

Life in the Son

A Journal of Grace and the In-Christ Message

Life in the Son

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Christ in you, the Hope of Glory*

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EDITORIAL

THE 365 MIRACLE

I can never forget the day some 25 years ago, as Robbie stood looking at a map saying, "Where will we find people who want to hear the message of the Christ-life?" We were in the process of leaving the church we had pastored to go on the road and tell hungry hearts the good news of the Christ-life. We had no open doors, no calls for the message; and we knew no one who needed us. Yet, the call to go was strong in our heart. The Lord had already told us to free ourselves of anything in our past ministry; this was a new day in the Lord. The Lord also told us to not worry about how many came to hear us preach and to never ask for an offering; He would take care of us. This has happened just as He promised.

Now as we look at a map, we see many locations where doors opened and the message was given a voice. The message has spread not only in America but all over the world. It has been a 'God-thing', certainly not a 'human-thing'.

It has been grace in action, amazing grace. Now the message has so spread around the world that we hear from hungry hearts in unbelievable places, thanks to computers.

The Christ-life web page has a link to our internet radio's constant stream of Christ-life messages. Imagine a pastor of a small church in India who has been waiting before God for days, with a burning desire to know God in a greater way. He has no one to talk to or to help him. Yet, within him burns the desire to get something fresh from the Lord. Finally, he is drawn to his computer and miraculously is Spirit-directed to the Christ-life web page; he clicks a button for Live365 Internet Radio and hears the message he needs to move on in Christ.

Or, there may be a college student wanting to go into the ministry but feels something is lacking in his life. Surfing the internet, he finds the Christ-life web and listens to one of the in-Christ messages; his life is changed and a new purpose takes hold.

There may be a dear woman, an alcoholic, alone and wondering what to do with her life; she may contemplate just ending it. She finds the Christ-life on her computer and begins to see what her life is all about, how Christ can live through an individual, living the life God intended for her. There are hundreds of stories like these I could tell; I've received testimonies from such people. The Christ-life broadcast on Live365 Internet Radio has made a great difference to countless lives.

When Robbie and I started, we understood very little in the computer world. But now, the computer and our *Life in the Son* magazine cover the globe. The message continues to spread and all the glory belongs to our heavenly Father who called us to bring His message. Tell a friend that they can hear the in-Christ message 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. Join our vast family of believers worldwide to understand the amazing grace that is yours. †

THE SUFFICIENCY OF GRACE

(2 COR. 12:9)

By Richard D. Cassidy

From the 2006 Christ-life Conference at Ridgecrest Conference Center

“I am what I am by God’s grace” (1 Cor. 15:10).

The grace-awakening to Christian freedom is long overdue. However, I am pleased to see that there is a growing confederacy of saints who have come to understand just how free they are in Christ Jesus. Now then, that is not an idle statement, nor is it without obvious substantiation. The world is filled with those of you who are truly in love with the one who has positioned you in His eternal freedom and the love-grace of the Father, which He alone brought from the throne room of God just for you, in fact, for you, alone. I’ll speak more about your uniqueness to that grace later in this message.

I am totally familiar with the theme, “The Sufficiency of Grace.” However, I am going to take a bit of liberty with that theme and zero in on the specific aspect of sufficient grace, which Paul so uniquely speaks about, and how that grace apprehended him the moment it chal-

lenged and changed him for the remainder of his life. Beloved, that is the absolute purpose of grace coming to us in the first place—to challenge and to change, and for most of us the challenge comes quickly, the change—well, that’s another matter altogether. Before we get into those thoughts, I need to share with you a bit of the history of grace as it is found in the Scripture.

A Brief History of Grace:

Grace is strictly a New Testament teaching; and more specifically, it is almost exclusively a term used by the Apostle Paul. In the Old Testament, according to the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, and the Nelson Concordance, the word *grace* is found only six times. Grace in those references never implies or even slightly suggests that it is to mean an attribute of God. It is a term to describe a human trait or a physical or material attribute, but never a term describing God’s dealings with man.

There is much talk about faith in the Old Testament, as well as in the New Testament, but the faith that is spoken of never has a connotation that it also contains grace, none whatsoever. Salvation in the Old Testament came by faith and works, which eventually would be judged as righteous by God. Therefore, eternity, for those ancient people, depended solely on their degree of faith and what they were capable of accomplishing in that faith, and then a hope that it was sufficient to life eternal. Now then, that is a frightening thought, is it not, for you and I, who are in the grace-grip of Christ, to think that our works and our faith are all we have to satisfy God and guarantee our eternal life? In the New Testament, grace is totally obscure in the Gospels, except for John’s gospel; and he only mentions grace four times. Dr. Luke’s Book of Acts mentions grace eleven times, and generally that is through his observation of the life and times of the Apostle Paul. In the other eight epistles of the

New Testament, grace is found sixteen times: James—2 times; Peter—10 times; the epistles of John—1 time; Jude—1 time; and the Revelation—2 times. Now then, that brings us to the epistles of Paul, in which he speaks of grace in all fourteen of them; in fact, he speaks of grace eighty-one times. So, are we then not driven to ask the question: What did the Apostle Paul know that the other New Testament writers obviously did not know? Really, it's quite simple—the other writers wrote of faith plus works for salvation. Paul is clear in his teaching that it is grace alone, by Christ alone, by faith alone, plus nothing else required for our salvation. Listen to him again, and maybe for the first time you can honestly know the eternal grace-grip of Christ more clearly in your continuous walk with the Lord.

“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Eph. 2:8–9).

The key to Paul's statement here is “you have been saved.” There are no ‘ifs,’ ‘ands,’ or ‘buts’ to his conclusion about the finality of grace-salvation. He is clear, concise, and convinced by the results of his own grace-day with the Lord. He passes that good news on to those who will hear or read him, both in

that long ago day and in all of the days that have come down to you and me. We are then to stand un-apologetically in this grace-position with Paul, and to face those hate-filled, bone-of-contention Christians who insist works are part of one's salvation. It is confrontation with this issue of the grace-gospel that causes those self-righteous beings—robed in their legalistic trappings with deep pockets which are filled with killing stones—to reach for their weapons of stone and let you have it right between the eyes. To be confronted by the Law-keepers can be a troubling, and at times, a terrifying experience for true saints in Christ. Many of these saints honestly do not possess sufficient knowledge to stand toe-to-toe with these ancient-law adversaries, and are eventually robbed of their grace-freedom. Lies are extremely difficult to combat, even for those who have the truth, live the truth and would willingly die for the truth but who are often subtly and slyly provoked to see this matter from some other viewpoint—false religion, and false teaching.

Paul, more than any other apostle, knew the danger of false teachings and false teachers. In the nearly forty years that he preached the Gospel of Grace, he had precious little time to enjoy his grace-salvation. He would no sooner establish his mes-

sage in a certain region when word would come to him that trouble was brewing among the saints. So, he either wrote a letter to that church, or he went to them and did his best to straighten out the mess only to see the mess raise its ugly head over and over again. Finally, for this intrepid innocent in Christ, there was no more time, no more preaching, no more writing—no more Paul. All of his work, all of his wandering, all of his writing ended. His life-blood spilled out on Nero's chopping block. Then all hell seemed to break loose. Jerusalem would be sacked, utterly ruined and scattered to the four winds; Christians would be persecuted and driven underground for centuries. Yet with all of this grief running rampant, grace prevailed!

One man! One woman! One child! One-on-one with the Lord, grace would continue throughout history, just as it had begun. This historic calendar stretched its pages all the way down to you and me; and the one-on-one message of the Gospel of Grace survived. How then can anyone suggest that this grace is not sufficient? How can anyone even begin to form an idea, a plan, a work, a system—indeed, a doctrine—which says there is much more required in our salvation than to simply trust Christ and the truth of what He had said all along: “It Is

“FOR BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED THROUGH FAITH; AND THAT NOT OF YOURSELVES, IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD; NOT AS A RESULT OF WORKS, SO THAT NO ONE MAY BOAST” (EPH. 2:8–9).

Finished!” Beloved, you are an absolute finished work of His grace, and there is nothing you do can, or any religious system can do, to improve on that un-improvable love act of Christ and His Cross. So stop trying! Enjoy your freedom! Love the very person that you are, for there is no other person than you, never has been, never will be, just you; and your heavenly Father loves you as His one and only child in Christ Jesus!

One final thought on this matter in this brief history of grace, and then I’ll move on to the meat of this message.

As I have already laid out for you, Paul is exclusively, as well as exquisitely, the progenitor of the Gospel of Grace, and clearly says as much in many of his epistles. This gospel was given to him by Christ to preach to the Gentiles and to those Jews who would listen. This position Paul had with Christ and His gospel generated a major problem among the original disciples as well as Jews in general. That problem has not eased off over the centuries; in fact, if anything, it has all but reached a point in our day that many Christians will have little, and in some cases, nothing to do with Paul or his precious gospel, and will disregard those who will bravely and boldly declare, “*For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus*

Christ, and Him crucified” (1 Cor. 2:2).

Beloved friends, grace history is not a pretty picture to look at, nor does its narrative promote easy reading. All across the ancient landscape of human history, the broken, bloodied, battered, and besieged saints mark its highway that is drenched in horror and unceasing hostility toward those who have only one desire in life—to be at peace with all men, to live a quiet life, to work with their hands, to mind their own business, as Paul so encouraged the saints in Thessalonica. And what’s so wrong with that? I ask that question frequently to folks in my part of the world, and I often here them respond to me: Cassidy, you talk and teach about the Apostle Paul and his Gospel of Grace as though there is nothing else in the Bible to know. Christians must know about the Law, and they must know about those men and women of the Old Testament in order to be right with God and to remain right with God. Don’t you believe that?

My answer always startles the inquiring one when I confidently and calmly say: “Absolutely not! And, friend, why don’t you leave other saints alone and just let them be who God has intended them to be?” That will honestly see the legalist make a hasty retreat for the door. Praise the Lord!

There must have been problems with the twelve disciples of Christ that strike a similar chord to the above thoughts of the man who spoke with me concerning how others have to be in their salvation. Jesus said on one occasion:

“Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?” (Luke 6:41).

Conflict continued between the disciples, even after the Resurrection and Ascension of the Lord, and nothing Jesus said or did removed the speck, the log or the prejudice from those whom He loved so dearly. So what has changed or is so different in our day? In a word: Nothing! There are those among us who will insist on probing around in others’ lives and rarely give an opportunity for grace-growth in that life—except by their rules. All of us, at some point in our walk with Christ, have been confronted by similar episodes and those people who orchestrate them. So we did the only Christian thing we could do, and that was to get out. Now then, what’s next? What do we do now that we are out? Paul answers that question so fantastically if we will listen carefully to him. Are you listening?

I am what I am by God’s grace.

“But by the Grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not vain; but I labored more abundant-

BELOVED, YOU ARE AN ABSOLUTE FINISHED WORK OF HIS GRACE, AND THERE IS NOTHING YOU DO CAN, OR ANY RELIGIOUS SYSTEM CAN DO, TO IMPROVE ON THAT UN-IMPROVABLE LOVE ACT OF CHRIST AND HIS CROSS.

ly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (1 Cor. 15:10).

There is not one ounce of false modesty in his words. Paul knew who he was; he knew what he was saying; he knew what was right, and he knew what was acceptable before God. But most of all, he knew how important it was for those saints of his day to know those things about themselves. He also knew those future generations, you and I, should come to know those very same things he knew about himself.

Friends, I do not exaggerate when I say that people ask me all the time why I put so much of my teaching emphasis in Paul. My answer is always the same: "Next to the Lord and the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul is an absolute comfort to be around, and I find no one else in the entire Bible that I would have for my constant companion and teacher than Paul." He is the true gospeler of grace. Paul is also the epitome of the sufficiency of that grace. So, it is appropriate for me to speak as I do about this man.

In the past few years, we have all heard a new grace-phrase come out of the teaching and writing of Warren Litzman which he calls "the whole bucket of grace." Now then, that phrase may not be profoundly theological, but can we not all agree that it is pure Texan? The implica-

tion of that statement is this: when the grace of God in Christ comes to a confessing and believing saint, that saint received, in that mysterious instant, all there was of grace. Nothing was held back. No stipulation as to certain works and ways that had to be attained for additional grace to come to that saint. Grace is all grace, all-at-one-time grace, or it is simply not grace at all. There are those Christian organizations, with which many of us have had our times, that have declared that grace must have limits, that these limits are predicated on the continuing behavior of the saint. If that be the case, then the following question begs attention: Who determines the limits? If man is to determine the limits of the grace of God, then man must first eliminate God, and in some religions systems man has done just that. This is clearly not a recent phenomenon in man's thinking and teaching and has all but been accomplished in religious systems that had their ignominious beginnings even before grace had its birthing on the Earth. It is in the regulating of grace that the born-again have suffered their grievous loss of freedom and have allowed themselves to be captive to the tyranny of bondage, specifically law and legalism. To the Galatian church, Paul encourages his friends to not allow themselves to

become victims of such false teaching and to reject knowledge of Gnostic liars.

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1).

Is anyone listening?

This grace-grip of Christ ought to be recognizable by every believer, but (and that's a mighty big 'but' to deal with, although appropriate) every believer must know who they are in this grace before grace can ever be extended to others so they can freely be who they are in the very same grace of Christ. Two things always seem to get in the way of this grace-appreciation in others.

1. Christian's Need To Compare: Why are Christians so uneasy and almost frightened at differences in others? I will tell you why from a twenty-first century point of view, which is strictly out of my own experience as a Christian. I have knowledge of a lot of religious history on which to base my opinion; in fact, I was even once caught up in such a history for a very long time. Religious systems insist on continuity, or sameness, and are totally and absolutely intolerant of anything that even hints of difference. If anyone thinks differently, speaks differently, dresses differently, expresses themselves differently, or simply enjoys life differently, well, legalistic

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 27)

"STAND FAST THEREFORE IN THE LIBERTY WHEREWITH CHRIST HATH MADE US FREE, AND BE NOT ENTANGLED AGAIN WITH THE YOKE OF BONDAGE"
(GAL. 5:1).



PAUL

AN APOSTLE OF JESUS CHRIST

By Gregg Bing

Notice: Here is the Information every on-going believer must assimilate in their thinking, if they are diligently learning Christ as their life!

—Warren Litzman

“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God” (Eph. 1:1).

These are the opening words of Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians, words that are often taken for granted, but words that are of great importance if we are to understand the Scriptures and properly discern God’s plan and purpose for believers in this present dispensation of grace.

Most believers make no distinction between Paul’s ministry and that of the Twelve. They lump Paul’s writings in with Peter’s, John’s, and even Jesus’ earthly teaching, assuming they all teach basically the same thing and they are all written to us for our obedience. While some might think this would encourage unity among believers, it has resulted, instead, in unanswered questions, confusion, and disunity.

Paul was an apostle of Jesus Christ, and while his ministry and apostleship were not the same as that of the Twelve, he was sent out in accordance with the will of God. Believers who stress the importance of studying

the writings and ministry of Paul are often criticized as being “Paulites,” sometimes even accused of placing Paul above Christ. These critics fail to see the unique nature of Paul’s ministry and apostleship, the special revelation given to Paul by the risen and ascended Lord Jesus Christ, and the vital importance of Paul’s writings for believers today.

In order to understand the nature of Paul’s apostleship, we will address three key questions: 1. How did Paul come to be an apostle? 2. What was Paul called to do? and 3. What was the nature of Paul’s ministry?

Paul’s Dramatic Conversion

Paul was originally known as Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:11; 21:39). His father was a Pharisee, one of Israel’s religious leaders (Acts 23:6). Saul was, therefore, raised according to the strictest sect of the Jews’ religion (Acts 26:5). He was trained in Jerusalem at the feet of Gamaliel, one of the most respected teachers of the

law (Acts 22:3). As a student, Saul advanced in Judaism beyond many of his contemporaries, *“being exceedingly zealous for the traditions of the fathers”* (Gal. 1:14). While Saul had a tremendous *“zeal for God”* (Acts 22:3), it was misplaced, for what he did, he did *“ignorantly in unbelief”* (1 Tim. 1:13).

We are introduced to Saul of Tarsus at the stoning of Stephen. Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, was falsely accused by the Jews of speaking against the temple and the Law of Moses. Stephen was brought before the Jewish Sanhedrin and given an opportunity to defend himself against the charges. He used the time to witness to these Jewish leaders. At the close of his testimony, Stephen brought an indictment against the Jews, accusing them of resisting the witness of the Holy Spirit. By betraying and murdering the Lord Jesus, they had followed in the footsteps of their fathers, who killed the prophets God sent to them. The Jewish leaders were indignant,

stopping up their ears and dragging Stephen outside to be stoned. The witnesses laid their coats down at the feet of the young man, Saul of Tarsus (Acts 7:58), who was in complete agreement that Stephen should die (Acts 8:1).

Saul had a zeal for God, but, like the majority of the Jews of his day, it was *“not according to knowledge.”* Saul, in his religious zeal, thought he could *“establish his own righteousness”* by keeping the traditions of the fathers, but he was *“ignorant of God’s righteousness”* and refused to believe in God’s righteous Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 10:1–4). Thus, Saul became the chief persecutor of the Church, that is, of all who believed that Jesus of Nazareth was Lord and Christ. Paul later would describe himself this way:

“Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities” (Acts 26: 9–11).

It was while on the road to Damascus, where he intended to continue his

persecution of Jesus’ disciples, that the life of Saul of Tarsus was changed forever. As he neared the city, suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. As he fell to the ground, he heard a voice from heaven saying, *“Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?”* Saul answered, *“Who are you, Lord?”* and the Lord said, *“I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads.”* Saul, trembling and astonished, responded, *“Lord, what do you want me to do?”* (Acts 9:3–6).

What a tremendous conversion this was—a life completely turned around, and all because of God’s marvelous grace. Saul was not seeking to know God through Christ, he was persecuting Him. Yet, when brought face to face with the Lord Jesus Christ, Saul came to see and believe that Jesus of Nazareth was truly Israel’s Messiah, the very Lord of glory. Saul later wrote to Timothy and described it this way:

“And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. 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. However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all long-suffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for ever lasting life” (1 Tim. 1:14–16).

Saul’s salvation serves as a pattern to all who will believe in the Lord Jesus as Savior. If God’s grace could save Saul of Tarsus, after all the terrible sins he committed, it can save anyone, for *“where sin abounded, grace abounded much more”* (Rom. 5:20). Saul was saved when He heard the Word of Truth, from the Lord Jesus, Himself, and believed it. It was not because of any goodness within him or because of any works of righteousness on his part (Titus 3:5), but by simple faith in God’s Son (Eph. 2:8–9; John 3:16).

Saul was saved by God for a purpose; but his calling was distinct from that of those who were apostles before him.

Paul’s Distinct Calling

In the first chapter of the book of Acts, the apostle Peter directed the apostles to select a replacement for Judas Iscariot, who had betrayed Jesus. They narrowed the candidates to two and then cast lots to select Matthias. There are some Bible teachers who believe Peter and the other apostles were wrong for doing this. They insist that Paul was God’s choice to take Judas’ place. Those who hold to this idea fail to see that Paul was called by God for a different purpose than that of the Twelve. Peter understood the number of these apostles must be raised back up to twelve because their ministry was to the twelve tribes of Israel. They



PAUL DID NOT RECEIVE HIS CALLING AND INSTRUCTIONS FROM MEN, SPECIFICALLY NOT FROM THE TWELVE, BUT BY DIRECT REVELATION FROM JESUS CHRIST.

began this ministry by going to the Jews in the homeland, starting in Jerusalem and Judea, the capital city and central region of the nation.

Paul was not called by God to take part in the ministry of the Twelve. While he certainly was called to testify before the children of Israel (Acts 9:15), his primary ministry was to be “*a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles*” (2 Tim. 1:11). At the time he was saved, this was something new, for up to this point the ministry both of the Lord Jesus and of His apostles had been limited to the Jews only. The only way a Gentile could come to God was as a proselyte, one who had adopted the Jews’ religion through circumcision (Acts 2:10). Paul was separated by God for the express purpose of preaching Christ among the Gentiles (Gal. 1:15–16).

Since Paul’s apostleship was something new, the message he was to preach did not originate with men. Paul wrote to the Galatians:

“But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Gal. 1:11–12).

After Paul was saved, he “*did not immediately confer with flesh and blood*” nor did he “*go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles*” before him. Instead, he went to Arabia and later

returned to Damascus (Gal. 1:17). While Paul was in Arabia, God began to reveal His plan and purpose for Paul’s ministry. God did not reveal everything to Paul at this time, for we know Paul received an abundance of revelations throughout his lifetime (2 Cor. 12:1–7). What is important to see is that Paul did not receive his calling and instructions from men, specifically not from the Twelve, but by direct revelation from Jesus Christ. I believe it is significant that the twelve apostles, who were sent to God’s earthly people, Israel, received their calling and commission from the Lord Jesus while He was still here on Earth. Whereas, Paul received his calling and commission from the Lord Jesus after He had already ascended back into Heaven.

Paul did not visit Jerusalem until three years after he was saved. He met with Peter, but only remained with him for fifteen days. During this time, the only other apostle he saw was James, the Lord’s brother (Gal. 1:18–19). While in Jerusalem, the Lord spoke to Paul as he was praying in the temple one day and told him:

“Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, for they will not receive your testimony concerning me...Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles” (Acts 22:18, 21).

While the Twelve remained in Jerusalem, even after the persecution

and scattering of the Jerusalem church that occurred after the stoning of Stephen (Acts 8:1), the Lord sent Paul away from Jerusalem to minister, instead, to the Gentiles.

Paul spent the next ten years in the regions of Syria and Cilicia, and was “*unknown by face*” to the believing Jews in Judea. All they knew of Paul was that “*he who formerly persecuted them, now preached the faith which he once tried to destroy,*” and for this, they glorified God (Gal. 1:21–24). Paul and Barnabas, were then led to go to Antioch in Syria, which became their new home. After a year of ministry in Antioch, these two apostles were sent out by the Holy Spirit to preach the Word in Asia Minor (Acts 13). In each city they visited, they preached the Word, first to the Jews, but also to the Gentiles. Paul’s ministry to the Gentiles was difficult for the Jews to understand and accept; not just for the unbelieving Jews, but for the believing Jews as well. When Paul and Barnabas returned from this first journey, certain Jews from Judea came to Antioch and insisted the Gentiles must be circumcised and keep the law in order to be saved, something Paul and Barnabas strongly disputed (Acts 15:1–2). It was determined that Paul and Barnabas should go up to the apostles and elders in Jerusalem to settle the issue. Luke’s account in Acts chapter 15 seems to indicate

that the church at Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem (Acts 15:2-3), but when Paul related this same event to the Galatians, he said, “I went up by revelation.” This statement indicates the Lord Jesus revealed to Paul that he was to go to Jerusalem. In this same passage, Paul gave the reason why the Lord sent him to Jerusalem:

“And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain” (Gal. 2:2).

This is another clear indication that Paul’s ministry and apostleship, even the gospel he preached, were distinct from that of the Twelve. Many people have trouble accepting the idea that Paul was preaching a different gospel than the Twelve were preaching, but why would Paul need to communicate to them the gospel he preached among the Gentiles if it was the same one being preached by the Twelve to the Jews? The fact is, it was not the same gospel. Paul goes on to say:

“But from those who seemed to be something—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man—for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me. But on the contrary when they saw that the

gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised” (Gal. 2:6-9).

“Those who seemed to be something” refers to those who had long had the reputation of being apostles and elders, the ones who currently held the leadership roles in the Jerusalem church (specifically James, who was the Lord’s brother, Cephas or Peter, and John). Paul declared of these men: they “*added nothing to me.*” Paul was not saying they were of no use to him or that he was, in any way, better than they were. He was simply indicating that, in regard to his own ministry, particularly the gospel he preached, these other apostles did not give him any revelation or direction. As Paul shared with these leaders of the Jerusalem church how God was working through him and Barnabas to reach the Gentiles for Christ, they recognized that Paul’s ministry was genuinely of God. It became clear to them that the Lord

had given Paul this gospel of grace to preach among the uncircumcised Gentiles, just as they had been given the gospel of the kingdom to preach among the Jews. From the testimony of Paul and Barnabas, it was evident that God was working through these new apostles, just as He was working through the Twelve, but clearly according to different callings. So, James, Peter, and John extended to Paul and Barnabas “*the right hand of fellowship,*” agreeing that each should continue in the ministry God had sent them to do. It is vital that we see and understand what James, Peter, and John came to see at the Jerusalem Council—that Paul was given a ministry and apostleship “*by the will of God,*” but one that was distinct from their own.

We still need to take a closer look at the overall purpose and nature of Paul’s ministry. For instance, while Paul was called of God to be the apostle to the Gentiles, he also had a ministry to the children of Israel. During the Acts period, Paul always went to the Jews first and then to the Gentiles. Why did God send Paul to the Jews first? What was the nature of his ministry to the children of Israel? After the close of the book of Acts, Paul fully unveiled God’s plan and purpose for a new body of believers, the Church, the Body of Christ, in which the distinction between Jew and Gentile has been removed. This is

IT IS VITAL THAT WE SEE AND UNDERSTAND WHAT JAMES, PETER, AND JOHN CAME TO SEE AT THE JERUSALEM COUNCIL—THAT PAUL WAS GIVEN A MINISTRY AND APOSTLESHIP “BY THE WILL OF GOD,” BUT ONE THAT WAS DISTINCT FROM THEIR OWN.

another aspect of Paul's apostleship that must be considered.

Paul's Diverse Commission

What was the purpose and nature of Paul's commission? To answer this question, we must consider two different aspects to his ministry: 1. his ministry during the Acts period, and 2. his ministry after the close of the Acts period.

Paul's Acts-Period Ministry

The early chapters in the book of Acts record the ministry of Peter and the Twelve to the Jews in Jerusalem and Judea, preaching the gospel of the kingdom. The majority of the Jews, led by their religious rulers, rejected the testimony of the Holy Spirit concerning Jesus Christ, "*crucifying again for themselves the Son of God, and putting Him to an open shame*" (Heb. 6:6).

As previously mentioned, things came to a head when Stephen was falsely accused of blaspheming the temple and the Law. During his defense before the Jewish Sanhedrin, Stephen accused the Jews of lawlessness in crucifying Jesus Christ and now resisting the conviction of the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51-53). When they heard this, these Jewish leaders were cut to the heart. They stopped their ears, cast Stephen out of the city and stoned him to death (Acts 7:54-60).

Saul witnessed and supported the stoning and became the chief persecutor of all who believed in Jesus as the Christ. A few years later, while traveling to Damascus to continue his persecution of "*the Way,*" the Lord Jesus appeared to Saul and saved him by His grace. Saul was commissioned by the Lord for a new ministry: apostle to the Gentiles. The Lord told Ananias,

"He [Saul] is a chosen vessel of mine to bear my name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel" (Acts 9:15, author's words added).

The next twelve years of Saul's life were spent in preparation for this special apostleship. Then, in Acts 13, we read that Saul (who was also called Paul) and Barnabas were separated by the Holy Spirit for the work to which God had called them. While the first twelve chapters of Acts centers on the ministry of Peter and the Twelve, the remaining chapters are devoted to the ministry of the Apostle Paul.

Though Paul was called to be the apostle to the Gentiles (2 Tim. 1:11), during the Acts period he was sent to the Jew first. The ministry of Peter and the Twelve was limited to the Jews in Jerusalem and Judea; Paul was sent to the Jews of the dispersion who were scattered to "*the utter most parts of the earth.*" The nature and purpose of Paul's ministry to the Jews during

this time is pictured in the first recorded miracle performed by Paul. Paul and Barnabas left Antioch and sailed to the island of Cyprus.

"Now when they had gone through the island to Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name was Bar-Jesus, who was with the pro consul, Sergius Pazilus, an intelligent man. This man called for Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so his name is translated) withstood them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. Then Saul, who also is called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, O full of all deceit and all fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord? And now, indeed, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a time. And immediately a dark mist fell on him, and he went around seeking someone to lead him by the hand. Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had been done, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord" (Acts 13:6-12).

Paul encountered a Jew named Bar-Jesus who was a sorcerer and a false prophet. He was with a Gentile named Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man who desired to hear the Word of God.

THE LORD TOLD ANANIAS, "HE [SAUL] IS A CHOSEN VESSEL OF MINE TO BEAR MY NAME BEFORE GENTILES, KINGS, AND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL" (ACTS 9:15, AUTHOR'S WORDS ADDED).

When the Jew withstood Paul and Barnabas, and then tried to turn the Gentile away from the faith, Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, pronounced blindness upon the Jew *“for a time (season).”* After seeing these things, the Gentile believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord. These events give us a pattern for Paul’s Acts-period ministry to the Jew first, then the Gentile.

Every time Paul visited a new city, he went to the Jews first, most often ministering to them in their synagogue. When the majority of the Jews of that city rejected and opposed Paul’s ministry of the Word, Paul was used of God to pronounce spiritual blindness upon them. As was the case with Bar-Jesus, Israel’s blindness was to be temporary, as Paul described it in Romans 11:25:

“For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.”

Paul would then turn from the Jews to preach the Word of God to the Gentiles, who were more eager to receive it. This is why we find the qualification at the end of Romans 1:16:

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first

and also for the Greek [Gentile].” (Author’s words added.)

Though we see this same pattern in each city where Paul preached, there are three significant turning points recorded in the book of Acts. The first of these takes place at Antioch in Pisidia, which is in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey). After Paul preached in the synagogue to the Jews, the next Sabbath, the whole city, including Gentiles, came together to hear the Word of God. When the Jews saw the multitudes,

“...they were filled with envy; and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the things spoken by Paul. Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us: I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth. Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed” (Acts 13:45–48).

Paul’s subsequent travels brought him further west to Corinth, a city of Greece. While there Paul *“reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuad-*

ed the Jews and the Greeks [Gentiles].” (Author’s words added.)

When Silas and Timothy joined him there, *“Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. But when they opposed him and blasphemed, he shook his garments and said to them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles”* (Acts 18:4–6).

The final turning point occurred in Rome, and is recorded in the final chapter of the book of Acts. Paul, a prisoner confined to house arrest and chained to a Roman soldier, could not go to the synagogue, so he called for the Jewish leaders at Rome to visit him.

“So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at his lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening. And some were persuaded by the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved. So when they did not agree among themselves, they departed after Paul had said one word: The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, saying, Go to this people and say: Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand; And seeing you will see, and not perceive; For the hearts of

“FOR I AM NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST, FOR IT IS THE POWER OF GOD TO SALVATION FOR EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES, FOR THE JEW FIRST AND ALSO FOR THE GREEK [GENTILE].” (ROM. 1:16, AUTHOR’S WORDS ADDED.)

this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them. Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it!" (Acts 28:23–28).

This was clearly a significant turning point. Having preached the Word to the Jews at Rome, Paul had now taken God's message to the Jews in "*the utter most parts of the earth*," and everywhere he had gone, a large majority of the Jews had rejected the truth. Paul's quote from Isaiah 6 looms as a final pronouncement of blindness upon the entire nation of Israel. It seems evident that, at this point, Israel, as a nation, was set aside by God. The promised earthly kingdom was no longer being offered; it was not even "at hand" any more. God's prophesied program for Israel was being postponed, at least "*for a time*."

Paul's public ministry to the Jews throughout the Acts period was limited to: "*no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said would come—that the Christ would suffer, that He would be the first to rise from the dead, and would proclaim light to the Jewish people and to the*

Gentiles" (Acts 26:22–23).

Even to the Jews in Rome, Paul:

"explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening" (Acts 28:23).

While God's purpose for Israel was clearly the subject of prophecy, God had another plan and purpose, a purpose which was ordained before the foundation of the world, but which had been kept secret from men of other ages (Eph. 3:9). This purpose was made known to Paul by direct revelation from the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 3:3). There are mentions of this truth in Paul's earlier epistles, written during the Acts period (Rom. 16:25–26; 1 Cor. 2:6–8), but now, with the setting aside of Israel in Acts 28, it was time to fully unveil this secret purpose of God. Paul, "*the prisoner of the Lord*," was led by the Holy Spirit to write letters to the saints at Ephesus, Philippi, and Colosse, as well as a letter to his friend, Philemon. In these "prison epistles" Paul made known the truth of the mystery of God's will (Eph. 1:9; 3:5).

Paul's Post-Acts Ministry

The book of Acts closes with Paul's final pronouncement of blindness upon the nation of Israel in Acts 28:25 through 28.

This pronouncement marked God's setting aside

of Israel as a nation and the postponement of His prophesied plans and purposes for them, particularly the promise of an earthly kingdom. While it is not directly stated in Scripture that Israel was set aside at this time, Paul's writings after this point clearly indicate this was the case.

From his prison house in Rome, Paul wrote his "prison epistles" in which he unveiled a new plan and purpose of God which was ordained before the foundation of the world, but kept secret from men of other ages. This truth was a mystery; it was hidden in God until it was given to Paul by direct revelation from the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul made mention of this mystery in his earlier epistles, written during the Acts period (Rom. 16:25–26; 1 Cor. 2:6–8), but the full revelation of the "*mystery of God's will*" is not found until we get to Paul's prison epistles, especially the books of Ephesians and Colossians (Eph. 3:1–9; Col. 1:24–29).

The mystery is that God is now calling out a new body of believers known as the Church, the Body of Christ (Eph. 1:22–23). This Church is primarily composed of Gentile believers (Eph. 3:1) because the majority of those in Israel had rejected the Lord Jesus Christ; a rejection that continues in the hearts of most Jews today. However, what is unique about this Church is that the difference between Jew and

WHILE GOD'S PURPOSE FOR ISRAEL WAS CLEARLY THE SUBJECT OF PROPHECY, GOD HAD ANOTHER PLAN AND PURPOSE, A PURPOSE WHICH WAS ORDAINED BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD, BUT WHICH HAD BEEN KEPT SECRET FROM MEN OF OTHER AGES (EPH. 3:9).

Gentile is completely done away with in God's eyes.

From the call of Abram in Genesis 12, God made a clear distinction between Israel, His chosen nation, and the rest of the nations (Gentiles). This distinction continued during the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus (Matt. 15:21-28) as well as throughout the Acts period. Even Paul's ministry during this period was "to the Jew first and also to the Greek [Gentile]" (Rom. 1:16). When Israel, as a nation, was set aside at the close of the Acts period, Paul revealed that this distinction between Jew and Gentile has been done away with in the Church, the Body of Christ.

Paul described the Gentiles' past condition this way:

"Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:11-12)

What a terrible condition Gentiles were in: without Christ, separate from Israel, having no hope, and without God in the world. This was all changed through the Cross of Christ!

"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off

have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity" (Eph. 2:13-16)

Through the shedding of His blood, Christ broke down the middle wall of separation between Jew and Gentile, a wall erected by God and set forth in the Mosaic Law. The enmity that existed between Jew and Gentile was put to death, and Christ, Himself, became their peace. He brought these two separate groups together and made them one—a new man, created in Christ Jesus—one body of believers reconciled to God through the Cross. The preposition used here is *through* the Cross, not *at* the Cross. The Cross made it possible for Jew and Gentile to be brought together in this way, but this truth was not made known at that time. The formation of this new Church is the essence of the mystery revealed to, and through, the Apostle Paul.

The mystery also revealed that God is dealing with the Church under an entirely new dispensation—

"the dispensation of the grace of God" (Eph. 3:2). The word *dispensation* comes from the Greek word *oikonomia*, which literally means "household law." It refers to the way in which a household is ordered and managed. Throughout history, God's dealings with mankind have consisted of a series of different dispensations; God has dealt with different groups of people (households) under different arrangements (laws).

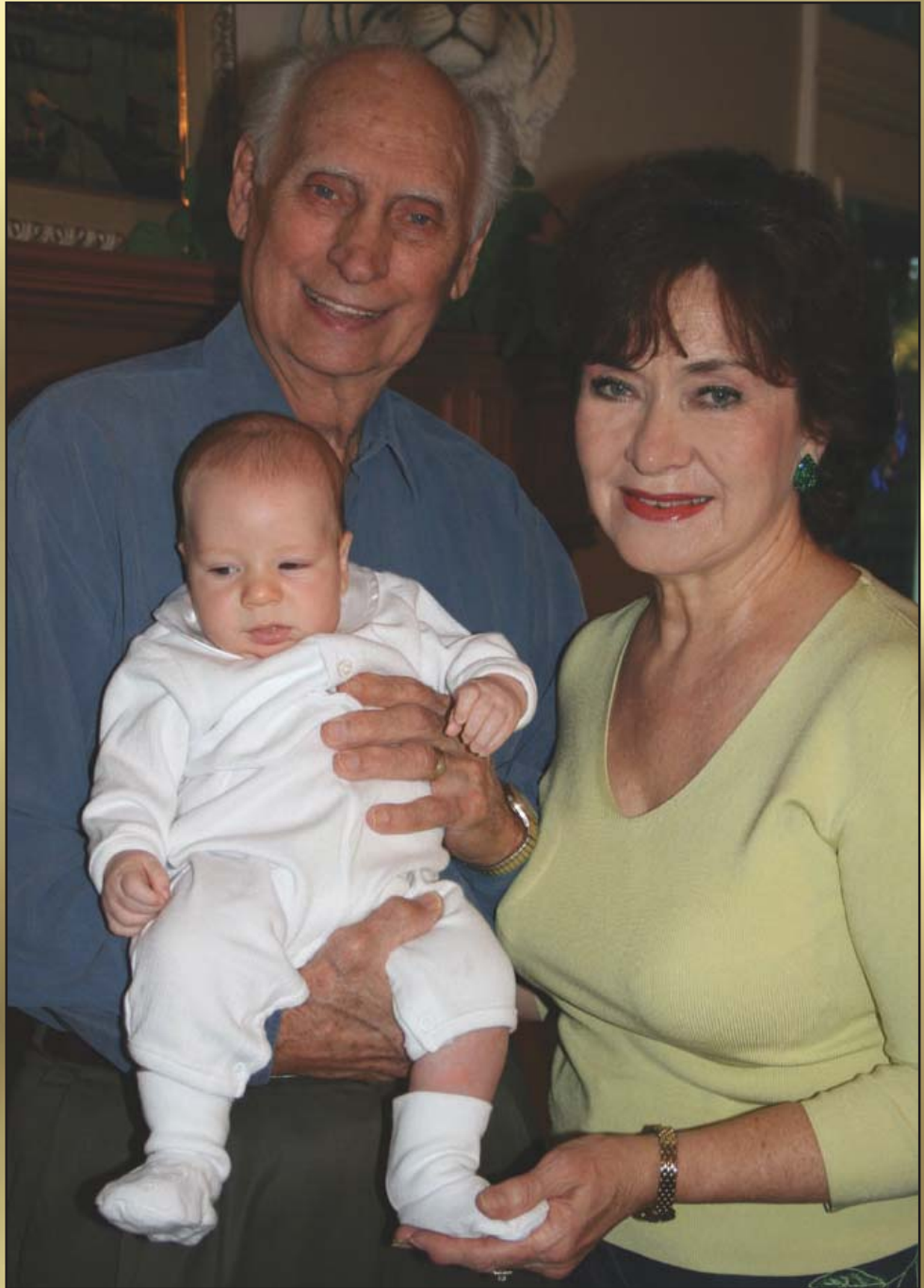
Most of God's dealings with His earthly people, Israel, were under the dispensation of law. This law was given through Moses, God's steward, or administrator, at that time. The law specified God's requirements for His earthly people, the nation of Israel; it governed every aspect of their lives: their relationship with God, their worship, their walk, their purpose, and their hope. The dispensation of the grace of God was given to the Apostle Paul, who served as its steward, or administrator, much as Moses did for Israel under the law. God's orders for men under the present dispensation of grace are vastly different from those who lived under the law. The law was given that men might know they were sinners and become guilty before God (Rom. 3:19-20). The law was a tutor or schoolmaster to *"bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith"* (Gal. 3:24). All the require-

THROUGH THE
SHEDDING OF HIS
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BROKE DOWN THE
MIDDLE WALL OF
SEPARATION
BETWEEN JEW AND
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ERECTED BY GOD
AND SET FORTH IN
THE MOSAIC LAW

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 23)

Merry Christmas

From Warren, Robbie and Baby Aidan



Praise God for all your daily miracles, big and small!

*"...For all things work together for good to them
that love God..."* (Rom. 8:28).

The Wonderful Event At Campmeeting

By Warren Litzman

Once a year, people from many of the Christ-life fellowships across America gather together for an annual conference. Believers who see Christ as their life come to refresh their souls, hear the Word from different teachers and generally spend time fellowshiping with each other. The fellowship is rich as each one sees Christ in each other; and it's a genuine family get-together. Often, there are believers from other parts of the world, and always we are blessed with new visitors. All are welcome to the warm, family spirit that pervades the conference. In fact, the new people who attend are greeted and hug as if they were old-timers in the Christ-life because all born-again believers have Christ in them and fit in perfectly. This has been going on 25 years; but this last conference in July was most unusual. I have to call it the 'Aidan Conference'. Aidan's birth on the opening day of the conference caused a wonderful thing to happen.

The story goes like this: My daughter, Teresa, who edits this magazine was ordered to bedrest for the last trimester of her pregnancy due to complications. The complica-

tions were compounded when the doctor discovered two blood vessels obstructing the birth canal. The doctor said that if Teresa went into labor, she would bleed to death too quickly for anyone to intervene. With a month to go before delivery tests showed that Aidan was still not fully matured. Teresa's life, as well as Aidan's, could be in danger. After an emergency visit to the hospital to prevent Teresa from going into labor, the doctor felt that the baby had to be delivered immediately. Aidan was born July 22, the day the conference began. Of course, I, as the proud grandpa, was very anxious. I needed to be at the camp meeting while Robbie was needed at home with Teresa.

The first miracle was the baby's delivery with no ill effects to Teresa. But the delivery was too early for Aidan. He needed more time for his lungs to develop. Immediately, he went into respiratory distress and was taken to the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) and put on machines to breath for him. A second miracle was needed.

The entire crowd at the conference was aware of all that was going on back in Dallas. Everyone present, it seemed, took the burden of Aidan to heart as if he was one of their own. He was prayed for at every meeting and all, with anticipation, awaited word from Dallas about Aidan. For two days, there was no word, but the trust that people had in the heavenly Father held steady. I was constantly on the phone waiting to hear a good word. After five days, as the conference closed, the word came that Aidan was out of trouble, though he would be in NICU for several more days. There was a rich time of rejoicing at the conference and every one there knew the Father had done great thing for Aidan. Now, some two months later, Aidan appears to be sound in every way, especially when he cries.

Aidan is a miracle. Our Father has a bag full of them for all of His children.

Our next Campmeeting is July 7 through 11, 2007, at Ridgecrest Conference Center in North Carolina. Make your plans to be there. These conferences are life-changing; and whatever your needs are, our Father is ready to help you. †

REPENTANCE AND FORGIVENESS

By Don Byrd

“And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed” (2 Cor. 12:21).

What does it take for an individual to become born again according to the Bible? Repentance and the new birth have been greatly misunderstood for many years. I hope I can share some thoughts that will help others understand the re-birthing. To properly understand this topic, one must go back to the beginning of God’s purpose from before the foundation of the world, before Creation.

Principle of Life

From before the foundation of the world, in eternity past, God birthed a Son; and this was the most wonderful thing that had ever happened to God. He became the father He wanted to be, and now He had the son He wanted. These two lived in perfect union and fellowship with each other from before the foundation of the world. The birth of the Son allowed God to fully express and

manifest the greatness of His love!

“Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:3).

The Son filled the longing in God’s heart, which nothing else could fill. As a father, He could now manifest His love in the manner that completely satisfied His heart’s desire. His Son was, is, and shall forever be the delight and total pleasure of His Father’s heart. The Father was, is, and shall forever be the delight and total pleasure—the heartbeat—of the Son!

When God, in His capacity as Father, birthed His Son, He placed His own nature in Him. Why? There was no other nature in existence except the Father-nature of God. This birthing is known as a nature-to-nature relationship. The only way a nature-to-nature relationship can exist is through a birthing. A part of God, known as nature, was now in His Son. The Father’s nature in the Son is

beautifully described in Hebrews 1:3 as *“the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person”!* When the Father placed His nature in His Son, that nature no longer belonged to the Father but was now the Son’s own nature. The Father lived His own life by His nature in total freedom, and then His Son had a nature comparable to that of His Father because it came from His Father through the birthing with absolutely no differences.

The Father knew what was in His nature before He placed His nature in His Son. The nature in the Son was exactly the same as that of His Father. *“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever” (Heb. 13:8).* From this I glean that nature cannot be changed and remains precisely the same as when it was given and received. The Son lived His own life through, and by, the nature that was birthed in Him from His Father. This is a very important principle found in Paul’s epistles. God intended life to be lived by an inward nature because this is how He and His birthed Son now lived their own lives. Living life by an inward nature is one

of the greatest principles found throughout the Bible! Life should be live by a nature rather than some other method. God's nature is described as a Father-nature because God's desire to be a father brought forth the birthing of His only begotten Son. This nature in the Son is known as the Son-nature. It is the Son who fulfills the longing of God to be a father. Now that the Son exists, God has someone to be father to! This is most vividly confirmed in the last line of Hebrews 1:5, "*I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son!*" In this line, the whole purpose and eternal plan of God is found. From the onset, God's desire and purpose was to be a father and to have a son.

This union and fellowship between Father and Son functioned in total perfection.

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:1-3).

It is my understanding that this union and fellow-

ship between the Father and His Son manifests the greatest of all pleasures between them. Because of this perfect union and perfect fellowship the Father and Son decided myriads of others should also be able to enjoy this same pleasure as is found in this union. Confirmation of this is found in John 17:11, "*...that they may be one, as we are.*" The desire to share this relationship with others brought about the creation of the human race. When God created Adam and Eve, He did so with the intention of placing a part of Himself, His nature, in mankind so that mankind would be able to participate in the same union of the Father and His Son:

"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us" (John 17:21).

God created Adam in this fashion: body, soul-mind and "empty house"—an empty container, the body, that was to later house the spirit that was to become part of man. The empty house was created to contain the "Christ in you," the spirit, or nature, to be inherently placed in every son birthed by the Father. The empty house is confirmed by the words of Jesus, Himself.

"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came

out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished" (Matt. 12:43-44).

Empty, swept, and garnished is the condition in which God created Adam's empty house. In the original creation of Adam, the house existed, but it was totally empty. It is my understanding that Adam's choice determined which nature would live in that container. The Bible states that Adam was only a living soul because he contained no spirit.

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7).

God intended to place His nature in the empty container. However, this was to be Adam's choice; and, as the Bible tells us, Adam made the wrong choice. After the believer is born again, he is a vessel that contains Christ's nature. *"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels..."* (2 Cor. 4:7). The treasure, of course, is Christ in the born-again believer on this Earth. This verse ends with: *"...that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us"* (2 Cor. 4:7).

The Result of Adam's Wrong Choice?

When Adam and Eve believed the serpent and partook of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden, they received the nature of the serpent into their empty

WHEN GOD CREATED ADAM AND EVE, HE DID SO WITH THE INTENTION OF PLACING A PART OF HIMSELF, HIS NATURE, IN MANKIND SO THAT MANKIND WOULD BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SAME UNION OF THE FATHER AND HIS SON.

UNDER THE OLD TESTAMENT SYSTEM, THEY COULD RECEIVE FORGIVENESS OF SINS, BUT THIS BY NO MEANS AFFECTED THE SIN-NATURE WITHIN THEM...THE SIN-NATURE IN THEM REMAINED UNCHANGED AND CONTINUED TO BRING CONDEMNATION FROM GOD.

houses. Adam was now a body, soul-mind and spirit-nature. Adam now had what we know as the sin-nature, which was a nature not akin to God at all. This sin-nature brought condemnation upon all of mankind.

“What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin” (Rom. 3:9).

Adam was now a fallen creature and had a depraved sin-nature. After he fell, he begat sons in his own likeness—depraved.

“And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth” (Gen. 5:3).

Adam was originally created in the image and likeness of God; but when he received the sin-nature, he was no longer in the image and likeness of God. Adam begat children in his own fallen image and likeness, and each of them had the inherent sin-nature resident within them.

“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” (Romans 5:12).

The sin-nature passed upon all men through the first man, Adam, simply by physical birth.

The sin-nature that brought condemnation from God upon all of mankind is the source of all the sin that humans commit. Humans

could not be forgiven for having this sin-nature resident within them. Under the Old Testament system, they could receive forgiveness of sins, but this by no means affected the sin-nature within them. They received forgiveness of sins; but the sin-nature in them remained unchanged and continued to bring condemnation from God. Everyone needs to understand that the sins of mankind would continue until the sin-nature was dealt with. The law could suppress or control the sin-nature through the individual’s mind, but the law could not rid the individual of the sin-nature. Those under the law could use their minds in conjunction with the law to suppress the sin-nature; but they could not perpetually maintain this status. Those under the law had to comply with the law at all times through total obedience to keep the sin-nature under control. Faith could not rid an individual of the sin-nature resident within, even faith as great as Abraham’s. At this point, nothing could remove the old sin-nature.

Those under the law were not aware that they were using the law to suppress or control the sin-nature in them because they did not know the sin-nature existed! This was not known until it was revealed to the Apostle Paul. All they knew was that they needed to obey the law God had given them in order to have a relationship with God. This is

what I call a law-relationship with God, which is a far cry from the nature-to-nature relationship between our Father and His Son.

Unchangeable Nature

“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” (Rom. 5:12).

The same sin-nature passed unchanged to every descendant of Adam. Every descendant of Adam possesses the sin-nature. This simply means they became sinners, not because they committed sins, but because they inherited, through natural birth, the sin-nature from their progenitor, Adam.

Because nature cannot be changed, it had to be destroyed as stated in Romans 6:6:

“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”

Christ destroyed the sin-nature at the Cross. His victory is our victory. So, when we are born again, the sin-nature is put out, and the believer simultaneously receives the Christ-nature from God, our Father! At this point, the believer should understand the meaning of Romans 8:1:

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

Condemnation is gone because the source of God’s

condemnation toward a human—the sin-nature—is now gone and Christ’s nature is in the believer. Just getting rid of the old sin-nature is not the solution to mankind’s problem. The removal and absence of the sin-nature is not the new birth. When the believer receives Christ’s nature, God can no longer find a reason to condemn him. Now that the born-again believer has Christ’s nature, there is, therefore, no condemnation from God. The absence of Christ’s nature is the greatest problem mankind has because the Christ-nature was necessary to complete mankind’s creation as God intended from before the foundation of the world. The following verses verify this:

“And ye are complete in him...” (Col. 2:10).

“...that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God” (Col. 4:12).

Mankind without Christ’s nature is absolutely incomplete in his creation, even if he has no sin-nature. I say this to emphasize the necessity of having Christ’s nature birthed in the believer, which constitutes the birthing.

All the repentance that could ever be made by any individual could not rid him of the old, inherent sin-nature. God did not forgive mankind for having this sin-nature. However, God, through the eternal work of the Cross, did provide a means of ridding mankind of the old sin-nature. This same Cross provided mankind with

Christ’s nature, wherein there is no condemnation from God. Now that the born-again believer has Christ’s nature, he can, and should, repent when sins are committed. Where and how does the believer find forgiveness?

“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace” (Eph. 1:7).

“In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins” (Col. 1:14).

Repentance and forgiveness function for the believer only because he is in Christ and for no other reason. Believers need this assurance that they have forgiveness when they repent of their sins.

Condemnation Removed

The death of the believing sinner must be recognized to properly understand the new birth.

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is

dead is freed from sin” (Rom. 6:3–7).

Repenting and asking for forgiveness is not what brings freedom from the sin-nature in the sinner. The old sin-nature must be removed and this necessitated the death of Christ on the cross.

How does this all happen? Union and death with Christ on the cross is the solution to the sin-nature problem in the sinner. Repentance of sins does not remove the old sin-nature in an individual. It took the death of the believer on the cross in union with Christ Jesus our Lord. It is this death with Christ that destroyed and forever removes the sin-nature from the born-again believer when the new birth occurs.

I have said all of this to say that a sinner cannot repent and receive forgiveness from God. However, when the born-again believer commits sins, he can and should repent to receive forgiveness from God. The sinner is totally dependent upon believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, which will bring about the death of the old sin-nature and the birth of Christ’s nature in that individual. Believing is the key for the sinner, not repentance.

“...sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (Acts 16:30–31).

“...that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in

IT TOOK THE DEATH OF THE BELIEVER ON THE CROSS IN UNION WITH CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD. IT IS THIS DEATH WITH CHRIST THAT DESTROYED AND FOREVER REMOVES THE SIN-NATURE FROM THE BORN-AGAIN BELIEVER WHEN THE NEW BIRTH OCCURS.

THIS IS THE EXACT REASON GOD SENT HIS SON INTO THE WORLD. JESUS CAME INTO THIS WORLD, JOINED HIMSELF TO THE ADAMIC RACE, AND THEN TOOK THAT RACE OF PEOPLE WITH THE SIN-NATURE TO THE CROSS.

thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Rom. 10:9–10).

Not a single reference is made about repentance in these verses. Believing is emphasized as the solution to finding forgiveness in Christ. Repentance by a sinner will never remove or destroy the sin-nature. Being baptized into the death of Christ will forever destroy the sin-nature. Christ joined Himself to the sin-nature (the old man in you); and took the old man to the Cross; and, there, the old man was crucified and died. When Christ was resurrected, He was resurrected without the old man.

Summary

From the onset, God wanted a nature-to-nature relationship with His own offspring. When Adam sinned and received the sin-nature, he became a fallen creature, which alienated him from God. Through Adam this sin-nature was passed on to all of his descendants when they were born into this world. This sin-nature was not akin to God in any way; and

it is this sin-nature that caused condemnation to come upon all men. The sinner is a sinner because he has a sin-nature, not because he commits sins. Mankind was, and is, condemned because of the nature within, and for no other reason.

Since nature cannot be changed, the only solution is to destroy the old sin-nature. This is the exact reason God sent His Son into the world. Jesus came into this world, joined Himself to the Adamic race, and then took that race of people with the sin-nature to the Cross. On the cross, the sin-nature was crucified; it died and is buried, never to be seen again in those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ! Simply repenting of sins would not accomplish the removal of the old sin-nature. Being crucified with Christ is what it takes for the individual to become one of our Father’s offspring.

Thank God for the wondrous work of the Cross of Christ that accomplished this! The death of the old sin-nature is only part of the work of the Cross. The believer also received Christ’s nature as a result of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. When this happened, the believer became

a “new creature” as written in 2 Corinthians 5:17:

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

“But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit” (1 Cor. 6:17).

This, too, is possible through the eternal work of the Cross of Christ Jesus, our Lord! There is no forgiveness for those who have a sin-nature; therefore, there is no need to repent, except in the act of accepting Christ as Lord and Savior. Death is the solution for the sin-nature problem in the sinner; and “*Christ in you*” brings a nature-to-nature relationship with our Father. Paul also calls this a face-to-face relationship.

“For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known” (1 Cor. 13:12).

This face-to-face, nature-to-nature, birthed relationship is what Christ Jesus, our Lord, wanted for His Father and for the born-again believer. From the onset, this is the nature our Father intended all humans to have resident within them through “*Christ in you!*” †

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Some of Warren Litzman’s most powerful, touching and insightful messages including *The Cross, Enemies of the Cross, and Our Journey Home*. See page 31.

ments of the law: its commandments, its judgments, and its ordinances, were merely a shadow of things to come. The substance, the reality of what was only pictured by the law, is found in Christ (Col. 2:14–17). In Christ, we are complete; nothing needs to be added to His finished work. This truth is a key part of the mystery given to Paul, as he states in Colossians 2:9–10:

“For in Him [Christ] dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the Head of all principality and power” (Author’s words added.)

No physical circumcision is needed today, because we are circumcised in Christ *“with the circumcision made without hands,”* a spiritual circumcision that is of Christ, not of the law (Col. 2:11). No water baptism is needed today because we are *“buried with Him in baptism”* and *“raised with Him through faith in the working of God”* (Col. 2:12), a spiritual baptism performed by

God’s Holy Spirit, not by some priest or preacher. Physical circumcision and water baptism were part of the law; but they were only a shadow of things to come. Why hold on to the shadow when we now have the reality in Christ?

Why is it so important to see the distinctive nature of Paul’s apostleship and ministry? Because he is God’s apostle to us today. Because he is God’s steward to the Church during the present dispensation of grace. If we truly desire to know God’s will for our lives today, we must see it can only be found in the writings of the Apostle Paul. This does not mean we discard the rest of Scripture. Paul himself told Timothy:

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16–17).

Though all Scripture is written for us, for our learning, not all Scripture is writ-

ten directly to us, for our obedience. Paul also told Timothy:

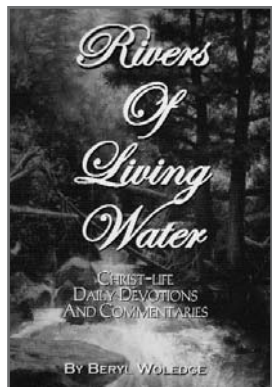
“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15).

If we want to find approval in God’s eyes, and be workers who need not be ashamed before Him, we must *“rightly divide the Word of truth.”* This means we must take note of the divisions God has placed in His Word; we must see the different dispensations (or dispensings) of God’s will throughout the ages. In particular, it is vital that we heed His instructions to us during the present dispensation of God’s grace. It is this dispensation that was given specifically to the Apostle Paul by God. That is why his apostleship, his ministry, and his writings are so important. †

(This message by Gregg Bing is taken from the church newsletter where he pastors in Fort Worth, Texas and is used with his permission.)

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See page 32.

THE FATHER'S INTENTION

By Warren Litzman

To look at God like someone may predict the weather is foolishness. To try to pin God down based on the finite knowledge we have is foolishness. But the study of God's word will in time bring the believer to some understanding of what God is doing. His knowledge is so far above and beyond our understanding that reading the same passage in the Scriptures again and again, will grow and take on new meaning from time to time.

Humans think they can read God's Word once and know it all. In my life, I have seen greater understanding come to me from John 3:16 each time I entered a new walk in the Spirit, when I went through a new experience, or when there were great changes in my life brought by the C&S gang (my circumstances and situations). This happens because the Father is always bringing me into His ultimate intention for my life and for His eternal plan. You see, there are two guidelines given to every ongoing believer:

1. You were chosen to be in Christ (Eph. 1:4). You were not just chosen to be saved; you were not chosen just to go to Heaven; you were not just chosen to

be a Christian rather than a Buddhist. You were chosen to be in Christ. The wisdom of the Father clearly shows in this fact. God knew humans could never be what He needed them to be within themselves. Just as Lucifer failed even though he was living in the Father's house and in His presence. God knew He could not trust His creations, remaining free-moral creations, to ever be what He needed in a family. So He placed, baptized, completely immersed the believing sinner, instantly when they believed, into Christ (Rom. 6:3) so his life would never be his own (Gal. 2:20).

The Father's intention in this is to make sure every child He produces will have His nature in them. He knows created beings, even in His image and likeness, can miserably fail Him, just as Lucifer did. But there was one who never failed Him, Christ, His Son; and when a sinner believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, the Father puts His seed, Christ, in them and never worries about who they are, or where they are headed in life. This is His intention and has worked and is working every moment after a believer is re-birthed.

2. The Father also used Christ's death on the Cross. By Christ's work on the Cross, God had the power to change humans and make them what He wanted them to be. He could just say the word, or point His finger and get what He wanted. But this could not have been done without them being in Christ. So to change humanity to fit His plan, all sinners were placed in Christ by the cup He drank at Gethsemane and, therefore, all were crucified with Him, died with Him, were buried with Him, were resurrected with Him and ascended with Him to heavenly places. The Father worked out His intention for His family perfectly.

It seems strange to me that any human would question God at any time on anything. But seeing that all humans have been possessed with Adam's nature at their natural birthing, there is little wonder that humans would not question God's knowledge. Stranger still are the born-again believers who constantly question God. This is done in ignorance; they still have not come to the revelation that they no longer live, but Christ lives in them (Gal. 2:20).

Believers who do not know Christ is their life are always questioning something. They question what God is doing outside of them; they question what God is doing inside of them. This is because modern religion denies people the final gospel, Paul's gospel, which, alone, spells out God's intention for them as well as His intention for the world. Some of the people who edit and print new translations of the Bible are the most ignorant of God's original intention. They cut out of their new translations most of the facts that have to do with the Father's original intention. They cut out "in Christ" statements. They cut out the word *perfect* when it refers to the fact that re-birthed believers, in their spirit, stand perfect before God. These and many more omissions are all aimed at the plan of God that calls for His offspring to have His nature in them. It is for this reason that we in the Christ-life stick to the old King James Version of the Scriptures. We believe it has been less messed up by modern religion and has less of an agenda by its translators.

In the plan of God, it is never God's intention just to save sinners for the Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, or Pentecostal doctrines. It is His intention to save them for His house and family in Heaven. By the time religious groups spell out what is necessary to be one of them in fellowship, or to join their church, you will need a

new Bible just to understand what they are doing. Of course, the Father's plan gets lost in all this.

His eternal intention to have His own family is lost to people building their own doctrines and their own buildings. But the worse part of all this is what is happening to the hungry believer wanting to really know God and His plan for them. They are denied God's intention for their lives and continue trying to be good according to whatever religious circle they are involved with. God's intention for the human life is clearly spelled out in Paul's epistles. When mankind starts changing anything Paul teaches, especially the teaching He received directly from Christ by revelation, you will have what we have now in religion. It will be everybody believing their own thing, ignoring what Christ gave Paul as the final gospel.

The fact is modern religion cannot operate according to Paul, who said, "Follow me as I follow Christ." Its entire structure is contrary to the final gospel. Those in religion would have to start all over; and only God, their Father, could work that out. Most, it seems, do not have the ability to do this, and God is not in the business of just changing religious denominations; He is in the business of bringing offspring whom He has already birthed to the fullness of the Christ who lives in them. His desire is for His own

children, not just the structures of manmade religion.

The idea of the Father's intention, or the idea that He even had an original intention, seems to upset some theologians to no end. Modern theology spends most of its time dealing with what happened after the beginning and very little time spent with what happened before the beginning. Of course, there are only two thoughts before the beginning that have to do with the plan where God would birth His own children. Both of these thoughts would be the basis for the eternal plan, and both have to do with the children He would birth Himself.

These two thoughts would eventually form the foundation of His ultimate intention and are mentioned fewer than three or four times in the whole of the Scriptures. They are found in Ephesians 1:4 and 1 Peter 1:18-20. The essence of these verses could only take place in the Father's time, and that time came some 4,300 years after Creation. Until the time came to induct these two ideas into effect, they were just God's thoughts; and as the Scriptures say, they were hidden in God from the beginning of the world (Eph. 3:9).

These two Scriptures only surfaced when the Father was ready to birth His own family. The in-Christ idea would belong only to the born-again, and the Father would make it all

EVERYONE WHO IS BORN AGAIN LOSES THEIR ORIGINAL ETHNICITY AND CULTURE, AS WELL AS THEIR OLD WAY OF LIVING. THEY ARE BONI FIDE, FULLY BIRTHED CHILDREN OF GOD.

work through Christ's death on the Cross. Some worry about what happened to Israel when Christ died on the Cross. His death there is for whosoever believeth, Jews, Gentiles, anyone and everyone. Everyone who is born again loses their original ethnicity and culture, as well as their old way of living. They are boni fide, fully birthed children of God.

This was the Father's intention from before Creation. Nothing in creation changes any part of His original plan. Those who do not accept Christ this side of the Rapture will have opportunity to accept Him under another plan. This plan has to do with Israel, who still rejects her Messiah, as well as the many who come out of the Great Tribulation. But none of these fulfill the Father's original intention or are a part of it. By that time, His heavenly family will be formed and His original plan completed. The key to all of this is the difference between the two phrases *before the foundation of the world* and *from (or after) the foundation of the world*. There are two plans, one before the world was created and one after the world was created.

There are at least three things necessary to the believer who is growing in the knowledge of the Lord. These three things form a foundation for searching the Scriptures.

First, to understand the final gospel, you must see how Jesus showed Paul how

it was to be interpreted. In 1 Thessalonians 5:23, Paul lays out the fact that the human is tripartite; that is, he is composed of body, soul, and spirit. This is like a template showing how all of the final gospel given to Paul is to be laid out. Everything Paul received from Christ fit this template. As you read the Scriptures you will see how the Lord deals with the tripartite human.

Second, you must learn to rightly divide the Scriptures. Even in Paul's epistles, he says things directly to Israel that do not belong to Gentiles. He is attempting to reach Israel with the final gospel as his heart burns with desire to see Israel saved. While these are good and often blessed truths, they belong to the one Paul is talking to. There are many occasions when truth that belongs to Israel does not belong to the Church.

Third, Paul lays out the fact that salvation has three phases. The verse directly dealing with this is 2 Corinthians 1:10. There are three very obvious aspects of the one's salvation.

1. The Scripture says, "*We are delivered from so great a death.*" This refers to the end of sin being death. Adam's sin and the old nature are all under the sentence of death. Salvation puts the old sin-nature out and brings in a new nature. Salvation is the deliverance from death to life. This part of salvation is in our spirit and is complete the moment

we believe on Christ as our Savior. This phase of salvation is perfect; for He that is joined to our spirit is perfect.

2. The next line in this verse simply says, "*and doth deliver.*" This is the second phase of salvation. Doth deliver means there is a work of salvation going on continuously in our souls. Actually, while we are saved instantly in our spirit, the salvation of our mind, will and emotions (what some call our hearts) is progressive. This phase of salvation will continue throughout eternity and is imperfect. We will continue studying the Word in Heaven because the Word is eternal.

3. The third phase of salvation is "*yet to be delivered.*" This speaks of our bodies. Our bodies are corruptible and without renewal until the resurrection morning. Then we will have the final phase of salvation, an incorruptible body (1 Cor. 15:52-54). You can see that the template of the tripartite human is wisely used by the Apostle Paul in this verse. This was not of his own wisdom; it was a part of the final gospel Christ gave to Apostle Paul.

Undoubtedly, the on-going believer will come to this new wisdom as he grows in Christ (1 Cor. 2:4-12). These verses should be studied until the believer is gripped with the true wisdom from Christ (1 Cor. 1:30) that speaks a different knowledge to the on-going believer than the world or religion has. †

Christians will become uneasy, really quite nervous. We have been taught to examine carefully all things on the outside of the saint, and are given no real encouragement to see into the soul of another which would clearly identify another not so much as different, but as significant.

We are excruciatingly diligent in comparing the tastes of others in music, art, profession, leisure, education, intellect, and, of course, wealth. We compare marital status. We are quick to compare others' spirituality based on the Bible translation they use, the hymns they sing, how much money they give, or their status in the organization. We compare the children of others to our own 'well-behaved kids.' If a person lives alone, is divorced, or a single parent that never married, something must be wrong with that person. Honestly, folks, the only wrong thing here is the comparison!

I've never met the person who wrote *The Rule Book on Comparison*; have you? Perhaps you may be the one who wrote it! Seems to me that the "speck-syndrome" Jesus spoke about becomes quite apparent right about now; doesn't it? Why such negativity anyway? I don't know of a Scripture anywhere in the entire Bible that promotes such a teaching. It is certainly not in the Gospel of Grace as far as I am aware.

Do you not know that comparison always fuels the fires of envy within people—all people? Out of which inevitably comes the judging and the prejudice; and that is the worst part of all because judging and prejudice always nullifies grace.

Before we can ever hope to demonstrate sufficient grace to let others alone, we'll have to get rid of the legalistic tendency to compare—this is legalism of the first order. God made you and me as we are. God is at work shaping us into the image He has in mind, which is Christ in us. There is only one you, and God is pleased to be your Father if only you would be pleased to be His child. Legalism requires that we all be alike, unified in all convictions, uniform in the way we look, to which we all ought to say loud and clear: 'Let me out of here!' I believe most of us have gotten out, right? You see, to live the Christ-life, there is no such thing as comparison. Amen?

2. Christian's Need to Control: Finally, there is yet another horribly ugly tendency within the Christian community—to control other Christians. The sad commentary here is that many, if not most, Christians believe this must be done. No it does not have to be done; and don't forget it. With far too many Christians, there is an almost prevalent approval found in the rigidity of religious control. All the while the implementers of such

religion will use all manner of threat, coercion, manipulation, and intimidation in order to enforce and maintain such control. I've yet to meet a leader of a religious system who is not themselves insecure and have no confidence or even an appreciation for what it means to be free. What may start out to be subtle hints at control eventually turn out to be demanding and forceful methods to get people 'in line' and to keep them 'in line.'

Those who are in control generally become controllers by intimidation, both verbally and physically bullying their way through manipulation to bend the will of others to come in line with their own will. Controllers rarely compromise; they simply do not know how. To challenge a control-freak is to run the risk of excommunication from the group, and generally that will mean a literal 'black-ball' attitude from all others within the organization. I heard a testimony given by a man at a Christ-life Conference in South Africa a few years ago who was once a prominent lawyer. This man was also a member of a Dutch Reformed Church until he challenged the teaching of that organization. In time he was dismissed from that organization, but not before he was thoroughly ostracized publicly, and was hard pressed to find work or to continue friendships with those whom he had known

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YOU AND I ARE WHAT WE ARE BY THE GRACE OF GOD; AND THAT IS SUFFICIENT FOR US TO KNOW AND TO COMPREHEND—WITHOUT HAVING TO CONTEND WITH ‘SPECKS AND LOGS,’ THE COMPARISONS AND CONTROLS IN FAR TOO MANY OTHER PRECIOUS SAINTS.

all of his life. Controllers can be killers of grace and the cause of great harm and hurt to those who are in the love-grace of Christ.

Controlling, like comparing, will ultimately nullify grace; yet this is the manner in which many will administer God’s unspeakable grace. Man has no capacity innate within himself to ever be the administrator of grace. Grace is not included in the gifts of the Spirit, nor in the fruit of the Spirit. Paul knew about his grace-walk with the Lord; and he would not, for any reason, abuse the privilege that was given to him to be the preacher-teacher of the Gospel of Grace to the Gentiles. Grace had little to no affect in the lives of the Jews; for they were yet fixed in their legalistic training and history and were not predisposed to be party to such an alien concept of Jehovah and their 4,000-year knowledge of Him. The Jews heard Jesus, didn’t like what they heard, and killed Him. The Jews heard the Apostle Paul, didn’t like what they heard from him, and killed him. Supposedly, all these killers of grace did was perfectly legal and above board and was to their own satisfaction. They were pleased with what they had accomplished in ridding the Jewish world of both the teachers and their teachings. Such is the mindset and the manner of those who are bent on comparing and controlling the Body of Christ in this century. Alas, these killers of grace

will be among us to the end of all centuries. Grace is indeed a foreign concept to anyone who is determined to keep Christians nailed down to the legalistic doctrines of a religious system, all the while many of them believe they are doing the will of God. Such attitudes and actions are observed within the Christian community whenever these groups meet in annual convocations, synods, conventions, and assemblies and the bickering, infighting, and struggles that come about through the jockeying of certain doctrines to be ruled on and the ultimate election of those men and women who surface to become organizational heads of tens of thousands of saints. Unity is the sacrificial lamb slain on the altar of uniformity and conformity; and grace becomes drenched in the blood of the innocents. But all is not lost. There is good news. Grace abounds and is sufficient until that day when Christ calls His children home. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly!

Conclusion

And so, it is time for me to end these brief moments with you, but not before I remind you once again what Paul had to say about himself and the sufficiency of God’s amazing grace.

“But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain” (1 Cor. 15:10). We all should determine just who we are in this grace gift of God and refuse to play

God’s agent-in-residence in anyone’s life. I don’t mean for that to sound simple and easy; for it is as tough a task as anything we may accomplish in our lifetime. To let others be themselves means we will actually free ourselves from the tyranny of comparison and control and then be able to give full attention to what our heavenly Father is trying to make of us.

In our day, grace, as the love gift of God in Christ Jesus, is an almost unknown teaching. Preachers preach on it all the time. Teachers teach on it all the time. Theologians analyze it all the time, and many Christians will forget it, almost all the time.

You and I are what we are by the grace of God; and that is sufficient for us to know and to comprehend—without having to contend with ‘specks and logs,’ the comparisons and controls in far too many other precious saints.

Come Thursday, this camp meeting will come to its end; and we’ll all return home and most likely not see each other again until next camp meeting. I hope that as you leave these North Carolina mountains you will not forget to take with you all of the good things you have come to learn about “God’s Sufficient Grace”—to be who you are, complete and perfect in Christ, and declare, as did Paul, *“By the grace of God, I am what I am!”* †

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 Off-campus resident, meals not included \$16 per day

Special Family Rates available through Christ-life office. Call 214-391-0488.
Cancellation deadline is June 7, 2007. Camp fees are refundable for cancellations received before this date.

Meals: Adults (without housing): \$114.50 throughout camp
 Ages 6-11 \$59. food charge (sharing room with adult)

Register and pay online at www.christ-life.org or send this form and deposits to:

Christ-life Fellowship, P.O. Box 170307, Dallas, Texas 75217

Complete entire form. (Please print.)

Name:	Hm. Phone:	Mobile Phone:
Spouse:	Child 1:	Age:
Address:	Child 2:	Age:
City:	Child 3:	Age:
State:	Child 4:	Age:
Zip:	Email:	
Fax #:		
Date:	Enclosed Payment Amount: \$	Check #

We also take Visa and MasterCard:

Credit Card #	Exp. Date:
Name on Card:	Signature:

Date of arrival? _____ I/We will be: driving___ flying___ renting car _____

Will you need air port transportation?*** _____ For how many in family? _____

Special Needs:

Before making flight reservations, please consider the following information for airport shuttles by CLF: Camp registration begins 3 p.m. July 7, with dinner at 5:30 p.m. Camp ends with breakfast at 7:15 a.m. July 11, with checkout no later than 11 a.m.

CLF provides Asheville airport shuttles on July 7 and 11 only. Contact Ridgecrest at 800-588-7222 for other arrangements. For more information regarding air port shuttles by Christ-life Fellowship, please contact Mike Robinson at 479-549-5319

* This form must accompany a deposit to hold reservations.

**If you need air port transfers, a Flight Information Form will be mailed to you and must be submitted to the Christ-life offices.

Use of LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center for this event does not imply alignment with, or endorsement by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Christ-life Fellowship
2007 South Africa Conference
With Warren & Robbie Litzman
Kempton Park Conference Centre Johannesburg
2.30.p.m. 26 April - noon 29 April

This is a lovely conference venue close to Benoni and has sleeping accommodation for 76 people. There is a wonderful conference hall and dining room/ fellowship area. Every bedroom has a shower en suite and 2 single beds, kettle, television, etc.

Deposit Required: R300.00 —No booking will be accepted without deposit.

Full Tariff: Total for 3 days (Dinner/Bed/Breakfast/Teas/Conference Fees)

Single R1600.00 per person

Double R1250.00 per person

Optional Meals: Lunches R70.00 per meal—N.B. These extra meals must be confirmed and paid for with final balance of accommodation by the 31 March 2007. Meal tickets will be issued.

Day Visitors: Conference and teas (Thurs–Sun) R 275.00 or R 30 per session including tea. Please book in advance so that we know which hall to book.

Total Balance due strictly by 31/03/2007

Transport: (Airport/Bus, etc) To/from the centre will be provided. Please make these arrangements early to assist those in Gauteng who have kindly offered to provide transportation. Late notification of your flight arrangements could mean arranging your own transport to the conference centre.

Payment Options:

Cheque made out to: Christlife Fellowship,
112 Village 5, Ascot Road,
Greenacres P.E. 6045

Bank Deposits/Internet: Christlife Fellowship
Standard Bank – Cheque Acc.
Branch: 050312
Acc. 082252564

For further information telephone Denise Hayes at 041–3744741,
Fax: 0866556812 or email: lanceh@iafrica.com/.

Christmas Specials Available Oct. 1- Dec. 31, 2006

CDS	<i>1 Corinthians Chapter 1</i>	#	14 CDs/\$70	
	<i>1 Corinthians Chapter 2</i>		14 CDs/\$70	
	<i>Cross, The (South Africa, 2003) Christmas Special-\$40!</i>		10 CDs/\$50	
	<i>Dispensations</i>		8 CDs/\$40	
	<i>Enemies of the Cross (South Africa, 2003) Christmas Special-\$32!</i>		8 CDs/\$40	
	<i>Introduction to the Christ-life</i>		4 CDs/ \$20	
	<i>It's Jesus! Just Jesus! (South Africa, 2005) Christmas Special-\$32!</i>		8 CDs/\$40	
	<i>Now that We Know Christ Lives in Us (S. Africa) Christmas Special-\$40!</i>		10 CDs/\$50	
	<i>Our Journey Home (South Africa) Christmas Special-\$40!</i>		10 CDs/\$50	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental CD Series #1-150, Entire Set</i>		150 CDs/\$600	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #1-10</i>		10 CDs/\$50	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #11-20</i>		10 CDs/\$50	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #21-30</i>		10 CDs/\$50	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #31-40</i>		10 CDs/\$50	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #41-50</i>		10 CDs/\$50	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #51-60</i>		10 CDs/\$50	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #61-70</i>		10 CDs/\$50	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #71-80</i>		10 CDs/\$50	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #81-90</i>		10 CDs/\$50	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #91-100</i>		10 CDs/\$50	
<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #101-110</i>		10 CDs/\$50		
<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #111-120</i>		10 CDs/\$50		
<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #121-130</i>		10 CDs/\$50		
<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #131-140</i>		10 CDs/\$50		
<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #141-150</i>		10 CDs/\$50		
<i>Reviewing the In-Christ Revolution (South Africa) Christmas Special-\$40!</i>		10 CDs/\$50		
<i>Spirit of Wisdom & Revelation (S. Africa, 2004) Christmas Special-\$40!</i>		10 CDs/\$50		

DVDs	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fund'l DVD Series #1-150, Entire Set</i>		150 DVDs/\$925	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #1-10</i>		10 DVDs/\$75	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #11-20</i>		10 DVDs/\$75	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #21-30</i>		10 DVDs/\$75	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #31-40</i>		10 DVDs/\$75	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #41-50</i>		10 DVDs/\$75	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #51-60</i>		10 DVDs/\$75	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #61-70</i>		10 DVDs/\$75	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #71-80</i>		10 DVDs/\$75	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #81-90</i>		10 DVDs/\$75	
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	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #121-130</i>		10 DVDs/\$75	
	<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #131-140</i>		10 DVDs/\$75	
<i>Precept Upon Precept Fundamental Series #141-150</i>		10 DVDs/\$75		

Books	<i>The Believer's Secret of Happiness</i> , W. Litzman	#	\$6.00	\$
	<i>Christ-life Healing for Body & Soul</i> , W. Litzman		\$10.00	
	<i>Christ Liveth in Me</i> , W. Litzman		\$0.50	
	<i>The Curse Is Broken</i> , F. Stigall		\$5.00	
	<i>Every Believer Must Have a Revelation of Jesus Christ</i> , W. Litzman		\$3.50	
	<i>Free at Last</i> , W. Litzman		\$6.00	
	<i>Jesus Lost in the Church</i> , W. Litzman		\$7.00	
	<i>The Law Is Not of Faith</i> , F. Stigall		\$5.00	
	<i>The Making of a Son</i> , W. Litzman		\$5.00	
	<i>Nicodemus and the Mystery of the Birthing</i> , W. Litzman		\$3.50	
	<i>Old Testament Tithing vs. New Testament Giving</i> , W. Litzman		\$0.50	
	<i>Paul, The Apostle of Grace</i> , W. Litzman, Second Edition!		\$12.00	
	<i>Proper Distinction Between Religion and the Gospel</i>		\$4.00	
	<i>Revelation Knowledge & 4th Dimensional Living</i> , W. Litzman		\$5.00	
	<i>Rivers of Living Water</i> , B. Woledge		\$17.00	
	<i>The Ultimate Revelation of the Cross</i> , F. Stigall		\$5.00	
<i>The Unashamed Christian</i> , W. Litzman		\$7.00		

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