period; **“...and destroy with the brightness of His coming.”** This is the literal second coming to the earth.

Vs 9-12 “...even him (“him” refers to the antichrist) whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish;..” While Satan is not omnipotent, he is more powerful than all the true Christians put together. What is meant here is that he, during the tribulation, will (1) be allowed to have all power over the earth. (2) He will be able to perform seemingly supernatural signs. What might some of those be? Through the mark (chip?) in the back of the hand and in the forehead he might be able to control everyone’s thoughts and actions. He might be able to use the space station

for a platform for a laser gun that could zap any point of the globe he might choose. (3) There are existent means by which he could destroy any and all those who oppose him. With present technology under his control he could do wonders that the world has never seen. Lying wonders would be seeming miracles which, performed in deceitful ways, would frighten the unsaved into doing things that, normally, even they would not do. Right now, we are seeing liberals in this country do things that are not only unconstitutional, but are, under our present laws unlawful. We know from these four verses that no one who had heard and understood the Gospel before the rapture will be able to be saved after the rapture. How do we know this?

Vs 10 Antichrist will come with all power and signs and lying wonders, **“and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved.”** Notice: this is written in the past tense. There had to be a time when “they” perished because they received not the love of the Truth. These have to be people who had an opportunity to be saved before the rapture of the Church. Why will they not have an opportunity to be saved after the rapture of the Church?

Vs 11, 12 **“And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”** This is all in the past tense. The rapture took place in verse seven when the Holy Spirit’s influence was removed, and in verse eight where the antichrist appeared on the scene. Because these are people who had a chance to be saved, had heard the Gospel, but had rejected it before the rapture, God will send them strong delusion that they might believe a lie. There will be no more opportunity for them to be saved after the rapture. You might say, “who then are the ones who make up the great multitude who are saved after the rapture, in the tribulation period? I will answer that question to the best of my ability in just a little bit.

Vs 13-17 The remainder of chapter two contains some comforting words to those who did believe the Truth before the rapture, and are going through tremendous persecution.

Vs 13, 14 Why is Paul bound to give thanks for the believers at Thessalonica? It is because **“God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth.”** This sounds like it is teaching ‘unconditional election’ with the elimination of man’s free will. It is not. What it is teaching is: (1) From eternity past God knew that these who believed on Christ when they were moved by the conviction of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God would do so (I Peter 1:2), and called them to salvation. (2) God called them (convicted them by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God to experience Godly sorrow, II Corinthians 7:10), by the Gospel Paul preached, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, (this will take place when we go to be with the Lord, either at physical death, or at the rapture. To eliminate man’s free will which God gave him at his creation is to place man in the category of an automaton or a robot. My wife loved me because she chose to love me. I loved her because I chose to love her. When I heard the Gospel I was so convicted of my sins that I chose to love the Lord Jesus Christ, not because I was elected, but because I was moved by what He had done for me. I love Him because He first loved me. That is not unconditional election, that is my being saved and becoming part of the elect once I was in Christ who is the elect, (I Peter 2:4-7). God, in His Sovereignty, chose to set man apart from all members of the animal kingdom by giving him a will to choose. Now that man’s free will was perverted by sin, Jesus Christ, when He ascended back to the Father, sent the Holy Spirit to reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to make up for man’s will that was perverted. Man still has to have a will to choose in the light of such verses as John 3:18, John 3:36, John 6:40, Romans 10:13, I John 5:11, 12, and many others. The lost are those who choose to reject the Lord Jesus Christ even when they come under the preaching of the Word of God. Christ paid for the sins of all mankind, (I John 2:1, 2), but those who hear and reject it have no hope in eternity. He is not willing that any should perish, (II Peter 3:9). And this is not the elimination of the sovereignty of God, but it is what God, in His sovereignty chose to do. The world is in the mess

it is in, not because God chose in His sovereignty to make it be in a mess, but because he put man in charge of it and man has made a mess of it. God is not the author of sin, but Lucifer introduced it to the universe when he rebelled against God and His authority.

Vs 15-17 These closing verses of chapter two make up a list of things for the Thessalonians to do in the light of all that has gone before.

a. “Stand fast” God never tells us to do something we are not able to do. Though it probably seemed impossible to follow Paul’s instructions at this point, we now know that it is possible. They did not have Philippians 4:13 yet, but they did have Proverbs 3:5, 6.

b. “Hold the traditions which ye have been taught...” Paul was not referring to the traditions of man, but the sound doctrine which he had taught them. Some times it seems that we will lose all if we go God’s way, but we will gain all if we go God’s way, even though we cannot see how it could possibly turn out well. Romans 8:28 was not available to them yet, but the covenants and promises of the Old Testament were. They had Genesis 3:15, Isaiah 7:14, Isaiah 9:6, and Isaiah chapter 53.

c. “Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father...comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.” If we have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, we have the Holy Spirit living in us who is our Comforter.

Chapter 3 – This last chapter contains a mixture of encouragement and warning. For those who have been faithful and have continued steadfast, Paul has encouragement that the Lord will come as He promised. For those who have quit their jobs and have begun meddling in others’ affairs, Paul says that if they will not work they should not eat. Also, others who are doing what they ought should mark those who are trouble-makers and have no fellowship with them. We are given a very important picture of what the Christian should be doing in the light of Christ’s coming. We should continue faithful to the Lord as He taught us to do, and keep our eyes on the skies, looking up, for our redeemer draws nigh.

Vs 1, 2 Paul has two prayer requests:

a. “Pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you:” Actually, this first request is three fold: (1) Pray for us. Don’t ever be hesitant to ask prayer for yourself if you are seeking to do something to serve the Lord. Paul does this often. To ask others to pray for you as you seek to serve the Lord is an indication that you know that you can’t succeed without prayer. (2) Pray that the Word of the Lord may have free course (might not meet with resistance); though we know it will, the more prayer we have for it to have free course, the more success we know we will have, (3) and that the Word of the Lord might be glorified even as it has been with the Thessalonians. This calls our attention back to the beginning of the epistle, and Paul’s praise for the fact that their faithfulness to sound doctrine, and their consistent faith in God’s Word was so strong that, everywhere they went, the testimony of the Thessalonians had gone before them.

b. “And that we may be delivered from wicked and unreasonable men: for all men have not faith.” Actually, this is a prayer that they might be delivered from persecution for the Gospel’s sake. One might say, isn’t that a bit unreasonable to ask those going through terrible persecution to pray that Paul and his team might be delivered from it? Not at all. If anyone would understand how much persecution hinders the progress of the Gospel, it would be the Thessalonians.

Vs 3 Paul had confidence that the Lord would establish them (Keep them on an even keel), and that He would keep them from evil. Paul was not saying that the Lord would keep them from the evil that others might bring on them, but that the Lord would keep them from doing evil. This will be

made clear as we proceed in this chapter.

Vs 4 Paul expressed confidence in the Lord that He would continue helping them to obey the commands that Paul had given them, and that they would obey the commands yet to come in this epistle.

Vs 5-15 Commandments born out of misunderstanding of the doctrines of the rapture and the second coming of Christ:

a. “And the Lord direct your hearts into the Love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.” Actually, this fifth verse is almost a summation of the rest of the chapter. If every Christian was seeking to exude the Love of Christ, and was living in the light of Christ’s coming for His own, the Church would be a well-oiled machine, fulfilling its calling.

b. “That ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received from us.” Some at Thessalonica had thought that Paul’s teaching of the imminent return of Christ for His own was going to happen right away, had quit their jobs, and were sitting around waiting for the rapture. After a while, when the rapture did not take place, they began to expect others in the Church to take care of them and feed them. They also had become busybodies in other peoples matters. This is what Paul refers to as disorderly. Any brother who does this is to be ignored. This is not the same as a family or individual who has lost their job and is in genuine need. This is a freeloader. Every Church has at least one of these, and sometimes a few. The tradition they had received from Paul is repeated in this chapter. Paul tells them that they know how they ought to conduct themselves simply from the example he had set before them when he was in Thessalonica.

c. Again, as Paul had done in I Thessalonians, he reminds them of how he had worked nights and preached days when he was with them before. The purpose was so that the Thessalonians would follow his example. The Jude-Christian work ethic is indispensable to a successful society. Socialism never works because it encourages laziness, not productivity. Thus Paul commands them to withdraw from the idle.

d. In verse ten Paul commands them that if any who is able to work and will not work, let him not eat. Paul is simply referring to those who are simply lazy and will not work. He is not suggesting forced labor, but that they let a man who has left his job and wants to just sit and wait for the rapture, let him do so. When he gets hungry enough, he will go back to work. These, according to verse eleven, are those who, having nothing to do, become busybodies and insert themselves into other men’s matters.

e. Paul exhorts them in verse twelve to, “...**command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work and eat their own bread.**” At the same time he tells those who are doing right to, “**Be not weary in well-doing.**” There is a tendency sometimes, in the Church to become weary when we have to deal with the same problem over and over again. So:

f. In verses fourteen and fifteen he commands them to mark (take careful note) the man who does not obey Paul’s word by this epistle and have no fellowship with that man. However, such a person is not to be treated as an enemy, but is to be admonished as a brother.

Vs 16-18 In Hebrew, “The Lord of Peace” would be Jehovah-Shalom. Many names are given to God in the Old and New Testament. In most cases, the name given denotes some attribute of God. In this case, the only one who could give the Thessalonians peace in their tribulation was the God of Peace. See John 14:27

Paul puts his signature on this epistle with acclaim to authorship, having written it himself with his own hand.

Paul’s trademark is “Grace,” and with this trademark he brings the epistle to a close. Paul’s

trademark always emphasizes the fact that all of God's provision and blessing is of grace. These last three verses, I believe, were a reminder to these Thessalonians that God's great salvation by means of grace is far more comforting than any other gift they could ever receive. In the light of that gift, their sufferings became bearable.

THE BOOK OF I CORINTHIANS

Group II, Book I

Authorship: The external evidence for the Pauline authorship is extremely strong from the first century on. The internal evidence supports the external. The writer calls himself Paul a number of times (1:1; 16:21; 1:12-17; 3:4,6,22). There are so many points of agreement with the Book of Acts that it could not be mere chance. The Epistle has the ring of genuineness from beginning to end. The contents of the book harmonize with what we know to be true of Corinth at that time.

Date: The writing of the Book of I Corinthians was occasioned by the report of serious evils at Corinth, by a letter from the household of Cloe in Corinth, with various questions to Paul for solutions, and by Paul's own anxious concern for the Church at Corinth. The Apostle himself tells us that the letter was written from Ephesus (16:8, 9), and it must have been written in the latter half of Paul's three year stay in that city (Acts 20:31; 19:8,10,21,22). We may therefore date it in the spring of 55 AD.

Purpose: We have already stated that there were reports of many problems at Corinth, as well as many questions that they had concerning the right conduct of Christians in certain situations. Paul had already written a letter to them which is now lost to us. In that letter he warned them not to keep company with fornicators. This letter did not get the desired results, so he wrote our First Corinthians to solve the problems and answer the questions. He waited patiently at Ephesus for an answer while continuing his important work there.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF I CORINTHIANS

I.	Introduction	1:1-9
A.	The salutation	1:1-3
B.	The thanksgiving on their behalf	1:4-9
II.	The divisions present in the Church	1:10-4:21
A.	The fact of the divisions	1:10-17
1.	Lack of unity of	1:10, 11
2.	Division over favorite Pastors	1:12-17
3.	Argument over baptism	1:13-17
B.	The causes of the divisions	1:18-4:5
C.	Pride verses humility and God's wisdom	4:6-21
III.	The disorders in the Church	5:1-6:20
A.	Pride clouded their watchfulness	5:1-13
B.	The lawsuits before the heathen	6:1-11
C.	Lack of morality	6:12-20
IV.	The difficulties in the Church – More moral problems	7:1-15:58
A.	Counsel concerning marriage	7:1-4
B.	Counsel concerning things sacrificed to idols	8:1-11:1
1.	What is an idol?	8:1-13
2.	Examples	9:1-27
3.	Admonitions and applications to the Corinthians	10:1-11:1
C.	Women to be covered in the Church	11:2-16
D.	Correction concerning the Lord's Supper	11:17-34
1.	Paul's correction	11:17-22
2.	The review of previous instructions	11:23-26
3.	The application to the Corinthians	11:27-34
E.	Counsel concerning spiritual gifts	12:14-40
1.	The ignorance of the Gentile believers	12:1,2
2.	How gifts are given	12:4-11
3.	The diversity of the gifts	12:12-31
4.	The importance of love	12:31-13:8
5.	The status of revelation gifts in this dispensation	13:8b-13
6.	The tongues gift and the place of prophecy	14:1-36
7.	The conclusion	14:37-40

F.	The doctrine of the resurrection	15:1-58
1.	The Gospel	15:1-4
2.	The witnesses of the resurrection of Christ	15:5-11
3.	The proofs of the resurrection of Christ	15:12-23
4.	The promise of the resurrection of Christ	15:24-34
5.	The nature of the resurrection body	15:35-50
6.	The comfort of the resurrection to believers	15:51-58
V.	The conclusion	16:1-24
A.	The collection for the poor Saints at Jerusalem	16:1-4
B.	Paul's intentions for coming to Corinth	16:5-12
C.	Paul's warnings – Be ready	16:13-22
D.	Paul's trademark and closing	16:23,24

The Book of I Corinthians gives us greater insight into the problems of the early Church than any other Book in the New Testament. As we read and study this Book, however, we see that the problems that this Church faced are really no different from those faced by the present-day Church. God has given us in this Epistle, along with II Corinthians, the answers to those problems and how to apply them. If anything, there is a greater variety of problems in the Church today than there were then. Those which are not addressed in I and II Corinthians are addressed in I Timothy and Titus.

THE ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK OF I CORINTHIANS

Chapter 1 – This chapter gives us the greeting to the Church at Corinth. It is interesting to note that, because of their factious spirit, they had lost sight of the blessings and goodness of God, and had lost their thankful spirit. Paul is forced to thank God on their behalf because they had stopped thanking Him. The first chapter continues by showing us the problems which had divided the Church at Corinth.

Vs 1-9 In the beginning of the introduction we find that a brother in Christ named Sosthenes was with Paul when he wrote this letter. Remember, it was written from Ephesus on the third missionary journey, outbound. Paul, along with his missionary team, had tried to minister in Asia Minor on the second missionary journey, but were not permitted that opportunity, for the Holy Spirit wanted them to continue on to Macedonia. Now, outbound on the third journey, Paul spent better than three years at Ephesus with much opposition. Sosthenes, whose name means “savior of his nation,” was taken and beaten in the presence of Gallio, the Roman Governor of this region. See Acts 18:12-17. He may have been one of the converts of Paul at Ephesus. He could have been a Jew who had been well acquainted with the people of Corinth since, for some unknown reason, Paul mentions him on this occasion.

a. Paul states that he is the Apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God. This is probably a direct reference to the unique nature of the means by which Paul became an Apostle.

b. Paul addresses this epistle to the “Church of God” which is at Corinth. On very rare occasions, the word “Church” is used to refer to the entire Body of Christ, or Bride of Christ, but almost always in the New Testament it refers to a particular local Church.

c. We are given two things which are true of Saints: (1) They are sanctified in Jesus Christ. There are three phases to sanctification: immediate sanctification is when we are saved, we are set apart as God’s property; progressive sanctification, that is, growing in the Lord all during our earthly life after we are saved; final and complete sanctification when we go home to be with the Lord and are conformed to the image of Christ. (2) They are called to be Saints along with all who in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. See Romans 10:13

d. He desires that they be recipients of God’s Grace (unmerited favor), and peace both with God (salvation) and of God (fellowship) unbroken by sin in the life.

e. It is important to note in verse four that it was necessary for Paul to thank God on their behalf for the gift of God’s grace which had been given to them by Christ. They, among other things, had become an unthankful people. Compare this with the opening of the letter to the Church at Philippi: **“I thank my God upon every remembrance of you.”**

f. While verse five tells us that they have been enriched by Christ in all utterance and in all knowledge, we will find that they had done nothing with these gifts. What good does it do to be gifted with the knowledge of God and the ability to express it if they did not use it?

g. The testimony of Christ was confirmed (brought results) in you. There was, Paul says, an outward profession of faith in Christ from them.

h. They came behind (came short) in no gift; waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. They had received the same gifts that all the other Churches had received, but were unthankful. The thing that makes their thanklessness so unacceptable is that they have taken these gifts for granted and were just waiting for the next big gift of the coming of the Lord for His own.

i. Verses eight and nine assure them that God will come for them since He is faithful to His promise, while they have done nothing about sharing the gift of eternal life with others. We will

find that they have been too busy arguing and fussing among themselves.

Vs 10-31 Paul's dealing with divisions in the Church:

a. **Vs 10-12** Someone in the household of Cloe, probably the husband and father, got in touch with Paul who was in Ephesus, about the divisions over leadership in the Church at Corinth. How childish these things seem to us, yet they still go on in the best of Churches today. Every Church's constitution ought to contain a clear statement as to who was going to be on the Church's Pulpit Committee. There were four factions at Corinth: those who favored Paul, those who favored Apollos, those who favored Cephus (Peter), and those who said they would follow no one but Christ. It is too bad that things of this nature cannot be settled as the matter of the Lord's will concerning who should go as the first real missionaries at Antioch in Syria in Acts 13. If anything happened to my Son-in-law, I'm sure it would be hard for me to sit back and watch a pulpit committee choose a new Pastor for the Church, yet it would be my responsibility to do so. When Paul said that they ought to all say the same thing, he did not mean that they ought to be a mindless group who simply followed a Pope's dictates, but that they all should wait on the Lord until they were of one mind. They expressed a desire for Apollos to return to Corinth, but he wanted no part of it at the time. Evidently his first term as Pastor at Corinth had revealed some of the same problems that Paul was dealing with in his epistles to them. A Church ought to not only be able to trust their Pastor, but they ought to be able to trust their Deacons and other leaders in the Church. Too often the wrong kind of people are put in positions of leadership. Too often major decisions are made in the Church like the first Baptist business meeting in Acts chapter one when the Church two men to replace Judas and then cast lots to see which one got the most votes.

Vs 13-18 "Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" Paul rebuked the factious spirit with a scathing question in three parts:

a. Is Christ divided? There is nothing nor any one more unified than the person and doctrine of Jesus Christ. If Jesus was not the Son of God then he was a liar and a deceiver. But liars and deceivers do not give their lives to promoting and teaching good, love, selflessness, love for God, self-sacrifice, etc. They do not go around healing people and raising the dead. Both the words and the deeds of Jesus prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that Jesus was who he claimed to be. As He said what He said, and did what He did, Jesus gave all the glory to God the Father. He deliberately went back to Jerusalem to be crucified for the sins of mankind, which, by the way, fulfilled every Old Testament Messianic prophecy concerning the Messiah up to that point.

b. Was Paul crucified for you? Paul was not crucified for anyone, nor could he have been since he was a human being with a sin nature and sins of his own for which he would have had to die. The death of Paul was by beheading, and it was sacrificial for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

c. Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? Although they could have done the deed and said the words, it would have meant nothing, nor would it have served any purpose for anyone to have been baptized in the name of any man, except that of Jesus Christ. If water baptism was necessary for salvation, as the proponents of baptismal regeneration claim, then Paul had a problem in his theology: In verse seventeen he says, **"For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect."** Nor does Paul include water baptism in his explanation of the Gospel in I Corinthians chapter fifteen. I do not play down the importance of water baptism as an outward testimony of one's identification with Jesus Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, but Paul did not consider it to be an essential to be saved. Salvation is consistently represented in the Scriptures as being by God's grace, through faith. Water baptism is a matter of works. If Paul was sent to preach the Gospel, and water baptism was an essential part of the Gospel, then Paul was either wrong in verse seventeen, or the translators left something out. Paul thanked God in verses fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen that he baptized none of them but Crispus and Gaius and the house of Stephanas. Did Christ not send him

to get people saved? Those in the Book of Acts who only knew the baptism of John the Baptist were in need of further enlightenment before they were saved and baptized into the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit See First Corinthians 12:13. Their factious spirit was in danger of making the Cross of Christ of none effect.

1:18-4:5 Paul gives us the cause for the divisions among the Corinthians:

1:18-2:16 Paul compares worldly wisdom with the wisdom of God: In verse nineteen he quotes from Isaiah 29:14: **“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.”** By comparison Paul says, **“Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?”** And then he says, **“...it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”** The closer we get to the events of eschatology, the more foolish the preaching of the Gospel seems to the general public. Even when we hand someone a Gospel tract in this “enlightened” country today we often get a smirk. The average person thinks of that as out-dated and foolish. Now we are hearing that the millennials are giving up television for the I-phone or the I pad. They would rather watch television on a ten inch screen while they are doing something else than to sit and watch it on the big screen. They are bored when they go to Church because they are not being moved by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, or because it has no nudity and immorality in it. They would rather be hugging trees, saving the material world, or demonstrating for something they know nothing about than hearing the truth of the Gospel. The Gospel is foolishness to the younger generation in this country. It is interesting to note that some of the third-world countries such as Zambia in south central Africa are having nation-wide revivals. Even Zambia’s president claims to be a born-again Christian. While in this great “civilized” country of America, Churches are closing their doors, or converting from evangelizing to entertainment. Paul states in verse twenty three, **“...but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness.”** But in verse twenty four he states, **“But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”** There are still those, however, in our country, on our streets, in our neighborhoods who need and long for an answer to their emptiness. It may be harder to get them down an isle of the Church to an altar, but they will still respond one-on-one. This calls for more door-to-door evangelism. The need is there ever stronger than before, and it is not our intelligence that will win them, but the simple Gospel of Jesus Christ. We sow, others water, but God gives the increase.

Vs 26-31 God has chosen the things that the world calls foolish, and the things that men see as weak (today the world often refers to Christianity as a crutch, or as a weakness of character), to confound those who think they need nothing and no one. But when their health fails them, or they lose their job, or they suddenly lose their financial security, and they see the Christian going through the same kinds of things with their joy and happiness intact, it baffles them. Those who trust only in their own ability, their own health, and their own finances are the ones who have an untrustworthy crutch. Jesus Christ never fails His own, but trust in one’s own intelligence and talents will always be a prescription for failure. The reason God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty is so that He gets the glory and not man. According to verse 30, it is God who is made unto us, **“wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”** Paul closes this chapter with, **“He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”**

Chapter 2 – This chapter reminds them that the natural man cannot receive nor understand the things of the Spirit of God without a spiritual birth which gives spiritual understanding. He rebukes them for their pride in their carnal knowledge. Too many people know a lot about the Bible, but they don’t know the Author of the Bible. Knowledge without the New Birth leads to foolishness and frustration.

1:18-2:16 Continued: True wisdom is the gift of God, not the mental ability or natural

discernment of man.

2:1-5 – How and why Paul came to them at first as he did:

a. Corinth though a prominent city in itself, was located just a little way to the west southwest across the straights from Athens, the center of philosophy and intellectualism. It was impossible for the people of Corinth to avoid the pride in intellect that pervaded southern Greece. After all, the height of their greatness had been when they ruled the then known world under their ruler and benevolent dictator, Alexander the Great, who had created the Koine Greek language, which became the commercial language of the Great Roman Empire, including Israel. This same pride in intellect had pervaded the Church at Corinth in Paul's absence, and now, as he had arrived at Ephesus on the third missionary journey, their problems that arose from that pride in intellect had reached his ears through the household of Cloe. Paul begins chapter two by reminding them that when he was first in Corinth and established the Church, he did not come to them in man's wisdom or excellence of speech, but in the power of God. He said, **"For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."** Paul declares that he was with the Corinthians the first time in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. Was he a coward? Anything but a coward. His weakness, fear, and much trembling were in the flesh, but note verse four: **"And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."** His whole purpose was to not influence them with the wisdom of men, but with the power of God. Paul wanted them to realize that they were not converted by his preaching, but by the very power of the Holy Spirit. The same is true of our preaching today: if it isn't powered by the Holy Spirit, our preaching is in vain.

Vs 6-8 Paul and his evangelistic team had come to them the first time speaking the wisdom of the Gospel, which had been kept secret from the beginning of time, and was only understood by the person who had received a spiritual birth. To the unsaved, this message was foolishness, but to the saved it was the power of God. Paul said that if the Princes of this world had known and understood the message they brought, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.

Vs 9-16 Paul tells us why the unsaved cannot understand spiritual things, while the saved can.

a. As far as the unsaved are concerned, **"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."**

b. God has revealed these things unto us who love Him, by the Spirit of God, but an unsaved man does not have the Holy Spirit to teach him. See John 14:26. No one knows and understands the things of the Spirit of God unless they have the Holy Spirit living in them.

c. We who are saved have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit of God so that we can understand what God has to say to us. Paul said that he came speaking the things of the Holy Spirit, and the things which the Holy Spirit speaks, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, not spiritual things with the spirit of man.

d. Verse 14 says it all: **"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."**

e. The word "spiritual" means saved. Paul said that they who are spiritual judge (discern) all things, yet he is judged (discerned) of no man. Who has known the mind of the Lord (understood the things of God), except those who are saved: they have the mind of Christ.

Chapters 3-4 The carnal Christian vs. the spiritual 3:1-4:21 This chapter clearly states that the problem at Corinth was carnality. When they ought to have been on strong meat, they were still on the bottle. Though there may be strong meat coming from the pulpit, there are many Christians in

the pew that belong in the spiritual nursery. Today, in this time of apostasy, Christians come to Church and hear, but they don't hear. There is little application of what is being preached.

a. Carnality in the Christian hinders understanding so that our efforts for Christ are made null and void; and we have nothing to show for our lives lived as Christians in this world. This is what produced the factious spirit that was among them. A Christian can build with gold, silver, and precious stones which, when subjected to the fire of God's scrutiny are only refined and made more perfect, or we can build on the foundation of Christ with wood, hay, and stubble which will only be burned up. With what materials we build is up to us, but all our works after we are saved will be subject to the judgment of Christ at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Those who build with wood, hay, and stubble will enter in, yet so as by fire. How terrible to think of standing before the Lord Jesus with nothing to show for the life we lived as a Christian in this world. The Temple of which Paul speaks here is our body which belongs to Him. We should never forget that God can take this physical life of ours any time He wants. Sometimes Christians die young because they want to misuse the Temple of God which is their own physical body. See I Corinthians 6:19,20. 3:15-17

b. Verse eighteen seems to be difficult to understand, but it can only be understood in the light of verse nineteen. The things of God seem to be foolishness to the unsaved in this world; so, if any man wants to be thought wise by his fellow Christians, he must be thought a fool by the world. 3:18, 19

c. Paul strongly rebuked the Corinthians for losing sight of the purpose and calling of the local Church: The world's wisdom is to be shunned, but God's wisdom is to be sought. Paul told the Corinthians to shun the factious spirit, and know, that in Christ, we all have God's good gifts in common. 3:20-23

Chapter 4 Application and conclusion: Paul deals with stewardship:

a. The stewardship of the Church at Corinth had gone wanting because of their factious spirit. More than any other Church, the Corinthians questioned the Apostolic authority of Paul. Here, they are warned for doing so. Paul had been made a steward of the mysteries of God, and they were in danger for questioning this commission. In II Corinthians 5:19, 20 Paul reminds the Corinthians that they also had been made stewards of the same message as he. 4:1-5

b. God requires that a steward be found faithful in their stewardship. Paul points out that he does not judge himself and his stewardship: That is God's doing. Paul was telling them to prepare for God's judgment by being good stewards of God's gifts.

c. The Christian has no reason to be puffed up about any spiritual wisdom or spiritual understanding they may have since these are the gift of God to the individual. 4:6, 7

d. Spiritual leaders are called on to pay a higher price since they are the spiritual parents of the flock. Paul said that the Apostles (for the sake of the Corinthians), were appointed unto death (as good under-shepherds after Christ's example), being made a spectacle (actors on a stage) to: (1) the world – Cosmos, (2) the Angels (note 11:10) Paul stood as an example to the Angels on Christ's behalf, as do we, (3) and to men – Paul stood in Christ's stead, before men as an example of what is genuine and real. The Apostles were willing to be thought of as fools for Christ's sake: the Corinthians were wise concerning Christ, but had not been willing to pay a price for being Christians.

e. The Corinthians looked upon Paul and his fellow-workers as fools for Christ's sake and therefore, they thought of them as weak. They thought of themselves as strong, for they enjoyed the gift of salvation, but were not experiencing much persecution. You are not doing much for Christ if the world is speaking well of you. Have you ever had someone think of you as being weak because you went to Church and served the Lord. When we were in a state-wide youth ministry in Arizona

many years ago, one of our ministries was holding Bible Clubs in the High Schools. In most cases we could not have our clubs on campus and we held them in buses in front of the school. Most of our regular teens carried their Bibles to school on top of their books. One young man was the quarterback on the football team in the largest high school west of the Mississippi River. He was well known and popular on campus. He started carrying his Bible to school too. One day he happened to leave his books on the bench in the locker room while he was dressing out for practice. Another member of the team saw the Bible and said, "What's that, a Bible?" He answered, "It sure is." The other team member said, "What are you, a sissy or something?" The Christian stood up, picked up his Bible, held it out to the other fellow and said, "Here, you carry it to school for a week and we'll see who the sissy is." We need to be ready to take a little flack for the Gospel's sake and thank the Lord for the privilege. Remember what Christ suffered for us.

f. Paul wrote, **Ye are honorable, but we are despised.**" The world laughs at the person who stands up for the Lord, and now, even persecutes them (I'm speaking of America). The world looks on those with envy and praise who shun God and get rich and popular. They have their reward. Our reward for standing true to the Lord is yet to come.

g. Paul related to the Corinthians some of the things he and his fellow-workers had suffered for the Gospel in order to bring the greatest of all gifts to the Corinthians, yet the Corinthians did not appreciate it. It is hard to make sacrifices for people who do not appreciate what we have done for them, but when we are trying to help people spiritually, we are not so much serving them as we are serving the Lord, and the Lord appreciates it.

h. Paul gives them some strong warnings in verses 14-16. He emphasizes the fact that they may have many teachers, but that he is the one who birthed them spiritually, and that they should follow what the Lord has led him to teach them and tell them.

i. He continues his warnings to them in verses 17-21. He tells them that he plans to come to Corinth personally and make sure that these matters are straightened out. He asked a very pointed question, **"What will ye? Shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?"**

Chapters 5-7 These chapters deal with moral issues which were probably brought up in the letter the Corinthian Church had written to Paul.

a. Chapter 5 – How to deal with (pornea) immorality in the local Church. This chapter is so important since it teaches Church leaders how to conduct Church discipline. The Greek word "pornea" actually is a word that refers to any kind of sexual sin. Sometimes it is translated "adultery," sometimes "fornication," and sometimes other forms of sexual sin. It is the Greek word from which we get our English word, "pornography." In this case, a man was living in sin with his father's wife. Now the word wife implies that his father had either married two women, and that one was not his mother, or that his father had married a second time, and had married a much younger woman, probably close to his son's age. In both Old and New Testament times men married women much younger than themselves so that they could have many sons. When we study II Corinthians we will find that this man evidently was a saved man, but it is rather hard for us to imagine something like this going on in the Church, the whole Church knowing about it, and no action being taken about it. On the other hand, I was in the pastorate long enough to know that in the best of Churches today, if Church discipline was exercised against such a situation, there would be some people who would side with the offender and feel sorry for them. Churches have stopped exercising Church discipline any more for fear of a law suit, or for fear of losing a generous givers. They allow sin to go on and it robs the Church of its testimony and effectiveness. The chapter begins with the stating of the problem.

a. There is a man living in sin with his step-mother. 5:1-13

This is a sin which is not so much as named among the Gentiles. He is a man who is a member of the Church at Corinth, but is living in sin with his father's wife who is not his mother. This is a case of incest, and the Church, because of their pre-occupation with bickering and pride, had let it continue on without doing anything about it. 5:1,2

b. What is the right thing for the Church to do about it? Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul had already determined what to do. He could not be there to take care of it himself, so he tells them what to do. They were to call a special meeting of the whole Church. Paul said he would be there in spirit, and in Christ's power (authority) they were to administer discipline. The whole Church, as a body of believers, were to commit this man into Satan's hands for the destruction of the body in order that his spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Here is a strong proof passage for the doctrine of eternal security. 5:3-5

c. Paul also told them what to do about the Church's lack of the proper treatment of the problem. Then Paul reminded them that, **"a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump."** The solution is to purge out the old leaven. They were not to sit down and counsel with this man, they were to put him out of the Church and sever fellowship with him. As a new creature in Jesus Christ, we no longer live the new life with the old sin. 5:6-8

This is pictured in the Feast of Unleavened Bread in Exodus 13:7. The Feast of the Passover began the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Passover pictured the suffering and blood atonement of Christ on the cross of Calvary. The next seven days were the rest of the period during which they ate nothing with leaven in it. The Feast of unleavened bread pictured the Christians separation from sin (sanctification) and their being set apart from the world as God's property. We are to then to consider ourselves dead to sin, to live no longer therein. Romans 6:1, 2; 5:7, 8

d. Paul then told them what to do about such cases in the future: Paul had written a previous letter to them which is not preserved for us. In that letter he had told them not to company (fellowship) with fornicators. He reminds them of this in: 5:9

He did not mean that they were to have nothing to do with fornicators who were lost and in ignorance of the Gospel, but with those who were in the Church and were practicing such things. It is far better to keep the house (Church) clean than to restore cleanliness after it is defiled. 5:10

He then clarified his former statement, telling them that they were to have no fellowship with anyone in the Church who was a fornicator, covetous, an idolater, a railer, a drunkard, or an extortioner. They were not to take communion with them. 5:11

Paul pointed out that those who are unsaved, God judges. But he has given the judging of the members of the Church over to the Church itself. Since God judges those outside of Christ and the Church judges those who are members of the Body of Christ, they are to put this man out of their fellowship. This would place him in a kind of no-man's land, for the unsaved would not want anything to do with him since he is a Christian, and the Church would have nothing to do with him until he had stopped sinning and had made things right with God and the Church. If Churches would exercise this kind of discipline today there would be no vile sins going on among Church members. 5:12

Chapter 6 – How to handle legal problems that arise between Church members: Unless they are crimes with which the governmental authorities should deal, they should be judged by the Church and not taken before heathen judges. A Christian should never sue another Christian. The rest of the Chapter instructs the Church concerning the sanctity of the Christian's body as the Temple of the Holy Spirit. Since chapters five and six deal with matters of a moral nature, chapter six seems

to be out of place in this trio of problems, but as we saw in I Thessalonians 4:6, this is talking about defrauding one's brother in relation to his wife.

a. When two Christians have problems of a legal nature between them, it is wrong to take them before a heathen court. Paul reminds the Corinthians that the Saints will judge the world, and they certainly ought to be able to judge the smallest matters that come up in the Church. Again, he reminds them that the Saints will also judge the Angels (this is probably referring to the fallen Angels who followed Lucifer in his rebellion against God). He continues by shaming them in that they could not find one among them who could judge among their brethren. The problem in this instance was spiritual immaturity. The premise is that they ought to bear loss rather than to take a brother to a heathen court. He closes this section with, **"Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren."** 6:1-8

b. The Church should practice moral purity: 6:9-20

In order to clearly understand this section of Scripture we need a few definitions: The unrighteous are unsaved people. The Bible tells us that there are none righteous; no not one. The only way in which a person can be judged as righteous is if they are saved: in Christ, by Grace through faith. Especially in the twenty first century we must be very careful about who joins the Church. The Church is made up of born-again believers who have been scripturally baptized after their salvation. The best of churches, however, probably have a few who think they are saved, but are not. The list that follows here is a list of things lost people **practice on an ongoing basis**, but which even some saved people fall into once in a while. There are some Christians that still drink alcoholic beverages, who get divorces and remarry, (although that is adultery), who do any number of things Christians should not do, but if they are genuinely saved, they are still saved. The unrighteous are those who have never received Christ's payment for their sins. People are not lost because they commit individual sins, but because they reject the one who has already paid for their sins. See John 3:18: **"He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God."** and John 16:8,9, **"But when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me."** Jesus paid for all the sins of all mankind for all of eternity. The sin that sends people to hell is the sin of rejecting the sin payment, Jesus Christ. See I John 2:1, 2. The list that follows refers to people who are yet unsaved and practice these sins: fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate (gay), abusers of themselves with mankind (homosexuals). This does not begin to be a complete list, but it seems to be some things that were going on in the Church at Corinth. These are things that marked the life-style in the Roman Empire at that time. The collapse of the Roman Empire was because of moral decay from within. The list continues in verse ten with, thieves, covetous, drunkards revilers, extortionists. These, Paul says, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. If I understand it correctly, Paul's purpose is to purify the Church. The problem was that there were still people in the Church who ignorantly continued to practice these things. Because of their pride and what they thought was their perfect knowledge, these practices which they had known all their lives were tolerated. But Paul continued by saying, **And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by The Spirit of our God."** Paul states clearly that all things are lawful for the Christian because their sins are all paid for in Christ, but not all things are expedient (proper or needful). These things are no longer proper in the Christian's life. The body is not for (pornea) sexual sin, or sexual uncleanness, but is for the Lord. It is no longer ours, but His. See I Corinthians 6:19,20. Verses 14-16 make it clear that even joining one's self to a harlot makes the two, one flesh as though they were married. In other words, as many women as a man has had intercourse with is how many wives he has. God is clear that a man is to have one wife, and a woman to have one husband from the time they marry until one or the other dies. Paul tells them to flee youthful lusts. When the temptation comes to be unfaithful to

one's spouse, use your two good feet and run from it. Here, Paul tells them to flee fornication (pornea – any kind of sexual uncleanness). The chapter closes with two good memory verses that every Christian should memorize for emergencies, 6:19, 20 God means it; do you believe it?

Chapter 7 – This is a vital chapter. It deals with the problems of divorce, remarriage, marriage, giving in marriage, and the unequal yoke. Many in the Roman empire had more than one wife, and even many concubines. Some of these had been saved and were now wondering what to do about their multiple marriages. Should a Christian whose mate had not gotten saved get rid of the unsaved mate and marry a Christian? Some of these questions had undoubtedly been raised in the communication to Paul from the Household of Cloe.

a. “It is good for a man not to touch a woman.” This shocks us in today's society. Should we not shake hands with a woman in church? The explanation to this statement lies in the word “touch.” In context in this case, the word means to passionately, or lovingly touch a woman when she is not your wife or child. It is, at the best, mental infidelity. If a man has the need to passionately touch a woman, let him have his own wife, and let the woman have her own husband. We ought to be friendly in a Christian manner, but every man (and woman) ought to learn to master their thought life through thinking on the things of God. See Philippians 4:8. Paul the Apostle equates the new nature with the renewed mind. In Romans chapter seven, verses twenty four and twenty five Paul writes, **“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.”** It is this new nature that cannot sin because it is born of God. See I John 3:9. The flesh, however wants to do nothing but sin. See Romans 7:18. Again, in Romans chapter twelve, verses one and two Paul writes, **“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”** Paul again equates the renewed mind with the new nature which cannot sin. What do we have when we have this new nature which cannot sin and the flesh which cannot do right? **We have war.** This why we are admonished in Ephesians chapter six, to put on the whole armor of God so that we can stand against the wiles of the devil. See John 15:5 and Philippians 4:13. We must nourish the new nature and starve the flesh. In practical terms, we must get rid of the things which appeal to the flesh, and spend as much time as possible exposed to the things that feed the new nature; things such as more time in God's Word, and more time in prayer.

a. “Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. This simply means, let the husband make himself available to his wife, and the wife make herself available to the husband in the area of making love, and hugging and loving each other frequently. Sir, if you have an office job, and you have a sweet, young, attractive secretary who is overly attentive to you, ask the next higher up to get you an old, efficient, ugly one and move yours to another office. Love on your own wife. That sweet, young, attractive secretary is attentive to you because she wants to get ahead in the firm, or she is interested in your income. Look in the mirror often and admit: there is nothing still attractive about you, except to your wife. Wife, if you work outside the home, keep your mind on your own business and, if it must wander, think on what you are going to do to make yourself more attractive to your husband. Try to keep that weight down and have your hair done once in a while. If you don't have much left to work with, try working at building his ego and your marriage in general. Wife, tell your children how great their father is, and husband, praise your wife to your children, and tell them what a great mother she is. Stay in your own corral. See Proverbs 5:15-21. Seek the Lord and serve the Lord together.

There should be no denying the spouse access to your body unless it is agreed between you to do so for a brief time for fasting and prayer, and then come together. Other than condemnation of the strongest sort, there is no mention of love making between two people of the same sex in this book or any other book of the Bible. It is looked upon in both the Old and the New Testament as the greatest of abominations.

b. Although Paul certainly does not condemn marriage, he wishes that all might be able to remain single like his self. In his calling it was necessary that he be single, and God had given him that ability. If every Christian remained single, however, Christianity would soon die out. The family unit is the basic structure of our society, and the God-haters and Christ-rejecters of our present world are trying to stamp it out. Paul simply feared the trials that would come to Christian families because of the persecution that was so strong at that time. The quickest way to get a man to compromise is to threaten his wife and children.

c. Verses 10, 11 say, **“Let not the wife depart from her husband: but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or let her be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.”** Some at Corinth had the problem of having been saved, but still being married to an unsaved person. Paul tells them they should stay together. Marriage is for one man and one woman for life. When they marry and consummate the marriage, they are one flesh and must not be separated. See Malachi 2:16. Many of the new Christians, however, had been married and divorced. Much of what Paul said in this chapter was aimed at the unmarried next generation that they might produce a godly seed. Divorce should never be a consideration between Christians. Unfortunately, even with Christians their marriage too often ends in divorce. There needs to be much more teaching and preaching on this subject in our Bible-believing Churches. It is a sin to get a divorce, even if one is unsaved and the other saved. When God says the wife should not depart from her husband, but if she departs she should remain unmarried, he means she is not free to remarry, even if the fault was on her husband’s part, or if she was the subject of abuse. This is what I like to call the battered wife provision of the Scriptures. If she has to leave him, stay unmarried. She should give her life to the raising of the children, their biblical education in a good fundamental Church, and finding work where she can work the hours they are in school. She is not free to remarry. If the husband puts away his wife and remarries, she is still not free to remarry, but neither is he. If he remarries, he has committed adultery. If she does, she is committing adultery. This is made clear by Christ in Matthew 5:31, 32

d. Paul deals clearly and thoroughly in this chapter in verses twelve through sixteen with the mixed marriage where one is saved and the other is not. Because Paul says, **“To the rest speak I, not the Lord”** at the first of this passage, some think that it is simply what Paul thinks is right, and that the passage is not inspired. This is by no means the case. God gave him permission to write this sentence, and therefore, it is inspired. In the case of a marriage where one got saved and the other did not, they are to stay together, if the unsaved is content to live with the Christian. It gives the Christian opportunity to lead the unsaved to Christ. If the unsaved, however, chooses not to remain with the Christian, the Christian should let the unsaved go. The Christian is not under bondage to make the unsaved stay in the marriage. But it still does not give either one freedom to remarry. See verses 39 and 40. Even though the unsaved might depart, the marriage is recognized by God, otherwise their children would not be considered legitimate. Once a couple is married, in the eyes of God, that marriage is binding until the death of one or the other. Once one or the other dies, the other is single. If it is the Christian still living, they are then free to remarry, only to another Christian.

e. Once again, Paul does not say that marriage is wrong. He simply states that, because of the present emergency, (extreme persecution) it would be better for a man not to marry, but if he is engaged, and the woman to whom he is engaged (betrothed) is getting close to the end of her child-bearing years, let them marry. He says it is better to marry than to burn. He means it is better to

marry than to constantly be fighting the battle of sexual desire unsatisfied. The word “burn” does not refer to hell.

f. In consideration of the last two verses, it is a crime what some Bible interpreters have tried to do with these. Paul tells us that a woman is bound to her husband as long as her husband lives. How much simpler could the Holy Spirit have made it? Marriage is for this life, to meet the needs of His creation. He is simply repeating the teaching of the Old Testament.

Chapter 8 Counsel concerning foods offered to idols: Of all the Pauline Epistles, this chapter of I Corinthians deals more extensively with the doctrine of forbearance, and especially with meat offered to idols than any other passage.

1. The principles of the subject:

a. Principle #1 An idol is nothing at all. It is an inanimate object. The only way it can hurt you is if you let it. It cannot physically help or hurt you. It cannot speak, hear, see, counsel, answer prayer, anything.

b. Principle #2 There is only one true God, of whom are all things, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him. There is no other god who can do anything for us, nor who can answer prayer.

c. Principle #3 Not every man has this knowledge concerning things offered to idols, and therefore, they are offended if they see a Christian eating things offered to idols. This may be an unsaved person who knows that Christians reject the idea of any other god but the true God, or it may be a new or weak Christian eating meat offered to idols. If anyone is offended by seeing Christians eating meat offered to idols, it is not worth the Christian having this freedom. The Christian, under grace, has the freedom to enter the shambles (common market place which was part of the heathen temple) and eat meat that has been offered to idols. Why should the Christian forego doing so? Because it might offend the weak Christian or the unsaved who knows we are Christians. It is for the sake of others, not our selves. This is called the Doctrine of Forbearance. It is taught in almost every Pauline epistle.

d. Principle #4 The Doctrine of Forbearance is the idea that a particular thing may not hurt me, and may be perfectly legitimate for me, but it may offend or become a stumbling block to someone else. If that is the case, I can do without it, at least in their presence, or anywhere where it might be an offence. The Apostle Paul said, **“Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.”** If a Christian will put others ahead of themselves, they will always be careful to practice this principle.

Chapter 9 This chapter continues the doctrine of forbearance. Paul points out that although he is an Apostle, he enjoys all the privileges any other person does, but is willing to forgo those privileges for the sake of the Gospel and for his converts. He emphasizes that those who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel, but that he has not asked any support from them so that he could minister to them. When we study Philippians we will find that the Church at Philippi was the only Church which gave regularly from day one, to Paul and his needs. Paul says to the Corinthians that he “stole” (took support) from other churches to do them service. Let me remind the reader that the Church at Corinth was the Church that, more than any other, questioned Paul’s apostleship. In this chapter he defends that Apostleship.

a. Paul said that the Corinthians were the seal of his Apostleship. (1) He started the Church and won most of them to Christ. (2) He is the one who saw to it that they had good leadership. Obviously, Peter had been there and had preached to them; Apollos had been their Pastor for a

while, and Paul had stayed in touch with them concerning their problems. (3) He is the only one, so far as we know, who loved them enough to talk straight to them concerning the error of their ways. (4) he had worked with his hands to pay his own way so as not to be a financial burden to them.

b. As an Apostle, Paul had the right to do the following: (1) He had the right as an Apostle, to eat and to drink. By this he meant that he had the right to expect support from the Church to which he ministered. (2) He had the right as an Apostle to be married and have his wife travel with him to take care of wifely things just as other Apostles did. We know from the Scriptures that Peter was married. There must have been others of the Apostles who were also married. (3) He quotes from Deuteronomy 20:6 to back up his claim that those who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. **“And what man is he that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not yet eaten of it...”** and from Deuteronomy 25:4. **“Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.”** Paul poses the question, is it all right for us to minister to you spiritually and not receive from you financially? He goes on, however, to say that he has not used any of these privileges, but has labored on the side to make a living so that he can sustain himself while he ministers unto them. Paul’s desire was that he make the Gospel without charge.

c. Verses 19-23 have become a greatly controversial passage in our time. There are so many in the “new evangelism” that try to make this passage say that Paul promoted being like the sinner to win the sinner. If this is what Paul was saying here, how then can we convince the sinner of his or her need of Christ? If we are being like them to win them, what then do we have that they do not already have. We only appear as a hypocrite. What then is Paul saying? He is saying that he has equipped himself to understand the thinking of any person he might deal with so as to be able to answer their objections to the Gospel. He can think on the level of the Jewish religious leader for he was one at one time. He can think on the level of the heathen Greek or Roman for he grew up a good portion of his early life in their midst. He was mentally equipped to stand toe to toe with the great Greek philosophers on Mars Hill. He could win a run-away slave to Christ in a Roman jail cell. He was **“made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.”** This he said he did for the Gospel’s sake that he might be partakers of it with them. This is what the Corinthians should have been doing instead of fighting among themselves.

d. He said that he lived the Christian life in the same manner as a runner who runs in a race: he ran to win. He controlled his body and lived moderately in all things so that when he had preached to others, he himself would not be a castaway.

Chapter 10 – In this chapter Paul warns the Corinthians about trying to hold onto the world with one hand, and the Lord with the other. He says that they cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of the demons at the same time, nor can we. Paul likens the Christian life to the struggles that Israel faced in the wilderness. Once again we see the typology in the experiences of Israel as they made their way from Egypt to the Land of Canaan. We have already seen that the Passover was a picture of the death of Christ on the cross; shedding his blood as an eternal atonement for the sins of all mankind. We have seen that the Passover, with the next seven days were given to Israel as the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the type of the sanctification of the Christian at the moment of his salvation; a separation of the Christian from the world (Egypt was a type of the world) and unto God. The actual leaving of Egypt was a type of the Christian coming out from among the world (cosmos – The turning of our backs on the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life See I John 2:15-17) and the taking of our stand with Christ.

a. The first four verses of chapter ten continue that typology with (1), the crossing of the Red Sea under the protection of the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night. Herein is a picture of the Christian’s baptism, which is an outward manifestation of our identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Baptism does not save us, nor does it make us more saved,

it is simply an outward manifestation that we have turned our backs on the world and have identified with Christ. They were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the Sea. The cloud represents the Holy Spirit who baptizes us into the Body of Christ at the moment of our salvation. See I Corinthians 12:13.

b. Verse three speaks of the Manna which was provided for them to eat in the wilderness, which was a picture of Christ Himself, who is the Bread of life. See John 6:35-40. Verse four speaks of the spiritual rock that Moses smote with the rod to bring forth water in the wilderness to slake their thirst. That rock represented Jesus Christ who was smitten that we might partake of the Water of Life (eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ). See Matthew 16:13-20 and John 6:31-34

c. Verses 5-13 speak of the rebellion and the transgressions of some of the people of Israel in the wilderness. Verse five says that they were overthrown in the wilderness because of their rebellion. These represent those who murmured and complained in the wilderness because they did not walk by faith and believe God. Salvation is based on simply believing God's Word and walking with Him by faith. Good works are the result of faith; not faith a result of good works. They fell in the wilderness because they did not believe God. Verses seven and eight speak of the making of the golden calf at Mt. Sinai while Moses was up on the Mount receiving the Law from the hand of God. Verses nine and ten speak of the ones who were destroyed by serpents God sent into the camp of Israel because they murmured against God and Moses. Moses was told to make a brass serpent on a pole and set it up in the camp. The brass (brass represents judgment) serpent represented Christ on the cross with our sins placed upon Him. Everyone who looked to the brass serpent was healed of the snake bite, and all those who refused, died. All who will look to Christ on the cross bearing our sins and trust in Him will live, but those who do not will die in their sins. Paul writes that these were given to us for examples, and for our admonition, so that we might learn from their mistakes, and be wiser for it. These were also given for our admonition to warn us lest we come short of genuine faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior. Verse twelve is a final warning for the professing Christian: **"Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."**

d. Verse thirteen has been said to be one of the hardest verses to memorize in the Bible. There are three parts to the verse, and each one is a wonderful promise from God. (1) **"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man:"** You and I sometimes feel as though no one else in the world has ever gone through what is happening to us. God promises in this verse that any temptation (trial or testing) we may be facing is something that people face all the time. It is a very common problem. (2) **"..but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able;"** What a wonderful promise for us to claim: He is faithful and will not put more on us, nor will He allow any more to be put on us that He knows we are able to handle. (3) **"..but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."** There is probably no one who will ever read this but that some time or another has said, "This is too much: I just can't take it any more" when, in reality, we can, by His grace. But our guardian and protector will, along with the test, also make a way to resolve it, or escape it by His Grace. We do not need grace and faith for any trial until we arrive at that trial.

e. Verses 14-22 have to do with the subject of Idolatry. We are admonished from verse 14 to flee idolatry. In the next chapter we have the best and most frequently used passage on the subject of communion. Here he asks the question: is not the communion we observe that which honors and remembers Christ? But he reminds us that the heathen observe communion in honor of the devil, and the demons. He warns us that we cannot drink the cup of the devil and the cup of the Lord at the same time. We cannot partake of the Lord's Table and that of the devil at the same time. Paul makes a grand argument for separation in these verses. We cannot be an honor to the Lord while running with the devil's crowd. To try to do so is to provoke the Lord to jealousy. This is the very thing that destroyed Israel and Judah during the time of the Kings. If Israel had been content to let God be their King instead of wanting an earthly King so as to be like the other nations around them,

they probably would not have fallen into the trap of idolatry. The same thing happens to us in the twenty first century: we want to belong to God and have His gift of eternal life, but we want to be like, and look like the world at the same time. Beware.

f. Verses 23 through 33 deal with doing everything we do to the glory of God. Verse 31 might be the key verse for this passage: **“Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”** If we were to follow the advice of this one verse, all would be well.

In verse twenty three, a very familiar verse, Paul tells us that, under grace, all things are lawful for the Christian, but not all things are expedient (useful for effecting a desired result). In other words, if I want to be as effective in winning people to Christ as possible, I will want to eliminate drinking a small glass of wine with my dinner. The wine is lawful for me, but it is not expedient. Of course, I don’t drink wine, nor do I want to. This is somewhat similar to chapter eight and the doctrine of forbearance. If I want to serve Christ as effectively as I can, I will be willing to eliminate anything that could be a stumbling block.

Verse twenty four makes it imperative that we seek the well-being of others instead of our selves. As we read this verse, we must ask our selves if we are really more interested in fulfilling our own desires than we are in helping to meet the needs of others.

Verses twenty five through thirty one really expand verse twenty three. **“The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof”** If you are invited to the home of an unsaved person, eat what is put before you without asking if it is something you normally would not eat. Ask God’s blessing and eat it without questioning it. However, if the host tells you it is food that has been offered to idols before being served to you, do not eat it. Not because God said under the Law that it was unclean, but for the conscience of the unsaved person. They may be testing you, but they also may just not know of your convictions concerning food offered to idols.

Verse thirty two, put as simply as possible would be, do not do anything that will be a hindrance to your witness to Jew, Gentile, or the Church.

Verse thirty three is a summary of the whole section: **“Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.”**

Chapter 11 – The first part of this chapter treats God’s chain of command and authority. It uses the example of the covering of the head in the place of worship. The second half of the chapter is of great importance because it deals with the problems at Corinth over the observance of communion.

a. Verses one through three deals with God’s chain of command. God inspired Paul to write that the head of the woman is the man, that the head of the man is Christ, and that the head of Christ is God. The reason God said that the man was the head of the woman is that He first created man, and then made woman out of a part of man to be the one to fulfill his life. I do not believe God means that woman is man’s servant, but that she was designed to do for man what he could not do for himself. If a woman is single and is still living at home, her father is her head. If she is single and her father is either no longer living, or she is no longer living at home, her decisions are her own, but she would be wise to find a good Church and let the Pastor’s teaching and preaching be her guide. The head of the man is Christ. This makes man, in a marriage, the priest and spiritual guide of the home. Of course, if he is not saved and she is, he is still her head, but she should not do something he might tell her to do that was scripturally wrong. Peter was inspired to tell the Christian wife how to win her unsaved husband in I Peter three, one through six. If a Christian woman with an unsaved husband will do what the Bible says for her to do, God will take care of the “what ifs.”

The Man’s head is Christ. In this passage God tells the man he is not to pray nor worship with his

head covered for that dishonors his head. The man, if he knows the Lord, should submit to the will of the Lord in all things. He is to love and lead his wife in spiritual things, and make final decisions about matters in his family. He is the disciplinarian in the family and must lead his children and teach them in spiritual matters. He should be a good listener, both to the Lord, and to his wife and children. If a boy is still in his home and single, he, like his sisters, is subject to his parents, and especially his father. At any age, a male must honor God and follow Christ in all things.

The passage tells us the head of Christ is God. That would be God the Father. Here again we come to the matter of just how the Godhead works. The best way to think of the Godhead is: There is one God, manifested in three persons. God the Father is the originator of all things; God the Son is the executor of all things; and God the Holy Spirit is the administrator of all things; yet they are one God.

b. This passage, however, as far as the covering is concerned, is also speaking about hair. No specific length is given in the passage, but it is clear verses 13-15 are speaking of the covering as hair. A woman's hair is her glory and is her covering. On the other hand, it is clear that a man's hair is to be short in relation to a woman's hair, in fact, it is a shame for a man to have long hair. The only exception to the man's hair in the Bible was the Nazarite vow under the Law. Part of the Nazarite vow was that, as long as a man was under this vow, he was not to cut his hair. The Nazarite vow ended, however, with the dispensation of grace. Every Christian should be separated unto the Lord to walk in obedience to His Word because of love for the Lord today. In some of the best of churches today, however, it is hard to tell sometimes whether a person is male or female. If you will notice, some of the most rebellious women are those who have their hair cut short, and some of the most rebellious men are those who let their hair grow long. I would remind every Christian, however, that this passage of Scripture is found in the New Testament and is still the will of God under Grace. His chain of command has not changed under grace.

c. The second main part of the eleventh chapter has to do with the matter of communion. The Church at Corinth had turned the Lord's Supper into a drunken orgy. Instead of their observance being a time to remember the Lord's Supper with the unleavened bread representing the broken body of Christ, and the unfermented grape juice representing the shed blood of Jesus, various ones were bringing a regular meal, and others were getting drunk on fermented wine. This is an abomination. Paul told them the following things to do to remedy this problem: (1) Eat and drink your regular meals at home. (2) They are to share equally in the unleavened bread. (leaven is a type of sin, so unleavened bread should be used). (3) they were to share equally in the unfermented wine (grape juice) for it represented the blood of Christ shed for their sins. (fermentation is a type of sin).

d. Paul went on to explain just exactly what Jesus did in instituting the Lord's Supper, and the procedure which He followed. (1) Verse 24 tells us that when Jesus had blessed the unleavened bread, He broke it and said, **"Take, eat: This is my Body, which is broken for you: This do in remembrance of me."** The Roman Catholics who teach salvation by means of Sacramental Grace, take the obvious and change it to the literal, which it is not meant to be. We teach that this is one of two ordinances of the Church which are to be done repeatedly so as to constantly remind us of the broken body of Jesus on the cross. The Roman Catholics teach that this is a sacrament (a means by which saving grace is administered). They teach that unless one partakes daily of this sacrament he or she has no hope of ever reaching Heaven. By means of what they call "the miracle of transubstantiation, the wafer is turned into the literal body of Christ. They believe that a Roman Catholic priest has the right to administer grace in the Mass. Paul writes, under the inspiration of God in Hebrews 10:11, **"And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering often times the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:"** Next, Paul, under the inspiration of God, says, concerning the unfermented grape juice, Jesus said, **This cup is the New Testament in my blood: This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me."** Again, the Roman Catholics

apply this literally as being the literal blood of Christ which is, supposedly, changed from fermented wine into the blood of Christ. This means that Christ has to be re-crucified every time the Mass is observed. Paul writes, by Divine inspiration in Hebrews 9:28, **“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”** In order to be sure of reaching Heaven, according to the Roman Catholics, one would have to attend Mass regularly, plus keeping all the other sacraments, receive the Last Right when dying, go to Purgatory to suffer for one’s sins, and then, when one had suffered enough, enter Heaven. Not even the priests are sure of going directly to Heaven. What a sad thing when the Bible says, **“Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”** And again, **“By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast.”** Jesus paid the sin debt of all mankind in one, eternal atonement. See I John 2:1, 2

e. Paul then leaves us a stern warning concerning partaking of the Lord’s Supper unworthily, not unworthy, but unworthily. Unworthily refers to being unsaved. Certainly, an unsaved person should not partake of the communion, “unworthily means flippant, or lighty, or without having examined himself first and confessed any known sin. We were made worthy to partake when Christ saved us, but we can partake unworthily by coming to the Lord’s table unworthily as a Christian. (1) He would be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord (he would be making light of the body and blood of the Lord which bought him). Therefore, he or she should examine her self, or his self and confess all known sin before partaking, (2) The Christian that partakes of the symbols of the Lord’s body and blood unworthily (in a disrespectful manner), eats and drinks damnation (judgment) to him self, or her self. The type of judgment is clearly described. The word “damnation” does not refer to the Christian losing their salvation, for that is not possible, but it refers to illness, or physical death. There are many ways in which the Christian could bring judgment on him self, or her self. We are told in verse 31, if we would judge our self we would not be judged. God assures us that if we would judge our self we would not be judged with the world (unsaved). I have heard of one pastor who said there was so much un-confessed sin in his church that he had not served communion for years. That pastor had it backward. He should preach that church right and then start serving communion again. He, himself was sinning by not serving communion and warning his people of the consequences of partaking unworthily.

Chapter 12 – What a masterful treatment of spiritual gifts we find in this chapter. There are two kinds of spiritual gifts dealt with here: the individual gifts given to individual Christians, and the office gifts. Most of chapter twelve deals with the spiritual gifts, given to individual believers, to be used for the glory of God. Paul begins by saying that he would not have them (nor us) to be ignorant of the subject. All too many base their whole doctrinal system on a misinterpretation of this subject; so let us carefully examine what Paul is telling us here.

a. Those who worshipped idols in the past should remember that they were led to do so by an antichrist spirit. No man can acknowledge Jesus Christ as savior and Lord of their lives except by the Holy Spirit convicting them to do so. Without godly sorrow there is no salvation. See II Corinthians 7:10. Likewise, no man that was being led by the Holy Spirit would blaspheme the name of Christ. It is, therefore, true that none can receive a spiritual gift unless the Holy Spirit chooses to give it to him. Verse four tells us, **“Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.”** The first thing Paul wants us to know on this subject is that there are different gifts for different purposes, but that they are all administered by the same Holy Spirit. By “diversity of gifts” he means there are many different gifts the Holy Spirit gives. In verse five he tells us, **And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord** (Lord Jesus Christ). The Lord Jesus Christ is the one who made all of these gifts possible, and Paul wants us to know there are **“differences of administrations, but the same Lord.”** That is, there are different ways in which

to administer the same gift. Not all people who have the same particular gift are meant to administer it in the same way. Paul also tells us in verse six, **“There are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.”** He means that two people can have the same gift, but they may be led of the Spirit of God to use it in different ways, to different extents. But any gift that is given to a Christian then may differ both in the way it is administered, and in the extent to which it is administered, from the same gift given to another Christian. This thing of spiritual gifts is all up to the same Lord who made it possible. He knows which gift or gifts each of us can handle best, and He knows what we would do with each gift, and to what extent. He gives each of us what He chooses. Let us not neglect our gift or gifts, nor let us covet the gift or gifts given to another. Spiritual gifts are given to the individual Christian so that he or she might profit from it. Although I am certainly no scholar, I do not need to have an extensive Bible education in order to love teaching what God teaches me, and loving to share with others what I learned from those who are scholars. I loved being an assistant Pastor and Youth Pastor; I loved the chaplaincy; I loved missionary work among the American Indians; I loved the work with teenagers for many years; I loved the pastorate for many more years; I loved evangelism; I loved traveling with a Gospel team; I loved the radio and television ministry; I loved teaching on the college level; now I love writing and teaching Sunday School. I’m only close to 89. No telling what I might take up next. If there is something else God has for me, I’ll be glad to do it, but He would have to call me to it. Whatever God gives us, we ought to use it for His glory.

b. These are the spiritual gifts listed in this chapter. We will try to explain each of them:

Wisdom – James, Chapter one tells us that wisdom is ours for the asking, but this is not the wisdom spoken of here. This is the gift of wisdom for counseling and giving advice to other Christians with various spiritual problems. Any Christian can ask wisdom from God for any thing in their life and receive it, but God might choose to give it through someone with a special gift of wisdom.

Knowledge – We can all receive knowledge from good books, good teachers, experience, etc. but the gift of knowledge spoken of here is a special gift from God to assimilate great facts from many areas with understanding so as to write the good books from which we all can learn. They seem to have a special insight into things that the rest of us do not possess. These, for one example, are writers of Biblical reference books.

Faith - We are all given faith by which to trust Christ as Savior. But there are those to whom God gives the faith to accomplish great things of which the rest of us are not capable. Examples of these are listed in Hebrews chapter eleven. One might say, “doesn’t faith come by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God? Yes, but that verse is speaking primarily of the faith to trust Christ as Savior. The more time we spend in the Word of God, the stronger our faith will be. But not all are given the faith to do the things those listed in Hebrews chapter eleven did by faith.

Healing – There is only one healer, and that is God. Sometimes we call doctors, healers, but they treat; God heals. Most people, given the knowledge, could be a doctor, but no one can actually heal, except the Lord. This gift is one of administration, and it involves also the gift of faith. God has given us the formula in James chapter five for healing in this Age of Grace, but to some God gives the gift of administering it.

Miracles – Here, again, we have a gift in which the gift of faith is involved. God almost always works through natural means, but once in a while He chooses to use the supernatural to get something done. Like the gift of healing, no one but God can actually perform a miracle, but some people are given the gift of being so yielded to God and humbly submitted to Him, that God uses them to do the supernatural. Remember, there are no miracle workers but God.

Prophecy – This gift is no longer active. The Gift of Prophecy was one of the revelation gifts in the early Church until the Canon of Scripture was complete. We will deal with this more thoroughly in

chapter thirteen.

Discernment – Although this gift is sometimes given to people other than spiritual leaders, it is almost always given to those who are in spiritual leadership. A man who is called to pastor must have the gift of discernment. True, many are in the pastorate who do not have good discernment, but if they do not, they really should not be in the pastorate. This gift is used most often to discern whether people are really the kind of people we want to have in leadership positions. It is also important to be able to discern what kind of music should be used in ministry. It is important to be able to warn people of harmful influences. By discerning of spirits, the Scripture means discernment of influences or teachings or philosophies abroad in the world. This gift is found most often in spiritual leaders.

Tongues – This is another of the revelation gifts of the early Church which is no longer in existence. There are many who claim some kind of Heavenly language by which they receive revelation of new truth, but there is no new truth since the closing of the Canon of Divine Scripture. We will deal more with this gift in chapter thirteen.

Interpretation of tongues – According to chapter fourteen, whenever the gift of tongues was used in the giving of new revelation, before the Canon of Divinely inspired Scripture was complete, there had to be an interpreter present, or the person who received the revelation was to remain silent. Today when we have other languages spoken in the English-speaking Church, we always need to have a translator present. Again, we will deal with that more extensively in chapter fourteen.

c. Verses 12-26 speak of the oneness of the Body of Christ, but the importance of each member in particular. Verse thirteen says, **“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one spirit.”** Frequently, talented people get bent out of shape because they are not called on to sing, or speak, or do something that receives special attention. This is a problem older than the Church itself. Since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, man has had the problem of craving attention and adulation. This is a sin. About two years ago I found I had what looked like a blood blister about one eighth of an inch in diameter on the very end of my left big toe. I did not think much about it until it broke open and began to bleed. I also found out that there are many nerve endings there for it rubbed on the sheets at night. I reluctantly went to a foot doctor, who, in turn, sent me to a dermatologist. Both did A biopsy and found that it was not malignant. I am still treating that thing, and it is unbelievable how much misery one little sore can cause. It’s only one toe, and no one ever sees it but me, but I found out just one aspect of the importance of one toe. It may not get in the limelight too much, but it is just as important to the over all welfare of the body as is the nose, which is about as prominent as any part of the body, And only Moslem women cover it up, unless its below zero outside; and then we all cover it up. Otherwise, it sticks out there like Mount Everest, at least mine does. There are times when that big toe is more important than the nose, but it doesn’t usually get the attention our nose does, because it isn’t seen, except at the beach. God has fashioned the Body of Christ exactly as He wants it, and it is a sin for us to complain because we don’t get the attention someone else does. We are just as needful for the healthy functioning of the Body of Christ as the one in the limelight. The important thing is that we faithfully serve our purpose. When you stub your toe in the middle of the night, you know the meaning of verse twenty six: **“And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.”** Stop pouting; the rest of the Body of Christ needs you as much as it needs any other part, in order to function as it should. We should serve the Lord in our calling with our spiritual gifts, faithfully and we wouldn’t have time to be concerned about the gifts of others. We can all pass out tracts, and win souls to Christ. Start bringing unsaved people to church Sunday after Sunday and folks will soon notice you. But our rewards are not in this world: they are waiting for us at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

d. Verses 27-31 conclude the chapter by making it clear that having no particular gift is necessary in order to be saved; and that not every one has the same gift or gifts. This is so important for us to know since some teach that unless you speak in tongues, you are not saved. Strange they should pick that particular gift that draws so much attention to a person. I once had the pastor of the largest Pentecostal Church in town (not Houston) ask me if I had ever spoken in tongues. I told him I had not. He said, "That's a relief; neither have I."

e. In these concluding verses we have three of the office gifts which Christ gave when he ascended up to the Right Hand of the Father. Actually there are five of these with which we will deal when we get to the Book of Ephesians. The three that are listed here are Apostles, Prophets, and teachers. The office of Apostle, and the office of Prophet are no longer operative. The Apostolic age ended with the death of the Apostle John around the end of the first century A.D. The office of Prophet also ended with the completion of the Canon of Inspired Scripture. We will speak more about the office of Teacher when we get to Ephesians chapter four. Some like to add the offices of Deacon and Bishop, but we will try to shed light on those when we study I Timothy chapter three and Titus chapter one.

Chapter 13 – The first seven and a half verses are given to the qualities of God's kind of love, agape love. The rest of the chapter, except for the last verse, is given to explaining how the revelation gifts will come to an end when "that which is perfect" (the completed Canon of inspired Scripture) is come. Misuse of these spiritual gifts was just as rampant then as now. It is important, however, that we remember that chapters twelve, thirteen, and fourteen are all three speaking of spiritual gifts. Chapter thirteen is often called the love chapter, and that tends to turn our attention away from what the chapter is about. The first seven and a half verses are inserted at this point to emphasize the fact that any of these gifts operated without Agape (God's kind) of love, is of no use at all. Let us take special note of the qualities of Agape Love:

a. Tongues – The first verse deals with the gift which causes the most trouble in the Church: tongues. Paul, under Divine inspiration, tells us that speaking in tongues, without God's kind of love, is like a brass gong or a tinkling symbol. Both of these were instruments which were used to get the attention of false gods. In other words, to speak in tongues without Agape love amounts to nothing. Here I go getting myself in trouble again but, contrary to the position held by almost all fundamental, Bible-believing Pastors, I believe there are two kinds of tongues mentioned in the discussion on spiritual gifts. Verse one speaks of the tongues of men which are the tongues spoken of in most passages of the New Testament. But verse one also speaks of the tongues of Angels (a heavenly language) which if spoken without Agape love, also amounts to nothing. I do believe there are instances where this ability to speak in an angelic tongue was given. When I get to Heaven, if I find out I am wrong, it will not make a bit of difference to me. I'll be happy to be wrong, but I believe I am right or Paul would not have mentioned it in this first verse.

Prophecy – Verse two contains four spiritual gifts; prophecy, discernment, knowledge, and faith. Paul says of these, if I possess all these gifts and have not God's kind of love, I am nothing.

Discernment – Wouldn't it be wonderful to be able to understand all mysteries in God's Word? If you did, but you did not use that ability in the framework of God's kind of love, you have wasted your gift. It profits you nothing.

Knowledge – To have all knowledge, would be to know all that God knows, but this is speaking of the gift of knowledge. If I had the gift of knowledge in this present day, I would not have to go to Bible College. It would still be of no value unless used with God's kind of love.

Faith – Paul speaks of faith to move mountains. With that gift, what kind of a real estate person you could be. Seriously, faith is so important, but used without God's kind of love, it is useless.

Sacrifice – Surely, if I give all my earthly possessions to feed the poor it would count for something, but Paul says it profits me nothing.

Martyrdom – Even if we give our bodies to be burned at the stake without the motivation being God’s kind of love, it profits me nothing. Say, God’s kind of love must be the greatest of all spiritual gifts. Do you suppose that is why the last verse of chapter twelve says, “**Yet show I unto you a more excellent way**” when introducing chapter thirteen?

b. The characteristics of God’s kind of love are: After you finish thinking on this list, you will agree with me that it is impossible for mankind to love like this while in this flesh. Only God can love like this. Aren’t you glad you are loved to this extent? John 3:16

Long-suffering – When we think of the mess this world is in today, we have to quickly turn to II Peter 3:9 and remind ourselves that God is so patient that He is waiting till the last soul is in the fold before the door is closed. But one day the last soul will be won and the door will close.

Kindness – We cannot envision a love here on earth that is never unkind or harsh since we, ourselves are subject to that weakness with those we love the most. More important than that, we are often unkind with the Lord whom, I hope we love more than any earthly mortal. Although we will never master it during this life, let us work at kindness, even toward those we love the least.

Does not envy – Who at times does not experience envy; and though we hate ourselves for it, let us practice rebuking ourselves when it breaks in upon us. Think on God’s kind of love: that kind of love that never ever experiences envy. Envy is a sin: when it tends to break out in our hearts, let us practice thanksgiving for what we have, and what God has done for us. Count your blessings, name them one by one.

Does not exalt itself – It is so human to want praise and recognition. For what? If we are truly living for God we should see that He gets the praise. I am a fairly healthy (almost) 89 year old. Should I be proud of that, and brag about it; or should I be constantly praising God for each day He gives me? “**Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above; and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.**”

Is not proud – Pride is the original sin. Sin, the Scriptures tell us, was found in Lucifer, and has infected the entire human race through Adam. It is in keeping with the nature of God not to show love without pride. It is in keeping with we who are still in the flesh to be proud of even our love we show to others. Do you ever long to be completely like our Lord?

Does not misbehave – It is so common today to see even those who name the name of Christ misbehaving in relation to their love for others. Our love for even our enemies should be real and deep, but it is often shallow and pretentious.

Not selfish – Do you love your self too much? Do you shy away from loving others? We ought, according to the Scripture, to be willing to lay down our lives for the brethren. At the least, we ought to love our neighbor even as we love our selves. Is that, in your thinking, an impossibility? In a modern day situation such as a sudden car crash, would your inclination be to pull over and see what you could do to help the victims, or would you drive around it and continue on? What did the Good Samaritan do?

Not easily provoked – Are you easily provoked? I tend to be. But think how you provoke others. Being provoked at others is akin to losing our temper. What is it that provokes you? Did you ever do the same thing? If not, are you capable of doing the same thing? Do you provoke others in some other way that you hadn’t realized?

Does not think evil – In Philippians 4:8, there is a list of things we are commanded (not requested) to think on. None of us always thinks on the things we should, but we would come closer to it if we would work on it. Work on it and practice it consciously until it becomes a part of you.

Does not rejoice in iniquity – Would you rejoice if the entire Islamic system collapsed, and they all turned on each other and killed one another? Would you be glad if the entire nation of North Korea blew up from an accidental explosion from its own missile testing? If so, you would rejoice in iniquity. Millions of lost souls in Islam today are longing for something to meet their spiritual needs. They are prisoners of a system that they secretly hate. Should those souls go out into eternity without a chance to hear the Gospel? Most of the people in North Korea hate the dictator who keeps them in starvation. They are unwilling prisoners of a godless military regime. Should they go into eternity without having a chance to hear the Gospel? It is the system that entraps them we should hate, not the helpless who are entrapped.

Rejoices in the Truth – Are we always glad to hear the truth finally come out in every situation; even if it does not favor us? or are we only willing to have the truth come out when it favors us? Truth is what told us of Christ. Truth is what brought us to Christ. Jonah pouted at the results of the preaching of the truth to a people he hated. Could we possibly be so hard hearted as to pout when good comes to someone we don't like?

Bears all things – Because we are still in mortal bodies, do we use that for an excuse to say, “this is more than I can bear”. The next time you are tempted to say this, think of those is far worse circumstances.

Believes all things – This is, perhaps, the most difficult characteristic of God's kind of love to understand. God does not want us to believe everything someone tells us. Some of the best commentaries bypass this one, but let me share what I believe Paul is saying: God's kind of love does not make hair-trigger decisions about things, but always prays for, and takes a person's word for what they do. This, I believe, would involve the gift of discernment. Sometimes we know what happened in a particular situation and we know people are lying to us. This is not something God would have us say we believe, but when we don't know, we take the person's word for it. If it involves sin, we might believe that it happened the way the person says, but not condone it at the same time. In cases where we just don't know, we pray and believe God for the best.

Hopes in all things – Again, I believe God would have us to love a person who has even greatly sinned against us and hope for their conversion. We should always hope for the best in any situation instead of hoping for evil upon a person.

Endures all things – Loving with God's kind of love is totally sacrificial and selfless. When we love with God's kind of love, we keep on loving even though the person or situation keeps working against us. When we were directing a youth ministry many years ago, the chairman of our board was one of the most godly and selfless men I had ever met. When his neighbor, whom he had tried many time to win to Christ would trim his trees, he would throw the old limbs over the fence onto the yard of our friend. He would often throw his garbage over the fence. The chairman of our board always prayed for his neighbor, cleaned up the mess, put it in his own trash containers, and said nothing about it. This went on for a long time until one day, his neighbor came over and said, “what can I do to make you angry; I have tried everything. How do you keep your cool?” The chairman of our board told him, “The Lord taught me to love you for Him, unconditionally. The neighbor went to church with them and got saved. God's kind of love certainly.....

Never fails – This is a promise from God. We might say that God's kind of love is just impossible. It is, only if you don't know the one who made the promise. When you have experienced God's kind of love in accepting Jesus Christ as your own personal Savior, you realize, “**Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all thing are become new.**” II Corinthians 5:17.

c. Verses 8-12 deal with just the Revelation gifts. By Revelation gifts we are referring to those three spiritual gifts that were used of God before the completion of the New Testament Canon of

Scripture: Prophecy, tongues and knowledge. These are now inoperative because they are not needed, and they would present an excellent opportunity for Satan to cause confusion in the Christian community if used along side the closed Canon of Scripture which God says is completed, and not to be added to. See Revelation 22:18, 19. (1) Verse 8 – **“Whether there be prophecies, they shall fail...”** The word fail does not mean “fail to come to pass,” but that prophecy as a means of giving new Truth from God, will come to an end. Also in Verse 8 we read, **“Whether there be tongues, they shall cease:** The word “cease” means the same thing as “fail.” It means that speaking in tongues will come to an end. Also in Verse 8 we read, **“Whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.”** The words “vanish away” mean the same thing as “fail” and “cease.” All three of these will definitely come to an end. The question arises then, when do they come to an end? If we look at Verses 9-12 we find the answer. (2) Verses 9-12 - Vs 9 **“For we know in part, and we prophecy in part.”** At the time that Paul wrote First Corinthians, the New Testament Books were just beginning to be written, and the only revelation Christians had was the Old Testament, which was that from which Paul, the other Apostles, and the Disciples were preaching; that and their own first hand knowledge and experience. Consequently, they were still possessors of partial knowledge, and they were still prophesying in part. In verse 10 we learn when these three revelation gifts will end: (3) Vs 10 **“But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.”** Now the question arises, “what is ‘that which is perfect?’ In answer to that question, we shall counter with a question: What is the subject of verses 8-12? The answer is, partial and full revelation. So, partial revelation ends when full revelation is received. If there is any question about that answer, let’s look again at Revelation 22:18, **“But I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:...”** Obviously, Prophecy is closed. That means the three gifts by which partial revelation were given are no longer operative.

a. Verses 12, 13 Paul said that at that time they saw through a glass darkly; meaning that at that time they did not have a full understanding of the various doctrines which we now hold as foundational to Christianity. Then he states that (when that which is perfect is come) we shall see face to face. He is using a metaphor which simply means, now we have partial revelation, but then we will fully understand. In Verse thirteen he refers back to the portion having to do with the most important spiritual gift of all, upon which all the rest rely: **Love.** He says, **“And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.”** (love)

Chapter 14 – Paul emphasizes that there are God-given regulations on the use of the gift of tongues in the Church, and that these should be followed in order that all things can be done decently and in order. This chapter is extremely important because of the misuse of the gift of tongues in our time. The only gift of tongues in our day is the ability to quickly master other languages in order to communicate the Gospel. One thing that leads us to believe that tongues in the New Testament times was other earthly languages, is that the whole then known world had been forced to learn Koine Greek, since it was the commercial language of the Roman Empire. When Paul and others carried the Gospel to the far reaches of the Roman Empire, he did not have to learn other languages.

a. Paul begins this chapter by urging us to choose to prophesy (preach or witness). If anyone received a revelation they should choose to communicate it in the language of the people so that everyone could be edified. He states that, even though someone received a revelation and communicated it in an unknown tongue, it was of no use to the congregation since no one could understand it. Therefore, it was not to be done unless there was a translator present. It seems there was a problem here very much like that which we have in relation to contemporary Christian music in the Church today. When we sing a good song the right way, everyone listens to the message of the song and is edified. If another sings a bad contemporary song the wrong way, it draws attention

to the singer, instead of any message the song may convey. So it is with tongues. Probably, most of those who spoke in tongues did so to draw attention to themselves, much as they do today, and the devil uses it to cause confusion in the congregation and exalt individuals instead of Christ. Let's look at a list of regulations God put on the use of tongues in the early Church: (1) He who speaks in an unknown tongue speaks to God, not to men. Here is where I am inclined to think Paul is speaking of a heavenly, or angelic language. (2) He that speaks in tongues edifies himself, not the Church. (3) He that speaks in tongues can only edify the Church if there is an interpreter present. (4) Seek to edify the Church. (5) Let him that speaks in an unknown tongue pray that he may be able to interpret. (6) Tongues are for a sign to those who do not believe because they hear in their own tongue. But if someone who speaks the same language you do comes in and hears some speaking in tongues, he will think the congregation is crazy and will not come back. (7) If everyone prophesies and an unbeliever comes in, he will be convicted of his sins and be saved. (8) Let all things be done unto edifying. (9) If anyone speaks in an unknown tongue, there must be an interpreter. (10) Let no more than two or three speak in an unknown tongue in a service. (11) If there is no interpreter present, let him that would speak in an unknown tongue keep silent. (12) Let those who prophesy speak one at a time, and then only two or three in a service. Note verses 34, 35 which say, **“Let your women keep silence in the Churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak: but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the Law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the Church.”** Since the context is speaking about prophesying or speaking in tongues, I believe these verses mean that women should never preach (or at that time in the history of the Church), speak in an unknown tongue in the Church. In several instances in the best of churches today, women can't ask their husbands at home for their husbands are unsaved and have no idea how to answer them. But women today are formally educated when they weren't in the early centuries of the Church. They can sit in Church and learn. While they were not to prophesy nor speak in an unknown tongue back then, it leaves some questions as to what they are limited to today. Scripture always interprets Scripture, or one passage explains another. I Timothy 2:12 says, **“But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.”** The woman is not to teach men, nor are they to usurp the authority of the man. That is crystal clear. Women can teach children up through eleven years old (Israel held that a young man's religious responsibility began at the age of twelve.) Women can teach women, as long as it is under the authority of the Pastor of the Church. They can sing in the choir, in special music, etc., but it is always good to have her do what she does with the full knowledge and sanction of the Pastor of the Church. These women who get on the radio, and on the television and teach and preach are defying God and His Word. Women who start Bible studies in their home and invite other women to come are violating the Scripture. Everything of this kind was to be under the authority of the local Church. Remember chapter eleven: The man is the head of the woman, Christ is the head of the man, and God the Father is the head of Christ. Any para-Church ministry should be subject to the authority of the local Church. I do not believe it is in violation of the Scriptures to have a woman give her testimony in Church, so long as she does not get to preaching or teaching. Someone will always say, “But things are so different today.” Is that a valid reason for defying the Word of God? Paul ends this subject with, **“Let all things be done decently and in order.”**

Chapter 15 – This is the great and classic chapter on the resurrection. All a Christian needs to know on this subject is found here and in First Thessalonians 4:13-18. The word “rapture” does not appear in the Bible, but the incident of which it speaks does; in fact, it is the next major incident on God's prophetic calendar.

a. Paul opens this chapter with a review of the Gospel. In verses one through four of the chapter he lists that which makes up the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul says that he is delivering to the

Corinthians (and us) that which he had already received. We cannot convince others to receive that which we ourselves have not received, nor that of which we are not convinced. When we have found Jesus Christ and His gift of eternal life to be sweet, we want everyone else to partake. We usually say that there are three parts to the Gospel (good news), but I believe chapter fifteen gives us four. (1) Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; (2) and that He was buried; (3) and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures. Number four is found in verses fifty one through fifty eight: (4) He is coming in the air for His own, the rapture. Let's take a closer look at each of these: (1) **Christ** – He is the only one who was qualified to die for our sins since He had no sin of His own, II Corinthians 5:21; (2) **Died** – In order to pay our sin debt He had to die, Romans 3:23; (3) for our **sins**, Romans 6:23a; and (4) **He was buried** – This provides the proof of His death, Luke 23:50-56; (5) **He Rose again** – The Scripture says that He rose again for our justification, I Corinthians 15:5-8; and (6) **The Rapture** – I Corinthians 15:51-58 and I Thessalonians 4:13-18.

b. Next, in verses five through eight Paul gives us a list of those who actually saw Him, talked with Him, ate with Him, and touched Him following the resurrection. Without the resurrection of Jesus we would be of all men most miserable because we could not be saved and justified by a dead Christ. **“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept”** I Corinthians 15:20. (1) Mary Magdalene, John 20:1-18; John says that Mary came to the tomb early, while it was yet dark. When she saw Jesus she thought He was the gardener, until He spoke her name, and she recognized His voice. He told her not to touch Him for He had not yet ascended to the Father. In the Old Testament the Priest, when serving in his official capacity, could not touch anything unclean. If he did, that made him unclean and he could not make the sacrifice for the people or the person. Jesus told Mary not to touch him for he had not yet ascended to the Father. This means that He had not as yet presented His own blood in the Heavenly Holy of Holies as a once for all atonement for the sins of all mankind. See Hebrews 9:24. A few minutes later as the women who had seen the empty tomb ran to tell the Disciples, they fell at His feet and clasped Him about the feet. That means that in the short time between the time Mary saw Him, and the time the women had been to the tomb and found it empty, Jesus had been to Heaven, made the atonement, and returned; (2) The women who had been to the tomb and were running to tell the Disciples, Matthew 28:9; 10. (3) The two on the road to Emmaus, Luke 24:13-35; (4) The ten Disciples in the upper room on Sunday evening with Thomas absent, John 20:19-25; (5) The eleven eight days later in the upper room with Thomas present, John 20:26-29; (6)

Seven of the Disciples at the Sea of Galilee, John chapter 21; (7) We do not know when the over five hundred saw Him at once, I Corinthians 15:6; (8) We do not know when James, the half brother of Jesus saw Him alone, I Corinthians 15:7; (9) Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus, Acts 9:1-8.

I Corinthians 15:5-8 gives us a limited list, but we must go to the Gospels and the Book of Acts to get the entire list. Countless millions have seen Him with the eyes of faith since that time. I personally thing Jude, the half brother of Jesus saw Him sometime before the ascension sine he was an unbeliever before the crucifixion, but God used him to write the New Testament Book of Jude.

c. The next division of chapter 15 is verses 12-19 which tell us what would be true if Christ had not arisen from the dead. **“But if there be no resurrection from the dead...”** (1) then Christ is not risen, **“and if Christ be not risen,** (2) ...then is our preaching vain, (3) ...and your faith is also vain, (4) ...we are found false witnesses of God, (5)...your faith is in vain, (6) ...they that have fallen asleep in Christ are perished, (7) ...we are of all men most miserable. Our own personal experiences with Christ have shown us that Christ is risen, and that He has kept every promise which He made to mankind, and more.

d. Paul gives us a list of things Christ is going to do because He is risen: **“But now is Christ risen from the dead...”** (1) He is become the first fruits of them that sleep in Jesus. In the Old

Testament the first fruits of the crops raised by Israel were brought to the Levites as an indication of the quality and quantity of the harvest. Likewise, Jesus, in His resurrection is an indication of the “quality,” and the “extent,” of the resurrection we will experience. See Romans 8:29; (2) By Jesus comes our resurrection from the dead. See II Corinthians 5:1-9; (3) **“For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”** All who have trusted Jesus as their savior shall be raised to everlasting life, as we have already see in II Corinthians 5:1-9. The resurrection will come at His Coming for the Church in the Rapture. I Thessalonians 4:13-18. (4) He will deliver up the Kingdom to God; (5) He will put down all rule and authority and power, **“For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet.”** (5) He will destroy the last enemy, which is death. (6) God the Father has put all things under Jesus’ feet except for God the Father. (7) Jesus will put all things under God the Father once He has subdued them all, that God the Father may be all in all.

e. Paul asks, “If Christ is not risen, why do we do the following? (1) **“Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead?”** This verse has puzzled many Christians. Are the Mormons right? Should we be baptized for the dead who died without Christ? The answer is “NO.” What then does this verse mean? It means, “If Christ is not risen from the dead, then why do new Christians get baptized to identify with a dead Christ, with no hope of a resurrection from the dead?” (2) Paul asks, **“And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?”** He says, if Christ is not raised, we may as well eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die. He then challenges the Christian community to win people to Christ who is raised from the dead.

f. In verses 35-50 Paul discusses the nature of the resurrection body. An often asked group of questions is, “What is our resurrection body going to look like; and what age will we be; will we recognize loved ones from this life? In answer to the first question Paul says, **“Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die.”** This body must first die, whether we live until the rapture or not, in order to be changed into the new resurrection body which is conformed to the image of Christ. See Romans 8:29 and II Corinthians 5:1-9. In verse 44, the words, “spiritual body” do not mean that the resurrection body is spirit instead of flesh for Christ’s resurrection body was flesh and bones, not flesh and blood, but flesh and bones, and our resurrection bodies will be identical to His. It does mean that our new body is spiritual, not carnal, likewise the new tangible body will be spiritual (not spirit), not carnal. The resurrection body will be in complete harmony with God, not with this world.

g. Paul tells us that there are many different kinds of flesh: the flesh of men, the flesh of beasts (mammals), the flesh of fish, and the flesh of birds. It is important to note that Paul, although he had not had a seminary course in biology, knew the difference between the physical nature of man and that of the rest of life forms. He also noted that there are different kinds of bodies: Celestial (heavenly, such as Angels), which would be spirit beings, and terrestrial (earthly) which would be tangible, or physical.

h. As far as what age we will be in our resurrection body, the Bible does not tell us. If I were to speculate, I would say, probably the same ideal age that Adam and Eve were before the sinned. Mind you, that is wild speculation. Will we know our loved ones and friends who were saved? Yes, but the relationships will be far superior to those we had with them on earth. We know there will be no marriage, nor giving in marriage in the resurrection. **“And as we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”**

i. Verses 51-58 have to do with the rapture itself. The biggest battle in relation to the rapture (first resurrection) is, “when does it happen?” Some believe it takes place during the middle of the tribulation period, as the Great Tribulation begins. Others believe that the Church will go through the entire tribulation period. But most Bible-believing Christians believe it will take place just before the tribulation begins. This is called a pre-trib position. The meanings then of mid-trib and

post-trib would be obvious. The mid-trib position is based largely on Matthew 24 and 25, but these were written to Israel. Re-gathered Israel will go through the tribulation. The post-trib position is based largely on the rapture of the tribulation saints found in the last half of Revelation chapter seven. But these are people who have never heard the Gospel before the rapture and are won to Christ with the Kingdom Gospel which is preached to them by the 144,000 of Israel who will already have been redeemed. Most of these will be martyred for their faith in the tribulation period. The Pre-trib position is based on numerous passages that, to my thinking, are crystal clear. God never said that the Church would not go through any tribulation, but that it would not go through The Tribulation. The book of Revelation is divided into three parts: That which has been, chapter one; that which is (the Church Age, or the Age of Grace) found in chapter two and three; and the tribulation period, beginning with chapter four and continuing through chapter twenty. There is no mention of the Church after the end of chapter three, and chapter four begins with a type of the rapture. Another strong supporting passage is II Thessalonians chapter two, verses 1 through 8. The words “let” and “leteth” in the middle English in which the King James was translated meant “to restrain, or “to hold back,” just the opposite of what it means today. In this passage it refers to the Holy Spirit who will hold back the flood of iniquity that will accompany the tribulation period. The Holy Spirit, in this age of grace, holds back the flood of iniquity which will mark the beginning of the tribulation period by working through the Church, born-again believers. If the Church is caught up in the rapture, the influence of the Holy Spirit will be removed also. When this happens, II Thessalonians 2:7 says, “...**He who now letteth will let until He be taken out of the way.**” Then verse eight says, “**And then shall that wicked be revealed...**” (antichrist). When the Church is caught up in the rapture, it is called “**The Harvest:**” when the tribulation saints are caught up during the latter part of the tribulation it is called, “**The Gleanings.**” These are both part of the first resurrection.

j. What will be the nature of the first resurrection (rapture)? It will happen in the twinkling of an eye. The twinkling of the eye would be a tiny fraction of a second. (1) We will be changed – This mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption. (2) The dead (in Christ) shall be raised incorruptible, then we which are alive and remain. (3) Death will be swallowed up in victory. Death will lose its sting since the sting of death is sin and Christ died for our sins. The strength of sin is the Law, but Christ fulfilled all the Law. The chapter closes with these words: “**But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**” “**Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.**”

Chapter 16 – This last chapter talks about the offering for the poor Saints at Jerusalem, and gives Paul’s closing warnings to the Church to set things right.

a. Verses 1-4 Paul was constantly taking up an offering for the poor saints at Jerusalem. The Church at Jerusalem had chosen to practice a pure form of communism at the very beginning. Everyone brought all that they had, sold it, and put into one sum from which each person’s needs were met daily. Communism would be a wonderful form of government except for one thing: Human Nature. It was not long before there was bickering over some getting more than others, Acts chapter six. Others sold their lands and gave only part, but said they gave all, and died because they lied to the Holy Spirit, Acts chapter five. It seems as though the Church at Jerusalem was always in need of help. As Paul went from place to place, he took up an offering for the poor Saints at Jerusalem. The year before when Paul had been to Corinth and established the Church there, they had pledged to take up an offering for Jerusalem. We will discuss this more when we study II Corinthians, but we do want to recognize two things from this passage: (1) The offering was taken when they came together on the first day of the week (Sunday) which was when the New Testament Church met for worship. We worship on the First day of the week, not on the Sabbath.

The Sabbath was given to Israel as a day of rest, not worship, and as part of the Law. The Book of Hebrews tells us that there is a rest for the People of God: Christ is our Sabbath Rest, and we rest in Christ all the time, and every day of the week. If Christians kept the Sabbath Rest they would be saying that Christ did not fulfill it, and that His work was not sufficient. We rest and worship on the Lord's day when **He finished His Work**. (2) Paul's personal plans: I hope the reader will recall that Paul was in Ephesus, outbound on the third missionary journey when he wrote our First Corinthians. He expressed his plan to pass through Macedonia on his way to Corinth. His visit to Corinth would be a follow-up to his two letters to the Corinthians preserved for us, as he wanted to make sure they responded well to his correction. I'm sure, from my own many years in the ministry, that he was not looking forward to what would have to be done in Corinth had they not heeded his advice in his letters. We can teach and preach to a congregation for years, but it sometimes only takes a very brief time for Satan to undermine those years of instruction. Paul tells them that he will pass through Macedonia on his way to Corinth and, perhaps, spend the winter with them. As it turned out, he spent only three months with them before returning to Jerusalem. In verse nine he told them, **"For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries."** See Acts chapter 19. Paul was evidently, at that point, planning to send our I Corinthians by Timothy, so he admonished them to treat Timothy with great respect and kindness, for he was a faithful co-worker of Paul's. There is just a bit of humor at this point as he mentioned wanting Apollos to return to Corinth for a second time as their Pastor, but he said that Apollos' will was not to come to them at that time. I think Apollos had already had his fill of the people at Corinth. Paul continued by saying, **"He will come when he shall have a convenient time."**

b. Verses 13-20 contain Paul's final reminder to the Corinthians to solve their problems quickly by means of the application of Paul's instruction. There is an under-tone of extreme seriousness in these final words of instruction: (1) Verses 13 and 14 – **Watch ye** I Peter 5:6; **Stand fast in the faith** Ephesians 6:11; **Quit you like men** Joshua 1:9; **Be strong** Joshua 1:7; **Let all your things be done with Charity.**" I Corinthians 13:13. (2) Verses 15 and 16 give us a challenge to be like the household of Stephanas which had addicted themselves to **"The ministry of the Saints."** In the best of Churches today there is not enough caring for the needs and welfare of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Praise God for the household of Stephanas; may there be more of them in the church today. See First Thessalonians 5:12-15. Stephanas, along with Fortunatus and Achaicus had evidently gone to Ephesus to assist Paul with his opposition there. Let us never be hesitant to help a brother or sister who is faithfully serving the Lord, no matter what kind of circumstances they are in. It is certainly clear that Paul is not in a pleasant mood when he closes this letter. He is like a loving parent whose adored child has done a dastardly deed. And he knew he must discipline, but he was in danger of punishing too harshly, but he was also careful to let them know of his love. He expressed both in his closing words in verses 21-24. This problem of mixed emotions is also seen in the opening chapters of II Corinthians:

Verse 22 – **"If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha."** (Anathema = irredeemable and Maranatha = at the Lord's Coming).

Verses 23, 24 – **"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. A'men."**

THE BOOK OF II CORINTHIANS

Authorship: Both the external and internal evidence for the Pauline authorship is so strong for this Epistle that we need not dwell on these points. The writer twice calls himself Paul (1:1 and 10:1).

Date: Paul wrote a letter to the Corinthian Church which is not preserved for us (I Corinthians 5:9). Having come to Ephesus on the third missionary journey, Paul received word of the problems at Corinth and wrote our I Corinthians and sent it by Titus and another brother (presumed to be Timothy). Waiting as long as he can to hear from Corinth, he left Ephesus and went to somewhere in Macedonia (likely Philippi). In Macedonia Paul met the messenger returning from Corinth with a favorable reply to his Epistle. He then wrote II Corinthians and informed the Corinthians that he would soon be coming there. There was, however, a small minority which still resisted Paul's authority. II Corinthians was written not too long after I Corinthians, and thus, must have been written around 55 AD.

Purpose: Paul had at least eight reasons for writing II Corinthians, as we can see from the content of the Epistle. (1) He wanted to set forth the purpose for His sufferings in Asia Minor. (2) He wanted to justify the changing of his plans for coming to Corinth. (3) He wanted to give them instructions concerning the treatment of the repentant offender. (4) He wanted to express his joy for the good news from Corinth. (5) He wanted to present the Gospel and its ministry as superior to the Law and its ministry. (6) He wanted to appeal for separation from the world and reconciliation to him. (7) He wanted to urge the Corinthians to bring their part of the offering to a speedy and satisfactory conclusion. (8) He wanted to establish his authority as an Apostle. For the most part, the Book of II Corinthians is a book of reconciliation and restoration.

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NOTES ON SECOND CORINTHIANS

I. In **Chapter one** of II Corinthians Paul seeks to impress on the Corinthians how he has suffered on their behalf because of their sins, and to explain to them what had delayed his coming to Corinth the second time. The reader will remember that Paul's first visit to Corinth on the second missionary journey had been for the purpose of establishing a Church there. He did not know at the time that Corinth would turn out to be one of the largest and most influential of all the Churches Paul and his fellow workers had ever established. Its close proximity to Athens, however, had created a number of problems. There was the strong influence of Greek philosophy for which Athens was well known; there was their pride of intellectualism; and there was their complete submersion in idolatry for which Athens was well known. The greatest problem at Corinth, however, was pride in intellectualism, and a constant questioning of Paul's Apostleship and authority. Paul's constant travel, exposure to the elements, great physical persecutions, and personal appearance did not lend themselves to recognition as the greatest Theological mind of the first century. He did not come dressed as a twenty first century cleric, nor did he wear the robes of a religious Pope. He, of necessity, wore the clothing of the common man who had too many scars, and who had slept too many nights under the stars.

a. Verses 1, 2 In the first two verses Paul identifies himself and sends his usual greeting to the Church at Corinth. He says that he is an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God. Undoubtedly, he is thinking as he writes this, of the Damascus Road experience that had transformed his life forever. Timothy was with him as he wrote this letter. It is most likely that it was Timothy and Titus he had sent from Ephesus to Corinth with our First Corinthians. Paul had waited as long as he could at Ephesus for an answer and left there to go through Macedonia on his way to Corinth. It was somewhere in Macedonia that he met the messenger with the reply from Corinth, and wrote our II Corinthians. The news from Corinth was mostly good: the man who was living in sin in chapter five of I Corinthians had evidently repented and gotten right with the Lord. The Church, for the most part, had responded well to I Corinthians, and brought great relief to Paul's heart. You will find that the second letter is much more personal than the first. Paul's prayer in verse two for the Church at Corinth is that they might be the recipient of grace and peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul used this greeting so routinely that it may seem repetitious, but you can rest assured that he meant it.

b. Verses 3-11 Because of the over-all nature of this letter, I think we can safely say that the afflictions of which Paul spoke were partly physical and partly emotional. A minister who is a true servant of the Lord suffers greatly when his people are walking in sin, and are oblivious to what he has consistently taught them. The problems at Corinth, along with the Physical persecution he suffered in Ephesus (in Asia Minor) were almost more than he could bear. To hear that things were getting straightened out at Corinth was a great relief to him. What we do not know from Scripture, but is found in extra-biblical literature of the time is that the Apostle John was the one who planted most of the churches in Asia, and pastored most of his ministry at Ephesus. This made it a little easier for Paul to leave Ephesus and go to Macedonia. Some people, such as Paul are called to an itinerant ministry, while others, such as John are called to labor in one place for most of their professional life. It may seem like Paul could have waited until he arrived at Corinth to relay this message to them, but he would not have wanted to go through Macedonia without checking with the churches there. Also, travel in those days was mostly on foot, and he had to travel the full length of the Italian boot to arrive at Corinth. Paul wrote that God comforted us in our afflictions so that we could comfort others in their afflictions with the same comfort. The reply from Corinth had comforted Paul so that he, in turn, could comfort them when he arrived at Corinth. Paul wrote that they could help his coming to them by praying for him. He also mentions the gift that had been sent to him by Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, and what a comfort that was to him.

c. Verses 1:12-2:4 In these verses Paul told the believers at Corinth of the cause of his delay in coming to them, and what his new travel plans were. Paul had a clear conscience concerning his ministry to the Corinthians, not by means of fleshly wisdom, but by the grace (enabling) of God. He and his fellow workers had been able to maintain a good manner of living (conversation), both toward the world and, even more so, toward them. What they had written unto the Corinthians was all that they needed to do to live right. His feeling toward the Corinthians was mutual with those expressed in their reply. Paul's original plan was to come to Corinth, pass on to Macedonia, and then return unto them before going to Judea. Paul assured them that he really meant to follow his original plan. He did not lie to them, but could not help that his plans got changed. It was God who had established the relationship and great friendship between them. It was He who sealed them by the Holy Spirit in Christ, and had given them the earnest (down payment on) of their inheritance. The reason Paul had changed his plans was that he did not want to come to them and deal with their problems in anger.

Chapter 2 1:5– 2:1-4 continue the same subject having to do with Paul's change of plans. He continues, **“But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness.”** This is a beautiful picture of how we ought to discipline our children. We should always be careful not to discipline in anger. Paul said, if he made them sorry, who then would make him glad but those whom he had made sorry. After all, they were the ones who were his joy. As we said before, he could have forgone the writing of this second epistle and waited until he arrived in Corinth, but he wrote with many tears so that they might know before he arrived, how much he loved them.

a. Verses 5-13 In these verses Paul deals with the matter of forgiveness and restoration of the man who had been living in sin at Corinth. Evidently the man had suffered enough and had made things right with God and with the Church. In such a case the person, if sincere, and showing evidence of sincerity, should not only be restored to the Church, but should be fully restored as though nothing had happened. This is how God forgives and restores. (See Psalm 51, David's prayer of confession and plea for the restoration of the joy of his salvation). So often in good, fundamental, Bible-believing Churches today we see expressed forgiveness, but only partial restoration. We should be glad that God does not continue to hold our sins against us. When the Christian sins, the sin is paid for by Christ and the Christian does not lose their salvation, but sin does break fellowship. This fellowship can be restored **fully** by confessing the sin. God is **then “faithful and just to forgive us our sin, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”** God will both forgive and forget.

We may not be able to forget as God does, but we can certainly pray that God will help us to never call up the past again. As we treat the person as though the incident never happened, it will be easier and easier to forget that it did. The punishment that Paul instructed the Church to inflict on him, and his subsequent repentance was enough, Paul said. He tells them that whoever they forgave, he also forgave. In verses twelve and thirteen Paul told of his anguish as he left Ephesus, preached the Gospel in Troas, but saw nothing of Titus returning from Corinth with a reply to our First Corinthians. He then continued to Macedonia where he finally met Titus bringing good news.

b. Verses 14-17 In these verses Paul expressed great joy and relief because of the good news from Corinth. He gives the glory to God, where it belongs. Using the picture of the pleasant aroma in the nostrils of God from the Altar of Incense, he pictured the Corinthians and their repentance from their sins as a pleasant aroma to both the saved and the unsaved; to the saved because they will be pleased; to the unsaved because they will see what they themselves need to do. See II Corinthians 7:10. Paul emphasized that he and his fellow workers were promoters of the truth, not as many which corrupted the truth.

Chapter 3 This whole chapter is given over to what New Testament ministers ought to be, and how Paul and his fellow workers had tried to meet these requirements. Paul said they did not need letters of recommendation to them, or from them to be looked upon as bona-fide Apostles, the Corinthians themselves were epistles written in his heart. As they did right, as they should, and as they maintained a good testimony, they were his commendation wherever he went. He said that this testimony was not written in stone, but on fleshly tablets of the heart. Undoubtedly, this is a reference to the stone tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written because he continues on by saying, the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. The Law serves the purpose God meant for it to serve: it shows us that we are sinners, unable to keep the law. In other words, the Law is God's perfect standard of righteousness, but since no one can keep it perfectly, it kills. The spirit of the Law gives life, for, recognizing that none can keep the Law, by faith, the one who seeks to live by God's standard, but fails can look to Christ in faith to make up for their lack and live. Paul continues by comparing the Old Covenant with the New. He said if the old was glorious, how much more glorious should the New Covenant of grace be. If the Old Covenant of the Law was so glorious that it caused the face of Moses to shine, and they had to cover his face, how much more glorious is the New Covenant of Grace. The Jews to this day still have a veil between them and the understanding of the Law, how much more glorious is the New Covenant of grace which is simple, and clear, and easy to understand; so much more glorious. Paul stated that when the Law was read, the veil was still over the law, and Israel still failed to understand the meaning and purpose of the Law, but when the veil was removed, the Spirit of Christ made all things clear to those who would heed the message. He stated that **"..where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty."**

Chapter 4 Verses 1-6 Without God's empowering, the ministry which has been given to us, Paul said, would be impossible. Although this was written to the Corinthians concerning the ministry God had given to Paul, Silas, and the rest of their evangelistic party, but it is actually applicable to every Christian. **"For without me, ye can do nothing."** Jesus said to His Disciples in John 15:5. **"I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me,"** Paul wrote to Timothy in his final epistle. The power of the ministry is not inherit in the minister, but is received from Christ. In order, however, to have this power of Christ upon one's ministry, one must have a life which has renounced the hidden things of dishonesty. A life which rejects craftyness, and that does not handle the Word of God deceitfully. It must be a life that reflects Christ in that it is a reflection of Christ who is the embodiment of Truth.

a. The only ones who cannot understand the Gospel of Christ are those to whom it has not been presented by some means. A person can be enabled to understand the Gospel by reading a tract, or other literature that explains it. They can understand it if someone comes to them and explains it. They can understand it by going to a good Bible-preaching Church and hearing it preached. If they can find a good radio or television preacher who presents the Gospel correctly, they can understand it. This is what Paul meant by, **"..manifestation of the Truth.."**. While it is true that people can be saved by any of the above means, and many others, it is also true that, no matter how the Gospel is presented, a person cannot be saved by just being exposed to it. God knows the heart, and He knows whether a person is willing to listen and wants to understand. If the person is willing, and will receive the message and believe, they will be saved. It must be presented by some means, however. **"But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."** Paul knew that if they promoted themselves, their ministry would be in vain. It was Christ who must be exalted, and His Gospel, for He was the one who had wrought salvation; they were but the ones whom God had called for the proclamation of it. They were but the servants, but Christ was the message. They preached to the uttermost, and Christ saved to the uttermost all that came unto God by Him. God, who commanded

the light out of the darkness had enlightened Paul and his fellow-workers so as to give them a knowledge of the glory (Good News) so that they could proclaim it.

b. Verses 7-12 Paul and his fellow-workers were always dying to self in order that those who heard their message might live unto Christ. Verses seven through twelve contrast these two. The reason God gives us these contrasts is so that we can see the excellency of the power is of God and not of the messenger:

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|--|--------------------------------|
| (1) We are troubled on every side | Yet not distressed |
| (2) We are perplexed | But not in despair |
| (3) Persecuted | Not forsaken |
| (4) Cast down | Not destroyed |
| (5) Bearing in the body Christ's dying | That Christ life is manifested |
| (6) Always delivered unto death | His life might be seen in us |
| (7) Death worketh in us | Life in you (Corinthians) |

c. Verses 13-18 Paul stated that they, by faith, believed that what God the Father did for Christ, He would do for them in Christ:

- (1) He that raised up Jesus from the dead will raise us up also with all believers. I Corinthians 15:51-58
- (2) All that God the Father had done through Christ, He would do for them also. Romans 8:28-39
- (3) Though this physical body may perish, the spiritual man is renewed day by day. II Corinthians 5:1-9
- (4) What we may suffer here is but for a moment, but God has prepared eternal glory for those who are His own. Revelation 21
- (5) We see only the things which are temporal now, but the eyes of faith see what God has promised us. John 11:25, 26

Chapter 5 Verses 1-9 What happens to the believer after physical death: With the utmost confidence, Paul was inspired by the Holy Spirit to tell us what happens to the believer immediately after physical death. (1) Our earthly house of this tabernacle is actually this physical body. Paul says, if it is dissolved, we have a building of God (a body made by God) which is eternal, and is in the Heavens (Third Heaven). (2) Paul says we groan earnestly to be clothed with this new body. See Romans 8:22, 23. (3) I believe verse three and the word "naked" have to do with the period between the death of this earthly body and the receiving of the spiritual body (not spirit but spiritual-the resurrection body). That period in between will be a period, unless the rapture comes first, during which soul and spirit will be consciously present with the Lord, but will not have a tangible body. (3) We are not groaning to be unclothed (without a tangible body), but that we might be clothed with the spiritual (resurrection) body in order that mortality (this mortal body) might be replaced by the resurrection body which is identical to the body Jesus had following His resurrection. That we might know that God will keep His promise concerning our resurrection, He gave us an earnest payment (down payment) on our inheritance: the Holy Spirit. If we were to list the things the Holy Spirit does for us, it would require a separate syllabus, and a separate course to cover them. The just shall live by faith, but God did not leave us without evidence. **"Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord."** As we said, we walk by faith, not by sight, but not without some assurance. We are not flying blind; we have a full panel of instruments: sixty six books of

instruments by which to navigate in the Christian life. **“We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.”** The most important thing is to be certain that, whether present or absent, we are accepted (pleasing to) by him.

a. Verses 10-16 God has also given the believer motives for giving Him our best every day of our lives on this earth. The Christian life is too often presented as: *“Do you believe you are a sinner?” “Yes.” “Do you believe Christ died for your sins?” “Yes.” “Do you want to receive Him as your Savior?” “Yes.” “Pray this prayer after me.....”* That is what is called easy-believism. There is no godly sorrow for sin; there is no true repentance; there is no transformed life; and the person goes on living just as they did before, thinking they have eternal life. As we will see in verses seventeen through twenty one, the Christian is a new creature in Christ Jesus, and there is a natural desire to want to start telling others what has happened to them. Another motive is found in verse ten, that **“We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”** This judgment is for the Christian, and has nothing to do with our salvation. It does have to do with rewards. There is a graphic description of this judgment in I Corinthians 3:11-15. We are told in that passage that we can either build upon our salvation with gold, silver and precious stones, or we can build with wood, hay, and stubble. We are also told that every man’s work shall be tried by the fire of God’s judgment. This is not the fire of hell, this is a consuming, or refining fire, depending on the materials with which we have built. Fire consumes wood, hay, and stubble, while refining gold, silver, and precious stones. Whatever may be the case with each of us, it will be done before all the redeemed. This event is also pictured in the fourth chapter of Revelation. It takes place in heaven right after the rapture, Revelation 4:1-8. There is no way to picture in this world how humiliating it would be to stand before all the redeemed of all ages and have revealed the kind of a Christian life we have lived after having personally received Christ’s blood atonement for our sins. If we build with wood, hay, and stubble, we will be ashamed.

Our first motivation, then, would be the knowledge of what the Lord had prepared for the believer when he leaves this world. God promises the Christian that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. The second motivation would be the Judgment Seat of Christ, as we have already seen. We would be subject to the judgment of the wasted hours in front of the T.V. We would be judged on the wasted opportunities to share the Gospel that we passed up. We would be judged on the basis of what we did with God’s call to the mission field, or the pastorate, or to faithful service to the Lord through our local Church, or a million other things. This life is but a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. The rapture could take place at any moment, and after that, the Judgment Seat of Christ. The third motivation is the fear of the Lord’s chastening. God does not always chasten immediately following the Christian’s disobedience, but we can rest assured that He will, for He has obligated Himself to do it in His Word. See Hebrews 12:6, 11. The fourth motivation is God’s kind of love. Paul gives the Corinthians cause to glory in that Paul and his company have done the things they have done for the Corinthians, and not for self. The phrase, **“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead...”** can be taken two ways: “The love of Christ constraineth us,” or “the love for Christ constraineth us.” I believe that, because of the context, it must be taken, “The love of Christ...” To be the recipient of that kind of love must move one to service that is motivated by that love. The fifth motivation is a personal and intimate knowledge of Christ through the new birth, and not in a fleshly, earthly knowledge. We know longer know Christ after the flesh, but as our Savior and Redeemer. We know Him as God who came into a body of flesh and bore our sins in his own body on the tree, died, was buried, rose again victorious over death, ascended to the right hand of the Father and is now our mediator. Our knowledge of Christ now is as the one whose blood atonement not only covered our sins, but removed our sins into oblivion, never to be seen again. We know Him as the one who rose from the dead for our justification, and as the one who ascended

to the right hand of the Father to be our mediator. We ought to know Him so intimately that we would be quick to obey every command and request, and to lay down our lives for Him if necessary. What a wonderful Savior.

b. Verses 17-21 This passage deals with the new creature in Christ and the new commission as the Ambassadors of Christ. From the Greek, verse seventeen literally says, “**Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation: old things are constantly passing away; behold, all things are constantly becoming new.**” This is called progressive sanctification. There are three phases to sanctification: instant sanctification when we are saved and set apart as God’s property, progressive sanctification, or our spiritual growth in this life, and final and complete sanctification when we go to be with the Lord. We are his property (I Corinthians 6:19, 20) because He has redeemed us (bought us back from the slave market of sin). We are not our own; we are bought with a price. When He redeemed us in the New Birth, He also reconciled us to Himself. To be reconciled is to have the sin barrier removed by His once-for-all blood atonement on the cross, and to be brought back into fellowship with God. Having been reconciled, we are then given the ministry of reconciliation. That simply means that we are given the wonderful power and authority of God to lead others into reconciliation by giving them the Gospel. In other words, we are given the miracle-working power of leading others to Christ and seeing them become new creatures in Christ. This commission is not a choice, but a commission. It is tantamount to being in the army and receiving an order from a superior. We are privileged, yes, but commanded to win souls to Jesus Christ. What an awesome experience: The creator of the universe has commissioned us to help others find the new birth just as we did. “**To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.**” Having received the ministry of reconciliation, we are now ambassadors of Jesus Christ. It will probably never dawn on us in this life, the enormity of the responsibility that accompanies this commission. It would be an overwhelming honor to be assigned the task of being the Ambassador of the United States to Russia, or France, or England, but to be assigned the commission of Ambassador of Jesus Christ to the World is beyond our comprehension. Are we about our assignment daily? What kind of a representative of Christ are we to the world? How would others rate us in the carrying out of our commission? In some ways, verse twenty is even more important than the realization of our commission; it challenges us to make sure we are even reconciled to God ourselves. “**...we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.**”

c. This chapter ends with the greatest motivation of all, to be real in our Christian life, and in our responsibility of being ambassadors for Christ: “**For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.**” He took our place so that we might take His place.

Chapter 6 Chapter six is divided into two very important divisions:

a. Paul begins the chapter with an impressive listing of what he felt in that day, constituted the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, or as we saw in the previous chapter, our position as ambassadors for Jesus Christ in this world:

(1) As workers together with God, we should be careful to see that we did not receive the grace of God in vain. I believe that Paul, by this statement meant, “Be sure you did not receive your salvation and commission as an ambassador for Christ just to become a pew warmer.” It is expected of us that we get busy right away carrying out our duties in our new calling. “**Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.**” We need to stay busy for the Lord.

(2) We must be careful not to knowingly be offensive in our work as the ambassadors of Jesus Christ, so that we do not bring reproach on the ministry.

(3) In everything we do in God's service, we should prove ourselves the true servants of God through patience, in afflictions, in need (necessity), in distress, when beaten, in imprisonment, in tumults, in hard work, in waiting to see what is going to happen, in times of fasting,

(4) In the ministry of being an ambassador of Jesus Christ we should prove our selves by living a pure life, by our knowledge of what we say, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the power of the Holy Spirit, by God's kind of love, by the Knowledge of the Word of God, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor, and by being dishonored, by bearing an evil report against us, by receiving a good report, by patiently being called deceivers, by always, regardless of what is said of us, being true to our calling

(5) In the ministry of being an ambassador of Jesus Christ we should serve the Lord with our whole heart whether we are unknown, or well known, by life or by death, by being chastened, or by being allowed to live, as sorrowful (disappointed), yet always rejoicing, as being willing to have nothing, but making many rich, having nothing, yet possessing all things.

b. The second half of this chapter is given to the subject of personal separation from the world and unto God.

(1) Verses 11-13 are a plea for reconciliation. Paul said that he and his workers were ready to teach them the things of God, their hearts were open to them, and if there were any hard feelings they had to be on the part of the Corinthians, not with Paul and his team. He had already said that their hearts were enlarged toward the Corinthians as unto Paul's own children, and he makes a plea for their hearts to be enlarged toward him.

(2) Verses 14-18 are a plea for separation from the world. He calls for them to avoid the unequal yoke. While Paul gives us several examples of the unequal yoke, let us say at this point that the unequal yoke does not apply only to marriage. The Christian can very easily find himself in an unequal yoke in secular organizations, religious endeavors, business partnerships, Lord's Day activities, and a thousand other areas. When we come to this passage of scripture the yoke most people immediately think of is marriage, and marriage is, perhaps the area of most frequent attention. The Christian should certainly be friendly toward unsaved people, and we certainly need to be a part of things at work as much as we can without compromising our testimony, but the thing we need to watch is getting involved with unsaved people to where they become close friends or the ones with whom we enter into activities. They certainly should not be confidants with whom we discuss personal matters or ask for advice. We should be the dog that wags the tail, not the tail that is being wagged.

c. When around unsaved people, be pleasant and friendly, but do not get involved in their gossip, complaints, criticism, or other unscriptural activities. Paul gives us an impressive list of unequal yokes:

(1) **"..for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?"** It is an old cliché, but a good definition of fellowship is "two fellows in the same ship." Of course they would both want the ship to be going to the same place. Having fellowship with someone else, or with an organization, in a Christian setting, requires that the desires, convictions, beliefs, etc. be the same. It would, more than anything else, require that the two be in complete doctrinal agreement. There is no fellowship between two people when they are not in agreement about that about which they are fellowshiping.

(2) **"What communion hath light with darkness?"** Light represents Truth, and there can only be one Truth. Darkness is the absence of light, or ignorance of the Truth. Communion, in context here, means that both are partaking of the same spiritual food.

(3) **"And what concord hath Christ with Belial?"** The word "concord" means harmony. There is no harmony between Christ and the devil. Billy Graham made the statement in a magazine

interview one time, that he was looking forward to having a time to get together with Mohammad Ali because he thought God wanted to use Ali to help bring the Christian and Moslem world together. What a shocking statement! There is no basis of concord between the two.

(4) **“..or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?”** An infidel is an unbeliever. What common ground is there between a believer and an unbeliever? Sometimes when a Christian thinks they are in love with an unbeliever, they will say that their love will overcome their differences. I have heard an unbeliever who wants to marry a believer say, “I don’t mind if they go to church. I’ll stay home and they can go if they like.” After they marry that will almost always change because the Christian’s Church activities start getting in the way of places and things the unbeliever wants to do. Almost always, the unbeliever drags the believer down. There is no common ground between the two. My sister went to Church and sang in the choir until she met, and fell in love with an agnostic. When they got married all of her Church activities ended and they were off on picnics or travel activities on weekends. Just where do the two of these agree? None.

(5) **“And what agreement hath the Temple of God with idols?”** Paul makes it clear that our bodies are the Temple of God because His Holy Spirit lives within us. See I Corinthians 6:19, 20 **“What? Know ye not that your bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”** In verse sixteen Paul writes, **“I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”** In Philippians 1:21 Paul writes, **“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”** He is actually saying, “For to me, to be living is for Christ to be living through me, and to die is gain.” When Christ ascended, He promised to send the Holy Spirit to live in us. Christ is now living out His life in and through us. Whatever you and I do as true, born-again Christians, the world would expect Christ to do if He was here in the body.

d. The rest of this chapter: verses 17 and 18 make up a classic passage. We would do well to memorize these two verses and repeat them to our selves frequently. **“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate SAITH THE LORD, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, SAITH THE LORD ALMIGHTY.”**

Chapter 7 In the light of what we have learned from chapter six then, we are told to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the **body** and the **spirit** (physically, but even more importantly, in matters having to do with the new nature). God has given us the senses through which to experience the physical, tangible world around us: touch, taste, sight, hear, smell. God has also given only to man, the frontal lobe of the brain where we process all these senses and make decisions about how to respond. The frontal lobe of the brain is where moral decisions are made. It is the main control station for the rest of the body. Underneath the frontal lobe and a little ways back is the Pituitary gland which is the ductless gland (ductless glands empty their secretions directly into the bloodstream, so the reactions are instantaneous) which controls the function of all the other ductless glands of the body, such as the adrenals, the reproductive glands, the salivary glands, etc. When we see something that is tempting, at the speed of light, the frontal lobe processes it and signals the corresponding glands. The human brain is the seat of the mind’s activity. The mind of the unsaved person is dead to what is God’s will because of the sin nature. It can make decisions, but the only thing that deters it from making the wrong decision is the fear of getting caught and being punished. The mind is incapable of making the right decisions until it is born-again through saving faith in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. In the Bible, this is called “the renewing of the mind.” Paul equates the spiritual birth with the renewing of the mind, and the mind, its self is equated with the spirit. See Romans 12:2 and Romans 7:21-8:1. Although we are

saved, and the spiritual man is made alive; and the renewed mind cannot sin (I John 3:9) because it is born of God, the brain of man can still make wrong decisions. When the Christian dies physically, his brain dies, but his renewed spirit which cannot sin, and his soul (self-consciousness) are immediately, consciously present with the Lord. See II Corinthians 5:1-9 The sinful flesh is ours no more, but it will be raised and changed into a spiritual body (not spirit, but spiritual), which cannot sin because it is conformed to the image of Christ. Never again will the new creature in Christ be tempted. The true Christian has the capability right now to cleans his body and his spirit for the effective service of the Lord. God will not use a dirty vessel.

a. Verses 2-7 In these verses Paul is seeking to reconcile with the Corinthians for his having had to chasten them so severely in our First Corinthians. He begins by reassuring the Corinthians of the fact that he meant no harm to them:

(1) **“We have wronged no man.”** He had to hurt them so that he did not have to harm them. That may seem like a strange thing to say, but let me give the reader an illustration of what I mean. As I was growing up, my father had to discipline me. There were time that his discipline hurt, but it did not harm me. He did not wrong me, but he certainly did help me to do right from then on.

(2) **“We have corrupted no man.”** By this Paul meant that he had not treated any one of them in such a way as to turn them to wrong doing. In stead, his disciplinary measures had only helped them. Discipline does not corrupt, but purifies.

(3) **“We have defrauded no man.”** Paul was saying that he had not misled any one of them. He had not taken from them, but rather, he had done for them what they refused to do themselves. His whole purpose was to cleanse and set right the wrongs that existed at Corinth.

(4) **“I speak not this to condemn you.”** To condemn them would have been to have washed his hands of them. Instead, what he did was done out of love for them. As parents, we do not discipline our children because we want to condemn them, but because we want them to turn out to be a glory to the Lord. The right kind of discipline should draw the ones disciplined closer to us, not drive them away.

(5) Verse four speaks of what the news Titus brought from Corinth did for him: It led Paul to speak boldly (proudly) of the Corinthians. It led him to glory for what they had done to solve their problems. He was greatly comforted by the news that the Corinthians, for the most part, had repented and made things right with the Lord and with each other. He was extremely happy, even though in great tribulation, both in Ephesus and in Macedonia where he happened to be at the time. He speaks of the persecution they were experiencing in Macedonia, and how his fears for the Corinthians were abated with the coming of Titus with word that they had repented and resolved their problems. They had responded well to his previous letter, our I Corinthians. He mentions that he was not only comforted by the coming of Titus with good news about them, but he was also comforted because they had treated Titus well.

b. Verses 8-11 These verses are of great importance because they speak clearly of the need and importance of repentance. Many Christians today hold that repentance is not important, nor necessary for the Christian. In fact, this is the one doctrine that is lacking in many formerly Bible-believing Churches. The lack of the preaching of the doctrine of repentance has filled our pews with what the Church today calls carnal Christians, but whom I would called unsaved professors.

(1) Paul’s previous letter had produced godly sorrow in the Corinthians that caused them to repent. He said that he did not repent (he was not sorry for writing what he wrote) although he did repent (he was sorry that he had to grieve them so deeply). Their sorrow was sufficient to move them to repentance of their sins. Paul was sorry that he had to wound them so deeply, but he was not sorry that it led them to repentance. That was his objective. If we have to discipline our children, it hurts us to have to do it, but we are glad when we see it brings about true sorrow for what they have done.

This is what Paul is saying to them in verses eight and nine.

(2) Verse ten gives us the progression that is necessary in preaching that moves people in sincerity, to the altar. See Ephesians 4:11, 12 **“And He gave some Apostles; and some Prophets; and some Evangelists; and some Pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ.”** I am not writing of man-made emotion, but of Holy Spirit conviction which is generated by the preaching of repentance. If people are not willing to turn from what they are doing wrong, nothing is being accomplished. The first step is the creation of godly sorrow; godly sorrow works (brings about) true repentance unto salvation; true repentance unto salvation is the kind of repentance people do not turn back from. It produces a lasting work. This is what is missing, along with some other things, in personal evangelism today. Without godly sorrow which is produced by the word of God, empowered by the Holy Spirit, there is no true repentance unto salvation, or, for that matter, unto true repentance in the life of a sinning Christian.

(3) What did it produce in the lives of these sinning Corinthians? First, it produced carefulness. That is, it caused the Corinthians to stop and think carefully about their conflict within the Church. Second, it produced the clearing of their selves. That is, it caused them to do what they needed to do to make right their wrongs. Third, it brought about indignation. That is, it brought the Corinthians to the place where they were indignant with their own sins. Fourth, it brought about fear. The fear of God’s chastening has been lost from many churches today because we are afraid to preach the results. The lack of the preaching of the fear of God to our people today has created a people to be feared, as far as the welfare of the Church is concerned.. Fifth, it brought about a vehement desire. Paul seems to indicate here that once the Corinthians had read his letter which would be our inspired I Corinthians, they not only responded well, but that they responded with great eagerness to the discipline. Sixth, it brought about great zeal for righteousness. It almost seems as though the letter had shocked the Corinthians out of their fighting among themselves, and made them aware of God’s pending wrath on their sin. To repent is desirable, but to repent with zeal is far better. Seventh, It caused them to revenge (avenge) their sin. In this case we are not speaking of the avenging that belongs only to God, but that they were quick to reverse their sin and sit in judgment on their own sin. Paul concludes verse eleven by stating that they had made all things right that were wrong.

(4) Paul states that he wrote to them, not so much because of the wrongs that needed to be made right, but rather to demonstrate his concern and love for them as his own spiritual children. Their joy brought joy to Paul, as did their good treatment of Titus. Because of the way they responded to our first Corinthians, Paul states that he was justified in praising them to Titus in the past. Paul states that Titus’ confidence in the Corinthians was confirmed and Paul’s confidence in them had been reassured.

Chapter 8 The Apostle Paul had a wonderful gift of going from the sublime to the mundane. This is not to say that the collection Paul was taking for the poor saints at Jerusalem was not important.

a. He immediately begins his appeal to the Church at Corinth concerning this collection by stating how generous the Churches of Macedonia had been in spite of their poverty. Paul was using a little psychology on the Corinthians since they had boasted a year before as to how much they were going to give. In essence, Paul was saying it is now time to show that you meant what you said a year ago. When referring to what the Churches of Macedonia had done, he said that they had first given of themselves. What a wonderful testimony. Often when wealthier people give they try to buy their way, but the Macedonian Churches, which were experiencing such tremendous persecution and such poverty, had started their giving by giving of themselves. It is grand to see people giving; even giving sacrificially, but it is somewhat rare to see them give out of their

poverty, and, on top of that, give of themselves, thinking of others ahead of themselves. He then tells the Corinthians that he expected to see them abound in this grace also. Paul uses the example of Jesus, Himself as He gave of Himself; of His own life on Calvary to make full payment for the sins of all mankind. See I John 2:1, 2. Paul reminded the Corinthians that a year before, they had been ready to pledge, but now it was time to do. He reminds them that he does not want to be disappointed in the light of all he had promised Titus they were ready to do.

b. Paul reminds the Corinthians that their salvation had come from the abundance of the spiritual blessing that had been passed on to them from the Church at Jerusalem. Now it was time for the Church at Jerusalem to benefit from their material abundance. He also reminded the Corinthians of Titus' self sacrifice in coming unto them to help with their spiritual needs and problems. Undoubtedly he spoke of Timothy when he referred to the brother who had accompanied Titus. Paul refers to these fellow-workers as the messengers to the Churches, who were to be treated well so as to prove his boasting of the Corinthians to them.

Chapter 9 Chapter nine is a continuation of the subject of giving to the offering for the poor saints in the Church at Jerusalem. I believe Paul may have had in mind at the beginning of this chapter, that which he had said in I Corinthians 16:15 when he referred to the household of Stephanas as the first fruits of Achaia (southern Greece), and that they had addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints. As we have mentioned before, Paul had boasted to the Churches of Macedonia about how liberally the saints at Corinth had pledged to be. Although it is inspired, I can almost see Paul with a slight grin on his face when he writes in this epistle that some from Macedonia might come with him when he comes to Corinth, and he did not want them, nor himself to be embarrassed because the Corinthians did not follow through on their promise. He suggests that he might send some of the brethren from Macedonia ahead to help them receive their collection so that it would be ready when he came. In addition, Paul adds a little leverage when he wrote in verse six, **“But this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.”** A classic verse is found in verse seven when he wrote, **“Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”** Paul also expresses (I think it is because he knows the Corinthians are much better off than the Macedonians), that he prays God will multiply their food, their seed and all that they have so that they can give bountifully. Paul closed this chapter of this epistle with that which would be hard to resist when it came to being a good steward of God's provision; he writes, **“Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.”** And we say. Amen. He gave His only begotten Son to be the propitiation for the sins of all mankind for all time and eternity on Calvary.

Chapter 10 Paul's Apostolic Authority: Of all the Churches Paul had planted during his ministry, the Church at Corinth questioned the Apostolic authority of Paul more than any other. Thus we see in chapter ten a classic defense of that authority.

a. Paul's credentials: He said that he was base (looked down upon) when he was present with them, but that he was bold when he was absent and was expressing himself in a letter. There were some at Corinth who thought Paul was carnal and walked after the flesh. These were probably those who preferred Peter or Apollos, or were of the crowd who would follow no man, only Christ. In defense Paul wrote: **“(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”**

b. Paul said that the authority given to him by God was for their edification, and not for their

destruction. The Corinthians claimed that Paul's letters to them were weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence was weak and his speech was contemptible. Paul promised that when he arrived in Corinth soon, he would be the same in physical presence as he was in his letters. He wrote, **"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise."** Paul said that they would not measure themselves (boast of themselves) beyond what was true, but they had stretched themselves as far as to the Corinthians with the Gospel. Paul's desire was to convince the Corinthians of their authority, and then to reach beyond them to those whom some other man had gotten there ahead of them and made ready to their ministry. He continued by writing, **"But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth."** It was, of course, obvious that God's hand of approval was upon Paul and his fellow-workers.

Chapter 11 Paul feared that they might be misled, as was Eve, by someone without God's anointing and blessing upon them, into receiving some other Gospel other than that which he had brought to them, even the simplicity of Christ. He was afraid that if another came preaching another Jesus that they had not received, and another spirit which they had not received, they might believe and follow after him.

a. Paul said that their apostleship had been made known among the Corinthians and that the proof of his apostleship did not come behind any of the rest of the Apostles. This is not the only time Paul had made known his fears that he had endangered the message which he preached to them by not asking for remuneration for doing so. He said, **"I robbed other Churches, taking wages of them, to do you service."** Paul reminds them that he was not chargeable to any of them when he was with them the first time, but paid his own way by making tents at night and preaching in the daytime. Anything he lacked, the brethren from Macedonia (mainly Philippi) made up for. Those who come expecting to be supported, and asking for support are false teachers. They are only interested in taking advantage of the Churches.

b. Paul lists his sufferings so that the Corinthians can see what it has cost him to bring the Gospel to them: (1) Paul is a Hebrew the same as their other teachers who took advantage of them. (2) He is an Israelite. (3) He is the seed of Abraham. (4) He is more a minister of Christ than any of the others in that he first brought the Gospel to them. (5) More abundant in labor. (6) In stripes without measure. (7) In prisons more frequent. (8) In danger of death often. (9) He was beaten 39 stripes by the Jews five times. (10) He was beaten with rods three times. (11) He was stoned and left for dead once. (12) He was shipwrecked three times and spent a day and a night in the deep. (13) In long journeys often (mostly by walking). (14) In perils of waters, (15) In perils of robbers. (16) In perils from his own countrymen, the Jews. (17) In perils from the heathen. (18) In perils in the cities. (19) In perils in the wilderness. (20) In perils in the sea. (21) In perils among false brethren. (22) In weariness. (23) In painfulness. (24) In watching often. (25) In hunger. (26) In thirst. (27) In fasting often. (28) In cold and nakedness. (29) The care of all the Churches. (30) In Damascus he was let down over the wall in a basket. Paul had no desire to brag, but he wanted the Corinthians to know just what it cost to bring them the Gospel and to see to their problems. It would be good for every true Christian to obtain and read the unabridged addition of the book, "Fox's Book of Martyrs." This is a documented book of individual martyrs who laid down their lives that we might have the Gospel today.

Chapter 12 This twelfth chapter of II Corinthians begins with an account of Paul's visions, out-of-the-body experiences, and the thorn in the flesh which God gave him to keep him humble.

- a. The men of whom Paul is speaking in verse two of chapter twelve is himself. He says, whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell. He was caught up to the third Heaven (There are three Heavens spoken of in the Bible: The earth's atmosphere, outer space, and the place of God's throne). There he saw things it was not lawful before God to utter. This would be comparable to a man dying, going to Heaven, and coming back to tell about it. Lest he should boast about it, however, God gave him a thorn in the flesh. The messenger of Satan to buffet him lest he be exalted.
- b. Just what the thorn in the flesh was we do not know. Because of the bright light on the Damascus road, it may have been difficulty with his eyes. It could have been any number of things, but what it was is not important. The important thing is the purpose of it. The messenger to bring the thorn in the flesh was from Satan. The purpose for the thorn in the flesh was to produce humility, lest Paul become proud.
- c. When Paul said this was the third time he was coming to them he meant by means of epistle, not bodily. This was only the second time he had been to Corinth. The first time was on the second missionary journey for the purpose of planting the Church. See Acts chapter 18. He spoke in I Corinthians of a previous letter he had written to them, but it was not preserved for us. Our I Corinthians was the second letter, and our II Corinthians was the third.
- d. When he said that the parents ought to lay up for the children, not the children for the parents, he meant that the parents ought to prepare a way in life for their children to follow. It is the spiritual responsibility of the parents to teach and train their children how to live. See Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Ephesians 6:4; and Colossians 3:21. Paul continues by reminding the Corinthians how he had spent himself for them, as had Titus and the other brother he had sent with Titus.
- e. By this epistle Paul was trying to get them to settle any differences which remained so that he would not have to deal harshly with them when he came. This is a very strong and plain warning he gives in verses 19-21.

Chapter 13 Again, Paul speaks of his coming to them the third time, and once again, this refers to his coming to them by way of an epistle. He has a very stern warning about those in Corinth who may still be living in sin. God wants a clean Church, and He will not settle for anything less. He tells them that if he came again, He would not spare, that is, he would not go easy on them. He told them that if they had any question about what his intentions were, they would find him not weak, but strong. He wrote, referring to Christ, **“For though He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God toward you.”** He told them if they had any question about his Apostolic authority they should examine their own salvation, and that he hoped by then they knew he was not a reprobate. He said he was writing these things for their edification and not for their destruction. Paul closes with brief instructions to be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; if they did these things, the God of love and peace would be with them. He said to greet one another with a holy kiss, then closes with this beautiful conclusion: **“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all, Amen.”**

THE BOOK OF GALATIANS

Authorship: There is absolutely no question as to the Pauline authorship of Galatians that has reached us from apostolic times. The Epistle to the Galatians is unquestionably Pauline in every respect. Its every sentence so completely reflects the life and character of the Apostle to the Gentiles that its genuineness cannot be seriously questioned. Both internal and external evidence are extremely strong.

Date: Paul had written the Book of I Corinthians from Ephesus about 54 or 55 AD and had waited there as long as he could for an answer to their response. When Titus did not return, he left Ephesus and made his way to Macedonia where he met Titus returning from Corinth with a favorable response. From somewhere in Macedonia Paul wrote II Corinthians about 55 AD and then continued on to Corinth where he wrote Galatians and Romans about 56 AD. Most likely, Galatians was written just before Romans since Paul was much troubled over the news that the Judaisers had reached the Galatian Churches and had turned them from the true Gospel to a false Gospel made up of a mixture of Law and Grace. This would have placed the date of the writing of Galatians earlier in 56 AD, and just prior to the writing of Romans.

Purpose: Obviously the purpose of the writing of Galatians was to oppose the false teachings of the Judaisers, and to correct the Galatians on the subject of Law and Grace. This brief but powerful little Epistle is often called the little Romans since they both deal with this important subject. These two Epistles with their statement, "The just shall live by faith" sparked the reformation.

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NOTES ON GALATIANS

Introduction After writing I Corinthians from Ephesus on the third missionary journey, and after writing II Corinthians from somewhere in Macedonia, Paul journeyed on to Corinth where he wrote Galatians and Romans, both on the subject of Law and Grace. From these two Epistles we get the doctrines of the reformation. Paul had established the Churches of Galatia on the first missionary journey, but had received word after his arrival at Corinth on the third missionary journey, that the Judaisers had come to the Churches of Galatia and had taught a mixture of Law and Grace. The Epistles to the Churches of Galatia and to the Romans are to offset the damage being done by the false teachings of the Judaisers.

Chapter 1 Verses 1-5 Since this was an epistle of urgency, Paul began the epistle very strongly by making sure that the spiritual leaders of the Churches in the political province of Galatia which had been established on the first missionary journey, knew that he did not get his Gospel which he preached from men; not even the other Apostles, but from Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Jesus from the dead. Paul's Gospel could not possibly come from any higher authority than it did. He also wanted them to know that this epistle came with the authority of all of those who were with him at the time of the writing. Paul does pause long enough to preface the letter with his trademark of grace. After all, while this epistle is actually a spiritual spanking, it also is a letter to Paul's spiritual children whom he loved dearly, and for whom he was deeply concerned. He wanted the Galatians to know from the beginning that this epistle came with the power of Jesus Christ and God the Father who had raised Him from the dead. Jesus Christ had given Himself for our sins that he might deliver us from the curse of sin that was upon this whole world, and the universe because of the sin of Adam and Eve. He also wanted the glory for this message to go to God the Father who had made their salvation by grace possible.

a. Verses 6-10 Paul began by showing that there was no other Gospel other than the Gospel of the Grace of God. Paul was shocked and hurt that they could so soon be turned from the Gospel of grace to a false gospel that included works in addition to faith for salvation. He remarked that this was no gospel, for having to work for one's salvation is not good news. The Judaisers had come from Jerusalem preaching that, to be saved, one had to place their faith in Christ, but they also had to keep the Law and be circumcised. When Christ died on Calvary he did not leave one aspect of our sin and failure uncovered: Jesus paid it all. Paul's argument grew even stronger in verse eight when he says, **"But though we or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."** As though that was not clear enough, he repeats in verse nine the same warning. In this context, to be accursed would be to be assigned to hell. I took a pastorate many years ago that was running about forty people, all over fifty years of age, next to a retirement community. They had only one family with children, and those children were ready to go into junior high school. Before the first year was out we started a Christian school and bought a nice bus to begin our first bus route. Before long we had the small auditorium that seated about one hundred and twenty full on Sunday morning and nearly full on Sunday night. We tore out a wall at the rear of the auditorium and added about fifty more seats. Soon we bought a second bus and had two busses running with one of our men serving as Bus Minister. We built a good youth group largely through the Christian school. We had four acres of land and soon started building a five hundred seat auditorium. The first Sunday we were there we had forty six in Sunday school. When we left to take a Pastorate in Texas six years later, our attendance was about two hundred to two hundred fifty in Sunday school. The Christian school had over eighty students, kindergarten through the twelfth grade and was recognized by the Arizona State Board of Education. Within five years after we came to Texas, the man who followed us there

had started a day care, there was no youth group, no bus ministry, and no school. Many of the people we had reached were gone and the Church was greatly in debt. What a grief it was to see our flock led astray in such a short time. I know how Paul must have felt with the situation in the Galatian Churches. But we were only responsible for what happened while we were there. With Paul, he had the care of all the Churches and they were heavy on his heart. Paul did not seek to please men, but God. The Pastor, evangelist, etc. does not have to please men, but he does have to please God. Especially the pastor has to seek to please God if he wants to see the blessings of God on his work.

b. Verses 11-24 How Saul received his Gospel: Saul's Gospel was not, and is not a man made Gospel. As Moses received the Law, the ordinances, and the statutes from the mouth of God on Mt. Sinai, so Saul received his Gospel directly from Jesus Christ somewhere in Arabia, and not from man. Saul tells in this passage of how zealous he was for the Law, and how he persecuted the Church, but all that changed on the Damascus road when Christ appeared to him personally and, having saved him called him into His service to take the Gospel to the Gentiles. See Acts chapter nine. There is a seeming contradiction between Acts 9:1-31 which seems to have Saul going directly from Damascus to Jerusalem where Barnabas introduced him to the Apostles; and Galatians 1:11-19 where Saul says that he conferred not with flesh and blood, nor did he go up to Jerusalem to confer with the other Apostles, but that he went into Arabia (which would have even included the Sinai Peninsula and Mount Sinai itself at that time) where Jesus Christ gave him his Gospel of grace to preach to the Gentiles. The question is, when did he go to Jerusalem? The answer is found in the account in Acts between verses 22 and 23 of chapter nine: Verse 22 says, **"But Saul increased the more in strength and confounded the Jews that dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ."** After this verse is where he evidently left Damascus and went into Arabia, although Acts does not record it. Then he had to have returned to Damascus where he was let down over the wall in a basket to escape those who sought to kill him, and went to Jerusalem where Barnabas introduced him to the brethren and the other Apostles. Verse 23 says, **"And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him..."** That period of many days was a period of three years, according to Galatians 1:18. After he had been introduced to the brethren at Jerusalem he went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

Chapter 2 Verses 1-10 continue the narrative of the events of Saul's beginning in the Gospel ministry. Saul went again to Jerusalem after fourteen years, with Barnabas and Titus. This would have been after the first missionary journey when the Church met to determine what was to be required of the Gentile converts. He writes that he explained his Gospel to those of reputation (the Apostles and leaders in the Church), privately.

a. He did not want to explain his Gospel of grace as yet to the entire Church at Jerusalem since it was made up of Jewish believers and former converts to Judaism, who, in turn, had been converted to Christ. To the Jewish Christian, it was hard to think of salvation through faith in Christ as being a whole new Covenant. They had been raised all their life to think of their uniqueness as being rooted in the Law, the covenants, the prophets, the ordinances, the statutes, the sacrifices and offerings, and circumcision. To suddenly be told that they could eat anything that God had called clean, they no longer had to make repeated atonement for their sins, that they could go directly to God in prayer through Christ and His once for all atonement of His blood shed on Calvary, and that they no longer needed the earthly priest was too much for many of them. To them who believed in Jesus as the Christ, and as the Son of God who came to be God's Lamb, sacrificed for their sins once for ever, it meant believe, yes, but also keep the Law and be circumcised. It was too much to absorb all at once. Then to have their unique status in the world shared with Gentiles, it was almost more than they could bear. It was too much for some to bear and they took upon themselves the responsibility of teaching the Gentiles that they must believe on Jesus Christ, but they also needed

to keep the Law and be circumcised. These were the Judaisers who became an emotional and intellectual thorn in the flesh to Paul. Later, setting these Jewish believers straight and teaching them the fact that salvation by grace through faith was a whole new covenant, not a new patch on an old garment, or new wine in old bottles became a full time job for Paul.

b. It was this conflict that brought Paul back to Jerusalem following the first missionary journey. When he returned to Antioch in Syria, his sending Church after the first journey, he found the Judaisers had already come to Antioch and were spreading their poison. It was necessary for him, Titus, and Barnabas to take these Judaisers back to Jerusalem and get a ruling of the leaders of the Church to make a decision on the matter once for all. Paul, Barnabas, Peter, and James came to the conclusion that only four things would be required of the Gentile believers, and those for the sake of testimony: to abstain from meat offered to idols, from things strangled, from blood, and from fornication. See Acts chapter 15. The Church at Jerusalem already was aware of the fact that the Gentiles had been included in this new covenant. See Acts chapter 11. When Paul reached Corinth on the third missionary journey, he received word that the Judaisers had invaded the Churches of the political province of Galatia, the first four Churches Paul had planted: Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystera, and Derbe. The Judaisers are still very much with us today in the form of false religious groups such as the Seventh Day Adventists, and the Church of Christ. It is a matter of salvation by God's Grace, through Faith, plus a form of works of some kind. God has made it clear that Jesus Christ took care of all the works, but we must accept His great Grace by pure faith plus nothing.

c. There seemed to be two reasons why Paul circumcised Titus, who was a Greek. (1) He was a Greek, and for him to be a main member of Paul's evangelistic team was an offense to the Jewish believers. (2) The Judaisers could make trouble for them in the Church in Jerusalem. As far as their philosophy of evangelism was concerned, however, Paul said that they gave way to them, no not for an hour. The Judaisers might have thought that they were a very important part of the whole equation, but to Paul, they were nothing but an irritation. He states in verse eight, **"(For He that wrought effectually in Peter to the Apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles.)"** Cephas (Simon Peter) and James and John all gave to Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, recognizing the fact that God had called them to go to the heathen (gentiles), while they went to the circumcision (Jews). They did encourage them to be mindful of the poor, that is, giving alms to the poor, which thing Paul was already doing.

d. Verses 11-14 Why Paul rebuked Peter at Antioch in Syria: Peter had gone to Syria with Paul, Titus, and Barnabas. While there Peter ate with the Gentiles and had free fellowship with them, but when certain Jewish brethren came from the Church at Jerusalem, Peter withdrew himself from the Gentiles and fellowshiped only with the Jewish brethren. Paul rebuked him to his face because he was maintaining a double standard. He asked him, **"If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?"** Not only did he rebuke him, but he rebuked him before them all.

e. Verses 15-21 Justification is not of the Law, but by grace only: (1) Paul makes it clear that he and his fellow Jews who are believers are not sinners (heathen – lacking in knowledge of the Law or grace) as are the Gentiles, but they have believed on Christ for their salvation, and not on their good works. They know they are saved by grace through faith alone, not by the Law, or the keeping of the Law. (2) It is a bit difficult to understand what Paul is saying in verse 17, but his whole idea is that if they are found to be sinners by believing that they are saved by grace alone, this is what Christ taught, and Christ is not the author of sin. (3) Paul said in verse 18 that if he teaches the keeping of the Law for salvation after having taught that salvation under the new covenant of grace is by grace through faith alone, he makes himself a transgressor. (4) He says that it is because of the Law that he is dead to the Law (While the Law is God's perfect standard of righteousness, it cannot save us, but rather slays us for we cannot keep the Law. It is by grace, through faith in

Christ that we live, and by this one means only. (5) Verse 20 is a classic verse which every Christian should memorize. We will take one part of the verse at a time. (1) **“I am crucified with Christ.”** Every person who has received Jesus Christ as their Savior is in Christ. All that Christ did to bring about our salvation includes everyone who is in Christ. For example, When Christ was crucified, all who are now in Christ were crucified in Christ. Spiritually then, we are, in Christ, crucified with Him. When He died and was buried, everyone in Christ died in Him and was buried with Him. When He was raised from the dead, everyone in Christ was raised from the dead in Him. **“..nevertheless I live;..”** Because Christ was raised from the dead, everyone who is in Christ is spiritually raised from the dead in Him. **“..yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:..”** Now everyone who is in Christ has Christ living in him or her in the person of the Holy Spirit (The Spirit of Christ), and he or she is living in Christ. **“..and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God,..”** Every person who is in Christ, though still living in the mortal, corruptible body, is alive spiritually by saving faith in Christ. **“..who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”** He loved everyone who is in Him by faith, so much, that he was the sacrifice in a substitutionary, propitiuous, and atoning manner. Paul closes this chapter by saying, in essence, If salvation could possibly be accomplished by the keeping of the Law, then there was no reason for Christ to come and die in our place to pay for our sins. Here is where Roman Catholicism does frustrate the grace of God in that, with the exception of those whom the Catholic Church deems to be Saints, in spite of Christ’s substitutionary payment for all our sins, everyone else who is in good standing in the Catholic Church must go to purgatory (there is no such place) and suffer for their sins before they can get into Heaven. What then would be the purpose of Christ’s once-for-all atonement?

Chapter 3 Verses 1-5 The Galatian Churches had no excuse for being drawn away to another gospel, which was no gospel at all. (1) Jesus Christ had been preached to them clearly, and if they had not been in Jerusalem to actually see the crucifixion for themselves, they at least knew of it happening. Paul and Barnabas had taken this good news of the new covenant of grace to them on the first missionary journey. (2) The sign that God gave to the Church in the first century was the baptism by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ upon receiving Christ as Savior. See First Corinthians 12:13. This had happened to the Galatians when they believed on Christ. Paul asked then, **“Received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law or by the hearing of faith?”** (3) Paul asked them if they were set free from their sins by doing enough good works, or by the Holy Spirit? (4) Paul asked them if they thought they had suffered so much persecution because of good works, or because they had identified with the Lord Jesus Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. He (God) who had ministered to them the Spirit and had done so many miracles among them; had he done them because of their works in the flesh, or by the hearing of faith?

a. Verses 6-18 The example of Abraham: **“Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.”** Paul uses Abraham as an example of salvation by grace through faith alone in both Galatians and Romans. The main reasons for this are: (1) Obviously, by going back to the Pentateuch, we can clearly see that Abraham was called of God and given the Abrahamic covenant long before the Law was given to Moses (2) He was justified by faith. **“Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.”** Long before the Law was given through Moses. (3) Abraham was told that all the **families** of the earth would be blessed though his seed by faith, hundreds of years before the Law was received at Sinai. How then could Abraham have been justified by the Law? Those who are the children of Abraham are those who believe the promises of God and are justified by their faith. So as Abraham was blessed and justified because he believed God, so all those who trust in the promises of God are blessed with Abraham.

b. There is also the argument from the law and the purpose of the Law: See Deuteronomy 27:24.

In order to be saved by the works of the Law, a person would have to keep the whole law perfectly all their entire life without one single exception. It is not possible for anyone to do this as we see to Romans 3:1, and 23; and Isaiah 53:6. The eleventh verse is the key verse to the books of Galatians, Habakkuk, Romans, and Hebrews. **“But that no man is justified by the Law in the sight of God, it is evident: for The just shall live by faith.”** (Titus 3:5 and Ephesians 2:8, 9) The Law is not of faith. Romans chapter seven tells us we would not have known sin had it not been for the Law. The Law of God is perfect: It is God’s perfect standard of righteous. The problem is with man. Man did not inherit Adam’s sin, but he inherited Adam’s sin nature. Everything reproduces after its own kind, and sinful man reproduces sinful man. We all get our sin nature from our father. We cannot break the Law of God, but we break ourselves on the Law of God. Keeping the Law of God is a matter of works, but no human being can do it. Christ, since He was sinless, (II Corinthians 5:21), kept the Law perfectly in our place; not destroying it, but fulfilling it, that we might be justified by faith in Him alone. The worst part of His suffering was when our sins were placed on Him and, **“He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”** Since God the Father could not countenance sin, He had to turn away. That is when Jesus cried, **“My God, My God, Why hast thou forsaken me?”** The purpose of the Law was to be a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. Its purpose is simply to show us that we are all sinners.

The promise of which verse nineteen speaks is the promise made to Abraham in the Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 12:2, 3). **“And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great: and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”** The families of the earth would probably be referred to today as the nationalities. The Seed referred to in verse nineteen is Christ and means that Christ, the Messiah, (Savior) would be the descendant of Abraham. The genealogy is given in Matthew chapter one. Christ is the one who fulfilled the entire Law perfectly on our behalf because we could not. Paul says in verse twenty three, **But before faith came, we were kept under the Law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.”** This chapter closes with the promise that if we are Christ’s, then are we Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Chapter 4 The fourth chapter compares Faith with the Law, and includes the allegory of Hagar and Sarah. The first three chapters, in Pauline fashion, contain the doctrinal portion of Galatians. The last three chapters contain the practical application of the doctrinal portion:

a. Chapter three, verses twenty four and twenty five speak of the Law being a school master to bring us to Christ. Chapter four begins with the fact that as long as one is a child (under the Law), he or she is in no better position than a servant, although he or she is the heir of all thing, but they are under tutors (the Law) “until the time appointed of the father (the finished redemptive work of Christ). **“But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”** May we stop here and discuss the subject of adoption. Adoption, in the Scriptures, does not mean the same thing as it does in a legal sense in our society today. It means the placing of a son. Keep that in mind, for we will come back to it. We do not enter the family of God by adoption; we enter it by birth. **“Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.”** The water birth is the natural physical birth by which we enter our earthly family, while the Spiritual birth is how we enter the family of God. The adoption that takes place at the time of our spiritual birth is the placing of a lost sinner into the very family of God, and is a spiritual process performed by the Holy Spirit. See I Corinthians 12:13. It allows us to cry “Abba Father” to God. At the resurrection of the Saints in the rapture, we receive our resurrection bodies which are conformed to the very

image of Christ. This is the full adoption for which the believer now waits. See Romans 8:22-29. Then we will realize the full adoption, that is, the placing of a born-again son into full sonship through faith, not by the works of the Law. We then are no longer servants, but sons and heirs of God through Christ. Romans 8:17.

b. Verses 8-20 introduce us to a contrast of Faith and the Law: Before we knew God we were in bondage to those which were no gods. Paul asked the Galatians, “Now that you know God, or are known of Him, how in the world can you turn back to your situation under the false gods that could do nothing for you, or how can you now turn to the bondage of the Law?” They, as converted Gentiles, had turned to observing days (feast days), months (the special months such as the 14th of the first month of the Jewish Calendar), times (the Sabbath day to rest), years (Sabbatical years and year of Jubilee), all of which were part of the Jewish Law. Paul feared that perhaps the first missionary journey had been in vain. The situation was evidently so bad that he wondered if they were even saved. Just what infirmity of the flesh he was speaking of is not clear. On that first missionary journey he was stoned and left for dead at lystra. Other than that, we do not have a record of any other physical limitation of which he might be speaking, unless it was the thorn in the flesh. He does speak of how eagerly they received him at the first and would have plucked out their own eyes and given them to him if they could. He asked, **“Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?”** The great extent of Paul’s love for them is revealed in verses nineteen and twenty when he wrote, **“My little children of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, I desire to be present with you now, and to change my voice, for I stand in doubt of you.”** What a heartbreak to think that perhaps that first missionary journey had been in vain. Surely there were those among them who were genuine converts and had not fallen for the lies of the Judaisers.

c. In order to make the matter of Law vs. Grace clear to the Galatian Churches, Paul used the allegory of Hagar, Sarah’s Egyptian maid, and Sarah, Abraham’s wife. As the years went by and the possibility of the Abrahamic Covenant being fulfilled through Abraham and Sarah, Sarah had told Abraham to take Hagar, her Egyptian maid and go in unto her and perhaps God would give Abraham a son to fulfill the promise through Hagar. When Hagar conceived and bare a son, Sarah became jealous. Hagar and Abraham gave the son the name, Ishmael, which means “Whom God Hears.” He is the father of twelve sons whose descendants are the Arab people, and the origin of Islam. This, of course, was an act of disobedience on Abraham’s part and this act has generated Israel’s worst enemies all through its history. When Sarah was ninety years old, and Abraham was one hundred, God, who had tested their faith all these years, gave them the “Son of Promise,” Isaac, whose name means “Laughter.” Although Ishmael was born fourteen years earlier, God repeatedly referred to Isaac, when speaking to Abraham, as thy son, Thine Only Son. In the allegory then, Isaac represents the promised fulfilled by faith, and Sarah as Grace, the means of God’s promise being fulfilled. Hagar represents Mt. Sinai and the Law, and Ishmael represents trying to fulfill the promise by works. Thus the allegory, a masterpiece, pictures the promise of salvation realized by grace through faith, with the failure to realize the promise fulfilled by endeavoring to bring it about by the works of the Law. Nothing that man may do in the way of disobedience can thwart the plan of God. If the Galatian Churches had not been led astray by the Judaisers, we would not have this masterpiece in the form of the letter to the Galatian Churches on the subject of Law and Grace. God can even cause the wrath of men to praise Him.

Chapter 5 Verses 1-15 This chapter emphasizes the subject of living by faith. Verse one makes me think of something of which the Christian is often accused: The world often accuses the Christian who has been made free from the Law, or a life of trying to work our way to heaven by our good works, as having placed our selves in bondage to a system of do’s and don’ts, which

Christianity, of course is not. We do place ourselves willingly into the will of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. His will is not bondage, however, it is finally, freedom; freedom from the grave, death, hell and sin, and the inability to be good enough to please God. To stand fast means to refuse to be moved. This does not mean that God has made us slaves who must do certain things or else lose His favor. Oh no. Standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free is something God wants us to learn to do for our own benefit. He is urging us to refuse to surrender our new found faith in Jesus Christ. Paul chooses the matter of circumcision to illustrate his point.

a. Circumcision did not save anyone in any dispensation, but was to the Old Covenant of the Law what Baptism in water is to the Christian under the New Testament of Grace. Baptism in water after our salvation is an outward testimony to the world that we are dead to sin, buried with Christ, and raised to a new life in Christ. It is not salvation, but an outward sign that we have been saved by grace through faith. The same was true of circumcision under the Old Covenant of the Law: it was not salvation, but an outward sign of belonging to Jehovah God. Both circumcision under the Law and Baptism under grace are a matter of works. We are not saved by works but by grace through faith. Under the Old Covenant of the Law, however, if a man received circumcision to become a proselyte to Judaism, he was a debtor to keep the whole Law. Verse four has led some to think that a Christian can lose his salvation. When it says, “...**fallen from grace...**” it means that the individual who chooses to be justified by the Law has fallen short of being justified by grace. When one is justified by faith he or she is declared righteous before God the Father by grace plus nothing. Jesus paid our sin debt on Calvary, and He paid it in full, leaving us nothing to do except receive Him and His finished work by faith. The word “hope” in verse five should be translated confidence. It is not a mistake in the translation, for when the 1611 King James was published it meant confidence. What this passage boils down to is, if a person is trusting his circumcision, he is a debtor to keep the whole Law. In Jesus Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything because Jesus fulfilled (not destroyed) all the Law and now trusting in Jesus Christ for salvation is what assures one of eternal life.

b. Paul told the Galatian Churches that they were doing so well, and, apparently, were growing in grace. Already knowing the answer he asked, who turned you from the truth? It certainly was not Christ, who called them to salvation by His grace through faith. “**A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.**” By this Paul meant that it did not take very much of the devil’s deception to affect the whole of the Galatian Churches. Leaven is always used as a type of sin. Paul reaffirmed his confidence in the Galatian Churches, telling them that those who had fed them this lie would bear their judgment. It seems to me as I read and study this carefully, that Paul was hinting at the fact that if any of them of the Galatian Churches persisted in following the false teachings of the Judaisers, they also would bear the same judgment.

c. The Holy Spirit led Paul to make an excellent point when he told the Galatians that to preach circumcision as being necessary to be saved would nullify the whole point of the New Covenant of grace. There would be no persecution because he would have been preaching the same thing the Judaisers were preaching. The offense of the cross (of the once-for-all atonement for all the sins of the whole world) would cease. Paul reminded them that they had been set free from the Law, not to give way to the flesh, but made free to serve Christ and live a godly life. Christ does not set us free so that we can continue in sin (Romans 6:1, 2), but so that we can live for Him, free from the consequences of sin. Paul said that he would like to see those who had deceived them cut off; not cut off from the possibility of being saved, but cut off from further deceiving the Churches. He told them they had been called unto liberty, but not unto liberty to exercise the desires of the flesh. They now had liberty to help one another to grow in the Lord and become more Christ-like. Paul said that all the law was fulfilled in one word (sentence): “**Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.**” He continued, however, by warning them that if they fought among themselves they would be consumed, one of another. I think Paul meant that they would each nullify the other’s testimony.

There is nothing that can destroy a Church more quickly than the lack of harmony about sound doctrine. Concerning harmony, see I John chapter one. Concerning sound doctrine, there can only be one interpretation that is right. We should be thankful to God for godly men and woman who have written commentaries, Bible dictionaries, and other reference books that help us understand the Bible, but humans are subject to error. There is only one Book which always interprets the Scriptures correctly: That Book is the Book of books, the Scriptures themselves. Scripture interprets Scripture.

d. Verses 16-21 This is a passage that teaches us to walk in the Spirit so as not to fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Then the passage lists for us the major things which make up the works of the flesh. Verses sixteen through eighteen instruct us to walk in the Spirit so as not to fulfill the lusts of the flesh. I John 3:9 says, **“Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin because he is born of God.”** This verse bothers many Christians because they know that they have sinned since they were saved. We all have; but this verse says we cannot sin because we are born of God and His seed remains in us. How do we explain this seeming contradiction? When a person is saved, his spirit is made alive and he or she has spiritual life. That new nature is that part of us that cannot sin. However, we are still in a mortal, corruptible body which wants to do nothing but sin. Romans 7:18 says, **“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.”** Since the new nature cannot sin, and the flesh wants to do nothing but sin, there is, in the Christian, a constant war between the flesh and the Spirit. This is why God has provided us with the whole armor of God found in Ephesians chapter six. There is, however, only one piece of the armor that is offensive: the rest is defensive. That one piece is the Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. It was through the Word that God created all things, Genesis chapter one, **“And God said...”** It was through the Word of God that Jesus was victorious when He was tempted, **“It is written...”** It is through the living Word of God that you and I are saved, **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”** and, **“The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us...”** and, **“I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me.”** and, **“As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on His name.”** The Sword of the Spirit is invincible. It is the only weapon we have against sin. To successfully walk in the Spirit we must hide in our hearts, the Sword of the Spirit. To walk in the Spirit is to be led by the Word of God, Psalm 119:105. To be led of the Spirit, we must hide the Word of God in our hearts, Psalm 119:9-11. **“But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the Law.”**

e. Verses 19-21 list for us the primary works of the flesh:

- (1) Adultery – The violation of the marriage bond for sexual reasons. This used to be committed mostly by husbands, but in the last few decades, with the women’s movement, it has become about fifty fifty.
- (2) Fornication – Interestingly enough, fornication and adultery are the same word in the Greek, but, depending on the context, it is interpreted properly. Fornication is sexual intercourse, while Adultery is fornication committed in violation of the marriage bond.
- (3) Uncleanness – This would refer to any sexual act that is not a legitimate one between husband and wife.
- (4) Lasciviousness – Lustful, lewd, or wanton. As used in context it denotes unbridled lust and wantonness.
- (5) Idolatry – Making anything else ahead of God; worshipping any other thing as God; breaking the first commandment.
- (6) Witchcraft – Worshipping Satan, demons, or any part of that which pertains to the underworld.

Seeking help by any means from satanic forces.

(7) Hatred – As it appears in context here it would mean to despise to the extent of being capable of killing or extensively hurting.

(8) Variance – The tendency to change; undependable; unreliable; not trustworthy.

(9) Emulations – The desire or ambition to equal or surpass; the desire to exalt one's self above God or the things of God; what Satan has always tried to do in dethroning God and taking His place.

(10) Wrath – Unbridled anger. As used in context here, uncontrolled anger and bitterness toward God, and things which pertain to God. Great hatred toward the People of God.

(11) Strife – Violently opposing another; to war against or battling against.

(12) Seditions – The stirring up of discontent; causing resistance or discontent.

(13) Heresies – Those who embrace false doctrine and refuse to turn from it; those who systematically oppose the truth.

(14) Envyings – A strong desire to have what others more fortunate than our selves have; A deep desire to have what is another's.

(15) Murders – To premeditatedly take the life of another, often without feelings of guilt.

(16) Drunkenness – The willful imbibing of alcoholic beverages until losing one's ability to think rationally.

(17) Revellings – Wild partying with drunkenness, and often accompanied by immorality.

(18) And such like – I am glad that Paul was led to add this phrase at the close of this list. There are many other things that could be added to it, but they would all be things that most often accompany one or more of the above. Paul adds, **“...of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.”**

f. Paul is not speaking of a saved person when he says that they shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. If he was, no one would get to the Kingdom of God. There is a distinct difference between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus said that the Kingdom of God is within you. It is a spiritual Kingdom entered by faith in Jesus Christ as one's personal Savior. The Kingdom of Heaven has not come as yet. It is the Kingdom for which Jesus taught His Disciples to pray: **“...Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.”** The Kingdom of Heaven is the Millennial Kingdom when Christ reigns on earth for a thousand years. It is the seventh and last dispensation. When Jesus said that the above people would not enter the Kingdom of God, He meant they could not enter the Kingdom of God with their sin. They must first repent and turn from their sin and trust Jesus as their Savior. Once we are in Christ we have eternal life. All our sins were paid for at the cross. The one thing that condemns a person today is to reject the payment; that is, to reject Jesus Christ who paid for our sins with His own blood. This was of extreme importance for the Galatians to hear. What they had done when Paul was with them on the first missionary journey was to enter the Kingdom of God by faith, not by works. When we are in Christ, our sins, no matter how great they were, are all, not only forgiven, but are done away with. They were punished in Christ.

g. In verses twenty two through twenty six Paul, by way of contrast, gives us the **fruit** of the Spirit; that is, the fruit the Holy Spirit bears in the believer's life. This is automatic, and is evidence of the fact that the individual is really saved, for we cannot bear these things in and of our self.

(1) Love – This is (agape) love, or God's kind of love of which the characteristics are given in I Corinthians chapter thirteen. This is a totally selfless kind of love which always gives and never

requires anything in return.

(2) Joy – Joy is not the same as happiness. Happiness is totally dependent on what happens, while joy is ours regardless of what happens. Joy is a constant awareness of God's presence with us.

(3) Peace – The saved person has one kind of peace, and can have a second kind if he so desires. The moment a person receives Christ as Savior and is born-again they have eternal peace with God. As long as the Christian walks in the Spirit instead of the flesh he can enjoy the peace of God. We walk in the Spirit by walking in unbroken fellowship with God.

(4) Longsuffering – This is taking persecution and opposition for Jesus as long as we need to without complaint, just as Jesus does with us.

(5) Gentleness – This refers to dealing with the things that come in life calmly and carefully so as to avoid unnecessary offense.

(6) Goodness – The effort to do good, to be good, and to encourage goodness among others. Good could also be said to be purity, righteousness, and honesty.

(7) Faith - Faith in context here would be trust and confidence in God and in His Word. Living by faith is living by the promises of God and never doubting Him.

(8) Meekness – This does not imply weakness, nor does it imply a lack of manhood, but in the Middle English it means humility, a most desirable virtue.

(9) Temperance – Being moderate in all things. It implies self control, and keeping every area of life under the control of God. But God must always be first in all things at all times.

Paul writes, **“Against such there is no law.”** The Fruit of the Spirit is not brought under the Old Covenant. One who would live by the Fruit of the Spirit has been set free from the Law by the substitutionary atonement of the Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, once for all. Again he writes, **“And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.”** This does not by any means imply that as soon as a person is saved they are sinless and perfect. We have mentioned before that there are three phases of sanctification: instant, progressive, and complete. After we are saved we are learning and growing and becoming more Christ-like. The important thing is that these things which are the fruit of the Spirit begin to manifest themselves in our lives. Paul says that if we live in the Spirit (if we have been born of the Spirit) let us also walk in the Spirit (manifest the fruit of the Spirit daily in our lives). Three things Paul warns against for the Christian: (1) Don't desire vain glory (don't try to get glory for your self instead of God), (2) Don't provoke one another (don't rub each other the wrong way intentionally), (3) Don't envy one another (don't desire what others in the local Church have that you do not have. Be content with what God has given you).

Chapter 6 In verses 1-10 of this chapter, Paul gives us nine practical applications of what he has told us:

a. If it is found that a man in the local Church congregation has done something wrong, and it be known to the congregation, work with that man to get him to see what he has done wrong, strive to see true repentance (See II Corinthians 7:10), and then restore him to fellowship. When you are working with him be careful that you do not become a victim of the same sin.

b. The Law of Christ is not the same as the Law of the Old Covenant. The way to fulfill the Law of Christ is to bear one another's burdens. By this, Paul means watch for opportunities to help a brother or sister in Christ in any way you can when you see they are laboring under a heavy burden in life. Share their cares and troubles.

- c. It has been said that if we want to measure how much we will be missed when we are gone, fill a bucket with water, stick your fist in up to the wrist, pull it out, and the hole that is left in the water is a measure of how much we will be missed. Be careful not to get too high an estimation of your importance in this world lest you deceive yourself. Those who will remember you will be those who truly loved you, and those to whom you owed money.
- d. Be sure you are producing results through your life that will last, and then you can be content with your life, and not envy another.
- e. Verse five may seem to conflict with verse two, but it does not. Every one of us must carry our own burden in life. If a brother or a sister sees us about to fall beneath our load, they, or we fulfill the Law of Christ by stepping in to help and encourage.
- f. At first reading, verse six may seem to be reversed, but it is not. The student is to communicate with the Teacher. This simply means that the student should be careful to show their appreciation to the teacher. The same truth is brought out in I Thessalonians 5:12, 13. The teachers who demand the most from you are probably the best teachers you have, especially when it comes to studying the Word of God.
- g. Verses seven and eight give us classic truths that the Bible student would do well to memorize. Verse seven is both a spiritual principle, and a secular principle that cannot be circumvented. **“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”** We cannot live lives that fit the devil’s lifestyle, and expect to have the blessings of God on us. This principle applies to the Christian as well as the unsaved. I do not mean by that that the Christian will lose his salvation if he or she sins. If a Christian deliberately commits a sin he or she will have to bear the consequences. They are still a child of God, but the fellowship is broken and God will have to discipline his child; Hebrews chapter twelve and verse six. Verse eight applies to the unsaved. Corruption in verse eight refers to spiritual death. “Sowing to” refers to choosing as a lifestyle. It means choosing Christ or rejecting Him. Sowing to the flesh refers to rejecting Christ as one’s Savior, while sowing to the Spirit refers to trusting Christ as one’s Savior. Which have you chosen?
- h. We must remember that the Galatian Churches had been through a great deal of persecution. Paul warned them against growing weary in well doing. He also urges them to grasp every opportunity to do good for others, especially for the believers. Here again we see the matter of hospitality emphasized. There is all too little of this practiced in our Churches today. Not only do we do little for our fellow Christians, but we don’t really make an effort to know people’s needs: we don’t even know the names of others in the Church. There is so little fellowship among the brethren.
- i. Verses 11-17 Paul’s last thoughts concerning grace: Paul was so concerned about the situation at the Churches in Galatia that he wrote this letter in his own hand, rather than having someone else write it as he dictated it.
- (1) Those who were trying to get them to be circumcised as part of their salvation, and thus place themselves back under the Law, were doing so as escape persecution for the cause of the true Gospel of Christ.
 - (2) They wanted the Galatians to do something that they themselves were unable to do; keep the Law. Their reason was so that they could glory in the flesh. This is not unlike many super-Church pastors today who preach less than the true Gospel, or they teach a soup, soap, and sunshine gospel in order to build a big Church. They are more interested in numbers that bring glory to themselves than they are in getting true converts to the true life-changing Gospel of Jesus Christ. They are more interested in getting reformed pew-warmers than they are in getting regenerated converts.
 - (3) Paul was interested only in winning converts like himself: who were truly born-again through the

blood-atonement of Jesus Christ on Calvary's cross and His resurrection, which produced a believer to whom the world was crucified, and who was crucified unto the world.

(4) Paul taught the neither circumcision nor uncircumcision were of any value as far a salvation was concerned; only a new creature in Christ Jesus.

(5) Whether it be Israel or the Gentiles, those who trusted only in the atoning work of Christ; the Gospel Paul preached, brought peace with God.

Paul, rather curtly, states that he does not want to hear any more of this foolishness concerning the false teachings of the Judaisers, from the Galatian Churches. He bore in his body the "marks of the Lord Jesus," literally, as proof that only the preaching of the true Gospel of grace brought persecution from the world. Paul gloried in persecution for the cause of Christ. There is no other cause worth being persecuted forth other than what is taught in the Word of God.

j. Verse eighteen gives us Paul's trademark so fitting to this epistle: Grace. **"Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.**

THE BOOK OF ROMANS

Authorship: References from the early Church Fathers support the Pauline authorship of Romans. Internal evidence also bears out the fact that Paul is the author. The author calls himself Paul (1:1) and describes himself in such a way as can only mean Paul the Apostle. (11:13 and 15:15-20)

Date: The Epistle was written during the three month stay in Greece (Acts 20:2,3) on the third missionary journey. This is evident from the following facts: Paul was going to Jerusalem with the collection at the time of writing (Romans 15:25-27). He frequently stressed this collection in the former letters to Corinth. (I Corinthians 16:1-4 and II Corinthians 8:9). This shows that these letters were written about the same time. Romans is later than II Corinthians for he is now on the verge of departing for Jerusalem (15:25). He wrote II Corinthians from Macedonia, on the way to Corinth. He refers to Cenchrea (16:1), the seaport of Corinth, as nearby. He is entertained by Gaius (16:23), and he had baptized Gaius at Corinth (I Corinthians 1:14). Erastus too seemed to have lived at Corinth (Romans 16:23 and II Timothy 4:20) We therefore conclude that the Epistle to the Romans was written from Corinth shortly after the writing of II Corinthians, and the epistle to the Galatians, or about 56 AD.

Purpose: Paul had not yet been to Rome when he wrote the Epistle. He expresses the fact that he wanted to visit Rome, but could not at that point because of his present undertakings. He did purpose to visit them, however, on his way to Spain after going back to Jerusalem. He had just written Galatians from Corinth, and, as we know, Galatians was written to offset the influence of the Judaisers.

Galatians is often called the little Romans since both books deal with justification by faith. As far as we know, with the exception of one congregation meeting in the house of Priscilla and Aquila, there was not an organized Church in Rome, for Paul addressed the Epistle, not to the Church at Rome, but to all that be at Rome. We therefore conclude that the purpose was threefold: (1) He desired to go to Rome to help the believers formally establish a local Church with Apostolic authority; (2) He knew that a group of believers without God-appointed leadership was open to false doctrine, and he wanted to give them a clear understanding of the basic doctrines of Christianity; (3) He knew it was a matter of time until the doctrine of the Judaisers spread to Rome.

Nature: Romans is the doctrinal masterpiece of the New Testament. It is the pinnacle of Pauline doctrine; chapter eight is the pinnacle of the epistle

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF ROMANS

I.	Introduction and personal concerns of Paul	1:1-15
A.	The author	1:1a
B.	The Gospel of Jesus Christ	1:1b-5
1.	Paul was given to the Gospel of God	1:b
2.	The Gospel foretold in the Old Testament	1:2
3.	The Messiah foretold in the Old Testament	1:3, 4
4.	Apostleship – To take the Gospel to all nations	1:5
C.	Recipients of the letter	1:6, 7
D.	Concern for the Jewish and Gentile believers at Rome	1:8-15
E.	Paul's love for the Gospel and what it can do	1:16,17
II.	Righteousness – a must for knowing God: Doctrinal section	1:18-8:39
A.	How can man be righteous before God?	1:18-5:2
1.	Mankind's total sinfulness	1:18-3:23
2.	Righteousness is by faith, not works	3:24-31
3.	The example of Abraham	4:1-25
4.	Adam and Christ compared	5:1-21
B.	Righteousness identifies the child of God	6:1-8:39
1.	The doctrine of the Nicolaitans	6:1-14
2.	The doctrine of the Gnostics	6:15-7:6
a.	Obey sin and die	6:15-23
b.	Freedom from bondage of sin:	7:1-6
3.	Righteousness not possible under the Law	7:7-25
4.	Victory through the Grace and Mercy of Christ	8:1-39
III.	Israel and the Gentiles - Practical section	9:1-11:36
A.	Paul's burden for Israel; that they might be saved	9:1-5
B.	The sovereignty of God in dealing with mankind	9:6-29
1.	God chooses Isaac	9:6-9
2.	Jacob instead of Esau	9:10-13
3.	Hardening Pharaoh's heart	9:14-18
4.	God's choice of good and bad vessels	9:19-24
5.	God's right to save the Gentiles as well as Israel	9:25-29
C.	Why Israel failed and the Gentiles were included	9:3-10:21
1.	The Gentiles receive what Israel lost	9:30-33
2.	Israel's ignorance is a result of refusing Christ	10:1-3

	3.	Both Jew and Gentile saved by Grace through Faith	10:4-15
	4.	According to prophecy, Israel rejected the Gospel	10:16-21
D.		The condition of Israel when Paul wrote	11:1-10
E.		The future for Israel	11:11-36
	1.	Blessing resulting from Israel's fall	11:11-15
	2.	Why Gentiles should not boast	11:16-21
	3.	God blesses faith and judges unbelief	11:22-24
	4.	Israel's salvation	11:25-27
	5.	God's mercy shown historically	11:28-32
	6.	God is perfect and just in all His dealings	11:33-36
IV.		Admonitions to godly conduct	12:15:13
	A.	The living sacrifice – What God expects of Christians	12:1, 2
	B.	The use of spiritual gifts	12:3-8
	C.	Daily conduct with believers and unbelievers	12:9-21
	D.	Submission to authorities as the ministers of God	13:1-14
	E.	The doctrine of forbearance	14:15:13
	1.	Food and special days	14:1-6
	2.	Judging	14:7-12
	3.	The Doctrine of Forbearance	14:13-23
	4.	Putting others first – respect the weaker brother	15:1-3
	5.	Oneness of purpose among them	15:4-6
	6.	Christ reigns over both Jew and Gentile in Christ	15:7-13
V.		Personal considerations	15:16:27
	A.	Paul's reasons for writing with boldness	15:14-16
	B.	Supernatural events accompanying Paul's ministry	15:17-21
	C.	Paul's plans for the future	15:22-29
	D.	Prayer requests	15:30-33
	E.	Phoebe recommended	16:1, 2
	F.	Greetings to individuals and groups	16:3-16
	G.	Warnings against false teachers	16:7-20
	H.	Paul's fellow-workers send greetings	16:21-23
	I.	Paul's trademark and benediction	16:24-27

The Book of Romans is the great theological masterpiece of the Bible. It is especially important as it touches on Law and Grace. The subject of Justification by Faith was the battle cry of the Reformation. It is, however the one doctrine above all others that kept a segment of the Church true to Apostolic Doctrine throughout the Middle Ages when the Roman Church ruled so strongly. It is

the foundation Truth for the dispensation of Grace. The trademark of this doctrine is, “**The Just Shall Live By Faith.**” The statement is found in Habakkuk, Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews.

ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK OF ROMANS

Chapter 1 Chapter one of Romans gives us an excellent word picture of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Secondly, it gives us Paul the Apostles' evaluation of the Gospel. Thirdly, it gives us an accurate, and even prophetic evaluation of the condition of all mankind; Jew and Gentile in every dispensation. Chapter one centers more on Gentiles, while chapters two and three concentrate more on Israel. There is also a full refutation of evolution, and "science, falsely so called," along with the eventual condition and eternal fate of people who turn their backs on God's revelation of His one way of salvation.

a. 1:1a Paul identifies himself as the author of the epistle in the very first word. He refers to himself by two terms in this first chapter: servant and Apostle. The order is also important. There are two words in New Testament Greek that are translated servant: "doulos" and "deaconos," the former of which means slave, while the latter means servant. Paul used the first of these, meaning that he referred to himself as a slave of Jesus Christ. Paul, of his own free will, had chosen to submit himself to every desire and will of his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. When we are saved, we become the property of Jesus Christ and He becomes our Savior, but as we grow in the Lord, we learn of the Lordship of Christ, but we have the choice of submitting to it or not. If we do, and we should, it should be because, **"The love of Christ constrains us."** This was strongly true in Paul's case. But he also refers to himself as an Apostle. The literal meaning of the Greek word "apostolos" is Sent One. In the Biblical sense, however, there were no Apostles after the death of John who died about the end of the first century A.D. While the Church chose Matthias to take the Bishopric of Judas, God chose Paul. We never hear of Matthias after his selection to replace Judas, but Peter and Paul are the two main characters of the Book of Acts, Paul being most important. Paul wrote at least thirteen of the twenty seven Books of the New Testament, and possible a fourteenth. Peter was chosen of God to be the main Apostle to the Jews, while Paul was chosen to be the Apostle to the Gentiles. Paul was the greatest theological mind of the first century A.D.

b. 1:1b-5 The Gospel of Jesus Christ is unique in that it is the only way for mankind to have sins forgiven, the guilt removed, and have eternal life. Two things should be noted in this passage: (1) This is the Gospel which was preached by all of the Apostles and the early Christians. The earliest of the New Testament Books to be used by the first century Christians was the Book of James which was written about 48 A.D. by the half-brother of Jesus. It is probably the most Jewish of the New Testament books. This was not a book which emphasized a narrative of the life of Jesus, nor did it emphasize the Gospel. Every truth taught in the New Testament has its roots in the Old Testament and is revealed through the speaking and writing prophets. The Christians went everywhere preaching Christ from the message of the Old Testament prophets. Beginning with Adam we have preserved for us in the Old Testament the whole lineage of Jesus Christ through David until the birth of Christ. Everything that the Old Testament says about Jesus Christ was perfectly fulfilled in Him from Genesis 3:15 until His Death, burial, resurrection, ascension and mediation for us. There are well over one hundred detailed prophecies concerning the Person and redemptive work of Jesus Christ throughout the Old Testament Scriptures. Daniel chapter nine tells us everything pertaining to the events having to do with the future of Israel from the going forth of the edict from the Persian King Xerxes to return to Jerusalem and build the walls of the City, to the end of the tribulation period, minus the Age of Grace, written for the Jews. Even the dates are given. This was written over 500 years before the coming of Christ, and every detail was right on schedule. The twenty fifth and twenty sixth verses of Daniel nine say, **"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after three score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall**

destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.” Verse 24 tells us seventy weeks make up the whole prophecy. Each week is a week of years, or seven years, and the whole period includes 490 years, but does not include the Age of Grace in which we are now living. There were 49 years and 434 years, or a total of 483 years from Xerxes’ edict to Nehemiah to return and rebuild the walls and the city until the cutting off of the Messiah (The death of Christ). Since this is a prophecy for Israel, it does not include the Age of Grace during the spread of the Gospel. The 70th week, or the last seven years are the tribulation period which begins right after the rapture of the Church. That is given to us in chapters 4 through 20 of the Book of Revelation; the Revelation of Jesus Christ. The dates are just right, but the prophecy was written during the Babylonian captivity, long before any of these events took place. There are hundreds of prophecies and types concerning Christ in the Old Testament. These are the Scriptures from which Paul preached Christ. The Gospel of God is clearly set forth in the first four verses of the fifteenth chapter of I Corinthians which Paul wrote to Corinth from Ephesus: **“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures:”** There is also a fourth part to the Gospel found in I Corinthians 15:20-23, the promise of our resurrection because of His resurrection from the dead, verse 20, **“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.”**

c. It was necessary for Jesus to be descended directly from King David in order to fulfill the Old Testament prophecies, especially Genesis 3:15 and the Abrahamic Covenant found in Genesis 12:2, 3. The righteous line descended from Adam through Noah, through Shem, to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to Judah, to David, from David through Solomon and the kingly line to Joseph, the foster-father of Jesus, giving Jesus legal claim to the throne of David, and from David through David’s son Nathan to Mary, the mother of Jesus, giving Jesus the claim through the blood line to the throne of David. The Holy Spirit was the person of the God-Head who fathered Jesus in the womb of Mary so that He was the Son of God. See II Corinthians 5:19. We get our sin nature from our father, not our mother. Eve was deceived in the transgression, but Adam was given the commandment before Eve was even made. (Romans 5:12, 19). Jesus had no sin nature, and while he , as a man, could be tempted, as God he could not yield to temptation; thus He had no sin and could die a substitutionary death for our sins. (II Corinthians 5:21),

d. Paul, no doubt referring to his experience on the Damascus Road, said that it was through the power and authority of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, that he was granted grace and apostleship to take the Gospel to the whole world.

e. Verses 6, 7 By the same power, he said, all of the believers are called to the same calling, or ministry. As Paul addresses the recipient of this letter we must take note of the fact that he did not address the “Church at Rome,” but rather to, “all that be at Rome, beloved of God, called to be Saints.” During the Apostolic period in the first century, a separate local Church could not be established without the authorization of an Apostle. After the death of the Apostle John at the end of the first century, a local Church could be established by the authority of a Mother Church under whose umbrella the Church was formed and shepherded. Such was the case with the growth of the Churches in the eastern leg of the Fertile Crescent and North Africa. Most of the Churches in the eastern leg of the Fertile Crescent were originally started by Peter, who in his latter years, worked among the Jews still in the area of old Babylon. The Churches of North Africa (the Coptic Church) were thought to have been inspired by the Ethiopian Eunuch who was led to Christ by Philip in the Negev, (Acts chapter 8). Most of the Churches in western Asia Minor were thought to have been planted by the Apostle John. Perhaps this is why John used these as representative of the seven

divisions of the Church Age in Revelation chapters two and three. There was one house-Church in Rome at the time Paul wrote Romans, and that was in the home of Priscilla and Aquila, chapter sixteen, verses three through five.

f. Verses 8-15 Paul's relationship with the Roman Christians: Although Paul had never been to Rome, most of those to whom he wrote must have been his converts who had migrated there. They were either his converts or the converts of his converts; his spiritual grandchildren. One privilege the Jews had under Rome was that they could move about the Roman Empire without restriction. Paul's interest in the Romans was part of a larger concern. Paul gave thanks for the effectiveness of their faith, which bore testimony to Christ throughout the entire then-known-world. Paul also called God to witness of his faithfulness in his prayers for the believers at Rome. Paul six reasons for his interest in the Roman Christians: (1) He wanted to go and see them at Rome, probably to organize them into a fellowship of Churches officially sanctioned by an Apostle. (2) He wanted to impart to them some spiritual gift that they might be established. It is interesting, and true that to preach the truths of God's Word is to impart a spiritual gift. God has given every Christian the ability to impart spiritual gifts to others every day. The spiritual gifts he wanted to impart to them, however, would also have included sound doctrine to help the saved ones grow in the Lord. (3) He wanted to comfort them by his faith, and he by their faith. Those spiritual gifts we impart can be very comforting to those who receive them. (4) He wanted to have some fruit among them. He had tried to come to them before, but was hindered (let) from doing so, and this epistle was the next best way to impart that spiritual gift to them. It was obviously God's will to do things this way, for the epistle was preserved to do the very same thing for us today. (5) Paul felt that he was a debtor to the Greeks (the intelligent) and the barbarians (the Peasants) who were uneducated. He was a debtor to give them the Gospel. (6) Paul said that he was ready to preach the Gospel to them who were at Rome. As a Pastor for many years, I would have to say that this is somewhat of an understatement. Of course they did not use this expression in those days, but I believe Paul was chomping at the bit to preach the Gospel to not only the Christians at Rome, but to his fellow-Jews who had not heard it, and the unsaved which made up the great majority of the population of the Great City of Rome.

g. Verses sixteen and seventeen give us the nature and content of the Gospel. Paul stated that he was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. I can't say that most Christians are ashamed of the Gospel any more than they are ashamed of their Savior, but they are at least embarrassed to speak of both in public, or even door to door. May God give us the boldness to open our mouths and let our faith and our Savior be known to the lost. In these two verses, Paul gives us his definition of the Gospel: (1) It is the power of God (dunamas in the Greek, from which we get our English word dynamite) unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek (Gentle). (2) **"For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith..."** (3) **"...as it is written, the just shall live by faith."** God's Word tells us there is absolutely no other way to be saved but by faith in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary, His death, His burial, and His resurrection. The more we make of the Gospel of Christ, the more it can make of us. As in the Book of Galatians, so here in the Book of Romans, we find the Battle Cry of the Reformation Period: **"The Just Shall Live By Faith."**

h. Romans 1:18-32 Nowhere else in the rest of the Bible do we find a passage of Scripture that so graphically sets forth the depravity of man as Romans 1:18-32. There is so much here that it will take a while to do it justice. Please get everything you can from this passage, for you will need it to deal with so many different kinds of false teachings.

(1) Romans 1:18-20. God has so clearly revealed Himself to man that there is absolutely no excuse for any human being anywhere on earth to have a reason for not believing in creation, as opposed to evolution. We refer to the **Teleological** argument for the existence of God. This is the argument from design. Design always demands a designer. Everything God has made demonstrates intricate design and absolute intelligence. The theory of evolution would have us believe that the billions of

demonstrations of complex design in creation are the result of random mutations. No living thing could possibly mutate into another **Kind**. Mutations take place within a kind, but it is impossible for transmutation to take place. D.N.A. prevents it. The number of chromosomes in the cells of a given kind prevents it. There are countless road blocks that prevent a kind from changing into another kind. There are mutations, both natural and artificial within a kind, but no transmutations from one kind to another. Of course it is no longer used, but one of the strongest arguments for evolution used to be similarities between the embryos of two different kinds, but one never developed into the other. Perhaps there are similarities between kinds, but that is a stronger argument for the fact that the same creator designed them both. There are no living or fossil examples of any transitional forms between kinds. Everything reproduces after its own kind, just as the Bible says. Evolution is always taking examples of micro evolution and using them to try to teach macro evolution. It is only trickery. Verse eighteen says, **“For the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the Truth in unrighteousness;”** Verses nineteen and twenty go on to say, **“Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.”** The “Truth” spoken of in verse eighteen is the Word of God, See John 17:17. When men hold the Truth in unrighteousness, they place themselves under the wrath of God. Of course they do not worry about that when they don’t believe in God to start with, but they will when the wrath of God actually falls on them. If we went out in the yard and found the most humble weed, and cut a cross section of the stem, we could place it under a microscope and discover complex design. We would find two tiny tubes called the xylem and the phloem. The xylem carries water and mineral salts to the leaves where, by means of photosynthesis, they are transformed into food for the plant. The phloem then carries this food to the roots and other parts of the plant where it is needed. How long would it take for that system to develop by means of random mutations? and how could the plant survive until this system was fully developed? and why hasn’t this system evolved any further since it became fully functional? and why, when that weed goes to seed does it never evolve into something better? There are no answers to these questions except that God created it fully developed and fully functional. The same is true of everything God has made, whether it be animate or inanimate. A single grain of salt under a microscope, with a tiny bit of water added releases a show of sublime beauty in multi-colored crystal form that shows intricate design. What masterful omniscience designed the universe so that stars are not bumping into each other, causing explosions of immeasurable power, bouncing off of each other like billiard balls when a player breaks the group. Consider the Human Body with its circulatory system, digestive system, central nervous system, endocrine system, respiratory system, etc. Consider the pituitary gland and its complex functions which are not as yet fully understood. Consider the perfect shape of the red blood cell and its multiple functions. We could go on and on, but how can we assign any of these or countless other systems or organs of the human body to random mutations? There is irrefutable evidence that the Human Body could not function were it not created all at once, fully developed. How does a union of the male and female reproductive cells, the egg and the sperm, contain all the necessary intelligence to develop into a full human being? Why are all its parts in the right place? We could continue with such questions concerning all that God has created, but we would find complex design in every one without exception. All things show design, and design demands a designer. In the theory of evolution, death is a good thing for it is the eventual goal for all things. In creation, life is a good thing and death is the result of sin. In spite of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, and because intelligent design is the only alternative, and to admit that is out of the question with the evolutionist, if he accepts intelligent design, he is facing eventual judgment for sin; he is facing a Holy God. But God has provided a way for the evolutionist, the atheist, the agnostic, the average human being, to have life eternal simply for the taking. See Romans 10:13; John 1:11-14; I John

5:11-13; John 3:16; Revelation 3:20; and many more. Reader, don't be the one who, because he or she embraces a lie, cannot see the obvious.

(2) Verses 21-28 The downward progression that marks one who embraces a lie: There was a time when man knew the true God who designed and created all things. In fact, if you travel the world and interview people from every family of mankind, every nationality, every tribe, the most intelligent, the least educated, you will find universal belief in some supreme being, even if it is wealth and fame. Every person worships something. That process is in-born from our original parents. Even from the beginning when man knew God personally, however, he did not glorify Him as God, nor was he thankful to God for all God had made for him. Instead, mankind followed the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. (I John 2:15-17) This resulted in their becoming vain in their imagination. When TRUTH (light) is rejected, (darkness) a lie takes its place and the person's heart (understanding) is blinded to the truth. **"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."** In most Churches there are fools in the pulpits. Most so-called scientists today are fools. Our governments are full of fools. Business is full of fools. All of this is because God, and the obvious, has been left out. As has been the pattern in every civilization where God is left out, all that God has done and made has been replaced with what man has done and made. Man has deified the works of his hands and has given the glory that should be the Creator's to the creature. (This is evolution, or, perhaps, we ought to say devolution). Here is the second consequence: **God gives up on** such people when they finally and irrevocably reject the very idea of God. He not only gives up on them, but He gives them up to uncleanness (akatharsian in the Greek) meaning without spiritual purity in a Levitical sense; being defiled with impurity. God gives them up to their own lusts to dishonor their bodies between themselves (homosexuality). They deliberately change the Truth of God into a lie. They knowingly reject the truth and call it a lie, while taking a lie and calling it the truth. The Prophet Isaiah said in Isaiah 5:20, **"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter."** This brings them down to the next level where they worship and serve the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. The second time, God said, **"God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature."** Lesbianism is the result of the man, the natural head of the woman, giving himself over to unnatural lusts. Having no men to lead them to righteousness and purity, they take the reigns and give themselves over to filthy and godless acts that are totally unnatural. Again, he says that the men give themselves over to homosexuality in verse 27. For the third time, since man did not like to retrain God in his knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient (Greek, pure or proper).

(3) Verses 29-32: The final product of rejecting God: a. Unrighteousness is a general term incorporating all actions, thoughts, and speech which is violently and deliberately anti-God. b. Fornication is the Greek word pornea which refers to all and every sexual uncleanness. c. Wickedness, in the Greek connects evil with Satan and the occult. d. Covetousness is the sin of lusting after that which belongs to someone else. e. Maliciousness is kakia in the Greek and simply means evil, or of the devil. f. Envy, phthonou in Greek, meaning evil prompted by envy. g. Murder- premeditated taking of the life of another person born out of hatred. h. Debate- to strive or argue, verbal fight. i. Deceit -In the Greek, dolou, meaning guile, or bitterness. j. Malignity- meaning depravity of heart and life. k. Whisperers- meaning gossipers, or liars, or spreaders of evil material. l. Backbiters- meaning defamer, or evil-speaker. m. Haters of God- We have seen on the previous page what this is and what it produces. n. Despiteful- Meaning boldness of disrespect in speech and behavior: actually, the Greek word means insolent. o. Proud- meaning, self-centered or self-exalting. p. Boasters- Meaning, to talk proudly about one's own deeds and accomplishments; often stretching the truth. q. Inventers of evil things- Meaning, making us evil to accomplish an evil goal. They often make up evil accusations against someone else. r. Disobedient to parents-

meaning, a disregard for things their parents tell them for their own good; often practiced to spite the parents. s. Without understanding- Meaning, they have no comprehension of the truth and the good because they have set their minds against it. One cannot know truth without knowing the one who is the way, the truth, and the life. t. Covenant breakers- Many today will enter into a covenant with the full intention of not keeping it because the covenant favors them, but, having no honesty or integrity, they plan to break it when they have obtained what they want. Look at the covenants or treaties America has made with other countries. u. Without natural affection- Those who practice only erotic love. It is self serving. v. Implacable- Unmerciful, or out of control as far as evil is concerned. unreasonable. w. Unmerciful-merciless; taking no mercy on the victims of their hatred and venomous treatment. All of these are well aware of what believers tell them awaits them unless they repent, but they are past the point of no return. They not only take pleasure in their wickedness, but they also rejoice in getting others involved. No sinner wants to sin alone. This is why it is so important to reach people as young as possible. This is why we hire a man to work specifically with out teenagers. This is why we train teachers to work with children, winning them to Christ as soon as they are able to understand and receive Christ as their Savior. When they graduate from High School they think they are adults and don't know they are at the most vulnerable point in their life. Then we send them to college for the pseudo-intellectuals to shape after their own erroneous thinking. Even in Bible colleges today they can be influenced by some questionable doctrine, or by roommates who have a pet agenda. They had best be well grounded in the things of God before proceeding with their education.

Chapter 2 Verses 1-10 Notice that chapter two begins with the word “therefore.” This means, of course, that it is referring back to chapter one and the extent of the depravity of man. Man is, according to verse one, inexcusable if he sits in judgment on the spiritual condition of anyone else. Unsaved people love to tell a Christian who is concerned about another person's spiritual condition, “you're not supposed to judge.” There are times when the Christian is instructed to judge. There are countless pitfalls for the Christian, and if God does not give us the discernment to distinguish between the good and bad we will soon be victims instead of victors. Chapter five of I Thessalonians instructs us to be a spiritual care-taker for our fellow Christians. That would be an impossible task if we had no discernment as to when they were in spiritual need. The thrust of Romans chapter two is the idea of judging others when we are guilty of doing the same things. Man's sin nature tends to give us the false impression that we are better than others and , therefore, qualified to judge them. God is the judge, but he wants to use the serious Christian to be a watchdog for our brothers' and sisters' spiritual well being. The key to being able to do this is keeping one's own house clean. Every Christian is going to stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ and answer for what we did with what He gave us. Our judging of others should be in the form of helping and encouraging from the Scriptures.

a. According to verse four, it is the goodness of God that leads us to repentance. We often fail to recognize the goodness of God. Sometimes the goodness of God is a trip to the woodshed. (See Hebrews 12:6). Some times God's goodness is a solid “no” to what we want to do. God is a perfect parent, and we are his children. What He does is always the best for us; it is the goodness of God that leads us to repentance.

b. In verses seven through ten God tells us clearly what the judgment of God will be for each one. For those who through patient continuance in well doing, and who seek for God's glory, honor and immortality, the reward is eternal life. Glory, honor, and peace will be the reward of those whose works are good and pleasing to the Lord, whether we be Jew or Gentile. Indignation and wrath are the reward for those who are contentious, do not obey the Truth, but obey unrighteousness. Tribulation and anguish also are their reward, be they Jew or Gentile.

c. Verses 11-16 God is an equal and fair judge; He plays no favorites. The Gentile who has had no knowledge of the Law and chooses to live in sin and reject Christ will die without Law. The Jew, with a knowledge of the Law, who chooses to live in sin and reject Christ will be judged by the Law. It is not those who have a knowledge of the Law of God that are justified, but those who choose to keep the Law (or do it) that are justified. Paul is not saying that one can be saved by the keeping of the Law, but is saying that it is those who choose Christ and righteousness who are justified. No one can keep the Law perfectly, but it is those who choose to ignore it and live contrary to it who are going to perish. The Gentile who, having the law naturally written upon their heart, keeps the Law (Word of God) is really better off than the Jew who possesses the Law, but does not live by it.

d. In chapter one, and thus far in chapter two, we have seen Paul deal with the fact that all are sinners, but the emphasis was upon all men without too much differentiation between the Jew and Gentile. Now in verses seventeen through twenty nine Paul shows how, with many advantages, the Jew is still in the same boat as the Gentile. The Jew places his confidence in the fact that he has the Law, can access the Law in every situation, knows what the will of God is, thinks of himself as a light to those in darkness, and a teacher of babes (those who are new converts to Judaism), an instructor of the foolish (uneducated); he thinks he is all of these because he has access to the Law. He teaches that one should not steal when he steals. They teach all the commandments to others, but fail to keep them themselves. Because of their double standard the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles. They teach others to be circumcised, and that it is essential to salvation, but they don't realize that circumcision means nothing unless a person keeps the whole Law, which is impossible. If the uncircumcision (Gentiles) keep the Law, should that not serve for circumcision? Would that not allow the uncircumcision to sit in judgment on the circumcision? Paul states in verses twenty eight and twenty nine, **"For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."** This is the same principle that Jesus taught so many times when here on earth. He said that the Jews are so careful to wipe the outside of the cup, to wash their hands before eating, to have the right outward appearance, but that they were full of dead men's bones. The Jew majored on the outside, while Jesus majored on the inside, and what came out of the man. The Jew was so careful about what others thought of them, but Jesus was interested in what God knew them to be. The Jews were proud of the fact that they were hearers of the Word, while Jesus was interested in the doers of the word. God knows what we really are inside, regardless of what we are on the outside. So many Christian can look and act just right when they come to Church on Sunday, but they are like the world the rest of the week.

Chapter 3 Verses 1-8 That the Jew has certain advantages over the Gentile is self-evident; and of these, the chief is the possession of the Holy Scriptures. But this only makes the Jew's sin more evident, since advantage brings responsibility and guilt to the individual when he does not keep it perfectly. Does man's unrighteousness display God's righteousness? If this is the case, sin is part of God's plan, and man cannot be held accountable. But Paul refutes this. God is just and He will judge man in His righteous judgment.

a. Then comes God's verdict on the entire human race in verses 9-20. With Paul, the idea that all of mankind are sinners is not a suggestion but something which he has already established. (1) **"As it is written, there is none righteous, no not one."** Vs 10 This is a reference to Psalm 14:1.- **"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt. They have done abominable works. There is none that doeth good."** Vs 11 **"There is none that understandeth."** See I Corinthians 2:14. Vs 11 **"There is none that seeketh after God."** We do not seek Him, He seeks us. Vs 12 **"They are all gone out of the way."** The world seeks another way, but Jesus is the only

way. John 14:6. Vs 12 **“They are together become unprofitable.”** Vs 12 **“There is none that doeth good, no not one.”** Vs 13 **“Their throat is an open sepulcher; with their tongues they have used deceit; The poison of asps is under their lips: See Psalm 5:9.** Vs 14 **“..whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Vs 15 “Their feet are swift to shed blood:”** Isaiah 59:7. Vs 16 **“..destruction and misery are in their ways:”** Vs 17 **“..and the way of peace they have not known: Vs 18 “..there is no fear of God before their eyes.”**

b. In verses nineteen and twenty Paul gives us a clear picture of the purpose of the Law. He tells us that what the Law says is said to those who are under the Law so that no one can claim righteousness by the keeping of the Law. The Law is given to show us that all are guilty before God. The whole purpose of the Law is to show us our guiltiness; that we cannot keep it.

c. Verses 21, 22 Righteousness is attained by faith, not by the keeping of the Law, as Paul has clearly proven. Righteousness without the Law is a reference to the righteousness of Christ imputed by faith to those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as the substitutionary payment for their sins. Please do not misunderstand, the Law of God is perfect (Romans 7:7-13), and we would not know that we are sinners were it not for the Law, but the Law can only condemn, not save. What purpose does the Law serve for us today, then? It shows us we are sinners and convicts us of sin. It should be the desire of the Christian to live by it, but not under it. It is impossible for the Christian to be saved by keeping the Law, nor kept by the keeping of the Law, but once the person is saved, they should love God's perfect standard of righteousness, and want to have it as a goal in their life. The only way to live a righteous life, however, is by faith in the power of God.

d. Verses 23-31 Many people like to use what is called the Romans' Road in doing soul-winning. It is so called because of all of the verses used are found in the Book of Romans. Romans 3:10 and 3:23 are the first two verses in the Roman's Road and are used to emphasize the fact that all of us are sinners no matter how good or how bad we may appear to be in every-day life. R.A. Torrey, one of the greatest soul-winners who ever lived had a favorite saying that I like very much: "Let the Word do the work." By this he meant, instead of using our own explanations of a verse of Scripture, have the person read the verse. After they have read it once so that you can hear them, ask them to read it again and tell them you would like to ask them a couple of questions about the verse. This time they will really read it. With Romans 3:23, have them read the verse, ask them to read it again and that you would like to ask them a couple of questions about the verse. After they have read it the second time, ask them, "What two things does God say in this verse are true of every person?" They will answer, "All have sinned." Then you can say, "What else does it say all have done?" They will answer, "All have come short of the glory of God." The average unsaved person has no idea what the glory of God is, so be ready to explain that it means that God is absolutely sinless and Holy, and that we have come short of that. Then you can ask them, "How many does God say in this verse have sinned and come short of the glory of God?" They will answer, "All." You can then say, "Does that include me?" They will say, "Yes." Then you can ask them, "Does that mean you?" Be sure to always say, "What does God say..." Using this method, the person has been convicted by God right from the Word instead of you telling them that they are a sinner. You have let the Word do the work. You can then go on with the Romans Road doing the same thing with each verse. The verses are: Romans 3:10; 3:23; 5:12; 6:23; 10:9, 10; 10:13. When using Romans 6:23, be sure to be able to explain what wages are. That word is not used as much any more. I like to conclude with John 1:12 also. When they are ready to pray, tell them basically what to pray, but let them pray the prayer for themselves if they will. Only help them with the prayer if they do not want to pray on their own. Follow the prayer with some assurance verses. Have some helpful materials to give them to remind them of what they have done. Be sure to give them the Church address, telephone number, service times, etc. It is also good to have something to leave with them that has their name, address, decision, & date of their decision on it. If they don't have a Bible of their own, try to get a King James 1611 for them to keep for their own.

(1) Many times certain words that we take for granted are completely foreign to them. In verse twenty four be sure to be able to explain the meaning of words such as “justified,” “grace,” and “redemption.” To be justified before God the Father means to be declared righteous through the Imputed righteousness of Christ. Grace is what God does for us that we do not deserve. Redemption means (to be bought back) to be bought back from the slave market of sin by the substitutionary death, burial, resurrection, and once for all blood atonement of Jesus Christ.

(2) “To be a propitiation...” Propitiation means a satisfactory payment. In the eleventh verse of the fifty third chapter of Isaiah we read, **“He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied.”** It is speaking of the fact that God the Father saw the suffering of Christ on the cross as He bore our sins and was satisfied with the payment Christ made for the sins of all mankind. This prophecy was written over seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus. Jesus becomes our satisfactory and acceptable payment for our sins when we accept Jesus Christ as our Savior and become a Disciple of Christ. Not only are our sins forgiven, but they are eradicated. They are against us no more. We have been declared righteous in the sight of God the Father forever.

(3) Again, in verse twenty six we are told that God, the moment we trust Jesus as our Savior, is just (He is justified) in justifying us in His sight because Jesus has paid our sin debt. There is no one then who can boast by any means of being saved by the keeping of the Law since it is impossible for sinful man to do. The only means of justification is by Faith in the finished work of Christ. “Jesus paid it all; all to Him I owe; sin had left a crimsoned stain; He washed it white as snow.”

(4) Paul has also made his point that God is the God of the Gentiles as well as the God of the Jews, for neither can keep the Law perfectly, thus, circumcision avails, neither does uncircumcision, nor does the effort to be saved by the keeping of the Law perfectly.

(5) Paul’s purpose was not to destroy the purpose of the Law, but, as Jesus did, he purposed to establish the Law as fulfilled by Jesus. After Jesus had fulfilled every requirement of the Law on man’s behalf, then mankind was saved, Jew, or Gentile, by faith in the one who fulfilled it. The ninth chapter of Hebrews tells us there is no remission of sin without the shedding of blood. This is because the life of the flesh is in the blood. Without the shedding of the blood of Jesus on the cross of Calvary there could be no remission of sin. But Jesus perfectly fulfilled the Law, (not destroyed it) and then shed His own precious blood to provide the remission of sins for all mankind, Jew, or Gentile. There’s nothing left to do to atone for, and eradicate the sins of all mankind “Jesus paid it all; all to Him I owe; sin had left a crimsoned stain: He washed it white as snow.”

Chapter 4 Verses 1-12 As in our study of the Book of Galatians, so in Romans, Paul uses Abraham as an example of the great truth, **“The just shall live by faith,”** to his readers. Paul said that if Abraham was justified by the works of the Law, then he has something of which he can boast, but not before God. But the Scriptures say **“Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.”** See Genesis 15:6. Abraham could not be justified by the Law since he lived hundreds of years before the Law was given. Abraham’s being counted righteous was not by works since all who are counted righteous by works are trying to settle a debt which it would take all eternity to pay; the debt of sin. But Abraham simply believed God and his faith was counted to him for righteousness. Paul also cites David who wrote, **“Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.”** Paul then asked the question, was Abraham’s righteousness imputed to him when he was under the Law, or not yet under the Law? It was imputed to him long before the Law: long before he was given circumcision. Therefore justification by faith is for both the Jew and the Gentile, for Abraham was the father of all those who are justified by faith.

a. Verses 13-25 The promise given to Abraham, then, was by faith alone. The promise of which

Paul speaks is the Abrahamic covenant. See Genesis 12:2, 3. Circumcision was given to Abraham as a seal of the covenant which was given him long before circumcision. He is the forerunner of all those who believe and are justified by faith. All those, then, that believe on Jesus Christ for salvation are descendants, spiritually, of Abraham who was justified before circumcision was given to him as a seal of the Covenant.

b. Abraham did not become the father of all who believe after he was under the Law, but hundreds of years before the Law was given, and he became the father of all those who believe for justification by faith. If all who are under the law are justified, then the covenant is of none effect. **(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations),...** Abraham was, then, the Father of many nations by faith. This is why he sought to fulfill God's promise of a seed who would be the Father of many nations. Although his efforts were not by Sarah, he still believed God for the promised seed, even in his old age. The faith by which Abraham was justified was not just faith to leave home and family and go out into a land he had never seen, but that was promised to him, it was mainly the faith to believe God for the promised seed through whom all nation of the earth would be blessed. His faith did not fail him when God told him again when he was ninety nine years old that he would have the promised son by Sarah. After God appeared to him in a Theophany with the two angels he firmly believed God's promise to give him, through Sarah, the son He had promised. This faith was imputed to him for righteousness. Hebrews chapter eleven says of him and Sarah, **"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker was God. By faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore innumerable."** We also then are counted righteous who believe on the Lord Jesus for justification, and do not trust in our own righteous works, or the keeping of the Law. Recently, a long-running television series, "Little House of The Prairie" reruns have been band from some of the networks because it was supposedly sexist and racist. I wonder if they have recently watched some of their own situation "comedies?". Although it is a clean and very moral series, the church scenes always have the preacher preaching good works for salvation. A lot of people love that series and watch it with their families, but it has the very error which most people hold about the way of salvation: salvation by works, not by grace through faith. Satan has almost unlimited ways of taking the good and wholesome and injecting a little poison that ruins that which could be a real help to the spread of the true Gospel of Grace.

Chapter 5 This chapter shows us the fruits of justification by faith; that this justification by faith is for you and me; and how sin entered into the world.

a. Verses 1-5 The fruits of Justification by grace through faith:

(1) Because we are justified by faith and not by the Law, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

(2) We have access to God's grace through faith, wherein we stand. We rejoice through the assurance of God's promise.

(3) We glory in tribulations because we know that the trials God lets us go through build our patience and help up to learn to rest in the Lord in every situation.

(4) Patience works experience; and experience builds hope (confidence); and hope makes us

unashamed

(5) The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given unto us. There are so many things that the Holy Spirit does for us that we could never list them all.

b. Verses 6-11 Christ died for all Mankind. There are those who teach us that Christ died for only a select group that God chose in His sovereignty to be saved. Any saved person who reads and studies the Bible will know that God is sovereign. This does not mean that God, because of His sovereignty, can only do things the way this group says He can. This group follows a man-made system of doctrine. I am not a Calvinist in the way Calvinism is taught today. Neither am I an Arminian in doctrine (the opposite of Calvinism); I am a Biblicist. The Bible teaches that there are two entities that God, in His sovereignty, elected. They are Israel, which He chose as His wife to produce a Son. See Ezekiel chapter sixteen and Revelation chapter twelve; and Jesus Christ Himself, God's Son whom He chose to reconcile the world unto Himself. See I Peter chapter two and verse six, and Isaiah forty two, verse one. Ephesians chapter one shows us that we are elected unto salvation because we are in Christ, not elected so that we will be in Christ. Christ died for the sins of the whole world. See I John chapter two and verses one and two. The only thing that can send a person to hell today is if they reject the payment for their sin. Romans chapter six, verse one says, **"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."** We have already seen in Romans chapter three that we are all sinners (ungodly). Here is another passage that tells us Christ died for all mankind, not for just a limited group. Paul said that some would dare to die for a righteous person. For whom would you be willing to give your life? Parents are often heard to have lost their lives trying to save their children. Once in a while a person will give their life trying to save a husband or a wife from death. Christ died for all of us who, by nature, were His enemies. Anyone reading this is probably a Christian, but there was a time when you were lost in sin. You were not only a sinner by nature, but a sinner by choice. When we were yet in our sins Christ died for us. This is the proof of that set forth in John chapter three, verse sixteen. Verse nine is most important as an answer to those who claim that the blood of Christ is no more efficacious for the removal of sin than the blood of any man. This verse clearly says, **"Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him."** Paul goes on to say, if we were reconciled to God when we were yet in our sins, we shall be saved (justified) by His life (His resurrection). See Romans 4:25. When Christ died on the cross He said, **"It is finished,"** meaning that the propitious payment for the sins of all mankind was complete, but this payment for sins would have been of no value to any of us were it not for his resurrection. A dead Christ can save no one, but one who conquered death, sin, hell, and the grave can. He rose again for our justification. Paul said, we joy (rejoice) in Christ by whom we have received the atonement.

c. Verses 12-21 These verses tell us how sin came to be in the world, and how we came to be sinners by nature. Verse twelve says, **"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned..."** The one man of whom Paul is spoke here is Adam. Paul, speaking by Divine inspiration, says that sin entered the world by means of Adam, and death by sin. God does not lie: before Adam's transgression there was no sin in this world. In that case, before Adam sinned there was no death. That completely rules out a pre-Adamic race, or animals that lived millions of years ago, died, and became fossilized. There could have been nothing that lived and died before Adam brought death into the world. We do not know how long Adam and Eve were in the garden before they sinned, but we do know that temptation was introduced to this world by Lucifer, probably the highest of the angels, who originated sin when he rebelled against God and led one third of the Angels out of Heaven and down to hell. See Matthew 25:41. Paul also tells us in this passage that there was no sin, that is, man did not know sin until the Law was given. It is the Law that shows us that we are all sinners. Mankind were all sinners before the Law, but they did not know when they were sinning until the

Law was given. See Romans 7:7-12. However, death reigned, as Paul states, from Adam to Moses. Even in man's ignorance he was still guilty without the Law. The only hope for man was to trust the promises of God. Righteousness was imputed to man by faith. Verse fifteen presents a contrast between Adam and Christ. This verse is a parallel verse with Romans chapter six and verse twenty three. Paul states, **"For if through the offense of one many be dead..."** This parallels the first part of Romans chapter six and verse twenty three, which states, **"For the wages of sin is death..."** Wages are what we earn: they are ours because we earned them. Adam, as the federal head of the human race, earned the wages of sin for the whole human race, which is spiritual death; eternal death for all mankind. We have this coming because we earned it by sinning. Verse fifteen continues, **"...much more the grace of God, and the gift of grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ hath abounded unto many."** This part of the verse parallels the second half of Romans chapter six, and verse twenty three which says, **"...but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."** Note: death is earned by sin, but life is a gift, by faith in Jesus Christ. Verse twelve presents the same parallel. It only took one sin by one man to plunge the entire human race into sin, but it took God in human flesh bearing the sins of all mankind for all time to bring the human race, potentially to justification. Verse seventeen tells us that those who place their faith in Jesus Christ as their substitutionary payment for sin, and trust Him to save them, by the grace of God, are given the gift of righteousness. We are not made righteous, but are declared righteous before God the Father as we are, by faith, in Christ. The conclusion is given us in verses eighteen and nineteen, **"Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."** Verse twenty makes it clear that while the Law revealed the fact of our sin nature, and our sinning because of our sin nature, the grace of God (unmerited favor) was far greater and brought about our reconciliation to God simply by faith. Under the old Covenant of the Law, sin reigned unto death, so under the new covenant, Grace much more abounded unto life (eternal life) through the finished redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Chapter 6 The fact that we are saved eternally by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ through faith does not give us a license to sin, but it frees us to live unto God. We have been baptized into Christ (that is, spiritually by the Holy Spirit) by His death, so we are dead to sin. How can we then continue in sin any longer? We have been raised with Christ to live a new life. Paul states that our old man (the person we were before our salvation) is now dead to sin, so we should live no longer in sin. The person who is dead with Christ shall also be raised to newness of life, even as Christ was raised from the dead. Sin has no more dominion over Him, therefore, it has no more dominion over us that we should live in it any longer. The idea that we should continue in sin in order to prove the grace of God was one that was propagated by the Gnostics. They declared that if one is declared righteous by faith, the more we sinned after we were saved, the more we exalted the grace of God. Of course the opposite is true. It is the godly life of the believer that demonstrates God's grace. When we are saved we are baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ. (I Corinthians 12:13). We became new creatures with a new nature which does not want to sin (II Corinthians 5:17), nor is it possible for the new nature to sin (I John 3:9): it is the flesh which wants to sin. God never tells the Christian to do something he cannot do.

a. Christ died for sins once, but He lives unto God forever. Three commands are given in verses eleven through thirteen. (1) Reckon yourselves to be dead to sins. (2) Don't let sin reign in your mortal body. (3) Don't yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness. We could not obey any of these commands without the enabling of the Holy Spirit. Sin has no more dominion (power) over the Christian (Romans 8:1) and cannot condemn us once we are in Christ. The idea of sinning

because we are not under Law but under grace is a fallacy. That entity is our master to which we yield ourselves. We, as Christians can choose to yield our selves unto sin, or unto righteousness. It all depends on who we want to have the mastery over us. If we choose sin, we will be miserable. See Hebrews chapter twelve and verses six and eleven. As Christians, we are not our own; we are bought with a price. When we were yet in our sins, we were the servants of sin and could do nothing about it. But now we have a new nature which makes it possible to have victory over sin. We now have a desire to yield our members unto righteousness, and thus show God's grace.

b. Summary: The wages of sin (that which we deserve because we have earned them) is death (Thanatos in the Greek – eternal separation from God in hell), but **the gift of God** (that which we do not deserve, but that God gives us because He loves us) **is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**”

Chapter 7 It is contrary to the will of God for one to have more than one husband or wife. The only way under the Law for a man or a woman to be married again was for the first husband or wife to die. Paul illustrates the spiritual application of this by showing us that the contract that represents our marriage to the Law, which is our first husband or wife, has been annulled, and constitutes the death of the first husband. But when the first husband or wife is dead, the living is free to remarry. Likewise, the Old Testament believer was bound to the Law as long as the Law was binding, but Jesus came and, without sin, fulfilled the Law. When Jesus died after fulfilling the Law, the believer was free from the Law. When Christ rose from the dead we were free to be married to Christ by faith.

a. There are certain questions that arise because of indwelling sin: (1) The first of these is, Is the Law sin? No. The problem is with the sin that dwells in our flesh. The Law is good, for it is God's perfect standard of righteousness. We are the problem. We cannot keep the law. And the Law condemns us for we are not perfect. (2) The things we want to do are the things we fail to do, and the things we no longer want to do are the things we do. The trouble is that the flesh is at war with the new nature that we have in Christ. (3) There are two laws at work in the life of the believer: (a) when we would do good, evil is present with us. Paul says he delights in the Law after the new nature (the renewed mind) but the flesh still wants to serve the Law of sin. He speaks of the war that goes on between the new nature and the flesh and says, **“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”** He then answers his own question: **“I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind (new nature) I myself serve the Law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.”** This warfare is the reason we need the whole armor of God, so that we can stand against the wiles of the devil. The Scriptures tell us in Ephesians 6:12, **“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”** Also we are told in II Corinthians 10:4, **“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;”** There really should be no chapter division between the end of chapter seven and the beginning of chapter eight, for chapter eight continues the same thought with the wonderful promise:

Chapter 8 **“There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”** While the Book of Romans is looked on as the pinnacle of Bible Doctrine in the New Testament, the eighth chapter is seen as the pinnacle of Bible Doctrine in the Book of Romans. We will try to take one of these doctrines at a time and deal with it as we are able.

a. The doctrinal teaching concerning election: What most Bible students do not realize is that, although Paul was the Apostle to the Gentiles, much of the material in his epistles was either directed to Israel, or written about Israel; or it was a comparison of Israel and the Gentiles. Although we have touched on this subject previously, we cannot avoid a more in-depth study of it in this chapter. For an orthodox Jew to read verses one through twenty one for the first time would be infuriating, since they were constantly enraged at the very idea of including the Gentiles in anything having to do with Israel. Verse one is a universal statement including both Jew and Gentile. If a person is in Christ, Jew or Gentile, there is no condemnation that can be brought against them. We have already discussed in chapters three through six how to get and be in Christ. We are totally helpless to save ourselves, but Jesus has, as the Lamb of God, paid the debt of our sin. When we personally accept that payment which has already been made, we are in Christ: His payment goes in the place of our sin; His resurrection in the place of our resurrection. **“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus...”**. No one, Jew nor Gentile can ever boast of gaining this blessing by their own doing. It is also important to note that this blessing is not limited to a select group, except those who are in Christ. For either Jew or Gentile to be in Christ Jesus there had to be two elections made on God’s part. God chose a wife (People or nation) out of all the peoples of the world. He elected Israel. **Why Israel?** We have no idea. He had to first create Israel, (as He created Eve from Adam’s rib, so He created Israel from all of mankind.) starting with a man, Abram, who proved to be less than perfect; a man who was raised in Ur of the Chaldees, a hotbed of idolatry. His father, Terah, and thus Abram, were descended from the righteous line of Adam through Noah to Shem, and thus, the Semitic people. Through Abram God produced a promised son, Isaac, who, in turn, fathered Jacob (Israel) who fathered twelve sons, one of which, Judah, was the tribe that produced a young **virgin** woman to mother God’s **Elect Son**. This elect Son was fathered by none other than **God, the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35)**. God was in this sinless human body, II Corinthians 5:19, (we get our sin nature from our father, Romans 5:12) for the purpose of reconciling the world unto Himself, II Corinthians 5:19. Why Judah? This joyous privilege should have gone to Reuben, the first-born son of Jacob, but Reuben defiled his Father’s couch by going into his father’s concubine and thus, lost the right. The next two in order were Simeon and Levi who lost the privilege by avenging their sister’s defilement by the Prince of Shechem. The next in line was Judah, who received the privilege in the place of the first-born. God provided Himself a sacrifice by becoming the sacrifice Himself as **“The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.”** See John 1:29, the fulfillment of Abraham’s prophetic statement from Genesis 22:8. The whole story is told as a brief one-chapter history in the twelfth chapter of the Book of Revelation. Election is always based on the foreknowledge of God in the Scriptures. God is omniscient, that is, He knows all that is to be known, and He is the origin of all knowledge. He deals with unsaved people whom He knows will be saved on a different basis than those whom He knows will never be saved, although given a chance to be saved all their lives. John 6:40 says, Jesus speaking, **“And this is the will of Him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.”** Calvinism is based mainly on five tenets which can best be portrayed as an acrostic which makes up the word, TULIP:

(1) T – Total depravity – Biblicists would say that we believe in total depravity, but not in the same way that Calvinists do. A true Calvinist believes that, while there is no goodness at all in man, he has also been relieved of his ability to make any spiritual decision other than to do wrong. One of the main things that sets mankind apart from animals is their ability to make up their mind about things: to make decisions of their own choosing. All plant and animal life is locked into a particular behavior pattern from which they will not naturally deviate. Man still has the ability to reason and change his mind about matters, but he no longer can be saved without the Holy Spirit using the Word of God to produce Godly Sorrow which leads to salvation, not to be repented of. See II Corinthians 7:10. Arminianism, a liberal body of Christian doctrine opposed to Calvinism is

based on the teachings of Jacobus Arminius, and is based on the free will of man to decide his spiritual destiny, and opposes the Calvinistic doctrine of election. The Biblicist holds that mankind must first be brought under conviction of sin by the Holy Spirit (Godly Sorrow, II Corinthians 7:10), using the Word of God before they can be a true conversion to Christ as Savior. Calvinists believe if you are not a five-point Calvinist, you are automatically an Arminian. Biblicists believe there is no measure of goodness in man since the fall of Adam and Eve, but that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. See John 16:7-15. This is the main purpose of the Holy Spirit's coming for the unbeliever. The Holy Spirit makes up for the perversion of man's will by sin.

(2) U – Unconditional election: The Calvinist believes that God, in His sovereignty, elected certain ones to be saved, and certain ones to be lost. As we will see later, the salvation of those who are elected by God to salvation have unconditional election. When confronted with the claims of the Gospel they will be saved. The Biblicist believes that God wants everyone to be saved (II Peter 3:9), but He knows in His foreknowledge that most will choose to reject the payment Christ made for their sins. (Matthew 7:13,14 and John 6:40).

(3) L – Limited atonement: The Calvinist teaches that Christ's blood atonement for sins is efficacious only for those who are elected unto salvation. They teach that Christ only died for the elect. The Biblicist teaches that Christ's blood atonement made on Calvary's cross paid for all of the sins of all mankind for all time, but only provides salvation for those who receive Christ as their Savior. (I John 2:1, 2 and John 1:12, 13). It is not our sins that send us to hell; they are paid for, but rather the sin of rejecting the payment for our sins. (John 3:18 and John 16:8, 9).

(4) I – Irresistible grace: The Calvinist believes that to one who is elected unto salvation, the saving grace of Jesus Christ is irresistible. When convicted of sin by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, the Biblicist believes the individual still has the will to choose salvation, or to reject it.

(5) P – Perseverance of the Saints: The Calvinist believes the person who is elected unto salvation will persevere until they go home to be with the Lord. The Biblicist believes that the truly saved person will be kept by the power of God until they go home to be with the Lord. Neither believes that a truly saved person can lose their salvation.

(6) The difference between what Calvinists and Biblicists believe about how salvation takes place: The Calvinist believes that a person who is elected unto salvation, upon hearing the Gospel, will be regenerated so that he or she can then exercise a regenerated will to receive Christ as Savior. The Biblicist believes that when a lost sinner hears the Gospel from the Word of God, and is convicted of their sins, he or she must then decide to receive Christ as his or her Savior. No one can be saved without Godly Sorrow produced by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. (II Corinthians 7:10). The Calvinist position kills evangelism. The Biblicist position demands it. **“Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”** Romans 10:13

b. The doctrine of predestination: Contrary to common belief, predestination is not the same thing as election. The doctrine of predestination applies only to those who are saved. Once again, the doctrine is based on the omniscience of God. From eternity past, God knew who would be saved, but he did not make us be saved. Knowing who would be saved, He pre (before hand) determined the destination of every believer. Our destination which He has pre-determined is not so much a place as it is a new condition. If we examine the passage closely in Romans eight, verse twenty nine, we will see that we are pre-destined to be conformed to the image of Christ. In other words, our resurrection bodies will be just like His. I do not mean that we will all look alike, but that we will all have the same kind of body that He has. I Corinthians 15:35 reads, **“But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?”** Those questions are answered in the rest of the fifteenth chapter, but one aspect must be mentioned at this point before

we consider the next doctrine: this new body is a spiritual body. Verse 44 says, **“It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.”** It does not say, **spirit body**, as in the case of the Angels, but a spiritual body, as in the case of Jesus Christ. Jesus’ body was spiritual and, at the same time, flesh and bones. He ate with them by the Sea of Galilee, and in the Upper Room, yet He could pass His tangible body through solid doors without disturbing the molecular structure of either one. Right now we are in corruptible bodies, but then, in incorruptible bodies. We are now in mortal bodies, but then, in immortal bodies. We now have a spiritual nature in a dying body, but then, a spiritual nature in a spiritual body. We will be totally conformed to the image (likeness) of Christ.

c. We now back up a bit in the eighth chapter to consider the doctrine of adoption: Of all the doctrines of salvation, the doctrine of adoption is the most misunderstood. The moment a person is saved, they are given the Spirit of adoption, (Romans 8:15) but we do not enter the family of God by adoption, we enter the family of God by a spiritual birth. Notice in Romans 8:15 that the word Spirit is capitalized, referring to the Holy Spirit. At the moment of our spiritual birth the Holy Spirit adopts us into the spiritual family of God, but it is not until the resurrection that our adoption is complete. (Romans 8:22-27). Our adoption is complete when the body is also conformed to the image of Christ at the resurrection. So we are waiting for our adoption which is ours by faith. We will not deal with it as a separate doctrine, but we must comment on the word “called.” The Calvinist would place it in the same category as election. Notice, however, that in the progression of doctrines here it follows the process of predestination, which we noted is an act of God which applies to the saved. Those whom He knows will be saved, He predestines to be conformed to the image of Christ. Knowing they will be saved, God sees to it that they are called by the convicting power of the Holy Spirit to come to the Lord. Once again, He does not make us be saved, but, in His foreknowledge, He knows that we will be saved.

d. The next doctrine dealt with in this chapter is justification: Justification is being declared righteous before God. The Word of God says in Romans 4:25 in speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ, **“Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.”** Jesus, who is the one who paid our sin debt, can be just in declaring us righteous before the Father because He not only paid our sin debt with His once-for-all blood atonement on the cross, but He conquered death and hell and sin and the grave by rising from the grave so as to be able to present that atonement before the Father in the Heavenly Sanctuary, declaring all who were in Him by faith, as righteous as Himself, (Hebrews 9:12, 24, and 28). When God looks at the born-again believer, He sees not the sinner saved by grace, but He sees Christ. Justification is summed up in 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.”**

e. The last doctrine dealt with here is the doctrine of glorification: Those whom God justifies, He also glorifies. In His High-Priestly prayer in John chapter 17, Jesus prayed, **“And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.”** This glory which is Christ’s is imputed to everyone who is in Christ, that the world might see Christ in us, (II Corinthians 5:17).

f. The rest of chapter eight assures us that, once we are in Christ, nothing can separate us from God’s love; for once we are in Christ, God loves us as He loves Christ. Romans 8:34 Verses 35-39 are certainly verses of great reassurance for the believer.

(Vs 35) Most Christians in our present day immediately think that any hardship that comes their way is an indication that God has forsaken them. This causes many to throw in the towel and quit. Reader, if you are married and have children, you know that sometimes the fellowship between your children and yourself is not what it ought to be. When our children grieve our heart, if we are

the right kind of parent, we still love them and would protect them with our life if necessary. That is exactly what Christ did, not only for Israel, but for all who would come to Christ among the Gentiles. Sometimes we have to discipline our children, but it is because we love them, not because we have ceased to love them. Vs 35 suggests that tribulation cannot separate us from the love of Christ. He also suggests that distress cannot separate us from the love of Christ. Also persecution, famine, nakedness, peril or sword cannot separate us from the love of Christ. As you will recall, these are all things Paul told the Corinthians he suffered himself, yet he never was tempted to think that they happened to him because Christ no longer loved him.

(Vs 36) Paul refers his readers at Rome, back to Psalm 44:22 where the Psalmist reminds Israel of the very same thing. Jesus, Himself, suffered this very same thing for us, Isaiah 53:7, yet he knew He was the ultimate object of God's love. Jesus reminded His Disciples the night before the crucifixion that the world would hate them because it hated Him. He said, **"In this world ye shall suffer persecution."** But He also reminded them that He would be with them always.

(Vs 37) It is through Jesus, Himself, that we are more than conquerors in this life, though subject to suffering. If we want to have part in His fellowship, we must also have part in His suffering.

(Vs-38, and 39) These verses assure the believer that there is absolutely nothing that can come between them and the love of God which is ours through Jesus Christ our Lord. We are loved as the Father loves the Son because we are in the Son.

Chapter 9 The main subject of chapter nine is "Israel and the Gospel." It is often used by the Calvinists to reinforce the doctrine of election. For this reason, we must remember that God elects on the basis of His foreknowledge, and in relation to whether the individual is of true Israel by faith, or is in Christ by faith. We must be careful to remember that God is sovereign, and whatever He does is good and right, regardless of what we think or feel. We must also be careful, however, not to follow any man's system of doctrine, unless that system completely agrees with the Word of God. There are many things in the Scriptures that people do not understand fully. If we understood everything the Bible has to say, we would be as smart as its author.

a. What advantages does true Israel have?

(1) They were provided with adoption. Adoption, in the Scriptures, means "The placing of a son." Adoption means the same as it did in chapter eight, but there is a big difference between spiritual adoption into the family in the New Testament and spiritual adoption of true Israel in the Old Testament. The story of God's election of Israel as His wife in Ezekiel chapter sixteen is a picture of their being God's chosen instrument to be used in producing a body which He would inhabit as Jesus Christ (II Corinthians 5:19) for the purpose of reconciling the world unto Himself. Adoption for Israel has to do with her final reconciliation to God in the tribulation period and the Millennium. At the present time they are "put away" (in exile), but God has promised to restore true Israel. We have already dealt with adoption as pertains to the New Testament believer, but adoption as pertains to Israel in the Old Testament, and under the Law, pertains to God's choosing Israel as His wife to produce an Only Begotten Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. In addition to Adoption, Israel had the following advantages:

(2) The Glory of being God's chosen people. As New Testament Christians, we should radiate the glory of Christ in our lives, but we will not share in the glory of God until we are home in Heaven with Christ. Israel did bear that glory as God dwelt in their midst.

(3) They also possessed the Covenants: They, as the righteous line from Adam, had the Noahic Covenant, the Abrahamic Covenant, the Palestinian Covenant, and the Mosaic Covenant.

(4) They have the Law, which is God's perfect standard of righteousness. There is nothing wrong

with the Law, although it cannot save us, the trouble is with mankind: we are all sinners. The purpose of the Law was to show man that he is a hopeless sinner.

(5) They were given the service of God. They were chosen to be the ones to bear Jacob's new name, (Israel = The Prince that prevails with God). We are privileged to bear the name, Christian which means, A Disciple of Christ.

(6) They were given promises that pertained to Israel uniquely. Likewise, the New Testament Christian is given promises which pertain to him or her uniquely.

(7) They had the Fathers (Patriarchs) and the great leaders: (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses). The New Testament believer has Christ, the New Testament Scriptures, Peter, Paul, John, etc.

(8) The Messiah, whom they rejected. The New Testament believer possesses Him by faith, and has Him living in him or her in the person of the Holy Spirit.

b. In this chapter we have one of two instances in the Scriptures where someone was willing to be accursed of God for the salvation of his people. The first was Moses when God stated that He would destroy rebellious Israel and create a new nation through Moses. Paul was willing to be accursed from God for the salvation of Israel. This is the very thing that our Savior did on Calvary's cross: He was made to be sin for us; He who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

c. God is sovereign in His dealings with Israel and with all mankind. There are some illustrations of this in chapter nine.

(1) In chapter nine, verses six through nine we have the example of the birth of Isaac when Sarah was ninety and Abraham was one hundred. This is not possible with man, but all things are possible with God. Remember, whatever God chooses to do He does based on His foreknowledge. The birth of Isaac, a type of Christ, was a very necessary part of God's over-all plan to produce the body in which He dwelt as the Messiah. This does no violence to the sovereignty of God since whatever God does He does in his sovereignty. Only those who were born Israelites and placed their faith in the promises of God contained in the Abrahamic Covenant; and to fulfill them through Isaac, were of the true Israel. **"For without Faith it is impossible to please Him."**

(2) In chapter nine, verses 10-13 we read of God's exercise of His sovereignty when He chose Jacob over Esau, although Esau was the first-born. God chose and elected Jacob on the basis of His perfect foreknowledge. On the same bases, He hated Esau before he was ever born, for He knew that he would be willing to sell his birthright for a mess of pottage. But the doing of it was Esau's perverted will.

(3) In chapter nine, verses fourteen through eighteen God demonstrated His election on the basis of His foreknowledge when He had mercy on Israel, His Elect Wife (Ezekiel chapter sixteen) when He purposely raised up Pharaoh, knowing in His foreknowledge that he would harden his heart and refuse to let Israel go from the bondage of Egypt, so that He could demonstrate His "Power" (sovereignty) in him by showing that, try as he may, Pharaoh could not force Israel to stay in Egypt. God demonstrated His power over all creation by His plagues. He demonstrated His power over life and death when he took the lives of the firstborn in every Egyptian household. He showed His power through the dividing of the Red Sea, and then demonstrated His omnipotence when He closed that sea on the Egyptian army. Nothing can turn God from His eternal purposes. In His sovereignty He has purposed that every person who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved; not to the Jew only, but also to the Greek (Gentile). Romans 10:13 and Romans 1:16.

(4) Chapter nine, verses 19-24 demonstrate God's control over vessels of wrath, and vessels of mercy. Scripture interprets Scripture. In order to understand why God would make one vessel unto

honor, and another vessel unto dishonor, we must understand several things: First, God knows our thoughts afar off (in the future). He knows everything about every person before we are conceived. Psalm 139. Second, God loves all mankind and wants every person to be saved. II Peter 3:9. Third, He knows, however, from eternity past, just what each one will do with the Gospel. John 2:24, 25. He deals with each one on the basis of what He knows they will do and be. There had to be a Judas to fulfill Scripture, God made a vessel unto dishonor, not making Judas betray Jesus, but knowing that he would. Look at the opportunities Judas had during the three years he walked and lived with Jesus, and was under His teachings. Judas chose to do what he did of his own perverted will, and God knew he would.

(5) 9:25-29 Recorded in chapter nine, verses twenty five through twenty nine are God's testimony in Hosea and Isaiah to an extension and limitation of God's saving work. This whole chapter is written to present the justification of God's inclusion of the Gentiles in His salvation. Only a remnant of Israel will be included among the saved, (144,000). The following are the references in Hosea and Isaiah that are quoted here:

Hosea 2:23

Hosea 1:10

Isaiah 10:22

Isaiah 28:22

Isaiah 1:9

(6) 9:30-33 Here is the stumbling stone, not only for Israel, but for the followers of Calvinism. God is not speaking in these chapters of the election of individuals whom God wants to be saved, but of the fact that God, in His foreknowledge, has elected to include the Gentiles in His salvation purely on the basis of His grace. **"As it is written, Behold I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense: and whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed."** This is God's new Covenant of Grace that includes both Jew and Gentile.

Chapter 10 This Chapter continues the same subject: The failure of Israel and the success of the Gentiles. It is really dealing with the "Age of Grace."

a. Paul begins this section with an expression of His burden for Israel, the People of God. By rejecting Christ and the new Covenant of Grace, plus nothing, and minus nothing, they have, for the present, alienated themselves from the Grace of God. Paul states that Israel has a zeal of God, but they have completely missed the Person, Purpose, and Plan of God when they ordered the crucifixion of Christ and accepted the guilt of that act upon themselves and upon their children. They rejected the new Covenant of Grace and held to the old Covenant of the Law. Jesus said in John chapter ten and verse sixteen, **"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."** Today, if a Jew receives Christ as his or her Savior, they are still a Jew by birth, but they have become a Christian spiritually. If a Gentile receives Christ as their Savior, they are still a Gentile by birth, but they have become a Christian spiritually. Ephesians tells us that God has broken down the wall of separation between Jew and Gentile and that they two are one in Christ. In His High Priestly prayer Jesus prayed that the Father would keep all that He had given Him, and that they all might be one in Him as He is one with the Father. Paul states that, in their willful ignorance of God's righteousness obtained only by faith in Jesus Christ, they sought to establish their own righteousness by the Law. They should have submitted themselves to God's righteousness by faith in Jesus Christ. Christ fulfilled the Law, and thus, was the end of the Law for Righteousness. Christ Himself said that he did not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it. We

could not fulfill the Law ourselves, but He did it in our place and became our substitute. Anyone who would seek to be justified by the Law would be obligated to keep every part of it perfectly. Jesus does not have to come and be crucified again, nor does atonement have to be made over and over again as under the sacrificial system; nor does Christ have to be raised from the dead over and over again for our justification. Hebrews 9:12, 24, 28; and Hebrews 10:10-14. All one has to do to be saved is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as one's personal Savior and confess Him with the mouth. Romans 10:9, 10.

b. Since salvation is by faith alone, and not by the Law, the whole world needs to hear it. That raises then the following questions:

- (1) How shall people call on someone in whom they have not placed their faith?
- (2) How shall they place their faith in someone about whom they have not heard?
- (3) How shall they hear without someone to tell them?
- (4) How shall someone tell them unless they be sent to them?

How comely, welcomed, appreciated, thus beautiful are the feet of those who bring the Gospel.

Chapter 11 Israel's ignorance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is not due to a lack of those who came bearing the message, however.

a. Even Isaiah said, "**Lord, who hath believed our report.**" See also John 12:38. Has Israel not heard? Yes. God sent the prophets over and over again with hundreds of prophecies which have been fulfilled in the person of Christ. The first Church was made up of Jews who turned to Christ and then carried the Gospel to their own people.

b. Paul the Apostle said, "**For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation, To the Jew first, and also to the Greek.**" God even used the Gentiles to provoke the Jews to Jealousy. Isaiah prophesied that Christ would be received of the Gentiles when they were not even seeking Him, but the Jews still rejected Him although He fulfilled all the Old Testament Messianic prophecies. His goodness is demonstrated toward all those who believe; both Jew and Gentile unless their salvation profession is not real, and then they too would be cut out of the vine. Both Old and New Testament tell that God is not through with Israel: they shall be grafted back into the vine, as God is able to do, and will do in the Tribulation Period. See Ezekiel chapter thirty seven. The valley in that allegory is the Land of Israel, and the dry bones are spiritually dead Israel today. Ezekiel was told by God to prophesy twice to the bones. The first time he prophesied, the bones came together and sinew and flesh came upon them and they stood up. This is represent in Matthew chapter twenty four by the budding of the fig tree, for the fig tree is representative of Nation Israel. This restoration of national Israel began in 1948 when the United Nations, the United States, England, and Russia all recognized Israel as a sovereign nation once again. When Ezekiel prophesied the second time he was instructed to prophesy to the wind (breath or Spirit). Breath entered into the bones and they became alive. This is the spiritual restoration of Israel, and would be represented by the Olive Tree which is a symbol of Spiritual Israel. This will not take place until the beginning of the tribulation period when God gathers all of true Israel back to the Land, judges then and separates the sheep (true Israelites) from the goats (false professors). At first, Israel will accept the antichrist as their messiah, but when he establishes himself in the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem as God, their eyes will be opened and he will be seen as a counterfeit. That is when all of rue Israel turn to Christ. When they enter the Millennial Reign of Christ (The Kingdom of Heaven), they will be, if I understand it correctly, still in their mortal bodies. The expression, "All Israel shall be saved" is a reference to all Israel which have been gathered to the Land in the beginning of the tribulation period. They are represented in chapter seven of the Book of Revelation, either literally,

or figuratively as the 144,000. This restoration of Israel is recorded in every one of the Major Prophets in the Old Testament, as well as most of the minor Prophets.

c. God's mercy to all, both Jew and Gentile, is magnified by His actions in history. Some Christians have developed a hatred for Israel since they are so opposed to Christians, and have often treated them badly. This is dangerously wrong. They do what they do toward Christians because they believe Christians to be opposed to their religion. We must understand that God still blesses those who bless Israel, and He still curses those who curse Israel. He cannot and will not repent of any covenant He has made with Israel. After all, though put away for the present, Israel is still the wife of God whom He used to produce the Christ Child. We, at one time were the enemies of God, but God had mercy on us. At this present time they are the enemies of God, but we should show them mercy.

d. Excellence and glory of God – the source, sustainer and goal of all things. It is not possible for finite man to understand God's ways, His wisdom, His riches, or His knowledge. We will never understand them this side of eternity. It is only for us to accept them and trust Him. Who has ever understood the ways of the Lord counseled Him? Isaiah 40:13. Who has ever been able to out-give God? Whose faithfulness and grace are greater than God's? All things are God's, and are for God's glory

(1) John 1:3 (2) I Corinthians 8:6 (3) Revelation 1:6

Chapter 12 Attitude and conduct expected of the Christians at Rome as revealed to Paul by God:

a. Consecration of body and mind. God, in the very familiar first and second verses of this chapter, beseeches (begs, pleads with) the Christian through the Apostle Paul, to make a decisive dedication of both his members and his faculties to Christ which is only the beginning place for the Christian. The sacrifice must first be Holy, and then it is acceptable to God. **"Be not conformed to this world..."** means that we are not to be poured into the world's mold, or to become congruous to this world. **"But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind..."** Both here and in the latter part of Romans 7 the renewed mind is equated with the new nature, or the New Birth. It is the New Birth (regeneration) which transforms the individual. The purpose for the transformation of the individual is, of course, in order that one might have eternal life, but in the present context it is so that the Christian might know the will of God. God only has one will, not three. It is His good, acceptable, and perfect will.

b. Humility in the use of spiritual gifts: According to Vs 3 there are two results of treating one's spiritual gifts with humility: a. That he might be able to treat his spiritual gifts with soberness (seriousness) so that his understanding of them will not be distorted by pride. b. So that he will be aware of the measure of his own spiritual gifts. See I Corinthians 12, Verses 4 and 5 are a parallel passage to I Corinthians 12:14-27. Verses 6 through 8 give us a different kind of list of spiritual gifts from those found in I Corinthians chapter 12. Our gifts differ according to the measure of the grace given to each Christian. (1) The gift of prophecy (now no longer operative. See I Corinthians 13. (2) Ministry – This appears to be the call to minister in a full time capacity. It is to be carried out in accordance with our ability to wait on the Lord for direction. (3) Teaching. This gift corresponds to one of the office gifts in Ephesians 4:11. Teachers of the Word are some of the spiritual leaders given to help perfect the Saints for the work of the ministry. They also perfect their gift by waiting on the Lord. (4) Exhortation – Exhortation is strong preaching such as that done by evangelists and revivalists. This is also an office gift found in Ephesians 4:11 used to perfect the Saints for the work of the ministry. (5) Giving is first mentioned here as a spiritual gift. It is to be performed with simplicity. This indicates that it is to be done quietly, and not in a way that will draw attention to the one doing it. It is to be done not with personal attention in mind, but with the idea of helping others and supporting the work of the Lord. Some have a special gift of giving. To

many of those who possess this gift, God has given greater means. (6) Ruling: This is similar to the gift of being a Pastor, or Bishop. It is to be done with all diligence, realizing the great responsibility connected with it. (7) Showing mercy is a spiritual gift which all Christians should exercise to as great a measure as possible, but to some is given the special gift of exercising mercy. Administering it must be exercised with cheerfulness.

c. Character traits to be exemplified

- (1) We are to love without dissimulation (without feigning our love, but with sincerity).
- (2) We are to hate sin, (avoid it, abhor it, flee from it, have nothing to do with it), while holding fast to that which is good (pleasing to the Lord, is in the perfect will of God).
- (3) We are to show kind affection one to another, (love with brotherly kindness). We are to put the needs of others ahead of our own desires.
- (4) We are not to be slothful in business (let important things go wanting in the Lord's business as well as in the secular realm). Rather, we are to be fervent in spirit. (See Colossians 3:23)
- (4) We are to rejoice in hope (by faith). Many confuse joy with happiness. Happiness is dependent on what happens, while joy is experienced by the Christian in spite of the circumstances.
- (5) We are to be patient in tribulation. This comes from realizing that nothing can touch the Christian but that it is for the Christian's good. If tribulation comes, it somehow will glorify God and be for our good. Romans 8:28
- (6) We are to continue instant in prayer. I Thessalonians 5:17
- (7) We are to distribute to the necessity of the Saints and be given to hospitality. See I Corinthians 16:15
- (8) We are to bless them who persecute us, and curse not. Instead, we are to return good for evil. James 1:2 and Matthew 5:11, 12
- (9) We are to rejoice with them who do rejoice; and weep with them that weep. This calls on us to be unselfish, without envy, and genuine in our desire to be used of God.
- (10) Verse sixteen calls for unity among the believers. See I Corinthians 1:10
- (11) We are not to return evil for evil, but we are to be honest in all our dealings
- (12) As much as possible, we should live peaceably with all men. For this reason, we should pray for all in positions of leadership, as we will see in chapter thirteen.
- (13) We should not try to avenge ourselves, but leave vengeance to God, He will balance the books. That is not our department.
- (14) If our enemy is hungry, we should feed him; if he is thirsty, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.
- (15) **"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."**

Chapter 13 This chapter of Romans deals with submission to authorities, and walking in love.

a. Verses 1-7 Submission to authorities: This is not the controversy it was in the 70s, 80s, and 90s. We have come to our senses and stopped long enough to study this chapter closely. Whether we like it or not, this chapter is telling us to be in submission to all who are in authority. How would we parents like it if our children stopped obeying us because they thought the rules we set forth were not fair? Also, since God puts all who are in authority in their places of authority, to disobey authority is to disobey God. This does not mean that you and I are to kiss the Pope's ring, nor does

it mean we should practice mercy killing because some quack doctor tells us to do it. It does mean we should obey the laws of the government because God puts the kind of government in place that He knows we deserve. It does, however, still ruffle the feathers of a few when we take this passage literally; and there is no other way to take it. The whole purpose for being in submission to authorities is to provide a quiet and peaceable life for the believer. There comes a time, however when certain edicts or laws set down by government, religious leaders, school teachers, etc must be disobeyed. Anything that requires us to disobey God is to be disobeyed, but it is to be disobeyed respectfully. It may cost us our earthly life, but it gains us glory when we go to be with the Lord. God is the highest authority.

b. Let me suggest an example: Years ago when the tax protest movement came about, many people stopped paying taxes because they protested some of the things for which their taxes were being used. **Wrong.** Jesus said to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's. Once we have paid our taxes it is up to Caesar as to what he does with the money. He will answer for wrong use of tax money. We will answer for paying our taxes to Caesar. Some people stop tithing at Church because some of the Church's income was used for some purpose which they thought was unnecessary. If it is used dishonestly, protest respectfully. If it is still used wrongfully, find another Church where God's Word is followed, but don't stop paying your tithes. Be sure you are in a good, Bible-believing, Bible-preaching Church that uses the tithes honestly and wisely, but don't stop giving your tithes. Also be sure that you give your tithes to your local Church, not to some television or radio preacher, or some religious organization which happens to be doing some good at the time, but is not biblically sound. Children, you are responsible for obeying your parents and honoring your parents. If your parents do wrong, that is their fault, and they will answer to God for their wrong doing, but we are responsible for being obedient and honoring. Some years ago when we were pastoring we had a good sized Christian school. At that time Christian school teachers could opt out of the Social Security program as self-employed. Suddenly, the government changed that and put them under the ministry of the Church and required the Church to pay Social Security for their teachers. We felt that our School should not pay any kind of taxes since we were tax-exempt under a 501 C-3 organization. It is not right for the government to tax the Church, but we joined a class-action protest and paid the tax under protest. Each month as the Social Security tax was paid by our Christian school it was accompanied by a respectful protest letter to the government. We finally won the case, but our teachers were required to pay their own Social Security. When we protested respectfully, God got us out from under the unfair tax burden on the Church. I have no idea what Caesar did with what we paid under protest, but that is government's responsibility, and they answer for that. My wife is now with the Lord, and I live on my Social Security income since I have always paid Social Security. I could have opted out in 1952 when I began in the ministry, but no one told me, so I have always paid all of my own Social Security. If I could have invested that same amount privately through the years I would have a tidy sum to live on until I go home to be with the Lord. No ministry I ever served under, however, ever had to pay part of my Social Security. Students (even in college) should be subject to teachers; we all need to be subject to law enforcement officers; we need to be subject to the boss in our employment, etc. The same principle that is set forth here is found in Titus 3:1; I Peter 2:13-17; and I Timothy 2:1, 2.

c. Verses 8-14 The second part of Chapter thirteen has to do with the Christian walking in love. Interestingly enough, the Greek word for love all through this passage is "agape," which is the strongest Greek word for love. It is God's kind of love which gives without expecting anything in return. This is interesting in that most passages of Scripture having to do with love for the brethren use the Greek word "Phileo" which denotes a brotherly love. The reason Agape is used here is because it is in relation to keeping the Commandments having to do with man's relationship to man. We see so little of this among God's people today, but in our daily walk we should love the brethren

with the same kind of love with which God loves us. Once in a while a Brother or Sister in Church will rub us the wrong way. It might even be legitimate from the world's point of view, but God does not love from the World's point of view: He loves unconditionally. Many have interpreted verse eight as not owing any debts, and I believe it can be interpreted that way, but the emphasis is on owing one another nothing but unconditional love, and that only. That means to love whether the person is sweet or sour. Unconditional love will solve a lot of problems before they ever get started. When we love with God's kind of love it means that we are not depending on their loving us back. Unconditional love does not depend on the individual being lovable. The only condition is that the person be a brother or sister in Christ. Whether we are sweet or sour, God loves us unconditionally. A sin a fellow Christian might commit could call for Church discipline, but we are to discipline with unconditional love and a broken heart. This principle would certainly solve a lot of problems in Christian marriages. If all of us Christians would practice this principle, how sweet Church business meetings would be. What a sweet atmosphere it would be in which a Pastor could minister. Do you suppose there was some reason God had Paul put these two seemingly unrelated subjects together in this letter?. What a perfect ending for chapter thirteen: **"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof."** Say, that fits perfectly.

Chapter 14 This chapter is also divided into two parts: The first part has to do with judging other Christians on the grounds of what days they observe for certain purposes; judging another man's servants (employees), etc. The other part has to do with the fact that Christ is the only judge, and the doctrine of forbearance.

a. Verses 1-8 have to do with the matter of judging. Here again is the doctrine of forbearance:

(1) Those who are weak in the faith are not to be judged or condemned because they are not as strong as other believers. Rather, they need to be helped to become strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Those things which are all right for one Christian might be a stumbling block for another. If it can keep us from offending a weaker brother, we should be willing to forgo that thing to keep from offending the other.

(2) Two categories are mentioned here: The foods we eat and the days we observe. Some have said that the observation of Saturday or Sunday as the day of worship is the issue here. That is not the case. The Scriptures clearly teach that Saturday was the seventh day of the week, was not a day of worship, was a day of rest, was given to Israel, and was perfectly fulfilled by Christ. I have known some very wonderful Christians who, having no Seventh Day Baptist Church in their city, would hold a small service in their own home and then come to Sunday services at our Church. They were never legalistic about it, but they were always very wonderful, self-giving Christians who were always very involved in serving the Lord at our Church. We never judged them, but welcomed their faithfulness and love for the Lord readily. Their son studied for the ministry and served the Lord for many years in the Conservative Baptist denomination. God is the final judge and we must all answer to Him at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Sometimes we become judgmental of others because they eat things that are not good for them, and are hindered by their diet in some way. If we can help a brother or sister eat a more healthy diet, it is fine, but we are not to sit in judgment on someone because they eat a certain thing. Pork is not good for us, but don't sit in judgment on a brother or sister who enjoy eating pork roast or bacon, etc.

b. Verses 9-23 These verses assure us that God is the final Judge. Christ died and rose from the dead to be, not only the Savior of all who will place their trust in Him, but to be the Judge of both the living and the dead, (both the saved and the unsaved). Verse twelve states, referring to the saved, **"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."** Rather than judging others on the basis of non-essential matters, let every man be sure that he practices the doctrine of

forbearance. Be careful to live so as not to put a stumbling block in another's way. Be sure that what we do as mature Christians is done or said in such a way so as not offend a newer believer. Teach and help so as not to condemn the weaker brother. Patiently lead them along into Truth and sound doctrine. After all, we are going to answer to the Lord as to how we assist in the growth of newer believers. Verses sixteen and seventeen instruct us, **"Let not then your good be evil spoken of." "For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."** The whole matter is summed up in verse twenty one by saying, **"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak,"** and verse 23b: **"For whatsoever is not of faith is sin."**

Chapter 15 This chapter continues the discussion of the doctrine of forbearance, but with an emphasis on unity.

a. Verses 1-6 If we all sought to please our fellow-Christian instead of our selves, we would be pleasing the Lord. This is actually the fulfillment of the Scriptural admonition to love our neighbor as our self. Glory should be brought to God through endurance, consolation, and harmony. God is glorified when each of us lives for others instead of for ourselves. This brings biblical unity, consolation, and harmony among the believers.

b. Verse 7-13 The ministry of Christ is designed to include both Jew and Gentile. Paul, being a Jew, admonishes the Jewish Christians to receive the Gentiles into their number even as Christ received the Jewish believers. He emphasizes that God used the Jews (circumcision) to fulfill the Old Testament truths and prophecies, and that the Gentiles might bring glory to God by their inclusion in the glorious plan of salvation. **"For this cause I will confess thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name."** Psalm 18:49. Also: **"Rejoice ye Gentiles, with His People."** And again, Psalm 117:1, **"Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud Him all ye people."** Isaiah wrote, **There shall be a root of Jesse, and He that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; In Him shall the Gentiles trust."** Isaiah 11:1.

c. Verses 14-21 In these verses Paul emphasizes again the inclusion of the Gentiles in God's eternal plan of salvation so as to strengthen his own call to be the Apostle to the Gentiles, and to have carried on the ministry, which up to now has produced multitudes of Gentile believers. If Paul had not believed that the Scriptures (Old Testament) upheld his claim that the Gospel of Jesus Christ included the Gentiles, he would not have left for Jerusalem at the endangerment of his own life right after completing this letter to the Romans. At least three times Paul was warned that his return to Jerusalem at that time would subject him to great persecution and possible death, in the Book of Acts. All of these warnings were, according to the Book of Acts, from the Holy Spirit, and yet he went. To take the Old Testament message of the Messiah to the Gentiles, although they themselves had rejected it, caused the Jewish religious leaders to be furious with Paul. We already dealt in the beginning of this text in the life of Saul of Tarsus (Paul the Apostle), how Paul's conversion and call to be the Apostle to the Gentiles came about. Knowing that he was commissioned to this ministry by Jesus Christ Himself, he was fearless.

d. Verses 22-33 Paul, in these verses, expresses his desire to visit Rome. Because Paul had been so consumed with taking the Gospel to places where it had not yet been preached, he had not had opportunity to get to Rome, although he greatly desired to do so. Because he had no more places in Achaia to preach the Gospel where it had not already been preached, he planned to come to them on his way to Spain. Paul states clearly in this portion of Scripture that there are two reasons he wants to leave right away for Jerusalem: First, the Saints of Macedonia and Achaia had made up a substantial offering for the poor Saints at Jerusalem and he wanted to get it to them. He states that since the Gentile believers had benefited from the ministry of the Jewish believers spiritually, it was only right for the Saints in Jerusalem to benefit materially from the material gifts of the Gentile

believers. That is a principle which holds true through-out Christianity today. We ought to pay for our spiritual groceries where we receive them. That is why all our giving ought to go through the local Church. Secondly, Paul wished to minister to the Jewish Saints at Jerusalem. Although he was called to be the Apostle to the Gentiles, he still had a tremendous burden to preach the matter of Law and grace to the Jewish believers. So many of them did not fully understand the all new Covenant of grace under which they were saved. Although God had raised up Peter and James to minister to the Jewish believers, even they did not seem to have a full grasp of the fact that salvation by grace through faith was a whole new Covenant which did not require circumcision and the keeping of the Law.

e. Paul closes the fifteenth chapter with a request for prayer, including the following things: For protection from the unbelieving Jews in Jerusalem; That the service that he has for the Saints in Jerusalem might be accepted well by them; and that he might be able to come to them in Rome with joy. God had already taken care of all of these requests, but his coming to them was not to be with as much joy as he had hoped.

Chapter 16 This last chapter of the Book of Romans is made up of recommendations, commendations, and greetings.

a. Verses 1, 2 Phoebe, or Phebe was a servant of the Church in Cenchrea, which was a town located just two or three miles southeast of Rome. According to this passage there was an established Church there, and for some reason, Phoebe was planning to go to Rome. Paul wanted to make sure that she was well received by the Church at Rome.

b. Verses 3-16 There is a special greeting for Priscilla and Aquila who had hazarded their lives for Paul on more than one occasion. He had first met them on the second missionary journey when he arrived at Corinth from Athens. There was a local Church meeting in their home, but not an over-all organized Church at Rome. Evidently some who were in that Church are listed here as special ones Paul wanted to greet: Epaphroditus, Mary (we are not told which Mary), Andronicus and Junia who Paul says are his kinsmen and fellow prisoners, Amplius, Urbane, Stachys, Apelles, Aristobulus, and his household, Herodion, who is also listed as Paul's kinsman, The household of Narcissus, Tryphaena and Tryphosa, Persis, Rufus, Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes and the brethren that are with them. Paul instructed them to greet one another with a Holy kiss. (This would have been only among the men, and they would have given each other a light kiss on each cheek, which is a custom still practiced in the middle east today).

c. Verses 17-24 This passage is made up of pleas to observe certain things among the Christians in Rome. One of the worst cancers that can be found in a local Church is those who cause divisions and offences contrary to the sound doctrine in the Church. Paul says to avoid such people. They will try to have little groups over to their house and spread questions about the leadership of the Church. They try to prey on those who are newer Christians. Have nothing to do with them. Paul says that these are those who serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies. When he says that they serve their own bellies, he is saying that they exalt themselves and their own purposes. More often than not, these are people who want to control the Church, but the Pastor and Board will not put them in places of leadership. Have nothing to do with such people. They are a cancer within the Church. Paul proceeded to commend the obedience of the Roman Christians but to encourage them to be wise concerning that which is good, and naïve (simple) concerning all that is evil. Was that not Adam and Eve's original condition? Verse twenty is a definite reference to the first Messianic prophecy in the Bible, Genesis 3:15. He says, "**And the God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.**" You might ask, did not Jesus bruise the Serpent's head on Calvary as a fulfillment of that prophecy? Yes, He did, but while Satan can no longer have any power over our salvation, He can certainly try his best to ruin our testimony and effectiveness while we are still

here on earth. Satan will be totally put down as far as each believer is concerned, when that last trumpet sounds for the Christians, and we are caught up to be with Him. We will no longer be subject to sin and evil. Until then, we are to be wise concerning that which is good, and Naïve concerning anything evil. We have somewhat of a conclusion at this point as Paul states, **“The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.”** Almost as an after thought, Paul says, **“Timothy my fellow worker, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you.”**

Verse twenty two was inserted by the Scribe who wrote this letter as Paul dictated it. He simply wanted to insert his own greeting. Whether inspired or not, God saw fit to leave it in the letter.

Gaius was Paul’s host; the person with whom he was staying in Corinth at this last stop on the third missionary journey. It was at his home, no doubt, that Galatians and Romans were written. Gaius may have been the Pastor of the local Church in the home of Priscille and Aquila (Verses 3-5); for he sends greetings from the whole Church there. Paul had evidently led Erastus, the Chamberlain (Mayor) of the city to Christ for he also sends his greetings. The last greeting is from Quartus, a brother in the Lord.

d. Verses 25-27 Paul closes this superb letter with a glorious Benediction which includes blessings from the following:

- (1) God the Father who has **“the power to establish you.”**
- (2) **“The preaching of Jesus Christ”** (during His earthly ministry)

Paul says that these were kept secret in the Old Testament until the time for their revelation through the preaching of the Apostles and Disciples, but they have now been made known. Light has been shown on the Old Testament prophecies just as light was revealed to Paul on the Damascus Road; light that, though it caused him to be physically blind for three days, made known to him what, before his conversion, he was not able to see. This is the Gospel which God gave Him on the back side of the Arabian Dessert. Remember, at this point, they preached Christ from the Old Testament Scriptures: they had no New Testament yet. But they preached the doctrine that is now ours in the New Testament. And so we come to the end of the New Testament Epistle which is the doctrinal pinnacle of the entire New Testament. Praise God for the Book of Romans.

THE PRISON EPISTLES

According to the Book of Acts, Paul spent two years under house arrest, in his own hired house in Rome. It is not absolutely established as to which years those were, but we know from all evidence that they had to be 59/60 or 60/61. We also know that during those two years Paul was allowed to have limited freedom when it came to those who wanted to visit him, or bring him gifts from Churches or from fellow workers not in prison. We also know that Caesar was not really interested in matters having to do with the religion of the Jews, nor was he interested as yet in this new, what he considered a sect, Christian teaching. It took two years for Paul's case to come before Caesar, but by the time it did, even Caesar's own household had been touched by the witness of Paul. Paul always made wherever he was his pulpit. The Book of Acts comes to an abrupt stop (not an end) with the fact that Paul spent two whole years in his own hired house in Rome. When his case came before Caesar he was released as a free man.

During those two years Paul wrote four letters which have been preserved for us as inspired Scripture. Three were written during the first year to Churches in Asia-Minor, probably originally planted by John the Apostle, and one during the second year to Macedonia to a Church planted by Paul and his evangelistic team.

The four letters were probably in the following order:

Year One 59/60

Colossians – Written to the Church in Colosse where, no doubt, Philemon was either the Pastor, or was a prominent member.

Ephesians – Written to the Church at Ephesus where Paul had invested a great deal of time on the third missionary journey.

Philemon – A personal letter written to a wealthy slave owner who lived in Colosse.

Year Two 60/61

Philippians – A more emotional and heart felt letter written to the Church at Philippi expressing his appreciation for their generosity and faithfulness.

Paul told us that the Church at Philippi was the only Church which had been faithful in giving to his needs consistently from the very beginning.

We are told that the first three letters were carried by Tychicus, accompanied by Onesimus, whom Paul had led to Christ in the Prison at Rome, and was sending back to Philemon; no longer a slave, but now a brother in Christ.

THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS

Authorship: The external attestation for the Pauline authorship of the Book of Colossians is all that could be desired. There is abundant use of the Epistle, and reference to it by the early Church and its leaders. The internal evidence is also quite satisfactory. The writer calls himself Paul three times (1:1; 1:23; and 4:18).

The Epistle to the Ephesians is a sister book to Colossians, and contains much of the same material, style, and vocabulary. They were written about the same time as the Book of Philemon. Since the Colossian Church probably met in the home of Philemon, all of the above three Epistles were carried by the same messenger at the same time. Both Colossians and Ephesians were meant to be **encyclical** letters, that is, they were to be circulated to all the Churches so that all could have the benefit of their instruction. Tychicus and Onesimus were the messengers

Date: The Epistle to the Colossians seems to have been the first of the prison Epistles, although written about the same time as the Epistles to the Ephesians and to Philemon. Philippians was written toward the end of the first imprisonment. Colossians was occasioned by three elements which had been introduced to the Colossian Church by Judaic-Gnostic teachings brought by false teachers from Jerusalem, posing as Christian brethren. Paul deals with all three parts in this Epistle:

- a. There was a distinctly Jewish element, as seen in Paul's reference to circumcision, and the ordinances which are against us, meats and drinks, feast days, new moons, and Sabbaths (Colossians 2:11-16).
- b. There was an ascetic element, as seen in his reference to ordinances, touch not, taste not, handle not (Colossians 2:20-23).
- c. There was a speculative element as seen in the warnings against Philosophy and vain deceit (Colossians 2:8). This may very well be a reference to a denial of the full Deity of Christ.

Epaphras came to Rome to confer with Paul about these problems since Paul was not able to come to them. We may therefore date the writing of the Epistle at about the middle of Paul's two-year imprisonment at Rome; about 59 or 60 AD.

Purpose: We have already discussed the purpose of the Epistle under the subject of the date. This letter was sent by Tychicus and Onesimus, along with the letters to the Ephesians and to Philemon.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS

I.	Introduction:	1:1, 2
II.	Christ's Lordship, and His position as Head of the Church	1:3-2:7
A.	Thanks to God for the Colossians' faith in Christ	1:3-8
B.	Prayer for their growth in Christ	1:9-1
C.	Christ as Lord	1:15-19
1.	Lord of creation	1:15-17
2.	Lord of the new creation	1:18, 19
D.	Christ as God's reconciler	1:20-23
1.	Reconciler of all things	1:20
2.	Reconciler of the Colossian Christians	1:21-23
E.	Paul, Christ's minister of reconciliation	1:24-29
1.	Sharer of Christ's sufferings	1:24
2.	Preacher of the mystery of salvation by Grace	1:25-27
3.	Teacher of the Saints	1:28, 29
F.	Paul's burden for the Christians of the Lycus Valley	2:1-7
III.	The Lordship of Christ, and the false teachings at Colossae	2:8-3:4
A.	The sufficiency of Christ	2:8-15
1.	Christ: Lord over all energy and authority	2:8-10
2.	Christ: The giver of spiritual life	2:11-14
3.	Christ: Master of the Cosmos	2:15
B.	The Colossians' denial of Christ's Lordship	2:16-19
1.	Ritual – return to the old Covenant of the Law	2:16, 17
2.	Deceit of false doctrine and practices	2:18, 19
C.	Their new practices compared with true doctrine	2:20-3:4
1.	Dead to the old Covenant in Christ to new life in Christ.	2:20-23 3:1-4
IV.	Christ is Lord of the Christian.	3:5-4:6
A.	Knowing what it means to be in Christ	3:5-17
1.	The marks of the New Covenant to be put on	3:10-17
B.	Special precepts	3:18-4:6
1.	The Christian Family responsibilities	3:18-4:1
2.	Prayer	4:2-4
3.	Responsibility to the unsaved	4:5, 6
V.	Conclusion	4:7-18

A.	Recommendation of the messengers	4:7-9
B.	Greetings from Paul's fellow workers and Paul himself	4:10-15
C.	Last admonitions	4:16-18
1.	Colossians to be an encyclical letter	4:16
2.	Admonition to Archippus	4:17
3.	Paul's trademark and salutation	4:18

ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS

Chapter 1 – Paul assured the Colossians of his prayers for them and his thankfulness for their faithfulness in the face of great persecution. He emphasized the Lordship of Christ in general and the Lordship of Christ over the believer in particular. He admonished them to faithfulness in the light of all that God had done for them in the person of Christ. In this first chapter Paul introduced them to Christ as the mystery of God (The Gospel).

Chapter 2 – This chapter is the main doctrinal section of the Epistle. The issues at stake were: The Lordship of Christ over all creation and over the believer in particular. These are compared to the false teachings which had come to Colossae:

- (1) Philosophy and vain deceit after the traditions of men
- (2) The rudiments of the world
- (3) Fleshly circumcision
- (4) The handwriting of ordinances
- (5) Meat and drink, holy day, new moon or Sabbath
- (6) Worshipping Angels
- (7) Touch not, taste not, handle not – The Law
- (8) Will worship, and the neglecting of the body.

Chapter 3 – This chapter begins the practical section wherein, the doctrines already set forth are applied in a practical way to the Christian life. Paul listed the things pertaining to the old nature which were to be put away by the Christian, and the things pertaining to the new nature which were to be added and practiced in the new life. Vs 17 gives us the summary of this chapter to this point. Chapter 3:18-4:1 gives us a list of human relationships which are basic to the Christian life, and tells us how to maintain them.

Chapter 4 – This chapter gives us simple explanations as to how to live victoriously in this present evil world (our walk, our speech, etc.). Obviously this letter was to be an encyclical letter as was the Epistle to the Ephesians; it was to be passed on to the Church at Laodicea.

NOTES ON COLOSSIANS

Colossians is the first Pauline Epistle in the third group making up the Prison Epistles and was written during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome. Three of them; Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon were written about the same time and sent by the same messengers, Tychicus, and Onesimus.

The fourth, Philippians, was written the next year, 60/61, during Paul's second year of imprisonment and was sent by a different messenger. Colossians and Ephesians are sister books dealing with the same subject, but from different perspectives. Colossians deals with "Christ, the Head of the Church, which is His body", while Ephesians deals with "The Church, the body of Christ, who is its Head." Both books were encyclical letters. The messenger who carried the Philippian letter was Epaphroditus. See Philippians 2:25.

Chapter 1 1:1, 2 In these two verses we have the Author of the Book, the content of the greeting and the recipients of the greeting. The author of the Book of Colossians is none other than Paul the Apostle. This book has his style of writing, his brilliant theology (He was the greatest theological mind of the first century), and his name, which is mentioned three times in the book. The Book is written to the Saints and faithful Brethren who are at Colossae. Saints and faithful brethren are one and the same. Some hold that Paul was addressing Jewish believers when he used the term, Saints, and the Gentiles when he used the term brethren, but there are times when he addresses his Jewish Brethren. The Church at Colossae was very near the Church at Laodicea, and these encyclical letters were to be passed on to the Church at Laodicea. If there is any question as to why that was important, read what John has to say about the Church at Laodicea in Revelation 3:14-22. The greeting is, **"Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."**

a. Verses 3-8 This portion of Scripture has Paul's praise for their faithfulness and their fruit. Paul, so far as we know, did not plant this Church, but it was one probably planted either by some of Paul's disciples from the School of Tyrannus when Paul was at Ephesus, or By John the Apostle. John probably planted all seven of the Churches found in Revelation chapters two and three. The fruit that was born by the Church at Colossae seems to have been born, first, because of the faith and love that they had toward the Saints, and because of the hope they had through Christ by means of the ministry of Epaphras, a fellow worker (servant) with Paul. Epaphras seems to have been the one who informed Paul of their faithfulness, fruit, and faith and love toward the brethren. A Church cannot hope to have more than these two aspects to their ministry: a faithful ministry that is bearing fruit, and a ministry of faith and love toward the brethren.

b. Verses 9-13 Here we have a most impressive list of the things Paul had prayed about concerning the Church at Colossae from the time that he first heard of their commendable attributes. Here is a ministry that is a must for every Christian who is serious about winning others to Christ: once they come to Christ they must then be discipled and prayed for. Never leave a new convert without your prayer support. I had a room mate in Bible College who kept a file for each one he led to Christ, and prayed for each one regularly. He was older than I, and would now be in his early nineties, but I imagine he knows where each one is and how each is doing spiritually because he has continued to pray for them. How rewarding!

(1) Paul prayed that they might be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom. Wisdom is made available to every Christian as soon as they are saved. See James 1:5. Wisdom is the ability to use knowledge. Thus, spiritual wisdom is the ability to use spiritual knowledge. See Psalm 111:10.

(2) He prayed that they might have spiritual understanding. Someone who is genuinely saved will begin to receive spiritual understanding. This is found in the Holy Spirit into whom we are baptized when we are saved. See I Corinthians 12:13. See also, I Corinthians 2:14.

(3) He prayed that they might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing. The only way to walk worthy of the Lord is walk (live) according to His Word. See I John 1:7 (Light=Truth=God's Word). John 17:17

(4) He prayed that they might be found fruitful in every good work. It is very likely that anyone reading this knows that we are not saved by doing good works, but it is also very likely that anyone reading this knows that true salvation produces good works. If a person is really saved they are a new creature (creation) in Christ and it will be natural to want to be doing for others, especially, pointing others to Christ. Matthew 28:18-20

(5) He prayed that they might be increasing in the knowledge of God. If a Christian wants to be more and more effective and fruitful in their Christian life, they will want to be learning all they can about the Word of God and the God of the Word. Paul told young Timothy in II Timothy 2:15 to **"Study to show thyself approved unto God; a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth."**

(6) He prayed that they might be strengthened with all might according to His glorious power. The believer receives his power for the Christian life from God. See Isaiah 40:31. The trouble with so much of what is called Christian today gets its power from a "here's how" book that is secular.

(7) He prayed that they might be granted patience and long-suffering with all joyfulness. See Romans 2:7 and Romans 5:3, 4 You have no doubt noticed that impatience is usually accompanied by an undesirable attitude, which in turn, is very unchristian. We are to **"Serve the Lord with gladness."** If people see us joyful, even in trying situations, it will go a long way toward helping to win them to Christ. Look at the patience He has had to have with us.

(8) He prayed that they might be thankful to the Father who had made them meet (worthy) to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light. This can only be when we have had the righteousness of Christ imputed to us by the Holy Spirit. His righteousness is not something we can earn by any works; we cannot purchase it; we don't deserve it; but it is the gift of God. Ephesians 2:8,9.

(9) He prayed they would be thankful to the Father for delivering them from darkness. So often we are anxious to receive from the hand of God, but we forget to give thanks for all He has done, and is doing for us constantly. I Thessalonians 5:18

(10) He prayed that they might be thankful to the Father for translating them into the Kingdom of His dear Son. Slow down: take time to think about the enormity of your salvation and thank Christ often for what He did for you. II Corinthians 9:15

c. Verses 14-17 The eternity, the omniscience, the omnipotent, and the Omnipresent Christ: Verse fourteen makes it clear that we have our redemption through Christ's **Blood**. Not too many years ago there was a movement in Christian circles to down-play the importance of the blood of Christ. There was, I am sure, a much stronger reaction to the movement than was expected and the proponents, popular well known preachers, saw the importance of letting the emphasis which they had started fade away. One of these preachers, a popular, supposedly conservative radio preacher and pastor made the statement that "the blood of Jesus Christ was no more efficacious in redeeming us from sin than the blood of any man; but it was the substitutionary nature of His death that brought about this miracle." Of course the blood and His death are one and the same: **"the life of the flesh is in the blood."** They also held that Jesus did not present His own literal blood in the Heavenly sanctuary as an atonement for our sins, but that He presented Himself and His death. If we are to eliminate Christ's literal blood, we eliminate the doctrine of atonement from one end of

the Bible to the other. The first blood atonement was recorded in Genesis 3:21 when God shed the blood of animals to make clothing for Adam and Eve. Hebrews 9:22 says, **“And almost all things are by the Law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.”** Hebrews 9:12 records, **“Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”** Hebrews 9:24 tells us, **“For Christ is not entered into the Holy Places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.”** Hebrews 9:28 says, **“So Christ was ONCE offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”** I would like to offer one more verse, although there are so many: I John 1:7, **“But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.”** There are so many other passages we could site, but these will have to do for now. If the life of the flesh is in the blood, and Jesus is the Son of God, His blood was more than efficacious for the remission of all the sins of all mankind, since it was sinless blood.

Verse fifteen presents Christ as **“The image of the invisible God,”** we need to know exactly what that means. It means that Jesus Christ is one and the same with God the Father; and He and God are one. II Corinthians 5:19 says, **“To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself...”** One might say, “yes, but the body was human.” It is true that the body of Jesus was human, but it was a sinless body since God the Holy Spirit was the father of Jesus, and therefore, Jesus was called Immanuel; “God with us.” See Matthew 1:20 and 1:23.

Verses sixteen and seventeen must be considered together: Sixteen tells us that all things were created by Christ and for Christ. (God the Father is the originator, God the Son is the executor, and God the Holy Spirit is the administrator. These three are one). See John 1:1-3. Verse seventeen tells us first, that Christ was before all things. See John 1:a, **“In the beginning was the Word...”** When was the beginning? If God is eternal, what is meant by “In the beginning?” The actual meaning of the Greek is, “When all things began, the Word already was.” If that is the case, what began? I believe the best interpretation of this statement in verse seventeen is that Jesus Christ was eternally existent before time and space began. He was eternally existent before anything was made. Second, verse seventeen tells us that by Him all things consist, or are held together. As we know, all matter is made up of atoms. The strange thing about atoms is that they, according to the laws of physics, should fly apart, but they tenaciously hold together. Since Christ made all things, that means He made every atom. By Him they all consist (are held together). Let’s not forget that He also, by just speaking the command, could tell them all to fly apart. Both Peter and John tell us just that will happen one day when the earth shall melt with a fervent heat and He will create a new Heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. That is to be our eternal home, by the way. The Capital will be the New Jerusalem.

d. Verses 18-22 The theme of the Book of Colossians is, Christ, the head of the Church, which is His body. These verses present that theme. Verse eighteen begins by stating the fact that Christ is the Head of the Body. So many times we see people going to the altar on the invitation for the same reason over and over again, but never getting victory over it. I believe the main reason that happens is because, while most of these folks are serious about the decision they make, they don’t give God access to that part of them that would make victory possible. We surrender the body to Him, but we don’t give Him access to the “control room.” The Old original Amplified Bible worded Romans 12:1 something like this: “I beg of you, Brethren, in the light of all of God’s mercies, that you make a decisive dedication to God of your bodies; both your members and your faculties...” It doesn’t do any good to give Him the body without giving Him the key to the control room.

The expression, **“Who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead...”** Jesus had no beginning, but He was the beginning of the resurrection of a human body from the dead into a resurrection body. I Corinthians 15:20 is a parallel verse, and says, **“But now is Christ risen from the dead,”**

and become the first fruits of them that slept...” Jesus raised at least three people from the dead during His earthly ministry, but they were brought back to their mortal bodies. The believer will have a perfect resurrection body that will be perfectly conformed to that of Christ at the resurrection, and it will never die. We know this because Jesus was our first fruits: He led the way in rising from the dead to a resurrection body. The term “firstborn from the dead” simply means that Jesus, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, had to have a sinless, but mortal body which died, since the wages of sin is death. He also had to rise in a resurrection body to bring about our justification before the Father. He led the way that we might follow. His resurrection assures our resurrection. This is what is pictured in baptism when we are raised up out of the water. “... **that in all things He might have the pre-eminence.**” In order for Christ to have the pre-eminence, He had to be the one who broke the death-barrier.

Verse nineteen speaks of “**all fullness**” dwelling in Christ. This verse is somewhat repetitious, and simply means that it pleased the Father for Jesus to be seen as being the fullness of the image of Christ, for His redemptive work. In Hebrews 10:5, 6, which give us the words Jesus spoke to the Father the night He came into the world; and Hebrews 1:8-12 which give the words the Father spoke to the Son on the night of the incarnation. Because of Christ’s fulfillment of the Father’s will, the Father chose that all fullness might dwell in Him.

Verse twenty again emphasizes the importance of the Blood of Christ, for by it He reconciled all things in Heaven and on earth unto Himself. See II Corinthians 5:19. To reconcile, means to bring two parties who are at enmity, back together. He not only reconciled man to God through His blood atonement on Calvary, but He gave to all believers the ministry of reconciliation. Notice what a fantastic work Jesus accomplished through His substitutionary, propitious death on the cross as set forth in verses twenty one and twenty two: He not only reconciled us to the Father, but He also did it when we were at enmity in our minds and in our wicked works. He loved us while we were yet in our sins. He brought about this reconciliation through His own death, so as to be able to present us Holy, un-blamable, and un-reprovable in the Father’s sight. Paul makes it clear that the words he has written in the last few verses apply to every person who is a true believer and not an apostate, who will turn and deny what he or she once professed. There is no man or woman who ever lived, is now living, or who will ever live whose sins were not paid for on the cross. The sin that condemns a person, since the completion of Christ’s redemptive work, is the sin of rejecting the payment. John 16:8, 9: Speaking of the Holy Spirit, “**And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me;** and John 3:18: “**He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten son of God.**”

e. In verses 23 through 29, Paul tells his readers that these things are theirs if they are true believers, and do not apostasies. He continues by relating his own commitment to the Gospel of Christ, which is the mystery which was hid from mankind under the Old Covenant of the Law, but has now been made known to His saints. Paul also reminds the Church of the Colossians that God had chosen him to make this mystery known to the Gentiles. The mystery of which he speaks is, “**Christ in you, the hope of glory.**” Paul closes this portion by reminding them of his objective: “**That we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.**”

Chapter 2 In the opening of this chapter Paul expresses his concern for the Christians who were at Colossae, and for those of Laodicea. Since these Churches are not mentioned by Paul in the Book of Acts as places where he had established Churches, they may have been planted by those whom he taught in Ephesus for two years, or by John the Apostle, since his main ministry was headquartered at Ephesus. 2:1-7 and Acts 19:9

a. Paul wanted to be sure of the following things concerning these:

- (1) That they fully understood the doctrines of God the Father, and of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- (2) That they knew that all treasures of wisdom and knowledge were hid in the Father and the Son and not in worldly wisdom and knowledge. See Romans 1:18-25.
- (3) He did not want them to be misled by the Philosophies of man. See II Peter 2 and the Book of Jude.
- (4) Paul wanted to be sure that, having begun well, and having a good testimony, they might continue walking in sound doctrine.
- (5) He wanted them to be well grounded in sound doctrine, and to abound in sound doctrine.

b. In Chapter two, verses eight through thirteen Paul emphasizes Christ's Lordship, and the false teachings which were then existent at Colossae. In verses eight through fifteen Paul emphasizes the sole sufficiency of Christ. He lists three things in verse eight they should avoid:

- (1) Men's philosophy and vain deceit. Philosophy is defined in the Webster's New World College Dictionary as being a person's search for wisdom and knowledge; while vain deceit is defined as unprofitable and misleading philosophy. Man's philosophy is vain and is most often deceitful or misleading, such as referenced in Hebrews 13:9, "**Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace...**" Man's philosophy is vain; that is, it has no lasting substance.
- (2) The Traditions of men: Over the years, the religious leaders of Israel had substituted tradition for "Thus saith the Lord." Many of these traditions were exposed by Christ during His earthly ministry. We are to live by the Word of God only. See John 14:21 and Psalm 119:11
- (3) The rudiments (principals to be held) of the world: These are the ideas the world lives by. While some may sound good, they always cause division and controversy. Wars are fought over what two different powers hold to be the rudiments of mankind. (example: Socialism vs. a true Republic). We are to live by the Word of God. See Psalm 119:105.

c. Verse nine tells us that the fullness of the Godhead (Trinity) dwells in Christ: and that means that all the fullness of God dwelt in a human body. Of course, the entire purpose of that was so that He could, as the sinless God-man, make satisfactory payment for the sins of all mankind. The Gnostics of the first century taught that Jesus Christ was something more than man, but less than God, but The Word of God tells us in II Corinthians 5:19a, "**To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself...**" The entire time Christ was on earth, up until His resurrection, the trinity existed as always except that in the person of Christ, He dwelt in a human body. Bishop Kennedy of Los Angeles, and pastor of a large United Methodist Church, made the statement, "I can acknowledge the Divinity of Christ, but I cannot accept His Deity." What is that supposed to mean? Christ is and was God, as He always has been. Verse ten tells us that we are complete in Him who is the head of all principality and power. When Paul says we are complete in Him (Christ), he means that there is nothing else that has to be done in order for us to have eternal life. Jesus paid it all. We can rest assured of that, not only because it is inspired Scripture, but because he accompanied this statement with the fact that Jesus Christ is the head of all power (omnipotent) which is a property of God. Principality implies ultimate authority. The Church is His body, but He is the head. Once again, the theme of the Book of Colossians is, **Christ, the Head of the Church, which is His Body**. Verse eleven speaks of circumcision without hands. This is a spiritual circumcision brought about by the dwelling of the Holy Spirit of God in the heart of the believer. Circumcision has to do with separation; separation from the world and separation unto God. See Romans 6:1, 2 This leads to an outward manifestation of the transaction that has taken place within: Baptism, of which verse twelve speaks. At the moment we are saved, we are baptized

by the Spirit of God into the Body of Christ. This is manifested outwardly by water baptism, which does not save us, but does show the world that we are identified with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection. What a blessing it is then in verse thirteen to see that **all** of our trespasses are forgiven because we are in Christ and are clothed with His robe of righteousness. See II Corinthians 5:17. What a thrill to know that we are new creatures, made and declared fit for Heaven; not by anything we have done, but because of what only He could do.

d. Verses thirteen through fifteen list some of the things Christ does for us at the time of our salvation:

(1) He quickens us (makes us alive spiritually). The Scriptures tell us that Christ died for us even when we were yet in our sins.

(2) He forgives us all trespasses. When He says “all” He is referring to ,past, present, and future trespasses. Under the Old Covenant of the Law, each trespass a person committed required him or her to bring a trespass offering, but our trespass offering was made once for all through the offering of Christ once. See Hebrews 9:28 and 10:10-14.

(3) Through His redemptive work on the cross Jesus conquered all of the evil powers of the cosmos. (Verse fifteen) These are the powers referred to in Ephesians chapter six and verse twelve.

e. The Colossians’ practices were a denial of Christ’s Lordship, chapter two, verses sixteen through nineteen.

(1) The Judaisers desired to sit in judgment on the New Testament believers, and impose on them the requirements of the Old Covenant of the Law such as: What foods they could and could not eat; the observing of the feast days; and the observance of the new Moon and Sabbaths.

(2) Verse seventeen tells us that these were only shadows (types) of those things which were to come and had only symbolic value, but Christ fulfilled them all.

(3) in verse eighteen Paul tells us not to let anyone sit in judgment on us concerning these things, nor to let anyone force these things on us who have been liberated from the Law. He also warns against the worshipping of Angels. Several years back there was a real emphasis on Angels, and many people let them receive the praise and worship that belongs only to the Lord. Angels are created beings; higher than mankind, but still created beings. In the Scriptures they always refused worship, except for the fallen angels who had a large part in the craze over angels years ago. The Roman Catholic Church still reveres them and makes statues of them. Many claim to have had visions of angels and are puffed up by their own fleshly pride.

(4) Verse nineteen tells us that these same people refused to hold fast to the Head, which is Christ, by whom the whole body is supplied and held together by means of its joints and ligaments, causing it to grow with a growth which is from God. Without the Head, the body is dead. It may be going through the motions like a chicken with its head cut off, but it is soon dead and gone. In the case of the Body of Christ, the Church would be nothing but a social club run on man’s philosophy.

(5) In verses twenty through twenty three Paul asks, **“If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances (touch not, taste not, handle not; which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?”** To put this in words a bit easier to understand; Paul is saying, if we are saved and alive in Christ and dead to the things of the world, then why are we living by the doctrines and commandments of the Old Covenant which cannot save? All of these came to an end when Christ fulfilled them by His life and His substitutionary death on the cross. This is the same message he wanted so badly to teach to the Church at Jerusalem. There was a tendency among the Jewish believers to see the New Covenant of Grace where Christ perfectly fulfilled the Law, and then died for the sins of all mankind and rose again for their justification if they put their trust in

Him, as an extension of the Old Covenant. Some of these first believers went out after the Day of Pentecost preaching faith in Christ coupled with circumcision and the keeping of the Law. These were the Judaizers who made the ministry of Paul the Apostle and his fellow workers so difficult. These Judaizers had evidently reached western Asia Minor and infiltrated the churches there. No doubt this is why both Colossians and Ephesians were encyclical letters. Paul wanted to make sure that all the Churches got the message of these epistles.

Chapter 3 The same subject is continued in chapter three, verses one through four, except that these four verses give us the positive side of the subject. It is not enough to tell the Church what not to do, we must tell them what to do. Dr Bob Jones Sr. often said, “The way to keep from don’ting is to do so fast you don’t have time to don’t.”

a. Paul states that if we are risen with Christ; that is, if we are saved and in Christ Jesus by faith, then seek to be taken up with those things which are heavenly where Christ is seated on the right hand (the right hand is the hand of power and authority) of God. If we are truly identified with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, seek those things that have to do with Him. He is seated on the right hand of the Father as the person of the Godhead who carries out every plan of the Father. We can actually and accurately say that Jesus Christ is the right hand of the Father. This is why Paul states in Ephesians that we are seated in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

b. Verse two admonishes us to set our affection on things above, not on things on the earth. Actually, we need to be more Heavenly minded and we would not have such a struggle with the things of this world. Through our senses, we become so attached to this life and this world that we fail to cultivate Heavenly mindedness. How then is heavenly mindedness to be cultivated? The old fashioned way: Time, not just reading, but systematically studying the Word of God; time spent in prayer. Keep a log of prayer requests and note the date on which each prayer is answered. Gather good articles on spiritual subjects by reliable authors. Put what you learn into practice. When Paul says in verse three that we are dead, he means that the Christian is dead to the world and the things of the world. See I John 2:15-17. Jesus told us, however, that when we put our trust in Him for salvation, we never die. Where is our life? it is hid with Christ in God. While we still have to contend with the flesh here in this life, our spiritual man is seated with Christ in the heavenlies. In the meantime, Christ sent the Holy Spirit to be our comforter, teacher, guide, helper, and chastener. When Christ comes for His own in the rapture, we shall appear with Him, sharing in His glory in our new resurrection bodies, and no longer subject to sin. See also Romans 8:22-32.

c. Christ’s Lordship in the Christian’s life: 3:5-4:6 Things that must go from the Christian’s life: The things that pertained to the old life must be put to death. Reader you may not have been guilty of the things in this limited list, but as you continue to read with the subject of mortifying the old nature, let the Holy Spirit speak to your heart and He will show you the things that need to go from your life. Paul lists the following: Fornication. Fornication, in the Greek, is “pornea” and refers to any sexual uncleanness. Uncleanness: Wanting to make sure that the full meaning of the word “pornea” was understood, Paul adds the word, “uncleanness.” Inordinate affection. This is a nice way of saying, any unnatural sex act such as homosexuality and lesbianism. Evil concupiscence. This term refers to unholy desires. This moves us from the outward practices to the desires of the mind. Covetousness, which is idolatry (See I Samuel 15:23). The desire of the heart is equal to the carrying out of the act. To covet is to set something above the Lord in your life. For this cause the anger of a Holy God comes upon those who are not children of Grace. Before we were saved, these were things we sought after. Paul instructs us to also put off the following: Anger, wrath (rage), Malice (bad feelings toward others), Blasphemy (anything done or said which denies or makes light of spiritual matters or the Lord, Himself.), Filthy communication out of your mouth (See James 3:1-12), Lying, one to another (See Revelation 21:8). These all should be put off as one would put off a

soiled garment since we are new creatures in Christ.

d. Verses 10-17 Paul continues the emphasis on the Lordship of Christ by giving us a list of new things that must come into the life of new believers as one would put on a new garment after first having had a good hot shower: The first is Bowels of mercies (tender-heartedness). The world sees people in need and passes them by. The new Creature (creation) in Christ sees the same person and is moved by compassion. To feel compassion, however, is not enough. We must do for that person what we are able to do. The second thing is Kindness (pity). There is so little kindness in the world today. We can demonstrate kindness by taking the time to tell a person about the way of salvation, or by taking the time to help a fellow Christian in need. The third thing is humbleness of mind. So few today take time to honor the other person's opinion, whether they agree with it or not. So many times when we are convinced that we are right, we find out later that we were wrong and the other person was right. Humble yourself and listen. The fourth thing is meekness. In present day usage in English, meekness has the connotation of being cowardly, but in the Middle English, it means politeness. We are living in a world today where if one shows politeness by opening a door for a lady, or getting up on a crowded bus to give your seat to a lady, you are looked at as being stupid. The fifth is long-suffering. In context here it means being patient with others although they may try your patience. Also, we should do so with kindness. In I Corinthians chapter thirteen we are told that love suffereth long, and in kind. When we are working with people in relation to their soul's need, we must take as much time as is needed. Aren't you glad God is long suffering? The sixth is Forbearance toward others. This is quite similar to being long-suffering. In context the word means self-control and patient restraint toward others. The seventh is forgiving one another. So many cases of enmity could be solved if only we could learn to humble ourselves and forgive someone who has wronged us, or whom we think has wronged us. Paul goes on to add that we should forgive others as Christ forgave us. The eighth is what Paul calls the bond of perfectness, Charity (God's kind of love). God's kind of love is always giving; asking nothing in return. The ninth is to let the peace of God rule in your heart. The Peace of God is that which He gives to us. We can not exercise that peace ourselves, we can only surrender to it and let it reign in us. When the peace of God rules, it is impossible for the Christian to get riled. He says that, as a body (Church) we are called to this matter of letting the peace of God rule, and not only as an individual. In the Tenth, Paul says to let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom. In order to let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom, we must be bathing our lives with the Word. It takes at least three things to enable us to do this: We must daily spend time reading it, again and again, we must have a systematic way of studying it, and we must hide it in our hearts through memorization. Most of us shy away from memorization, but without it we are ill equipped when we come up against an opportunity to Witness for Christ. We may be able to paraphrase from memory, but it is the very Words of God that strike home to the heart. The eleventh is we are to let the Word of God dwell in us richly in all wisdom. It is not enough to know the Word of God, but we must know how and when to use it. R. A. Torrey, one of the greatest soul winners of all time often said, "Let the Word do the work." But knowing how to use the Word so as to how to let it do the work involves wisdom. Wisdom is the ability to use knowledge. This wisdom comes from God and is granted gradually as we grow in the Lord and in the knowledge of the Word. It is granted liberally to any believer who asks for it in prayer. See James 1:5. The twelfth is, "teaching and admonishing one another..." Some are given the gift of teaching, but all of us, once we have grown some in the Lord and learned how to teach and admonish, can do so in connection with watching for the spiritual welfare of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Be sure you teach and admonish with the Word, and not with your own impressions of the brother or sister's needs. God will show you when to teach and admonish, and when not to. God gives us a list of tools to use in teaching and admonishing one another. They are: Psalms – The Book of Psalms was the spiritual song book of Israel in connection with their worship. All of life's emotions are to be found in the Book of Psalms. It is not just a book of emotions, however, but a book of wisdom based on human

experiences. It is a classic tool for counseling. We are also given Hymns with which to teach and admonish. Most hymns were inspired by some deep emotional experience. We know the words to many of the old hymns. Think about them and think how God could use them to teach and admonish others. There are spiritual songs. Hymns are primarily for worship, while spiritual songs are for the purpose of inspiring and lifting the spirits of the hearer. While spiritual songs are often sung as congregational songs. They are very often used as specials in the form of trios, quartets, or solos. They may be used as choir songs. Learn the words of good spiritual songs to use in teaching and admonishing others. These are all to be sung or quoted with grace in our hearts, to the Lord. Verse seventeen says, **“And whatsoever ye do In word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.”** Think on that verses and memorize it: let it control everything you do for Christ. If you can’t say or do something in the name of the Lord Jesus, don’t do it. Many of today’s professional Christian recording artists got into the business for a ministry, but their success soon changed what could have been a ministry to a business. Success brings money, and money brings corruption.

e. Domestic issues are dealt with in chapter three, verse eighteen through chapter four, verse one.

(1) Wives: They are told they are to submit to their husbands, but what does that mean? As in politics matters pertaining to the responsibilities of wives’ place in society is often looked on as being the invention of white old men in today’s society, but it was actually given by God in Genesis chapter three following the fall of man. If anyone wants to argue the matter, they must argue with God. God also gives us a clear outline of her responsibility to her husband in Ephesians chapter five and in I Peter chapter three. Woman was made by God to be a help meet to man, which means she meets every need of man that man cannot meet for himself. She alone is given the wonderful privilege of bearing children, and having the main part in raising them, but her subjection to her husband is something that came to her as a result of her part in the original transgression. We get our sin nature from our father since it was to Adam that God gave the commandment before Eve was ever created. The Scriptures tell us that the woman was deceived in the transgression, but Adam was not. After Eve partook of the forbidden fruit, Adam had the choice of staying with his wife and being separated from God, or staying in fellowship with God and loosing the woman. He made a choice that men have been making ever since: he chose the beautiful Eve who would grow old and die instead of staying with the eternal God who could have given him another woman, and lived forever in the garden. Everything reproduces after its own kind. Fallen man cannot produce sinless children. The first event in Genesis chapter five is the birth of Seth, who was to replace Abel whom Cain killed. Counting Adam, Seth was the second in the righteous line. But the Scripture says that he was born after Adam’s likeness, while Adam was created after God’s own image. Every human being that has been born since the fall of man has been born in Adam’s image; with a sin nature.

(2) Husbands: The husband’s main responsibility toward his wife is to love her. There is so much more involved in loving one’s own wife than the physical aspect of loving her. He is to provide for and protect her, praise and help her. Men operate more from the left hemisphere of the brain, which is the seat of logic and reason. Women operate more from the right hemisphere which is the seat of our emotions and love. Women are much easier to lead to Christ than men. Men are more inclined to be stubborn and to think themselves right than women. Women are more inclined to seek forgiveness and to seek reconciliation than are men. It is harder then for men to express the love that they should, when they should. She needs his assurance and his physical expressions of love for her. He needs to love her and not wait for her to love him. He needs to make every effort to meet her emotional needs without a lot of questions she may not be able to answer at the moment. She needs his attention and the assurance that everything is all right in their relationship. The best picture of what kind of love God is speaking of here is found in Ephesians chapter five, verse twenty five which says, **“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and**

gave Himself for it;” The only conclusion to which we can come then is that men ought to love their wives enough to be willing to give themselves for them.

(3) Children should be trained up in such a way that they will both honor and obey their parents. One can obey without honoring, but one cannot honor without obeying.. See Ephesians 6:1-3. This twentieth verse interprets Ephesians 6:1 which says, **“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.”** Some teach that this is saying, “Children, obey your parents if they are saved. Colossians does not make that distinction. Scripture always interprets Scripture. God wants children to obey their parents whether they are saved or not. Obedient and loving children can often win unsaved parents to the Lord, but it is certain that disobedient ones cannot.

(4) It is so important for Christian parents to learn how to discipline children in a biblical way. There is no excuse for inconsistent and unfair discipline. The following are some guidelines for biblical discipline:

Never discipline in anger

Always be sure your child knows why he or she is being disciplined.

Be sure you have first given warning or instruction as to what you expect from them.

Apply the rod or paddle to the buttocks. Do not slap wildly, hitting on the head or any part of the body where injury might be done.

Let the child know how it hurts you to have to punish them.

Let the punishment fit the transgression.

Hug the child and pray with them after you have punished them.

Unreasonable punishment and verbal abuse are what provoke a child to anger and rebellion.

Positive rewards for well doing, and praise for obedience are so important.

(5) Slaves in this day and time could be translated as employees. While there is quite a difference between slaves in those days and employees today, the principles given here are the same.

It doesn’t matter whether an employee who is a Christian has a good boss or a poor one, his attitude and response should be the same. Many times an unsaved boss can be won to Christ by an obedient and pleasant employee.

The Christian employee is obligated to give his boss an honest day’s work, and to do his or her best no matter how they are treated. The only exception would be if an unsaved boss required the employee to do something dishonest and disobey God. In that case the Christian employee must obey God and accept the consequences. The Christian employee can always rest assured that when they do right they can trust God to take care of them, and reward them for their faithfulness.

The Christian employee who does wrong to please the boss, however, can count on the chastening of the Lord. Hebrews 12:6

Chapter 4 The subjects of relationships is carried over into chapter four, verse one.

(6) The Christian boss or employer should always remember that he has an obligation to treat his employees honestly and fairly, and as either Christian brethren, or as lost souls whom he or she is trying to reach for Christ. He or she should never forget that they have a “Boss” in Heaven to whom they must answer.

a. Verses 2-4 We can learn a great deal about prayer from verses two through four. Paul gives two

instructions about prayer in this passage, and one request concerning his self.

(1) Paul instructs the Colossians to continue in prayer. I Thessalonians 5:17 where Paul writes, **“Pray without ceasing.”** By this he means to have a consistent prayer life without letting other concerns turn you from it. We should have a certain time of the day and a definite place where we can get alone with God.

b. He also instructs them to be watchful in prayer, as a watchman on the wall watching for the safety of the city. With as much violence as there is in the world today we need to pray for the safety of our congregation, the ministerial staff, and the facilities. If we have a Christian school at our Church, we need to pray for the safety of the students, staff, teachers, and the facilities. We ought to pray with thanksgiving for the privilege of prayer, and for answered prayer.

c. Paul requested prayer for himself. We certainly ought to be faithful in praying for those who serve the Lord in a full-time capacity. He wanted them to pray that his presentation of the Gospel might receive an open door in the household of Caesar where he was in bonds at the time.

a. In verses 5-6 Paul speaks of the Christians' relation to non Christians. In order to walk toward them who are without (unsaved) we must (1) redeem the time (Ephesians 5:15); buying up every minute and every opportunity to share the Gospel for we never know when the sun will set on the day of Grace. (2) Our witness should always be with grace, but it must also be seasoned with salt (down to earth); that is, it must make people thirsty for the Water of Life.

b. Verses 7-18 The Conclusion :

(1) In verses seven through nine Paul speaks of the messengers who will be carrying the Colossian and the Ephesian epistles, as well as that to Philemon. These three were all written about the same time during the first year of the imprisonment in Rome, 59/60. Tychicus was in Rome and had been faithful in ministering to Paul while there. Paul considered him to be a beloved brother, a faithful minister, and a fellow-servant in the Lord. Can these things be said of us? Also, Onesimus, a runaway slave from the home of Philemon, whom Paul had led to Christ in Rome, was to accompany Tychicus on this mission. We will have more to say about Onesimus when we study the Book of Philemon. Ephesians and Colossians are sister letters, and while Colossians is shorter, it contains much the same material. These Churches were close together in western Asia Minor, and Philemon was either the pastor of the Church in Colossae, or the Church met in his home, or both. The reason for sending Tychicus was two fold: that he might find out their estate (their welfare), and that he might comfort their hearts. They were to tell the Colossians how things were with Paul in Rome. Paul refers to Onesimus as a faithful and beloved brother who was one of them. (He had been a runaway slave who had stolen from Philemon, his owner), but then a member of the Church through receiving Christ as Savior.

(2) In verses ten through fourteen, Paul lists those who send greetings to the Church at Colossae. A fellow-prisoner whom Paul had evidently led to Christ, Aristarchus by name sent greetings. It is interesting to note that Marcus (John Mark) who had accompanied Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey was with Paul at Rome. We read in Paul's last Epistle, II Timothy, that John Mark had become profitable to him in the Gospel. A man named Jesus (Justus) was a Jewish believer whom Paul may have led to Christ in prison. Paul calls all of these his fellow workers. It makes me think of one of our missionaries, Robert Bottom, who is a chaplain in the County Jail system in Houston who often tells of prisoners he has led to Christ who are leading others to Christ. Epaphras, who was originally from Colossae labored faithfully in prayer for the Colossians that they may stand perfect (mature) and complete (fully equipped) in all the will of God. Paul said that he had a great burden for the believers at Laodicea and Hierapolis, (Churches in the same general area of western Asia Minor. Luke, Paul's personal physician, and Demas who later forsook Paul,

“Having loved this present world,” (II Timothy 4:10) were also with him at Rome at this time.

(3) Verses fifteen – eighteen: Paul’s personal farewells In verse fifteen Paul sends a farewell to Nymphas. He may have been the Pastor of the Church at Laodicea, but at least we know the Church met in his home. In verse sixteen Paul makes it clear that this letter and the letter to the Ephesians were encyclical letters; that is, they were to be circulated throughout Asia Minor. Archippus may have been one of the young men called to the ministry at Colossae. Paul closes the letter with his trademark: **“The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you, Amen.”**

THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

Authorship: None of the Epistles which are ascribed to Paul have a stronger chain of evidence to their continued use than that which we know as the Epistle to the Ephesians. It was continually ascribed to Paul and quoted as Pauline by the early Church leaders. The internal evidence also is very strong. The writer twice calls himself Paul (1:1 and 3:1). It follows the Pauline pattern of greetings, thanksgiving, doctrinal matters, practical application, and personal matters. The language also is Pauline. It is quite similar to Colossians which was written about the same time and delivered by the same messenger.

Date: Quite a bit of time passed between the writing of the four Epistles of the third missionary journey and the writing of the prison Epistles, of which Ephesians is one. Paul returned to Jerusalem where he was taken into protective custody by the Romans. Several years passed before his final arrival at Rome. Epaphras came from Colossae with word of the Judio-Gnostic heresy which had arisen there. Paul then wrote the Epistle to the Colossians and a personal letter to Philemon and was about to send them by Tychicus and Onesimus when he decided to write an encyclical letter to the Church at Ephesus, since that city was a key city of Biblical Asia (the western half of Asia Minor), and have it distributed to all the Churches. The date of this Epistle can be set as the same as Colossians and Philemon, 59/60 AD, the first of the two years of the first Roman imprisonment.

Purpose: The theme of this Epistle might be stated as “Seated In Christ in the Heavenlies.” Paul reveals the fact that all that we have in Christ makes us part of the elect (I Peter 2:6 and Isaiah 42:1), as we will see in the analysis of the book. Our standing, therefore, is not one of earthly position, but a Heavenly one.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

I.	The believer's standing in Jesus Christ (The Elect)	1:1-3:21
A.	Greeting	1:1, 2
B.	All the Believer has is because he is in the Elect	1:3-23
1.	Elect according to God's foreknowledge	1:3-6
2.	Redeemed by the Elect (Christ)	1:7-12
3.	The Holy Spirit seals us in the Elect	1:13, 14
C.	Paul's first prayer for the believers at Ephesus	1:15-23
D.	Salvation by grace through faith alone	2:1-10
1.	What we were before we were saved	2:1-3
2.	What we are in the Elect	2:4-6
3.	What we shall be because we are in the Elect	2:7-10
E.	Oneness of Jews and Gentiles in Christ	2:11-22
1.	The Gentiles' state outside the Elect	2:11, 12
2.	Jew and Gentile in the Elect – One body	2:13-18
3.	Together, a building of God	2:19-22
F.	The mystery made known	3:1-13
1.	The dispensation of the Grace of God	3:1-6
2.	Unsearchable riches of Christ	3:7-13
G.	Paul's second prayer	3:14-21
II.	The Christian's conduct in this world	4:1-6:24
A.	Walking worthy of our vocation	4:1-16
1.	Walking in the unity of the Spirit	4:1-6
2.	Our walk made possible by His gifts	4:7-12
3.	Growing to maturity in our walk	4:13-16
B.	Walking not as the Gentiles	4:17-32
1.	How the Gentiles walk	4:17-19
2.	Off with the old and on with the new	4:20-24
3.	The application	4:25-32
C.	Walking in (Agape) love	5:1-14
1.	Love as Christ loved us	5:1-7
2.	Walking in His light	5:8-14
D.	Walking in wisdom	5:15-6:9
E.	The Christian's walk is a warfare	6:10-20
1.	Be strong in the Lord and the power of His might	6:12-17

	2.	A walk bathed in prayer	6:18-20
F.		Closing greetings	6:21-24
	1.	Tychicus, the messenger	6:21, 22
	2.	Paul's benediction	6:23
	3.	Paul's trademark – Grace	6:24

ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

Chapter 1 – Paul identified himself and greeted the Church at Ephesus: The Saints and all the faithful in Christ Jesus. He then proceeds to list all the blessings which are the Christian's when they are in Jesus Christ, the Elect of God (I Peter 2:6 and Isaiah 42:1). We are then sealed in Christ forever (Ephesians 1:13) by the Holy Spirit of promise. The chapter closes with Paul's prayer of thanks to God for what He has done.

Chapter 2 – In this chapter Paul gives us a word picture of the lost man, the redeemed man, and what we shall be in the future. He also shows us how God reconciled the Jew and Gentile and made both one in Christ.

Chapter 3 – This chapter shows us all that belongs to the Jew in Christ and all that belongs to the Gentile in Christ. Together, we are fellow heirs of God in Christ Jesus. The chapter ends with Paul's second prayer.

Chapter 4 – The last three chapters give us the practical application of the doctrine taught in the first three chapters. Paul says in chapter four that the believers walk should be worthy of his calling, and different from the world.

Chapter 5 – Paul first gives us the negatives and positives of how to walk in love. Loving God is not just a positive thing, but also involves negatives. Verse eight makes it clear that the things that are listed in the preceding verses of chapter 5 belong to the old life and should have no part in the believer's present. In verses eight through fourteen we have the positives that belong to the new walk in Christ (walking in the light).

Verses fifteen through twenty give us the characteristics of the wise walk. Verses twenty one through thirty three give us a classic passage telling the husband and wife the responsibilities of each, and the ingredients of a successful walk together. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul uses the relationship between the husband and wife to picture the relationship between Christ and the Church.

Chapter 6 – The same line of thought continues in chapter six, giving us what the various relations in the earthly family ought to be, such as, Children with parents, and parents with children. It also gives us other relationships such as servants with master (employee with employer) and master with servants (employer with employee). Verses ten through seventeen list the parts of the Christian's armor which is absolutely essential if we are to stand against the wiles of the devil. All of the armor is defensive except for the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. There is no other weapon that is effective against Satan. Verses eighteen through twenty give a prayer for all Christians to pray, and verses twenty one through twenty four include Paul's closing benediction and his trademark, Grace.

The Book of Ephesians is meant to be an encyclical letter. After it was read at Ephesus, it was to be circulated among the Churches of Asia Minor. I believe the primary reason for this is the importance of doctrine, and the fact that Ephesians contains so many of the vital basic doctrines of

the Christian faith. One of the main problems in Christianity today is that doctrine has been abandoned for the sake of so-called unity. Doctrine is the systematic presentation of Bible Truths. Without doctrine, Christianity loses its identity. There is nothing to believe.

NOTES ON EPHESIANS

Chapter 1 Just what is the Christian's position in Christ? From Chapter one, verse one through chapter three, verse twenty one we have the answer to that question. The first two verses contain the Salutation: Paul states that he is an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God. In other words, he did not choose to be what he was, but God willed it.

a. Who are the Saints and the Faithful? One school of interpretation is that the Saints in the early Church were the Jewish believers, and that the Faithful were the Gentile believers who showed continuing evidence of being genuinely saved. This position is divisive and partial toward the Jewish believers. One of the things the Book of Ephesians endeavors to do is to bring Jew and Gentile together as equal in the body of Christ. The Saints and the Faithful are one and the same.

b. The Saints and the faithful are not two different groups, but simply two titles he gives to the believers at Ephesus. Paul expressed his wish that the Saints and Faithful at Ephesus might constantly experience Grace and peace. Grace is what God does for the believer that the believer does not deserve, while the peace of which Paul spoke here was that which God ministers continually to the believer who lives by complete faith in the promises of God.

c. Notice that the multitude of spiritual blessings the believer experiences is because of our being "**in Christ, the Elect of God.**" See I Peter 2:6 and Isaiah 42:1. When we trust Christ as our Savior we are baptized into the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 12:13), and are sealed there by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13 and 4:30). The following are a few of these blessings gleaned from Ephesians chapter one:

(1) He has blessed us with all spiritual blessings heavenly places **in Christ.** Vs 3

(2) He has chosen us **in Him** (Christ) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: Vs 4 He did this on the basis of His foreknowledge, (I Peter 1:2). He elects on the basis of His foreknowledge and then determined the destination of all who are in Christ to be conformity to the image of His Son, (Romans 8:29) at the time of the resurrection.

(3) Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children **by Jesus Christ** to Himself... See Romans 8:22-25. Vs 5

(4) ...wherein He hath made us accepted **in the Beloved**... Only in Christ can God accept us as His children. See John 14:6. V:6

(5) **In whom** we have redemption through **His blood**, the forgiveness of sins... See Hebrews 9:12. To be redeemed is to be bought back from the slave market of sin. We are born into this life with a sin nature that makes us slaves to sin. Through the substitutionary payment for sins made by Christ once for all with His blood atonement made on Calvary, and by this means alone can we be redeemed from the slave market of sin. Vs 7

(6) ...he might gather together in one, all things **in Christ**, both which are in Heaven, and which are on earth; even **in Him.** Vs 10

(7) That we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted **in Christ.** Vs 12

(8) **In whom** ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of Truth... Vs 13

(9) **In whom** also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, Vs 13

d. Paul's first prayer for the Ephesians is found in verses fifteen through twenty three of chapter one. He prayed for:

(1) He prayed for the Lord to give them the Spirit of wisdom concerning the knowledge of Him

(that God might give them the wisdom to know who God is and what He has done for them). Chapter one, verses fifteen through twenty three. This is something many Christians never fully realize and appreciate. (Chapter one, verse seventeen). Hope is used in verse eighteen in the middle-English sense: that which is absolutely certain. In other words, God is showing them here that His will is that we might realize to the fullest with absolute assurance that He will fulfill His promises concerning our inheritance. The word Saints is used here in the sense of the Body of Christ collectively. Chapter one, verse eighteen.

(2) He prayed that they might realize the greatness of His power to carry out all that He has promised the believer. Chapter one, verse nineteen.

(3) He prayed that they might realize that the same power that raised Jesus from the dead will also raise them from the dead. This power is found only in Christ. Chapter one, verses nineteen and twenty.

(4) In verses twenty one through twenty three Paul prays that they might realize that Christ has all power; power that is far above all power they have ever seen in this world. The power of Christ is the total of all power in the universe, for He created all power and all forces in the universe. All power emanates from Him. God the Father has put all things under the control of Christ. He has made Him the head of the Church which is His body: the fullness, or completion of Him, filling up the entire Church, the Body of Christ.

Chapter 2 Chapter two, verses one through ten present the individual's salvation as being by Grace, through faith alone; not of works. These verses speak of what we were in the past before we trusted Christ, and what Christ has done to make us a new creature.

a. Those who were dead in trespasses and sins, He has quickened (made spiritually alive). Previously, before we came to know Christ as our Savior, we walked after the course of this world; that is, we had no appetite for the things of God, but only for the things of this wicked world.

b. Paul continues by saying that in the sins of this world is where we had our conversation (manner of living, or life style); and we walked in obedience to the orders of the god of this world (Satan), caring nothing for the things of God. Here Satan is called the Prince of the power of the air (atmosphere). His power, however, is only temporary. As far as the believer is concerned, he is a defeated foe. Our lifestyle was like that of the children of disobedience, and we served the unregenerate mind, and were by nature, the children of wrath as are all the unsaved. Chapter two, verses one through three.

c. Verses four through ten are a masterpiece of God's mercy and grace. Our salvation has nothing to do with our works, or our righteousness. Paul first speaks of the richness of God's mercy (what God does not do to us that we do deserve). It seems, according to this passage, that God's mercy is a product of His love for the world of mankind, (John 3:16). His mercy and love for mankind was even at work on our behalf when we were yet in our sins. This fact is the basis for Christ's prayer from the cross, "**Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.**" Any one of us would have called for the obliteration of the world of mankind after what He had already suffered, and was about to suffer, but His heart spoke of forgiveness. This parallels God's act of slaying animals to make skins to cover the nakedness of Adam and Eve right after they had so greatly disappointed Him by breaking the one commandment He had given them concerning their spiritual and physical welfare. While they were yet in their sins, God went to work for their redemption. The word "quickened" in verse five means to make alive. Here is a reference to the fact that our redemption is forever tied to Christ's resurrection from the dead. Seek as we may, our salvation is by God's grace, (what God does for us that we do not deserve), and by no other means. The "**... raised us up together...**" of verse six is a reference to our spiritual birth, not our future physical resurrection.

For the new believer, it may be confusing to understand how we can be seated together with Christ in Heavenly places while we are still physically living in this world. It is our spiritual person that is already seated with Christ in heavenly places, while the physical still lives in this physical, tangible world. That is why we should consider our old nature to be dead. Notice, we are seated together in Heavenly places **“in Christ Jesus.”** Jesus ascended to the right hand of the Father forty days after his passion, and is seated there as our mediator. Spiritually, we are seated there with Him in glory in our new nature, but He sent the Holy Spirit to be our teacher, comforter, guide, helper, and disciplinarian here on earth, once we are **“...in Christ Jesus...”** See John 16:7-15. Christ has done what He has done for the believer so that He can fulfill His promises to us in the future. We are waiting for the completion of our adoption, and we know it will take place because of all that Christ has already done for us. Notice, He shows His kindness toward us **“...through Christ Jesus...”** As familiar as verses eight and nine are, we still need to deal with them to expand the meaning a bit more. Paul makes it crystal clear that there is only one way of salvation: It is by grace, through faith. It is the grace of God that made salvation available to everyone, but it is God’s gift of faith that makes it a reality for the individual. In order to be one of God’s elect, we must, when we hear the Word of God and the claims of Christ on our lives, and the Holy Spirit generates godly sorrow (conviction of sins) in our hearts, respond to that conviction and call upon the Lord for forgiveness of sins and the gift of everlasting life. We have His promise that the moment we believe and receive Him as our Savior, we become the **“Sons (children) of God.”** See John 1:12. Note also that the faith to trust Christ as Savior is not something worked up within ourselves, but is the **“gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.”** Paul goes on to say that we are **HIS** workmanship. When we are saved and are made a new creature in Christ, it is none of our doing. Note that we are created **“in Christ Jesus”** unto good works. It is impossible for us to influence God with our good works before we are saved, but our good works that are generated by our salvation please Him after He makes us new creatures in Christ Jesus. Before Adam and Eve’s redemption, it has always been God’s plan for us to, after our salvation, to walk in good works. Good works do not generate salvation, but salvation generates good works.

d. Verses eleven and twelve give us a picture of what we were before we came to know Christ. The circumcision he speaks of here is all who are Israelites by birth, and the uncircumcision refers to the unsaved Gentiles. When we were yet in our sins, we were:

(1) without Christ: We could have been extremely religious; we could have been good moral people, we could have been extremely philanthropic from a human standpoint; we could have been very generous, constantly doing for others, but we would still have been without Christ.

(2) aliens from the commonwealth of Israel: To be aliens means that we were not part of; we were separated from; we were on the outside; we were not acceptable. The commonwealth in the middle English means exactly what it says: common – shared equally; wealth – all God had provided and done for Israel as God’s chosen people.

(3) strangers from the covenants of promise: As God chose Abram (Abraham) and began to build a family that one day would become the Nation Israel, he gave them Covenants, which the unsaved Gentile did not share. There was the Noahic Covenant found in Genesis 9:1-17; the Abrahamic Covenant found in Genesis 12:2, 3; the Palestinian Covenant found in Genesis 15:1-21; the Mosaic Covenant found in Exodus 19:1 through 40:38. The unsaved Gentiles knew nothing of these and thus could not claim them.

(4) having no hope and without God in the world: Although the world often finds a false hope in “religion,” or “good works,” etc. there is no hope of eternal life outside of faith in the completed redemptive work of Jesus Christ. If we do not have Christ, we do not have God. See I John 5:11 and 12 and John 14:6.

e. What a wonderful promise verse thirteen is. Before we come to know Christ as our Savior, we

are without hope and without God in the world, but the “once for all” blood atonement of Jesus Christ changes all that when we put our trust in Him. **“But now in Christ Jesus...”** those who were at one time as far from God as it is possible to be, are now made nigh **“..by the Blood of Christ.”** To be made nigh means to be in Jesus Christ by faith in His redemptive work and by receiving Him as our own personal Savior.

f. Verses fourteen through twenty two show us how Christ, through His redemptive work, has brought the believing Jew and the believing Gentile together as one in the Body of Christ.

(1) Before the beginning of this sixth dispensation, the dispensation of Grace, the Jew (circumcision) and the Gentile (uncircumcision) were at enmity with each other.

(2) Christ paid the sin debt for all mankind forever by taking the wages of all mankind’s sins upon Himself on the cross. See II Corinthians five, verse twenty one. See also I John chapter two, verses one and two. At the moment our sins were placed upon Him, He cried, **“My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?”** God the Father could not countenance sin and **saw of** the travail of His soul, but could not **see** the travail of His soul. At that moment, God the Father, and God the Son were separated, for sin separates. See Isaiah 53:11. All the rest of the sufferings of Christ, as terrible as they were, did not compare with this moment. This is the cup that Jesus prayed might pass from Him. While the saved Jew is still a Jew in the flesh, he is a Christian by spiritual birth. While the saved Gentile is still a Gentile in the flesh, he is a Christian by spiritual birth. In His own body on the tree, Christ broke down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile making both one. As we stated before, without Christ, Jew and Gentile were at enmity with each other, but Christ is our peace: the fulfillment of the Old Testament type born out in the Peace Offering.

(3) Christ has made both the Jew and the Gentile new creatures and the old enmity no longer exists. Of the two He has made one new man. He has reconciled both unto God in one body (the Body of Christ – The New Testament Church). **In Christ**, they are both parts of the same body, the Body of Christ. He slew the enmity that was between them **In His Body**, on the cross. Christ has now come (in the person of the redeemed) to preach peace to those who were near (Jews), and to those who were far off, (Gentiles). For **“..through Him,”** we both (Jew and Gentile) have access **“to Him”** through one Spirit (the Holy Spirit) and to the Father.

g. Jew and Gentile are no longer strangers and foreigners to each other, but are of the same household, the household of God. The saved Jews and the saved Gentiles are now brothers and sisters **in Christ**. They are built upon the same foundation (**Christ**). They both rest their case for salvation on the same foundation and corner stone (wedge of the arch), **Christ Jesus**. Together, they form one Temple in **the Lord**. Together, they form one habitation for God through the Spirit.

Chapter 3 In verses one through thirteen Paul emphasizes his mission given him by God to the Gentiles:

a. In verse one Paul refers to himself as the prisoner of the Lord. I am sure the Lord would have us learn that our circumstances, whatever they may be, are part of the will of God for us. We often think that God is punishing us, when in reality He is teaching us. When we learn to see the good and the trials of life as from His hand, we might be able then to say with Paul, **“I have found in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.”** Verse one also confirms that this is one of the prison epistles. Paul tells us, beside, that he is the prisoner of the Lord for the Gentiles, for those to whom he is writing.

b. Verse two tells us that Paul looked upon whatever he was called to endure in getting the Gospel to the Gentiles as the dispensation (or we might say, the commission) of God given specifically to him to carry out. God never gives us an order that we are not able to, by His grace, fulfill.

c. Verses three through thirteen show us that Paul was given, by revelation, the mystery (the Gospel) that was, up until then, hidden in ages past, but was then made known to them through him. This is a reference to the Gospel of Jesus Christ; the whole new covenant, given to him on the back side of the Arabian desert shortly after his conversion. He makes reference to this in Galatians. It was, Paul said, given to him by revelation. This would be a good time to differentiate among revelation, inspiration, and enlightenment:

(1) Revelation, as it is used in the Scriptures, is God's Truth, which is the only absolute truth known to mankind. Revelation 1:1

(2) Inspiration is the means by which this absolute Truth is made known to man. Inspiration means to breathe into. When God wanted to make known something concerning Himself, or things pertaining to Himself, He breathed it into the mind of a human writer of His choice by putting the very words into the mind of the person; not by mechanical dictation, but by bringing them into the mind of the human author, using the human author's style, vocabulary, and personality. II Timothy 3:15, 16

(3) Enlightenment takes place when a sincere Christian reads, studies, or memorizes the Word of God with the desire of understanding it. God's Holy Spirit will give them understanding of it. I Corinthians 2:14

d. Paul's second prayer, verses 14-21

He prayed that the whole family of God in Christ might be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man (new nature). He prayed that Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith, (that they might have assurance of their salvation through faith alone). He prayed that they, having love as

their foundation, might, along with all the Saints, have full understanding of the love of Christ and all it entails, for it passes all understanding of the natural man. Last of all, Paul gives his benediction in verses 20 and 21.

Chapter 4 As we see in just about every one of the Pauline Epistles, the first half is given to doctrine, while the second half is given to the practical application of that doctrine. The last three chapters of Ephesians are given to that practical application. God, through Paul, admonishes believers to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called. What is that vocation, and what are its characteristics?

a. "Our vocation is making Christ known to others, while our avocation is making a living so that we can carry out our vocation." Dr. Bob Jones Senior. Its characteristics: "Unity of the Spirit" – 4:1-6)

(1) Lowliness – Considering others better than our self. If we are not careful, endeavoring to carry out this attribute can become hypocritical.

(2) Meekness – Humility (See Titus 3:5): In order to have true humility we must be able to see our selves as God sees us. Next, true humility means seeing ourselves as others see us. False humility really adds up to pride; just the opposite. (See Titus 3:2).

(3) Longsuffering – Bearing patiently with others. It is so much easier to complain about the other person's short-comings. (See II Peter 3:9). To be Christ-like requires a great deal of longsuffering. Anyone, lost or saved, should be very thankful that our blessed Savior is longsuffering.

(4) Forbearing one another in love – This entails putting another's spiritual welfare ahead of one's own because of love and concern for the other person's spiritual growth. The doctrine of forbearance is to be found in almost every one of Paul's Epistles. (See Romans 3:25). Most American Christians today are so selfish and self-centered that we really don't care much whether a

weaker brother is offended by something we do or not. With that kind of a spirit we will be fortunate to ever lead anyone to Christ.

(5) Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace – This simply means to keep the body of Christ of one mind, Scripturally, at the same time. This requires quite a balancing act. First, it requires constant strong preaching in love, but with firmness. It requires constant watchfulness for flaws and weaknesses in the body of believers. It requires setting an example before the body of believers all the time. Last, but not least, all of this must be done in firm love. (See Psalm 133:1 and Ephesians 4:13).

b. The singleness of the Christian condition: Just as there is only one way of salvation, there are many other “ones” of Christianity.

(1) There is only one Body of Christ – The Church – (See I Corinthians 12:20).

(2) There is only one Spirit – The Holy Spirit of God – (I Corinthians 6:19, 20).

(3) There is only one hope of your calling – Saving faith in Jesus Christ as your personal Savior – (Romans 1:30).

(4) There is only one Lord – Jehovah-“Jesus is Savior” – (Philippians 2:11 and John 14:6).

(5) There is only one Faith – Saving faith in Christ – (Jude Vs 3).

(6) There is only one baptism – The baptism by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ – (Luke 3:16 and I Corinthians 12:13).

(7) There is only one God and Father of us all (the redeemed) – (Deuteronomy 6:4) – Elohim-Jehovah – (Above all, Ephesians 1:21 He is Sovereign over all; He is through all, Romans 11:36; pervading all; and in you all: all the believers, John 14:23).

c. The Office Gifts of Christ for the believers: These were given by Christ for the perfecting of the Saints for the work of the ministry, and for the edification of the Body of Christ. During three days Jesus’ body was in the tomb He was in Paradise, the abode of the Old Testament Saints. No one had ever gone to Heaven yet because Christ’s once for all Blood Atonement had not as yet been made. (See John 3:13). These were referred to as the captives. (See Vs – 8-10) The unbelievers went to Hades which we would best translate as hell, a place of torment until all time was ended and “death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. Today, Paradise is empty, but Hades is still occupied. The Old Testament Saints remained in Paradise (also called Abraham’s bosom), until Christ had made the atonement for the sins of the whole world in the heavenly sanctuary. (See Hebrews 9:12 and 24). While in Paradise Christ preached the completed new Covenant of grace to the Old Testament believers and led them out of Paradise and into Heaven. (See Vs 8-10). When He did so, He also gave the Office Gifts to the Church, the Body of Christ to use for His glory. (See Isaiah 61:1 and Psalm 68:18). The gifts listed here are Office Gifts to be used for the leadership of the Church. The gifts:

(1) Apostles – The Greek word is “apostolos” which means “sent one.” Every born-again believer who is trained to do so is, in one sense, a sent one, but in the Biblical sense, the word refers to the twelve Christ chose to plant and grow the Church after the Day of Pentecost. After the death of Judas, the Church chose Matthias to take his place, but God chose Saul of Tarsus to be the replacement. We hear no more of Matthias as an Apostle. The Apostolic period ended with the death of the last Apostle, John, about the end of the first century A.D.

(2) Prophets – In the Old Testament sense, the word pertains to one who foretells the future by the revelation of God. There is still a great deal of prophecy in this sense in the New Testament in passages such as the Book of Revelation, and the 24th chapter of Matthew, etc., but in many cases in the New Testament, a prophet, or one who prophesies, is telling forth already revealed truth.

Other than in this sense, there are no present day prophets giving new Truth (Revelation). With the close of the Canon of Scripture in the Book of Revelation, the last book of the New Testament to have been written, there has been no more new revelation given by God. In fact, in the last chapter of the Book of Revelation, God warns against anything being added to, or taken away from that last book.

(3) Evangelists – This gift is given to the Church to stir up the apathy and lethargy which so easily comes with a set pattern of services with the same voice in the pulpit. The Church occasionally needs a new voice to awaken it out of spiritual sleep. This is the calling of the evangelist.

(4) Pastors – Strictly speaking, the Pastor preaches for the purpose of moving the congregation to action. His main objective is to motivate the individual Church member to do what the Bible says to do, and to refrain from doing what the Word of God condemns. Today, the Pastor has to be a Pastor-teacher. His main ministry is to motivate the believer, but he must also systematically teach the Word of God. Thus, many have combined the last two of these office gifts by giving the Pastor the title of Pastor-teacher. There is, however, the need for this last office apart from the office of Pastor. While the Pastor must be a teacher of the Word, the responsibility of the Teacher is different.

(5) Teachers – While the Pastor's primary purpose is to motivate, the Teacher's primary purpose is to educate. We cannot live by the Word unless we know what the Word of God says. This very passage gave rise to the Sunday school in our churches. While not every teacher is a Pastor, every Pastor must be apt to teach. See I Timothy 3:2. Satan has been successful for many years in convincing many Christians to rule out Sunday school for adults because they think it is for children only, but this has resulted in many Christians being biblically illiterate as well as uneducated. Most Christian adults today cannot even say the books of the Bible in order, let alone know what is in each one. There is a great need for good Christian Teachers who are called to that ministry. Our Church had homework for all ages in Sunday school and they are now participating in class.

d. The purpose for the gifts collectively: They are for the purpose of perfecting the Saints for the work of the ministry. Most Christians rest happily on the comas which separate seemingly three purposes, but, in the Greek there are none. The end result of Bible education is to get the Christians doing the work of the ministry so that the Body of Christ can be edified. Sunday school is for the primary purpose of studying the Bible so as to prepare the Christians for service. All Christians should be witnessing every day. Every Christian should be ready to give an answer to those who ask him or her, the reason for the hope that is within them. Good teachers are trained in Sunday school. Many times adults come to the Christian leaders in the Church and say, "What we need is a good Bible study." Our answer is always, "We have one on Sunday morning at 9:30 A.M.: you ought to come." It is a matter of priorities; so just how important is your Christian Faith? Verses thirteen through fifteen say that the combined work of these offices should work together, **"Till we all come (1) in the unity of the faith, and (2) of the knowledge of the Son of God, (3) unto a perfect man, (4) unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that (5) we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and (6) carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but (7) speaking the Truth in love, may (8) grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:"** See how it works?

e. Verses seventeen through thirty two contrast the walk of the unsaved with the walk of the Christian. Verses seventeen through nineteen show how the unsaved Gentile walks, (The word Gentile is used by Paul here in the light of the fact that he is writing to a predominantly Gentile Church.

(1) The unsaved walk in the vanity of their mind. Every man is a law unto his self. (Proverbs 14:12) The word "light" is used in Scripture to represent Truth and Knowledge of the things of

God, while darkness is a type of a lack of understanding of the things of God. The unsaved Gentile walks in darkness. (I Corinthians 2:14) The lack of spiritual understanding leads to the exaltation of man's intellect, which leads to pride. (Romans 1:18-32)

(2) (Off with the old and on with the new) Verses twenty through twenty four give us the appropriate walk for the Christian. Being a member of God's family teaches us to live contrary to how the unsaved Gentiles live in the flesh; that is, if we have heard Christ with the heart and have received and acted on the Truth as it is in Christ. (4:20, 21) The old man is the old nature; the fallen nature which manifests itself through the flesh, or through the senses: taste, touch, sight, hearing, smelling. Romans 6:1-4.

Paul equates the new or spiritual nature with the renewed mind. Romans 7:14-25 and Romans 12:1, 2. This new nature which is born of the Spirit cannot sin, while the flesh cannot help but sin. I John 3:9. This is what causes the battle which we constantly experience while we are at home in this body. This is what prompted Paul's remarks in II Corinthians 5:1-9, and verses 23, 24. Paul makes it crystal clear in Romans 7:18-25 as well as 8:1-10

f. The rest of the chapter is given to the practical application of these truths:

(1) Exchange lying for telling the truth. Not bearing false witness is part of one of the original Ten Commandments. It is so easy to misrepresent, or stretch the truth. James tells us, if we can control the tongue, we can control the whole body. After I was in the ministry for several years I borrowed a sixteen millimeter film with the promise to get it in the mail by a certain date. I forgot. I had it ready to go, and I even set it by the front door so that I would remember. Two days later the man from whom I borrowed it called and asked if I had mailed it. I was so ashamed, that I told him I had. As soon as I hung up the phone I grabbed the film and raced to the main post office and mailed it. That was on Wednesday, and that lie ate away at me all day. The man from whom I had borrowed it went to another Church than we did, but, while my family went on to prayer meeting, I went to his church, called him out of the service and confessed my sin. He thanked me for doing so and said that I just reached a new height in his impression of my character. If you tell a lie, make it right with God and the person to whom you told it as soon as you can.

(2) Don't sin by being angry. If you do, don't let the sun go down on your wrath. Before the day ends, make it right with the person or persons you have offended. Jesus was the only person who could really use controlled righteous indignation. He did so both times He cleansed the Temple in Jerusalem. We often call our uncontrolled temper, righteous indignation, but that is often also a lie. Ask the Holy Spirit's help to control your temper.

(3) Neither give place to the devil. Romans 13:14 tells us to make no provision for the flesh. When the Holy Spirit says, "No," we often go ahead and do the thing anyway. We know that doing so is going to make us miserable, but the flesh wins out. If there is something that is offensive to the Holy Spirit, get rid of it so as to make no provision for the flesh. A dear friend, who had been saved in our youth ministry in his teen years, came home from Viet Nam an alcoholic. He was ticketed several times for driving under the influence and finally served a jail term. He lost his wife and family, his home, and everything he had. In jail he stopped drinking, of course, and, with the Lord's help, has not started drinking again. He is now in a good Church, serving the Lord, and even has his driver's license back, but he has several of us he can call when he needs encouragement. It can be done with the Lord's help, but it is always best to not give any opportunity to the devil in the first place

(4) Exchange stealing for honest work so as to have to give to those in need. Some people don't think it is stealing to take a box of paper clips home from the office for their own use at home. They would never think of stealing someone's car, or money etc., but stealing is stealing. Notice also the reason for working an honest job: it is so that we can have to some to help someone else in

their time of need. Of course we need to work an honest job in order to pay our bills and provide for our family. But we seldom think of using a little extra we might have left over to help someone in need: we think instead of using it for our own pleasure.

(5) Exchange all kinds of filthy talking for the kind of talking that will be edifying to others. See James 3:8-12. Notice how many times the sins listed in Proverbs 6:16-19 involve the tongue. Profanity or filthy talk has no place in the life of the believer. Any kind of questionable speech nullifies our Christian testimony.

(6) Exchange anything that grieves the Holy Spirit by making a habit of the following things:

Put away bitterness – Bitterness does no harm to anyone but our selves. It can eventually cause physical problems.

Put away wrath (rage) – Wrath, uncontrolled, can even lead to doing physical harm to others, or even to murder. It is clearly a loss of one's control of emotions and the expression of them.

Put away anger – We have already dealt with this above, but the emphasis here is to put it away; and this does not mean to put it back in our memory banks, it means to confess it and forsake it.

Put away clamor (busyness without purpose) – I was dating a girl the year I went off to Bible College. She was a fine Christian girl, but years later her own mother made the remark that she was the only person she ever knew who could be in two rooms at the same time. This is also a sin of the tongue. When we are talking we are learning nothing. How much better off we would be to listen much and talk little.

Put away evil speaking – There are many ways to practice evil speaking, some of which we have already mentioned. But such things as gossip, slander, unfounded accusations, lying, etc. are also evil speaking. The only one who can control my mouth is the Lord, and then only when I surrender my tongue to Him.

Put away all malice (evil feelings) – Malice is another thing that can not only eat away at our joy, but it can eat away at our physical well being. To forgive is only possible after we have gotten this sin right with God.

Practice kindness – Be careful; this can become habit forming. The more we practice kindness to both our friends and our enemies, the more joy and sense of relief we will feel.

Practice tender-heartedness – This attribute is very closely related to the previous one. The opposite of this would be hard heartedness. A hard hearted person is one who cannot forgive nor forget. Tender-heartedness wins over friends and enemies.

Practice forgiveness – Forgiveness is a Divine attribute. I want to call to our attention, however, that in order to forgive us the Lord Jesus paid a high price. The longer we carry hard feelings toward someone else, no matter what they have done to us, the more those feelings will fester and grow. Getting even is human, but forgiveness is Divine.

Practice doing everything that Christ did for you in the same way and to the same extent. This, of course, is impossible in the flesh, for, **“without Him we can do nothing,”** but, **“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”**

Chapter 5 The fruits of love in relationships: Chapter five, verses one through seven exhort us to walk in love. The Book of Ephesians can be compared to the writings of John when it comes to the subject of God's kind of love.

a. We are told in verse one that we are to be followers of God as dear children. We may wonder about the difference between “dear” children and the rest of God's children. Does God play

favorites? No, but God is pleased with His children who walk in obedience to His Word, and He is grieved with those who frequently disobey and have to be chastened. See Hebrews 12: 5-11. God's dear children are those who walk in obedience and love Him enough to do so. Being a follower of Christ means to walk in love (chosen obedience). To follow God means to imitate Him, so as, to walk in love. See Ephesians 4:32. There is no greater example of love than the sacrifice made by Christ when He paid our sin debt and rose from the dead for our justification. We should love in this same manner. See I Corinthians chapter thirteen.

b. Things that are the opposite to God's love, and which should be avoided if we are to walk in love:

(1) Fornication – (Greek-Pornea which means any manner of sexual impurity or uncleanness). Some times this word is translated fornication, and sometimes adultery. Other times it is just translated uncleanness, but the translation chosen is totally dependant upon the context.

(2) Covetousness – (Greek-Pleonexia which means greediness) should not even be named (found) among believers. When the young Church at Jerusalem decided to use a form of pure socialism, it failed because of the sin of covetousness. See Acts chapter five. Paul, as he went about on the missionary journeys, was always raising money for the “poor” Church at Jerusalem. Socialism has never been the solution in any government on earth because of this sin.

(3) Filthiness – Filthiness (Greek-Aisxrotase) really means baseness, and would refer to filthy talking, filthy jokes, filthy attitudes, etc. Filthiness can certainly apply to any characteristic that is of the lowest and most disgusting. There is no question but that it is totally unchristian.

(4) Foolish talking or jesting – (Greek-Morologia-moronic logic). (Greek-Eutrapelia-raillery) is totally misunderstood by most Christians, and sometimes turns the unsaved away from Christianity. These two terms do not mean that Christians should not have a healthy sense of humor. A fool is a person who says there is no God (literally in the Hebrew, no God for me). Foolish jesting is joking about, and making light of the things of God, and things pertaining to the spiritual. Foolish talking is speech which rejects God and speaks against anything pertaining to God. This certainly would apply to those who teach there is no God (such as many college professors). Psalm 14:1. Thanksgiving is to be chosen instead.

(5) Whore-mongering – (Greek-Pornos-a form of Pornea-which means fornicator). In this context it means, lusting after strange flesh, which, in turn means committing sexual impurity with anyone outside of the marriage covenant (other than one's own wife or husband).

(6) Idolater – (Greek-Eidololatrai). This would be anyone who places anything or anyone in God's place and makes them an object of worship. Idols are more prevalent today in America than they ever were in the culture in Bible times. We will work hard and sacrifice other things we would like to have just to pay twenty to thirty years on the mortgage of a house so as to get it paid off by the time we are too old to enjoy it. There is more excitement in our household over getting a new car than ever was about anything having to do with serving the Lord. We are constantly making payments on tomorrow's junkyard only to have thing break down before we get them paid for. Can we say we have no idols? On Christmas morning we can hardly wait for Dad to finish reading the Christmas story from the Bible and leading in prayer so we can tear into the presents under the tree. Must I say more?

(7) Let no man deceive you with vain (empty) words – We are bombarded with empty words every day. The question is, are these the words we allow to shape our lives, or God's Word? Shady advertising, political rhetoric, the stock market, gossip, social media, etc. all make and leave their impressions, but we must counter this with the real “Truth” of the Word of God. See Psalm one. Empty half truths and outright lies are what characterize the unsaved (children of disobedience). Don't be partakers with them. We can be partakers with them, not only by doing what they do, but

by simply listening to and agreeing with what they say.

c. Walking in the light – Chapter five, verses eight through fourteen are a contrast of light and darkness. We were in darkness (ignorance of the Truth) when we were unsaved, but now we walk in knowledge and understanding of the Truth. See I John 1:7 and John 3:19. Walking in the light maintains fellowship with Christ, but we live in a day which is wrapped in darkness. We must be careful not to be overtaken by that darkness. The fruit of the Spirit is not fruit the Christian produces within himself, but that which the Holy Spirit produces in the Christian. The Holy Spirit will show the believer what is acceptable unto the Lord. The works of darkness cannot bear fruit; but only wicked works. See Galatians 5:19-21 and Revelation 22:15. The Christian should have no part with such things, but should rather reprove them (expose and condemn them). These kinds of convictions change so rapidly in the Christian's life without our even being aware of the changes. I never went to dances before I was saved, nor did I know how to dance, but the teens in the Church where I was saved taught me how to dance. Most of them went to dances and attended the movie theaters, but there was a small group of older high school young people and a few college students in the Church that got together after Church almost every Sunday night to sit around and talk about the things they had encountered during the week. We would then search our Bibles to find out what God had to say about them. I had just turned seventeen when I was saved and knew nothing about personal separation. The position of youth pastor was almost unheard of back then, but there was a young married couple who sponsored this group who were very godly and helpful. I attended a few dances after I was saved and really liked it: it was great to hold a pretty young teen girl in my arms and move to the beat of the music, but, for some reason, I did not feel comfortable being there, nor did I feel at home with a date at the movie theatre. God then called me to preach. I kept defending these things, but I still didn't feel comfortable doing them. At the same time I was starting to do some preaching, and I was going to the homes of family friends and leading some of them to Christ. The little group began to examine these things and found that God said, **"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Beliel? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the Temple of God with idols? For ye are the Temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore, come out from among them and be ye separate saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."** II Corinthians 6:14-18. We also found that I Corinthians 6:19, 20 said, **"What? know ye not that your bodies are the Temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's."** It was in that little group that I gained my convictions based on God's Word. God did not want us in those worldly places; doing those worldly things and we all agreed they had no place in our lives. Of course, in defense of the movie theatre, many Christians will say, well we have the same Hollywood movies on DVD in our homes. What's the difference? So? Get rid of them. At the same time, in our homes we are not supporting the theatre its self. If you must dance, pull down the shades and grab your wife and have at it, but be sure you are dancing to the right kind of music. Do I sound legalistic? That will give you an idea of how far we have backslidden in my lifetime. From the time I was born until I was saved, my Dad always reminded me, don't ever do anything to a girl you would not want some man to do to your sister or mother. That was a good bit of biblical instruction. See I Corinthians 7:1. See why we are so desensitized that we can't have revival today? We love walking on the edge more than we love Christ. Our Churches entertain instead of having real Heaven-sent, Holy Spirit empowered revival. May God speak to our hearts from his Word. Many Christians today are "social drinkers." See what God says about it in Proverbs chapter twenty, verse one: **"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not**

wise.” Some Christians smoke. See I Corinthians 6:19, 20 above. There are many more internal and external things that grieve the heart of God, but, they are accepted without question today in Christian circles. We used to preach about these things and people came under conviction when they were mentioned from the Word of God, but we have greatly softened in our convictions and have become like the world. Fortunately, there are still some local Churches that preach the Word and strive for souls, but they are few and far between. One great preacher of the past always signed his correspondence by writing, “Yours for a clean work, though a small one.” It is way past time to return to preaching which exposes, rebukes, and condemns sin. Christians should be careful not to make things of this nature; things which are done by the wicked, the subject of their conversation. Only the light of God’s Word exposes and effectively condemns this kind of wickedness. See I John 4:1. Only the person who will confess their spiritual depravity and receive Christ as their Savior will receive salvation, and with it, spiritual understanding. See I Corinthians 2:14 and 5:14.

d. The Spirit-filled life: Chapter five, verse fifteen through chapter six, verse nine:

(1) To walk circumspectly means to walk with great caution and care. Spiritually speaking, it means to live by the wisdom of God’s Word. We are to walk by God’s wisdom, not the worldly wisdom of the unsaved Gentiles. As we do so, we are to redeem the time, taking advantage of every opportunity to make Christ known. This is so important since we do not know at what hour the Lord may come for His own in the rapture and the opportunity to reach the unsaved will be gone from us for ever. The fact that the days are evil could apply to any time in the history of mankind from the moment of the fall of mankind to the present hour. Satan takes no holidays or vacations. The closer we get to the rapture, however, the worse things become since the devil realizes he has less time, the world’s population is rapidly increasing, and Christian’s are becoming more apathetic.

(2) What is the will of God for these perilous times? Don’t be filled with spirits from a bottle, but be filled with the Holy Spirit. Encourage yourselves, not with the music of this world, but with Hymns, Psalms, and spiritual songs (songs which minister to the God-consciousness of man), making melody in your hearts to the Lord. Man is a three-part being: body, soul, and spirit. The body is the visible, physical, tangible part of man: it is the part of man to which the material world appeals. The soul is the self-consciousness of man and the part that responds through the senses to the tangible world around him. The spirit of man is his God-consciousness, and his awareness of God and spiritual things. Because of man’s fallen nature, we are born spiritually dead and must have a spiritual birth. See John 3:3, 5 and I Corinthians 2:14. Music also has three parts: rhythm, harmony, and melody. Man’s body responds primarily to the rhythm of music, while man’s soul responds to the beauty of harmony, but man’s spirit responds mostly to melody. Without a distinct melody, music is nothing but noise.

(3) Thanksgiving is almost a lost art, even among Christians. Unthankfulness is one of the things which God says will bring about perilous times in the last days. See II Timothy 3:1-5. Thanksgiving and praise to God (I Thessalonians 5:17) are two things that will lift the spirits and make our testimony attractive. Although many things in the Christian life may be difficult to bear, we should give thanks for all things because of Romans 8:28.

e. In verses twenty one through thirty three, God gives us a beautiful picture of the relationship between the Lord Jesus Christ and the Church by using the relationship between husband and wife:

(1) All members of the body of Christ should be submissive to each other. No one in the Church is considered by God to be more of an important person than any other. This is not to say that God does not appoint, or call leaders, but it simply means we must not feel our selves to be superior to others in the Church. There is always something we can learn from the humblest and quietest person in the church. Christ is the Head of the Church, and each member has his or her responsibility and importance.

(2) The wife’s prime responsibility is to submit to the leadership of her husband. The terms “as”

and “even as” in this passage mean, “in the same manner” and “to the same extent.” The Christian woman should not consider marrying any man who is not a dedicated Christian. See second Corinthians 6:14-18. That usually means a longer courtship than most are today. She really needs to know him so as to know if she can trust in him enough to submit to him “even as” she would submit to Christ and His leadership. She needs to submit to His spiritual leadership as well as to his leadership in every day decisions. That does not mean that she has no part in decisions that effect both of them, but it does mean that he needs to be spiritual enough that she can trust that the things he feels are God’s leading for her and whatever family God gives them are what God wants. At the Christian university where I met my wife, they had an organization in the mornings before first period and after breakfast called “Mission Prayer Band.” Anyone who wanted to could drop in for a few minutes to pray for the missionaries. Most of the time I could not go because I waited tables one shift and ate the second shift, and then went right to class. I started waiting tables in the private dining rooms for the department heads and their families and that gave me an opportunity, if no one showed up for breakfast, to eat and stop by and pray for the missionaries once in a while. My wife to be and I had a very serious relationship going by then, and I had asked her to be my wife. I started praying for some missionaries in Africa and became quite burdened for them. I thought God might be calling me to Africa. I found it hard to tell my wife to be because I was afraid she might not be willing to go, should God call me there. When I finally got up nerve to tell her, her response was, “So?” I said, “When I asked you to marry me, I said nothing about the mission field, and especially, Africa.” She simply replied, “God led me to accept your proposal. I figure, wherever God leads you I’ll be going too. That is true submission. Ladies, if you cannot submit to a man to that extent, he is not for you. Even Christian women have been so strongly influenced by the “Women’s Liberation Movement” that it rubs them like sandpaper to read, **“For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church: and He is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.”** Some young lady will invariably say, “Where do you find such Christian men today?” I will be the first to say that they are few and far between, but for every young lady who is willing to pray and wait for “Mr. Right,” there is a “Mr. Right” somewhere. See Psalm 27:14. Many young ladies train to be Christian school teachers so they can teach at a school a few years and watch for a man. When that Church does not produce any prospects, they quit and go to another Christian school. If God really calls them to be Christian school teachers, let them seek where God wants them and wait for God to bring who He wants for them. We find the will of God for a life’s mate by concentrating on what God wants us to do. Also, many young ladies train to teach in a Christian school, and when they get a husband, they seem to lose their calling. They quit and become a wife only. This makes it very hard for good Christian schools to maintain a good staff of teachers who work well together. Young ladies, are you willing, if it is God’s will, to not be married?

(3) The husband’s responsibility is to love his wife. There are many things involved in this word “love.” A man should not marry a woman whom he could not love in the manner taught here. First, Christ loved the Church so much that He gave himself for it. Married Christian men, do you love your wife enough to give your life for her? If not, you shouldn’t be married. Your desire should be to promote, encourage, and lead your wife spiritually to a position of spiritual strength and beauty. If you love her as you should, you will encourage her to eat healthy, and stay away from anything that would be harmful to her health. You will be watchful for her safety, and be sure she knows how much you love her. Compliment her frequently on her appearance. Tell her how beautiful she is in appearance and character. Meet her needs spiritually, physically, and materially. Tell her often how precious she is to you. All these things and more are involved in that word “love.” Above all, Christian men, do not marry a woman who is not a dedicated Christian. Also, be sure you are the spiritual leader in the home. Have a family altar, and make time for your wife and family. Help around the house and don’t make excuses. Never betray her confidence. As we are members of the

very body of Christ, so you and your wife are one flesh. Someone has said, I was much smarter than my wife in at least one way: the choice of a life's mate. Think on that. Young single Christian men, if it is God's will, are you willing to not be married?

(4) This illustration of the relationship between husband and wife is given by God through Paul to picture the relationship between Christ and the Church, which is His body. This is why God hates divorce (Malachi 2:14-16). Divorce is blasphemy of the relationship between Christ and the Church. See first Corinthians chapter seven.

Chapter 6 This chapter begins with the relationship between the children and their parents. Since Ephesians is about the Church, the body of Christ who is the Head. God begins by speaking to the children. This is actually a picture of what Christ is saying to the Church, the spiritual children of God through faith in Christ.

a. The children have two responsibilities to their parents: obey them, and honor them. A child can obey without honoring, but they cannot honor without obeying. Children can reap two things by obeying and honoring their parents. First, they can reap well-being; and second, they can reap a long life. The phrase, "in the Lord" does not mean that children should obey their parents if their parents are Christians. Ephesians 6:1 says, **"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right."** Scripture interprets Scripture. Colossians 3:20 says, **Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."** Children are to obey their parents whether their parents are saved or not. The only exception would be if the parents told the children to disobey God in some extreme way such as, going to the store and stealing something. If unsaved parents tell a Christian child they can no longer ride the bus to Sunday school, they should obey. If forced to disobey, they should disobey respectfully: they should still honor. When a child obeys an unsaved parent with honor and a right spirit, it can bring strong conviction to that unsaved parent's heart. Also, when a child does what God says to do they are honoring God.

b. Fathers (and fathers are the disciplinarians in their family)) would not have to use harsh discipline that alienates their children if they, from day one, would bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Discipline comes from the same root word as disciple, or to teach. See Proverbs 22:6 and Deuteronomy 6:3-9. It is primarily the father's responsibility to both train up and correct. All discipline should be done with love, not in anger. See this parallel passage in Colossians 6:4. God only gave us one child, a daughter, but she has always been such a blessing to us that we could not have asked for anything more. When I had to discipline her for something we would always warn first, but if it happened again we did what we promised to do. She and I would go to her room and I would ask her if she knew why she was being disciplined. When she understood, I would ask her to bend over my knee and I would give her two or three swats with the back of a hair brush, or my hand. I would stand her up facing me and ask her if she was going to try to not do the same thing again. When she answered yes, I would dry her tears, hug her, and pray with her for God's help to be a good girl. She would always tell me she loved me and I would tell her that I loved her. God has prepared a place on the body; just south of the border; on the back side of the desert, to apply the board of education to the seat of knowledge. Never beat a child or spank them on any other part of the body. Do not discipline in anger or yell at the child. Do not demean them or call them dumb. Let all discipline be done with firmness and love. Always tell the child that you want them to be the kind of a person in whom others see Christ.

c. The relationship between masters and servants given here would best be applied to employer and employee today. It is a type of the relationship between Christ and His love-servants, the redeemed. 6:5-9 Servants should:

(1) Servants should obey their masters (those in authority over them) as they would obey Christ.

(2) Servants should obey, not with the idea of gaining favor, but because it is pleasing to the Lord. It should be heart-felt as unto the Lord. In so doing they can influence an unsaved boss for Christ. See Colossians 3:17-23 and I Corinthians 10:31. If forced to do something that violates any of your Christian convictions, kindly tell your boss why you can't do that. If he threatens to fire you, find another job. Disagree respectfully.

(3) Masters (employers) should treat their employees as they would want their employees to treat them; not harshly, but with understanding and consideration.

d. The Christian's warfare, verses ten through twenty: There is a God-given way to be strong in the Lord. Many Christians are always defeated and discouraged in the Christian life because they don't do what God says to do to be victorious. The following things are necessary to be strong in the Lord:

(1) To be a strong and victorious Christian, your dependence must be upon the Lord. (John 15:1-16). **"For without me, ye can do nothing."**

(2) The Christian can only have a victorious walk if he or she has on the whole armor of God, and recognizes the enemy. Our enemy is invisible. Our enemy is the ruler of the real darkness and wickedness of this world.

(3) To have on the entirety of the armor of God is absolutely necessary. We must have our loins girt about with Truth. John 17:17. The Truth referred to here is the Word of God. The girdle was used in battle to hold the weapons of war. It must be easy to quickly access the weapons of warfare before the enemy beats us to the draw. This emphasizes the importance of reading, studying, and memorizing the Word of God. Reading God's Word is like trying to draw water with a dirty sieve: the sieve gets cleansed, but not much water is retained. Studying God's Word is like putting water in a safe container and preserving it for use. Memorizing God's Word is storing it in your mind and heart to use at a moment's notice. Notice, the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, is the only offensive weapon in all the armor. The rest is defensive. The breastplate of righteousness protects the heart, and out of the heart come the issues of life. The heart of man can only be a righteous heart if the individual is born-again, John 3:3, 5 and John 1:11-14. Only in the Word of God do we find the way of salvation and the means of spiritual growth so as to be stronger and stronger. Our feet must be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace. The feet always speak of going. We are commanded in the Word of God to go into all the world and preach the Gospel. We are told in this passage that our feet are to be shod (prepared) with the Gospel of Peace which is the only Gospel (good news) as far as salvation is concerned. We are not to go preaching just any message, but rather, **The Gospel** which results in **Peace with God**. We are to have the shield of faith with which we can quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. Faith is always the **gift of God**. See Ephesians 2:8, 9 and Hebrews 12:2. When God gives us the faith to be saved, we should use it and trust Christ. When God gives us the faith to go confidently into battle, we must use it and plunge into the fray. God gives faith generously to those who know Him and ask. The helmet of salvation protects the head (mind). The mind of every Christian is bombarded every day with all kinds of ungodly material. There is no escaping it. The helmet of salvation is being sure of one's salvation, and constantly seeking to grow in the Lord by spending time with Him in prayer, and spending time with Him in His Word. See Romans 7:21-25 and Romans 12:1, 2. Again, the Sword of the Spirit is the only offensive piece of the armor of God. It is so important that we not only know it, but that we know how to use it. Without a knowledge of how to wield the Sword we will never be able to carry out any of God's will. We would wind up being only hearers of the Word without ever becoming doers of the Word. Never go to battle without a knowledge of how to use your weapon. Last, but certainly not least, all of this is in vain unless we bathe it in prayer. Praying always (I Thessalonians 5:17) is a must. Praying always is going forward in the Spirit, while neglect of prayer is going nowhere in the flesh. John 15:5.

e. Verses twenty one through twenty four contain closing greetings. The man, Tychicus was the messenger, along with the converted run-away slave, Onesimus, who carried the letters to the Colossians, the Ephesians, and to Philemon. As we will see in our treatment of the Book of Philemon, Onesimus was the slave that ran away from his owner, Philemon and, at the same time, stole from him. He met Paul in Rome and came to know Christ through his witness. Philemon may have been the Pastor of the Church of the Colossians; or the Church at least met in his home. Since they had to go right past Ephesus, they could easily have taken these three letters, written during the first year of Paul's first imprisonment in Rome. The second year of that imprisonment Paul wrote the letter to the Philippians which was delivered by Epaphroditus.

(1) Paul told the Church at Ephesus that he would send them word by Tychicus as to his personal condition and welfare.

(2) Paul prayed for the Ephesians to have four gifts from God as he closes this letter: Peace, love, faith, and grace, Paul's trademark.

THE BOOK OF PHILEMON

Authorship: (See Colossians and Ephesians) Since the Book is very brief, and of a personal nature, it did not receive a great deal of attention in early Church letters and literature, but there is sufficient reference to it to establish that it was genuine and canonical. The internal evidence is overwhelming. Paul refers to himself as the author of the letter and to the personal warm relationship he had with Philemon all the way through the letter.

Date: Obviously the Epistle is written from prison during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome at about the same time as Colossians and Ephesians, and sent by the same messengers, Tychicus and Onesimus. This would place the date of the writing at 59/60 AD.

Purpose: Philemon was a wealthy slave owner. One of his slaves had evidently stolen from him and run away to Rome thinking he could get lost in the crowd there and never be found. Through some violation of the law in Rome, Onesimus, the slave, found himself in prison with Paul the Apostle and Paul was able to lead him to a saving knowledge of the Lord. In this Epistle Paul is returning Onesimus to Philemon with the plea that Philemon will receive him, not as a runaway slave, but as a brother in Christ. In doing so, we have a beautiful picture of the Gospel, which we will present in the analysis of the Epistle.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF PHILEMON

- I. Introduction: Vs 1-3
 - A. Timothy is with Paul when he writes this Epistle Vs 1
 - B. Paul considered Philemon a fellow-worker in the Gospel. The Church at Colosse probably met in Philemon's home. Vs 2, 3
- II. Thanksgiving for Philemon's faithfulness Vs 4-7
 - A. Paul does not flatter Philemon to try to get him to do what he wants him to do, but is genuine in his praise of Philemon.
 - 1. Paul prayed for him regularly Vs 4
 - 2. Paul praises his love for the Lord and for all saints Vs 5
 - 3. Philemon's life honestly communicated the faith Vs 6
 - 4. Philemon's faithfulness to the Saints was refreshing and brought joy to Paul Vs 7
- III. The plea for Onesimus Vs 8-21
 - A. Paul as a type of Christ Vs 8-10
 - B. Onesimus is a picture of the lost sinner saved by Grace Vs 10, 11
 - C. Philemon is a type of God the Father Vs 12-21
- IV. Paul's expression to Philemon of his desire to see him soon, and the final greeting Vs 22-25

ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK OF PHILEMON

As we have seen in the outline, Paul is a type of Jesus Christ in this small Epistle since he has brought Onesimus to the Lord, and because he pleads to Onesimus' owner, Philemon, for his forgiveness of Onesimus and his placing of him in a position of a son, not a slave. Onesimus was worthy of death, but through grace, Paul pleads on behalf of Onesimus, Philemon's slave who cannot return to his owner without suffering death (Romans 6:23a). Philemon is obviously a type of God the Father for he is petitioned to receive him as he would Paul. Onesimus is clearly a type of the lost, by Paul, in the light of what Paul has done for him, (Hebrews 10:5-9) to forgive Onesimus and place him in a position of son-ship instead of condemning him. What a beautiful picture we have of what Christ did for us on the cross when we read Paul's statement in Vs 18, **"If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account."** The punishment of our sins was placed on Christ's account (I Corinthians 15:3). The wrongs and sins of all mankind were placed on Jesus Christ's account at Calvary and He paid for them all in our place. See Isaiah 53:11 and II Corinthians 5:21.

NOTES ON PHILEMON

- a.** The Book of Philemon gives us a beautiful picture of God's provision of salvation by grace and all that it entails. Like the Book of Ruth, it is a factual story, but portrays great Biblical doctrines in type. See the Purpose in the introduction to the Book of Philemon: When Paul refers to himself as the prisoner of Jesus Christ it is a revelation of the fact that Paul, though a prisoner in Rome, sees his situation as the perfect will of God for him at the time. Timothy is with Paul at the writing of this epistle.
- b.** Paul considered Philemon a fellow laborer in the Gospel. Paul addresses the letter to Philemon as the one in whose home the Church at Colosse meets. Philemon could well have been the Pastor of the Church in Colosse at this time. With Philemon in the ministry were Apphia and Archippus who were probably Philemon's family. Paul's customary greeting follows: Grace (God's undeserved favor), and peace (that which is the Christian's as he trusts the Lord in every situation); both peace with God through salvation, and the peace of God through trust in Christ for His will, even in difficulties.
- c.** Thanksgiving for Philemon's faithfulness: Paul does not flatter Philemon to achieve his desired goals, but is genuine in his praise of him. Paul prayed for Philemon regularly. Paul expressed his thanks to God for Philemon's love for the Lord as being exemplary, and his love for the Saints as being genuine and consistent. Philemon's life seemed to demonstrate his faith by which he lived. The only way we can know a person's faith is by his works. See Hebrews 11:1. The faithfulness of Philemon to the Saints in his ministry, brought joy to Paul. All of these good characteristics of Philemon present him as a type of the Holiness of God the Father. Philemon could not forgive his slave who had sinned against him and be consistent and just under Roman law. Onesimus would have to be punished or killed because it was the law.
- d.** The plea for Onesimus: Onesimus was a slave who had been bought legally by Philemon, but who had stolen from Philemon and fled to Rome to get lost in the crowd. Because he was a runaway slave, or because of some other crime, he had landed in the prison where Paul lived. Paul had used this opportunity to lead him to Christ. Paul is a type of Christ who pleads for mercy for Onesimus at the hands of Philemon, just as Christ is the saved sinner's mediator (I Timothy 2:5 and I John 2:1) with God the Father. That mediator must be willing to bear the sinner's guilt and punishment in the sinner's place in order for God the Father to be just in forgiving the sinner and

removing his guilt. Payment for sin must be made under the law. We could not be saved by the law, however, for under the Law we would have to bear the punishment for our own sins, and the wages of sin is death. See Romans 6:23. Paul, as a type of Christ, pleads to Philemon for mercy (grace – undeserved favor) to be shown to Onesimus, and for Onesimus to be received back by Philemon, not as a slave, but as a brother in Christ.

e. Onesimus, the slave, worthy of death, and with no other way to be free of the sentence of death, is a type of the lost sinner on whose behalf Christ pleads through His once for all blood atonement to the Father. Christ asks not that we might just be spared from eternity in hell, but that we might be made children of God and joint heirs with Himself. Paul asks not that Onesimus might be received back as a forgiven slave, but that he might be received as a brother in Christ and as a member in good standing in the Church at Colossee. Paul asks that Onesimus might be received just as Philemon would receive Paul. Paul says that he had begotten Onesimus in bonds just as Christ begat us in His bondage which He took on Himself on our behalf. Paul said that Onesimus was then profitable to both himself and Philemon. The believer can be profitable to God as he serves the Lord in soul winning and helping his fellow-believers. Paul said that he desired to keep Onesimus with him since, as a believer now, he had been a real help and blessing to Paul. However, Paul said he would not have done this without seeking Philemon's permission. Paul suggested that all this had happened for good to all concerned. See Romans 8:28. We who are hopeless sinners are made profitable to God through the substitutionary, propitious, and redemptive work of Christ. Because Paul had led Onesimus to Christ, Philemon could then receive him as a brother in Christ. It is obvious from the epistle itself that Paul loved Onesimus as a brother and would have liked to have retained him as a helper there in the prison, but would not prevent him from returning to Philemon without his owner's permission. Philemon, after all, would love him as a brother in Christ at Paul's request since Paul had led Philemon to Christ years earlier. Jesus is the ultimate recipient of God's love, and anyone in Christ is a brother or sister in the Lord. Paul plead with Philemon that he might receive Onesimus even as he would receive Paul. Since we received Christ, God loved us even as he loves Christ, because we are "in Christ." We are part of the body of Christ. As Christ, in a substitutionary manner took our sin debt upon Himself and paid it in full, Paul plead with Philemon to place Onesimus's sin debt on Paul's account. At the same time, Paul reminded Philemon of how much he owed to Paul. While he owed his own salvation to Paul, Christ came to pay our sin debt, and we owe Him everything. Paul plead with Philemon to restore Onesimus for Paul's sake that he might be blessed and refreshed. God the Father rewarded Jesus and contributed to His joy by receiving every soul who puts their trust in Christ. See Hebrews 12:2. Paul expressed his confidence that Philemon would do above and beyond what Paul had requested of him. Our God does exceeding, abundantly above all that we ask or think.

f. Paul's expression of his desire to see Philemon again soon, and final greetings: Paul had confidence that he would soon be released. When he said, "**Prepare me also a lodging,**" it seems to imply, in addition to the one you have prepared for Onesimus at my request. Paul also sent greetings from those who were in prison with him in Rome: Marcus (John Mark), Aristarchus, Demas (who later would forsake Paul when Paul was in his second imprisonment in Rome), and Lukas (Luke). The epistle closes with Paul's customary greeting: "**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.**"

THE BOOK OF PHILIPPIANS

Authorship: Both external and internal evidence for the Pauline authorship of Philippians are strong. The writer introduces himself as Paul in 1:1. The historical details, style, tone, and language of the Epistle are clearly Pauline. This Epistle is one of sincere appreciation to the Philippian Church for their consistent support. He does warn them of the Judaisers, as he did the Galatian Churches, but mostly, it is a letter of deep friendship and appreciation.

Date: Philippians is one of the prison Epistles, written from Rome during Paul's first imprisonment there. In Paul's day, letters were written when there was a messenger available to carry it. Epaphroditus was about to return to Philippi (2:28). He had brought Paul a gift, and probably a letter from Philippi. Paul took the opportunity to send his greetings and appreciation to the Church at Philippi. According to the Epistle, his case was nearing a final decision so Philippians must have been the last of the prison Epistles. If the other three Epistles were written around 59/60 AD, Paul must have written Philippians near the end of 60 AD.

Purpose: As has already been mentioned, Paul wrote to express his gratitude for their steadfastness and faithfulness to him, and to admonish them to continued faithfulness. There were three churches which seem to stand out in Paul's life: The First Church at Jerusalem, his home Church, The Church at Antioch in Syria, his sending Church, and the Church at Philippi, his favorite Church.

THE OUTLINE OF PHILIPPIANS

I.	Salutation	1:1,2
II.	Thanksgiving and prayer	1:3-11
III.	The unconquerable Gospel	1:12-14
IV.	Reasons for the preaching of the Gospel	1:15-18
A.	His bonds caused some who disliked him to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ in envy	1:15
B.	Some in strife	1:15
1.	These first two hoped to add to Paul's suffering	1:16
C.	Some in good will and love	1:15
1.	This third found new boldness through Paul	1:17
D.	Paul did not care about the motive so long as the Gospel of Jesus Christ was preached.	1:18
V.	Paul had confidence that the Lord had more for him to do.	1:19-26
A.	He was ready to serve the Lord by life or by death.	1:20
B.	For the Christian to live is for Christ to be living, and for the Christian to die, it is gain.	1:21
VI.	Stand fast and be willing to suffer for Christ	1:27-30
VII.	Appeal to like-mindedness and selflessness	2:1-4
VIII.	Let the mind of Christ be in you	2:5-11
A.	Be ready to die for Christ	2:5-8
B.	Practice humility	2:8-11
IX.	Continued faithfulness to the Lord encouraged	2:12-18
X.	Paul's plans for the future	2:19-30
A.	Until he was free, Paul was sending Timothy to Ephesus	2:19-23
B.	He is confident he will be released and come himself	2:24
C.	Paul's plan to send Epaphroditus	2:25-30
XI.	Paul's sufferings which he counts but dung that he might gain Christ	3:1-11
XII.	Pressing toward the mark for the prize	3:12-16
XIII.	A godly walk and a Heavenly mind-set	3:17-21
XIV.	Fatherly advice	4:1-9
A.	Reconciliation and unity in the Christian community	4:1-3
B.	Rejoice in the Lord	4:4
C.	Practice moderation	4:5
D.	Do not worry about anything, rather, pray	4:6,7

E.	Purity of thought	4:8
F.	Emulate Paul's life	4:9
XV.	Paul appreciation for their giving	4:10-20
A.	Once again they had expressed their love with a gift	4:10
B.	Paul had learned to be content	4:11
C.	I can do all things through Christ	4:12,13
D.	The Philippians were his only consistent support	4:14-20
XVI.	Greetings and Paul's trademark	4:21-23

NOTES ON PHILIPPIANS

The Book of Philippians is not so much a doctrinal treatise as it is a letter of affection and appreciation to the one Church which had faithfully ministered to Paul's needs from the very beginning. It did not matter to the believers at Philippi if Paul was in prison, ministering to another Church, or ministering to them. They were consistently willing to identify with him in all his travels and undertakings.

Chapter 1 Timothy was with Paul in his prison house which Paul hired for the two years he was in Rome this first time. Much could be said of the faithfulness of Timothy and his character when we realize he was more than willing to remain with Paul, although Paul did not know what his fate was to be when he finally came before Caesar. The first year of the imprisonment, 59/60 A.D. produced the letters to Colossee, Ephesus, and Philemon. Those were all letters of correction and instruction, but this second year, 60 A.D. produced only one epistle, quite different from the other three. We might say that this letter to the Philippians was a love letter for they were the only church, which from their beginning, did not cease to minister to Paul's physical and material needs. They were the only Church that had done this, (4:15). It is not a book lacking in instruction, but, as we read and study it we get that sense of love for these faithful Christians.

a. Paul refers to himself and Timothy as the servants of Jesus Christ. Once we know Christ as our personal Savior, we become his love-servants with a commission (II Corinthians 5:17-21) to reconcile others to Jesus Christ. Our nation is presently (1/24/2019) divided into two major groups: the liberal left and the conservative right. There is a variety of motivations on each side, but it seems that nothing can break the stalemate. The truth of the matter is, if every person in this nation that is born-again was to carry out their commission daily, the seemingly un-resolvable problem would quickly be solved. Almost every problem in this world could be quickly solved if Christians would carry out the great commission. We are servants of the Lord as were Paul and Timothy, but instead of winning our prison to Christ (including Caesar's household), we have let our prison silence us.

b. The letter is addressed to "All the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi with the bishops (pastors) and deacons." Imagine if we could get "all" the saints in Christ Jesus; all the pastors and deacons in the greater Houston area on the same page, and witnessing for Christ, the wonderful things we would see happening. As we will see, Paul and Timothy accomplished what they did during those two years from house arrest with a Roman guard watching them constantly. See Psalm 34:7. It was probably those Roman guards that Paul and Timothy won to Christ first. Paul shared his own grace and peace with them in the greeting. These are two things without which we cannot successfully serve the Lord. We have previously discussed these two blessings from the Lord. This part of the epistle begins with an obvious expression of Paul's affection for the Philippians, thanking God every time he remembered them, which would have been frequently since he prayed for them regularly.

c. He was thankful that when he prayed for them, he could pray with joy. He was thankful for their fellowship in the Gospel from the first day until the writing of this epistle. He was thankful to know that **"He that hath begun a good work in you (them) will (would) perform it until the Day of Jesus Christ."** The Day of Jesus Christ would refer to the rapture. Paul's affection for them was so strong because they had not broken fellowship with him in any of his circumstances. Even in his bonds (imprisonments) they were partakers of his grace (the grace God gave him to endure). In verse eight Paul again expressed his love for them in that he longed after them all in the bowels (tenders mercies) of Jesus Christ. It seems that Paul thought of them as his family. There

was not only a Philial love for them, but an Agape love. Paul's prayer was that God might help the Philippians to abound (grow) more and more in their love for him and in their knowledge and judgment. Paul also desired to see them remain true to good judgment in relation to the things they approved, and that they might remain sincere and genuine in the purity of their faith until the Day of Jesus Christ (the Rapture). He desired to see them continue being filled with the fruits of righteousness (Galatians 5:22-26) which are ours through knowing Jesus Christ as our Savior, and thus, be constantly (being) filled with the Holy Spirit. For the Christians, there is only one baptism by the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 12:13) when we are baptized into the Body of Christ at salvation, but there are many fillings of the Spirit. See Ephesians 5:18, **"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."** The literal translation from the Greek should be, **"...but be constantly being filled with the Spirit..."** Even when Paul prayed for them he prayed with joy (Vs 4) because praying for them brought back memories of their love for him and their faithfulness in their witness. A verse which should be memorized is Vs 6: **"Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."** What our Lord begins, He finishes. Paul desired to see them continue to be filled with the fruits of righteousness (Galatians 5:22-26) which are ours through knowing Christ as Savior, and thus, being indwelt by the Spirit, (Vs 11).

d. Vs 1:12-19 The Preaching of the Gospel: Paul did not regret being a prisoner, for He was the prisoner of Jesus Christ, or perhaps we should say, he was a prisoner for Jesus Christ. Paul did not bemoan the fact that God had put him where he was, for God had him in the very center of His perfect will. Paul had been desirous of going to Rome since a Church with Apostolic authority had not yet been established there. Priscilla and Aquila had established a local Church there in their home (Romans 16:3-5), but "The Church at Rome" had not yet been organized with the oversight of one of the Apostles. He had planned to stop by Corinth on his third missionary journey on his way to Rome, but God had other plans. The problems at Corinth and the opposition and opportunities at Ephesus on that third journey had prevented his fulfilling his goals. At the writing of the Philippian epistle, Paul was in his second year as a missionary inside the prison at Rome in his own hired house, waiting to come before Caesar. It did not seem to phase him, but he saw this as an open door to reach all who came to see him, and to be an inside witness to Caesar's household. He said that some of the disciples, because of his bonds, were even more confident in preaching the Gospel. Some preached Christ out of envy and strife (They wanted to be seen with the same faith and boldness of Paul), and some of good will (to visibly take a stand with Paul). There were those who preached the Gospel in Rome to try to add to Paul's affliction, but however the Gospel was preached, he rejoiced that the Word was getting out. I imagine the group that brought the greatest joy to his heart was that group that preached the Gospel out of love for Paul; knowing that he was set for the defense of the Gospel. They were taking their stand with Him. We need to take our stand openly for those who suffer for the sake of the Gospel. See Hebrews 13:3. The reaching of Caesar's household would never have happened had Paul not gone to Rome as a prisoner of the Gospel. Regardless of what he suffered, Paul rejoiced in the fact that the Gospel was being preached. He looked beyond his own sufferings which he despised, to the conquest of the Gospel. Verse nineteen is often misunderstood. Paul was not speaking of his eternal salvation when he said, **"For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ."** This statement has the same connotation as Romans 8:28: he knew that all things would work together for good for him and deliver Him from his affliction either by life or by death. This was the attitude of the three Hebrew children when facing the fiery furnace in Daniel 3:17, 18 when they said, **"If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."** Jesus spoke words similar to this as He faced the suffering of the cross in Hebrews 12:2 where we read, **"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for**

the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Paul was stating that, with the prayers of the Philippians to uphold him, and the Spirit of Jesus Christ to be his strength, he would be able to deal with the consequences of his sufferings regardless of the outcome. His “salvation” of which he spoke was the means God would use to deliver him from the circumstances of his suffering.

e. Vs 20-26 Paul’s overriding desire that superseded his concern for his own physical welfare was that he not fail the Lord in his time of testing, but that he, by life or by death, would bring magnification to the name of the Lord Jesus. He knew that if he should live and be delivered, it would be because of the Lord’s deliverance, but if he died it would only be a glorious promotion from this life to the glories of Heaven. Verse 21 should be memorized: **“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”** By this, Paul meant that for him to live would always mean that Christ was living through him, and to die for Christ would be gain for him. This verse brings out another important truth for every believer: “for me to be living is for Christ to be living, and for me to die for Christ is to bring glory to His name, for He made my eternal life possible. Let’s extend that a little further: whatever I do in my body as a Christian, the world believes that Christ would do; and the way we die for Christ is a measure of the reality of our Christianity. Actually, Paul desired to go home and be with the Lord, but he knew that to live was more important for the Philippians for they needed the continued shepherding of their spiritual father. It seems as though God had revealed that He meant for Paul to live and to be set free. This may be because of God’s visit to him in the Roman Jail in Jerusalem in Acts 23:11.

f. Verses 1:27-30 Paul encouraged the Philippians to be steadfast: Paul first encouraged them to live a conversation (life-style) which complimented the Gospel of Christ. He also stated that, when he came to Philippi again, he wanted to find them standing true to the Gospel in unity (one spirit). He also admonished them not to be afraid. To take heart and stand strong would prove to their adversaries that believers are victors through Christ. It would also be a sign to their adversaries that they were bound for perdition. Paul pictured the sufferings on behalf of Christ to be a privilege and that they too could say with Paul, **“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”** One of the most important verses in this paragraph is verse 29: **“For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.”**

Chapter 2 Paul appealed to them on the basis of the following:

a. Verses 1-4 (1) if he has brought them consolation; (2) if he has brought them any comfort in love; (3) if he has taught them any fellowship in the Spirit; (4) if he has shown them any compassion and sympathy; then they should do the following: (1) prove by their lives that Paul’s joy over them is not in vain; (2) be like-minded in that they have the same love (God’s kind of love), that they be of one accord (have the same aims and goals), be like-minded (agreement in the Spirit); (3) He admonished them to let nothing be done through strife (factional motives) and vain glory (conceit and empty arrogance), but in lowliness of mind (true humility), let each one hold others to be better than themselves. Paul also encouraged them to get their minds off of their own wealth and think about the other person’s needs. Paul is not trying to be unkind here, but is jealous for the Philippians, that they should be an honor and a praise to God in every aspect of their lives. When we come to a passage like this we should use it as a measure of what God wants our lives to be. It would be an honor by any measure to be graded as being on the same level with the Philippians.

b. Verses 5-11 Paul used Christ as the ultimate and final standard by which to measure our Christianity: He first said that we should let the same mind be in us that was in Christ Jesus: While Jesus did not hesitate to declare Himself to be equal with God the Father, He was, at the same time, quick to make Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself the form of a servant, being made

in the likeness of man. This is the ultimate example of humility, to be Deity, but, for our sakes, to be made in the form of a man in order to bear our filthy sins. He humbled Himself to be nailed to the cross in our place and humble Himself unto death, even the most ignominious death; the death of the cross. We want to bear the name Christian, but are not willing to bear the least insult, rejection, or suffering for the sake of Christ. We may give to, and pray for the suffering Christians in another land, but we tremble at the thought of ever facing martyrdom for the sake of Jesus Christ and His Gospel. Note: God the Father has highly exalted him and given Him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, in Heaven, on earth, and under the earth (hell); and that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father. My, how Satan would love to have that said of him, but he did not die for us; he did not suffer for us; he did not bear our sins; he never ever humbled himself, but rebelled against God and was cast out of Heaven along with that one third of the angels who followed his pernicious ways. Since God has given Jesus a name that is above every name, His character is above the character of any created being.

c. Verses 2:12-18 Additional exhortations for the Philippians: Paul exhorts them, in his absence as well as in his presence, to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. To the young Christian, or the one who has not studied the New Testament from the standpoint of the Greek, this would seem to be teaching salvation by works. The words “work out” really mean to demonstrate. Hebrews 11:1 tells us that faith is the **substance** of things hoped for; the **evidence** of things not seen. Substance and evidence are visible and tangible things. How can faith be made visible? It can only be made visible in the things we do as a result of believing God’s promises or commands and acting upon them. Salvation comes by believing the promises of God; so working out our salvation simply means to make the salvation we possess by faith, visible by obeying the commission of God to go and share it with others. As I serve God, I make my salvation known. God, through Paul, tells us to demonstrate our salvation with “fear and trembling.” When we fill out the application for admission to the college of our choice, we are very careful to fill it out correctly and understandable, since it is the document that determines our admission. Even more important is demonstrating our salvation with extreme care and biblically so that people without the Lord get an accurate witness of what a real Christian is like. We are the only Bible that many people will ever read. Since it is **God** who works in us to carry out His good pleasure, we want **Him** to get the glory, not ourselves. Paul instructs them to do all things without grumbling, fault-finding, and complaining (against God), and questioning and doubting among themselves. He then lists four main reasons for doing this in verses thirteen through eighteen. They are as follows:

- (1) That they might maintain a good and clear testimony in a wicked and perverse world. He says they are lights in a dark world, so they were (and we are) to let their lights shine brightly. See Matthew 5:14-16.
- (2) That they might be faithful and consistent in their testimony so that Paul might have joy in them at the Judgment Seat of Christ.
- (3) That Paul might be justified in pouring out his life for their faith in Christ, if need be, with joy and rejoicing. I know what it is to pour one’s life into a congregation for twenty six years to help them be and stay right before God, and then have someone come after you and destroy that work in just a few months. We must remember, however, the work that was accomplished while we were there, and that the work is God’s, not ours.
- (4) That they also might have joy at the Judgment Seat of Christ in the form of those whom they themselves had won to Christ.

d. Verses 2:19-30 Paul’s plans to go and see the Philippians again: Paul expressed his plan to send Timothy to find out their physical and spiritual well-being. He stated that he had no other person whom he could send at that time that was like-minded, for the other fellow-workers whom

he might send at that time were interested only in their own endeavors, not the things pertaining to the welfare of the Philippians. Paul planned to send Timothy as soon as he knew how his trial before Caesar would turn out. Paul's expectation seemed to be that he would be set free and come to them in person. Paul had planned to send this letter by Epaphroditus, who had evidently come from Philippi to Paul bringing a package of things that would be helpful to him in the prison. The Church at Philippi had heard that Epaphroditus had been ill, and Paul stated, he had been ill, almost to death, but God had seen fit to raise him up, which thing was a great relief to Paul. Now Paul was planning to send him back to Philippi with this epistle so that they could be relieved, and rejoice in seeing him again. Paul asked them to receive him with gladness because his illness had been for the sake of the Gospel ministry.

Chapter 3 Verses 3:1-11 It sounds as though Paul meant to end the letter at this point, but the Holy Spirit brought other things to mind that he needed to write. It could be that his main purpose in writing this epistle had not been expressed as yet. As we stated at the beginning of our treatment of this epistle, it was meant to express of Paul's appreciation for their faithfulness to him, not an epistle of correction and instruction.

a. Verses 3:1-11 However, he does continue with some very helpful and practical things to help them in the future: these are things to watch out for. Good parents are always looking for things that might be harmful to their children. In the spiritual realm, Paul was no exception.

(1) Beware of dogs. Paul was not referring to literal dogs, but to unsaved Gentiles. The meanest dogs of all were the priests and leaders of the false religions of the Roman Empire. In particular, the term was used in Jesus' day to refer to Samaritans. That is not the case here, however. Paul is speaking of the ones who were promoting false doctrine, such as the "evil workers" to which he refers here. The concision was definitely a reference to unsaved Gentiles, as the term, circumcision would refer to the Jews. These are probably unbelieving Gentiles who had heard the Gospel and refused it. These would be the "fellow-countrymen" of the saved Gentiles. Paul says that they, both the believing Jews and the believing Gentiles who worship God in the Spirit are the real circumcision. They are the ones who can rejoice in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh for salvation.

(2) Paul's Apostolic qualifications": Of all people, Paul had more reason to put confidence in the flesh for salvation, because: He was circumcised the eighth day according to the requirements of the Law. He was an Israelite of the tribe of Benjamin; he was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a Pharisee when it came to religious affiliations (a fundamentalist of his day). Before his conversion, he had persecuted the Church, but none of those things served to justify him before God, so he counted them all but loss and as dung in comparison to winning Christ. He found true righteousness only in knowing Christ as his Savior. He not only wanted to be identified with Christ in the power of His resurrection, but also in the fellowship of His sufferings, that he might be assured of having part in the resurrection (rapture), the first resurrection.

b. Verses 3:12-16 The homestretch: Paul acknowledged that he had not yet attained perfection, but that this was the direction in which he was constantly striving. Once again, Paul used the picture of the competition of the Olympic Games to press home a spiritual truth: All those who have become perfect (mature) Christians should be like minded in that we also press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Those who do so, however, must contend by the rules. The end does not justify the means.

c. Verses 3:17-21 The Christian commonwealth: Paul told the people in the Church at Philippi to take note of those who followed his example and do likewise. It is so important for every Christian to realize that, no matter how insignificant we may consider our self to be, there is someone who is

watching us and patterning their life after ours. It may be our children, our parents, our grandchildren, or just someone at church or in every day life, but everyone has someone who is watching them, for good or for bad. They are to beware of those who do the contrary and are enemies of the cross of Christ, and bring condemnation upon themselves. There are always some, for one reason or another, who live contrary to what they know to be right. Our life may serve to convict them if we are following Christ. The Christian's life style is in Heaven, and we look for, and live in the light of His coming for His own, the rapture. Then these vile bodies will be transformed into the image of our Savior, Jesus Christ. See Romans 8:29. The middle English word "commonwealth" means exactly what it implies: that Heaven and all it holds for the believer is the Christian's wealth he has in common with all other believers, and with Christ.

Chapter 4 Apostolic advice: This section is made up of individual pieces of advice which pertain to the Philippian Church, and to all Christians for all time.

a. Verses 4:1-9 Paul tells the Church at Philippi (and us), Stand fast in the Lord. See II Timothy 2:1-4 and Ephesians 6:10. Euodias and Syntyche had evidently had some differences which had come between them. Paul advises the pastor at Philippi to see that they get their differences resolved and become like-minded. The Greek seems to imply that these two ladies are of special concern to him because they have been profitable to Paul as helpers in the ministry. They were always to have a rejoicing spirit, as we also ought to have. See 3:1. Paul told them (and us) to practice forbearance, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. What a sad thing it would be to be caught in the Rapture with an unforgiving and self-centered spirit. One evangelist I knew years ago often said, don't be caught in the rapture with any baggage with which you do not want to face the Lord. Paul told them to be careful for nothing (don't worry), but to cast all their care upon the Lord with prayer, supplication, and thanksgiving. He said that if they would do this, God would keep them in perfect peace in their hearts and minds. He then gives them a list of things on which Christians ought to think in order to keep the peace of God in their hearts. The List is as follows:

- (1) Things which are true – If a person dwells on telling the truth he or she will never have to worry about remembering what they said.
- (2) Things which are honest – Honesty is not the best policy; it is the only policy for a Christian to follow.
- (3) Things which are just – The best motive for being just in our dealings is, we have been justified by the "once for all" blood atonement of Christ.
- (4) Things which are pure – A synonym for pure is "Holy." To be holy is to be God-like.
- (5) Things which are lovely – (Attractive) Lovely things catch our eye and are pleasant to the eye and heart. A Christian, though perhaps not an outwardly attractive person, ought to be attractive in personality and in their testimony.
- (6) Things which are lovely – Pure and honest in their manner of living.
- (7) Things which are of good report – A person who is of good report is one who is known to be honest and trustworthy. Paul told them that if there are any things praiseworthy, virtuous, and of excellence, think on these things. The blessing is in the doing, not just in the hearing. Paul wanted them to remember the things they had received from Him, learned from him, heard from him, and seen in him, and do them.

b. Verses 4:10-20 Paul's appreciation for the gift: As they had done previously, but not for a while, they had sent a package of things to meet his present needs. The reason they had not sent anything to him for while is because they lacked a messenger. Paul told them in this epistle that it was not because he was in need, because he had learned to get by and be content with whatever God

gave him; and he had learned how to deal with having more than enough, and how to be content when things were sparse. Paul repeated his thanksgiving for their gift, reminding them that they were the only Church, of all the Churches established by him, that had consistently ministered to his needs, even when he was going through great trials in Thessalonica. He said he had not desired a gift from them, but he constantly desired to see spiritual fruit in their lives. This is what the Lord always wants to see in our lives. Again, he expressed his appreciation for the gift they had sent to him by Epaphroditus. The promise given in verse nineteen is often miss-claimed by many Christians: we cannot claim this promise until we, like the Philippians, have given out of our poverty. The Philippians had so little, but they did not show concern about how little they had, but of the needs of Paul. Paul gave thanks for their generosity, but he gave credit to God.

c. Verses 4:21-23 Greetings and benediction: Paul asked the Philippians to give his personal greetings to every true Saint at Philippi, and, at the same time, he sent greetings from all the true Saints who were with him in Rome. The most important part of his greeting includes the fact that there were many of the household of Caesar who were saved, and who sent their greetings. Paul concluded the epistle with his trademark: **“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”** When one reads the Philippian epistle and sees the greetings from Caesar’s household, they must be moved with great gratitude, as was Paul, that he was a prisoner of the Lord, and that he gloried in the opportunity, while most would have felt abandoned by God in a Roman prison in that day.

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

I Timothy

Titus

II Timothy

THE BOOK OF I TIMOTHY

Authorship: The fourth and final group of Pauline Epistles is made up of three Epistles: I Timothy, Titus, and II Timothy. These three Epistles are called the Pastoral Epistles since they were written to young pastors whom Paul had chosen to serve with him in the ministry. I Timothy and Titus were written from somewhere in Macedonia between the two imprisonments in Rome. After his acquittal at the trial which ended the first imprisonment Paul went as far west as Spain. Some say there is evidence that he went as far as the British Isles, but there is no hard proof for that. We do know that he visited the Churches in Macedonia and in Asia Minor, but was taken into custody the second time by the Romans, this time not in protective custody, but because Rome was at war with the Christians and was out to eradicate them from the face of the earth. What better way to do this than to start arresting their main leaders such as Peter and Paul. The internal and external evidence for the Pauline authorship of I Timothy is overwhelmingly strong.

Date: It is difficult to say how long it was after Paul's release from the first imprisonment that he wrote this Epistle and the one to Titus, but since the three Pastoral Epistles have a similarity of language, similarity of thought, and likeness of their treatment of false teachings which they combat, they must have been written close together, especially I Timothy and Titus. If Paul was released from the first imprisonment in late 60 AD, or early 61 AD, and if we allow one year for his travels and work in the East, and two years for his work in Spain, we get 64 AD. This then is the date we would suggest for I Timothy and Titus.

Purpose: Paul was prevented by other duties from returning to Ephesus, but he promised that he would come soon. It is obvious that he went to Ephesus between the two Roman imprisonments since he says that he had left Timothy to minister there. The problems in Asia Minor were great with the influence of Gnosticism, the Judaisers, and Greek Philosophy. This Epistle was written to encourage Timothy in the work at Ephesus, and to tell him how it should be conducted. There are indications that Timothy was trying to escape from the duties Paul had assigned him. He seems to have excused himself on the ground of his youth (I Timothy 4:12), poor health (5:23), and a certain distaste for the task (4:15, 16). These things furnish the occasion for the Epistle.

THE OUTLINE FOR THE BOOK OF FIRST TIMOTHY

I.	Salutation and introduction	1:1-20
A.	Salutation	1:1,2
B.	A charge to Timothy	1:3-16
1.	Warning against false teachers and teachings	1:3,4
2.	The importance of sound teaching	1:5-7
3.	The purpose for the Law	1:8-11
4.	Paul's personal testimony	1:12-16
C.	Dedication and giving of glory to God	1:17
D.	A charge to Timothy and an example of what not to do	1:18-20
II.	Paul's exhortations to Timothy and the Church	2:1-6:2
A.	Exhortation to prayer	2:1-8
1.	Prayer for authorities produces religious freedom	2:1,2
2.	Prayer for the all unsaved	2:3-8
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E.	Warnings concerning characteristics of the latter times	4:1-5
F.	Individual instructions for the congregation	4:6-6:2
1.	To Timothy	4:6-16
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4.	To elders	5:17-25
5.	To servants	6:1,2
III.	The conclusion	6:2b-21
A.	Sermon subjects for a faithful Pastor	6:2b-15a
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NOTES ON THE BOOK OF FIRST TIMOTHY

The Book of I Timothy is the first of the Pastoral Epistles. It, and Titus, are the two most Pastoral of the Pastoral Epistles; II Timothy being more personal in nature, and Paul's last will and testament to Timothy who was to take over the responsibilities of all the Churches in Paul's stead. I Timothy and Titus were written from somewhere, possibly Philippi, in Macedonia during the last of Paul's period of freedom between the two imprisonments. Soon after the writing of these two Epistles he was taken into custody by the Romans and held for execution. It was during this second Roman imprisonment that he wrote II Timothy, and possibly, the Book of Hebrews. As we have previously noted, the writing of I Timothy and Titus can be dated at about 64 AD.

Chapter 1 Verses 1:1-20 Salutation and introduction:

a. Paul identified himself to young Timothy as he would probably introduce himself to any Bible-believing and faithful pastor today, as, **Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Savior, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope..;**" When we belong to the Lord as His Children and His ambassadors, our relationship with Him, among other things, is one of Commander and Chief, and buck private. However, God will always place a yielded vessel in a fertile field by command: it is up to the vessel to obey or refuse. Paul saw himself in his present calling by command from the Lord Himself. He also has given command to all His soldiers in the form of the Great Commission. Have we obeyed the command as did Paul? See II Corinthians 5:18-20. Paul states that the Lord Jesus Christ is our hope. In the King James translation, the word hope refers to that which is absolutely certain. See John 14:4.

b. Paul addresses the recipient of the letter as, **Timothy, my own son in the faith.**" It is possible that Paul met young Timothy on the first missionary journey, he might have come to mind as a replacement for John Mark who sparked the controversy between Paul and Barnabas at the end of the fifteenth chapter of Acts as Paul and Barnabas prepared to begin the second missionary journey. As Paul and Silas started out overland from Antioch in Syria on the second missionary journey, they added Timothy to their entourage somewhere between Lystra and Derbe, where Churches had been established on the first missionary journey. Timothy had become like a son to Paul over the years and was greatly trusted by Paul. The expression "son in the faith" seems to indicate that Paul had led Timothy to Christ, perhaps on that first missionary journey. Paul's familiar "**Grace, mercy and peace...**" are not just a customary greeting, but a sincere prayer, especially for his preacher boys. Everything God does for the Christian, He does through grace. We do not deserve His watch care, or His provision, but He is faithful to provide them. Mercy, which we have mentioned many time already as being what God does not do to us that we do deserve, is something we need every hour of every day. It is so good to know that His mercy endureth for ever. Peace, as we have mentioned before, is two-fold: we have peace with God through our salvation, but we have the peace of God through a continual close walk with the Lord. As we previously stated, we know that Paul visited Ephesus during the period between the two Roman imprisonments since he states in chapter one, verse three that he besought (asked by way of assignment) Timothy to abide at Ephesus while he went into Macedonia. We don't know how long Timothy had the oversight of the Church at Ephesus, but we do know that he apparently had freedom to go to Paul when he was in prison in Rome the second time.

c. Paul stated the reasons he left Timothy in Rome in verses three through seven: Timothy was to charge the Ephesians to teach no other doctrine than that which Paul had taught them. He was to warn them of fables (teachings that teach earthly morality which may or may not be true). He was to warn them of endless genealogies, not that the genealogies of Scripture are not important, but

some, out of pride, were always wanting to vaunt theirs to show their pedigree. This, Paul said, was not edifying. He was left there to emphasize the prime importance of God's kind of love out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned (genuine, not faked) from which some, Paul said, have turned aside unto vain jangling (noisy arguing). Some desired to be teachers of the Law, when Paul had taught that they were under the new covenant of grace. These who wanted to be teachers of the Law didn't even understand what they were trying to teach. Paul taught about the place of the Law in relation to the new covenant in Romans chapter seven. See the next four verses.

d. Verses eight through eleven speak of the Law and the Gospel: God's Law is perfect, and is important in relation to the life-style of the Christian, if a person uses it accurately. In presenting the Gospel, the first thing we need to establish with a person is that we are all sinners, and the whole purpose of the Law is to show mankind that we are not perfect, but have come short of the perfection of the Law. The Law, Paul states, is not made for a righteous man; the trouble is that, **"There is none righteous, no not one."** Romans 3:10. The Law is made for the lawless, disobedient, ungodly, sinners, unholy, profane, murderers of fathers and mothers, and manslayers, whoremongers, them that defile themselves with mankind (homosexuals), men stealers (human traffickers), liars, perjured persons, and any others contrary to sound doctrine. We all need to see how many of these categories we fit in. All fit into the category of sinners: Romans 3:23 states, **"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."** Verse eleven says, **"According to the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust."** This is a reference to the Gospel which was to be preached to the Gentiles, and which was given directly to Paul in the Arabian Desert shortly after his conversion.

e. Verses twelve through twenty record Paul's thanksgiving for the privilege of preaching this Gospel in the light of his past, before his salvation. Christ enabled him, and counted him faithful, putting him into the ministry. Paul confesses that prior to his conversion he was a blasphemer, in that he rejected Christ and counted Him an imposter. He says that he was also injurious in that he persecuted the Church. Paul said God showed him mercy because he did it ignorantly in unbelief. A man might be married and then divorced and remarried, then converted to Christ. He is not qualified, as we can see when we get to chapter three, to be counted worthy to be placed in the ministry. From a human standpoint, it seems that Paul did things much worse than that, but not only became a minister of the Gospel, but the Apostle to the Gentiles. How could this be? Paul was a fervent servant of God in that he was jealous for the Law for which he would have given his life. As we saw in the life of Paul with which this book begins, God gave him every qualification he would need to be the Apostle with the most far reaching ministry before he was saved, so that when he was converted, he would be fully qualified to begin preaching the Gospel of Christ with full knowledge of the Scriptures. If there was ever anyone who was in a position to appreciate the grace, faith, and love of the Lord Jesus Christ, it was Paul. He called himself the chief of sinners, but he knew he was saved to serve as an example of just how great the grace of God was. For this reason, he states, he was shown mercy. We do not see Paul serving the Lord to try to make up for his past for he knew that was not possible. Jesus Christ had paid for that in full through His death, burial, and resurrection, and through His once for all blood atonement on the cross of Calvary. Paul served the Lord the rest of his life because of the magnitude of the grace of God that saved him from eternal damnation. What is the extent of Paul's gratitude to God? It is found in verse seventeen as he exclaims, **"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen."** Paul, on the basis of what he has stated concerning his own past and conversion, charged younger Timothy to faithful, selfless service of Christ on the basis of his own example. If Paul wrote the Book of Hebrews, and I think he did, he expresses this charge quite strongly in the first two verses of chapter twelve, and in the first two verses of Romans chapter twelve. The first two words of verse nineteen speak of "holding faith." I believe Paul means staying true to the one true faith once delivered unto the Saints. He adds, "and a

good conscience.” One cannot serve the Lord in the ministry with a guilty conscience, unconfessed and not dealt with. As Paul states, it will cause spiritual shipwreck. See I John 1:9. He then gives two examples of which the Christians at Philippi are evidently aware: Alexander and Hymeneus, who had been committed unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme. This does not mean that these two men who were professing Christians had lost their salvation, but are in the same category as the man in I Corinthians chapter five, who later was restored to full fellowship

Chapter 2 In verses one through eight Paul deals with the matter of the importance of prayer.

a. He lists four categories of prayer that are to be exercised for all men:

(1) Supplications: Humbly entreating on behalf of others. Some people think they get their prayers answered by demanding of God. Supplicating has the definite connotation of humbly entreating.

(2) Prayers: In context in this instance, prayers simply indicates the importance of simply including the subject, in this instance, all men, in your prayer life on a regular basis.

(3) Intercessions: Intercession is acting as a mediator in prayer in that you are pleading on behalf of another, or others.

(4) Giving of thanks: Again, in context, this expression has more of the connotation of giving thanks to God for the privilege of praying for others and seeing God answer prayer.

b. Paul gives three categories of people who are to be prayed for in order that our freedom to spread the Gospel might have the least resistance.

(1) All men: The Gospel has many enemies, so we should pray for all men that they might put up as little resistance to the spread of the Word of God as possible. I hand out tracts and talk to people in the store as I get my groceries. Most graciously receive the tract and thank me for the invitation to Church. Some reject it and will not even receive the tract. I do pray afterward that these people will read the tract and not throw it away. The number of people that graciously receive the tract, and sometimes, stop and talk about the Lord depends on the part of town in which I am shopping. People who have less are more gracious and receptive, while the wealthier snub you more often.

(2) For Kings (elected government officials): Many are not aware of the fact that our freedom to evangelize is slowly being limited in America. As this happens, we need to pray all the more that these doors of freedom will stay open. Before long, many of the home owner’s associations are going to be forbidding door to door witnessing. Maybe this is happening because we are not doing door to door witnessing as we should. It does no good to pray for the doors to stay open if we don’t take advantage of the freedom while we have it. In most places of the world this is not allowed.

c. The purpose is that we might lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. When this letter was written, it was written in a totally hostile atmosphere. There was strong opposition to the Gospel from the unsaved Jews, and there was strong opposition from the Roman Empire. Some were laying down their lives for the Gospel, while others were spending time in prison. There have been times in the State of Texas since we moved here in 1974 that the State Legislature has tried to limit evangelization to the four walls of the Church. They did not succeed, but that does not mean that they will not try again. Harvest while the sun shines and pray for extended periods of sunshine. It will certainly help if we do what we do for the Lord in godliness and honesty. The world sees too many theatrics and too much hypocrisy in today’s Church. The best of Churches today are asleep in Zion. **WAKE UP.** Get busy for God in godliness and honesty. **USE IT OR LOSE IT.** This is both good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior. If someone had fifty gallons of Bluebell ice cream delivered to your house you would have no place to keep that much frozen. You would be rounding up your neighbors and passing our spoons as fast as you could. Don’t we have something infinitely superior to that?

d. The will of God is clearly revealed in verses four through six of this chapter. God's will is that all men (people) be saved and come unto the knowledge of the Truth. This is the clear Sovereign will of The Sovereign God. He could make us be saved, but He has willed that each person make their own choice. However, how can any person make the right choice if they don't know what the choices are? Verse five makes it clear that there is only one mediator between God and man, the man (God-Man) Christ Jesus. If there is only one who can bring man and God together again, and it is God's will that all be saved, all must hear in order to have a choice. You and I were blessed with someone, or some ones seeing to it that we heard the Good News. What kind of a crime is it if we keep it to our selves? We cry out against aborting babies born alive. How about crying out when souls are going to an eternal hell when we can prevent it? **"Jesus gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."** Jesus has been testified now for nearly two thousand years, but a far smaller percentage of the world's population is saved today than at the end of the first century A.D. Notice: Jesus did not give Himself a ransom for the elect, but for all. The sins of all mankind are paid for forever. The sin that keeps people from becoming God's children is the rejection of that ransom. See John 3:18 and John 16:8, 9. We hear of people whom we know were not saved, who died and are in hell, and we shake our heads and say, "they made their choice." Did they? Did anyone tell them the choices? Did you? In verses seven and eight, Paul says that for this purpose he was ordained a minister of the Gospel; called to take this same Gospel to the Gentiles, **"in faith and verity."** He said yes to God's call by faith and in truth. This is all we need to do the same: faith in the promises of God and the message of (verity) truth. He concludes, for this reason he urges everyone to pray, **"holding up holy hands** (a symbol of reaching out to Heaven), without wrath (in godliness) and doubting (in honesty).

e. Verses 2:9-15 In verses nine through fifteen Paul discusses the part women should play in the Church, and the way they should dress. The last verse in this passage is one of the most misunderstood verses in the whole New Testament.

(1) Women's adornment: Women are not to wear elaborate or immodest clothing, abundance of jewelry, nor fancy hairdos. The passage does not say that this is how they are to adorn themselves when they are in the Church, but it is to be understood that this is the standard God has for women of the Church (Christian women) all the time. We might add that women should not use elaborate makeup, as did Jezebel in the Old Testament. Dr. Bob Jones Sr. often said, "Some women could use a little help, but they should not look like a newly painted barn." Modest clothing for women in Bible times was that which reached down to the ground. Even in the early nineteen hundreds in America a modest woman did not show her ankles. The very least requirement today should be that she have skirts which cover and come a couple of inches below the knee when she is seated. She should not have plunging neck lines, nor those that reach from off-shoulder to off-shoulder. The fact is that when both women and men wear provocative clothing they are advertising that they are loose people. For years now I have heard preachers say they do not want women sitting in the front row because their provocative clothing is a real distraction. A woman's hair should look attractive, but not gaudy. The first half of I Corinthians chapter eleven speaks of the woman's hair being her covering and her glory. Many professing Christian women today get their hair cut so short that they are obviously showing contempt for the will of God, but they would rather be cool than godly. We complain about how the teenaged girls dress and act, but they would look and act godly if they had a Church full of good examples to follow. Paul states in this passage that the standard given here is that of godly women.

(2) Women's Conduct in the Church: In the passage Paul states that women are to learn in silence, being in subjection. The subjection, of course, is to the men. God never meant for women to be Pastors, or Deacons, or even a Sunday School teacher where there are any men in the class. Women have taken more and more leadership in the Church, and it has greatly contributed to the demasculinization of the men of our country.

Women have taken top leadership positions in our Churches, in financial institutions, college and university administration, Radio, Television, and just about any other fields you might name. Women doctors treat men, and women now hold combat positions in all branches of the armed forces. These things ought not so to be, but most of all, this is an abomination to God in the Churches. As we will see in the next chapter, it would be impossible for a woman to fulfill the requirements for being a bishop (pastor, overseer, bishop), or a deacon of a Church. There are two clear restrictions listed here in I Timothy: women are not to usurp authority over men, and they are not to teach men. It is not that women today do not know as much as men, but that it is a violation of God's order of authority given in I Corinthians 11:1-4. The Biblical reason for this is also given here: Adam was first made, and then Eve. Someone might say, "So what?" It was to Adam that the commandment was given (Genesis 2:17) before Eve was even created. Adam was the one who was responsible for the woman's spiritual welfare, but, although Eve knew the commandment, Adam was responsible. Verse fourteen tells us that Eve was deceived in the transgression, but Adam is the one who gave us our sin nature. He was fully aware of the consequences when he partook of the fruit: he was not deceived.

(3) The fifteenth verse, as we said, is often grossly misunderstood. Genesis 3:16 tells us that the first consequence of woman's part in the transgression would be for her to have sorrow in child bearing, but women's (and men's) liberation came at the cross. Our sins were all paid for by Christ on the cross. If the woman will trust Jesus Christ who was God, born by normal child birth (except He was born of a virgin) as her Savior, she shall be saved the same as the man. Mary may have had a very hard time in child birth in that it was the Holy Spirit who conceived Jesus' body in her womb. Although our sins are forgiven, we still bear the results of the physical acts of our sin nature. This verse is not saying that a Christian woman will have an easy time of it in child birth if she is living a godly life. We are not saved by works, kept by works, or given an easy time of it in the Christian life by works. It is through child birth (Jesus Christ) that the woman is saved the same as the man if either one trusts Him as their Savior.

Chapter 3 This chapter contains the qualifications for Bishop (minister) and Deacon. Most pastors rarely preach on it these days for fear of offending someone in their congregation. It is not ignoring it, however, that avoids problems in the Church, it is ignoring it that causes problems in the Church. For many Churches, it is too late to start preaching on it now.

a. The requirements for being a Bishop (Pastor, Elder): The following are the requirements for being a Pastor of a Church:

- (1) He must be blameless: This does not mean that he must be beyond any blame for anything brought by anyone. It means he must be without legitimate blame for wrong doing. If he is living in sin he is not qualified. If he is living a godly life, but is wrongly accused of sin, he is simply a target for Satan's fiery darts but is still qualified.
- (2) He must be the husband of one wife: This does not mean one at a time, but one, period. The only way he could remarry would be if his wife died and he later married a Christian woman who was a virgin and had never been married before, or a Christian woman who had been the wife of a bishop and was widowed. See the Old Testament example in Leviticus 21:7.
- (3) Vigilant: Watchful. It is better to anticipate problems and Satan's attacks and be ready for them, although they might not happen, than to be blind to them and be hit by surprise. See I Peter 5:8.
- (4) Of good behavior: He should be a godly man, a man with a Christ-like conduct.
- (5) Given to hospitality: He should be a person who is quick to house the homeless and feed the hungry. He should use everything he owns to try to win the lost to Christ; and so should his wife and family. He should be a Good Samaritan.

(6) Apt to teach: He should and must have an aptitude for teaching. He should love teaching the Word of God.

(7) Not given to wine: The word wine is always translated in regard to the context. The Greek word, “oinos” can refer to any fruit or beverage of the vine. It can be translated grapes, grape juice, fermented wine, etc. Since the Scriptures condemn drunkenness, we can assume that this reference means alcoholic wine. However, it could refer to too much grape juice. I have known of Christians who seriously limited their ministry because they were constantly drinking Coke, or Pepsi, or coffee, etc.

(8) No striker: I assume this has to do with losing his temper and actually striking someone. This could be a stranger, someone in the Church, or someone in his family.

(9) Not greedy of filthy lucre: In considering a call to a particular position in the ministry, he should not ask, “How much does it pay?” He should ask God if this is where he wants him. If it is, God will take care of his needs.

(10) Patient: He needs to be a person who waits on the Lord and does not act first and pray later. “Follow the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire.”

(11) Not a brawler: One who tries to get his way by forcing it on others physically; manhandling.

(12) Not covetous: A man in the ministry should nor be desirous of anything another person has. He should not be covetous of those who have

More of this world’s goods than he has. With food and raiment he should be content. This is the last of the Ten Commandments.

(13) One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity: This would involve the instructions for raising children found in Ephesians 6:4 and Colossians 3:21. **“For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?”** Many of the preachers who were the product of Pastor J. Frank Norris were men who lost their families because they were too harsh with them, even from the pulpit. This often results from a man spending more time with the other children in the church than he spends with his own.

(14) Not a novice: I have seen a number of men who were called to the ministry and had not been saved very long. They wanted to start immediately with no formal training. A man needs to get as much formal training for the ministry as he can before taking a position. If that is not possible, he should try to find a position as assistant to the Pastor of a good strong Church and learn under the Pastor’s instruction. **“...lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.”**

(15) He must have a good report of them that are without: This simply means those who are not in the local Church, plus those of the unsaved with whom he does business. **“...lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.”**

b. Qualifications for the position of Deacon in the local Church: The Greek word “diakonos” is not so much a translation as it is a transliteration into English. The word literally means, “The servant of a king.” As it is used in the New Testament it means “The servant of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.” They are to be next in authority to a Bishop (Overseer or Pastor, or Elder). Their office, according to Acts chapter six, is to take care of the many details of the operation of the Church so that the Pastor can give himself to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word. In very few instances nowadays do we see Deacons who really carry out their intended function. The first Deacons were chosen in Acts 6:1-4. We will first look at the qualifications listed there:

(1) Men of honest report: These are men who have an excellent and consistent testimony in the local Church.

(2) Full of the Holy Ghost (Spirit): These are to be Spirit filled and Spirit led men. **“Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit.”** “...but be constantly being filled with the Spirit.”

(3) And wisdom: Wisdom is the ability to use knowledge, and comes from a Spirit filled, and a Spirit led life.

Now we will look at the list in I Timothy 3:8-13

(1) Grave: These must be serious men

(2) Not double-tongued: This would agree with Acts chapter six in that they were to be men of honest report.

(3) Not given to much wine: Again, this would be grape juice. They were not to be men who give themselves to eating and drinking.

(4) Not greedy of filthy lucre: See the requirements for being a Bishop.

(5) Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience: Holding the mystery of the faith (The Gospel) in a pure conscience leads to a pure Gospel. This phrase also implies that the Deacons have a responsibility to promote the faith and be a witness. A man should not be a deacon if he is not a soul-winner, nor should he be a deacon if he could not step into the pulpit and preach to edification in the case of an emergency. They could not do that without a pure conscience.

(6) Let these also first be proved: A man should not be put into the office of Deacon until he has first proven himself to be fully qualified. In the churches I have pastored, we did not put a man into the office of deacon, even though he had been a deacon in an excellent Church before he came to us, unless he was with us for one year and met all the qualifications.

(7) Blameless: See the same qualification for the Pastor.

(8) The Deacon's wife: Verse eleven tells us that their wives must also be grave (serious), not slanderers (not gossips or tale-bearers), sober (sober here does not refer to drunkenness, but to being serious about their husband's responsibility as a deacon), faithful in all things (one who is to be commended for faithfully supporting her husband and helping him in his responsibilities). We had to refuse a godly man from being a deacon in one pastorate because of his wife's ungodly ways. It made her so angry that she insisted they leave the Church. Shortly after this her husband had a heart attack and died.

(9) The husband of one wife: See the same requirement under Pastor above.

(10) Ruling their children and their own household well: See the same requirement for the Pastor or Bishop above.

(11) **“For they that have used the office of a Deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.”**

c. The third division of this chapter has to do primarily with a full description of the mystery of godliness: Paul expressed his desire to come and see Timothy whom he had left at Ephesus to Pastor the Church there. He stated that if he tarried long for some reason, however, he wanted Timothy to know how to conduct the work of the Pastorate. Obviously, Paul felt that godliness was basic to being a good Pastor, so he gives us a description of just what godliness is. Paul describes it as:

(1) God was manifest in the flesh – See John 1:1-14

(2) Justified in the Spirit – See Luke 3:21, 22

(3) Seen of Angels – See Matthew 4:11; Mark 1:12, 13; Luke 24:1-6; etc.

- (4) Preached unto the Gentiles – Acts 9:15,16; Acts chapter ten; etc.
- (5) Believed on in the world – Acts chapter 2; chapter 4:1-4; etc.
- (6) Received up into Glory – Acts 1:9-11

Chapter 4 Verses 1-5 The message and methods of apostates: People sometimes ask me, “What is an apostate? An apostate, according to Webster’s New World College Dictionary is, “One who abandons what one has believed in: as faith, cause, principles.” A renegade.

a. In relation to the real Christian faith, it is a person who once convincingly ministered the Christian faith, but has gradually turned from a sound biblical position. I personally do not believe it is possible for an apostate to return to the true faith. He or she is not one who was saved and has now lost their salvation, but one who posed as a real Christian, but for whatever reason, found it more profitable personally to turn from what they once professed. Not all professors are possessors.

- (1) They give heed to seducing spirits: They listen to and are drawn away by false teachers.
- (2) They give heed to doctrines of devils (demons): False teachers can often make their false doctrine sound very biblical. Illustration: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons) state in their brief doctrinal statement, “We believe the Bible is the Word of God as correctly interpreted.” The next statement is, “We believe the Book of Mormon to be the Word of God.” In other words, we are to interpret the Bible by the Book of Mormon. But the Book of Mormon is full of contradictions in relation to the Bible. In answer to the question, “Who is God?” Brigham Young states, “Who is this great man in the heavens? He is the first of the human race, the true god, the only god with whom we have to do.” In answer to the question, “Who is Jesus?” Again, Brigham Young answers, “He is the son of god by one of his many wives called Mary.” Other cults are just as incredulous. But to the new Christian, or the untaught Christian

This may sound very good. The Mormon Church is full of former Baptists who did not know why they believed what they professed to believe.

- (3) Speaking lies in hypocrisy: Many apostates know that they are teaching lies, but they do this so convincingly that they hook poorly disciplined Christians.
- (4) Having their conscience seared with a hot iron: They have told their lies to profit materially or financially until it no longer bothers them.
- (5) Forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from certain meats. The Judaisers of the first century taught these things and they found their way into the Catholic Church.
- (6) There are many other characteristics of apostates and false teachers, but let me suggest that you carefully read the Book of Jude, and the second chapter of second Peter.

b. Verses 6-16 What constitutes a good minister of Jesus Christ?

- (1) A good minister of Jesus Christ will constantly warn his people about the dangers that face believers. He will expose false teaching and false teachers. He will teach the Truth of God’s Word line upon line, line upon line, precept upon precept, precept upon precept.
- (2) But refuse profane and old wives fables: Many times this type of thing is found in those who major on preaching on prophetic themes. Speculation and impressive interpretation based on denominational teaching instead of pure Bible teaching.
- (3) Exercise thyself rather unto godliness: Godliness means god-likeness. While this is impossible in this life, it should be every Christian’s goal, but especially the minister of the Word of God.
- (4) Bodily exercise profits but little, and only for this life, while godliness profits much, both in this

life, and for that which is to come.

(5) Command and teach these things in order to be a good minister of Jesus Christ.

(6) Let no man despise thy youth: At this point Timothy was probably close to his thirties. At that time in history the average life span of a working man was about thirty five. Timothy was considered young, however, for a spiritual leader. Most preachers today are not considered much past the classification of a novice at the age of thirty. I was twenty two when I was ordained, and served as a youth pastor and assistant pastor until I was twenty six. For the next thirteen years I was director for a state wide teen ministry. At the age of thirty eight; almost thirty nine was when I took my first pastorate and was considered very young. There were probably some people in that first pastorate who knew more Bible than I did, but I learned rapidly the hard way. People will come to you in the early years of your ministry and try to offer advice, some of which can be helpful, but don't give them reason to look down on you because you are young.

(7) But be thou an example of the believers: If God should call you into full-time ministry, determine to be more Christ-like than any in your ministry. Spend much time in the Book, much time in prayer, and much time learning to be more and more adult and mature.

- a. In word – the manner of speaking
- b. In conversation – Manner of living, or life-style
- c. In charity – Giving of yourself for your people
- d. In spirit – Cheerful and positive
- e. In faith – Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God
- f. In purity – Living a life you would not hesitate for all to know

(8) Give attendance to reading: Paul means not only the Word of God, but good Christian reading material. Actually he means to study.

(9) Give attendance to exhortation: To preparing and delivering good preaching on necessary subjects.

(10) Give attendance to doctrine: Doctrine is a systematic arrangement of Bible truths. There is a famine of preaching on doctrine today. Many Christians know what they believe but don't know why they believe it.

(11) Neglect not the gift that is in thee: The explanation of “**the gift**” could be made several different ways, but I believe Paul was speaking of Timothy's call to the ministry; or, we might say the gift of preaching. But what did Paul mean when he said, “**..which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery**”? First, the reference to the gift being given to Timothy by prophecy refers to the fact that the Prophets of the Old Testament spoke of the fact that the message of the Gospel would be proclaimed by men called of God. The reference to the laying on of the hands of the presbytery simply means that when the Elders of the Church recognized the calling of God upon Timothy, they laid hands on him and ordained him to that calling, much as we still do in ordaining a man to the ministry today.

(12) Meditate upon these things: Paul was urging Timothy to give frequent and deep thought to this very special gift as a special calling from God. He was not to take it lightly, nor to think of it as something from which he could turn in the future.

(13) Give thyself wholly to them: This gift was not something to be treated as a part-time thing, but was something to which he should give his whole life and effort.

(14) That thy profiting may appear to all: If Timothy's call to the ministry was real, it should have been obvious to all those with whom Timothy came in contact. I have had complete strangers walk

up to me in public and ask if I was a preacher. A man with this calling has something about him that speaks of honesty and godliness.

(15) Take heed to thyself: Constant self-examination is very important for a minister of the Gospel. If he does not do this, he will find it easy to begin thinking he can do the work of God in his own strength.

(16) Take heed to the doctrine: A young minister will find that, if he is doing what he ought to do, as he grows in the Lord and gains experience in the ministry, his convictions should grow stronger. He should quickly reach the place where Bible Doctrine is something for which he would be willing to lay down his life. His understanding of doctrine will grow, but he will not deviate from that which he knows to be true Bible teaching.

(17) For in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear: Paul is not speaking of salvation from sin, but of saving both himself and those to whom he ministers from apostasy.

Chapter 5 Most of Paul's epistles divide into two major categories: deep doctrinal teaching and the practical application of that doctrine. Such is the case with I Timothy. The first three chapters are deep doctrinal teaching, but the last three are the practical application of the doctrine. Chapters one through three are doctrinal: chapters four, five and six are the more practical chapters. The first sixteen verses of chapter five deal with the care and treatment of widows in the Church, and verses seventeen through twenty five are about the responsibilities of Elders in the Church.

a. Verses 1-16 The care and treatment of widows in the Church: Paul makes it clear that there are two kinds of widows in the Church: those who are widows indeed, and those who are widows, but are not given to pursuit of spiritual interests. His main concern is for those who are widows indeed, but he has warnings concerning those in the other category. This chapter opens, however, with instructions to Timothy to not rebuke an Elder; perhaps because of his youth. Rather than rebuke him, Timothy is to entreat him as one would entreat (plead with) one's father. This instruction is given to Timothy in the setting of his being a good Pastor, but relatively young. The younger men are to be dealt with as one would entreat a brother. It is sometimes necessary for a Pastor to entreat another Pastor concerning the other Pastor's conduct being unscriptural. In verse two of this chapter Paul speaks generally about the treatment of older and younger women in the Church. The elder women are to be treated as one would treat one's mother. In this day and time, that subject needs a lot more clarification. Few young people, let alone adults, treat their parents as they should be treated. A young adult may be out of the home and on their own, and not necessarily responsible to obey every desire of the parent, but they are never too old to respect their parents. Timothy was to treat the older ladies in the Church as he would treat his own mother: with respect. As far as the younger ladies and girls were concerned, Paul instructed Timothy to treat them with the respect and concern he would have for the spiritual welfare of his own sister, with all purity! He was not to get emotionally involved with them. This is one reason why a man in the ministry, in our day and time, should have a wife. See I Corinthians 7:1, 2. Most Christian men today do not know this, nor have they ever heard it, but Christian etiquette demands that a man not shake hands with a woman unless she first extends her hand. When shaking a woman's hand, shake her hand briefly and let go. Do not hold on to her hand while conversing with her. That sends a wrong message. Verse three gets us to the subject of widows. Widows who are widows indeed are to be honored. In this case, we need to know who is a widow, indeed. Widows who have children or nephews are to be cared for by their family. Paul said that this was good and acceptable before God. The most common thing today in America is to get their elderly parents on Medicaid and get them into a nursing home as soon as possible. We like to call it "assisted living facility," or "a pleasant community of people their own age." Young people, don't forget that your parent probably set aside preparing for retirement in order to raise you, pay for your wedding, and put you through college. Paul said that

she who is a widow indeed is one who is desolate in that she has no sons or nephews to see to her welfare. She is also one who is trusting in God to meet her needs, and who has a ministry of prayer night and day. Sometimes it is necessary for an elderly parent to be in a nursing home because of the extreme nature of their health and care needs. My parents came to the place where we could no longer care for them in their home. My mother was paralyzed from the breastbone down, and neither my wife nor my sister could lift her. We kept them in their home with a live in care giver as long as we could, but it got to the place where my father began having small strokes and falling and breaking bones. It was more than a care giver could take care of. We got them in the nicest nursing home we could find, together in a large room with some of their own furniture. Each had their recliner during the day and excellent care, but after a while, the money ran out and I was Pastor of a Church with a Christian school. We were able to get them moved to a nursing home very close to us with a Christian manager. The workers all loved them and called their room the honeymoon room. My father passed away shortly after we were called to a Church in Texas, but I would fly out to see my mother and sister and her family a couple of times a year. My mother lived another fifteen years to die at the age of ninety two, but she refused to have her moved to Texas to live with us. She insisted that her ministry was there in the nursing home. She spent nearly twenty years in the nursing home, but my family and my sister's family loved her and did all we could to make that known. The nursing home family became her family, and we saw to her every need. Sometimes that is necessary, but if the parents can be kept in their own home, or in the children's home, it is a great blessing for them as well as for their children. I know of one couple who had no children, but still keep her mother in their home and cared for her. The mother in over one hundred years old, but needs help to get up and care for her self. They have a part time care giver who comes to the home, but, although they both are attorneys, he manages to stay very active in the Church although much of her work takes her out of town to the state capital. God has greatly blessed them for their faithfulness. Verse eight tells us that any who fail to care for their own, and especially those of their house, have denied the faith, and are worse than an infidel. He then gives us the characteristics of a widow in deed, for whom the Church should feel a responsibility to help care:

- (1) She is not to be listed as a widow in deed unless she is sixty years old or older; having been the wife of one man.
- (2) She should have a reputation for having done many good works.
- (3) She must have brought up children. Paul does say they have to be her own children, but that she has brought up children. God only saw fit to give us one child, a daughter, but we have raised many of those who were castaways for one reason or another. My wife loved that.
- (4) She must have lodged strangers. That is often very dangerous in a sinful society like today, but we have housed them in a little efficiency apartment on the back of our house. We have frequently housed evangelists, missionaries and their families, members of ensembles from colleges and universities, etc. We love the fellowship. Read the Book of Third John. My wife not only loved to house and feed them, she liked to take the wives and children shopping. Many Christians miss out on some wonderful experiences by refusing to show hospitality.
- (5) If she has washed the Saints' feet: In Bible times you were considered a very poor host or hostess indeed if you did not wash the saints' feet when they came to your home.
- (6) If she has relieved the afflicted: This, today, would be offering to go and take care of people who were ill and could not afford to go to the doctor or to a hospital. I grew up in the depression years of the 1930s. There was only one person on our entire block who had a telephone. Everyone went to their house to use the telephone and dropped their nickel in a little box on the kitchen table to help with the telephone bill. My mother was the self-appointed "doctor" of the neighborhood. If someone was down with the flu she would take her little black bag with the basics such as aspirin, iodine, a thermometer, etc and go take care of them until they were up and around. She would sleep

on their couch, cook for them and take care of them until they were well. I remember a little boy who lived around the corner from us who contracted what was then called infantile paralysis, later, Polio. The doctors gave up on him. His legs were drawn up under him until his heels were against his thighs. Mother would go every day, put him in a tub of hot water and work with his legs until, after many weeks she got his legs straightened out. A few weeks later he was walking normally with no symptoms of the disease. Everyone called her Mama Hodges. No one ever thought of paying her, and she never thought of charging them. No one had any extra money anyway. In those days people did for each other. Today most people don't even know their next door neighbor. Those were before the days of television, but everyone had a front porch where we would gather with our neighbors and play the guitar and sing folk songs. (Back then, everyone loved America whether they were republican or democrat.

(7) If she had diligently followed every good work: She had to be one who had earned a good reputation for her love of people and a concern for their needs. Until 1938 my father was the manager of a large business and we lived in a company house right next to the plant. When a job would open up at the plant, there would often be a line of men a block long to interview for the job. It seemed most people had no jobs. My mother knew that those men were hungry, so she would make a huge pot of bean soup and put a ladle in it and set it by the front fence. My sister and I fed the men while mother washed bowls.

(8) We will return to the verses we passed over, but let us go to verse sixteen. The summary of this passage is, **“If any man or woman that believeth hath widows, let them relieve them, and let not the Church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.”** To relieve them means to see to their needs. Today both people in the Church and people outside the Church come running to the Church for help. Many of them make their living running from Church to Church. It is the responsibility of the Church to make sure that those in need are really people in need, and not just free-loaders. During the depression years and the war years, everyone just expected to somehow make their way. America has lost its initiative and has become a welfare state. When I was still in the Pastorate, most of the people who came to the Church for help were able to work, but would not. Some even told us they could make more on welfare than they could by working at jobs for the unskilled. The reason the Chinese who came to America from the late 1800s to the 1930s and 40s prospered so quickly is that they would start a small business and everyone in the family would work. I had a job from the time I was in the 4th grade and made enough to buy my own clothes and help with the family income. I worked my way through college and came out owing the University \$25.00 with a B.A. degree in Bible and 13 semester house of graduate work and I never had a government loan or any other kind of loan. I waited tables and laid carpet in the summer, but I could finish my preparation for the ministry without a big debt hanging over my head. I know of people today who have been out of college for more than ten years and still have a large debt to pay off. Some of them are still living with mom and dad because they can't make it otherwise. Get two jobs if you have to, sluggard. If you can't afford college get a job and begin an apprenticeship. There is always a way to do what God wants you to do.

b. Now let's return to those verses we passed over which deal with the other kind of widow. Verse 6; verses 11-15: Paul had almost more to say about this group than he did about those who were widows indeed.

(1) Verse 6: **“She that liveth in pleasure...”** : This would be a widow in the Church who was under the age of sixty, and had her needs met and was “living in pleasure.” I sometimes think of this verse when I see a large R.V. on the highway with a bumper sticker that says, “We are spending our children's inheritance.” I personally believe that Christians who have that kind of money to spend could be helping with missions, or supporting their local Church with Tithes and Offerings. I would feel so guilty that I could not stand it. Except in the case of people with physical problems,

Christians should not plan to retire from serving the Lord. It is not clear here whether Paul meant that a widow was living a licentious life, or if she was just running around being a busy-body and a gossip. Almost all of the Christian widows my wife and I had the privilege of knowing were still very active in their Church and in Christian service in one way or another. Either way, they were not living in disregard for the Scriptural picture of what a Christian ought to be..

(2) Verses 11-15 Widows in the Church who did not qualify as “widows indeed:” Younger widows will be more interested in getting married again and be less interested in serving the Lord, so they did not qualify as widows indeed. In turning from their first profession of faith they would bring damnation upon themselves, showing that their profession of faith was not real. The younger widows would be apt to wander about from house to house gossiping and bearing tales they ought not. Verse fifteen says that some of the younger widows had already turned aside after Satan.

(3) Things younger widows ought to do: Marry, bear children, guide the house (keep house and train their children in spiritual matters – This might be the picture of the Christian home-schooling mother today). They should also give the devil no reason to speak evil of them.

c. Verses 17-25 The treatment of Elders (men who are leaders in the Church: The New Testament was all written in the first century A.D. and does not give us an inspired picture of the history of the Church past about 95 A.D. when the Book of Revelation was written. God has graciously preserved thousands of extra-biblical documents from the succeeding centuries. In fact, one of the most important documents is Fox’s Book of Martyrs which was documented and written about the 1560s by John Fox who was turned from the Roman Church by its inconsistencies with the Holy Scriptures. It is a masterpiece of the history, both of the Church, and of its martyrs. It has been added to since by various sources who have brought it up to about 1900 A.D. which is the date of the great shift in the Church through Neo-Orthodoxy and liberalism. It is used in the best of Bible colleges, universities, and seminaries as an associate text in Church History. Almost every family traveling west in the 1800s in America had a family Bible. Those who could afford a second book had a copy of Fox’s Book of Martyrs; and those who could afford a third book had a copy of Pilgrim’s Progress by John Bunyon. Those who do not read their Bible every day are starving their soul. Those who have never read Fox’s Book of Martyrs are starving their dedication; and those who have not read Pilgrim’s Progress are starving their Christian growth. Through the study of early Church history we see the evolution of the term “Elder.” In the beginning of the Church on the Day of Pentecost the term was a carry-over from the Synagogue worship and Judaism. As in Judaism, it had a dual meaning in the early Church. The primary meaning in the beginning of the Church and throughout the first century A.D. was the older, and presumed wiser men in the Church. Many of these were also early Pastors of Churches in the first century. As time passed, the term took on even more refined Identity of a synonym for Pastor, or lay-Pastor, originally, it referred to those who were literally older and wiser men in the Church. It is not treated by name by Paul as an office gift along with Apostle, Prophet, evangelist, Pastor, and Teacher.

(1) Those who labor well in the Word and in Doctrine are to be treated with double honor. All too often, when a Pastor has to take disciplinary action with someone in the Church, instead of believing the Pastor and the Church board of Deacons, the people will side with those being disciplined.

(2) The Pastor is to be adequately paid for his services and financially supported by the Church. I have seen situations several times where a small group who didn’t like the Pastor would try to starve him into resigning.

(3) Two or three witnesses should be required against a Pastor before any disciplinary action is taken against them.

(4) A Pastor who does sin is to be rebuked before all so that others might fear. Such disciplinary

action should be exercised by the whole Church.

(5) These things are to be carried out without preferring one before another. Such things should not be done suddenly without thorough investigation to make sure that the charges are true.

(6) Paul admonished Timothy not to be taken by another Pastor's sin, but that he should keep himself pure.

(7) When Paul told Timothy to take a little wine for his stomach's sake, he had to be referring to grape juice. Alcohol is the worst thing anyone could put in their stomach if they have digestive problems. Grape juice, however, is the best thing he could use since it has alum in it which would tend to draw up a stomach ulcer and close it.

(8) Some men's sins are obvious and easy to identify, but some men's sins are hidden and hard to detect, but, while some men's good works are obvious, the quiet good works of others cannot be hid.

Chapter 6 Chapter six is a collection of last minute instructions. First Timothy would almost lead us to think Paul had more to say but, for some reason, was pressed for time. This last chapter of the epistle is made up of a variety of things that Paul writes to Timothy just before making a rapid exit. Of course he wrote all that God wanted him to write, but for some reason, it seems to conclude rather suddenly. Undoubtedly, Paul hated to close this epistle, and that to Titus: these were his preacher boys whom he had trained and he did not know when he might be taken into custody by the government, for the pressure was mounting. He did not know when, or if he would have another opportunity to further their instruction.

a. The first two verses of this chapter are directed to servants. For the most part, among the Hebrews, servants were Israelites, while slaves were from other nations. Servants were more like family than were slaves. Servants are here instructed to hold their masters in honor for two reasons: that the name of God be not blasphemed by any other kind of service, and that God's doctrine be not blasphemed. While the Christian is a member of God's family, we are still, in a sense, His beloved servants, and are love servants in that we serve and love Him because He first loved us. Also Paul instructs them, if they have Christian masters, they should not despise their masters because they are in a different earthly cast than their masters, but should serve them well because, in the spiritual realm, they are in the same spiritual family. Timothy was exhorted to teach and instruct Christian servants concerning these things. The Bible does not condone or condemn slavery or servitude it simply tells slaves and servants who are Christians how to best maintain their Christian testimony.

b. Verses three through five have to do with the subject of false teachers. The marks of a false teacher are three-fold:

(1) Any teaching that does not constitute wholesome words: This would be any teaching that would stir up strife and confrontations among brethren.

(2) Anything contrary to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: This would be teaching that contradicts what Christ taught when He was here, or that He has given us through the Holy Spirit since His return to the right hand of the Father.

(3) Anything that is contrary to the doctrine of holiness: This would be teaching contrary to the very nature and attributes of Christ.

Paul then continues by listing several other marks of false teachers:

(1) They are proud: Try as you may, you can't tell them anything. They do not like to hear the Truth and will not listen to it. We might add to the interpretation of this statement that they are

arrogant.

(2) They know nothing: I believe Paul is telling us that they are ignorant of the things they themselves are teaching. They are self-appointed experts on every subject, and know nothing of that of which they speak.

(3) They dote about questions and strife of words: They nit-pick about the importance or meaning of even one word. The more they have to say, the more strife they stir up.

(4) The things which they teach cause envy, strife, railings, and evil surmising (conjecture or guesses). It seems like Paul is describing someone who delights in just stirring up trouble.

(5) They carry on perverse disputing of men with corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth: They carry on theological discussions in a most convincing way although without a knowledge of Christ. They have no idea of the meaning of the Truth.

(6) They believe and teach that the possession of material things and great wealth is real gain: They do not realize that knowing Christ and having the gift of eternal life is the only wealth worth having. How ridiculously silly our worldly possessions would look in Heaven. Paul warns them to keep their distance from these people.

c. Verses six through ten list the right attitudes of good teachers:

(1) Godliness with contentment is great gain. See Philippians 4:12, 13

(2) The things of this world are passing, and only the things of God are eternal. We can take nothing of this world with us when we leave here, so why do we so often put such value on the things of this world?

(3) Good teachers count their message to be the most important thing in this world. They are content with the things that pertain to God. As far as this world is concerned, the bare essentials are sufficient.

(4) A good teacher is aware of the snare of material possessions. He or she knows that the wealth of this world is fleeting, but also that earthly wealth can be a stumbling block to stand between them and God.

(5) Good teachers of the Truth know that the love of money is at the root of all evil and can be the spiritual ruin of a person, and that it does not make for happiness.

d. Verses eleven through fifteen give us the motives of the man of God. (1) Paul told Timothy that, as a man of God, he should flee all the things that would ensnare the spiritual leader and follow after the following things: godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness (humility).

(2) Timothy was to fight the good fight of faith. See II Timothy 4:7

(3) He should lay hold on eternal life. Timothy was already saved, of course, but he is here admonished to make that his main emphasis of his ministry. Timothy had already established an excellent testimony in this area before many witnesses.

(4) Paul charged Timothy strongly to follow godly instruction until Jesus comes. It is so easy for a minister of God to get a ministry established and then put the whole thing in cruise mode, but a work is either growing or dying and there is no place nor time to go on vacation from serving the Lord, even when you might be on "vacation" literally.

(5) Though some preachers of the Gospel of Christ might face humiliation at the coming of Christ for His own, a faithful minister will rejoice at that event. Paul told Timothy to keep this charge without spot, unrebukable until Jesus comes, just as his Savior did. When Jesus comes He will show who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords; the only Potentate. See Hebrews 12:1, 2.

e. Verses sixteen through nineteen tell us; the truly wealthy are those who trust the Lord, and not this world's uncertain riches, and are heirs, and joint-heirs with Christ Jesus. Of this Timothy was to warn the rich.

(1) The truly rich are those who are rich in good works.

(2) The only way one may take his riches to Heaven is by sending them on ahead by doing the will of God here.

f. Verses twenty and twenty one give a last charge to Timothy:

(1) He was to keep that which was committed to his trust. Paul is speaking, of course, of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

(2) He was to avoid profane and vain babbling. These would be not only what we today call profanity, but also that which is vain and does no one any good. He was to, as a minister of the gospel, make his life count.

(3) He was to avoid oppositions of science falsely so called. This would certainly include what we now know as evolution. See Romans chapter one. It is also important to study the good science of the Old Testament.

(4) Those who follow this false science and vain babbling will find that they have erred from the faith.

g. Paul closed with his trademark: **“Grace be with thee. Amen.”**

THE BOOK OF TITUS

Authorship: (See the Book of I Timothy). It is obvious that the author of I Timothy is the same as the author of Titus. They are the two most pastoral of the Pastoral Epistles. The Epistle to Titus is somewhat simpler than the Epistle of I Timothy, and deals less with the problems of organization. Although there is a great deal that is personal in this Epistle, there is more that is official. There are also two notable doctrinal passages in Titus: 2:11-14 and 3:3-7. Both external and internal evidence for the Pauline authorship of Titus are sufficient.

Date: (See I Timothy) Three things seemed to have occasioned the writing of this Epistle: (1) Problems in the work on the Island of Crete, (2) Titus' need of instruction and encouragement, and (3) The going of Zenas and Apollos to the Island. We do not know from what place Paul wrote this letter, but it was somewhere in Macedonia as he returned from his journey to Spain. Since the style and content are very similar to I Timothy, we might conclude that it was written about the same time, about 64 AD.

Purpose: We have already mentioned the three things which occasioned the writing of the Epistle to Titus. Paul had left Timothy to Pastor at Ephesus, and Titus in the Island of Crete. Timothy was more experienced than Titus, and Crete was a very hard place to minister. The people were rebellious and hard-headed, and did not cooperate too well. Titus seems to have been very discouraged in the work. As in the case of I Timothy, Paul tells Titus how to handle the various problems at Crete. The Epistle is very valuable, not only as a general "here's how" Epistle for Christian workers, but as a handbook on how to handle particular problems which can exist in the Church today.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF TITUS

I.	Salutation	1:1-4
II.	Titus' assignment: To set things in order on Crete	1:5-3:11
A.	The appointment and need of the Elders	1:5-16
1.	Qualifications	1:5-9
2.	The need for Elders to deal with false teachings	1:10-16
B.	The work of a Pastor	2:1-3:11
1.	Application of sound doctrine to problems	2:1-10
2.	Emphasis on the teaching of Grace	2:11-15
3.	Submission to Principalities and Powers	3:1
4.	What we were before our salvation	3:2,3
5.	How we were saved (not by works)	3:4-7
6.	Importance of good works	3:8
7.	What to avoid	3:9
C.	Definition of a Heretic	3:10-11
D.	Paul's future plans	3:12,13
E.	Last admonitions and salutation	3:14,15
1.	Re-emphasis on the importance of good works	3:16
2.	Paul's trademark (Grace)	3:17

ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK OF TITUS

Chapter 1 – In the light of the first four verses of Titus 1, we might judge that Titus had become so weary in the work on Crete that he might even have been doubting his calling. Paul reminds Titus of the purpose for which God had called him to the ministry. He had called him by the faith of God's Elect. He had called him by giving him the faith to acknowledge the Truth which produces godliness. He had called him because of the hope of eternal life which God has promised. He had called him through His manifested Word. He had called him through the fact that He had committed this Word unto him to proclaim. He reminded Titus of three things he needed to be successful in God's work:

- (1) God's Grace – God's provision we do not deserve
- (2) God's mercy – God's goodness which spares us what we do deserve
- (3) God's peace – Both peace with God (salvation) and the peace of God.

Paul spent the rest of the chapter instructing Titus as to his primary responsibilities at Crete: To set things in order in the Church, to ordain Elders in every city, to expose and oppose the unruly, vain talkers, deceivers, and teachers of Jewish fables (Judaisers), to expose those who profess to know God, but do not back it up with works.

Chapter 2 – Paul tells Titus the positive things he is to teach and preach.

- (1) Christian attitudes
- (2) Christian relationships
- (3) Verses 11-13 are of great import in that they teach us that the same grace that saves us also teaches us godly living and separation from the world. God would have us to live in the light of Christ's coming, and in the light of what He has done for us.

Chapter 3 – Paul teaches Titus in this chapter to instruct the people as to their responsibility to government and other authorities. He tells him to correct those

who live carelessly, and in worldliness. He reminds him again that our salvation is not by works, but by God's mercy (what God does not do to us that we do deserve). Good works should then be the outgrowth of salvation. Church discipline, according to the Word of God, is to be much more strict than that exercised by the Church today. A heretic is to be treated as an unbeliever after he has been admonished twice and refuses instruction. The Epistle ends with a brief treatment of personal matters.

NOTES ON TITUS

As we learn in the Epistle, the Island of Crete was a very difficult place to minister. While there are many similarities between I Timothy and Titus, Titus is somewhat different because of the nature of the people with whom Titus had to work. As we see in the introductory information, these people on Crete were hard headed and lazy. Titus had his hands full trying to get the Churches on the Island established and leaders appointed. Although shorter than First Timothy, Titus is valuable in that it shows us how to deal with the problem Titus faced. The Book of Titus was written about the same time as First Timothy, and generally, for the same purposes. It was written from somewhere in Macedonia shortly before Paul was taken into custody by the Romans to be martyred.

Chapter 1 Salutation: Paul introduced the epistle by referring to himself as the “servant of God” and the “Apostle of Jesus Christ. These first three verses give us the introduction to the Book. He said he was the Apostle of Jesus Christ according to the faith of God’s elect (those in Christ, who are God’s Elect). See I Peter 2:6. First came faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God; second came the acknowledging of the truth of God’s Word; third came godliness as a result of the trusting in the Truth of God’s Word; fourth came the assurance of Eternal Life through trusting in God’s elect as one’s personal Savior; fifth comes ambassadorship as the Christian grows in the knowledge of God’s Word. Paul made it very clear that he was called to preach this gospel, in fact, it was committed unto him by Jesus Christ Himself. See II Corinthians 5:17-20.

a. Verse four tells us the identity of the recipient of this epistle. Much as with I Timothy, Paul addresses Titus as his own son after the common faith. Next to Timothy, Titus must have been Paul’s next most important co-laborer in the Christian ministry. We know he was one of Paul’s most trusted young protégés.

b. Verse five tells us why Paul left Titus on the Island of Crete: (1) to set things in order and, (2) to ordain Elders in every city as Paul had appointed him to do. It is important to note that Paul called the Pastors, Bishops in First Timothy 3:1, but Elders when writing to Titus on the Island of Crete. In both instances he is referring to Pastors, but the terms, in most instances in the New Testament are used interchangeably.

c. Verses six through nine gives us the list of requirements for the man who holds the office of Elder (Pastor). While shorter than the one given to Timothy in the third chapter of I Timothy, it is quite similar. The requirements are:

(1) He must be blameless. Again, this does not mean that the man has to be perfect, but he must be free of those things that would bring reproach on the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

(2) He must be the husband of one wife. If he had been married and divorced and remarried, he would be disqualified. He could marry a second time if his first wife had died, but only to a Christian woman who was a virgin, or who was widowed after being married to the wife of a deceased Pastor.

(3) He must have faithful children (obedient children who were saved). Some King James Bibles put no comma between this statement and the words, “not accused of riot or unruly,” but I believe that while this should be true of the children, it is meant for the Pastor.

(4) He must not be accused of riot, or being unruly. He must be of an even temperament and well behaved.

(5) He must be blameless as the steward of God. Anyone can accuse a Pastor of something he did not do, but he must not be guilty, whether blamed or not. He represents God and, thus, he must be

without guilt of that which would bring reproach on the name of God.

(6) He must not be self-willed. He must not demand to have his way in every situation, whether right or wrong.

(7) He must not be soon angry. He must be able to control his temper in every type of situation. To lose one's temper is to lose one's opportunity.

(8) He must not be given to wine. He must set an example of sobriety for his congregation. If a man is given to drinking alcoholic beverages, or smokes, or does anything that is contrary to a biblical testimony, he will be showing that he is weak in his will-power which, with a Christian, is dependant on the confidence in the Holy Spirit.

(9) He must not be a striker. He should never express his disagreement with something or someone by using his fists. He certainly cannot be a Pastor if he is a wife beater, or if he beats his children.

(10) He must not be given to filthy lucre. He must not serve in the ministry for what he can get out of it for himself.

(11) He must hold fast the faithful Word as he has been taught, as Paul emphasized here, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and convince the gainsayers. He must always be ready to give a (scriptural) answer to those who ask him concerning the hope that is within him.

d. Verses ten through sixteen give us a warning concerning the false teachers and their failings that need to be dealt with. These are the things which are to be set in order in the Churches on the Island of Crete.

(1) The many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, especially they of the circumcision (unsaved Jews). Unruly and vain talker were those who were always opposing and resisting the preaching of the Truth of the Gospel. They were also those who refused to submit themselves to the order and discipline of the Church.

(2) Vain talkers and deceivers: These were those who taught doctrine contrary to the Truth, and didn't even know what they were talking about. See Romans 1:22. Most of these were unsaved Jews.

(3) They subverted whole houses for filthy lucre's sake. Good ministers must be faithful in stopping such, and shutting their mouths; not through physical violence, which is not the biblical way, but through strong preaching of the Truth, and through Church discipline. These did what they did for the love of money which is the root of all evil.

(4) Their own poets often wrote of the Cretan's evil characteristics: They said they were liars. (The Latin word Cretan means "liar." They said they were evil beasts, because they were always ready to devour the innocent, especially for money. They said they were slow bellies (lazy) because they were always quicker to stuff themselves and enter into sensual sins than they were to do any kind of work.

e. Church discipline was to be taken against such who were in the Churches on the Island of Crete. Church discipline is always for the purpose of restoration or salvation, not condemnation and destruction. In the process of disciplining these who were in error, Titus was to be careful not to give heed to Jewish fables (the Judaisers) and commandments of men (those who would turn the believers back to the Law), which turn men away from the Truth. The principle set forth in verse fifteen is one which may be traced all through the Scriptures: No matter how good the intentions of the unbeliever may be, he or she can do nothing that pleases the Lord, but even their good works are an abomination to God. See Proverbs 21:4; Isaiah 64:6; and Hebrews 11:6. In every age of mankind there have been those who profess to know God, but their works contradict their profession. See Ezekiel 33:31 and Isaiah 29:13.

Chapter 2 The Pastoral work of the Teacher/Elder: They are to apply sound doctrine to particular cases. Our attention is once again called to sound doctrine.

a. For the various categories of people in the local Church:

(1) For the elderly men : They are to be sober (serious) about spiritual matters. They are to be grave (avoid levity and act, talk , dress, and conduct themselves) in such a way as to generate confidence in those who follow their example. They are to be temperate (they must do all in moderation). They are to be sound in faith. What a destabilizing influence it is to see the mature Christian leaders erring in their faith and practice. This is why we see Church boards these days allowing rock bands and weak preaching in the Church, along with no requirements for being a member of the Church other than a statement of faith and baptism. There is no real repentance and godly sorrow seen in such people. The Baptist Church has always held to the requirements of a **regenerate** Church and baptism **after** genuine salvation. One Church in central Texas had a pastor who went around town asking the owners of prominent businesses if they would like to be deacons in his Church. Unfortunately, this was a large Baptist Church. The elderly men are to be sound in charity. Without God's kind of love, the ministry of the Christian is without any lasting value. See First Corinthians 13:1-8. The elderly men are to be sound in patience: One who is old in faith, but has not learned patience is a destructive influence on those who follow. See Romans 12:12.

(2) For the aged women: Their behavior should be such as mirrors holiness. They should demonstrate those characteristics which cause others to think of godliness. They are not to be false accusers; not slanderers or gossips causing hurt to others. They are not to be given to much wine (drunkards). We must again look carefully at the context. All fruit of the vine was called wine in the Middle English. God would not have them to partake of any of what He condemns, let alone much. They, like the Elders, are to practice moderation in eating and drinking. An over-weight Christian is never a good example. They are to be teachers of good things: They should teach young women to be sober (serious) about spiritual matters. They are to teach the younger women how to love their husbands. Most broken marriages are broken because the husband and wife do not know how to show love to each other. So many young Christian wives today have so many other interests outside the home that they don't have enough time to show love and dedication to their husbands after the honeymoon is over. Their children are often being raised by a baby sitter or a day nursery, and the children don't ever get to know the real love of a mother and father. Child abuse is rampant in our country today. No wonder people believe in the lie of evolution when monkeys take far better care of their children than human mothers. Too many men demand that the wife work also so that they can have the things of this world that soon pass away. The really "good life" comes from having a close loving family where each member follows biblical guidelines. Many mothers cannot breast-feed because they are too pressured to balance a home and a career at the same time. They never bond with their husband or their children. They are not present to see their children's first steps, or to hear their children's first words. The older women are to teach the young women to be discreet. Today's women, for the most part, are forward, aggressive and daring. What a disgrace it is for a woman to so do and be. The young women need to be taught to keep their testimony above reproach, and to avoid all appearance of evil. The world teaches women to be independent and self-reliant, while God teaches young women to trust Him and to be submissive to their husband's leadership. The older women are to teach the younger women to be chaste, modest, clean, pure and godly. They are to teach the younger women to be keepers at home. Simple things such as keeping a clean house which is an honor to the Lord, and how to do such things as sewing, cooking, washing clothes, ironing, decorating their home, making the home homey, creating an atmosphere at home to which their husband and children want to come, are not being taught to young women today. They would rather get fat and watch television, or try to cultivate a career outside the home than to be a good wife and mother. It is no wonder that so many marriages are doomed from the start. My wife and I had to rent a home until we were fifty years

old, but we always made a rental place a home and not just a place to eat and sleep. My wife and I were married sixty five years and twenty seven days before she passed away, and I loved every moment of it. She has been with the Lord almost three years at this writing, but I miss her so much to this day. We loved each other and our daughter who has now been married for forty one years plus. They have three children and seven and grand children, with an eighth on the way. While she is her Pastor/husband's right hand in the ministry, her home is a place that is a joy to be in. The older women are to teach the younger women to be good; to live in keeping with what the Bible teaches. To be good is to be like God. They are to teach the younger women to obey their own husbands, so that the Word of God is not blasphemed. Women who are not in submission to God do blaspheme the Word of God and God Himself. See Ephesians 5:22-24; Colossians 3:18; and I Peter 3:1-6.

(3) For the young men: Titus was to teach the younger men to be sober-minded (serious about the things of the Lord). See Philippians 4:8; Titus was to be a pattern for the young men to follow in regard to: Doctrine (to be sound in the Bible knowledge); Un-corruptness (to live holy and Christ-like lives in all things). See I Timothy 4:12; Gravity (honest, serious, dependable, trustworthy, etc.); Sincerity (they ought to be taught to be men of their word); Sound speech (what they say should match what they do, and visa versa. They should have speech void of profanity, suggestive words, and questionable inferences. Their speech should be free of gossip and backbiting, and should be such as would condemn those of a contrary part).

(4) For servants: Titus was to teach servants to be obedient to their own masters (today this would apply to employer/employee). We cannot ignore what our employer tells us and have any rapport with him or her in regard to an effective testimony; they are to please their masters in all things, not arguing with them. This often requires going above and beyond what is required of you. See I Peter 2:18; To please their employers in all things, not arguing with them. This often requires going above and beyond what is required of you. See I Peter 2:18; not purloining, but showing good fidelity (they are to be good stewards of that which is their employer's. This will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. In our day and time employers look for the outstanding graduates of Christian colleges and universities because they know these would be more likely to be trustworthy and honest.

b. Verses eleven through fifteen: The proclamation of sound doctrine: The first doctrine is the Grace of God – The Grace of God which has appeared to all men is the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. See First Corinthians 15:1-4. It has appeared to all men in that Christ's substitutionary, propitious blood atonement for all the people of the whole world for all time has, for two thousand years, been made known to all mankind by the preaching of it by the Church. Every part of the world has heard it at some time in those two thousand years. Out of the world's population God has called a people for His name. The darkest, most Gospel-resistant portions of the world today are the very areas where the distribution of the Gospel message had its beginning. When this Grace of God (God's unmerited favor) appeared to all men it taught. What does it teach? It teaches us to deny (repent of) ungodliness (our sins, for we are all sinners; see Romans 3:23) and worldly lusts (I John 2:15-17), we should live soberly (sincerely), righteously (Christ-like), and godly (God-like) in this present world. This instruction is directed to believers only for these things are impossible for the unsaved person to perform. See First Corinthians 2:14. We are to keep looking for, and living in the light of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His own (rapture), who gave Himself for us so that: There are two reasons listed here as to why He did these things for us: (1) That He might redeem us (buy back from the slave market of sin) from all iniquity, and (2) purify unto Himself a peculiar people for His name, zealous of good works. The only way the world can know that we are His people is by our works. I Peter 2:9 and James 2:18 Titus was to teach these things, which were particularly applicable to the people of Crete, exhorting (strong preaching) and rebuking, (scolding). He was to teach these things with authority. Paul ends this chapter with, "**Let no man**

despise thee.” See I Timothy 4:12.

Chapter 3 Verses one through eight: Paul begins this section with a list of things of which Titus was to remind the people of Crete. Not only does he instruct Titus to preach these things to them, but he reminds Titus that, until Christ came and saved them by His **mercy**, they were the same kind of offenders. We should always be careful in warning others of the consequences of rejecting God’s grace and mercy, to remember that we were once in their shoes, rejecting God’s grace and mercy. It will help to keep us humble.

a. Verses one and two: Titus was, first, to keep them aware of their obligation to government and others in authority over them. See Romans chapter thirteen. God is the author of all authority. He removes and He sets up in accordance to His will. If God lets us have an ungodly government, it is because we have earned it through our failure to try to get folks saved, and to preach righteousness. When we do right and live righteously, it makes all the difference in the world as to our circumstances in life. Titus was to teach the people of Crete to speak evil of no man. They were persecuted at the time by unbelievers, and by the Roman government. They were to speak evil of neither. They were to be gentle, showing all humility to all men. That does not mean they were to be the rug for all men to walk over, but they were to endeavor to live temperate lives. They were to be quick to produce every good work. We are not saved by good works, but salvation produces good works. See I Timothy 2:10; Ephesians 2:10; I Thessalonians 5:17; I Timothy 5:10; I Timothy 6:18; II Timothy 3:17; and I Peter 2:12.

b. Verses three through eight: In these verses Paul reminds Titus that they themselves were once lost and sinful until:

- (1) The kindness and love of God (The motivators) appeared on the scene.
- (2) It had nothing to do with our good works, for our best works are as filthy rags (the wrappings of the leper) in the eyes of the Lord.
- (3) God saved us through His mercy (what we deserve but what God does not do to us. His mercy is the other side of the coin of God’s grace).
- (4) He expressed His mercy through the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. See I Corinthians 12:13 and I John 1:9. This was shed on us **abundantly** through Jesus Christ our Savior. Our works had nothing to do with our salvation. Jesus paid for our sins on the cross, and when we receive His great salvation by faith, He applies his redemptive work to us and justifies us before the Father. Once we are justified (made as righteous as Christ Himself by receiving God’s salvation), we are immediately made heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ Jesus. See Romans 8:23. This is as sure as the very guarantee of eternal life.
- (5) Titus was to constantly remind them to maintain good works because they were saved. See Romans 6:1, 2; Titus 2:14; and I Timothy 1:15.

c. Verses nine through eleven present a list of things of which Titus was to warn the people of Crete.

- (1) They were to avoid foolish questions. Theologians like to sit around and argue the fine points of doctrine, which, if taken at face value from the Scriptures, are crystal clear to the born-again believer.
- (2) They were to avoid genealogies. Genealogies are important, or God would not have preserved so many of them for us in His Word, but we can get so caught up in studying genealogies that we neglect the basic doctrines under the new covenant of grace that have to do with our salvation and our Christian growth after we are saved.

(3) They were to avoid contentions and strivings about the Law. The Law is important to us because it is God's perfect standard of righteousness, but we can get so taken up with studying God's Law that we lose sight of grace. Since we are no longer under the Law, why should we be so taken with it that we forget the grace of God. The Law has nothing to do with our salvation since we cannot be saved by keeping the Law. Those who want to get young believers to return under the Law do so for the purpose of bringing attention to themselves, and nourishing their pride.

(4) Titus was also to warn the people of Crete concerning heretics and their false teachings. A heretic is a person who, by some means, is a professing Christian, but has gotten off into false doctrine. They are to be warned once, and if that doesn't correct them, a second time, but if they do not heed the second warning they are to be rejected from the Church, the local body of believers, and the true Church as a whole. The reason this action is to be taken is that a little leaven leavens the whole lump. See First Corinthians 5:6 and Galatians 5:9.

d. Verses eleven through fifteen seem to have a more personal sound to them. They are more reminders than they are admonitions.

(1) It appears that Titus' stay on the Island of Crete was not to be a permanent one. Paul was sending Tychicus and Artemus to Titus so that Titus could go and meet him at Nicopolis where Paul had determined to spend the winter. He instructed Titus to bring Zenas the lawyer with him, and Apollos the great orator, perhaps because he felt he might need them when he went before Caesar the next time. Evidently he anticipated his imminent arrest by the Romans.

(2) Paul again urged Titus to preach to the people of Crete to be careful to maintain good works which would be necessary in order to not be unfruitful. Christians will never bear fruit for the Lord if they do not look, talk and act like Christians.

(3) Paul sent greetings to Titus from the people who were with him (evidently those whom he had led to Christ wherever he was in Macedonia at the time), and to all those on Crete who loved him and the other Christians of Macedonia.

(4) Paul closed with his trademark, **"Grace be with you all."** **"Amen."**

THE BOOK OF II TIMOTHY

Authorship: (See authorship for I Timothy) This is the last of Paul's Epistles. It is addressed to Timothy, and is mainly personal, only incidentally pastoral, and less doctrinal than the other two Pastoral Epistles. It fits perfectly with what we know to be the incidents leading up to the end of Paul's life. Certain references in the epistle to people and places add authenticity to Paul as the author. It was generally accepted as Pauline by the early Church.

Date: Paul seems to have been executed shortly before Nero's death on June 8, 68 AD. It is clear that II Timothy was written shortly before Paul's execution. We may, therefore, date this epistle in the late fall of 67 AD or the early spring of 68 AD.

Purpose: The purpose of the writing of II Timothy seems to be three-fold:

- A. He wanted to encourage Timothy who would be shouldering Paul's responsibilities, and to warn him of the false teachers and teachings which were abroad.
- B. He wanted to let Timothy know how much he missed his fellowship, and that he longed to see him again.
- C. He wanted to let Timothy know of the need of his cloak, his books, and his parchments.

II Timothy seems to be a last will and testament by Paul. There is no tone of sadness in the Epistle, but a strong note of victory.

THE OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF II TIMOTHY

I.	Greeting and introduction	1:1-18
A.	Greeting as from a father to a son	1:1,2
B.	Recounting of Timothy's faith	1:3-5
C.	First list of strong admonition	1:6-18
1.	Stir up the gift of God	1:6,7
2.	Be not ashamed of the Gospel nor Paul	1:8
3.	Be a partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel	1:8-12
4.	Hold fast the form of sound words	1:13
5.	That which was committed unto thee, keep	1:14-18
II.	A good soldier of Jesus Christ	2:1-26
A.	Second list of strong admonitions	
1.	Be strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus	2:1
2.	Teach others what I have taught you	2:2
3.	Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ	2:3-13
4.	Charge the people not to strive, but to hear	2:14
5.	Study to show thyself approved unto God	2:15
6.	Shun profane and vain babblings	2:16-18
7.	Depart from iniquity	2:19-21
8.	Flee youthful lusts	2:22
9.	Avoid foolish and unlearned questions	2:23-26
III.	Perilous times in the Last Days	3:1-13
A.	This know also	3:1-5
B.	Paul's stand in the Last Days	3:6-13
IV.	The Christian's responsibility in the Last Days	3:14-17
A.	Next strong admonitions	3:14-17
1.	Continue in the things thou hast learned	3:14,15
2.	Know that all Scripture is inspired of God	3:16,17
V.	Paul's charge to Timothy	4:1-5
A.	Last list of strong admonitions – The charge	4:1
1.	Preach the Word	4:2-4
2.	Watch thou in all things	4:5
3.	Do the work of an evangelist	4:5
4.	Make full proof of thy ministry	4:5
VI.	Paul's personal experience	4:6-18

ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK OF II TIMOTHY

Chapter 1 – II Timothy is known for its personal nature. Paul is writing his last will and testament, so to speak. He has chosen as his successor, young Timothy whom he found early in the second missionary journey, and whom he groomed personally, to step into his shoes when the Lord called him home. Verses three through five give us great insight into how much Timothy meant to Paul. Verse five is a real witness to the importance of a strong Christian heritage. Timothy in particular, and all in the ministry should be careful to stir up (cultivate) the gift or calling of God. Timothy is reminded of the great importance of the Gospel, and the need of his faithfulness to it. Paul informs Timothy that all the Christian leaders of Asia had forsaken him, except for Onesiphorus.

Chapter 2 - Three examples are given in this chapter to illustrate the measure of dedication the Christian should give to the Gospel:

- (1) The soldier who does not entangle himself with the things of this life, or world (I John 2:15,16), but gives himself wholly to the Gospel.
- (2) The athlete who focuses only on his training that he may run to win no matter what the pain or cost.
- (3) The husbandman, or farmer, who must work hard at his work if he is to harvest or produce a crop which will feed his family and himself. He partakes of the first fruits in order to know the quality and quantity of the harvest. All of this is to make the Christian strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus, that he might instruct others, who can instruct others. The rest of this chapter is the negative side of the same subject. The Christian must forgo certain things, and eliminate certain things in order to be a fruitful Christian (Hebrews 12:1,2).

Chapter 3 – In the first five verses of this chapter we have a stern warning concerning the things that will bring about perilous times in the last days. The last days extend from the Day of Pentecost until the rapture of the Church. We are seeing these things today, and we are seeing them escalate as we come closer to the end of the age. They result (Vs 5) in a generation of “Christianity” which has a form of godliness, but no power. This is the time of the apostasy which we see in II Thessalonians chapter two. The rest of this chapter constitutes a warning against the influences of this time, and the only true answer to it, which is the Word of God hidden in the heart.

Chapter 4 – A charge is given to Timothy in the first part of this chapter:

He is to preach the Word faithfully in spite of the evil influences which may come about.

He is to preach the Word faithfully when it is convenient, and when it is not convenient.

He is to reprove (take to task), rebuke (correct), exhort (strongly instruct) with great patience and sound doctrine.

The reason for this is that the apostasy will draw many away to false doctrine.

The apostasy will be marked by the fact that people will not want sound doctrine any longer.

They will seek out teachers and preachers who will tell them what they want to hear.

Paul uses his own life as a pattern for young Timothy in that:

- (1) He fought a good fight. (Jude Vs 3)
- (2) He finished his course. (Hebrews 12:1)
- (3) He has kept the faith. (Jude Vs 3)

The reward for a faithful Christian is a crown of righteousness because he or she has labored for the Lord in the light of the coming of Christ for His own (Romans 14:10). Paul says that only Luke is with him.

Demas had forsaken him for the world, which is an example of the strength of the world's influences, for Demas had been with Paul during his first imprisonment. Crescens had evidently been sent by Paul to the Churches of Galatia. Titus had been sent to Dalmatia.

Paul expressed a request for Timothy to bring his cloak, for the cells were cold and damp in the Roman prisons. He also requested his books (scrolls) but especially the parchments, which were undoubtedly the Old Testament Scriptures. Some see loneliness and depression in Paul in this Epistle, but I cannot find it. It appears to be an Epistle of great victory and satisfaction. The closing verses speak of God's faithfulness, and greetings to his fellow-workers.

NOTES ON II TIMOTHY

II Timothy is the least pastoral of the Pastoral Epistles. This is Paul's last epistle and is more of a personal last will and testament to Timothy. Paul had chosen Timothy to take over the full responsibility of the oversight of all the Churches, and the continuance of Paul's work for he knows that he would not be physically delivered from his Roman prison this time except by death. There is the strong possibility that Paul wrote the Book of Hebrews, but we do not attribute it to him because he did not identify himself as the writer. If he did write it, it would have been written at this same time from Rome, during the second imprisonment, and just before Paul's martyrdom in 68 AD.

Some have accused Paul of being depressed and melancholy at the writing of II Timothy, but I have never been able to find any other spirit but that of victory and anticipation on Paul's part as he looks forward to the fulfillment of both Philippians 1:21-24 and II Corinthians 5:1-9.

Having considered the introductory material for II Timothy, let us continue with a detailed study of this masterpiece.

Chapter 1 More than any other Pauline epistle, II Timothy is extremely personal and intimate in nature. In the first two verses of chapter one we have the greeting to Timothy:

a. In the very first word of the first verse Paul identifies himself as the author of the epistle. He identifies himself as an Apostle of Jesus Christ “...**by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus.**” Christianity is the only religion in the world that can promise eternal life based on the promise of God, its founder. Some others may promise a form of life after death based on certain accomplishments of the individual; that is, good works, or self sacrifice. The epistle is addressed to Timothy, Paul's “...**dearly beloved son.**” Timothy was not Paul's son in the flesh, but his spiritual son in that Paul had probably been the means of Timothy's being saved on Paul's first missionary journey. For Timothy, Paul wishes God's grace (that which God does for us that we do not deserve), mercy (that which God does not do to us that we do really deserve), and peace (both peace with God when we are saved, and the Peace of God which is ours as we walk in fellowship with, and obedience to God) to be his from “**God the Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord.**”

b. In verses three through five Paul gives thanks for Timothy's faith: In verse three Paul was not thanking God for the fact that he, Paul, remembered Timothy each day in prayer, but that, when he prays each day, Timothy is in his thoughts. The wording is awkward in the English translation. Timothy had become like Paul's own son, and he loves to think about, and pray for him and his success in the ministry. In verse four Paul expresses his desire to see Timothy again. Paul acknowledges that Timothy was driven to tears over his circumstances, and that Timothy desired most of all that Paul might be filled with joy. Joy is not the same as happiness: happiness is dependant on what happens, but joy is the knowledge that God loves you, is with you, has your best in mind, and keeps you by His omnipotence in any happening. Verse five reveals the heritage of Timothy's faith. His grandmother, Lois, and his mother, Eunice were responsible for that. In I Timothy 1:2 Paul says that their faith was unfeigned, or genuine. What a wonderful heritage to have.

c. In verses six through eighteen, Paul gives Timothy some reminders of responsibilities in the Gospel ministry.

(1) There has been a great deal of controversy over what gift is referred to in verse six. The gift was conferred upon Timothy by the laying on of Paul's hands. In both the Old Testament Hebrew, and the New Testament Koine Greek, the laying on of hands is symbolic of one of two things, or both; the transfer of power or authority, or the imparting of the power of the Holy Spirit. After the end of the first century it was symbolic, for its literal application ended with the last of the twelve Apostles, including Paul in the place of Judas. In this instance, the gift, I believe, was the authority and power of Paul's ministry passed to Timothy, just as the power and authority of Elijah's ministry was passed to Elisha in the Old Testament. It does not speak of the gift of salvation, for, from the very beginning of the New Covenant on the day of Pentecost, salvation was by grace through faith, not the laying on of hands. See Ephesians 2:8, 9. It is also held by many, for good reason, as the gift of the call to the ministry. If I get to Heaven and find out this last interpretation is the correct one, I will not be the least bit upset. Which of the first and last two was referred to, the gift referred to his ability to fulfill his calling. Each of us is called to the ministry of personal evangelism, and to calling, we must always be quick to do all that is necessary to stir it up by daily time in the Word of God and that personal time in prayer with God. Notice that this is a command, not a suggestion. Verse seven reinforces the importance of stirring up the gift that is already ours. **"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."** The power of which this speaks is the power of the Holy Spirit, the love is the love of God Himself, and the sound mind is that which is centered on the Lord Jesus Christ and His example He has set for us. See Hebrews 12:1, 2. Verses eight through twelve challenge Timothy, and us, to endure the afflictions incidental to the ministry. First, Timothy is admonished to not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Christian should be honored to be an ambassador for the creator of the universe. See II Corinthians 5:17-21, nor of His messenger, though he be in prison for the Gospel's sake. In 1975 when the "Child Care Bill" was passed by our State Legislature, it nearly put Lester Roloff's ministries out of business, and put him in jail twice, but he would not yield to the State's pressure to try to force him to take a State license for the Church's ministries. There were many preacher's, however, that would no longer have anything to do with Roloff for fear of going to jail also. May God forgive them. See Hebrews 13:3. It may not be very long from the writing of this text until the Church in America gets a chance to show how serious it is about being willing to suffer for the Gospel's sake. When Paul tells Timothy to be a partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel, according to the power of God, it is a command, not just a good idea. See II Timothy 3:12 and 2:12. If a Christian is not suffering some degree of suffering for the Gospel's sake, there is only one thing true of him or her: They are not living godly in Christ Jesus. Verse nine tells us that God's calling to each Christian is not because of his or her abilities or talents, nor because of our desires, plans, or works, but according to His will. Verse ten reminds us that it is because of Christ's redemptive work that God can now reveal His will for us. Instead of seeking how we can put our will to work for God, we ought to be seeking what He has planned for us. We cannot know the will of God for our life until we first know Christ as our Savior. I Corinthians 2:14. Saul of Tarsus came to know God's will for his life after he first came to know Christ on the road to Damascus. We can know the will of God for our life as clearly as did Saul (Paul) if we are willing to do it. When can we really say, **"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"** the Lord will let us know definitely and clearly. Paul says in verse eleven that he was **appointed** a preacher, and an Apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. He did not choose it, but was appointed by God. In order to endure victoriously the trials that accompany the ministry, however, we must know **"whom we have believed"** (I John 5:13) and that **"He is able to keep that which we have committed unto Him against that day"** (Philippians 1:6 and I Peter 4:19, according to verse twelve. Verse thirteen presents us with another command that is given to Timothy by Paul. He is commanded to **"...hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."** This has to do with doctrine. Paul had taught Timothy what God gave to him on the back side of the Arabian Desert many years before. This is the Gospel which was to be preached and

taught to the Gentiles. To this, Timothy was to hold fast. See Ephesians 2:8, 9, Hebrews 12:2, and John 14:21. Verse fourteen lists one more thing that Timothy is to keep; that good thing that was committed unto him was to be kept by the Holy Ghost. This is also a reference to the Gospel, but the important part of this command is that it is to be kept by the Holy Ghost that dwells in the believer. This means that once a person is saved, and is called to preach, or witness, or write the Gospel message, the Holy Spirit, being our teacher of the things pertaining to the redemptive work of Christ, will not let us turn from the true message to a false one. See John 14:23, 26; 25:26; and 16:13. Verses fifteen through eighteen of chapter one give us examples of the loyalty and the opposition that Timothy will be up against; the first being, that there will be those who once stood with you, but when the pressure is on, they disassociate themselves from you. Those of the Churches of western Asia Minor (possibly the seven listed in Revelation chapters two and three) have all turned against him. This may have been out of fear because they knew that this second imprisonment meant his martyrdom. It is difficult for the strongest of Christians to face martyrdom, but when your “friends” all forsake you, it is that much harder. To make it even harder, Paul’s martyrdom took place in the end of the reign of Caesar Nero, the madman. Paul did not hesitate to list the names of at least two who fell into that category: Phygellus and Hermogenes. Paul inserts somewhat of a prayer for Onesiphorus in verse sixteen, who frequently ministered to Paul’s needs, and was not ashamed of Paul’s plight. When he was in Rome he actually sought out Paul and found him, not being fearful to be identified with him. See Hebrews 13:2. Paul continued his prayer for Onesiphorus in verse eighteen by praying that the Lord would grant him mercy. Paul reminded Timothy of how Onesiphorus had ministered to his needs when he had been in Ephesus.

Chapter 2 I believe the whole second chapter of II Timothy is given to telling Timothy how to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ. As we look at the rapid development of the world situation today; and as we look at the rapid fulfillment of Bible prophecy, we cannot help but say, “Amen” to all that is written in chapter two. War is not for cowards or quitters, but is for those who are strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. The instructions given in chapter two are almost all commands, not suggestions, for Timothy, and for us:

a. Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Once again, grace is what God does for us that we do not deserve. To be strong in grace is two-fold: first, it is looking to the grace of God for enabling for what we cannot do for ourselves. See John 15:5 and Philippians 4:13. Second, we should be quick to exercise grace toward others. To be strong in grace demands exercise. Spiritual muscles will atrophy with the lack of use as will physical ones. The things which Paul had taught Timothy over their years of service together had been taught in the hearing of multitudes of other witnesses and were meant, not for Timothy only, but for Timothy to teach to others, who, in turn, could teach others also. How can one exercise spiritual muscles?

- (1) Put on the whole armor of God: Ephesians 6:11-18
- (2) Study the Word of God : II Timothy 2:15 and 6:11-18
- (3) Develop a strong prayer life: I Thessalonians 5:17 and James 4:2, 3
- (4) Be absolutely sure of your salvation: I John 5:11-13
- (5) Work at becoming a soul-winner: Proverbs 11:30 and John 15:5
- (6) Be sure your testimony is clean and right with God: I Corinthians 6:19, 20

b. Those whom we teach should be faithful men who will, in turn, teach others also. This is the method God designed for getting the Gospel out. If two Christians would each reach one person and teach them how to reach others for Christ, in one year’s time there would be 8,192 people saved and winning souls. In two years there would be 33,554,432 people saved and winning souls. At the

end of two years and seven months there would be 8,589, 934,592 people saved and winning souls. There are only seven point four billion people in the world. This shows us that there are few Christians winning souls, and even less teaching others to win souls and trying to reach the world for Christ.

c. Paul gives Timothy three illustrations as to how to prepare for spiritual battle. This is vitally important since the Christian soldier will encounter much opposition.

(1) Be a good soldier of Jesus Christ: 2:3, 4: A good soldier will encounter much opposition and so he must get into basic training and prepare himself the best that he can. Basic training can be obtained from someone already in the battle and hardened up.

(a) Look for someone who is true to the Lord and the Scriptures, and who has a few scars.

(b) Find someone who is not entangled with the things of this world and is held in high esteem by other faithful Christians. Paul is not saying that a good soldier of Jesus Christ cannot have any worldly possessions, or get married, etc. He is saying that these things should not possess him. Paul is talking about getting entangled with the things which make up this world system defined in I John 2:15-17. One cannot love the world system and love God at the same time. The world system is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. The world-system, passes away, but he who does the will of God will abide forever.

(2) The second illustration is that of a successful athlete: 2:5 If we expect to wear the victor's crown we must win it in keeping with the rules of the game. We cannot make our own rules and try to do God's work our own way. He is the coach.

(3) The third illustration is that of a farmer: 2:6-8 Before we can plant, grow, harvest, and sell a good crop we must be sold on what we are growing. Before we can win others to Jesus Christ we must first be partakers of Christ and be thoroughly sold on Him as the only way of salvation.

d. The Gospel is to be firmly guarded and cherished. 2:8-10 Although Jesus completed the payment for the sins of all mankind for all time on the cross, and said, "**It is finished,**" without the resurrection there could be no justification for anyone. Romans 4:25.

(1) Paul's example of faithfulness: 2:9, 10 Paul was falsely accused of being an evil-doer, and spent much time in bonds, but he was glad to do so for the Gospel's sake. Had Paul not gone to prison in Rome the first time, Caesar's household would not have heard the Gospel. See Philippians 1:15-18. Paul was willing to suffer whatever came his way so that others might have the opportunity to hear the Gospel. This ought to be the attitude of every Christian, and especially those who are called into full-time Christian service. Vs 10

(2) The Truth embodied in a faithful saying: 2:11-13 Paul is speaking of dying to self in verse 11. If we are willing to die to self in order that the Gospel might get to others, we have the promise that we shall also live with Him, that is, we might share in eternal life. Vs 11 If we are willing to forget self and bear the sufferings of Christ in order to get the Gospel to others, we shall also reign with Him. for all eternity, beginning with the thousand-year reign of Christ here on earth. See Revelation 20:4; Philippians 3:10; and II Timothy 3:12. However, those who deny Christ will be lost eternally. (The apostate is an unsaved person who once claimed to have embraced sound doctrine, but when the heat of persecution comes, they go away and deny Him whom they once claimed to follow. Vs 12. God is faithful to both His promises and His threats. If we suffer we will reign with Him, but if we deny Him, He will deny us. He will not go back on either one for to do so would be to deny Himself, and that He cannot do. Vs 13

(3) The Truth rightly handled: 2:14-19 Again, Timothy is reminded to teach others to cling to sound doctrine and avoid striving about words which do not profit. Vs 14

(4) To be sure that we do this, we must, on an on-going basis, study to show ourselves approved unto God, with no reason to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth. (Rightly dividing the Word of Truth simply means correctly interpreting what the Holy Scriptures say, and not simply trying to make it say what we want it to say). To be sure that we do this, we must, on an on-going basis, study to show ourselves approved unto God with no reason to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth. With so many of our so-called Christian book stores selling only those things that people want instead of what they need, it is all the more important that we study the unchanging Word of God, and study helps that are in complete agreement with the Word of God. We must also be careful that we are not studying some perverted translation or paraphrase of the Scriptures. Vs 15

(5) Timothy is strongly commanded to shun profane and vain babblings: for these will increase unto more ungodliness. The more of the writings of liberals and infidels we read and study, the farther we get from the Truth of the Scriptures. Their teachings will eat like a canker (cancer). Paul lists two examples of those who have fallen into that trap: Hymenaeus and Philetus. It is so sad to see promising young men led aside into false doctrine. Vs 16, 17 These men had been teaching that the resurrection was past and had overthrown the faith of some. This happened at Thessalonica. See II Thessalonians 2:1-7. Vs 18 It is wonderful to know Christ as our Savior, but it is even more wonderful to know that He knows us, and that we are His. This cannot change since those who have sincerely professed Christ as Savior are built upon the one unchanging foundation; Jesus Christ. See Matthew 16:16-18 and I Corinthians 3:10-15. In the light of this Truth, all of God's people should depart from iniquity. Vs 19

(6) The Truth applied to life: 2:20-26. The Great House of which Paul writes here in the Church of the Living God. In every local Church there are some individuals (vessels) which honor the Lord and are an encouragement to everyone else in the house. There are also some individuals who dishonor the Lord and discourage others. Let us make sure that we are a vessel that brings honor to the Lord. What true Christian does not want to be useable to the Lord? Vs 20, 21

e. Here are some things to do to be a vessel unto honor:

(1) Flee youthful lusts. Some think that these are lusts that only bother us in our youth, but they begin at puberty and plague us the rest of our life. We are told to resist the devil and He will flee from us, but here we are told to flee. These are too hard for us to handle, so we should flee to the Word of God for victory. See Psalm 119:9, 11 Vs 22

(2) Foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. See Vs 16. First, we are to flee, and then we are to avoid. These are too hard for us in the flesh, so we need to stay away from them. Vs 23

(3) The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all man, apt to teach. While the Bishop or Elder (Pastor) must always be ready to do the work of an evangelist, he also must have an aptitude for teaching. If he does not have this aptitude he is not called to preach. This verse takes us back to the qualifications of a Bishop. The Bishop must not be a verbal brawler. Never argue with a fool. We are not called to argue, but to preach the Truth of God. Again, Paul emphasizes meekness or humility. We know we have the Truth, so we know we don't have to strive or argue. People who would oppose the Truth simply oppose themselves. If we patiently present the Truth of God's Word, they might be saved. Vs 24, 25

(4) We should do these things listed above so that, perchance, some who hear the Truth might be able to recover themselves out of the snare of the devil. Verse 26 makes it clear that the final decision is up to the person presented with the opportunity. Vs 26

Chapter 3 The Gospel is to be recognized as a fortress against apostasy: 3:1-17 Apostasy has been previously defined as a falling away from; or a departure from that which one previously claimed to believe or hold dear. Chapter three begins with the reasons for apostasy in the last days. The last days covers a period from the Day of Pentecost until the rapture of the Church. See Hebrews 1:2

a. The entire Church Age is marked by perilous times (trouble-filled times). The entire Church Age is full of peril for the believer because of the nature of the unsaved during this time. But there is also an implication in the Scriptures that these things will escalate during this period, ending in a vast apostasy. Here is a list of some of the things contributing to the perilous times:

(1) Men shall be lovers of their own selves. All manner of evil will come from men who love their own selves, while all manner of good will come from men who love God.

(2) Men and women will be covetous. They will never be satisfied with what they have, but will always want more.

(3) Boasters – Claiming accomplishments they have not done; boasting themselves against God and boasting that they do not need Him.

(4) Proud – Pride was the father of all sins. Pride puts self before God.

(5) Blasphemers – Attributing to man what God only can do.

(6) Disobedient to parents – This was a capital crime under the old covenant of the Law.

(7) Unthankful – Unthankful people always take others for granted. They do not possess the grace to thank anyone for anything, but assume that others owe them.

(8) Unholy – An unthankful society always leads to an unholy society. God's Word says that praise (thanksgiving to God) is comely (attractive). A thankful person draws attention to God, while an unthankful person is obnoxious, or unholy.

(9) Without natural affection – This not only refers to homosexuality and lesbianism, but to incest and child abuse.

(10) Truce-breakers – People who feel no obligation to keep their word in an agreement.

(11) False accusers – People who put good for evil and evil for good. The good are accused of doing wrong and are punished while evil doers are held in high esteem.

(12) Incontinent – Completely out of control; cannot be controlled.

(13) Fierce – Vicious and bitterly mean

(14) Despisers of those that are good – Because the good shine the light of conviction on their evil deeds.

(15) Traitors – People who will sell out their own parents, friends or family to get what they want.

(16) Heady – Strong willed people who will not listen to anyone else: they think only they can be right.

(17) High-minded – Proud with only a concern for their own plans and desires.

(18) Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God – This passage does not say that they will have no love for God, but that they will prefer pleasure over God. If faced with the choice between the two, they will take pleasure. These are people who go to a good Bible-preaching church when it is convenient, which isn't very often.

(19) Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof – These are people who go through all the right motions, but the power of God has departed. Isaiah chapter one.

(20) These people creep into houses – They are subtle, not announcing themselves for what they are, as both Peter and Jude warned.

(21) Silly women – such as Ellen White and Mary Baker Eddy who were both founders of cults.

(22) Ever learning – We have seen in our day a good number of those who start out well, but are never satisfied with learning. They are eventually taken with some false doctrine which may even lead to the beginning of some false religious system.

(23) Jannes and Jambres – According to ancient Jewish literature, these were magicians who withstood Moses when he went to Egypt to lead Israel out of bondage. They dealt in the occult. Those who are reprobate concerning the faith are past redemption. The folly of these who bring about perilous times in the Church Age will be made known to all men as was that of Jannes and Jambres.

b. In defense of the faithful: 3:10-12 Traveling together, and serving the Lord together for as many years as Paul and Timothy, had allowed Timothy to not only learn much from Paul, but also to know much about Paul.

(1) Timothy had thoroughly learned the doctrine taught by Paul. Doctrine is simply the systematic teaching of Bible Truths. The best part about knowing Paul's doctrine was that it began in Genesis 1:1 and continued through the last truth taught in the Bible.

(2) Timothy had also fully learned Paul's manner of life (life style). He knew that Paul was as genuine and consistent as it was possible for a human being to be. This does not mean that Paul never displayed disappointment or discouragement, but we know he was not inconsistent. Paul was certainly one after whom Timothy could pattern his life.

(3) Paul had a clear and concise purpose in life. It was one from which he could not be turned. What a wonderful example for a young preacher boy.

(4) Paul's faith was unwavering. I am sure that Timothy was never tempted to not follow in the faith-steps of Paul.

(5) Not only did Paul suffer a great deal for the Gospel, but he was also long-suffering, as was Paul's mentor, Jesus. Timothy traveled in the shadow of Paul's patience as Paul did in that of our Lord.

(6) Paul not only taught the practice of God's kind of love (Agape), but he lived it. As he taught it to Timothy, Timothy was to teach it to others, who could teach it to others.

(7) Patience and long-suffering are very similar. We might say that long-suffering is patience under pressure. This is one of the hardest things for any young preacher to learn, and it is one of the hardest for an old one to teach.

(8) Some have expressed their disappointment with the listing of Paul's persecutions in his epistles for fear that they might turn some from following their call to the ministry, but if a young preacher boy can be turned from his calling that easily, he might as well not even start his journey. In the immediate future we may be facing some situations similar to those Paul faced for the Gospel's sake. Let's hope our preachers are not going to be easily stopped. Evidently Timothy left us as good a record as did Paul.

(9) The same thing might be said of Paul's afflictions as are said here of his persecutions. It seems that Paul was always faced with some sort of physical, emotional, or spiritual affliction, but the blessing is in watching God give great victory in spite of afflictions. Paul's testimony was that God had delivered him out of all of these.

(10) Vs 12 As we have said before, anyone who is sincerely saved, but is not suffering persecution

is just not living godly in Christ Jesus. This verse leaves no question about that. See also II Timothy 2:12.

c. Our confidence is in the inspired Scriptures. 3:13-17 Verse thirteen is the reason we believe that the things which bring about perilous times will escalate as the Church Age comes to a close. These things will wax worse and worse. Timothy was not to let these things bother him, but was to continue in the things Paul had taught him (2:2), knowing of whom he had learned them. Vs 14 Although Timothy had known the Scriptures from the time he was a child (Old Testament Scriptures), he had probably not known Christ until Paul came on that first missionary journey (1:2). The Gospel is to be found, however, in the Old Testament Scriptures (Vs 15). Verses 16 and 17 are absolutely essential to our confidence in the Scriptures. All Scripture is God-breathed (II Peter 1:20, 21), and all Scriptures (God-breathed, canonical writings) are profitable for (1) Doctrine; (2) Reproof; (3) Correction; (4) and Instruction in righteousness. The purpose of all Scripture is that the man of God may be perfect (mature), thoroughly (thoroughly) furnished (prepared or equipped) unto all good works.

d. The final charge to Timothy, and the conclusion: 4:1-22. Timothy was then given a solemn charge (4:1-5). The charge is administered before God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living (quick) and the dead at His appearing (rapture), and at His Kingdom (His second coming). The first judgment Paul is speaking of here is the Judgment Seat of Christ at which all believers must appear. This judgment is administered to believers on the basis of what they did with what God gave them.

(1) Preach the Word! Vs 2 Timothy was not to preach current events, politics, the biographies of great men and women of God, book reports, or anything else but the Word of God. He was to preach; not argue, debate, or dialogue. He was to stand on the only perfect Truth. John 17:17.

(2) He was to be instant (prepared in an instant) in season (at the accustomed time and place) and out of season (at any opportunity). If a plant brings forth fruit out of season it is because it is determined to take advantage of any and all appropriate weather changes and moisture and plant food provisions. It is waiting to jump at any and every opportunity. Most preachers preach about a half hour between 11:30 and 12:00 on Sunday morning. Preaching on the street corner is out of season: preaching in a prison or jail is out of season, etc. Witnessing at work or knocking on doors is out of season, but it pays great dividends.

(3) He was to reprove (charge openly with fault or concerning error). Little of this is done in churches today. It does not all have to be done from the pulpit, but it does need to be done.

(4) He was to rebuke (strongly correct error, misconduct, etc.). This does not always have to be done from the pulpit, but it does need to be done as soon as it is known.

(5) He was to exhort. (Exhortation is strong preaching about which there can be no question as to what is meant). This was to be done with all long-suffering (Timothy was not to tire of doing these things, but was to continue doing them when they were needed).

(6) He was to preach sound doctrine. Doctrine is the systematic setting forth of the cardinal Truths taught in God's Word. The reason why most so-called churches are accomplishing nothing today is because they have abandoned doctrine. Even those Churches where, what the Bible says, is being preached, the people are being told what they believe, but they are not being taught why they believe it. The average professing Christian could not tell a person how to be saved, nor could they tell them how they can know they have eternal life. The time of which Paul is speaking here is the period called the "last days" which is the period extending from the Day of Pentecost until the rapture of the Church. As this period progresses, people will abandon sound doctrine and will search for a teacher who will tickle their ears and tell them what they want to hear. They will look for a church where the couples their age fellowship together and do things together. They do not

look for a Church where they can get involved in getting the Gospel out. This is the time of the apostasy. In case you hadn't noticed, we are now deeply into this period. Keep your eye on the signs of the times.

(7) We need to be aware of the issues of the day and warn our fellow Christians of them. Watch Israel, for she is the guide to prophecy. There are four things Timothy is told to do here to oppose the apostasy: Watch in all things: Keep your eye on the deterioration of society. There is hardly a day that goes by but that we see some aspect of prophecy being fulfilled.

(8) Endure afflictions: Stand strong in the face of strong opposition. It is hard to keep going when it seems like most others are directly opposed to what you are doing. Keep in mind who it is you should be trying to please.

(9) Do the work of an evangelist. A good pastor or preacher should never preach a message from the Word of God without including the way of salvation loud and clear.

(10) Make full proof of thy ministry. Timothy was to use to the fullest, all the abilities and gifts God had put in his hands (Vs 5).

e. Paul's final testimony: 4:6-8 Paul knew full well that he would not be delivered from prison this time. God had shown him this so that he would have time for preparation. There is no hint of sadness, but a tone of victory and satisfaction (Vs 6). Paul had done the three most important things a minister could do :

(1) He had fought a good fight. The Christian life is definitely a warfare; if it were not, we would not need the whole armor of God, Ephesians 6;12

(2) He had finished his course. This is an athletic term which referred to crossing the finish line. Whatever we undertake for God, we should finish, no matter what the cost. If God calls us to a task we had best complete it. No one likes a quitter.

(3) He had kept the faith. This is a reference to the faith once delivered unto the Saints (Jude Vs 3). Paul was always true to the doctrine God had given him in the Arabian Desert so many years before. If Paul had not been true to the faith, we may not have had the Truth of the Gospel today. For those who will follow Paul's example and do these three things, there is a crown of righteousness (eternal life), for they live in the light of Christ's coming for His own.

f. Paul's love and his concerns: 4:19-22. In these verses we find an account of Paul's fellow workers and their situations at the time of the writing. To have one's life-long service turn out like this would have left any other man in abject despair, but not Paul. His joy did not depend on the faithfulness of his fellow-workers, but on the faithfulness of Christ. Most of us, in Paul's position, would have been dwelling on the failures in their ministry, but Paul was undoubtedly dwelling on the thousands of converts, Churches established, etc. But Paul did leave us some examples of what can happen when Christians are not on the watch for the roaring lion, the devil.

(1) Demas had left Paul in prison awaiting the executioner and had made his way to Thessalonica. Paul states confidently that Demas had departed from him, having loved this present world. We don't know if he was backslidden, an apostate who had previously been able to successfully handle his act as a faithful co-worker of Paul, or just what his complete motivation was. We do know that he appeared to be a faithful co-worker with Paul when the Colossian and Philemon epistles were written for Paul was in prison in Rome the first time, and Demas was there with him. See Colossians 4:14 and Philemon Vs 24.

(2) Crescens had gone to Galatia. We don't know if Paul had sent him there to minister, or if he had fled Rome because of the persecution under Nero. Paul made no negative remarks about the reason for his departure.

(3) Titus had undoubtedly been sent to Dalmatia, a province far north of Macedonia along the east coast of the Adriatic Sea, and which, today, would be part of southern France.

(4) Luke, the beloved physician was with Paul, and was, undoubtedly, a great comfort to him. We do not know what happened to Luke following Paul's martyrdom, but we do know that he was faithful. He may have been martyred along with Paul. He too will have a Crown of Righteousness.

(5) Timothy is urged to bring John Mark with him when he came. Mark, as a disciple of both Barnabas and Peter had learned his lesson and was now profitable to Paul and to the Lord in the ministry. We can understand how John Mark might have attached himself to Peter since they both had miserably failed the Lord, but were given a second chance.

(6) Paul had sent Tychicus to Ephesus to minister there. Perhaps he was sent there to relieve Timothy so that he might fulfill these last requests of Paul. We are then given a list of things Timothy was to bring with him:

g. Those things Timothy was to bring when he came to Paul at Rome:

(1) It was in the late Fall of 67 A.D. or early Spring of 68 A.D. that Paul was martyred. Since Nero died in 68 A.D. this letter was probably written and sent in late 67 A.D. It would have been bitterly cold in the prison at Rome where Paul sat either writing or dictating this second epistle to Timothy. As he thought about the things he wanted Timothy to bring, he thought of the cloche he had left at Troas. How he would love to have its warmth at that time. Timothy could pick it up on the way to Rome. Most of all he wanted his books (scrolls) and parchments (containing the Scripture which were so dear to him). Paul warned Timothy to beware of Alexander the coppersmith who had given Paul so much trouble. He would also try to make trouble for Timothy. Here Paul shows his fatherly concern and love for Timothy. In verses 16-18 Paul records that he had stood alone when he came before Caesar during his first imprisonment at Rome. He states, however, that he was never really alone since the Lord stood with him. The Christian, though forsaken by all others here on earth, never faces any situation alone. Christ has promised to never leave us or forsake us. Paul states that he knows the Lord will also see him through this present trial, one way or another.

h. Verses 19 and 20 contain greetings for Prisca (Priscilla) and Aquila, Paul's faithful helpers whom he had first met on the second missionary journey in Corinth, the household of Onesiphorus (1:16), Erastus, another faithful worker who was then at Corinth, and Trophimus whom he had left at Miletum, ill. This was something over which Paul probably had no control. This may have been where he was taken into custody by the Romans this second time.

i. Paul again urges Timothy to come as soon as he can, and especially before winter, for he needed the cloche. Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia and all the brethren must have been Christians there at Rome, but not in prison with Paul since he had stated that only Luke was with him. Paul closes this last epistle with his trademark: **"Grace be with you." "Amen."**

STRONG ADMONITIONS GIVEN TO TIMOTHY BY PAUL IN II TIMOTHY

1. 1:6 Stir up the gift
2. 1:8 Be not ashamed
3. 1:13 Hold fast the form of sound words
4. 1:14 That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep
5. 2:1 Be strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus
6. 2:2 The things that thou has heard of me, commit to faithful men
7. 2:3 Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.
8. 2:4 Don't entangle yourself with the affairs of this life
9. 2:12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him
10. 2:14 Put them in remembrance
11. 2:15 Study to show thyself approved
12. 2:16 Shun profane and vain babblings
13. 2:19 Depart from iniquity
14. 2:22 Flee youthful lusts
15. 2:23 Avoid foolish and unlearned questions
16. 3:1 This know also, that perilous times shall come
17. 3:12 All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution
18. 3:14 Continue thou in the things which thou has learned
19. 4:2 Preach the Word
20. 4:5 Watch thou in all things; do the work of an evangelist.

Do these things and you can share in Paul's crown of righteousness.

Memory Verses For Year Two

Acts	13-28 13:2; 13:38,39; 13:47; 16:9; 16:31; 17:11; 23:11; 26:27,28; 27:23,24; 28:26,27
Romans	1:16; 1:20; 1:24; 1:26; 1:28; 2:4; 3:10; 3:23; 4:3; 4:7,8; 4:25; 5:12; 5:17; 6:1,2; 6:11,12; 6:14; 6:23; 7:18; 7:24,25; 8:1; 8:3; 8:9; 8:14; 8:16; 8:18; 8:26; 8:28,29; 9:33; 10:4; 10:9,10; 10:13; 10:17; 11:33; 12:1,2; 12:11; 13:1; 13:14; 14:7; 14:12; 15:1; 16:17
I Corinthians	1:10; 1:17; 1:21; 1:27; 2:2; 2:14; 3:6; 3:11-13; 4:2; 5:7; 6:1,2; 6:12; 6:15; 6:19,20; 7:10,11; 7:39; 8:13; 9:13; 9:22; 9:24; 9:27; 10:1-4; 10:13; 10:23; 10:31; 11:1; 11:3; 11:14; 11:23-32; 12:1; 12:12,4-6; 12:13; 12:27; 13:4-8; 13:13; 14:33-35; 15:3,4; 15:19-23; 15:34; 15:51-58; 16:13; 16:15; 16:22
II Corinthians	1:20; 2:11; 3:17; 4:3,4; 5:1; 5:8; 5:10; 5:13,15; 5:17; 5:20; 5:21,6:2; 6:14-18; 7:10; 8:9; 9:6; 9:15; 10:4,5; 11:14,15; 12:9; 12:10; 13:5
Galatians	1:8; 2:16; 2:20; 3:6; 3:11; 3:13; 3:26,27; 4:4-7; 4:28; 5:1; 5:9; 5:14; 5:16-18; 5:22-24; 6:1; 6:2; 6:6; 6:7,8; 6:14;
Ephesians	1:3; 1:11; 1:13; 1:22,23; 2:1,2; 2:5,6; 2:8,9; 2:13; 2:20,21; 3:17-19; 3:20,21; 4:1; 4:11,12; 4:22,23; 4:24; 4:31,32; 5:1; 5:10,11; 5:14; 5:16; 5:22,23; 5:25,26; 5:33; 6:1-3; 6:4; 6:12,13; 6:17; 6:18
Philippians	1:21; 1:27; 1:29; 2:5-8; 2:10,11; 2:12; 2:14; 3:7,8; 3:10,11; 3:13,14; 3:20,21; 4:4; 4:6; 4:8; 4:12,13; 4:18,19
Colossians	1:10; 1:14-17; 1:18; 1:27; 2:6; 2:8; 2:9; 2:13,14; 2:20; 3:1; 3:5,6; 3:8; 3:12; 3:16; 3:17; 3:18-21; 3:23; 4:1,2; 4:5;
I Thessalonians	1:3; 1:9; 1:10; 2:13; 2:19,20; 3:3,4; 4:1; 4:3-5; 4:13-18; 4:1-5; 4:12,13; 4:14-25
II Thessalonians	1:7,8; 2:1-8; 2:10-12; 2:13,2:17; 3:1; 3:6; 3:10,11; 3:13; 3:14,15;
I Timothy	1:9,10; 1:15; 2:1; 2:5; 2:9-12; 3:1; 3:13; 3:16; 4:1-3; 4:7,8; 4:12; 4:16; 5:1; 5:2; 5:3,4; 5:8; 5:17; 5:18; 5:20; 6:6; 6:10; 6:12; 6:17; 6:20,21
II Timothy	1:6,7; 1:13; 2:1-4; 2:15; 2:16; 2:22,23; 3:1-5; 3:14; 3:16,17; 4:2; 4:5; 4:7,8;
Titus	1:6-9; 2:1; 2:3-7; 2:11-13; 3:1; 3:4,5; 3:8-10; 3:14
Philemon	Vs 10 -12; Vs 15,16; Vs 18,19