

**GOSPEL
OF
JESUS & PAUL**

BY

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**A Comprehensive Study of Righteousness
Adam, Jesus & Us: Spirit, Soul & Body: a Study in
Scriptures
Spirit, A Study in Scriptures
Who Is Christ?
Who, In Christ, Are you?
No Other Gospel
Living Word
From the Heart**

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INTRODUCTION

This book, **THE GOSPEL OF JESUS AND PAUL**, has two purposes. First, it is a survey of the basic principles of the New Testament good news. Second, it is a confirmation that Jesus and Paul were teaching the same good news, the Gospel.

Because we do not always consider the basic concepts of the Gospel in a single book, we often over emphasize the importance of one or another element of the Gospel. It is my desire to consider them together so that we clearly see the importance of all of them with proper balance and definition. The elements that we shall consider include repentance, faith, grace, righteousness, forgiveness, discipline, and the fruit of the Spirit. There may be other concepts which could be included in this list, but these are the basics as I see them.

Many think that Paul teaches another Gospel than Jesus. It is possible that some contemporary teachers have taken the teachings of Paul out of context and produced a Gospel other than what Jesus and Paul taught. That does not mean, however, that Jesus and Paul taught a different Gospel.

I am convinced that Paul taught the revelation given him by Jesus. Paul's revelation is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We need to understand, however, that the two taught different groups of people. Jesus taught the Jews. Paul taught the born-again church. For that reason Jesus taught in parables, while Paul taught more directly. Therefore, Jesus used one vocabulary and Paul used another. As we examine the Greek (and Hebrew) meanings for these words of repentance, faith, grace, etc., and

the way Jesus and Paul used these words, we will see that they both taught the same good news Gospel.

Since I repeatedly use the phrase "Jesus and Paul," the reader may think that I consider Jesus and Paul to be equal in the ministry. This is not so. Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. Paul was but a mere man, called to be an apostle. Yet, the teachings of Jesus, along with the teachings of Paul comprise the major portion of the New Testament. They both taught. They both ministered the good news Gospel from the Father. Jesus went beyond teaching. He went to the Cross to make salvation and all of the good news available to us. Paul was only able to teach and live the good news provided by Jesus Christ.

I pray THE GOSPEL OF JESUS AND PAUL will bring a fresh insight to you about what Jesus died to give us and Paul sacrificed to teach us.

Chapter One

THE GOSPEL

What is the Gospel?

The word Gospel is used exclusively in the New Testament. The Greek word used is evangelizo or evangelion. The two words are used twenty-three times in the synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke). Neither of these Greek words appears in the Book of John. These two words are used 113 times from the Book of Acts through Revelation.

The Greek word evangelizo has been translated:

11. preach, x
12. preach the Gospel, x
13. bring good tidings, x
14. show glad tidings, x
15. bring glad tidings, x
16. declare, and x
17. declare good tidings. x

The Greek word evangelion has been translated:

11. gospel
12. gospel of Christ, x
13. gospel of God, x
14. gospel of the kingdom. x

The Greek word *evangelizo* is taken from two Greek words; *eu*, meaning well or good, and *aggelos*, meaning to bring tidings or a message. Thus, *evangelizo* means to bring good tidings.

The English word, *gospel*, comes from the medieval English word *godspell*. It was originally *god spell*, or *good spell*, which became *good news*. As time progressed the word changed from *godspell* to *gospel*.

Thus, we see the English word, *gospel*, accurately reflects the Greek word *evangelizo*, meaning *good news* or *good tidings*.

What is the Good News?

The Gospel is the good news. What is the good news? The good news may seem to be different things to different people. This should not be so. The good news that we are speaking of is the good news that Jesus brought to us and that Paul taught in the epistles.

We are not talking about some positive statement made by Mohammed, or Buddha, or a modern day psychologist. We are not talking about PMA (positive mental attitude) or other soul-realm, positive discipline programs.

The good news I am talking about is the good news that Jesus brought to us and willingly died to make available to us. But

even more so, it is the good news that our Savior, Jesus Christ, is alive today.

One could say, "It is good news to Jesus of Nazareth, that He is alive today. But what does that have to do with me today?"

The answer is simple. It is through Jesus' death that we find our forgiveness from sins. It is through His resurrection that we find new life on this earth. The good news is not simply that Jesus Christ was crucified, but that He is now resurrected from the dead. The good news is what Jesus Christ accomplished for us through His Cross and Resurrection.

The good news is that God loves us.

The good news is that God sent His Son to die for us.

The good news is that God raised Jesus Christ from the dead.

The good news is that God has empowered us to be like Jesus Christ.

The good news is that God has blessed us.

The good news is that God has healed us.

The good news is that God has given us peace.

The good news is that God has forgiven us.

The good news is that God has cleansed our conscience.

The good news is that God has given us eternal life.

Chapter Two

THE BASICS

What are the Basics?

There are a few simple concepts that define the good news, the Gospel. These basics reveal to us how to receive and how to keep this good news promised by God.

Basic concepts of the Gospel are:

11. repentance, x
12. faith, x
13. grace, x
14. righteousness, x
15. forgiveness, x
16. discipline, and
17. the fruit of the Spirit. x

This list reminds me of the foundation principles listed in Hebrews, Chapter Six, verses one and two:

11. "repentance from dead works, x

12. "faith toward God, x
13. "doctrine of baptisms, x
14. "laying on of hands, x
15. "resurrection of the dead, and x
16. "eternal judgment." x

When the fundamentals of the faith are considered, this list in Hebrews is generally the outline. However, I find the Hebrews list to be advanced compared to the first listing in this chapter, which is more basic to the Gospel. Even the Book of Hebrews speaks of righteousness as a "first principle" in Chapter Five, verses twelve and thirteen, before it lists the fundamentals in Chapter Six.

Carnal Camps

As the carnal mind considers the basics of the Gospel, carnal camps or groups are established. Through the years I have observed the opposing camps as follows:

11. Repentance 2versus mercy. x
12. Faith 2versus works. x
13. Grace 2versus law. x
14. Right-standing righteousness 2versus right-doing righteousness. x
15. The fruit of the Spirit 2versus the gifts of the Spirit. x
16. Love 2versus authority. x
17. Liberty 2versus order. x
18. Spirit 2versus the Word. x

You may not clearly see what I am saying. But, as we look at some of these carnal camps of controversy, I think you will understand my point.

Probably the most frequent camps for debate are "grace versus law" and "faith versus works." Let us expand on this by looking at the "grace versus law" camp with some detailed inspection.

There is a group of Christians who place emphasis on grace, however they define it. Erroneously, they believe that grace has absolutely freed them from the law, or any standard of moral conduct. Therefore, they use their definition of grace to justify their liberty, even their sin.

On the other hand, another group of Christians place the emphasis on the law, however they define it. They believe that obedience to the law and moral conduct is absolutely essential to have any favorable relationship with God. Therefore, they are under constant self condemnation because they never come into perfect obedience to the law.

Those who favor one of the two camps, grace or law, look at each other's preference and see respective shortcomings. The grace camp sees the bondage of the law camp. Therefore, the grace camp resists the call of the Holy Spirit into true, Spirit-inspired obedience. On the other hand, the law camp sees the libertarianism or sin of the grace camp and resists the call of the Holy Spirit into true, Spirit-inspired, moral, creative liberty. As a result, they retreat deeper into the security of the law and bondage.

The two camps, law and grace, should not be opposing one another as competitive to each other. It should not be law OR grace. This is the enemy's work; he has deceived Christians into believing that two valid truths from the Word of God are in opposition to one another. This should not and need not be.

Let us rethink this list of basics removing the "versus" which sets them in competition to one another. I will insert more appropriate phrases which reflect the New Testament relationship between the two as follows:

11. Repentance releases mercy.
12. Faith produces works.
13. Grace fulfills the law.
14. Right-standing righteousness produces right-doing righteousness.
15. The fruit of the Spirit confirms the gifts of the Spirit.
16. Spirit enlivens the Word.

These verbs (release, produce, fulfill, confirm, and enliven) place the two sets of nouns into a constructive, New Testament relationship with one another. The use of "versus," places them in opposition to one another.

My point is simply this. All of these New Testament concepts are valuable and precious in the sight of God. These basic concepts are compatible with the Gospel. However, if we are going to see how they are compatible, we must put off our carnal thinking and return to what the Bible itself says about these basics of the Gospel.

Chapter Three

REPENTANCE

Words of Jesus

Jesus preached, "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matthew 4:17)

Jesus taught: "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." (Luke 24:46, 47)

Words of Paul

Paul wrote, "Or despiseth thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth to repentance?" (Romans 2:4)

Jesus and Paul both taught about repentance. What did they really mean?

What is Repentance?

The English word "repent" means:

11. to feel sorrow, or regret for something one has done or left undone.
12. to change one's mind about some past action, intention as a consequence of regret.
13. to remember with sorrow.
14. to feel regret.
15. to be sorry.

There are three Greek words translated repent. They are *metamelonai*, *metanoeo*, and *metanoya*. The literal English meanings for these words follow:

11. *Metamelonai*, to care after, regret, repent.
12. *Metanoeo*, to think differently or afterwards, reconsider, repents, or abhors the past. x
13. *Metanoya*, compunction, reformation, repentance, reversal, change of mind. x

The Hebrew word *nacham* is translated repent. The literal meaning of *nacham* is:

11. to sigh, breathe strongly. x
12. to be sorry, lament, grieve. x
13. console, avenge. x
14. repent. x

My point in presenting these detailed definitions is to help you change your thinking about repentance. Tradition defines repentance (often by implication) to mean "change your actions." There is no doubt that actions need to be changed in

many instances. But changing of actions alone will not necessarily change the inner man. We can change our actions and still be "white-washed sepulchers."

The literal definitions of the Greek and Hebrew words for repentance do not specifically say "change your actions." The meaning very clearly says to change out of a motivation of genuine sorrow. But what needs to be changed? The only clear distinction we are given by these definitions is to change our mind or our thinking.

Therefore, repentance means to change our mind or thinking! Change from what to what? Change from intelligence to ignorance? NO! We are called to change our thinking from ungodly to godly thinking. We are called to repent our thinking from the word of the world to the Word of God. We are called to repent from unbelieving thinking to faith in God.

Repentance is a word dealing primarily with thinking, rather than about actions or works. God made repentance important because He knew that if we would think His way, we would soon act His way. Actions are important, but thoughts are even more important because they control actions.

What About Actions?

There has been so much emphasis upon repentance as a change of actions that this idea of change of thinking may be offensive. If repentance is a change of thinking, then what about actions?

I am in no way trying to promote rebellion or libertarianism. I am not saying it is not necessary to change your actions. It may or may not be necessary, depending on what your actions are. However, we must understand something. If we change our

actions without changing our thinking, our old thinking will lead us back to our old actions. If we change our thinking first, our new thinking will lead us to new actions which will remain, that is, as long as our new thinking remains.

It is impossible to permanently change our old actions without changing our old thinking. We may change them for a short season, but our old thinking will catch up with us and we will find ourselves back in our old actions. A permanent change of actions will only take place with a permanent change in our thinking.

Jesus and Paul both understood true repentance. Therefore, they both spoke of repentance, knowing that they were speaking of a change in thinking from unbelief to faith; from ungodly thinking to godly thinking. Repentance is a faith teaching. Repentance teaching is a call from unbelief to faith in God.

REPENT! Change your thinking about repentance. Understand that repentance is a call to think God's thoughts. Repentance is a call to faith in God's Word.

But what about actions? They will follow. When you begin to think God's thoughts, you will begin to hate actions that reflect sin. Not actions in others, but actions in yourself that reflect sin. You will begin to hate actions that reflect selfishness. Yes, you will see actions in others that reflect selfishness. You will be tempted to judge accordingly. Then, as the Holy Spirit shows you actions in yourself that reflect selfishness, you will hate your own actions just as much. With everything in you, you will refrain from those actions that reflect selfishness, because you think like God and you hate selfishness.

This is the very idea that Jesus brought to us in the Sermon on the Mount. Read it in Matthew, Chapters Five through Seven. After the Beatitudes, Jesus follows with a series of moral precepts which illustrate the various Beatitudes. In many of these moral precepts He begins by saying, "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time." He would then follow with a quotation from the law, both the Ten Commandments and the *Mishnah* (Jewish religious law). Jesus would then follow by saying, "But I say unto you." He would then state an even more important principle. Now the first statement would be a reference to the law and outward actions. But His addition would be a statement of the inward thoughts.

Jesus quotes the law by saying, "Thou shalt not kill." He then follows with His addition by saying, "That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment...." (Matthew 5:21, 22)

Jesus quotes the law again, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." He follows with His addition by saying, "That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." (Matthew 5:27, 28) First He quotes the law of outward performance, and then He adds His statement pertaining to the inner thought life.

You will find the same pattern in His teaching continued in Matthew, Chapter Five, and verses thirty-three, thirty-eight, and forty-three.

This illustrates my point. Jesus has called us to repentance of changing our thought life. He has called us to repent by putting on the mind of Christ. He has called us to repentance of changing our unbelief to faith in God. Repentance, as Jesus

taught it, is first of all a change of thinking to put off the carnal mind, and put on the mind of the Spirit.

In this call to repentance, changing our thinking, Jesus was not white washing our sin. He was not condoning adultery or murder. He was calling us to a higher life than mere outward performance. He was calling us to an inward thought life that would also reflect itself in our outward performance. Jesus so clearly saw that no man was able to obey the law, because no man was willing to change his thought life.

Actions are important to God. However, actions will never change permanently until we change our thinking. Repentance means to change our thinking.

Jesus on Repentance

Let us review several quotations of Jesus about repentance, inserting amplifying phrases, (such as "change our/their/his thinking," "changing of thinking") so that we might renew our thinking about Jesus' teachings on repentance.

"They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But ye go and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance (changing their thinking)." (Matthew 9:12, 13; see also Mark 2:17.)

"I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth (changes his thinking) , more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance (changing of thinking)." (Luke 15:7; see also Luke 15:10.)

"And that repentance (changing of thinking) and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem." (Luke 24:47)

"Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not (changed their thinking): woe unto thee, *Chorazin!* Woe unto thee *Bethsaida!* for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented (changed their thinking) long ago in sackcloth and ashes." (Matthew 11:20, 21; see also Luke 10:13.)

"The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented (changed their thinking) at the preaching of Jonas; and behold, a greater than Jonas is here." (Matthew 12:41; see also Luke 11:32).

In the parable of the two sons, Jesus taught: "For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not (did not change your thinking) afterward, that ye might believe him." (Matthew 21:32)

"From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent (change your thinking): for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matthew 4:17)

"And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye (change your thinking), and believe the gospel." (Mark 1:15)

"I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent (change your thinking), ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3, 5)

"Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent (change his thinking), forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times a day, and seven times a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent (change my thinking): thou shalt forgive him." (Luke 17:3, 4)

Paul on Repentance

"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance (changing your thinking)?" (Romans 2:4)

"For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance (changing of His thinking)." (Romans 11:29)

"For godly sorrow worketh repentance (changing of thinking) to salvation not to be repented of (change of thinking): but the sorrow of the world worketh death." (II Corinthians 7:10)

"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance (change of thinking) to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will." (II Timothy 2:24-26)

Jesus and Paul on Repentance

From these scriptures we see that both Jesus and Paul related repentance, a changing in the thinking, as an essential element of salvation.

Chapter Four

FAITH

Jesus on Faith

Jesus said, "Have faith in God." (Mark 11:22)

Paul on Faith

Paul states, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:8, 9)

What is Faith?

The English word faith means:

1. unquestioning belief in God.
2. a religion or a system of religious belief.
3. complete trust, confidence, or reliance.
4. faithfulness, fidelity, loyalty, allegiance to a person or a thing.
5. credibility or truth.

The English word faith is taken from the Latin words *fides*, meaning belief, and *fidere*, meaning to trust or confide in.

The Greek word translated faith is *pistis*. It is used 246 times in the New Testament. *Epistis* literally means:

1. conviction of truth,
2. belief,
3. fidelity, and
4. faithfulness.

The Greek word *pistis* is taken from the Greek word *peitho*. *Peitho* literally means:

1. to convince,
2. conciliate,
3. pacify,
4. to become a believer,
5. to trust, and to be confident.

Another Greek word that is very similar to *pistis* (faith) is *pistos*. *Pistos* is translated faithful and literally means:

1. trusty, faithful,
2. easily persuaded, and
3. believing.

Yet another Greek word similar to *pistis* (faith) is *pistuo*. It is usually translated to believe and literally means:

1. to think to be true,
2. to be persuaded,
3. place confidence in, and
4. to intrust a thing to someone.

In all of these Greek words; *pistis*, *pistho*, *pistos*, and *pistuo*, there is a common thread. That common thread is trust and faithfulness.

We find additional help in the Hebrew word *ahman*. *Ahman* is translated:

1. nurse,
2. faithful,
3. established,
4. verified,
5. believe, and
6. trust.

A similar Hebrew word, *ehmoon*, is translated:

1. faith,
2. faithful, and
3. truth.

Faith, Faithfulness, and Belief

What can we conclude from all of the English, Greek, and Hebrew words for faith? In all three languages we find very little distinction between faith, faithfulness, and belief.

Jesus said, "Have faith in God."

Faith in God is faithful trust in God.

Faith in God is believing what God said.

Faith in God is believing faithfully in what God said.

Faith in God is believing faithfully in what God said, when all else would persuade us otherwise.

Faith in God is so believing what God said that we faithfully trust in the Word of God when all else would persuade us otherwise.

Faithfulness and steadfastness have been hidden in our learning of faith. Faithfulness is not a popular idea in the minds of men. This is a day of instant coffee, instant soup, instant success, and instant everything. But in God's mind faithfulness is of great value. We cannot have instant faithfulness. Faithfulness may begin in an instant, but only time will prove it to be faithfulness.

In this hour, men want instant faith that produces instant results. However, instant is not a word that describes faith. Faithfulness is a word that describes faith. Faith can begin in an instant, but time alone will prove that it is faith, that it is faithfulness.

Faith has been taught to be many things, but first of all faith is faithful trust in God.

Now Faith Is?

In Hebrews, Chapter Eleven, verse one, we read, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Wuest presents an interesting translation of this same verse in Hebrews, Chapter Eleven, "Now faith is the title deed of things hoped for, the proof of things which are not being seen."

If we insert the phrase "faithful trust" for the word faith, the Wuest translation would read, "Now faithful trust is the title deed of things hoped for, the proof of things which are not being seen."

Faithful trust is the substance.

Faithful trust is the title deed.

The Hebrew word translated substance in the King James Version is *hupostasis*. Thayer's Lexicon defines *hupostasis* as:

1. setting or placing under,
2. things put under,
3. substructure,
4. foundation,
5. that which actually exists,
6. a substance,
7. real thing,
8. quality of substance,
9. steadiness of mind,
10. firmness,
11. courage,
12. resolution,
13. confidence,
14. firm trust, and
15. assurance.

From these definitions of substance we find the ideas of foundation, real thing, resolute courage. Therefore, we amplify

Hebrews, Chapter Eleven, verse one: Now faithful trust is the real foundation, the resolute courage, of things hoped for....

This verse continues to say, ...now faithful trust...is the evidence of things not seen. The Hebrew word for substance is *elengchos*. Thayer's Lexicon defines *elengchos* as:

1. a proof,
2. conviction, and
3. that by which a thing is proved or tested.

Therefore the Kaiser Paraphrased version of Hebrews, Chapter Eleven, verse one is "Now faithful trust is the real foundation, the resolute courage of things hoped for, the proof of the existence of things not seen."

Chapter Five

FAITH COMES

Quantity of Faith

We read in Mark, Chapter Four, verse four that Jesus spoke of those who have no faith. Apparently there was a question about whether or not all had faith, for Jesus says, "Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not...." (Matthew 21:21)

Jesus spoke often of little faith. (Matthew 6:30, 8:26, 14:31, 16:8, and Luke 12:28)

Jesus also spoke of great faith. (Matthew 8:10; 15:28, Luke 7:9)

Jesus taught about those with no faith, little faith, and great faith. Yet Jesus did not teach directly about how faith comes.

Paul, however, addresses the question of how faith comes. "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought

to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." (Romans 12:3) The word measure, metron in the Greek, means limited portion.

The "every man" that Paul refers to is not universal mankind, rather every one who is among the church at Rome. He is speaking to Christians. It is Christians who have received a measure, a limited portion, of faith from God (and not unbelieving universal mankind.)

The Wuest translation makes this very clear. "For I am saying through the grace which is given me, to everyone who is among you, not to be thinking more highly of himself, above that which the necessities in the nature of the case impose upon him to be thinking, but to be thinking with a view to the sensible appraisal of himself according as to each one God divided a measure of faith." (Romans 12:4)

The context of this verse emphasizes our place in the body of Christ. Paul is simply saying, "Do not go beyond the faith, the limited portion, God has given you to evaluate your place in the body of Christ." When we do not use faith to evaluate our place in the body of Christ, we think too highly of ourselves. We become proud. It takes faith to avoid pride and to know our God-given place in the body of Christ.

We have taken this "measure of faith" scripture out of context many times and used it improperly. The result has been contention and strife. Let us keep the verse in context and understand, "God has given us, as Christians, a limited measure of faith so that we will properly know our place in the body of Christ."

In contrast to the "measure of faith" scripture (Romans 12:4) is Second Thessalonians, Chapter Three, verse two; "And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith." It is apparent in the King James Version that the men spoken of are not Christians but unreasonable and wicked men. The King James translators did insert the second use of men. The Greek would read, "For all have not faith." The King James translators also deleted the definite article "the", which is found in the Greek, before faith. A literal translation of the Greek would read, "For all have not THE faith." The Wuest translation clarifies this.

"Finally, be praying, brethren for us, to the end that the word of the Lord might be spreading rapidly and be continually glorified, even as it is doing in your case, and that we may be delivered from men who act in improper and unbecoming manner and who are in active opposition to that which is good; for all do not possess the faith [the Christian system of belief]." (II Thessalonians 5:1-3, Wuest translation)

This verse is not talking about personal faithful trust. It is talking about adhering to the Christian system of belief.

As a result, we see from the Bible that not all of mankind believes as Christians believe. We also see that God gives Christians a limited portion of faith, if for nothing else, at least to evaluate their place in the body of Christ.

Faith Comes

Paul wrote, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:17)

THE EMPHASIZED BIBLE, by Joseph B. Rotherham, states this verse, "Hence our faith cometh by something heard. And that which is heard through a declaration of Christ." (Romans 10:17) This gives a considerably different picture of how faith comes as compared to the King James Version.

From the King James Version we read, "...hearing by the word of God," and many believe this means "hearing ONLY by the King James Version." This is absurd, since English is not the only language by which men can receive faith and be saved. Others realize English is not the only language and believe Paul means, "...hearing by the written word of God."

The Bible says that "faith cometh by hearing." By hearing what? By hearing the Word of God. This may mean "by hearing the written Word of God" spoken by a preacher or a believer. It may mean by hearing the inspired Word of God, not necessarily a quotation from the King James Version, or any other written version. The inspired Word of God may be by testimony of what Christ has done to save, to heal, to deliver, or to provide. This testimony of what Christ has done is the preaching of Christ. It is this idea that the American Standard Version, the Moffatt translation, and Rotherham's THE EMPHASIZED BIBLE speak of. They translate the phrase "Word of God" as "preaching of Christ." This preaching of Christ is the living Word of God. When people hear what Christ has done for others, their faith is increased that Christ will do the same for them.

Faith Comes By Praying?

For many years, well-meaning people have prayed, "God, give me faith," or "God increase my faith." Since Romans, Chapter Ten, verse seventeen says that "faith cometh by hearing, and

hearing by the word of God," teachers have said, "Faith does not increase because we pray for it." "Faith comes by hearing the Word." It is true. God does not give us faith because we ask for it in prayer. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God.

For this reason we get the idea that there is no relationship between faith and prayer.

I submit to you that faith comes by prayer. Faith does not come because we ask for it in prayer, but faith will come as we hear the word of God while we are praying. Consider this. As you pray, you enter the presence of God. As you worship Him in silence, you suddenly hear the voice of God. You do not know if it is an audible or inaudible voice. You just know that it is the voice of God. God speaks and says, "Go to Bongo Bongo, and there I will use you to raise up a church." With that instruction from God, heard while you were praying, your faith thermometer would race to the top of the scale.

My point is simply this. There is a relationship between faith and prayer. When are we better able to hear the living Word of God, than when we are in prayer!

Faith comes by hearing the Word of God. We hear the King James Version being read, and faith will come. We hear a testimony of what Christ has done for others, and faith comes that God will do it for me. We hear the Word of God in prayer, and faith comes. We hear God speak as we walk down the street, and faith comes. Faith comes by hearing the living Word of God, the Christ of God.

It was not necessary for Jesus to teach, faith comes by hearing, because He was and is the living Word of God. While the disciples were listening and watching Jesus, they were hearing

and seeing the Word of God; their faith was growing. Jesus did not need to teach the disciples how to hear Him and see Him. They were doing it by their very presence with Him.

Paul's teaching included the message of how faith comes, because it was what his listeners needed to hear. Paul spoke to many who had not heard Jesus nor seen Him. Paul's listeners were not having faith directly imparted to them by hearing and seeing Jesus, the Living Word of God. Since Paul was bringing a second-handed testimony to them, he helped and encouraged them with, "faith comes by hearing" the living Word of God, the preaching of Christ.

Chapter Six

FAITH GROWS

Can Faith Increase?

The apostles' request to Jesus was "Increase our faith." (Luke 17:5)

This request followed Jesus' instruction for the disciples to forgive someone seven times a day. In another passage He instructed them to forgive 490 times a day. Seven times a day was more than the disciples could handle, not to mention 490 times a day. They needed more faith. Therefore, their request, "Increase our faith."

Jesus responded by telling the disciples, "If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this Sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you." (Luke 17:6)

With the story of the mustard seed faith, Jesus is teaching the disciples that the quality of faith is far more important than the

quantity. We need a purer quality of faith rather than a larger quantity of faith.

Jesus continues to teach. He tells about the servant coming in from the field who is not served by his master. Why did Jesus say this? Jesus is teaching us that pride will quench our faith. We cannot boast about our faith accomplishments, but we must realize that we are servants. When we exercise our mustard seed faith, we are doing just what God has called us to do as His servants.

Paul speaks of increased faith, "Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labour; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly, to preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand." (II Corinthians 10:15, 16)

The Greek word, *auxano*, is translated increased. *Auxano* literally means grow up or enlarge.

Faith apparently can and should enlarge or grow.

Little and Great Faith

Although Jesus taught that the quality of faith was more important than the quantity, He also used the adjectives "little" and "great" in describing faith.

Jesus spoke of little faith. In each case, the phrase "little faith" is translated from one Greek word, *oligopistos*, which literally means lacking confidence or having puny faith. (Matthew 6:30, 8:26, 14:31, 16:8, Luke 12:28)

Great faith is spoken of by Jesus. The adjective "great" is derived from two Greek words: *tosoutos*, meaning vast; and *meGas*, meaning big. (Matthew 8:10; 15:28, Luke 7:9)

Summary

Although Jesus did speak of little and great faith, He implied that the quality of faith is more important than the quantity. Paul spoke directly to increasing faith.

Chapter Seven

FAITH THAT IS SEEN

The Bible records in three different passages that Jesus "Saw their faith."

"And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee."
(Matthew 9:2)

"When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." (Mark 2:5)

"And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee." (Luke 5:20)

All three of these passages refer to the palsied (paralyzed) man let down through the roof into the presence of Jesus.

Jesus saw their faith. Who's faith? The faith of the palsied (paralyzed) man and the others (probably four) who carried him on a stretcher.

What did Jesus see? He saw their faith. Could Jesus literally see their faith, or did He see the corresponding actions of their faith? The word see is translated from the Greek word *eido*, meaning to see or to know. This implies understanding rather than literal sight. Jesus saw or knew of their faith by things that He saw outwardly.

In this scene of the palsied man lowered through the roof, Jesus saw many things instantly.

LOVE

Jesus saw four men who loved their sick friend enough to carry him through the streets to a house meeting. Paul tells us, "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." (Galatians 5:6) Their faith was evidenced in their work of love.

AGREEMENT

Jesus saw a group of men in agreement. There may have been others asked to help carry the palsied man, but they had no faith that he could be healed. Therefore, they were not part of the group. A group of men who went to such effort to help a friend had to be in agreement. Jesus said, "Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 18:19)

PERSISTENCE

By the time Jesus saw the group of men, the palsied man was being lowered through a rather large hole in the roof. By the

time the four men had arrived at the house with their palsied friend, the house was full. They could not get in with him. They could have given up and gone home saying, "If God wanted to heal him, He would have made a way to get into the house." But they did not think that and become discouraged. They took courage and carried the palsied man up narrow steps to the roof. There they began to tear up the roof. Now, I do not know what kind of roof, or what effort was required by them to tear it up. This I do know, the Bible says they removed the tiles; it was not a sky light that opened with the push of a button. They had to tear the roof off of a man's house in order for their friend to get his audience with Jesus. They had faith that if Jesus would see him, Jesus would heal him. It takes faith to tear up a man's roof to get into a meeting.

Having torn up the roof, their friend could be lowered into the presence of Jesus. That is when Jesus saw the palsied man and instantly knew all that they had done to get the paralyzed man into His presence. That is when Jesus saw their faith.

Does Jesus See Your Faith?

Jesus can and will see your faith if you will yield to these simple principles. In an act of love, come into agreement, agreement with others and with the Word of God. In that act of love and agreement, be persistent, faithful, and patient in your confident trust in God. Jesus will see your faith. He will manifest the promise of God to you.

Chapter Eight

FAITH TALKS

We have defined faith as confident faithful trust in God.

Faith comes by hearing the Word of God, the preaching of Christ.

The quality of faith as a mustard seed is counted by Jesus to be as important as the quantity of faith. Yet we see that faith can grow from puny faith to vast or big faith.

JESUS LETS FAITH TALK

Let us consider the familiar passage of Jesus teaching His disciples in Mark, Chapter Eleven, verses twenty-two through twenty-six. Jesus said, "Have faith in God." (Mark 11:22) Most translations are identical to the King James passage. There is the possibility that Jesus was saying, "Have the faith of God." If this was true, Jesus was expressing a completely different idea than portrayed by the broadly accepted King James Version. It is one thing to have faith in God. It is another thing to have "the faith of God." The difference is in the definite

article "the." It is not expressly written in the Greek text. However, it is expressly written in the Greek text when referring to "the faith" of Christianity. Although "the" does not appear in the Greek text, it may be implied.

There is no real difference between "Have faith in God" and "have the faith of God," as long as our faith remains related to or dependent on God. Let me explain what I mean.

To hold the image of "Have faith in God," one could inactively sit around expecting God to do it (because all he is doing is "having faith in God.") Many have done this and missed what Jesus was teaching His disciples.

In accepting the image of "Have the faith of God," one could become very active in operating the faith principles, but become independent of God. Christian faith can never be independent of God.

Jesus has not called us to inactively sit having faith in God (without actions). Jesus has not called everyone to practice the principles of faith, independent of God. Abraham did that and produced Ishmael. He was not the promised Son from God. Isaac was the promised Son from God.

The faith of God is faith in God. It is both. Jesus has called us to practice faith principles while depending on God to make our practice fruitful.

FAITH WORKS THROUGH SAYING

Jesus continues, "For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall

believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith." (Mark 11:23)

In this statement, Jesus was teaching His disciples how to release or activate their faith in God, or the faith of God. It is a teaching of how to use faith to deal with your mountainous problems.

Let us first see that Jesus was using the very faith principle He was teaching...as He was teaching it. What was He teaching? He was teaching, "talk to your mountain of problems." Jesus had a mountainous problem. It was twelve unbelieving disciples who did not know how to use their faith in God or the faith of God. So Jesus used the faith confession principle; He spoke to His unbelieving disciples telling them to speak to their mountain, thereby having faith in God or the faith of God to move that mountain.

How do we know that this was what Jesus was doing? He said, "For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall SAY unto this mountain...."

He could have said, "For verily I say unto my mountain, that whosoever shall say unto their mountain...." His mountain was twelve unbelieving disciples. He was kind and said, "For verily I say unto you...." He did not call them His mountain of unbelieving followers, but He could have. He did not call His disciples His mountain, because that is exactly what He was trying to correct with the teaching of "SAY TO THE MOUNTAIN."

SAY TO THIS MOUNTAIN

The central point of the teaching of Jesus is the word "say."
"SAY unto this mountain...shall believe that those things which
he SAITH...he shall have whatsoever he SAITH."

Have faith in God. Have the faith of God. Say to your
mountain, "Be thou removed."

The Book of Hebrews records what happened when God
SAID. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were
framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were
not made of things which do appear." (Hebrews 11:3) Through
faith we understand. This verse does not say, Through faith the
worlds were formed. It says, "through faith we
UNDERSTAND that the worlds were framed by the Word of
God..." It takes faith to understand that the worlds were
framed by the Word of God.

When we have faith in God, we have confident trust in God.
When we trust in God we want to be like Him. When we have
the faith of God, we want to be like Him.

My point is this. When God spoke, the worlds were framed,
things happened. Have faith in God. Speak to your mountains
and see things happen.

TALK TO GOD IN FAITH

Jesus continues to instruct, "What things soever ye desire,
when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have
them." (Mark 11:24) The things that you believe in your heart
and speak with your mouth will come to pass. Therefore, when
you are speaking to God, believe in your heart and you shall
have what you ask.

HOW TO BELIEVE

Further, Jesus teaches, "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses." (Mark 11:25)

Jesus is teaching His disciples to believe out of their heart. To do this, their hearts must be open to God, free from unforgiveness. Therefore, Jesus had to teach them how to have an open heart.

You open your heart and maintain an open heart by forgiving those who speak or act against you.

Through these passages, Mark, Chapter Eleven, verses twenty-two through twenty-six, Jesus was teaching:

HAVE FAITH IN GOD!

How?

Talk to mountainous problems and believe in your heart!

Why?

So that what you say to God in prayer will come to pass.

How can we be assured of answers to prayer?

Keep an open heart of belief through forgiveness!

Simply stated: Faith works through speaking out of an open heart of belief.

I believe Jesus is saying, "Confident, faithful trust in God will produce outward works when our open, forgiving heart of love sincerely is overflowing with that confident, faithful trust, so that our mouth speaks of that very thing that is abundantly overflowing from our hearts."

Why Forgive?

There are many scriptural exhortations to forgiveness. There is much benefit in genuine forgiveness. One of the more important reasons to be forgiving is that God has forgiven us through the Cross of Jesus Christ. Another important reason is so that our hearts will be open and free to release faith.

Believing in the heart is an essential element of faith. Releasing faith from our heart requires an open heart.

Our hearts are either open, or they are closed. If they are open, they are open to God and everyone else. If they are closed to anyone, they are closed to everyone and God as well.

PAUL WRITES OF FAITH CONFESSION

Paul instructs in his epistle to the Romans to SAY. "But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in 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."
(Romans 10:6-10)

Obviously Paul shares Jesus' understanding of the relationship between faith and confession, saying.

In the sixth verse of Romans, Chapter Ten, we see that it is righteousness that speaks. Faith is not speaking. It is the righteousness that comes by faith that does the speaking. (In latter chapters of this book, we will examine righteousness in detail.) Let me simply point out that righteousness is that spirit to Spirit right standing with God. That right standing with God speaks. What does it say?

It says, "Do not say 'in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above.)'" (Romans 10:6)

It says, "Do not say, 'Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)'" (Romans 10:7)

WHAT DOES RIGHTEOUSNESS SAY?

Jesus is Lord and God raised Him from the dead.

This is the ultimate expression of our confident, faithful trust in God. In every situation, our open hearts should inspire our mouths to say, "Jesus is Lord and God raised Him from the dead."

When we have need for healing, our righteousness says, "Jesus is Lord; God raised Him from the dead." Therefore, by His stripes I was healed.

When we have financial problems, our heart inspires our righteousness to say, "Jesus is Lord; God raised Him from the dead." Therefore, He has provided all my needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

This is not all that the righteousness of faith could say, but this is the most basic faith confession. Paul continues to write, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:10)

With the mouth, confession is made unto new birth.

With the mouth, confession is made unto peace.

With the mouth, confession is made unto healing.

With the mouth, confession is made unto prosperity.

With the mouth, confession is made unto unity.

With the mouth, confession is made unto salvation.

FAITH TALKS!

Chapter Nine

FAITH WALKS

JESUS ON FAITH WORKS

In several passages Jesus said, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." (Matthew 9:22; Mark 5:34, 10:52; Luke 8:48, 17:19) These passages specifically relate to the healing of the body (in blind Bartimaeus, the ten lepers, and the woman with the issue of blood).

Jesus also said, "Thy faith hath saved thee...." (Luke 7:50)

There was no question in the mind of Jesus. Faith works. Faith in God will produce tangible manifestations. He directly related faith to healing and salvation.

PAUL ON FAITH WORKS

Paul writes to the church at Ephesus; "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9)

This scripture has been taken out of context and used to deny any relationship between faith and works, but that was not the intent of Paul in this passage. He is simply saying that it is by grace through faith that we are saved. We are not saved by our works. However, once we are saved by grace through faith, outward works or exploits for God should result.

Chicken or Egg

Paul was dealing with the spiritual version of the argument: "Which comes first, the chicken or the egg?" Paul is dealing with, "Which comes first, faith or works?" In the question of faith or works, there is a clear, concise answer. Faith comes first. Works then follow.

Paul is not only talking about being born again, but being saved. From the Greek word, *sozo*, saved is translated. *Sozo* literally means healed, preserved, saved, to do well, and be whole. Paul is stating a general principle. Grace through faith results in God's promises being manifested. Confident trust in God will motivate God to release His grace to manifest what He has promised.

JAMES ON FAITH AND WORKS

No consideration of faith and works would be complete without including the Letter of James. In the second chapter James writes, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" (James 2:14)

"Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." (James 2:17)

"Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." (James 2:18)

"But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" (James 2:20)

"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." (James 2:26)

TWO KINDS OF WORKS

There are two operations of works that are being talked about by Paul and James. These two operations of works become confused in our "chicken or egg," "Which came first, faith or works?" debates.

One operation of works is salvation related works, especially following the new birth. Paul clearly states in Ephesians, Chapter Two, verse eight, that we are saved by grace through faith, not by works. And Jesus repeatedly said that your faith has made you whole, meaning that your faith has worked or produced results.

Another operation of works is works related to our ministry or Christian life style. Paul wrote, "The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11) That faith, that continual, confident trust in God should produce some outward performance. No one can claim to have faith in God when they sit doing nothing. This is what James referred to as he wrote his letter. He related works to faith with mention of both Abraham with the sacrifice of Isaac, and he named Rahab, the harlot, as she protected God's messengers in Jericho.

It would seem that Paul and James were not in agreement about the relationship between faith and works, yet, I see that both were looking at the same problem of definition from two different sides. Importantly, both arrive at the same conclusion: Faith without works is dead.

THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING

The bottom line is simply this. When we have confident trust in God, we have confident trust in what God said. This confident trust in what God says will cause us to say what God says in every situation. We will have so much trust in what God says in every situation that we will act on that Word of God, even though it does not appear to be true, according to the circumstances. There is no point in arguing about which comes first, faith or works. We should be giving ourselves so completely to God that we will say what He says, and act on that Word with works of faith. The proof of the pudding is in the eating, someone once said. The proof of our confident trust in God is in the living. It is possible to have faith which has not yet produced works, but if it is true faith, that is, confident trust in God, it will compel us to do the works of God.

Have faith in God. Speak to mountains and do the works of God.

Chapter Ten

GRACE

What is Grace?

Before we can consider what Jesus and Paul taught about grace, it will be necessary to define grace from the English dictionary, and from the Greek and Hebrew. We will find that we must go even further to examine how the Greek and Hebrew words are used before we can be conclusive.

English Word

The English word grace is taken from the Latin, *gratia*, meaning goodwill. Grace in English is defined:

1. effortless beauty,
2. charm of movement or form,
3. characteristic of pleasing,
4. to be generous or full of goodwill,
5. mercy or clemency,
6. favor,

7. reprieve,
8. divine love and protection,
9. a short prayer said before a meal,
10. an address to royalty; his or her grace,
11. a note of musical embellishment.

Thus we see that in the English, this word grace has a broad spectrum of meanings. The meanings which are in the dictionary are vague, but nevertheless good and positive. This is partially why we lack in understanding grace as used in the Bible. The English is not specific. Therefore, the theology surrounding grace is not specific.

Some of this vagueness is clarified as we examine the Greek and Hebrew words that are translated grace.

Greek Words

The Greek word *karis* is translated grace a majority of the time. *Karis* is used 155 times in the New Testament and is translated into several English words. The English word grace is translated 130 times out of the 155 times that *karis* appears.

Karis has been translated into the English words grace, favor, thank, pleasure, liberality, benefit, gift, joy, thankworthy, and acceptable.

Thayer's GREEK ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT defines *karis* as:

1. sweetness, charm, loveliness;
2. goodwill, loving-kindness, favor;
3. the spiritual condition of one governed by the power of divine grace;

4. a gift of grace, or proof of grace; and
5. thanks, recompense, or reward.

Even in the Greek there is a vagueness in the meaning of *karis* or grace.

A second Greek word which is directly related to *karis* is *karisma*. The similarity between these two words is obvious. *Karisma* is used just 17 times in the New Testament. In each use it is translated gift or gifts.

Thayer's GREEK ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT defines *karisma* as:

1. a gift of grace,
2. a favor which one receives without any merit of his own, and
3. the power of divine grace operating through men.

Hebrew words

The Hebrew word *ghehn* is translated grace or favor seventy-one times in the Old Testament. Gesenius', HEBREW AND CHALDEE LEXICON TO THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES defines *ghehn* as:

1. grace, favor, goodwill;
2. grace, gracefulness, beauty; and
3. supplication, prayer.

Another Hebrew word translated gracious is *ghannoon*. It is used only 13 times in the Old Testament, and in each case is translated gracious.

Thus, we see an agreement between the English, Greek and Hebrew ideas of grace, graciousness, favor, and gift. There is also an implication of the power of God.

JESUS ON GRACE

Jesus used the word *karis* only four times in the Gospel of John. (See also Luke 6:32-34 and Luke 17:6.) Each time this word is translated thank or thanks.

However, the word *karis* is used only seven times in the Gospels concerning Jesus Himself, as the Gospel writers refer to Him.

"And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace (*karis*) of God was upon him." (Luke 2:40)

"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour (*karis*) with God and man." (Luke 2:52)

"And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious (*karis*) words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?" (Luke 4:22)

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace (*karis*) and truth." (John 1:14)

"And of his fulness have all we received, and grace (*karis*) for grace (*karis*)." (John 1:16)

"For the law was given by Moses, but grace (*karis*) and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 1:17)

Although Jesus taught nothing that would let us know of the doctrine of grace, He himself was a manifestation of the grace of God in that He was full of grace and brought grace to us.

PAUL ON GRACE

In contrast to Jesus' use of the word *karis*, Paul uses the word repeatedly. Paul opens each epistle with a pronouncement of grace to the reader, such as in First Corinthians, Chapter One, verse three, "Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

Paul writes, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace [*karis*] ye are saved:)." (Ephesians 2:4, 5)

I quote Ephesians, Chapter Two, verses four and five, to make a point about the Biblical difference between grace and mercy, both appearing in this passage. The Greek word for grace in this verse is *karis*. The Greek word for mercy in this verse is *eleos*. Literally, *eleos* means:

1. mercy,
2. kindness and goodwill toward the miserable and afflicted,
3. a desire to help the miserable and afflicted, and
4. the mercy and clemency of God in offering men salvation.

Although *karis* and *eleos* are different words, they are very similar in meaning. Both contain the idea of goodwill, gift, and favor. However, there is a significant difference. *Karis* contains the idea of power, whereas *eleos* contains the idea of clemency.

This similarity of meaning between grace and mercy carries over to the English words. For this reason, there has not been a proper distinction made between the theology of mercy and the theology of grace. We mistakenly insert the idea of mercy in scriptures that pertain to grace and thereby lead people astray from truth concerning grace.

As we look again at Ephesians, Chapter Two, verses four and five, we see both the idea of mercy and grace incorporated in this passage about salvation; "But God, who is rich in mercy...hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)."

Paul then goes on to incorporate the idea of faith into this salvation message; "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:8, 9)

The word for gift used in Ephesians, Chapter Two, verses eight and nine, is *doron* . It means gift or sacrifice. The word gift in this verse is not derived from *karis* which is also translated grace and sometimes gift.

In conclusion, we will review the definitions of grace, mercy and faith and apply them to this salvation passage Paul wrote in Ephesians.

Grace is God's willing gift of His power.

Mercy is God's willingness to forgive our sin or shortcomings.

Faith is confident, faithful trust in God.

Therefore, Ephesians, Chapter Two, verses four through nine, reads in the Kaiser paraphrased translation, "But God, Who is rich in willingness to forgive our sins, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead through our sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by God's willing gift of His power ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His willing gift of power in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by God's willing gift of power are ye saved through confident, faithful trust in Him; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift (*doron*) of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."

Chapter Eleven

GRACE IN THE WORD

We have considered the English, Greek, and Hebrew definitions for the word grace. This has given some insight to grace as being a "favorable gift from God." However, even this in-depth study does not clarify the meaning of grace as used in the Bible. Therefore, we will examine the use of the word grace in the Bible to find further insight to the grace of God.

GRACE OF JESUS CHRIST

In ten scriptures, there is direct reference to the grace of Jesus Christ. Does the Bible mean "the gift of Jesus Christ"? Does the Bible mean "the power of Jesus Christ"? Does the Bible mean "the favor of Jesus Christ"? It possibly means all of these things, since Jesus Christ is our all in all.

The phrase, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" is used in several scriptures. (John 1:17; Romans 16:20, 24; I Corinthians 16:23; II Corinthians 8:9; Galatians 6:18; I Thessalonians 5:8; II Thessalonians 3:18; II Peter 3:18; Revelation 22:21)

GRACE FROM THE FATHER

The Bible speaks of grace from God the Father in eleven scriptures. (Romans 1:7; I Corinthians 1:3, 4; II Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:13; Ephesians 1:2; Philippians 1:2; II Thessalonians 1:2; I Timothy 1:2; II Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4; Philemon 3; II John 3)

Whatever grace is, the grace spoken of in the Bible is from God the Father. Is it favor? Is it power? Is it a gift? Is it all of these things?

GRACE BE WITH YOUR SPIRIT

Paul commands the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to be with you or your spirit in nine scriptures. (Philippians 4:23; Colossians 4:18; I Thessalonians 1:1; I Timothy 6:21; II Timothy 4:22; Titus 3:15; Philemon 25; Hebrews 10:29; 13:25)

Apparently grace can be with us and with our spirit, since Paul speaks this blessing of grace without condition. Apparently the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, from God the Father can be with us and our spirit. What is it that can be with us? Is it favor, a gift, or power?

PAUL RECEIVED GRACE

Paul speaks of the grace given to him in several passages. (Romans 1:5; 12:13; 15:15; I Corinthians 3:10; Galatians 1:15; 2:9; Ephesians 4:7; Philippians 1:7; II Timothy 1:9)

GRACETO THE HUMBLE

Grace is given to the humble (I Peter 5:5, James 4:6). It is given to those who love the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 6:24). Grace is freely bestowed upon all of us in the beloved (Ephesians 1:6).

GRACE ABOUNDS

Paul exhorts the Christians to let grace abound in their lives. (Acts 4:33; Romans 5:15, 17, 20, 21; 6:1; II Corinthians 9:8; Ephesians 2:7; I Thessalonians 1:14)

Apparently grace is such a valuable thing that we need to allow it to abound in our lives. What is it that we should allow to abound? The gift of God? The power of God? The favor of God? Yes, even all of these wonderful benefits from God through Christ.

GRACE CALLS

According to Paul, the grace of God chooses and calls men to the ministry. (Romans 4:16; 11:5; 12:6; Ephesians 3:7, 8; Hebrews 12:28)

STRENGTH AND GRACE

Peter writes that the God of all grace will Himself restore, establish, and strengthen you (I Peter 5:10). The author of the Hebrews letter exhorts that their hearts be strengthened by

grace (Hebrews 13:9). Paul exhorts Timothy to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus (II Timothy 2:1).

Obviously, there is something more to grace than a gracious attitude. There is something more to grace than the idea of a gift from God. Grace must be a free gift from God that has the ability to impart strength.

WORDS AND GRACE

The Bible says much about words and speech with grace. Our speech should always be gracious so that it imparts grace to the hearers (Ephesians 4:29, Colossians 4:6).

Of course, Jesus Christ was the Word that became flesh and dwelt among us. He dwelt among us full of grace and truth (John 1:14). When He spoke in the synagogue on the sabbath day, they "wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth." (Luke 4:22)

SALVATION AND GRACE

The Bible tells us in many passages that we are redeemed, saved, or justified by grace. (Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:7; I Peter 1:10)

Paul's rather complete exhortation concerning grace and salvation: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in

times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:1-9)

WHAT DO YOU MEAN SAVED?

We are saved by grace through faith, not by works. What do you mean saved? The Greek word used for saved is *sozo*. *Sozo* literally means delivered, healed, preserved and protected. This definition obviously includes being born again. We are born again by grace through faith. We are healed by grace through faith. We are delivered by grace through faith. We are preserved by grace through faith. And we are protected by grace through faith.

It is grace, the power of God's grace, that cleanses us from sin, transforming our spirit man to make us new creatures in Christ. It is the grace power of God that heals our bodies. It is the grace power of God that delivers us from our enemies. It is the grace power of God that preserves us in Christ. It is the grace power of God that protects us from harm.

GRACE THROUGH FAITH

The grace power of God is released to our lives and in our lives by faith in God. We are saved by grace through faith. The grace power of God is released in our lives by our confident, faithful trust in God and the work of the Cross of His Son, Jesus Christ. Our part in salvation is to direct our faith toward the Cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ and express that faith to God. The Father then responds with His grace power to fulfill His promise to all those who believe or have faith in Him. We express our faith in God for new birth. The grace of God comes to us from God by the Holy Spirit, and we are cleansed from sin. The grace of God transforms our spirit man, and we are made new creatures in Christ Jesus.

The same is true for healing. We express our faith in God as our great physician. Then God responds by sending His grace power by the Holy Spirit to heal our bodies. It is our faith toward God. It is God's grace toward us. By grace are you saved through faith.

The same is true for deliverance, protection, and preservation. We express our faith toward God as the God of deliverance, protection and preservation. God responds with His grace power by the Holy Spirit to deliver, protect, or preserve. We are saved by grace. We trust in God. God sends His grace power in response to our faithful trust in Him.

THE GIFT OF GOD

Paul explains that this grace by which we are saved, through faith, is "not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."

It is the gift of God. What is the gift of God? Is it the grace? Is it the salvation? Is it the faith?

We find some help to answer these questions by considering this passage as translated by Joseph B. Rotherham in THE EMPHASIZED BIBLE. "For by his favour have you been saved, through means of faith, and this hath come to pass; not from you, of God the free gift! Not from works, lest anyone should boast."

What has come to pass? Obviously it is salvation that has come to pass. Therefore, it is salvation that is the free gift of God (by implication). This salvation is not of works, lest we could boast of our accomplishments.

It is important to consider what the free gift is, since many have concluded from the King James Version of the Bible that the free gift is faith. From that conclusion they have made unjustifiable conclusions about the gift of faith. I could easily get sidetracked at this point. But the important point is that salvation is the gift from God. It is something that cannot be earned by our works or efforts. Praise God!

What is the gift of God? It is salvation. This simple conclusion is not so apparent in the King James Version. However, many other translations make it clear from the Greek that salvation is the gift of God.

We express our confident, faithful trust in God. God sends His grace power by the Holy Spirit to cleanse us, to transform us, to deliver, preserve and protect us. Salvation is the gift of God. None of this happens by our wisdom or efforts. It is a gift of God.

GRACE AND POWER

Although the idea of power in the Greek and Hebrew words translated grace were conveyed, power was not strongly defined. We have consistently used the word grace without strong justification for the use of power in connection with it. As we consider the use of the Greek word for grace, *karis* or *karisma*, in the Bible, we find these words related to the power of God in a definite way.

In Paul's first letter to the Corinthian church, he gives instruction concerning the gifts of the Spirit in Chapter Twelve. Paul wrote, verse four, "Now there are diversities of gifts (*karisma*), but the same Spirit." Here Paul is making reference to the nine gifts of the Spirit. The word gifts in the English is *karisma* in the Greek. These gifts are related to the power of God in operation. We call them gifts of the Spirit, and that they are. However, they are also the operations of the Spirit in power. These nine gifts of the Spirit are nine operations of the Spirit. They are nine ways the Holy Spirit demonstrates the power of God. They are the gift-graces (*karisma*) of God. These gift-graces are the power of God. The grace of God is the power of God as the word is used in this letter to the Corinthian church.

GRACE AND MINISTRY

This grace power gift of God is not just to save us. This grace power of God is not just the release of God's power through us by the Spirit for the operations of tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophecy, word of knowledge, word of wisdom,

discerning of good and evil spirits, faith, healing and miracles. This grace power of God is also for the work of the ministry.

In the letter to the Romans Paul writes, "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace (karis) that is given to us...." (Romans 12:4-6) Apparently the grace power of God has something to do with a person's ministry within the body of Christ. The gift of ministry which we have is given to us according to the grace power of God.

Let us consider the entire context of Chapter Twelve of Romans so that we see why and how this grace power is operating for the ministry gifts. Paul starts this chapter by talking about being transformed by the renewing of mind. Specifically, he is talking about renewing the mind concerning the will of God for our lives—a will of God that is good, and acceptable, and perfect. To properly evaluate our place in the body of Christ (our "will of God"), we should use a portion of faith that God has given us so that we do not evaluate our place in the body of Christ with pride, but soberly or seriously.

Paul then goes on in verse four of Chapter Twelve to explain that even though we do not have the same office, we are related to one another and are dependent upon one another.

It is in this context that we read, "Having then gifts differing according to the grace (karis) that is given to us...." (Romans 12:6) The grace power of God equips us to minister in different ways, even though we are all members of the body of Christ and dependent on one another.

The grace power of God equips some to prophesy. Do not prophesy beyond your faith.

The grace power of God equips some to minister. Wait on your ministry.

The grace power of God equips some to teach. Wait on your ministry of teaching.

The grace power of God equips some for exhortation. Wait on your ministry of exhortation.

The grace power of God equips some to give. Give in simplicity.

The grace power of God equips some to rule. Rule with diligence.

The grace power of God equips some to shew mercy. Shew mercy with cheerfulness.

THE GRACES

Following this list of ministries, Paul continues with the list of attributes which equip us to live in the body of Christ in Romans, Chapter Twelve. These attributes are also imparted by the grace power of God.

Let love be without dissimulation.

Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love.

In honor, prefer one another.

Be not slothful in business.

Be fervent in spirit.

Serve the Lord.

Rejoice in hope.

Be patient in tribulation.

Continue instant in prayer.

Distribute to the necessity of the saints.

Be given to hospitality.

Bless them that persecute you.

Bless, and curse not.

Rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

Be of the same mind one toward another.

Mind not high things.

Be not wise in your conceits.

Recompense to no man evil for evil.

Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

This list of instructions is given so that we might abide in the place that grace has called us to in the body of Christ. No man can in and of himself possibly live up to this list of exhortations. However, with the grace power of God in operation in us, we can and will abide in our place in the body of Christ and bear fruit to the glory of God.

PAUL'S THORN IN THE FLESH

No consideration of grace would be complete without looking at Paul's thorn in the flesh. "And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of revelations, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." (II Corinthians 12:7-9)

From this "thorn in the flesh" passage, many have concluded incorrectly that Paul was sick or blind. No. The thorn in the flesh was expressly a messenger of Satan. When Paul spoke to God about it, God replied, "My grace is sufficient for thee." God was promising Paul that His grace power was sufficient for Paul. God was saying that His power was all that Paul needed. God's power is made perfect in our weakness.

Paul then replies by saying, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power. . .Power. . . POWER of Christ may rest upon me." God's grace and Christ's power are applied to the same situation of Paul's thorn in the flesh because they are the same.

Summary

From this consideration of grace in the Bible, we see that grace is related to everything in the New Testament. We are saved by grace through faith. The gifts of the Spirit, operating through us to others, is the grace power of God. Knowing our place in the body of Christ and having a ministry to others is by grace. Abiding in harmony and peace in the body of Christ can only be accomplished by the grace power of God.

We can now understand why Paul wrote so frequently, "May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all." Grace is the manifestation of God and His power.

Chapter Twelve

GRACE,

GREASE OR LAW

As we have examined the English, Greek and Hebrew words for grace and their use in the Bible, we have discovered this. In understanding grace we see favor, free gift, and power. Therefore, we define grace as the free gift of God's power.

GRACE OR GREASE

This free gift of God's power has not been the usual idea associated with grace. Traditionally, religion has given grace the ideas of liberty, mercy and self determination of moral standards. This is defining grace as a greasy thing.

What do I mean, grace is a greasy thing? Let me explain with an illustration.

SET FREE

After we are born again, the burden of our sin and condemnation is lifted. We experience the spiritual freedom of the new birth. We do not realize at this point that there is much transformation in the soul realm that God wants us to experience to become more like Jesus.

BE HOLY

Other mature Christians observe our experience of the new birth and the new life in Christ. With sincere concern they come to us with loving advice. "Now that you are a Christian, you should stop stealing, smoking, drinking, and running with the wrong crowd," they encourage. In other words, be holy.

This is a genuine act of love, with a valid objective of Christian holiness. The question is, how do we respond to this? and what does grace have to do with this?

SIMPLE OBEDIENCE

When many new Christians receive the counsel to stop stealing, smoking, drinking, or running with the wrong crowd, they simply stop these things of sin and the flesh. They respond with simple obedience.

WHO ME'S

Then there are those who are shocked and offended at the suggestion that they sinned or were fleshly. They bury their

head in the sand of self-centeredness and deny that they need to change. These people do not grow up in Christ. They remain unfruitful, carnal Christians.

FREEDOM FIGHTERS

It is not uncommon to find the freedom fighters. They are told about stealing, smoking, drinking, and running with the wrong crowd, and they freely admit their conduct. However, they defend their conduct by saying, "I am not under the law. I am living in grace. Therefore, I can do whatever I want to do." They fight for their freedom in Christ.

Unfortunately, responses similar to the above example, "freedom fighters," are all too common in Christianity. These responses reflect two errors in understanding grace.

FREE TO SIN

The first erroneous understanding of grace is the idea of having the freedom to sin or have morals that violate the character of God. This idea is certainly contrary to the true grace that we see in the Bible. This idea of freedom to sin is not consistent with mercy. Of course, many Christians believe that grace and mercy are two words with the same definition. A close look at the Bible will show the difference between mercy and grace.

Grace is the free gift of God's power. Mercy is God's willingness to forgive our sin.

Grace is not a greasy thing. Grace is not freedom TO sin. Grace is not a cover up for our weakness or slothfulness.

Grace is the free gift of God's power to live above sin. Grace is the free gift of God's power to live above the law. Thus, this first concept that grace gives freedom to sin is clearly born out of incorrect understanding of what Biblical grace really is.

GRACE OR LAW

The second misunderstanding of grace is the assumption that grace can be measured by the law. No one can determine if someone is or is not walking by grace simply by observing if this person is walking by the law or not. Let me help you understand why I say this.

THE STANDARD

If we judge grace by the law, we are counting the law to be greater than grace. When we judge grace by the law, we are accepting the law as the standard.

There is a universal truth which simply says that when something is measured by something else, the thing being measured is of lesser authority than the standard. Let me explain that.

I am five foot, ten inches tall. I know this is true, because I compared my height to a standard yardstick. The yardstick says that I am five foot, ten inches tall.

If I claim that I am nine foot tall, it would make no difference. I would still only be five foot, ten inches tall. I can claim that I am nine foot tall until Jesus comes again, and it will not change

the measure of my height. The standard yardstick is founded on a greater authority than my own selfish wishes and claims of being nine foot tall. There is a standard yardstick in the Bureau of Standards in Washington that is carefully kept so that its length does not change. The United States Congress has vested authority in the Bureau of Standards to establish the length of a standard yardstick. It makes no difference what I claim or wish, the United States Congress has the authority to set the standard for me, a citizen of the United States. And what they say has more authority than what I say in the matter of the standard length of a yardstick.

Do you see what I mean? I am measuring my height against the length of a standard yardstick. I cannot change the length of a yardstick just to fit my wishes. Therefore, the yardstick is established by a greater authority than I have. The thing being measured in this case, my height, is of lesser authority than the standard by which it is measured, the standard yardstick.

What does this example have to do with law and grace? If we measure grace by using the law as a standard, we are saying that the law has greater authority than grace. If that is true, then we cannot be saved by grace alone. We must be saved by a kind of grace that will produce works of the law. We will not be saved until that kind of grace produces works of the law.

This may seem like complicated theology to you, but it has its practical importance. Remember, Paul wrote, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." (Ephesians 2:8, 9) A lack of understanding of grace has provoked questions.

Are we saved by grace alone?

Or, are we saved by grace plus works?

Are we saved by grace only, because we did not have enough obedience to be saved by the works of the law?

Are we saved only by a kind of grace that will produce works of the law?

Or, are we not saved by grace until that kind of grace produces works of the law?

I believe the Bible teaches that we are saved by grace alone. Paul wrote, "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." (Galatians 2:21) Do not frustrate the grace of God. Right standing with God the Father does not come by works of the law. If that is so, then Christ died in vain. Rather, He is still dead in vain and not raised from the grave. But Christ is raised from the grave. Christ did not die in vain. Christ died, that we might receive the free gift of God's power to save us.

THE SCHOOLMASTER

Paul wrote to the churches of Galatia, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." (Galatians 3:24, 25)

The words "to bring us" are inserted by the King James translators. The literal translation from the Greek would read, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster unto Christ, that we

might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."

Is the law our schoolmaster TO BRING US TO Christ, as the King James Version says? Or, is the law our schoolmaster UNTIL Christ came, as the Greek may imply? It is one thing for the law to lead us to Christ. It is another thing for the law to be our schoolmaster until we come to Christ.

If the law had power to bring us to Christ, then faith would not be required to be born again. The free gift of God's power, grace, would not be necessary to save us, but only obedience to the law. I submit to you that the law revealed our sin and our need for Christ, but it had no power to bring us to Christ or get us saved.

There is no doubt that we were under the schoolmaster of the law before we were born again. There is no doubt that law gave us understanding and instruction in morality, Godly living. But the law had no power to save us, to get us born again, or to transform our spirit man from sin unto righteousness.

What does the literal translation from the Greek say of Galatians, Chapter Three, and verse twenty-four?

The word for law in the Greek is *nomos*. *Nomos* literally means "the way something works." It has its origin in the allocation of the grazing grounds so that all the flocks would have some good grass and some good water. How would it work? It would *nomos* .

The word for schoolmaster in the Greek is *paidagogos* . It means trainer, tutor, or guardian. We have taken the English

word *pedagogue* from the Greek. We use *pedagogue* to mean schoolteacher, guardian or baby sitter.

Further, the word faith in verse twenty-five is preceded by the definite article "the" in the Greek.

Therefore, the Kaiser paraphrased version of Galatians, Chapter Three, verses twenty-four and twenty-five reads, "Whereas the way in which something works (the law) has become our 'baby sitter, guardian' until Christ, in order that by faith we might be justified (put into right standing with God); but having come into the faith (Christian system of trust in God and moral living), we are no more under a baby sitter, guardian."

SPIRITUAL CHILDREN

The practical response to this theological truth is this. It is true that we are no longer under a schoolmaster. But that works only for mature Christians. While we are spiritual children, the law is necessary to train and protect.

This is excellent reasoning, but is it Biblically true?

To find the answer to this question, we go to the Book of Galatians, Chapter Four. "Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father." (Galatians 4:1, 2)

It appears as though verses one and two of Galatians, Chapter Four are saying that spiritual children are still under the law until they become spiritually mature. However, if you read

further in the chapter, you see that Paul was referring to Israel as children under the law before Jesus Christ came in verses four through six.

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Galatians 4:4-6)

What Have You Done with the Law?

Earlier in this chapter, the possibility of grace being measured by the law was discussed. To reiterate, whatever is being measured is less than the standard of measurement. When grace is mistakenly measured by the law, it implies that the law has greater spiritual and moral authority than the free gift of God's power, grace. We know that grace is powerful enough to bring about the new birth, whereas the law has no power to transform the human spirit in new birth. Therefore, grace is more powerful than the law. Grace cannot be measured by the law.

If you are still measuring grace by whether or not it has produced obedience to the law, then you are still living under the schoolmaster of the law, as though you were an Israelite living before the time Christ came. If you are a born-again Christian, this should not be true.

How do We Measure Grace?

Christians should not be measuring their performance by the law. Does that mean we are free from the standard of moral conduct that the law prescribes? Certainly not. Grace is not a greasy thing. Grace is not a license to sin. Grace does have a standard, but that standard is not the law. Grace is greater in power and authority than the law, and therefore the law is not an acceptable standard to measure grace.

What is the measure of grace? In a simple answer, Jesus is the measure of grace. If we are doing what Jesus would do in any situation, we are living by the free gift of God's power, grace. If we are keeping the same attitude that Jesus would keep in any situation, we are living by the free gift of God's power, grace. One could keep the law and still not do what Jesus would do or have the same attitude Jesus would have.

John writes of John the Baptist saying, "This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 1:15- 17)

Grace came by Jesus Christ. The free gift of God's power came by Jesus Christ. We have received of the fulness of Jesus Christ. And in that fullness we have received grace for grace. We have received the free gift of God's power for the free gift of God's power. Now, I must admit, that does not make sense to me. It probably does not make sense to you either. What can it possibly mean?

One translation reads, "...and grace in exchange for grace." This makes a little more sense. It is especially helpful to remember that the Hebrew word for grace, *chanan*, literally means to bend down or stoop down to worship. In the phrase

"grace for grace" we find the picture of God bending down to meet us with His free gift of power through Jesus Christ. In exchange, we bow down to worship God through the free gift of power, grace, given us in Christ Jesus. If we are living by grace and not by the law, we will bow to Jesus Christ in every situation. We will not be trampled on by circumstances or the devil, but we will bow to Christ in adoration and worship.

GRACE AND FLESH

In all of this we must remember, even though we are saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8), it is still possible for us to walk in the flesh and miss God. How often I hear people quote from Paul's letter to the Romans, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus...."! And they stop quoting there to communicate the point that they are living by grace.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" is not the complete truth. Read on. It really reads, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:1)

Grace and the law is one problem. But grace and the flesh is something entirely different. When we chose to walk after the flesh, we are not walking in the free gift of God's power. We are walking in our own natural strength, or carnal strength.

People quickly say, "I am born again. I am in Christ Jesus. I cannot walk in the flesh." If that is what you think, you surely are deceived. To be in Christ is more than being born again. To be in Christ is to be born again and totally submitted to Him in

all areas of life. To be in Christ is to have our soul-realm emotions full of peace and joy. To be in Christ is to have our soul-realm mind single-minded in Christ, filled with the Word of God. To be in Christ is to have our will continually submitted to the will of God in every situation. To be in Christ is not just a spirit- realm new birth, but it is also submitting the soul realm to Christ in every situation.

A born-again Christian can walk after the flesh. To walk not after the Spirit will bring condemnation. But to walk not after the flesh, there is now no condemnation. The Holy Spirit will convict us of our sin or flesh. If that happens, we have the choice of continuing in our flesh, or falling on our face before God, asking forgiveness and stepping back into walking after the Spirit. We can only do this with the help of the free gift of God's power, His grace.

Thank God for the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. May that grace be with you in every situation, that you might give glory to God.

Chapter Thirteen

RIGHTEOUSNESS

The Greek Word

The Greek word translated righteousness is *dikaioσune*.
Literally translated it means:

1. equity,
2. justification, and
3. righteousness.

The Hebrew word for righteousness is *tsedaqah*. It has been translated:

1. restitution, right,
2. righteousness, piety, virtue, and
3. welfare.

There seems to be no revelation from the literal Greek or Hebrew language as to what righteousness really means in the English. English dictionaries translate it as meeting standards.

We will see in latter chapters of this book, that Biblically this is not a complete definition, that is, to meet a standard.

PAUL'S TEACHING

From Sin To Righteousness

Before being born again, the Bible calls us sinners; not because we had transgressed the moral conduct prescribed by God, although we had sinned according to Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," but because we were cut off from God, spirit from Spirit.

Now that we are born again, now that we have been reconciled to God by His Spirit, the Bible says that we are the righteousness of God in Christ, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (that is, in Christ). (II Corinthians 5:21) In the same chapter and paragraph that tells us that we are new creatures in Christ, we find that we are (when born again) reconciled to God, Second Corinthians, Chapter Five, and verse eighteen.

The Greek word, *logizomai*, is translated "imputing" in Second Corinthians, Chapter Five, verse nineteen. Imputing literally means to take an inventory, or to estimate. When God takes inventory in us, He assumes He will find no sin. He no longer assumes that we are sinners. He no longer assumes that we are cut off from Him, spirit from Spirit. God now knows that we are right with Him. In that reconciliation, God has made us to be the righteousness of God in Christ. He has put us once again into right standing with Himself.

Jesus' Teaching

In the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew, Chapter Five, Jesus teaches His disciples about entering into the kingdom of God to know Him and to be known of Him. He starts with the Beatitudes. Look at the fifth Beatitude, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." (Matthew 5:6) Now there is a promise if I have ever heard one!

I ask you, "How can we be filled with righteousness?" Jesus said that we would be filled, or at least, those who hunger and thirst after righteousness would be filled. He did not say...could be filled. He did not say...should be filled. He said, "shall be filled." The question is "Are you hungry?" You must be, or you would not be reading this book. So you are hungry and thirsty. Bless God, you are going to be filled, if you are not already. Not because I say so, but because Jesus said that those that hunger and thirst after righteousness "shall be filled."

Just how hungry and thirsty does one have to be before Jesus will fill him? Jesus did not say how hungry you had to be. Let me ask you this, "When you are hungry, and how do you know it?"

You might say, "When I feel empty in my stomach." or "My stomach growls if I really get hungry." Well, you have answered your own question. When you have that yearning for something more in life, you are hungry.

Jesus said that you will be filled. When you are hungry, Jesus knows it. Jesus looks on your heart and sees that you are hungry. Do you think that Jesus or the Father would withhold

any good thing from you. Certainly not! Jesus teaches, "If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Luke 11:13) Since He will fill you with the Holy Spirit, the third person of the trinity, He surely will fill you with the righteousness He was teaching about, Matthew, Chapter Five, and verse six.

Persecution Comes With It

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:10)

A very popular teacher once told the story of "crabology." It is the story of what happens to crabs in a basket. It seems this man had fished for crabs (or did he crab for crabs?). Mr. Craber would find a crab and throw it into a basket, just an open basket with no lid on it. As the basket would fill with crabs, he knew there was no danger of one of them crawling out. One crab would no sooner crawl up the side of the basket to crawl out when another crab would grab him from behind and pull his buddy crab back to the bottom of the basket. A lid for the basket was not necessary since the crabs kept themselves in the basket.

Jesus taught that life would be like the story of the crabs in the basket. No, He did not teach about crabology. He taught about persecution. Whenever we start to climb a little higher in life=whenever we begin to live, walk, and talk righteousness; there will always be someone there to try to pull us back to the bottom of the basket through persecution for righteousness' sake. Jesus said this is a sure sign you have found the kingdom of heaven, that is, you have found the dominion of the

heavenly king. You are on the right track when you get so hungry for the things of God that you can hardly sit still.

Seek Righteousness

Jesus exhorts us, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33)

Here is where we need to apply a little "sanctified common sense." So often we get too mysterious and super-spiritual about interpreting the Word of God that we miss the simple things. What have we missed in "Seek ye first the kingdom of God...."?

In this passage, Jesus was teaching the Jews, who had knowledge of God only through the Old Testament, the old covenant, law. Yet we apply this teaching to ourselves. If our knowledge of God was only through the Old Testament law, we could apply the teachings of Jesus to ourselves just as those whom Jesus was teaching had to apply them.

Let us remember that we are Christians. Those of us who have invited Jesus Christ into our hearts, have been born again. We are different than the Jews that Jesus was teaching. They saw Jesus only as a teacher, rabbi. They did not know that He was the Son of God until after the resurrection. So Jesus was preparing their minds to keep on seeking for righteousness. Jesus knew that one day in their lifetime God's righteousness would be theirs.

A Wild Goose Chase?

We may read Matthew, Chapter Six, and verse thirty-three, and set out to "seek for righteousness." We may never stop to think that Jesus was teaching those who had not yet been born again. Through this, the enemy could send us on a wild goose chase, that is, looking for something we might already have.

Stay Away From Geese

For my tenth birthday, my parents gave me the thing I wanted most. They loved me so much they generally gave me what I wanted most, if it was possible for them to do. I wanted a first class fountain pen. (This was before the day of the ball point pen.) I needed it for school, and I was convinced that it would improve my penmanship (more simply known as rationalization).

My parents gave me the beautiful fountain pen; one of the best that money could buy, at least I thought it was the best. It had a slender barrel with a gold clip. This pen also had a special design where the pen point blended into the barrel. I thought that would make it easier for me to hold, and improve my writing (this too, was rationalization). Oh, how I loved that pen. How I rejoiced when I got my birthday present.

I put my new pen in my shirt pocket, pulled on my sweater, and ran off to the movies to celebrate my birthday. After the movie, I started walking home. After walking several blocks from the movie, I reached into my pocket to admire my pen. THE PEN WAS GONE!

Oh, how I panicked. My pen was lost. I only had it less than four or five hours, and now it was lost. I turned around and

retraced my steps to the movie, looking intently as I went. I could not find my pen. I returned home, continuing to look for my pen. Still I could not find it. My heart was really heavy when I got home. Telling Mom was really hard to do. Naturally, she scolded me for not taking better care of my new pen.

I ran up stairs and threw myself on my bed. Feeling very sorry for myself, I had quite a pity party. (Of course, when you have a pity party, you are the only one that shows up.) After a while I stopped crying. As I lay there I felt something hard on my bed. I reached down under my belly to see what I was laying on. It was MY FOUNTAIN PEN!

The pen had slipped out of my pocket and was caught in my sweater. It was there all the time (sounds like a song title, doesn't it?). While I was looking for my lost pen, I had it with me the whole time. I had never lost it at all. It was there in the belly of my sweater.

I am sure you have done the same thing at some time or another. Maybe it was with your car keys. They seem to get lost more than anything else, or maybe the checkbook. We scream out "Honey, have you seen the car keys?"

The reply comes, "No dear. You had them last, remember." And so the panic starts. You are already ten minutes late for a very important appointment and your wife (or husband) has lost the car keys. (Of course, it is always someone else who lost them.) We rant around the house all bent out of shape because someone else lost "my" car keys. In a rit of fage (it should be "fit of rage," but by this time we cannot even talk right), we thrust our hands into our coat pocket and to our great surprise find the "lost" car keys.

This is the way we have been with righteousness. Because Jesus told the Jews to look for it, we Christians have also been looking for righteousness. But we are different than the Jewish listeners of Jesus. (At least, those of us who are born again are different than the Jews.) We have a new and living spirit. We have confessed with our mouth the Lord Jesus, and have believed in our heart that God raised Him from the dead and we have been saved (born again of the spirit) according to Romans, Chapter Ten, verses nine and ten. "...For with the heart man believeth unto RIGHTEOUSNESS; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

We have believed "unto righteousness." We have found it. We have sought first the kingdom of God (the dominion of the Heavenly King) in our lives, the righteousness of the Heavenly King, and all these things have been added unto us. We have been filled with righteousness as Jesus promised in Matthew, Chapter Five, and verse six. (Later in this book, you will read a performance righteousness which we should continually seek.)

Confess the following aloud in your prayer closet until it becomes part of your own heart and mind:

Jesus is the Lord of my life.

I believe that God raised Jesus from the dead.

I have found what I was seeking for in Christ.

Jesus has filled me with God's righteousness.

Chapter Fourteen

JESUS, THE WORD OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

"...And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (I John 2:1)

Jesus gave the Jews, and us as well, a promise. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. He said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." We have found Jesus. We have given our hearts to Him. We have confessed the Lord Jesus and believed in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead. WE HAVE FOUND AND BEEN FILLED.

How Did Christ Do It?

How is it possible for Jesus to keep His Word? How is it possible for Jesus to fill us with God's righteousness? We find the answer in First John, Chapter Two, verse one: "...And if

any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Jesus Christ has always been righteous. Jesus Christ was righteous from eternity past, when He, the Father, and the Holy Spirit said, "Let us make man...." (Genesis 1:26)

Jesus was conceived in the womb of Mary by the Holy Spirit (Luke 2:27, 31, 35). Jesus was born "not of the blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:13) Jesus was born of the Spirit of God. Because He was born of God's family, He was born with God's righteousness. Jesus was not born into Adam's family as you and I were. Jesus was born into God's family, a partaker of God's righteousness. (Note that it was Jesus that was born into the family of God. The Christ had always been a member of the family of God.)

Jesus Became Sin

Jesus Christ, the righteous advocate, went to the cross. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (II Corinthians 5:21)

I was recently reading a book which points out the Cross in every Book of the New Testament. When the author got to Second Corinthians, Chapter Five, verse twenty-one, he had great difficulty. I can understand why he did, for the natural mind cannot understand this verse unless the Holy Spirit has taught the natural mind about spirit, soul, and body. Just as Nicodemus had trouble understanding being born again, so we need the Holy Spirit to teach us that Jesus became sin. The author of this particular book defined sin as wrong doing and, consequently, had much trouble explaining what it is to "become" wrong doing. That is different than doing wrong

doing. If wrong doing is the definition for the word sin in Second Corinthians, Chapter Five, verse twenty-one, how could Christ do wrong on the cross while He was nailed there?

The natural mind quickly responds, "He did not do all those wrong things. He was punished as though He had done all those wrong things."

Yes, it is true. He did suffer the penalty of our sin for us; He became as though He had sinned. For instance, if in fact He had done all of the things God calls sin while hanging on the cross, He could not have been a suitable substitute for us. He would have had to die for His own sin, as we should have died for our sin, and as Adam did die for his sin. But this verse clearly tells us, "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin...." Jesus knew no sin. Satan had no claim on His life. Therefore, Jesus Christ was a suitable substitute for us who deserved to die because of our sin.

However, this logic is not sufficient to explain Second Corinthians, Chapter Five, verse twenty-one. It is true, Jesus became as though He had sinned. Jesus Christ took all of the penalties upon the cross that He would have received had He sinned. But He did not sin, nor did He deserve the penalties. They were your penalties and my penalties=penalties we should have rightfully received for our sin. This verse does not say, "He became as though He had sinned."

Second Corinthians, Chapter Five, verse twenty-one clearly says, "For He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." "He" (God) made "Him" (Jesus) to be sin, not to be as though He had done wrong. In this passage the word sin is used as a noun, not as a verb. In this passage sin is a state of being, not a name

for wrong doing. Again, this verse literally says, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him".

Jesus Christ was made to be sin. The Father put sin upon Jesus. Not just the consequences of sin, but sin itself. This may be hard for us to understand because we have consistently defined sin as wrong doing. If wrong doing is the only definition of sin, God is talking in riddles in Second Corinthians, Chapter Five, verse twenty-one. But, God does not talk in riddles. God is not wrong, and His word is not wrong. We are the ones who have had our thinking messed up about sin and righteousness. We have defined sin as wrong doing only. Is there another definition?

SIN, A STATE OF BEING

If sin is only wrong doing, Second Corinthians, Chapter Five, verse twenty- one does not make sense. But when we see that sin is also a state of being, a state of spiritual separation from God, then this verse on Jesus becoming sin can be understood. When Jesus became sin for you and for me, He was separated from God=just as you and I had been separated from God all of our lives, just as Adam became spiritually separated from God when he fell by disobedience. Jesus Christ, the Righteous, Who had never been separated from God, became sin (separated from God) so that you and I, who had been separated from God all of our lives, could be reconciled to Him.

This is a difficult thing for people to accept. Because of strong teaching about wrong-doing sin, it is hard for us to understand wrong-being sin. Yes, it is offensive to think of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, taking such a character upon Himself. That

is why the work of the Cross and Resurrection is so much more profound and significant than we can imagine.

We are so conscious of the tangible (material) world that we live in that spiritual concepts are not always easy to grasp. That is the very reason Jesus taught in parables, a natural story that portrays a spiritual or moral truth. Nevertheless, I want to examine the concept of separation to find some understanding of what spiritual separation really is.

Separation

There are various kinds of separation. There is physical separation. We can be in the same room with someone and be physically separated from them, that is, not touching them. Yet we can talk and communicate, because we are not separated from them in the mental realm. Or, we can be half way around the world from a person, therefore separated physically by a great distance. In which case, we surely cannot touch them, even though we may still communicate with them by telephone, television, or telegram. Physical separation does not imply soul-realm separation. Therefore, we see that physical separation can be a matter of degrees.

Let's look at soul-realm separation. We can be in the same room physically with someone, even touching, yet we do not agree with them in our thinking or our emotions. We could be arguing or hating one another. That is separation in the soul realm. But we are still physically joined together, possibly by handcuffs as a sheriff with his prisoner. Or, we can be together, yet separated from one another. For example, a body in a funeral home can be physically present with loved ones, yet absolutely and permanently unable to communicate in the soul

realm. Dead people are separated from this environment although their body is still present in the physical realm.

Can we now see how we could be separated from God before we accepted Jesus Christ as our Savior and were born again. All men are spirit beings even before being born again. Before new birth, the spirit of man is sin. Before new birth, the spirit is separated from God. Before new birth, we can communicate with the spirit realm, but not with God in His spirit realm. We have seen this demonstrated with many who communicate with demonic spirits, practicing witchcraft. As a dead body cannot see, feel, taste, hear, or smell the environment around it, so our spirit cannot spiritually see, spiritually feel, spiritually taste, spiritually hear, spiritually smell God, Christ, nor the Holy Spirit. But after being born again, our spirit man comes alive toward God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit; we can communicate with God, who is Spirit, and His spirit realm.

JESUS BECAME SIN

Jesus became sin. The Bible says so! When Jesus became sin He was separated from God the Father. He had never been separated from Him at any time, for any reason. But He became sin, separated from the Father. He no longer felt the heart beat of the Father. He no longer felt the spirit (breath) of the Father. He lost His communion with the Father. He lost His family membership. He was cut off and out of the land of the living (Isaiah 53:8). He was no longer in right standing with God. He lost His righteousness when He became sin, so we could receive righteousness.

It is recorded that Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my

God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34) He did not say this just to fulfill prophecy. He did not quote Psalm, Chapter Twenty-two, verse one, just to tell His disciples that He was being crucified. No. He cried with a loud voice, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" because He felt forsaken. This was the very moment that Jesus took sin upon Himself. This is the very moment that Jesus became separated from the Father. This the very moment that the spirit-realm life of God left Him. This is the moment His soul-realm emotions ruled His life as our emotions had ruled our lives before we knew Him. So His emotions caused Him to cry out with a loud voice. In that moment He acted like any other man that had been crucified. Jesus lost His right standing with the Father. His spirit became sin. He was cut off from God. He was separated from God, spirit from Spirit.

All of this happened before He died physically. He suffered the anguish of spiritual separation from God before He died physically. He gave up His right standing with God so that you and I could have right standing with God. For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

But God did not stop with the spiritual separation of Jesus Christ. He was delivered to the Cross for our trespasses, and Jesus was raised from the grave for our justification (to be made righteous according to Romans 4:24- 25). Jesus was the first born from the dead (Colossians 1:18). Jesus is the last Adam, a life-giving spirit (I Corinthians 15:45).

Say this out loud to yourself until you believe it with all your heart:

1. Jesus became sin for me.

2. I became righteous through Christ.

Chapter Fifteen

RIGHTEOUSNESS, A GIFT

God's Gift To Us

"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:17)

This verse clearly identifies righteousness as "the gift of righteousness." This statement gives us insight into the character of righteousness. It is something that is received from God as a gift, even as Jesus taught; "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." (Matthew 5:6)

Most people think they have a good understanding of what a gift is, but some may think as I did for years. My definition of a gift was distorted by natural teaching. Let's examine the true definition of a gift.

Santa Claus Brings Gifts

Think back of what you first learned about a gift when you were a child. The first things we are taught in life form a basis for thinking and continue with us. Our foundation for thinking is laid when our mind is uncluttered with the issues of life; these first teachings become basic cornerstones in our thinking.

When I learned about gift giving, it was at Christmas time as a small boy. I must have been only four or five years old. In Sunday School I had been taught about the wise men bringing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to the infant Jesus in the manger. My brother and sister began to tell me that Santa Claus was going to bring gifts of new toys on Christmas Day. Oh, how excited we became as we dreamed of new toys that Santa would bring.

Of course, everyone knows that Santa does his distribution from the Sears and Roebuck WISH BOOK. We three kids would lay on our bellies in front of the fireplace, looking and dreaming; dreaming about the gifts we wanted Santa Claus to bring on Christmas Day.

My sister and I got so excited one December day that we could not contain ourselves. We were jumping around and shouting about the gifts coming from Santa Claus. We ran around the dining-room table into the living room, chasing one another with joy and expectation of the gifts coming from Santa Claus. As we jumped up and down on the sofa, Mom walked in. She took one look at us and we froze in guilt. Pointing her finger at us, she scolded, "If you are not good, Santa Claus will not come with gifts." You'd better believe we tried to behave after that. With that statement, our fresh little minds were

reprogrammed with a new definition for gift: gifts, even gifts from Santa Claus, were to be earned by our goodness.

Did you ever run around the dining-room table? Did you ever jump up and down on the living-room sofa? Did you ever get excited about Santa Claus bringing gifts at Christmas? Did your mother or father ever say, "If you are not good, Santa Claus will not come"? Chances are they did. Most parents have said that to their kids at one time or another. Now I want you to understand, I believe in disciplining children. We must, however, not distort their understanding of God by making them believe that they must earn gifts by their goodness.

From past teaching we could have this constant reminder that we must be good in order to earn gifts; gifts from Santa Claus, gifts from friends, or even gifts from God.

Discouraging Hangover

I know what you are thinking, "That was long ago and I was a kid. I am an intelligent adult now, and I understand that a gift is not earned by my goodness." I know that you are an intelligent adult or you would not be loving the Lord Jesus Christ and seeking God's righteousness with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength. I thought that I understood the definition of a gift also; then, the Holy Spirit began to teach me.

Do you mind if we test to see if you have carried that childhood definition of a gift into your adult Christian life? Do you really understand that a gift cannot be earned with your goodness?

Here is the test. First, think of the last time you received a gift. Was it last Christmas, your anniversary, or your birthday? Secondly, I want you to remember if it was a surprise or not. If it was a surprise, the test is especially accurate since out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks, and the heart speaks first when you are surprised. When the surprise gift was handed to you, how did you feel? What did you say? Quite often we are very humble and say something like, "You didn't need to do this," or "I don't deserve this."

You are right on both counts. They did not need to do it. If they needed to do it, it would have been a wage paid, not a gift. If you deserved it, again it would have been a wage owed you because of your deserving. No, it was simply a gift.

Gifts are something that people do not need to give us. As a matter of fact, if they needed to give a gift to you, it would not be a gift at all, but an obligation, something required. Gifts cannot be earned, either by works or by goodness. A gift is only a gift when there are no strings attached. (And I am not talking about the ribbon around the wrapping.)

With your response, you revealed what was really in your heart. You probably expressed yourself with humility. That is good. But if you truly were embarrassed, you may still be trying to earn your gifts by your goodness.

You see, we have carried this idea about earning gifts by our goodness from childhood into our adult life. We still believe what Mom or Dad told us as a child, "If you are not good, Santa Claus will not come." As adults we are still thinking, If we are not good, God will not give us His gift of righteousness.

God Is A Giver

The Bible says that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8). While we were yet sinners, God gave His only begotten Son for us. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." (John 3:16) He gave. . .Gave. . .GAVE. . . GAVE<p120 His only begotten Son. God's gift to us is Jesus Christ. Receive Him as a gift. Stop trying to earn His love with your goodness. Lay aside your pride and just receive God's gift of love, God's gift of righteousness, God's gift , Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son.

"He (God) that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32) God freely gives. . .Freely Gives. . .FREELY GIVES. . . FREELY GIVES us all things. God so loves us that He freely gives us all things that we need for this life.

Receive and be Changed

God gives us these free gifts so that we will be changed. Yes, God wants us to change. He wants us to stop doing wrong. God wants us to be more like Jesus. God has "given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." (II Peter 1:4) God has given us these promises so that we can look and act like Jesus. He knew that we could not do that without a new and living spirit within. He knew that we could not do that without the peace that passes understanding in our minds. He knew that we could not be like Jesus unless our bodies were healed. He knew that we could not be like Jesus unless our finances and material

needs were met. God has given us exceeding great and precious promises. Now we can look and act like Jesus if we will believe, if we will have faith in God, if we will simply receive from God His gift.

According to Romans, Chapter Five, verse seventeen, God has given us the gift of righteousness. God has made us right with Himself. It is His doing. It is His gift to us. It is His righteousness, not our own; for our own righteousness is as filthy rags according to Isaiah, Chapter Sixty-four, verse six.

"Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17) God only gives us good things, and He does not change from time to time. So many people in this world do not believe that God is a good God. Many believe that God sent this cancer for a purpose. To believe that is a total misunderstanding of the wonderful and simple work of the Cross of Jesus Christ. God is a giver of good gifts. He has not changed that goodness.

Say this aloud until you believe it in your heart:

1. God has given me a good gift. (James 1:17)
2. I receive God's free gift of righteousness. (Romans 5:17)
3. With God's righteousness, I have the power to do good. (II Peter 1:4)

Chapter Sixteen

RIGHTEOUSNESS, GOD'S PASSPORT

What has God's Word shown us about righteousness?

Jesus promised that those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled. In Jesus Christ we are filled with God's righteousness.

Jesus Christ is the righteousness of God. He became sin so that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Righteousness is a gift from God. Gifts cannot be earned with our goodness. Believe and receive God's gift of righteousness.

The Holy Spirit Teaches

"And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." (John 16:8)

Although I have been studying the word righteousness for many years, I am continue to learn something new. Recently, my wife was reading Hebrews, Chapter Five, verse thirteen. As she read, it came alive to me. She read it to me, and the Holy Spirit showed me something new in that verse. I should not have been surprised at that, for John, Chapter Sixteen, verse eight, tells me it is the job of the Holy Spirit to reprove me (convince me of the lack of understanding) of righteousness. The Holy Spirit is the teacher. Without Him showing us this spiritual truth, none of us can understand God's righteousness.

Mature in Christ

"For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe." (Hebrews 5:13)

Let me give you the Kaiser translation of this verse: "Those of us Christians who are unskillful (inexperienced) in the word (understanding) of righteousness, are babes." (Hebrews 5:13)
This is what the Word of God says.

I believe that we can state the converse without distorting the meaning of this verse; "Those of us Christians who are skillful (experienced) in the Word (understanding) of righteousness; God calls mature."

Well, there is not one of us who does not want to be called mature by God. So it would be good for us to study this word, righteousness, and let the Holy Spirit teach us what God really means by this word.

Is Righteousness Right Doing?

The most universally known definition of righteousness is right doing. This is the definition that I held for years. So, I would read the Word of God with many promises to the righteous, and I knew that I did not qualify. The enemy was always reminding me where I fell short in obedience. He would not have to lie to me. All he would do is point out some little sin of omission=good things that I had intended to do but had not done. Consequently, I felt that I did not qualify for the promises to the righteous.

Natural Thinking

I have found that my experience was not unique. Most people, if not all of us, have defined righteousness as right doing. This is natural thinking. It comes from years of training in this life to be doers. Of course, we find it easy to confirm this thinking by simply looking to the Old Testament for our definition.

We live in a world and in a society that puts emphasis on doing. We are proud of doing things early in life, before others. When our children walk or talk earlier than normal, we let everyone know about it. We are so proud of them. However, if they are a little late about doing these things, we don't say much. Thousands of dollars are spent to teach our children to be doers. Through this emphasis, mankind has accomplished great things. We have even sent men to the moon.

Have We Missed Something?

Doing is very important, but there is something more important. Doing speaks of how. This word is spelled H-O-W.

But there is another word spelled with the same three letters, W-H-O. The difference seems very small to the eye, but the meanings of the two are poles apart.

We have not realized how we have confused these two words, how and who. We have said who when we mean how, and vice versa. For example, we introduce someone like this. "I would like you to meet Joe Dollar, my banker," or "I would like you to meet Bill Parsons, my pastor." We try to say WHO they are, but we add what they DO just for good measure.

The opposite is also true. How often have you asked, "How can I fix my car?"

The reply, "Send it to Mr. Goodwrench; He does very good work."

You did not ask who can fix your car, but how to fix it. Yet your friends quickly answered who can do it for you. Your friends may know that you are a poor mechanic, so this would be a very practical answer, but it still does not answer your question.

We constantly confuse WHO and HOW.

We have missed something most important. We have been so programmed in this life to DO, that we have overlooked the WHO. So I ask, have we misunderstood righteousness? Have we thought that it was a DO word, instead of a WHO word?

Who in the World are You?

When someone asks, "Who in the world are you?" what is your immediate response?

I answer, "My name is Bill Kaiser. I am a Bible teacher."

In the eyes of the world, we have an official document that tells who in the world we are, the birth certificate. It records our name, date of birth, place of birth, and the names of our parents. It does not say a thing about what we do, and there is a good reason for this. As newborn babies, we do not do much other than eat, sleep, and cry. That is, that's what we were doing on the day our birth certificate was made out. (Well, maybe not all; some things don't need to be mentioned.) As newborn babies, our ability to do things is underdeveloped. What I really mean is we don't send babies to the moon. They simply do not have the training.

About all we can do as newborn babies is to accept food and care from our parents. That food and care is simply a gift to us. We receive from our parents because of who we are, not because of what we can do, or how much we can earn, or even how much we may earn some day. Parents give to us because we are theirs.

The birth certificate is truly a document of WHO we are.

International Recognition

With our birth certificate, we can obtain a document from the Federal Government called the passport. This is an official United States document that certifies all the information on the birth certificate. The passport brings the information on the

birth certificate up to date. This passport is recognized throughout all the world by international agreement.

The passport is proof of citizenship. It officially describes who in the world we are. It also records your name, birthplace, date of birth, color of eyes, color of hair, height, weight, the nationality of your parents, and has a picture attached.

Without a passport, crossing an international border is impossible. It has such value that men steal or murder to obtain a passport to falsify their identification as a cover to do things they should not.

A passport is valuable, because men want the right to do things in different places. The passport, this document of WHO, is the key to our freedom. With it we can go where we want and do what we want to do.

God's Passport, Righteousness

God has given us a passport as a gift. It is not a political passport issued by the government with the authority of the government behind it. It is a spiritual passport. It has the authority of Jesus Christ behind it.

God's passport is not to gain passage from one political dominion or country to another. God's passport is used to go from one spiritual realm to another. This passport of righteousness is God's passport. It has been given to us as a gift through faith in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This passport of righteousness describes who in Christ you are. The word righteousness is a description of our newborn spirit.

Righteousness is to be right with God, because God is our Father and we are His children. Righteousness is to be in the kingdom of God, in the dominion of God the King, under His protection with authority to exercise against God's enemies. Righteousness is to be like God for He is our Father. God has become the Father of our newborn spirit through the agent of the Holy Spirit.

As we confessed with our mouth the Lord Jesus, and believed in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead, the Holy Spirit came to us, under orders from the Father to transform our spirit from death unto life by His grace power, because we have exercised our faith in His Son Jesus Christ. If we could take a picture of the newborn spirit man in you, it would look just like Jesus. All of God's children look like Jesus, just as Jesus looked like the Father. Jesus said, "...He that hath seen me hath seen the Father...." (John 14:9)

Note carefully that I said that you would "look like Jesus." Several years ago, before I was born again, my two-year-old son and I were walking through a department store in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. We walked past a perfect stranger who volunteered, "You sure can't deny that boy." Now I was tall and my two-year-old son was short. My boy had no hair, and I had a full head of hair. There were countless things about us that were different, but that stranger saw the similarity between us. So it is with our newborn spirits. We may not be fully developed spiritually as Christ is. We may be spiritually short compared to Christ. Christ is spiritually strong. We may not yet have developed our spiritual muscle. But if we could take a picture of our spirit man, we would look like Jesus The Christ.

Don't Lose Your Who

In the Fall of 1976, my wife and I had been ministering in Switzerland with friends for several weeks. After completing our ministry there, we were driving North toward Germany. Arriving at the German border in Basel, Switzerland, I asked my wife for the passports. She replied with surprise, "I don't have them. You do." Panic struck my heart. I knew I did not have the passports. We looked frantically for the passports. They could not be found.

The Swiss customs agent said, "Passport, bitte."

In my broken German I replied, "Ich habe kein passport." (Interpreted, "I do not have my passport.") He sent us into no man's land to turn around and come back into Switzerland. We could not cross the border without our passport.

We got to the Swiss customs agent coming back in from no man's land. He said, "Passport, bitte."

I replied in my best German, "Ich habe kein passport." He did not want to let us back into Switzerland. We were stuck between two countries until the first customs agent came to explain and rescue us.

We turned away from the border to start the long administrative hassle of reporting and replacing our lost passports. It would be days before we were permitted to travel. We had ministry scheduled in Germany, but we could not cross the border without our passports.

Oh, how we prayed. Where were the passports? Then that still small voice of the Holy Spirit spoke to my heart, "They are on

the top of the wardrobe in the room where you stayed in eastern Switzerland."

I stopped at the first telephone and called our friend. She quickly ran to the room and found the passports just where the Spirit of the Lord said I had left them. What a great relief that was!

The moral of the story is this. When you lose your WHO, you cannot DO. We had lost our WHO document, our passport, so we could not go and DO our prescheduled plans.

Remember Your Who

God has given us a spiritual passport, righteousness. Righteousness is a gift. It is better than any earthly passport, for it will take us safely into spiritual dominions; an earthly passport could never permit this. We received righteousness when we were born again. We do not lose it by simply misplacing it on the top of a wardrobe. But, to lose the awareness of righteousness, and how we received it, is just as damaging to us. We respond to every situation out of our mind. We either release or hinder the righteousness of the spirit man from working by our thinking. With the awareness of our right standing with God, we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us (Philippians 4:13). But when we lose our awareness of His righteousness in us, our efforts for God become relegated to the realm of the natural, carnal works of the flesh.

"And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Ephesians 4:24)

As we have traveled through Europe and Africa, we have been constantly reminded that we are in a foreign land. The way people talk, eat, and drive is different. Every time we come to a border, we are asked for our passports. By this, we are constantly reminded of the importance of a passport.

Likewise, we are constantly reminded that we are foreigners on this earth. Our new home is Heaven, but we are still sojourners on this earth. We should, therefore, constantly remind ourselves of our spiritual passports from God, His righteousness in us. We should put on the new man in our thinking, put on the mind of Christ. We should remind ourselves that we have received the gift of righteousness, even God's righteousness, through faith in Jesus Christ. As we begin to see ourselves as the righteousness of God in Christ, we begin to see ourselves as God sees us.

Who in Christ are You?

Second Corinthians, Chapter Five, verse twenty-one says that you are the righteousness of God in Christ. According to Second Corinthians, Chapter Five, verse seventeen, you are a new creature in Christ. We are the sons of God (Romans 8:14). We are joint heirs with Jesus Christ (Romans 8:17). We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us (Romans 8:37).

Put this awareness into your soul realm by putting on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24).

Say this aloud until you believe it in your heart:

1. Jesus filled me with God's righteousness.
2. I have received the gift of righteousness.
3. I am the righteousness of God in Christ.

Chapter Seventeen

PASSPORT TO SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY

Righteousness, A Breastplate

"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness." (Ephesians 6:14)

Righteousness is a breastplate. A breastplate is protective armor. It protects from the fiery darts of the enemy (Ephesians 6:16). Along with the shield of faith and the other armor, the breastplate of righteousness protects us from the condemning accusations of the enemy and his friends.

Paul said, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:1)

Although the Word of God says this is true, Christians too often feel condemned. We may feel condemned because we do not attend church enough, do not give enough, because of

sickness, temptation, discouragement, or even because we do not feel a burden for something. Yet the Word of God says that there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. If Jesus does not condemn us, who does? The devil and his friends.

Why do we receive this condemnation? Because we believe the lies of the devil. Mistakenly, we believe we are right with God because of our goodness, obedience, and our spiritual maturity. If this were true, we all should be condemned; for we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). But the Bible says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus...." (Why do you keep repeating this, Bro. Kaiser? Because you need to hear it.)

There is no condemnation, because "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." The law of the Spirit of life? What does that mean? The use of the word law in this passage has been a stumbling block to our natural minds. To the natural (religious mind), the word law means statutes and commandments such as the ten commandments. Of course, we all know that the law requires obedience, or we will pay the consequences, punishment for disobedience.

The Greek word *nomos* is translated law in this verse. It was first used to describe how the shepherds allocated their grazing grounds. They did not build fences, but they sat down to talk about "how it would work." They agreed that all the sheep should be able to eat some of the rich grass, but one flock would not have all of the rich grass. They agreed that all of the sheep should be able to get to the water, but that one flock would not have all of the water, leaving none for the rest of the sheep. They decided "how it would work."

This is far different than the idea that we now have of the law. Our current idea of law is: "If you drive through a red light and get caught, you will pay a fine." In a sense, the traffic signals were installed to tell us how things would work in the intersection. But that has long been forgotten. All we think of now is that we must stop at the red light or pay a fine. We have forgotten the intent of the law and have allowed it to become a bondage. (Now don't deliberately run through red lights and tell the policeman that I gave you permission to do so. If you think what I said gives you the right to run red lights, you still do not understand what the law is.) When you stop at the red light you should say, "Thank God for the red light, for it shows me how traffic in this intersection works." (Now that's the right idea. Obedience without bondage.)

Remembering the shepherds' agreement of "how it would work," let's examine Romans, Chapter Eight, and verse two. The Kaiser translation says, "For the way in which the Spirit of life now works in me has set me free from the way sin and death used to work in me." Hallelujah! Obedience without bondage. We can now see how it works. The Spirit of life that is now in you through righteousness has set you free from the way in which the old nature, the spirit of sin and death, worked in you in the past.

Why then is there no condemnation? The answer is simply this. Our relationship with God is not based upon our obedience any more, therefore, the law cannot condemn us. Our relationship with God is based upon faith; our faith in the Cross of Jesus Christ, our faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ, our faith that put us in right standing with God. Because our right standing with God is given to us as a gift from God, we did not earn it. Since we did not earn right standing, the enemy cannot deny

our right to have it, as he does sometimes by claiming that we did not earn it by obedience. The devil is right. We did not earn it. We received it as a gift from God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the work of the Cross.

Romans, Chapter Eight, verses one and two, really say nothing about obedience to the law. This passage talks about the working of that new and living spirit of righteousness inside us. That new and living spirit of righteousness, received as a gift, protects us from the accusations of the enemy which are accusations of disobedience. The understanding that God's righteousness is ours as a gift will cause those accusing darts of the enemy to bounce off without penetrating our heart. We know that we are in right standing with God, not by our own good works, but by faith in the work of the Cross of Jesus Christ.

We Win

With our breastplate of righteousness firmly in place, we move on to battle knowing that there will be some fiery darts, but trusting in God's righteousness to keep our hearts and lives from condemnation.

"...We are more than conquerors through him that loved us."
(Romans 8:37)

When Jesus filled us with God's righteousness, He gave us "...power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy...." (Luke 10:19)

Jesus informs us, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (John 10:10)

"For the way in which the spirit of life now works in you has made you free from the way sin and death worked in you in the past." (Kaiser paraphrased, Romans 8:1-2)

"...But the Spirit is life because of righteousness." (Romans 8:10)

Say this aloud until you believe it in your heart:

1. I have received God's gift of righteousness.
2. God's righteousness is a breastplate to me.
3. There is now no condemnation to me, because I walk after the Spirit.

Chapter Eighteen

PASSPORT TO HEALING

Righteousness is Life

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (I Peter 2:24)

Did you notice that First Peter, Chapter Two, verse twenty-four is a righteousness scripture? We probably associate this scripture with healing more than righteousness. For years I did not understand why the Holy Spirit spoke of healing and righteousness in the same scripture, but finally, I began to see what this verse was saying.

Biblical healing is understood in different ways. Many people do not believe healing is spiritually available to us today. They believe that Peter, James, John, and the other apostles were the last to be able to heal by faith and prayer.

Others know that Biblical healing is for today, for they observed it in the mighty healing revival of the 1950's. During that time, God raised up men who were used in the gifts of healings and miracles in wonderful ways. However, it appeared that only certain men were used for God's healing touch. Also, many believed that God would only heal certain people. It appeared this way, since many who received prayer for healing did not receive the manifestation of their healing.

There are others who believe that healing is for all of God's children, but we are not all able to find or fulfill the conditions that God requires for us to be healed.

Finally, there are those who believe that God desires to heal all of His children just as He desires to save all in His creation. They believe that He has made every provision for salvation and healing. It is up to us to appropriate our healing through faith in the Word of God and the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

What does all of this have to do with First Peter, Chapter Two, and verse twenty-four? Simply this. The Holy Spirit treats healing in the same manner as He treats righteousness. We have seen from the Word of God (Romans 5:17) that righteousness is a free gift from God, that this gift IS right standing with God. Righteousness is a word that describes the newborn spirit. First Peter, Chapter Two, verse twenty-four bears this out; "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness...." We were cleansed from sin by the blood of Jesus and the result is a newborn spirit that is in right standing with God.

Then First Peter, Chapter Two, verse twenty-four, changes the subject from righteousness to healing (at least, I thought the subject was changed). But if you will look closely, you will see that there is no subject change at all. After the word "righteousness" there is a colon. This punctuation mark means that the same thought is now going to be expressed in different words. The Holy Spirit proceeds to say, "...By whose (Jesus') stripes ye were healed." I know that the original manuscripts had no punctuation. I do not base my argument only on the punctuation, but on the meaning of the words.

Since the Holy Spirit treats righteousness and healing in the same manner, we should also.

Righteousness is a statement or description of our newborn spirit. Therefore, this statement about healing is also a description of our newborn spirit.

You may say, "Oh, I see, Bro. Kaiser. You are saying that First Peter, Chapter Two, verse twenty-four, does not talk about physical healing, but it is referring to spiritual healing."

No. (I did not say that, you did. Well, maybe I put the words in your mouth. But you know that some believe this way.) First Peter, Chapter Two, verse twenty-four talks about physical healing. It is saying that physical healing starts in the newborn spirit. It is saying that you have the power to receive your healing in your newborn spirit now. You received this spirit of power when you received the spirit of righteousness.

"And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal

bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Romans 8:10, 11) Hallelujah! The Spirit is life because of righteousness. This is the Word of God that brings physical healing power out of our newborn spirit into our mortal bodies.

If this power is in our spirits, how do we get it into our bodies?

First of all, we begin to see that healing is already in us. Not will be, not could be, not should be, but healing is...Is... IS IN US NOW. <p120 See this in your mind's eye. When you think of your newborn spirit, see yourself as God sees you. God looks on your newborn spirit. He sees righteousness, authority, healing, and all of His promises resident in your newborn spirit now, today. See your spirit as having power to quicken your mortal body.

Releasing Healing

Well Bro. Kaiser, if this is true, why are so many Christians sick? Let me ask you this. Why are so many Christians still walking in the flesh? Why don't we walk after the Spirit? Why don't we follow after righteousness and sin not? (See I Corinthians 15:34 and II Timothy 2:22.)

Believe it or Not

The answer to why we yet have sick Christians is very simple. Satan has us believing that our passports are lost. We have lost our righteousness consciousness. We are looking for something that we have always had (even as I looked for my un-lost fountain pen). We have believed Satan's lies and thought that

we were not worthy to receive this gift of righteousness and healing.

Let us believe in healing. Let us put off the old thoughts and "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness (with built-in healing power) and true holiness." (Ephesians 4:24)

Confess It

Believing is not enough. We will confess with our mouth that we are healed if we believe that we are. When I was first saved, I learned that healing was available now. I did not understand how to receive it, but I was overjoyed that God would manifest His healing power to someone (maybe not everyone) in our day. I also learned about confession around the same time. When I would get a headache I confessed, "By His stripes I was healed." I continued to say it, but nothing happened. (I know I am not supposed to say that in such a book as this, but sometimes you just have to tell the truth about the circumstances.) Every time I said it, the words stuck in my throat. I was saying it with my mouth, but my heart was not believing it. I knew it was the Word of God. But I felt like a hypocrite when I said, "By Jesus' stripes I was healed." My problem was simple. My head did not understand that First Peter, Chapter Two, verse twenty-four was talking about the power to heal my body being in my newborn spirit. So I thought that I was playing some kind of psychological positive-thinking game. My heart did not really believe what I was confessing, so I did not release that spirit of righteousness and healing to quicken my mortal body.

If we will confess with our mouth and believe in our heart. . . Heart. . . HEART , we will be saved (Romans 10:9-10). The confession out of the heart is the Biblical confession. This is the confession that will bring the manifestation. This is the confession that will release the spirit of righteousness and healing from our newborn spirit.

Why Call the Elders?

"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." (James 5:14, 15)

If healing is in our newborn spirit now, why are we to call for the elders of the church for the prayer of faith?

First, we need to know who an elder is. The appropriate answer is "for every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe." (Hebrews 5:13) Those who use milk do not understand righteousness. They are babes. Therefore, we can conclude that the elders, the matured babes, understand righteousness. Elders understand that with righteousness comes life and vitality that can quicken the mortal body. An elder understands healing power is now resident in the newborn spirit of a person. Therefore, elders pray boldly. And elder knows that the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much (James 5:16).

Of course, when elders are called, there is no question but that they can come. They are not sick. The Word does not say, call the elders until you find one that is not sick. If the elders are

attacked with sickness, they confess with their mouth and believe in their heart, saying, "By His stripes I was healed." The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead, that dwells in them, even He that raised Christ from the dead, raises up from within, and quickens their mortal bodies by His Spirit from the inside of them (Romans 8:11).

In the mind of scriptural elders, there is no question about whether healing is for a person. They know, that they know, that they know, that they know, that healing is a benefit provided by God through Jesus. So the laying on of hands quickens that spirit, that raised Christ from the dead, that is in the person (a babe in Christ who does not understand righteousness) who called for the elder. The Holy Spirit then gives the gift of healing to the one who was sick. Yes. It was an unearned gift. It was not given only to those who understand righteousness. The Holy Spirit gave the gift of healing to the one who was sick, although he did not understand that in Christ he was already healed. This is called the grace and mercy of God.

Passport to Healing

The passport of righteousness carries with it the spiritual power which will heal our mortal bodies as we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord over sickness and as we believe in our hearts that God raised Him from the dead.

Your newborn spirit is the righteousness of God in Christ (II Corinthians 5:21). The Spirit is life because of righteousness (Romans 8:10). Healing and righteousness are in your spirit now (I Peter 2:24). It is righteousness that heals, quickens your mortal body (Romans 8:10).

Righteousness is your passport to healing.

When God forgave you through your faith in the Cross of Jesus Christ, God fore-gave you the gift of healing (that is, He gave you healing before). When you were forgiven, you were healed. When you were healed you were forgiven.

Confess this until you believe it in your heart:

1. I am the righteousness of God in Christ.
2. The Spirit in me is life because of righteousness.
3. By the stripes of Jesus I was healed.

Chapter Nineteen

RIGHTEOUSNESS, PASSPORT TO ALL OF GOD'S PROMISES

Jesus' Teaching

Jesus exhorts, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."
(Matthew 6:33)

We have sought God's kingdom and His righteousness.

We have found God's righteousness in the Person of Jesus Christ (I John 2:1).

We have received God's righteousness as a gift (Romans 5:17).

Now God promises in His Word, through His Son Jesus Christ, that He will add all these things unto us. In the Sixth Chapter of Matthew, Jesus is teaching the Sermon on the Mount. In this same chapter Jesus illustrates the Beatitude, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." (Matthew 5:8) He is

talking about motivation of the heart. If we will keep the motivation of our heart to seek first His dominion in our life, then God will take care of the food, clothing, and shelter that we need (Matthew 6:24-34).

If we will examine the Word of God concerning His promises, we will find that they fall into four distinct areas: the outward material things, the things of the physical body, the promises to the soul realm, and spiritual needs. The way in which these four promise areas are manifest to us is progressive. All of our spiritual needs are met in the new birth as we are made new creatures in Christ Jesus. The soul-realm promises will only be manifest as we allow the Holy Spirit to comfort our emotions, to teach our intellect, and to guide our will. Then, it is possible for us to live consistently in strength and health, being healed quickly if the enemy tries to put sickness upon us. Finally, God wants to manifest to us all of the material- and social-realm blessings as we walk after the Spirit. He does not demand that we become perfect in our soul-realm maturity before He will bless us in the body realm; but as we mature in the soul realm, it is far easier for the Lord to manifest our body-realm blessings. In simple terms, God starts renewing us in the spirit realm first (the new birth), then He works His way out through soul, body, wallet, and the social realm as fast as we allow Him to move.

Men teach that these promises of God are all conditional. They teach that they are only manifest when we meet certain conditions that God requires. This could be true in a sense, but many of the conditions that people talk about are Old Testament conditions of obedience and faithfulness on our part. Obedience and faithfulness are great attributes. I am all for these attributes in our lives and so is God. However, I see a simplicity in the conditions of God's promises to us who are

living in the new covenant. The simple condition I find in the New Testament is that if we confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in our heart that God raised Him from the dead, we shall be saved (healed, prospered, delivered, and given favor). This condition is great enough for all of God's promises to be fulfilled in us. It was great enough to get us born again while we were yet sinners. It is great enough for us to find forgiveness. A forgiveness scripture; "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John 1:9) This same condition is great enough to heal our bodies, just as the Word says, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."

All of God's promises, whatever realm they are applied to, are first given to us in the spirit just as healing was given to us in the spirit when we were born again. The Bible says, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32) With Jesus we have been given all things. I did not say it. The Holy Spirit said it in the inspired Word of God. This is a spiritual principle that we have missed. Grasp it now. All is ours in our spirit in Jesus Christ when we have been cleansed from sin unto the gift of righteousness.

Because we do not see this principle, we continue to look for our "un-lost fountain pens" and never come to see that we have had the promises of God right down in our bellies all the time.

Too Good to be True

This all sounds wonderful, and some think it is too good to be true. Why would God simply give us all these promises as a gift in the spirit? Wouldn't we all be spoiled if we had manifest all that God promises in His Word?

Well, some of us might act like spoiled brats if we have not allowed the Holy Spirit to establish a pure motivation in our heart. But after a while we would see that the Lord has given us these things; all of these promises; for a reason. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." (II Peter 1:4) In simple, modern English, the Kaiser paraphrased: "God has given us all of these things as gifts so that we could look and act like Jesus." God has not given us these promises simply to make life easier, although they will, but that we might look and act more like Jesus. I cannot understand how some people believe that poverty, sickness, discouragement, and division can glorify God. None of these things help us to look and act like Jesus.

"But, Bro. Kaiser, you do not understand that we are vile, and that the Lord has to prune us to keep us humble. God has to teach us through suffering."

Well, you can believe that if you want to. What you believe is what you will receive. I believe that the Holy Spirit is my teacher, and He teaches me through the Word, and if it is necessary for Him to chastise me, He will do that through the Word of God. Jesus taught, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John 14:26)

Since the Holy Spirit is the teacher, can we find out how He teaches us? Does He teach us through sickness? No. He comes to heal us according to First Corinthians, Chapter Twelve, verse nine. Does He teach us through discouragement? No. He is the Comforter. He does not know how to discourage but only to encourage. Does He teach us through division? No. He comes to bring unity in the church. Does He teach us through poverty? No. "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 Corinthians 8:9) It is the devil that comes only to steal, kill, and destroy. The Holy Spirit is come to prosper, bring life, and restore. The Holy Spirit teaches us God's goodness through these wonderful gifts from God.

Now do not misunderstand me. We will suffer with Christ, but this suffering is not from God. It comes from persecution and tribulation that Jesus Himself said we would receive when we accepted God's gift of righteousness (Matthew 5:10).

Releasing the Spiritual Gifts

How, then, can we release those promises that are resident in our spirit realm into the soul realm, body realm, and material realm? The answer is the same for all. It is a progressive release of the spirit to do the work; a release from the spirit realm to the soul realm and from the soul realm to the body realm. As we BELIEVE, we set our soul realm in agreement with the Word of God and therefore with the spirit realm. When our soul and spirit agree with the Word, we release the promises of the spirit into the soul realm. Then peace floods over our emotions, revelation floods over our intellect, and determination floods over our will.

Often we cannot believe without hearing ourselves confess the promise. We will believe what we say more readily than we will believe what any other man says. After believing ourselves, we will believe what our spouse says. My point is this, we believe those who are close to our hearts, and the ones we are open with.

But believing is not always receiving.

What do you mean? I thought you were a faith teacher.

I am. That is why I say that believing is not always receiving. It must be a believing from the heart. Belief in our head alone is not the Bible kind of believing. Bible belief in our heart releases the promises of God from our spirit man. Yes. Read the Word attentively. "...For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness...." (Romans 10:9, 10) Jesus talked about a believing man, "...And shall not doubt in his heart...." (Matthew 11:23) Jesus said, "...Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." (Matthew 12:34)

When we believe in our heart, the Word will come out of our mouth. It is this confession which comes forth from the heart that releases the promises of God from our spirit man. I was teaching on the subject of confession in a class one day. As I was making this point, about believing in your heart and confessing with our mouth, I used this illustration. "My wife and I have been believing for a better car for three years. We do not have it in the natural tangible realm, but we have it in our hearts." Three days later we were given a better car than we ever had before. I had been believing for three years, but I had not declared that I had it until that day in the classroom. The confession came from my heart and the promise was manifest.

(If you need a good scripture for transportation, use Psalms 45:4. "And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.")

Now I will even tell you that belief in the heart and a proper confession will not always release the promises of God. Honestly, I am not trying to destroy your faith, nor come against anything you have been taught about faith and confession. I am simply stating the principle in plain words, so you can understand and make this principle truly work for yourself. Yes. Heart belief and confession do not always release the promise from your spirit. You also have to act on your faith and confession at times. You see, the enemy will stop you at any one of these steps if you will allow him to do so. Hold fast your confession and follow through.

Act on your belief. Now the degree of action must be commensurate with your level of faith. What do I mean by that? It is one thing to give up aspirin for your headache. And it is quite another thing to give up your insulin. If you give up aspirin by faith, when in fact your faith is not up to that level of healing manifestation, then what happens is you continue to have headaches. But on the other hand, if you give up your insulin by faith, when in fact your faith of healing is not sufficient for that manifestation, you may die. Just because some people have died not understanding this principle does not mean the principle is invalid. It simply means they did not understand the principle or use it properly.

The simplicity of the matter is this. Works will never produce faith. Faith, however, which has no works or faith that does not motivate and urge us to trust in the Word; even to act on God's

Word; is not Biblical faith. "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." (James 2:17)

The practical application of this principle is simply this. If we are sick, staying away from doctors will not produce faith. But when we feed on the Word and our faith is strong, we will find we do not need to go to doctors. Now there is that great grey area in between. How do I know when I have faith and can act on my faith by not going to doctors? How do I know when I do not have faith, and therefore I need to go to the doctor? The practical answer is found in the consequences of failure. If the failure of your faith will only extend the length of your pain, then go for it; act on your faith. Trust God. If you want to take off your glasses and trust God for the healing of your eyes, but your driver's license says you must wear glasses to drive, then by all means obey the law of the land by wearing the glasses when you drive, and take them off when it is not against the law. If the failure of your faith will produce death, then don't gamble. We should not tempt God. We cannot blackmail God into healing us.

Believe the Word of God in your heart. Speak the Word of God out of your heart. Act on the Word of God when your faith is full, and you will see the promises of God released from your spirit man into your soul realm, and into the material realm manifest.

Stepping Out in Obedience

Ah, Ha! I knew you would finally see that obedience is the way to earn God's blessings.

I must say that acting on your belief and confessing the Word of God is obedience. But it is not our obedience that persuaded God to send His blessings to us. God sent His blessings to us, because we trusted in the work of the Cross of Jesus Christ, and we trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ. God sent His blessing to us so that we would have the power to obey Him. Obedience does not produce blessing. But blessings will equip us to obey. God does not heal us because we throw away our crutches. We throw away our crutches when we finally realize in our minds and in our hearts that healing has always been in our newborn spirit. We throw away the crutches when we gain enough confidence in the Word of God that we can literally and physically stand on the God's promises.

If it were our obedience that brought healing, then paralyzed people could never get healed, because they could not first move until God had healed them. But, as God promised salvation for whosoever will, He has also promised healing for whosoever will.

And so it is with all of God's promises. They are a gift from God into our spirit realm when we are born again. We release them into the soul realm by believing. The promise becomes manifest in our body when we act on what the Word of God says.

All of the promises of God in our spirit man come with the gift of God's righteousness, right standing with God. As we walk in harmony with this right standing with God, His Spirit leads us in the pathway that includes all of these things that we need in this life. They are a gift. . .Gift . . .GIFT from God.

If you have made Jesus Christ Lord of your life, you are born again. Therefore, you have all of these promises in you now.

You have God's righteousness in you now. You have the power to be healed in you now. You have authority over the enemy in you now. You have the power to walk after righteousness in you now. You can do all things through Christ who strengthens you now. You are the righteousness of God in Christ.

God's Word says it. Believe it. Trust in it. Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free. And be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage.

Chapter Twenty

FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness is a very important element in the Gospel of Jesus and Paul. Forgiveness will release the basic elements of repentance, faith, grace, and righteousness to be effective in our lives. The attitude of forgiveness places us in the very attitude that God has toward others.

An attitude of unforgiveness takes us out of God's attitude. When we are out of God's attitude, we prevent repentance, faith, grace, and righteousness from being fruitful.

Therefore, forgiveness is an important basic key to unlock the manifestation of God's promised blessings in our lives.

English Word

The English word “forgive” means:

1. to give up resentment,

2. to stop being angry,
3. to give up the claim to punish others,
4. to overlook, and
5. to cancel or remit.

In Old English and Anglo-Saxon English, the "give" portion of the word forgive, was quite emphatic.

Greek Word

There are several Greek words translated forgive: *aphiemi*, *charidzomai*, *apoluo*, and *apheses*.

Aphiemi is used most frequently, 146 times. *Aphiemi* , has been translated:

1. forgive, 24. let,
2. leave, 25. forsake, and
3. suffer, 26. let alone.

Thayer's GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, defines *aphiemi* as follows:

1. to send away; 24. to let go, let alone;
2. to bid to go or depart; 25. to permit, allow; or
3. to send forth, yield up; 26. to leave, go away from me.

The general idea in the words for forgive is to separate or release freely. It would be to release someone from their acts against you, to relieve them from the consequences, guilt, or punishment.

Other lesser used Greek words translated forgive are *charidzomai* and *apoluo*. *Charidzomai* has been translated:

1. forgive,
2. give,
3. freely give,
4. deliver
5. grant,
6. frankly forgive

Thayer's GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT defines *charidzomai* as follows:

1. to show one's self gracious, kind, and benevolent;
2. to grant forgiveness;
3. to give freely, graciously; and
4. to graciously restore one to another.

Apoluo has been translated:

1. release,
2. put away,
3. send away
4. let go,
5. set up liberty,
6. let depart, or
7. dismiss.

Thayer's GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT defines *apoluo* as follows:

1. to loose from;
2. sever by loosening
3. to set free;

4. to let go, dismiss;
5. to let free, to release;
6. to release a debtor
7. divorce; or Hebrew Words
8. to depart.

There are three Hebrew words translated forgive: *nacah*, *calach*, and *kaphar*.

Nacah is literally translated:

1. to bear,
2. to take,
3. to take away guilt, or
4. to forgive.

Calach is literally translated:

1. to pardon, from God alone.

Kaphar is literally translated:

1. to pardon,
2. to procure forgiveness, or
3. to make atonement.

What Forgiveness Means

From the English, Greek, and Hebrew words we find the common ideas of release, free, and gracious. Therefore, we define forgiveness as gracious, free release from anything owed. The something owed could be an apology for wrong speaking or wrong doing. In simple terms, to forgive is to give

before someone gives to you. Give to others who owe you, before they give to you.

Jesus On Forgiveness

Jesus spoke of forgiveness far more than Paul did in the epistles.

Purity of Heart

Jesus taught about forgiveness in Matthew, Chapter Six. This passage is in the Sermon on the Mount and specifically relates to how to be pure in heart.

"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matthew 6:14, 15)

Confess from the Heart

Jesus also relates forgiveness to our faith confession as He teaches His disciples to speak to their mountains in faith.

"And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." (Mark 11:25, 26)

Dealing with the Brethren

In Matthew, Chapter Eighteen, Jesus teaches on dealing with the brethren of the faith. There Jesus teaches that if your brother trespasses against you, go to him and make things right. If he will not hear you, then take one or two more as witnesses and go to him again. Finally, if he will not hear you then tell the entire congregation of the matter.

We then find a verse which we often use in our authority over the devil, but was given in the context of authority of dealing with a brother that has trespassed against us. "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."
(Matthew 18:18-20)

The point is that we have the ability to bind a brother or sister into their trespasses. It depends on whether we forgive or not.

How Often?

Peter then asks, "Lord how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus said unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven." (Matthew 18:21, 22)

Seven times seventy is four hundred and ninety times each day. In a normal day, we are awake and active about nine hundred and eighty minutes. In other words, we should be ready to

forgive our brother every two minutes of every day, if necessary. Jesus is simply saying that we should carry a continuing attitude of forgiveness in our hearts toward everyone.

Jesus Forgave

Jesus Himself practiced this principle of forgiveness while hanging on the cross. He said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34)

Authority to Forgive

After the resurrection, Jesus appeared to the disciples in the upper room. He breathed upon them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." (John 20:22, 23)

Apparently Jesus delegated to His disciples the authority to forgive or remit sins of others. It is one thing to forgive those who have trespassed against us, but Jesus has delegated to us the authority to remit the sins of those who have trespassed against others as well.

Paul on Forgiveness

Paul speaks far less of forgiveness than Jesus does. This does not mean that Paul believed less in forgiveness. He certainly did believe in forgiveness from God, as is revealed in Ephesians, Chapter One, verse seven, "In whom we have

redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

Paul also speaks of God's forgiveness toward us in other verses. (Romans 4:7; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 1:14; 2:13)

Only in one passage does Paul speak of forgiveness among the brethren, in Second Corinthians, Chapter Two. Paul saw the importance of forgiveness among the brethren.

Unforgiveness, A Closed Heart

Jesus and Paul both understood, I believe, that unforgiveness caused the heart to be closed. How important it is to see this!

How often have I heard forgiveness teaching justified from the view that "God said to forgive, therefore we must forgive." We must be obedient. That is true. However, I believe that God has called us to obedience in certain areas, not just for discipline's sake, or obedience's sake, but because there is a principle involved that releases or quenches life.

Unforgiveness quenches life. Forgiveness opens the heart and releases life. When we do not forgive, it is not just the relationship between us and the person we have not forgiven that is broken. Our relationship with God is broken because our heart has become closed.

It is true that when you do not forgive, "neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses." (Mark 11:26) In the preceding verse, we find a little different image of this problem. "Forgive, if ye have aught against any: that your

Father also which is in heaven MAY forgiven you your trespasses." (Mark 11:25)

Based upon the loving nature of our heavenly Father, I find it hard to imagine God punishing us by not forgiving us when we do not forgive others. Rather, I see God weeping in grief over the broken relationship between two of His children. I see God looking for every opportunity to bring reconciliation among His children, but grieved because He cannot accomplish it. He waits for us to open our hearts once again so that He can forgive us. Our hearts will only open once again as we are willing to forgive others, then God, through our open heart is able to forgive us.

Two Hearts?

Several years ago I was carrying on one of my inaudible conversations with the Lord. I was taking grief and sorrows to the Lord as I meditated.

I thought, "Lord, how wonderful it would be to have two hearts! One heart I would keep open to you. The other heart, I would keep securely closed so that others would not tromp through my heart with their muddy boots, leaving wounds and scars."

The Lord seemed to reply to me, "No, Bill. Anyone with two hearts is a freak. I have made you to have but one heart."

As I often do, I began to negotiate with the Lord, hoping to persuade Him to do things my way. "OK, Lord. Just one heart, but two doors. One door that would always be open to you so we can have loving fellowship. The other door will be kept

securely closed. I will give pass keys to only a few close friends that I can trust, friends who will not mess up my heart with their muddy boots."

It seemed as though the Lord smiled at my childish attempts to avoid His truth. "No, Bill." The Lord replied, "I made you with just one heart. It is either open or closed. If it is open to me, it is open to everyone, friends and enemies, saints and sinners. If it is closed to anyone, it is closed to Me also."

Still I objected to this truth. "Lord, I cannot possibly go through life with an open heart. Lord, you know what people can be. Look what they did to Your Son Jesus. They crucified Him."

The Lord sweetly and gently replied, "Yes, Bill, you can do it. Have faith in Me. I will protect you from the fiery darts of the enemy. I will protect you from the hurts of life. Learn to forgive as I have forgiven you, and you will allow my love to flow through you to comfort and heal others."

This is the ultimate faith message. Do we have enough faith, do we have enough confident, faithful trust in God, to believe that the gift of God's power can keep us in right standing with Him regardless of what comes against us?

Can we believe that God will help us keep our hearts with all diligence, so that the issues of life that flow out from it will be sweet, pure, clean, and loving as it was from the heart of Jesus?

Repent. Change your thinking from unbelief to....

Faith. Have confident, faithful trust in God that He will send His....

Grace. God will send the free gift of His power to save us in every situation, and give you the gift of....

Righteousness. Receive the gift of righteousness and act on your right standing with God through....

Forgiveness. Release others from any obligation that they may have to correct any trespass against you, and you will be what God has saved you to be.

The is the GOSPEL OF JESUS AND PAUL.