

# Our Security In Christ

## *The Believer And His Commission*

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The following article is the sixth in a series of Discussions on the subject of "Our Security In Christ".

*What does Romans 1: 14-17 reveal to the Christian concerning his security in Christ?*

14) "I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise. 15) So, as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also. 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. 17) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

This series is intended to show, and to promote the belief that The Apostle Paul, when measured by the perfect Word of God, and when studied thoroughly, simply is not – and cannot be – the person he wrote of in the seventh chapter of Romans. If you have read through this series from the beginning, you should already be concerned – if you are a believer that Paul was really that wimpy person who simply could not live a consistent life in the Spirit – and be willing to rechart your belief; for Paul was truly a man by whom the Words of the Holy Spirit could be trusted on any occasion, at any place.

It is a grand and glorious privilege to be a child of God and bear the name "Christian." But just so grand and glorious the privilege, so great and weighty the responsibility. In the sense of evangelism, we are our brother's keeper. The tragedy of tragedies is for a believer to live and work beside unbelievers, rub shoulders with them, but never try to lead them to Christ. This is the most cruel sin man can commit against his fellowman.

It is our responsibility to tell others about the Saviour who saved us. All unbelievers are blind, they are bound in the shackles of sin, they are led about by the devil; and we should attempt to rescue them through the message of salvation: ". . . *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them*" (II Cor. 4:3, 4).

Paul declared, "*I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the Gospel. . . For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith*" (Rom. 1:14-17 in part).

Paul recognized the debt he owed to unbelievers — a debt to preach the Gospel and make known to them the wonderful salvation that he had received in Damascus. He recognized his responsibility to make known to others the Gospel of God's saving grace that had meant so much to *him*.

In all his epistles, Paul stresses the fact that the Christian not only has the grand and glorious *privilege* of telling others about the Savior, but that he has a great and *responsibility* to do so. In his letter to the Corinthian church he said, ". . . *My beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord*" (I Cor. 15:58).

To Timothy he wrote: *"These things command and teach. Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee"* (I Tim. 4:11-16).

In II Tim. 4:1-5 he continues: *"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."*

In each of these passages of Scripture, Paul pleads for the spirit of evangelism to be demonstrated, that each believer should possess and practice the spirit of evangelism in consistent soul-winning.

The Lord Jesus Christ, greatest soul-winner who ever lived, never passed up an opportunity to witness — even to one individual. To His disciples He said, *"My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together"* ( John 4:34-36).

All we need do today is look around us, listen to the conversation of the masses of humanity, and we will see that the fields are indeed white unto harvest — and as we look upon the reapers we will see that they are few! Today as never before we need to pray for the Lord to send forth laborers into the fields. We should be willing to say, "Lord, here am I! Send ME!"

*"The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise"* (Prov. 11:30).

*"And they that be wise [soul-winners] shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever"* (Dan. 12:3).

There is no scriptural basis for the song "Will There Be Any Stars in My Crown?" but the Bible clearly teaches something much better: We will not have stars in our crowns — but if we are faithful soul-winners we will shine as the brightness of the stars!

### ***Paul's Message to the Corinthians***

*"And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God"* (I Cor. 2:1-5).

There is a scriptural way to evangelize and win souls. Every believer should be an evangelist in that he gives out the good news that Jesus saves and the grace of God is sufficient. Paul was one of the best educated men of his day, yet he was careful to preach the Gospel in plain, simple language. He wanted his converts to have faith in the Christ of the Gospel and trust in His shed blood rather than being influenced by the apostle's speech and enticing words. With his education and background Paul was capable of speaking great swelling words, enticing words that would demonstrate man's wisdom and

accomplishments — but he did not preach after that fashion. His message was singular — it was the heart, soul, and essence of salvation: **the cross, Jesus Christ crucified.**

Later in the same epistle he reminds the Corinthian Christians WHY they are believers: *"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures; And that He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, He was seen of James: then of all the apostles. And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed"* (I Cor. 15:1-11).

Notice that Paul reminds the Corinthians that he delivered to them the message which he had first RECEIVED, and it was this message whereby they were saved, and wherein they stood. He preached the blood of Jesus Christ as the only remission for sin — and beloved, any minister who does not preach the virgin birth, the blood atonement, the second coming and the verbal inspiration of the Bible has only one reason for not doing so: If he does not preach these great fundamentals of the faith, then he does not BELIEVE *them!* He will preach what he believes, and if he does not preach these tremendous truths, it is a sure sign that he does not believe the truth.

Paul gives a clear, concise definition of the Gospel. He said "I preach to you what I myself received — first, that *Christ died for our sins* 'according to the Scriptures'; second, *He was buried* 'according to the Scriptures'; third, *He rose again the third day exactly as the Scriptures said He would.* He was seen by His disciples — singly, in groups, and at one time by as many as five hundred." He ascended into heaven after finishing the work He came to do — and that finished work so completely satisfied the heart of God that Christ is now in the highest seat of heaven — at the right hand of God the Father (Heb. 1:1-3).

The fifteenth chapter of I Corinthians is one of the greatest "resurrection" chapters in the entire Bible — and if there BE no resurrection, then all else is empty and vain. If Christ be not raised, then our preaching is vain, our faith is vain, and our loved ones who have died in the Lord are lost forever.

*" . . . If ye keep in memory what I preached unto you . . . "* (v. 2). Paul is here reminding the believers in Corinth that the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ and the bodily resurrection make up the two indispensable, undeniable facts of the Gospel of the grace of God. Reminding them of the message he had preached to them, through which message they were saved, he lays upon their hearts the weight of their own responsibility to work earnestly, steadfastly, with a consuming zeal to make known to others the glorious Gospel of the grace of God, the good news of salvation.

### ***Paul's Exhortation to Timothy***

*"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Savior, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope; unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine. Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do"* (I Tim. 1:1-4). Here is emphasized Paul's assurance that he is God's minister, delivering the message of God Almighty and the Lord Jesus Christ. In the passage previously quoted from I Timothy 4:11-16 Paul admonished and

exhorted his son in the faith to give attendance to reading and to meditation. "Give thyself wholly to them, meditate upon them, *continue* in them."

Beloved, Christianity is not a part-time responsibility; ***Paul the Apostle knew that!*** There are too many part-time Christians (so called), who give God a few minutes of their time on Sunday morning and take the other six days of the week for themselves. They give God a few pennies on Sunday morning and keep the rest for themselves. Such people are not soul-winners, neither are they spiritually minded; and (assuming that they have ever been saved) they cannot be effective witnesses for Christ.

You will notice, in II Timothy 4:1, Paul gives young Timothy — not a suggestion, but a **divine charge**: "*I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom; PREACH THE WORD!*" Any young man who is not willing to face this charge is not fit to be a minister of the Gospel. All Christians should be soul-winners, but this instruction is directed primarily to Timothy in his capacity as a faithful minister of Jesus Christ.

Paul warns Timothy of judgment at Christ's appearing. When Jesus comes, each believer will be rewarded for his stewardship — and all faithful stewardship will receive a reward. I personally believe that the greatest joy of the heart of God is to save the sinner. I further believe that WE, as believers, should strive earnestly and faithfully to get the Gospel message to those who have never heard.

The question has been asked, "Why should *anyone* hear the Gospel twice until *everyone* has heard it *once*?" To young Timothy Paul said, "Preach the Word — **nothing else!** Be instant at all times — in season, out of season. Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."

Notice that reproof and rebuke precede exhortation and doctrine. We need to *reprove and rebuke* the world of sin, and in so doing point out to them their need of a Saviour. We need to exhort them to be born again, and then give them Bible doctrine.

Paul warned Timothy that the day would come when people would not endure sound doctrine, but would "heap to themselves" (hire) teachers — and that is the proper word today. Ministers are "hired" and "fired." There was a time when God called preachers and sent them into the field — and this is still true in many instances; but all too often ministers are manufactured in denominational seminaries and turned off the assembly line much as automobile manufacturers build automobiles!

The true minister of God is called of God, ordained of God, and sent by God to the assembly over which He appoints that minister His under-shepherd.

We are warned that people will turn their ears from the truth and be turned "unto fables." But in spite of the multitudes who will refuse the truth, we are to be faithful in our evangelism. We are to watch (be alert), endure afflictions, make full proof of our ministry. God help us who profess to be ministers to preach the Word of truth — always, under all circumstances and in the face of all difficulties.

### ***Paul's Message to the Galatians***

"Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead; ) And all the brethren which are with me unto the churches of Galatia: "*Grace be unto you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from the present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

*"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have*

***preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again. If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.***

*"For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. **But I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.** For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God, and wasted it: and profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.*

*"But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.*

*"Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; and was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ: But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. And they glorified God in me" (Gal. 1:1-24).*

Paul is proclaiming his unaltered faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, having received it supernaturally from the Master Himself! (and none other!)

If you believe the corrupt doctrine that Apostle Paul is the wimpy, corrupt, unsaved, without the Holy Spirit – wimp – of Romans Seven, then you have no revelation of who Christ is – and His true relationship with His bride (Ephesians 5: 22-33).

As the Apostle Paul writes to the Christians in Galatia, he recalls the day of his powerful conversion and his amazing experience as he journeyed toward Damascus — the day when his physical eyes were blinded but the eyes of his understanding were opened. With sad and heavy heart he recalled how, *"beyond measure,"* he had persecuted and wasted the Church of the living God. He probably remembered the day Stephen was stoned, seeing that young man's face shine like the face of an angel as he prayed for his executioners, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. . . . Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:54-60).

How amazing to this apostle, that God should call him and that Jesus spoke to him on the Damascus road, when he had persecuted and wasted the Church, allowing believers to be stoned and martyred! But he was thankful. He said, "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; *who was **before** a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.* And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 1:12-14).

In I Thessalonians 2:4 he mentions having been "allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel." The Lord fully trusted the gospel to Apostle Paul; and Paul never, not one time acted out, or preached anything unfiltered by the Father. Not ever!

*"For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if do not preach the gospel!. . .Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes **for the prize** is temperate in all things. Now they **do** it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for and **imperishable crown.** Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: **not as one who beats the air.** But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified."*

He stresses the truth that the message he preached came to him by revelation direct from God, not by tradition received from other apostles. In other words, Paul said, "I had a revelation from God — a revelation of His crucified, buried, risen Son; and at the same time, He called and ordained me to preach the Gospel of His grace. I was a blasphemer, a persecutor of the Church, who injured many saints — but in spite of it all, He saved me, counted me faithful, and put me in the ministry."

In studying the writings of Paul we see that he was always careful to assure those to whom he ministered that the message he gave was not his, but God's. Paul always proclaimed that he was not a minister by choice nor by vocation, but by direct ordination of God Almighty: *"For though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel!"* (I Cor. 9:16). His message was not his own. It was by revelation from God.

Paul was jealous for the Gospel of the grace of God. According to a passage quoted from our chapter in Galatians, he proclaimed that if anyone — man or angel — should preach any other gospel, "let him be accursed" — in other words, *let him drop into hell!*

It would be far better to be a gangster, a dope peddler, a bootlegger, a liar, a thief, a cold-blooded murderer, than to be called a "minister" and pervert the Gospel of the grace of God, delivering to eternal souls a message other than that of the grace of God that saves, keeps, and delivers! God have mercy on any person who professes to be a preacher or teacher of the Gospel, and yet perverts the truth of God to please men, to bring glory to himself, to further the cause of a denominational group, or to curry favor with ecclesiastical bosses!

In I Corinthians 9:19, 22 Paul testified, *"For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. . . . I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."*

The same honorable and glorious calling that Paul had is offered to each and every Christian. I do not mean that we can all be apostles, nor that God will call us to pen down thirteen epistles; but we have the privilege of teaching the same glorious Gospel as that preached and taught by Paul!

No one has any priority on the Gospel. You may not be a pastor, an evangelist, or a missionary — but if you are born again you can be a witness for Jesus, giving out the good news that Jesus was crucified, buried, risen, seen of men, ascended into heaven where He is now seated at the right hand of God the Father to make intercession for all who will come unto God by Him!

### ***Who Helped YOU to Find the Way of Salvation?***

Jesus saved me — no one but Jesus could have saved me, for there is none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved; *but someone helped me to find the WAY to Jesus.* I dare say that you who are born again can remember someone who had a definite part in bringing you to the door of salvation and pointing you to Jesus. Perhaps it was your mother, your father, your husband, your wife; perhaps someone simply handed you a Gospel tract. Perhaps a pastor, an evangelist, a street preacher put a little salvation pamphlet in your automobile one day when you parked downtown. Somewhere, in some way, somebody helped you to find your way to Jesus!

I definitely know who helped ME — even when I did not care to BE helped. My mother prayed for me many times, and I had a sister who was specifically interested in my going to heaven when seemingly others — myself included — did not care. They prayed untiringly and would not take "No" for an answer. They witnessed to me — and I despised them for doing it. They wrote letters to me — and I read them in spite of the fact that I did not want to read them. My sister consistently insisted that I be saved — and because of her testimony I WAS saved. Therefore, it would be criminal if I should let others pass by and I refuse or neglect to tell them about the wonderful Savior!

But there are so many poor sinner boys and girls who do not have godly mothers, sisters, fathers, or brothers to pray for them! If you and I who know Jesus do not pray for them and witness to them, they will be lost eternally in the lake of fire. We should say with Paul, "Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel!" May God help us to be willing to do anything honorable and Christian to help men and women, boys and girls, to come to the knowledge of Jesus and be saved.

### ***God's Warning***

*"Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul"* ( Ezek. 3:17-19).

"He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" ( James 5:20).

Like Paul, we should often remember the day when we heard the Gospel and our blinded minds were opened, our hard hearts were melted, our stubborn wills were broken through the hearing of the Word of God — and we yielded our lives to Jesus! We should ask ourselves the question, "What — and where — would we be today had we not heard the Gospel?" No doubt some of us would be in hell by now, others would be steeped in sin, broken in health, hopelessly lost and *on the road to hell*.

Facing this fact, we should give thanks to God for His love and grace, for the shed blood of Jesus, and for the individual or circumstance that pointed us to Christ! God forbid that our sense of indebtedness should ever leave us, that we should ever look upon the winning of souls as the duty of others — or as something to be done in our spare time when we have nothing else to do. May we willingly and determinedly face our responsibility to those who are still blinded, groping in the darkness of sin and shackled by Satan!

### ***The Message That Saves Must Be Positive and Authoritative***

Supposition is no good in soul-winning. We who would effectively win souls must, first of all, know for sure that we know the Savior; we must know for sure that we speak with authority.

Paul could say, ". . . I KNOW whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (II Tim. 1:12). Paul knew WHAT he believed, but first and foremost he knew WHOM he believed. He knew a living Christ and he preached a living message: "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. . . . Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babler say? Other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection" (Acts 17:3, 18).

The secret of Paul's successful ministry was that he always preached "according to the Scriptures." He always declared "Thus saith the Lord." He did not care for human theory or supposition, he did not care for human speculation. He possessed divine revelation, and when he spoke, he spoke with authority. There was no doubt in the mind of the apostle concerning the bodily resurrection of Jesus, and His saving power. He never said, "The way I see it . . . in my humble opinion . . . it may be. . . ." He thundered out the Gospel "according to the Scriptures" — and he spoke with authority, in words easily understood — words that were "the power of God unto salvation" to all who will believe.

The soul-winner must never apologize for preaching the pure, unadulterated Word of God! The man who

is not sure that God lives, sure that God loved us and gave Jesus, sure that Jesus died, was buried, rose again and is now seated at the right hand of God, the man who is not sure that sin is real and "the wages of sin is death" and equally sure that Christ saves sinners, should never attempt to win souls or preach the Gospel. Believe it or not, beloved, we live in a world that is hungry for a salvation message that is logical, convincing, dogmatic, and authoritative.

We have entirely too many question marks and too much supposition in the pulpits today — too much preaching that is manufactured in denominational seminaries instead of being revealed by the Holy Spirit as the minister searches the Scriptures. The Word of God is the only message that will save a sinner, bring peace to a troubled heart and assurance to a soul on the verge of despair. God help us to sound out this good news to all who need a Savior.

### ***The Message of Redemption Is the Message of the Cross***

A gospel without the cross is not a Gospel. A message void of the shed blood of Jesus is as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. The devil does not fear the man in the pulpit or the personal worker who detours around the cross and the blood as the only remission for sin and the only hope for the sinner.

We are living in a day when the masses desire to have their ears tickled with a bloodless gospel devoid of the cross. Paul said to the Corinthians, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. . . . But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (I Cor. 1:8, 23, 24).

*"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners . . ."* (I Tim. 1:15). This "faithful saying" is worthy of acceptation because it is time-tested and centuries-proved by those of us who are believers, having received the message by faith. Without the cross, there IS no Gospel, in its true meaning.

The *sinless life* of Jesus could never have saved us. The miracles He performed could never have saved us. It was His death on the cruel cross that paid the sin-debt and purchased redemption. So long as He remained upon earth, His sinlessness simply showed ordinary men how exceeding sinful they really were. It was a divine imperative that He go to the cross: "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" ( John 12:24). Jesus was that corn of wheat. To Nicodemus He said, ". . . As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" ( John 3:14, 15). A "must" with God is a MUST! There was no other way — it had to be the cross.

There are many new translations of the Bible today. We hear much about bringing it "up to date" to fit the times in which we live. The Bible has always been up to date — and will continue to be so. Times change, customs and people change: but sin does not change, Satan does not change — and neither does the gospel! The Bible is as up to date as the tick of the watch on your arm, as up to date as tomorrow morning's headlines. Sin is still *sin*, the wages of sin is still *death*, and the Word of God still thunders out: *"Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God! Except ye repent, ye shall perish!"*

Jesus said, *"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me"* (John 12:32), and the only message that WILL draw men and women out of the gutter of sin and plant their feet on the Solid Rock is the message of the cross, the message of the crucified Saviour and His shed blood. No other message can or will bring salvation.

### ***The Gospel Message Is a Message of Warning***

The Apostle Paul preached the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He preached the love of God, he preached the mercy of God, he preached the grace of God — and he did not stop short of

preaching the wrath of God. He did not preach a chocolate-covered, sugar-coated, easy going, popular message. To the Corinthians he said, "*Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men*" (II Cor. 5:11). That is, "Knowing that God is a God of terror, a God of wrath, we preach warning, persuading men to turn to the Lord Jesus Christ lest they fall into the hands of the God of terror."

Hebrews 12:29 tells us, "... *Our God is a consuming fire.*" Paul did not preach a one-sided Gospel. He preached the whole counsel of God — the love of God, the wrath of God, the terror of God, and the fire of God's judgment. In his famous sermon on Mars Hill he cried out that God "*commandeth all men every where to repent; because He hath appointed a day, in which He will judge the world in righteousness ..*" (Acts 17:30, 31 in part).

Paul believed and preached that it is a divine necessity to repent or perish, but in the modern pulpit we hear very little about repenting, and the old-fashioned mourner's bench has been outlawed. (I realize that mourning and weeping will not save — but those outward emotions do signify a broken and a contrite heart which God will not despise.)

God has always honored a contrite, broken heart. Godly sorrow worketh repentance, and I do not believe there has ever been an instance of true salvation which was not preceded by godly fear and godly sorrow.

We need more dogmatic, positive preaching concerning the judgment of God, preaching that will cause men to realize the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the drastic need of a Saviour, preaching that will cause men to tremble under the power of the Holy Spirit. We need messages like the Apostle Paul preached to the people in Thessalonica: "... *The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power*" (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

There is no excuse for anyone missing here. The Lord Jesus Himself, *in a body*, will one day be revealed. He will be seen coming in the heavens, accompanied by a host of angels and His Bride. He will descend from heaven to earth, taking vengeance on those who know not God and who obey not the Gospel. They shall be punished — *not destroyed or annihilated as some would have us believe* — but punished with *everlasting, unending destruction* from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power!

We NEED this type preaching today. The people need to be informed about the return of Jesus, the coming judgment, the fires of hell, and the eternal damnation of the wicked. In Mark 9:42-48, Jesus preached the hottest sermon ever preached on hell, and He preached it in the plainest, most understandable language.

It is true the Gospel is good news — the best news any sinner could ever hear — *and we must preach the love of God with the good news of salvation*; but we must not stop there. We cannot preach the *grace* of God without also preaching the judgment of God. We must tell individuals that if they refuse the Saviour and turn a deaf ear to the call of the Spirit, they will face God as their righteous judge.

Paul said, "*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*" (Heb. 10:31) — but it is not necessary to fall into the hands of a living God. Right now, you can fall into the arms of a loving Savior! He invites, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest... They that come to me I will in no wise cast out. . . Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. . . The Spirit and the bride say, Come. Let him that heareth say come. Let him that is thirsty come. Whosoever will, let him come!"

That is the invitation of the Lord Jesus to every sinner — but do it now! "*Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth*" (Prov. 27:1).

". . . *Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation*" (II Cor. 6:2).

### ***The Gospel Message Is an Instructive Message***

Paul was an evangelist, but he was also a teacher. God calls pastors, teachers, evangelists, missionaries — yes; but in one sense we all have the same calling. There are different ministries, but all preachers of the Gospel should also be teachers of the Gospel, "warning every man, and TEACHING every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col. 1:28).

There are two extremes today — one group believes in extreme (but often superficial) emotionalism. They sing, shout, clap their hands, and have a great meeting where the time is taken up, primarily, by singing, shouting, and hand-clapping. I am not criticizing those who practice this type of emotionalism; I am only pointing out that if we hope to stand in the hour of storm, and if we hope for our converts to weather the storms, we must be sure that they are founded and grounded upon the Solid Rock. Paul never forgot to preach doctrine. He taught his converts Bible doctrine that would give them grace, courage, and strength to stand in the hour of testing.

On the other extreme is the formal crowd who attend services where everything is done by cut-and-dried programming, and the devil knows far in advance what is going to happen, when, and to whom. The program is outlined far ahead of time and it cannot be altered, even for the sake of the Holy Spirit. It must go according to schedule — stern orthodoxy, dead religion.

Between these two extremes, then, are the few who preach a dynamic, soul-saving Gospel. They believe in a genuine, heartfelt salvation, and they also teach the Word that will root and ground believers in the faith once delivered to the saints.

### ***Tragedy of Tragedies***

In many instances, in far too many churches, those who come forward for church membership do not know a reason for what they are doing. They simply join a church, ask for baptism, and have no knowledge of what it means to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. I truly believe that there are many honest seekers of truth and salvation who come forward in a church service and go away with empty hearts and disillusioned minds, without knowing how to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and trust Him to forgive their sins and save their soul. To me, this is the tragedy of tragedies!

Perhaps, when these dear souls come forward seeking salvation, the preacher takes their hand, invites them to be seated while the church clerk takes their name and address, and asks them if they are coming into the church by baptism, by letter, or by watch-care. At the close of the invitation hymn he asks them if they believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, and they answer, "Yes." They are then "voted into" the church, a baptismal time is set — and no one bothers to open the Word of God to instruct them, no one reads the Scriptures to those who have come forward, no one points out the "why" and the "how" of believing, receiving, and having faith in God.

Thus, the poor souls who came forward with hungry hearts seeking to know Jesus, leave the church as the Ethiopian eunuch left Jerusalem, the city of worship, and was returning home with the same empty hunger in his heart — until Philip met him and expounded unto him the Scriptures.

We must remember that the sinner is dead in trespasses, blinded by sin, bound in the shackles of iniquity, and hopelessly lost! How tragic to hurry through the altar service, bypass the moments of inquiry, and rush an honest seeker of salvation into church membership when he actually has no knowledge of a personal relationship with the Savior. A large majority of those who come forward are ignorant concerning the Word of God, they have no knowledge of the Gospel; and it is the solemn duty of the Christian to instruct them in the things of God and show them the plan of salvation based on God's Word.

To the Romans Paul said, ". . . *Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they*

*have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the Gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God"* (Rom. 10:13-17).

In these verses Paul gives the plan of salvation in reverse. God calls and sends witnesses who give forth the Word of God — the good news that Jesus Saves. Thus, the Word is heard by the unbeliever, and the Word brings faith. Then faith, born in the heart of the unbeliever through hearing the Word, automatically calls on God and the transaction is complete. Jesus saves the one who calls.

But there can be no saving faith on the part of the seeker of salvation until he first hears the Word of God — not with the ear, but with the heart: "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:10 ). We need to saturate the seeker of salvation with the Word of God.

Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (Jn 5:24).

I Peter 1:23 says, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, *by the Word of God*, which liveth and abideth for ever."

James said, "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness *the engrafted Word* which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21). There can be no salvation, no saving faith, until the unbeliever hears the Word of God.

When the Philippian jailer asked, "What must I do to be saved?" Paul and Silas answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." But notice: "And they spoke unto him **THE WORD OF THE LORD**, and to all that were in his house" (Acts 16:31, 32).

Paul answered the jailer's question. When he asked what he must do to be saved, Paul replied, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" — and that is the **ONLY** way to be saved. But this poor, blinded, pagan jailer did not know what it meant to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. But Paul knew, and he gave the **WORD OF GOD** to the jailer and to all of his household. Apart from the Word there is no saving faith, there can be no new birth. It is the Gospel that is the power of God unto salvation to those who believe.

But in this atomic age, when men are running to and fro and the whole world is in a frenzy, in most church services the minister gives a short essay or sermonette, folk are invited to unite with the church, and those who desire to do so come forward to give the preacher their name, address, and be voted into the church. The Word of God is not opened, no instruction is given on the meaning of believing on the Lord Jesus Christ unto salvation. Tragedy of tragedies, indeed!

Jesus was a very busy Man, but if you will study the Gospels you will find Him sitting at table with publicans and sinners, instructing and teaching them. You will find Him sitting at Jacob's well, patiently teaching a poor Samaritan woman, leading her to the living water. Our Lord was never too busy, never in too big a hurry, to teach individuals and lead them into the way of salvation.

The natural man cannot know nor understand the things of God until the Holy Spirit comes into his heart. Then He (the Holy Spirit) reveals the things of God. To the believer, God reveals His truth — and it is up to us who believe to teach and preach this truth to unbelievers, to point them to Jesus, and to make the way of salvation clear and plain. When they receive Jesus, they can understand the things of God.

"But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things

of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (I Cor. 2:10-13).

Paul was an evangelist, a missionary, an expositor of the truth. He exhorted, he rebuked, but he also taught. To young Timothy he said, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15).

Paul wanted to see men saved — but for every believer he had a still deep desire to "*present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.*" To the Christians in Corinth he said, "*For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich*" (II Cor. 8:9).

In I Corinthians 6:19, 20 he said, "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Paul was a doctrinal preacher but he had no place in his ministry for dead orthodoxy and cold religious creed. He was dynamic even in his preaching of doctrine. He urged his hearers to live a practical, spiritual life — even in the smallest details of daily living — in their social life, their business affairs, or whatsoever. Christians should live a life that will not bring reproach upon the Savior.

### ***Paul's Message Was Appealing***

The Gospel Paul preached was dogmatic and dynamic, but it was also appealing. He did not take a Gospel club and drive people, but rather, he appealed to them on the grounds of the cross, the blood, and what Jesus had accomplished for them.

He pleaded with the believers in Rome to present their bodies a living sacrifice because of God's mercy and grace, because of God's goodness to them (Rom. 12:1). He invited the Corinthians to follow him as he followed Christ (I Cor. 4:16). In his second letter to the Corinthians he told them, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. . . . We then as workers together with Him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain" (II Cor. 5:20; 6:1).

To the believers at Ephesus: "*I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*" (Eph. 4:1-3).

As Christians today, we should hear this same pleading message from this Prince of Apostles who counted all things loss that he might be his best for Jesus.

Paul's preaching was not a religious lecture. He delivered a message that sought to lead men to a definite act of faith in God unto salvation, followed by a definite surrender of body, soul, and spirit. True, he was an outstanding theologian, but he was also a down-to-earth evangelist and Bible teacher. God gave him the gift of oratory and the power of appeal, but he always based his message upon the truth of the Gospel. He never added his ideas or suppositions to "thus saith the Lord." Instead, he challenged, "Let God be true, but every man a liar!" (Rom. 3:4).

Jesus spoke of John the Baptist as "*a burning and a shining light.*" Paul's preaching was characterized by fiery enthusiasm because it came from a heart aglow with total surrender and devotion to Christ. He

preached the Word that is *"like a fire"* (Jer. 23:29).

I believe in a heart-felt salvation and in true emotion; but emotional appeals from the pulpit ( the reciting of "sob stories" to move the congregation to tears) without scriptural teaching and Bible doctrine, will produce only superficial results. On the other hand, even sound theology that is completely void of personal application and warm-hearted appeal can lead only to a Gospel-hardened group of church members. In either case, the result is sad, and should not be.

The pure Gospel of the grace of God, delivered by a man who lives what he preaches, will produce a change in the thinking of the unbeliever who is exposed to such preaching. It will bring a verdict in the heart of the listener. A pure Gospel message delivered from a pure heart will reach the souls of men for Christ, for such a message appeals to the individual and challenges him to do something about the need of his heart. Pure Gospel preaching will create a sense of need in the hearts of sinners, along with a sense of fear, a sense of responsibility, a sense of indebtedness — for after all, man is the genius of God's creation, the product of God's creative power.

Pure Gospel preaching carries a message of warning, of wooing, of intreating, urging, pleading and persuading, inviting those who need the Lord to make a definite decision for Christ, receive His finished work, and trust Him as Savior. Pure Gospel is *"the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth."*

### ***The Gospel Message Is All-Sufficient***

The man who preaches the pure Gospel of the grace of God delivers an all-sufficient message. All we need to know about God, the devil, salvation, sin, heaven, hell, and things pertaining to life here and hereafter are contained in the Word of God, The Apostle Paul preached with profound conviction that the Gospel is all-sufficient. He believed that the Gospel is the only message to heal the world's ills, heartaches, and woes.

To the Christians in Rome he said, ". . . I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ" (Rom. 15:29). In Ephesians 3:8 he said, *"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."*

Paul proclaimed the true Gospel — the message of good news that God so loved that He gave heaven's best, that through His grace sinful man might be brought back into the right relationship with a holy God and find in Him every need for time and for eternity.

His message was not so much what men ought to be and do, but, primarily, what GOD can be in us and through us, and what God has done and will yet do for us and through us in Christ Jesus our Lord and Saviour. Paul laid down the rules of Christian conduct, and yet his message was not a list of negatives. Rather, it was one that sounded out the unsearchable riches of God's grace, inviting men to receive that all-sufficient grace and the all-sufficient Saviour in His saving power.

The unbeliever is hopeless, without strength, depraved, and hell-bound — but all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and put their trust in His finished work will find every need fully met in Him. In Him we find salvation, victory, and reward!

### ***Paul's Burden***

I personally believe that Paul was the most powerful preacher who ever lived, apart from the Lord Jesus Christ. He was clear and logical — in his preaching, in his thinking, in his teaching. His epistles clearly reveal that this man possessed a consuming passion for lost souls. His heart was tender toward those outside of Christ. Of his own brothers in the flesh (Israel) he said, *"I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my*

*conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh"* (Rom. 9:1-3). He carried such a burden for his own people that he confessed he would be willing to be accursed from Christ if it would save them!

In Philippians 3:18, 19 he said, ". . . Many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things." This great evangelist, this spiritual giant, could weep over sinners, even though they were enemies of Christ and would have destroyed even Paul himself. Not many Christians — ministers, Sunday school teachers, or laymen — weep over sinners today. We need more eyes bathed in tears for the sake of winning souls for Christ.

In Galatians 4:19 Paul said, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." He not only carried a tremendous burden for the lost, but for his children in the faith as well, that they would go forward and upward, becoming more like Christ day by day.

Writing to the Corinthian believers he said, "And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved" (II Cor. 12:15).

Paul was not ashamed to weep. So great was his passion for souls, so sharp the pain in his heart because of the fact that they would spend eternity in hell unless they received the Gospel message and put their faith in the shed blood of Jesus, that he compared his agony of soul with the travail of a woman in childbirth. Yes, Paul could "weep o'er the erring ones."

*"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves, with him"* (Psalm 126:6). Paul was willing to sacrifice anything and everything; to go to all lengths in personal sacrifice and loss in order to be instrumental in saving souls. He hazarded his life time after time. He became accustomed to living dangerously. In spite of the trials and persecutions which he endured, he bought up every opportunity to bring souls into the Kingdom of God.

When he set his face steadfastly toward Jerusalem, he knew that he would be persecuted, he knew he would be arrested. In every city where he had preached he had suffered bonds and afflictions, and he knew that the same treatment awaited him in Jerusalem. Yet he said, "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24).

Simply put, Paul never had time enough to think in a carnal manner. His walk was ever in The Holy Spirit. Coming up is more of Paul with emphasis on Romans Nine. Be Watching.  
Blessings from

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