

BIBLE STUDY FOR BEREANS

JULY, 1936

“LET HIM GLORY IN THE LORD”

“That no flesh should glory in His presence.” I Corinthians 1:29. “He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” I Corinthians 1:31.

“For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.” Philippians 3:3.

It generally takes a long time, and many lessons, to teach some Christians to have no confidence in the flesh, especially if they are religious Christians. Such are foolish Christians, like the Galatians, to whom Paul wrote, “Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” Galatians 3:3. “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit.” Galatians 5:17.

In this same Epistle Paul wrote:

“But God forbid that I should GLORY save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Galatians 6:14.

After reading Galatians 5:19 to 21 and inventorying the works of the flesh, it is difficult to understand how any one, who has been redeemed by the grace of God and the blood of Jesus Christ, can trust in the flesh for one moment.

As “they that are in the flesh cannot please God” (Romans 8:8), there is not one thing in the flesh that commends itself to God. The most religious sinner on earth has nothing that God will accept as part payment for salvation. “That which is born of the flesh is flesh.” John 3:6. No man can begin to adequately appreciate the grace of God until he can and will say with Paul, in sincerity, “I know that in my flesh there dwelleth no good thing.” Romans 7:18.

Paul said, the commandment (law) wrought in me all manner of concupiscence.” Romans 7:8.

On account of the weakness of the flesh, the Ten Commandments cannot aid in man’s redemption one iota, unless, as the ministration of condemnation, it convinces him of his entire dependence for salvation upon the grace of God and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, apart from any works until after the Divine transformation has taken place in the believer’s soul. II Corinthians 3:7 and 9; Galatians 3:24 and 25.

WORKS REWARDED

Believers will be rewarded according to their works when they meet the Lord in glory.

“For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed towards His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.” Hebrews 6:10.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” I Corinthians 15:58.

“And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.” Colossians 3:23 to 25.

“Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.” I Corinthians 3:13 and 14.

The Scriptures, which deal with the Gospel of the Grace of God, clearly differentiate between “salvation not BY works of righteousness” and “salvation UNTO works of righteousness.

For our salvation, for our hope of heaven, for our regeneration, or new creation, Christ must receive all of the boasting, one hundred per cent of the glorying.

We must reach heaven as sinners saved by grace. We can never stand in God’s presence and tell Him we reached heaven by supplementing the perfect work of Christ.

Then for service, we believe and act upon II Corinthians 9:8: “And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.”

We are saved unto good works and they should daily abound in the life of every sinner saved by grace. Let us glory in the cross of Christ.

INTO GOD’S MARVELOUS LIGHT

“That ye should show forth praises of Him, Who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” I Peter 2:9.

“God’s marvelous light.” Inasmuch as God is a marvelous God, we are sure that His light is marvelous. And we marvel that into that marvelous light we have been called, “out of darkness.”

The Bible is a story of “darkness” and “light”. The history of the sinner saved by grace is the story of darkness and light. God’s grace finds the sinner, where the first chapter of the Bible finds the earth, in darkness and chaos. But “God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all.” I John 1:5. “And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. And God made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night.” Genesis 1:3 to 5 and 1:16.

The first day of the Christian is the day when God speaks light into his soul. “The way of the wicked is as darkness they know not at what they stumble.” “But the path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day,” Proverbs 4:18 and 19.

Concerning the Son of God’s love, we read these words “In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” John 1:4 and 5 and John 1:9.

The Lord Jesus Christ was sent from heaven, “to give light to them that sit in darkness.” Luke 1:79. “The people which sat in darkness saw great light.” Matthew 4:16.

Great and marvelous is God's light as given to the world in the Lord Jesus Christ. He said, "I am the Light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life." John 8:12.

When Saul of Tarsus was converted "there shined round about him a light from heaven." Acts 9:3. After that he became the Apostle Paul and had much to say about light and the children of light. When Paul saw that light he heard the voice of the Light of the world Who said unto him, "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." Acts 26:18.

All who are in darkness are in the power of Satan. "The whole world lieth in Satan." I John 5:19. Therefore the whole world lieth in darkness. The soul of the sinner is in darkness even though he may be surrounded by many Christians and be influenced by Christian environment. It is the entrance of God's Word that giveth light. Psalms 119:105. It is God's Word that tells of God's Son and His glorious gospel. "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, Who is the image of God, should shine unto them." II Corinthians 4:3 and 4.

Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light and he does not want sinners to have the true light of the true gospel. The Gospel of Christ's Glory transforms the believing sinner and also translates him. Hear God's Word: "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us, into the kingdom of His dear Son: in Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Colossians 1:12 to 14.

Now saints in light: Now delivered from the power of darkness. What a transformation! Called out of darkness into His marvelous light. Then God says to the believer, "be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers—What communion hath light with darkness?" II Corinthians 8:14. How pitiable to see a child of light walking in darkness or enjoying fellowship with the children of darkness.

God says to the believer: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Ephesians 5:11. "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light." Ephesians 5:8. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." Romans 13:12. "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night: and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet the hope of salvation." I Thessalonians 5:5 to 8. "For God Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." II Corinthians 4:6. "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world." Philippians 2:15. "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick: and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." Matthew 5:14 to 16.

Believers are to walk in the light: "But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." I John 1:7. Let us remember the words of the Psalmist: "The Lord is my light and my

salvation: whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" Psalm 27:1. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Psalm 119: 105.

We must diligently, prayerfully, spiritually, systematically read and study and feed upon God's Word and hide it in our heart if we walk through the darkness of this world in light.

THE WORLD AND THE LIGHT

"Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." Jude 13. For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." II Peter 2:4. "These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever." II Peter 2:17. . "But he that, hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." I John 2:11. "For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved." "He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." John 3:17 to 20.

Because of evil deeds men still love darkness rather than light.

ISRAEL'S DARKNESS

Christ's chosen race, His own Nation, refused the light of His revelation. And He said: "But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matthew 8:12. "Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matthew 22:13. "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matthew 25:30. The story of the Nation Israel is told in the blindness of Bar-Jesus (meaning the child of Jehovah-Saviour). "And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; add he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand." Acts 13:10 and 11.

Israel is blind, not seeing the Son for a season. But they will yet say, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." They rejected their Messiah with this cry, "Away with Him, Crucify Him." "We have no king but Caesar."

Christ went to Calvary to die because of man's darkness "And they crucified Him, and parted His garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted My garments among them, and upon My vesture did they cast lots. And sitting down they watched Him there." Matthew 27:35 and 36. "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?" Matthew 27:45 and 46.

“DARKNESS OVER ALL THE LAND”

Christ was being made sin, made a curse. “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. “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” Galatians 3:13. There will be darkness over that land again. “The sun is to be turned into darkness.” Joel 2:2; Joel 2:31; Zephaniah 1:15.

THE MILLENNIUM LIGHT

“I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles.” Isaiah 42:6. “Then shall Thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee, the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.” Isaiah 58:8. “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light; and kings to the brightness of thy rising.” Isaiah 60:1 to 3. “The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be to thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory Thy sun shall no more go down: neither shall thy moon with draw itself for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.” Isaiah 60:13 and 20. “And there shall be no night there: and they need NO candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.” Revelation 22:5.

Sinner, come on out of that darkness before you enter into everlasting darkness. Fellow-believer, let us be indeed and in truth children of light.

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

BY CHAS. F. BAKER

When will it take place? Will we be here when it happens? Will there be signs or indications of its nearness? How will it affect the Church? What will happen to Israel? How about the other nations? These and many other such questions which might be asked can be rightly answered only insofar as a clear distinction is maintained between two great future events which are both concerned with the Second Coming of Christ. The purpose of this article, therefore, will not be merely to talk about the Second Coming, about which most Fundamentalists have a general knowledge, but to set forth clearly and concisely the distinctions (between Christ’s coming for His Body which is the Church, and His coming back to earth to establish the Millennial Kingdom. After this has been done it will be seen why there is so much confusion and fantastic teaching abroad today upon this subject.

The first prophecy spoken by man was: “Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints” (Jude 1:14, 15). The last message of the Bible is: “Surely I come quickly” (Revelation 22:20). Between the two covers of the Bible it will be found that this doctrine occupies a larger part of the text than any other, and that it is the major burden of prophecy. It is the clear teaching of prophecy that Jesus Christ will return to this earth personally, just as literally as He left this

earth (Zechariah 14:4; Acts 1:11; Revelation 1:7; Matthew 24:30; Matthew 25:31; Revelation 19:11 to 16). It is equally clear that this second advent will be immediately after the Great Tribulation (Matthew 24:29), and immediately prior to the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom (Revelation 19:20). This second advent is the subject of all of the Old Testament prophecy, of the Gospel accounts, of the Acts and of the Revelation. It has no direct relationship with the Church which is Christ's Body of which all of the redeemed of this dispensation are members. Since the Church as well as the present dispensation were both Divine secrets until revealed through the Apostle Paul (Ephesians 3:1 to 9; Colossians 1:25 and 26), it follows of necessity that none of the prophecy given before Paul's time could possibly refer to the Church. Therefore, none of the references to a future coming of Christ outside of the Pauline Epistles apply to the Church. Only those epistles which set forth distinctive Church truth will be found to contain distinctive truth concerning Christ's coming for the Church. It would be just a useless to try to find the account of the recent World War in a history book written in the nineteenth century, as to try to find the account of the Church in the Old Testament, or even in the Gospels. Just as the Church itself was a hidden mystery from ages past, so also was the truth concerning the rapture of that Church (I Corinthians 15:51 and 52). The mystery here stated is not that Christ will come again, or that there will be a resurrection, but that the bodies of the living saints are to be changed into immortal ones at the same time that the dead in Christ are to be raised in incorruption, and both together caught, up to be with the Lord, not left here for the Kingdom (Philippians 3:20 and 21). See the article: "The Saviour Out of Heaven" in June, 1936 Issue, Bible Study for Bereans; I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18.

The following distinctions should make evident the above affirmations, as well as clarify these great and important doctrines. Since the one concerns the Church and the other the Kingdom, these titles will be used to carry out the distinctions.

1. CHURCH: No political signs are given to forecast the rapture of the Church, although certain spiritual conditions are foretold which will characterize the last days of the Church (II Timothy 3:1 to 9; II Timothy 4:3 and 4).

KINGDOM: Political signs as well as phenomena in nature will immediately precede His coming back to earth (Matthew 24:3 to 44; Joel 2:10, 30, 31; Zephaniah 14:4 to 8; Daniel 7:7 to 28; Revelation 13:14). Some of these signs seem to be already in preparation, but they will not come into open manifestation and fulfillment until the present dispensation of the mystery is completed.

2. CHURCH: No prophecy remains to be fulfilled, so that this event might happen at any moment.

KINGDOM: Much prophecy in regard to political set-ups, to the nation of Israel, and to the seven years of tribulation must first be fulfilled before this event, so that it would be impossible for it to happen during the next seven years.

3. CHURCH: Designated as the Day of Christ, which will be a day of reward and consummation of our salvation (Philippians 1:6, 10; Philippians 2:16; I Corinthians 1:8; II Corinthians 1:14).

KINGDOM: Designated as the Day of the Lord, which will be first of all a day of judgment to be followed by the establishment of the Kingdom (Isaiah 13:9 to 16; Isaiah 24:21 to 23; Isaiah 26:20 and 21; Isaiah 34:1 to 35:10; Ezekiel 30:3; Joel 1:15; Joel 2:1 to 11; Amos 5:16 to 20; Obadiah 1:15 to 21; Zephaniah 1:14 to 18; Zephaniah 14:1 to 21; Malachi 4:1 to 6; Matthew 25:31 to 46; Acts 2:19 to 21; I Thessalonians 5:1 to 3; II Thessalonians 2:1 to 8; (R.V.).

4: CHURCH: Affects only the members of the Body of Christ: the living and the dead in Christ. Unbelievers of Israel and of the Gentiles unaffected.

KINGDOM: Affects all nations, breaking in pieces Gentile powers and judging and establishing Israel as the Head nation (Daniel 2:44 and 45; Deuteronomy 28:13). The Church will be unaffected by it, since it will be with the Lord.

5. CHURCH: Involves an “out-resurrection from the dead”, which appears to precede the first resurrection (Philippians 3:11), and the rapture.

KINGDOM: Involves the first resurrection which occurs at the close of the Great Tribulation (Revelation 20:4 to 6), and no rapture. This resurrection is first in the sense that it comes a thousand years before the final resurrection. These two resurrections are the subjects of prophecy, called elsewhere the resurrection of the just and of the unjust (Acts 24:15; John 5:28 and 29). Since the Church is a secret, its resurrection is a secret one preceding the first resurrection of prophecy, being an “out resurrection from the dead”, signifying that only one cohort of the righteous dead will there be raised, namely the Body of Christ.

6. CHURCH: The material creation with its curse will remain unchanged after the Church is taken out. KINGDOM: The curse will be removed and creation will be delivered from the bondage of corruption (Isaiah 11:6 to 9; Romans 8:21).

7. CHURCH: Christ’s coming for His Church is in no way related to the fulfillment of any covenant, unless God’s promises to the Church be considered in the sense of a one sided covenant, which the Scripture nowhere calls them.

KINGDOM: Christ’s coming back to earth will result in the fulfillment of all of the covenants. These covenants were all made with the nation Israel (Romans 9:4; Ephesians 2:12), and will be fulfilled to that nation. They include the Abrahamic, the Davidic, and the New Covenants.

While we are called the children of Abraham and the seed of Abraham (Galatians 3:29; Romans 4:11), it must be understood that these relations exist only in the fact that we are justified as Abraham was, by faith apart from the deeds of the Law, and that through a Saviour Who is Himself Abraham’s Seed (Galatians 3:16), and that we as members of the Body of Christ have no relation to the Abrahamic Covenant which is called the Covenant of Circumcision in Acts 7:8. This covenant has to do with that great nation which God promised to make of Abraham, namely Israel, and with the land which it should possess (Genesis 12:2; Genesis 15:18 to 21). These promises could not refer to the Church; for it is not a great nation, neither is its citizenship upon this earth. Up to this time this covenant has not been fulfilled, but it will be when Christ comes back to earth (Deuteronomy 30:3 to 5).

The Davidic Covenant promised an everlasting kingdom to Israel upon this earth, with a King to sit upon the throne. (II Samuel 7). Israel has been without a king for about twenty-five hundred years (Hosea 3:4), but this covenant will not go forever unfulfilled. Jesus Christ was born to take the throne of David (Luke 1:32), but He was rejected and crucified. However, God raised Him from the dead to sit upon that same throne of David (Acts 2:30), but Peter makes it plain to the children of the covenants that He can not sit upon that throne so long as the heavens retain Him (Acts 3:19 to 26). Christ is not a King today sitting upon the throne of David; He is seated upon His Father’s throne awaiting the time that His enemies will be made His footstool (Hebrews 1:13; Hebrews 10:13). That will occur when He comes out of heaven as King of kings and Lord of Lords. Revelation 9:11 to 16.

The New Covenant was made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah (Jeremiah 31:31). As sinners saved by the blood of Jesus, we enjoy the spiritual benefits of that Covenant,

being blessed with all spiritual blessings, but it can in no sense be said that this covenant has been fulfilled with the parties with which it was made. The New Covenant guarantees the conversion of the whole nation of Israel, but we are plainly told that in this present dispensation Israel is an enemy concerning the Gospel. “And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers’ sakes” (Romans 11:26 to 28). Plainly then, this new Covenant cannot be fulfilled until the Deliverer comes out of Sion at some future date. This coming will be Christ’s Second Coming, and, at that time, not by some long and tedious process of the working of the gospel leaven, but instantaneously, the nation of Israel shall be born (Isaiah 66:8). Thus God will fulfill all of these great covenants with His earthly people at the Second Coming of Christ. But before any one of them is fulfilled, we as members of the Body of Christ, will be with Christ, rewarded and blessed with all those blessings which He promised us in Christ before the world began (Ephesians 1:3 and 4).

STUDIES IN EPHESIANS

BY PASTOR VINCENT BENNETT
LESSON NUMBER EIGHT

BY NATURE AND BY GRACE. CHAPTER 2:1 to 7.

Condition by Nature. Ephesians 2:1 “. . . Dead in trespasses and sins.”

The great work of Divine grace begins in men dead in their sins. Upon this dark background of man’s condition by nature, the marvelous and matchless grace of our God shows forth in all its splendor. Before we can fully appreciate the gospel of saving grace, “what we were” in sin must be fully recognized. Outside of Christ man is spiritually dead, without hope and without God. This is the foundation fact of the gospel of our salvation. If man’s condition by nature was not as bad as this, then he could seek for a lighter cure than the one God has provided; if he had a “spark of life” he could depend upon “cultivation” instead of “salvation”; the power of “reformation” instead of the power of the “resurrection”. But God’s word is emphatic, man is DEAD. Because man is dead he cannot live a better life; he has none to begin with, being by nature dead, so how can he look to that nature for life? The source of life cannot be found in himself, and left to his own resources man is lost and without hope. Therefore, nothing he ever does can satisfy God; “there is none righteous, no not one” (Romans 9:10); and “none is good save one, that is, God” (Luke 18:19). Let man be respectable, educated or religious but in the sight of God, and in the light of the Word, he has nothing in which to boast. He is helpless, lost and condemned, a respectable, educated religious sinner. He is dead in trespasses and sins and needs saving. Nothing but the resurrection power of the Lord Jesus can quicken him or bring him to life. Those who by faith have accepted the Lord Jesus as their Saviour have been quickened from their condition of sin and death; they have passed from death unto life.

“YOU” “WE” “US” “TOGETHER”.

I want to bring to your attention an important thought before proceeding to Ephesians 2:2. Notice the objects of Divine favor in Ephesians 2:1; how the Holy Spirit emphasizes the bestowment of God's grace upon the Gentiles. "And YOU hath he quickened". Also in Colossians 1:21, "And YOU that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled." Not that the Gentile is in a worse condition than the unbelieving Jew, for in Ephesians 2:3 the Apostle, as a Jew; unites himself with the rest of fallen humanity saying, "Among whom also WE all had our conversation in times past . . . and were by nature the children of wrath EVEN AS OTHERS". Romans 3:9 brings this out plainly: "What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin." Just as all are under sin and there is no difference by nature between Jew and Gentile, so God has graciously included all in his love for a definite purpose. In the 4th verse the Apostle speaks of "His great love wherewith he loved US" (Jew and Gentile) and Ephesians 2:5 and 6 reveal that God is doing something with the Jew and Gentile TOGETHER: stating that He has quickened US TOGETHER and hath raised US up TOGETHER, and made US sit TOGETHER in heavenly places in Christ. Watch these words carefully as we go through this chapter.

Ephesians 2:2 tells of the walk of the natural man: "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". This chapter opens with men as the habitation of "Satan" and closes with men as the habitation of "God". The walk of the natural man is seen to be under the dominion of the devil and the Apostle uses no argument to prove his existence, neither does he underestimate the devil's power. He accepts him as a real personage and as an enemy of God, pointing to the "sons of disobedience" to show his presence operating in their lives. We can thank God that while Satan has "power", and "works" in the lives of men and women to their destruction, those who have been "quickened" have the power of the risen Lord operating in their hearts. (Ephesians 1:19 and 20), and they can be more than conquerors through Him (Romans 8:37). So that though we wrestle against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world (Ephesians 6:12), we can be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Ephesians 6:10 and Ephesians 3:20. That this power "worketh in us"! What a contrast with the power that worketh in those who are the children of disobedience: Ephesians 2:3, "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." This passage of Scripture is self-interpreted as it follows in natural sequence to Ephesians 2:2, finding expression in the realm of conduct and experience.

Ephesians 2:4, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us."
"But God"—When human help is of no avail, when all is dark and hope is gone, when all that we deserve and can expect is wrath, God is rich in mercy. He steps in and reverses the whole situation. What music this is to the sin sick soul. God intervenes for the hell-deserving sinner—A new day dawns, death is turned into life, and despair is changed into the hope of glory.

"Rich in mercy" for His great love wherewith He loved us".

We deserve "justice" but we receive "mercy". Oh! how rich God has been to us! Surely we can say with the Psalmist in Psalm 103:1, "Bless the Lord, oh my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name." Psalm 103:8, "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy". Psalm 103: 10 to 12: "He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth so great is His mercy

toward them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgression from us”.

Ephesians 2:5: “Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by Grace ye are saved).” What a revelation this is of God’s (boundless love and grace! He loved us “even when we were dead in sins”. It is not difficult to love the lovable, but God commendeth His love toward us while we were yet sinners (Romans 5:8). A sinner deserves death, but grace saves him from what he deserves, and provides him with life and righteousness which he never deserved. Yes! amazing though it may seem the believer in the Lord Jesus is saved from his sin, and for the sake of the risen Lord, stands justified in the sight of God as though his past sins were never committed; and the righteousness of the Lord Jesus is imputed to him or put to his account as though it were his own (Romans 4:24 and 25). That is GRACE. This theme will be further amplified when we reach Ephesians 2:8.

THREE BENEFICIAL ASPECTS OF GOD’S GRACE.

As a result of the working of God’s grace, three outstanding benefits have been bestowed upon us which are related to the past, present, and future, and are revealed to us by the prepositions “with” “in” and “through”.

1. WITH CHRIST, Ephesians 2:5 and 6. “Hath quickened us together WITH, Christ . . . and hath raised us up together.” The little word “with” in the above passage tells of the believer’s identification with the Lord Jesus in death, burial and resurrection. In Luke 12:50 the Lord Jesus, facing Calvary, said: “But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished?” When He died upon the cross this was Christ’s death-baptism. We deserved death but He died in our stead and when, by faith, we accept the Lord Jesus as our personal Saviour we accept God’s righteous judgment of sin as born by Him on the Cross, and we are identified “with” Him. When He died, we died; His death baptism was ours, and when He was raised from the dead His resurrection was ours; we were raised up “with” Him. Romans 6:3 to 5 makes this identification with Christ’s death baptism very plain. “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death? Therefore, we are buried “with” Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection. And again in Galatians 3:27, “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ”. Colossians 2:12, “Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead”. And Colossians 3:1, “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.” These are passages of Scripture that make our identification with Him unmistakable and bring before us, in an undeniable way, the only baptism that saves, which is the ONE baptism of Ephesians 4:5.

We would call attention to this word “together” in Ephesians 2:5 “Quickened us `together’ with Christ. Many expositors interpret this word as though “TOGETHER With Christ” brought out the truth of identification, but we have already pointed out that “quickened WITH Him” brings out this truth and the word `together’ speaks of the believing Jews and Gentiles who are being made `one’ and are the subjects of his identification with Christ.

2. “IN CHRIST”. Ephesians 2:6. “And made us sit together in heavenly places IN Christ Jesus.” By virtue of His resurrection and ascension, and the blessed truth of our identification

with Him, positionally, we are made one with Him in the heavenlies. Where He is, so are we. This is a glorious fact for the "Present" and is the theme that gives Ephesians its transcendent and lofty character. The Body is vitally united to the Head and since the Head is in the Glory seated at the Father's right hand the members of the Body are also seated in the Heavenlies in Him.

3. THROUGH CHRIST. Ephesians 2:7. "That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus". We have been "loved", "quickenened", "raised", and "seated", for what purpose? This passage of Scripture tells us, it is a mountain peak in the revelation of God's eternal purpose and one of the richest and deepest in the Word of God. The word "shew" means to "exhibit" or to "display". God is planning an "exposition" for the ages to come, displaying the exceeding or surpassing riches of His grace. Just as sure as the fact of Christ's death, and our identification and conformity to the likeness of His death (Romans 6:5, Philippians 3:10), and as certain as anything He has done or is doing for us, so sure can we be that the power that raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will take a redeemed Church to glory to be the display of His grace. And "He shall change our body of humiliation that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the Working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." Then will the Church which is His Body and the Lord Jesus the Head be joined in the Glory bringing to realization Ephesians 4:13, the perfect man, the stature of the fulness of Christ. Colossians 3:4 states that when He appears we shall appear with Him in Glory. This will be the display of His Grace in the Glory; that all the principalities, angelic powers and intelligences, good and bad, might know that God's grace has triumphed, not in wrath, but in love and kindness and mercy.

WHEN, HOW, WHERE AND WHY

DID PAUL RECEIVE WHAT?

The Apostle Paul wrote about one-half of the Books of what are generally called the "New Testament Scriptures." It is generally believed that he wrote about one-half of his messages before the close of the "Acts" period and about one-half of them after the close of the "Acts" period. It is significant in Paul's ministry, during the "Acts" period (oral and written), that he referred to the Old Testament Scriptures, or used "Israelitish" terms, more than 250 times, whereas, in his last seven Epistles he did not use 20 such references or terms. Many times during the "Acts" period we find the words "miracles", "signs", "visions", "tongues", etc.; but in his "Post-Acts" Epistles, generally called "Paul's Prison Epistles", no mention is made of these supernatural demonstrations. A comparison of the gifts of I Corinthians 12:8 to 11, with the gifts of Ephesians 4:11, should prove interesting and instructive; also a comparison of Acts 19:11 with I Timothy 5:23 and II Timothy 4:20.

In Paul's Prison Epistles we find very frequently these words, "faith", "hope" and "love". Therefore we should find I Corinthians 13:8 and 13:13 very interesting and instructive. In these verses we learn that certain "sign gifts" were to pass away and faith, hope and love were to abide. The sign gifts and miracles found in Paul's Pre-prison Epistles are not found in his Prison Epistles.

In Acts 28:25 to 28 we have the Divine Record of the Divine judgment upon Israel (the nation); but the armies of Matthew 22:7 did not besiege Jerusalem until several years after Paul pronounced the judgment of 28:25 to 28. All during the “Acts” period Israel’s temple stood in Jerusalem. During that period Israel was preserved and protected by the Covenant-keeping God, and Father; because of the prayer of Christ on the cross, Luke 23:34. During the 37 years from Calvary to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus (about 70 A.D.) Israel had access to the temple, enjoying the favor of the Roman government for more than 30 years of that time, and they continued their “Judaism” in temple worship under the leadership of their high priest. Acts 20:16; Acts 23:3 to 7.

During that period, up to Acts 28, Paul became a Jew to the Jews (under the Law), and God’s order was “to the Jew first”. I Corinthians 9:20 to 24; Romans 1:16; Acts 13:46; Acts 3:21.

Paul, in his ministry, called himself the apostle, or teacher, or preacher, or minister, or the Lord’s prisoner. “to the Gentiles”, more than a dozen times. He mentioned himself in the first--person pronoun more than 1300 times. He was neither deluded, presumptuous nor egotistical. He had many revelations from the Lord. II Corinthians 12:1 to 12. He had a special deposit from the Lord. II Timothy 1:12 (Greek—“my deposit”). Christ sent him to preach riches to the Gentiles never hinted at in the Old Testament Scriptures (“unsearchable”—“not to be tracked”). Ephesians 3:8. He had committed unto him, “the Dispensation of the Grace of God, “the Dispensation of the Mystery” for the Gentiles. Ephesians 3:9. In his Prison Epistles “the Mystery” is mentioned twelve times.

Paul did not receive his “uncircumcision” gospel from Peter and the Eleven (apostles before him, Galatians 1:17). Neither did they give him any authority to go to the Gentiles. Christ gave him that authority. Unlike the Eleven, in the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19 and 20, Christ sent Paul, not to baptize. I Corinthians 1:17. Neither did Paul in his Prison Epistles tell any one to obey or preach the message of Mark 16:15 to 18.

In Acts 9:1 to 15, we have the record of Paul’s (Saul’s) conversion. Then what followed? He straightway preached Christ (Messiah) in the synagogue. Acts 9:20. Now, note carefully what he called this: “preached the faith which he once destroyed.” Galatians 1:23. Remember, Saul never persecuted Gentile Christians. He was turned to Christ before the door of salvation was opened to the Gentiles. Acts 14:27. Saul never preached to Gentiles in his “Grace of God” gospel what Christ preached to him, “Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins.” Acts 22:16. Paul went to Arabia; and after three years went up to Jerusalem, where he spent about two weeks with Peter and James the Lord’s brother. Galatians 1:17 to 24.

Fourteen years after, by revelation, Paul went again to Jerusalem and told them of a revelation he had received from the risen Christ, “the gospel of the uncircumcision”. Galatians 2:7. Note, the Twelve learned it from Paul and not from Christ. Let us not confuse the faith which Saul, the persecutor, destroyed, with the gospel of the uncircumcision about which he, nor the Twelve, knew nothing when he was persecuting the Church of God. Neither let us confuse the “gospel of the uncircumcision, foreseen in Abram’s call (Galatians 3:8) with the ministry of reconciliation. II Corinthians 5:16 to 21.

Now let us refer again to our subject, “When-How-Why and Where Did Paul Receive What?” and Search the Scriptures. But let us note this order:

1. The Faith Paul once destroyed.
2. The Gospel of the Uncircumcision.
3. The Dispensation of God.

4. The Ministry of Reconciliation.
5. The Dispensation of the Grace of God.
6. The Eternal Purpose of God in Christ.
7. The Dispensation of the Mystery.

Ephesians 3:1 and 2

“Far this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the DISPENSATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD which is given me to youward.”

Ephesians 3:8 and 9:

“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the DISPENSATION ‘OF THE MYSTERY, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.”

Galatians 1:11 and 12:

“But I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but BY THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST.”

Galatians 2:7:

“BUT CONTRARIWISE, when they saw that the GOSPEL OF THE UNCIRCUMCISION WAS COMMITTED UNTO ME, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter.”

I Corinthians 9:16 and 17:

“For though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, A DISPENSATION OF THE GOSPEL IS COMMITTED UNTO ME.”

Colossians 1:25 and 26”

Whereof I am made a minister, according to the DISPENSATION OF GOD WHICH IS GIVEN TO ME FOR YOU, to fulfill the Word of God; Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints.”

I Timothy 1:11:

“According to the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, which was COMMITTED TO MY TRUST.”

Romans 15:16:

“That I SHOULD BE THE MINISTER OF JESUS CHRIST TO THE GENTILES, ministering the Gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.”

II Timothy 1:9 to 12”

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel: WHEREUNTO I AM APPOINTED A PREACHER, AND AN APOSTLE, AND A TEACHER OF THE GENTILES. For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: For I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep (my deposit)” (original).

Paul had a Divine deposit. How did he receive it? “By revelation”. Galatians 1:12; Ephesians 3:3. It was for Gentiles. He magnified his office as the Apostle to the Gentiles.

Romans 11:13. The risen Lord instructed Paul to give the salvation message to Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy. Romans 11:11; Acts 13:46; Acts 18:6. Christ committed to Paul the gospel of the uncircumcision. Galatians 2:7. The Twelve Apostles learned this fact when Christ sent Paul to Jerusalem by revelation (14 years after Galatians 1) Galatians 2:1. Paul revealed in Ephesians and Colossians, written several years after he wrote Galatians, deeper and higher truths concerning Christ and His Church than he revealed in Galatians. Many of the glorious riches of the members of Christ's Body, declared in Ephesians and Colossians, are not recorded in Paul's messages written before he arrived at Rome as the prisoner of the Lord. As to when he received the revelation of these riches we have no Divine Record. But we surely have sufficient information to refute the assertion of some men of God that THE DISPENSATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD, mentioned in Ephesians 3:1 and 2, was inaugurated by the risen Lord on the day of Pentecost, perhaps two years before Saul of Tarsus was converted.

Surely Acts 14:27 marks a very important beginning in Paul's, Gospel to the Gentiles. Paul speaks of "my gospel" in Romans 2:16; Romans 16:25 and II Timothy 2:8. Here is the fact recorded in Acts 14:27: "How He (God) had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles." This was more than twelve years after Paul was converted. This opened door was because Israel had put it from them. Acts 13:46.

About fourteen years before Paul wrote his Second Epistle to the Corinthians he received an abundance of revelations. II Corinthians 12:1 to 12. Therefore, Paul received the revelations about 46 A.D.; about the same year of Acts 14:27, "the opened door". As Saul of Tarsus, he was met by the resurrected Christ near Damascus, between 34 A.D. and 38 A.D., Acts 9:1 to 15. We will have to wait until we see Paul in glory before we know just what revelations he received when he was caught away to the third heavens. As we follow Paul, from Acts 9 to Acts 19, we learn there are two periods, of about five years each, during which no record is made of his travels and ministries. There were perhaps seven years between Acts 14 and Acts 16. It is by no means an easy task to trace his spiritual activities, from Acts 9 to Acts 19, and definitely fix the year when he began to minister under that DISPENSATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD, mentioned in Ephesians 3:1 and 2.

But can we learn by tracing the spiritual activities of those "who were apostles before me ((Paul))" (Galatians 1:17), that they were not working under the DISPENSATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD? They were labouring under a commission from Christ. Mark 16:16 to 18; Matthew 28:19 and 20. They had committed unto them the gospel of the circumcision. But about 41 A.D. (several years after Saul's conversion) it was not lawful for them to go to Gentiles. Acts 10:28. The Lord made it lawful when Peter received that housetop "sheet" vision about 41 A.D. Did the Lord in that vision introduce the DISPENSATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD FOR GENTILES? Surely there is a great difference between Mark 16:16 to 18 and Ephesians 3:1 to 9. It is interesting to compare Peter's words of Acts 15:7 with Paul's words of Ephesians 3:1 and 2. Open your Bible and compare both of these Scriptures with Acts 14:27. From the Twelve the Lord chose that by Peter's mouth the household of Cornelius should hear the gospel. Acts 15:7. Then for the first time God did something. Acts 15:14. And the disciples rejoiced because of this repentance unto life.

But surely there was good and sufficient Divine reason why the other eleven were not chosen to preach to Gentiles, and why there is no record in the Acts that the Twelve preached the gospel out of the land of the Jews, why there is no Acts record that Peter preached to any Gentiles except the household of Cornelius, and why the record of the spiritual activities of the Twelve suddenly ends with the declarations of Peter and James in Acts 15:7 to 22. God must

needs have had Twelve Apostles, instead of eleven, from Acts 2:1 to Acts 11:18. Note that when Judas died a successor was chosen to bring the number to twelve. Acts 1:16 to 23. When James died (Acts 12:2) , that was the breaking-up of the Twelve. The date of the council at Jerusalem (Acts 15:1 to 22) after which Peter's name is not mentioned in Acts is just about the same year when Peter and Paul agreed to their respective different ministries as mentioned in Galatians 2:9.

In Acts 9:15 the Lord appointed Paul as a witness to the Gentiles; but it was more than fourteen years later before he was sent by revelation from the Lord, to Jerusalem to communicate the gospel of the uncircumcision for the uncircumcision. Peter had the gospel of the circumcision for the circumcision. Galatians 2:8. Some brethren tell us they had the same gospel and the same spiritual program. If so, strange language is Galatians 2:7 to 9. There was grace in the message for Israel; but if the gospel of the circumcision for the circumcision is identical with the DISPENSATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD for the Gentiles, then there was no need for such special revelations and a new commission to Paul. No "Berean" who searches the Scriptures will believe that Peter was intrusted with Paul's message and ministry. God's Word plainly declares that the DISPENSATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD FOR GENTILES was committed to Paul. Ephesians 3:1.

When was it committed to him? It certainly was not committed to him before he was converted. Therefore, THE DISPENSATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD for Gentiles is not in the first nine chapters of Acts. This is so evident that even the babe in Christ should see it at a glance. Therefore, we have learned a very simple but important lesson in rightly dividing the Word of truth and rightly understanding the Book of Acts. Let us repeat and emphasize that the Dispensation of the Grace of God is not to be found in Acts 1 to 9. And let us not be so stupid as to teach that the DISPENSATION OF THE MYSTERY or the Unsearchable Riches of Christ was the program and message which was proclaimed by the Twelve either on or after the day of Pentecost. That was Paul's deposit and not Peter's. Remember II Timothy 2:15 and obey it.

Paul did not continue with the ministry to the Gentiles concerning which Peter spake in Acts 15:7. The risen Lord, by revelation, gave Paul something new. Peter did not give to Paul the knowledge of the gospel, nor the authority to proclaim that gospel to Gentiles. We learn by reading Acts 8:5 to 17 that Evangelist Philip worked under the authority of the Twelve.. . But Christ and the Holy Spirit separated the Apostle Paul, born out of due season, for his special ministries. Acts 13:2; Acts 9:15; Ephesians 3:3. "I neither received it of man". Galatians 1:12. "Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me." "I conferred not with flesh and blood." Galatians 1:16 and 17.

The DISPENSATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD FOR GENTILES is mentioned by Paul in connection with THE MYSTERY which Christ revealed to him. Ephesians 3:1 to 5. THE MYSTERY has to do with the JOINT-BODY (Sussomos) of Ephesians 3:6. Although in Acts 9:15 (about 34 A.D.) Paul was told that he was to be a witness to Gentiles, he never mentioned the GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD until Acts 20:24 (about 59 A.D.). Remember that Paul received his abundance of revelations about 46 A.D., about the same year the door of faith was opened to the Gentiles (Acts 14:27; II Corinthians 12.1 to 12). Surely there is no intimation that Paul received the revelation of Ephesians 3:3 and 5 before that time, if that early in his ministry. Certainly not one of the Twelve knew the first thing about that mystery before Galatians 2:1 to 2 (not earlier than 46 A.D.).

IMPOSSIBLE

HEBREWS 6:4 TO 10

CHAS. F. BAKER

The impossibility expressed in Hebrews 6:4 to 6, namely the impossibility of renewing certain people to repentance, has caused difficulty to almost every Christian who has read the passage. It troubles those who believe in the eternal security of the believers; for it seems to teach that some will fall away and be lost, and it troubles those who believe that salvation may be lost; for it seems to teach the impossibility of one ever being saved again after having fallen away. It is the author's opinion that a careful examination of the text itself, along with a dispensational interpretation of the passage, will clear away all seeming difficulties.

It may be well to state first of all what the passage does not teach. It does not teach that the falling away is the result of sinful acts or immorality or indecency, but it is the result of going back to the first principles or shadows of Judaism, instead of going on to perfection in Christ who is the fulfillment and end of Judaism. Neither does the passage teach the impossibility of the grace of God availing for any sinner, no matter what his sin may have been. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Even under the Law God stood all the day long with outstretched hands to that disobedient and gainsaying people (Isaiah 65:2), and how much more gracious is He now in this dispensation of the grace of God. If you are unsaved, all of your sins are unforgiven, but not one is unforgivable if you by faith receive Jesus Christ as Saviour. If you are saved, you have already been forgiven all trespasses Colossians 2:13; for Christ your substitute suffered the penalty for all of them. If you are a child of God but have left the Father's house, as did the prodigal (Luke 15), remember that while the son was yet a great way off, the father was moved with compassion and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. There is not a passage in the Bible which teaches that God will not receive the sinner whose heart is turned to Him, no matter how great his sin may be. Therefore, the subject of this passage is seen to be outside the category of general sinning and a renewing to repentance.

It will be helpful next to examine the text a little more critically. This is one passage which should be read in the Revised Version for greater clearness of meaning. The Authorized Version clouds the meaning by placing an "if" at the beginning of verse six, which is not in the Greek text nor in the Revised Version, and by translating, "seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh," instead of, "while they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh". A very literal translation of the passage would read: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, as well as tasting of the heavenly gift and becoming partakers of Holy Spirit, both tasting the good Word of God and the miracles of the coming age, and are falling aside, to be renewing them again unto repentance while crucifying again for themselves the Son of God and putting Him to open shame." This translation is not a private interpretation, but is in harmony with other more accurate and recognized translations. It makes one point very plain, and that is that the impossibility is not caused by one act of sin or of rejection, but by the continuation in that falling back into a religion which has been brought to an end through the death of Christ. It is impossible to renew them to repentance while they are crucifying again the Son of God. But there is nothing here nor in any other place which would indicate the impossibility of such an one being saved if he desisted from putting the Son of God to an open shame and instead turned to Him and confessed Him as Saviour. The impossibility continues only as long as the re-

crucifying of the Son of God continues. This should satisfy any soul who is trusting in Jesus that this passage has no reference whatsoever to themselves. But to whom does it have reference?

This passage had reference and primary application to those Hebrews who lived in the days of the apostles, when God's dispensations were changing, when the old was decaying and vanishing away and the new was being established (Hebrews 8:13). There is no one upon earth today who could possibly exist under similar conditions; for these conditions have passed away and no longer exist. Adam lived under what is called the dispensation of Innocence and also the dispensation of Conscience; Noah lived under the dispensations of Conscience and of Human Government; Abraham lived under those of Human Government and of Promise; Moses likewise saw two dispensations, that of Promise and that of the Law added. It should not be difficult for anyone to see the impossibility of one today in this dispensation of the Grace of God living in exactly the same circumstances and in the standing before God which Adam knew in Innocence or that Moses knew under the Law, or that any one in any other dispensation past or future has known or yet will know. In like manner, the Hebrews addressed here had been born under the Law and in their lifetime they were seeing a change of Dispensation from Law to Grace. No other generation has gone or ever will go through this experience. They were adherents of Judaism and as such they were children of God in covenant relationship, and that even after they had crucified the Lord Jesus Acts 3:17, 25; Ephesians 2:11, 12, 17). It is evident that no Gentile could ever stand in this position; for all Gentiles were aliens and strangers from the covenants, and were not nigh to God, but afar off. These Hebrews who had been reared under a Divine religion which stood only in meats and drinks and divers baptisms and carnal ordinances (Hebrews 9:10), are now informed that the One who was typified by all of this religion has now come and by means of His efficacious and vicarious death He has brought an end to that religion and that its forms and ceremonies and sacrifices have no further meaning. Peter had told them at Pentecost that they crucified their Messiah in ignorance and that God was willing to forgive them and to send Jesus back to them if they would only repent (Acts 3:17 to 21), but Paul tells them in Hebrews 6:4 that they are no longer in ignorance, but have been enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and that to again reject the Son of God after His resurrection and the manifestation of the powers of the Millennial Age, was to re-crucify for themselves the Son of God and to make impossible their salvation. These people had crucified Him once, and now there was the danger that they would by their action crucify Him again. It would be impossible for any today to re-crucify Him in that sense; for none such had part in His first crucifixion. We may crucify Him by rejecting Him, but we cannot re-crucify Him, as could these Hebrews.

The true meaning of the passage can be found only by considering it in the light of its context (Hebrews 5:11 through Hebrews 6:9), as well as in the light of the entire epistle and its relationship to the other epistles of the New Testament Scripture. "The first principles of the oracles of God" (Hebrews 5:12) are synonymous with "the principles of the doctrine of Christ" (Hebrews 6:1). These principles or rudiments were the foundations of Judaism. These Hebrews should have known that all of their religion was typical and emblematic of a Reality which was yet to come, but they didn't, and the Apostle said that they needed a teacher to instruct them in these things which concerned infancy. Being instructed concerning these things in this epistle, they are told to leave behind (same word translated "forgive, send away, neglect", etc.) these first principles and to go on to perfection (or to maturity; the same word translated "full age" in Hebrews 5:14). Judaism was the kindergarten, but Christ was and is the University for those of full age. If a university graduate should go back to kindergarten, he would by that act be making void all that he had acquired in college; and just so for one to return to religion after

being enlightened concerning the crucified and resurrected Christ, was to make Christ of none effect. The kindergarten had its place once, but there, is no place for it now that Christ has come. These Hebrews had now come to a place of crisis. The book of Hebrews makes it to be another and a greater Kadesh-barnea (Hebrews 3:7 to 19). They had to choose whether they would go on with Christ or go back to their religion. The former involved going forth unto Jesus outside the camp, bearing His reproach (Hebrews 13:13), the leaving behind of the ceremonies and ordinances of their religion, and the desertion of their magnificent temple; the latter resulted in crucifying afresh the Son of God, putting Him to an open shame. Those who fell in the latter class were like the land which drank in rain from heaven but brought forth thorns and thistles, being rejected and nigh to cursing.

Considered in the light of the entire New Testament Scripture it is interesting to notice that Hebrews 6:4 and 5 refers to the Pentecostal experience. The whole nation was enlightened and made to taste of the heavenly gift, as Israel of old tasted of the good fruit of the land which the spies brought back (Numbers 13:25 to 27), they were made partakers of Holy Spirit (the name so used without the definite article usually refers to powerful manifestation of the Person of the Spirit, but not to the Spirit Himself), and they tasted of the powers of the age to come. It is noteworthy here to understand that the miracles of the Pentecostal era were manifestations of the powers of the age to come (i.e., the Millennium), and not a means of establishing the Body of Christ in the world, as is so often taught. To reject this testimony of the Holy Spirit was to sin against the Holy Spirit. They had sinned against the Son of Man in crucifying Him, but that had been forgiven them (Luke 23:34). Now they were sinning against the Holy Spirit, and in so doing they were re-crucifying the Son of God, and there was no forgiveness possible for that sin (Luke 12:10); for in that sin they had rejected the once for all sacrifice for sins which Christ had made, and there remained no more a sacrifice for sins (Hebrews 10:28). There is only one sin that the death of Christ cannot cover, and that is the sin of re-crucifying Him, and thus making void the once for all sacrifice for sins. The nation of Israel committed this sin all during the period of the book of Acts, and forty years after Pentecost God destroyed their city, their temple and their religion.

The Apostle Paul is proof that one may commit the unpardonable sin, and yet be pardoned. His own testimony concerning himself was: "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious" (I Timothy 1:13). It was the Holy Spirit who was witnessing to the resurrection of Christ in the Acts period, and Saul was blaspheming against the Holy Spirit. This constituted the unpardonable sin, and the re-crucifying of the Son of God. But God's grace found this blaspheming Saul, the chief of sinners (I Timothy 1:14, 15), and not only saved him, but made him the greatest apostle and exponent of the grace of God that the world has ever known. Paul's experience does not contradict the fact of an unpardonable sin, but shows that sin to be that of continuing to crucify afresh the Son of God, and the while one is doing that it is impossible to renew him to repentance. Saul ceased and was saved. Likewise, it is impossible today for sinners to be saved the while they reject the Son of God, but if they cease they may be saved.

MATTHEW—EPHESIANS

Even the superficial student of the Scriptures has noticed that, in many respects, there is a great contrast between the Gospel of Matthew and the Epistle to the Ephesians. There is no

difference as to the Divine inspiration and Divine authority of these two Records. The Book of Matthew covers the earthly ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you (Israel) by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know." Acts 2:22. In the last chapter of Matthew we have what has been called, "the Great Commission". This Commission was given to the Eleven about the year 33 A.D. The Epistle to the Ephesians was written more than thirty years later, and it contains the revelation which the ascended Christ gave to the Apostle Paul concerning the Church which is His Body, with special emphasis on the place of Gentiles in the dispensation of the grace of God.

Now by way of contrast compare Matthew 10:5 with Ephesians 3:1 and 2 and Ephesians 3:8 and 9.

"These Twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not." Matthew 10:5.

"For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ FOR YOU GENTILES, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach AMONG THE GENTILES the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, Who created all things by Jesus Christ." Ephesians 3:1 and 2; Ephesians 3:8 and 9.

Also the plain statement of Christ to an unfortunate Gentile, as recorded in Matthew 15:24, with Ephesians 2:11 and 12.

"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Matthew 15:24.

"Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." Ephesians 2:11 and 12.

Immediately this should convince us that the message and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth, in the Book of Matthew, is for Israel; whereas the ministry and message of Christ, revealed in Ephesians, is primarily for Gentiles. These Gentiles were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel while Jesus was here on earth.

As a connecting link we quote two verses from the pen of Paul, written more than 25 years after Christ died and went back to heaven: namely Romans 11:13 and 11.

"For I SPEAK TO YOU GENTILES, inasmuch as I AM THE APOSTLE OF THE GENTILES, I magnify mine office: I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come UNTO THE GENTILES, for to provoke them to jealousy."

The beginning of this ministry is mentioned in Acts 14:27.

"And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how He had opened the door of faith UNTO THE GENTILES."

This door was opened to the Gentiles about 15 years after Christ had closed His earthly ministry to Israel. Paul was not with the Lord Jesus while He was on earth. The story of his conversion is recorded in Acts 9:1 to 15. In Acts 9:15 are the Lord's instructions that Paul is to witness to Gentiles. In Galatians 2:9 we learn that the twelve apostles acknowledged the Divine authority of Paul's Gentile ministry. In the Book of Matthew we find the expression "the kingdom of heaven" more than 30 times. The first question in Matthew concerns Jesus the King

of the Jews. Matthew 2:2. In Matthew 27 the Lord Jesus is crucified as King of the Jews. In Matthew 3:2, Matthew 4:17 and Matthew 10:7, “the kingdom of heaven is at hand”. To them Christ gave “the keys of the kingdom of the heavens”. Matthew 16:16 to 19. The Lord Jesus guaranteed to the Twelve that when the kingdom is established on earth they will sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Matthew 19:28. The message and the program of the Gospel of the kingdom is set forth in Matthew 10:6 to 8, which we quote:

“Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely ye have received, freely give.”

In connection with the “Kingdom Gospel” program we find the “Our Father” prayer. The Israelitish disciples who were instructed were told to pray “Thy kingdom come”. They were also told in this prayer that the forgiveness of their sins depended upon their forgiveness of those who sinned against them. The penalty for refusing to forgive is set forth in the closing verses of the 18th chapter of Matthew. In Matthew we have the Sermon on the Mount, and in that sermon we are told that the meek are to inherit the earth. In that Sermon we have the Golden Rule with the “double” do. In Matthew 24:13 and 14 we learn that in the gospel of the kingdoms salvation depends upon “enduring unto the end”. In Matthew 8:1 to 7 we learn that the person miraculously healed is to obey the law of Moses and take a gift to the priest. In Matthew 23:1 to 3 we learn that Israelitish religious rulers occupy Moses’ seat with Divine authority.

This whole story is told in Matthew 5:17, which we quote “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.” Thus we see that in Matthew the Son of God, as Jesus of Nazareth, is indeed under the Law and a minister of the circumcision with a ministry of confirmation. We would ask our readers to carefully study Galatians 4:4, Romans 15:8, Acts 2:22 and Matthew 15:24.

Now by way of contrast we turn to the Epistle to the Ephesians. Jesus of Nazareth is not on earth. He is far above all heavens, seated—Ephesians 1:19 to 22, Ephesians 4:10. He is not the King of the Jews. He is the Head of the Church which is His Body. The record of the ministry of the twelve apostles closed with the 15th chapter of Acts, about 15 years before Ephesians was written, (except their epistles). Paul does not write as a minister of the circumcision; but as a minister of the uncircumcision. He is not proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom; for the kingdom of heaven, as presented in Matthew, was no longer at hand. He does not instruct any one to heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers or cast out demons. He is not instructing any Gentile believer to take a gift to the priest or to practice any other ceremony or obey any of the religious ritual which God gave to Israel through Moses the mediator of the Old Covenant, all of which were still binding on Israel when Christ was in their midst. On the contrary, in Ephesians 2:13 to 17, he plainly teaches that that middle-wall of partition had been taken out of the way. Instead of Divine forgiveness being conditioned upon human forgiveness, we find these words in Ephesians 4:32: “forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” Instead of the kingdom gospel, “he that endureth unto the end the same shall be saved, we learn that the sinner has been saved wholly and solely by the grace of God, and that he, is sealed by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption. Ephesians 2:8 and 9 and Ephesians 4:30. The believer is exhorted to be meek, but not that he may inherit the earth; for he is already seated in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 2:6 and 4:1 to 3.

In Ephesians, Christ is not fulfilling the law and the prophets, but He is speaking through Paul concerning “the dispensation of the mystery” and “the unsearchable riches of Christ” for Gentiles, Divine truth never once hinted at in the law and the prophets. There are no scribes and

Pharisees in Moses' seat, but every, sinner saved by, grace is in a heavenly seat. There is no "baptism unto repentance" for remission of sins such as we find in Matthew 3:11 to 17, but one Divine baptism, not made with hands, which identifies the believing Gentile with the risen Christ in glory.

There is no contest on earth between the Lord Jesus and Satan, but the conflict in the heavenlies between the members of Christ's Body and the Prince of the power of the air, the ruler of world darkness in the heavenlies. In Ephesians, Paul is not instructing members of the Body of Christ to heal one another, for he, himself, was a very sick man. And at the time he wrote Ephesians he wrote his most faithful coworker to take medicine for his sickness. I Timothy 5:23.

In conclusion, as we have noticed, there is a decided contrast. Inasmuch as the spiritual program of Matthew belongs to a dispensation that has closed, and the Epistle to the Ephesians gives to us God's spiritual program for the dispensation of the grace of God, in which all believers now live, surely we should be wise enough to know that the Book of Matthew should be studied in the light of the Epistle to the Ephesians. What glorious sublime truth we have in Ephesians! In this wonderful Epistle almost every phase of Christian life is covered. We have a wonderful chapter concerning the spiritual behavior of the family in the home, and also several chapters as to the spiritual behavior of the whole family of God clearly setting forth the highest standard in the Bible as to the unity of the Spirit, the unity of the faith in the inter-relationships of every member of the Body of Christ, with specific information that on this earth God has but one true Bible Church which is not primarily a human organization but a Divine organism.

Therefore the problem of separating and eliminating from the kingdom program of Matthew that which cannot be included in the doctrine and practice of members of the Body of Christ is not found in Ephesians. What a blessing will come to any member of the Body of Christ who will carefully, diligently, prayerfully and spiritually study time and again the great epistle, so teeming with Body truth.

WATER HERETICS

I think I can convince you that Christians of every group with respect to water baptism, are heretics, in the judgment of some other Christians.

Last Sunday morning (May 17th, 1936) a friend placed in my hand a leaflet, entitled "Water-Water-Water." The message was written by a very sincere religious man. He was dead in earnest. He gave the Christians of the older denominations, such as Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, Evangelicals, Disciples, Nazarenes and Brethren, little or no hope. They are so far removed from God's program, so far from the truth, and such a radical transformation would have to take place to get them back into the Bible Church, that he apparently considered the task so hopeless, it was scarcely worth while to appeal to them. His appeal was especially to the apostate, "Laodicean" Pentecostals. He acknowledged that, with him, all of these Pentecostals realized that something significant took place about thirty years ago, (when the latter rain began).

But his final call and appeal is now to a new, a different, "water" ceremony. Confessing their sins with penitent hearts, they must either obey this final warning and respond to this Divine command to be washed from all uncleanness, by a new water baptism, in the name of Jesus, or suffer the penalty of Revelation 3:16: "I will spew thee out of my mouth." A baptism in

the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit was a blunder and wholly inadequate and worthless. This zealous religious preacher is an exhorter, identified with the “Jesus only” Pentecostals. He is a firm believer and a zealous advocate of literal obedience to Acts 2:38: “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” And in Acts 19:5 to 7: “When they heard this they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.” This new “water” ceremony is not to be in the name of Jesus Christ, as in Acts 2:38, but in the name of “Jesus.” It must follow true repentance and for cleansing, the remission of sins.

He sees that in the first record of water baptism in the Book of Acts and in the last record of water baptism in that Book, the believers received water baptism before they revived the Holy Spirit; and that they were not baptized according to the formula in Matthew 28:19 and 20, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Carefully study Acts 2 and Acts 19, with reference to the first record of water baptism and the last, in Acts, and see whether the preacher has Scriptural grounds for his argument.

Moreover, he observes that the disciples of Acts 19:5 to 7, who received the Holy Spirit after the water ceremony, received the Holy Spirit by the imposition of hands; and that following the hands, they spake with tongues. How would we answer this Pentecostalist with the Bible to prove to him that the order of Acts 19:1 to 7 is not God’s Divine order for His Church today?

Perhaps you are ready to brand this religious “Jesus only” Pentecostalist a “water heretic”. But answer this question: does he not quote literally New Testament Scriptures to support his teaching? Both Scriptures relate to the Apostolic Church during the years of its purity and power.

A GRACE PREACHER’S CONTRARY OPINION

A day or two before I read the tract of this sincere, religious Pentecostalist, I heard an “Acts” message over Radio, Station WMBI. The message was given by a very zealous preacher of the grace of God. He is the pastor of an independent orthodox church, a leader among Fundamentalists. The beloved brother who introduced him urged the radio audience to attend the pastor’s Sunday afternoon services, because more than sixty people were to be put down under the water. It was to be an “immersion” service. Then the pastor touched on the subject of water baptism in his “Acts” broadcast. I quote him verbatim: “now understand, water baptism has not one-millionth of a fraction of saving value.” To this statement all spiritual students of the grace of God should give a hearty “Amen”, in the light of “Pauline” truth, which is “Christ” truth, as revealed in Romans 3:24 to 28, Titus 3:5 to 7, Ephesians 2:7 to 10, II Timothy 1:9 and 10. “Declared righteous without works.” “Not by works.” “Not of works.” “Salvation—the gift of God.” “God’s workmanship.”

Most assuredly, if the baptized person derived any benefit from the element water, or any efficacy or merit by the pastor’s act of baptism, then the Scriptures just quoted would not be true. But that pastor could not prove his statement that there was no merit in water baptism, with such Scriptures as the Pentecostal preacher used, such Scriptures as Mark 1:4, Mark 16:15 to 18, Acts 2:38, Acts 19:1 to 7. Surely no honest student of the Word of God can read Acts 2:38 and say, “there was not one-millionth of a fraction of saving value in the baptism unto repentance for the remission of sins.” Undoubtedly the three thousand would not have received the Holy Spirit, if

they had not first repented and submitted to water baptism. Saul was told by the Lord, “arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins.” Acts 22:16.

These two brethren are as far apart on water baptism as the two poles; yet both of them immerse in the name of the Lord Jesus and conscientiously believe that they are doing the will of God. Any student of the Scriptures must confess that the Pentecostalist has more verses concerning baptism to support his theory than has the Fundamentalist pastor. Each, of course, is a “water heretic” in the judgment of the other.

In another message this same Fundamentalist preacher dogmatically, affirmed that repentance never precedes salvation by grace but always follows salvation, being the fruit of, and proof of, salvation. And still he claims that obedience to Acts 2:38 meant membership in the same Body of Christ to which he belongs. Now carefully read Acts 2:38. “Repent and be baptized—receive the Holy Spirit.” Where in God’s Word is any order more clearly stated than here? Do you understand how any honest intelligent student of the Word of, God can have the dispensation of grace and the Body of Christ begin with Acts 2:38 and at the same time teach that repentance and water baptism should follow salvation by grace

Another Chicago pastor wrote a book entitled “Wrongly Dividing the Word of God”. He too is a leader among Fundamentalists. In his book he said that water baptism took on a new meaning at Pentecost, or with Christ’s resurrection. It then was the believer’s acknowledgement that he had received salvation and the Holy Spirit and had become a member of Christ’s Body. Acts 2:38 is the plain contradiction of this theory. This pastor opposes the other grace preacher and states that repentance is essential to salvation and is a factor rather than the fruit. Both say, the Body of Christ and the dispensation of grace began on the day of Pentecost.

Pastor No. 1—“Be saved, receive the Holy Spirit—be baptized in water—repent.

Pastor No. 2—“Repent—receive the Holy Spirit—be baptized in water.

The Bible—“Repent—be baptized in water—receive the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38.

Both of these brethren teach contrary to the plain Word of God and also contrary to each other. This doesn’t seem to bother them very much. They just go on with the practice and inconsistent teaching of water baptism.

WATER FROM THE JORDAN

Some time ago another very religious man came to one of our services. He had a large bottle of water. He approached me with much concern after the meeting and wanted me to receive water baptism from his hands, and his special water. It was very special water, according to his statement, for he had dipped it out of the river Jordan, near Jerusalem. He insisted that no other water baptism was efficacious. He was apparently sincere, but, in my Judgment, “sincerely wrong”. This, perhaps, is your decision. So we say, “another water heretic.”

TRIUNE BAPTISM

When I was speaking in a Bible Conference at Altoona, Penn., a few years ago, I was introduced to a pastor who wore a religious coat. He was, apparently, a splendid Christian character. He objected to my teaching concerning water baptism. I objected to his. He would not permit a Christian to sit at his Lord’s table unless that Christian had been immersed in water according to his mode, “three times under”. Each of us in the judgment of the other, was a “water heretic”.

BAPTISMAL REGENERATION

Alexander Campbell still has many followers: They believe that immersion in water is efficacious; that faith and water baptism are equally essential to salvation, because joined together by the resurrected Christ: “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” Mark 16:15 to 18. They have other Scriptures to support their teaching. Messengers of the grace of God, who preach that the sinner is saved by grace, without works: “not by works” in accordance with Ephesians 2:8, Romans 3:26, II Timothy 1:9 and Titus 2:5 to 7, declare that Campbell’s teaching is “water heresy.” Although both claim to be Christians, the “Grace” messenger and the disciple of Campbell can enjoy no fellowship together. Water is a great divider. But, like the Pentecostalist, Mr. Campbell’s disciple can and does support his water heresy with such Scriptures as Luke 3:3, Acts 2:38, Acts 8:5 to 12, Mark 16:16, Acts 19:5 to 7, John 3:5. Then why is he a water heretic if he supports his teaching with the Bible? The inconsistency of the Campbellite is the fact that he objects to separating faith and water and yet he separates faith and water from the signs that follow. Where are THE SIGNS OF MARK 16:17 and 18?

ADVENTISTS-RUSSELLITES MORMONS

The Seventh Day Adventists, the Russellites, or Rutherfordites, teach that there is merit in water immersion. The Latter Day Saints, or Mormons, teach that John the Baptist’s message of baptism unto repentance for the remission of sins, is God’s message for today, and that no one can become a true saint of God without the efficacy of immersion in water. Then they baptize for the dead, permitting one person now living to be baptized for a loved one who died without the opportunity of hearing of the revelation which the Lord gave to Joseph Smith. This is vicarious baptism. All genuine Bible Christians are agreed that all of these are “water heretics”.

INFANT BAPTISM

The Roman Catholics use holy water in baptizing or christening little babies, as well as adults, which they claim is necessary to make them holy, thereby taking away original sin. All non-Catholics are agreed that Catholics are “water heretics”.

I heard a Lutheran preacher declare that the baby of Lutheran parents becomes a Christian when presented for baptism by sprinkling. He said, “this is becoming a Christian by accident”. He forgot to quote the Scripture to support his “baby” baptism, which we can prove by the Baptists is “heresy”. Have all of these put on Christ? Galatians 3:26 to 28. As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Many covenant churches, which practice infant sprinkling, teach that the children of believing parents either become members of the church when sprinkled, or thereby become Christians.

The Reformed Church is one of the covenant churches teaching infant church membership and infant baptism. I quote from the printed message of Dr. Albertus Pieters:

WHY WE BAPTIZE INFANTS

“We do not mean that there is in Holy Scriptures any direct exhortation or command to baptize infants. There is not.” “He would not find infant baptism in the Bible, because it is not

there, and can not be gotten out of the Bible,” “The Bible is entirely silent about infant baptism, either pro or con.” We admit it. We do not profess to get infant baptism from its pages. We do profess to justify infant baptism from its pages. That is a very different thing.”

“It is at present the rule with all of the 500,000,000 professing Christians in the world, except the various Baptist bodies in this country or elsewhere. I have no exact figures at hand but, as nearly as I can determine, the Baptist population of the world may be something like 30,000,000. What is practiced and regarded as a most important religious ceremony by nearly 95 per cent of all Christians in the world, may fairly be called a “Christian practice.”

“The next great church father to testify is Origen of Alexandria, who was without question, the best informed Christian of his day. He was born in 185 A.D. and was himself baptized in infancy. In his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, according to Schaaf-Herzog Encyclopedia, he says:

‘The church has received the tradition from the apostles, to give baptism to little children.’

He also speaks of infant baptism as a ‘custom of the church.’ This testimony of Origen’s is decisive. He lived at the center of early Christianity, and had resided for a time in Palestine. When he says that the practice of infant baptism was received from the apostles, it is not likely that he is mistaken about it.”

Then Dr. Pieters quotes from several other early church fathers. In his quotations he shows that these fathers disagreed concerning water baptism. This “Reformed” theologian has made the confession that should be made by every one who teaches and preaches water baptism, whatsoever or whatever mode or formula is used, and whatever signification may be given to the water ceremony: namely, that they are following traditions instead of the Bible. It requires just five questions concerning water baptism to prove to any honest, unprejudiced Christian that his water doctrine is only theory. But even after it is proved to be a theory he is as fearful about giving it up as the Romanists are concerning candle-sticks, incense and beads. Among immersionists there are more than a dozen Scriptural explanations of each particular “water” ceremony.

Divers baptisms were imposed upon Israel until the time of reformation. Hebrews 9:10. But their baptisms were not as divers as are the “baptism” theories among the people of God. What utter confusion! What unholy controversies! What unspiritual divisions have been caused among members of Christ’s Body because of these traditional theories! Whereas, God enjoins us to keep the unity of the Spirit, specifically declaring, “there is one baptism.” Ephesians 4:5. Does water baptism unite the believing sinner to the risen Christ? Divine baptism does. But then the claim is that water baptism should follow. Then there are two baptisms. God declares for this dispensation ONE.

Let us remember that the Lord Jesus, in the flesh, was both circumcised and baptized. He never intimated that baptism would take the place of circumcision; and it never did. But only spiritual circumcision and baptism now remain. Colossians 2:11 and 12.

BAPTISTS NOT AGREED

Many Baptists declare that the baptism by immersion is the door of entrance into the Church. Some say that the Church was founded by John the Baptist; others say “No”. One of the outstanding Baptist pastors, who preached for years in New York City, said that God had joined together faith and water for salvation in Mark 16:16 and they could not be separated. However,

he inconsistently separated from faith and water the signs of Mark 16:17 and 18. This beloved pastor received, by letter, several Baptists from a Baptist Church in a near-by city and immersed them anew in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, because their former pastor had baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Other Baptists say their immersion is a burial ceremony to indicate the “old man” is dead and buried. Some Baptists say they hold for “restricted communion” because all true Christians must be baptized by Baptist preachers and become members of the Baptist Church. But most of them will acknowledge that they require for membership in their Baptist churches a water ceremony not required for membership in the Bible Church of this dispensation.

ALIEN BAPTISM

Some time ago I was attending a Conference of Fundamentalists in South Eastern Illinois. There were a number of Baptist agitators there from that section and from Kentucky, who did everything they could to wreck the Conference. Their war cry was “alien baptism”. They were in earnest. It was a serious matter with them. Just as the Jews wanted to tear Paul into pieces, because that Greek had polluted their temple by his presence (Acts 21:27 to Acts 22:23), they announced their anathema upon the Baptist pastor for permitting to stand in his “Baptist” pulpit, men who had received “alien baptism”. Every speaker, but one, had been immersed, “but their contention was that their baptism was unscriptural and valueless because not administered in the one and only New Testament church (the real Baptist Church), in the one and only New Testament way, immersion, as a door of entrance into the one and only true Church. These exclusive Baptists could not believe that any good thing, spiritually, could come out of any other denomination. And how they did condemn the Campbellites for their doctrine of “new birth by water”. But neither these Baptists, nor any other Baptists, have explained” to the Campbellites and the Pentecostals why they do not preach Acts 2:38: “baptism for the remission of sins and for the reception of the Holy Spirit. “They prefer not to discuss Acts 2:38.

This three-cornered battle is raging! A baptismal feud has been on for years.

The Baptists prefer not to discuss with the Campbellites and the Pentecostals Mark 16:16, “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” Note the order—1 believeth—2 is baptized—3 shall be saved. If we are working under Mark 16:14 to 18 let us adhere to the order and add the signs and say with Paul, “forbid not to speak with tongues.” I Corinthians 14:39. And how helpless a Baptist would be if he had to defend his position by Acts 19:1 to 7, which is the program attempted by the Pentecostals. What’s the order? “Water baptism”—“imposition of hands”—“Holy Spirit”—“tongues”. Where is such an order to be found in any Baptist assembly? It is the order in the Scriptures that give us the last record of the baptism of the disciples of Christ.

BAPTISM AND BLESSED HANDKERCHIEFS

The pastor of the large Baptist Church in Minneapolis, for years, has permitted a brother to bless handkerchiefs in his building. These handkerchiefs are to heal people of sickness. He is consistent. Blessed handkerchiefs are mentioned in Acts 19:11 to 13; where we have the last record of water baptism. Baptisteries and blessed handkerchiefs go together. Signs, tongues and water belong to the same dispensation. But the Baptists and others seem to be unconscious of the fact that they have substituted the tradition of their founders for an intelligent exegesis of the

Scriptures. Certainly they have a right to incorporate their peculiar “water” theory in their denominational creed and keep out of their denominations those who are not in agreement with their theory. But they know that there is no “Baptist” Church in the Bible. Moreover, their intelligent, spiritual Bible students acknowledge that there is but one Church in the world today and that no religious ceremony is required for membership in that one true Bible Church, which is the Body of Christ. Ephesians 1:19 to 22, Ephesians 3:6 and Ephesians 4:3 to 7. And they know that all sinners saved by grace are in that one Church and seated in the heavenlies in Christ. Therefore, they should just as readily confess that there is therefore a difference between their churches and the Bible Church. They are generally quite bitter when their water theories are questioned. They acknowledge that every saved Presbyterian, saved Lutheran, saved Methodist and saved Episcopalian, is a member of Christ’s Body, identified with Him in death, burial and resurrection, and is seated with Him in the heavenlies, blessed with all spiritual blessings; although not immersed. So believers are buried in true Scriptural baptism without water. Every believer has been buried with Christ in the only baptism required for this age. Without water they are as spiritual as water Christians.

UNDENOMINATIONALISTS AND INDEPENDENT DENOMINATIONALISTS

Are we not willing to admit that every Christian is a “water heretic” in the judgment of other Christians who give to the water ceremony a different signification? I can prove by the editors of several different magazines that I am a “water heretic”, or rather, a “no water heretic”: namely, “The Moody Monthly”, “Serving and Waiting”, “Just a Word”, “Our Hope”, “Revelation”. But I call your attention to this most interesting, if not startling fact, that each of the beloved brethren, who wrote the different magazine articles concerning my “water heresy”, is a “water heretic” in the judgment of each of the other writers; at least they are quite at variance in their baptism theories. Each one of these Fundamentalist brethren is a believer in the verbal inspiration and absolute Divine authority of the Bible, and a preacher of salvation by grace without works, as I am. Each of these editors and writers is positive that there is one and only one Church in this dispensation and they are unanimously agreed that no kind of water baptism, or religious ceremony of any kind, is Scripturally required for membership in the Body of Christ, God’s one true Bible Church. As to why and how they stand for their different water ceremonies, they are all disagreed. But they are clever enough to keep silent as to their disagreements and unite for a general attack upon those who would show from the Scriptures that they are all wrong about water.

To say the least, it is unfortunate and regrettable that there should be among our outstanding “fundamental” “grace” preachers such positive disagreement concerning water baptism, as to leave in utter confusion young preachers and Christians who highly respect all of these men and accept their interpretations of the Bible, as the standard for fundamentalists, in earnestly contending for the faith once-for-all delivered unto the saints. These outstanding “Fundamentalist” leaders are all agreed on the great fundamentals of the Christian faith; agreed that salvation is wholly and solely by the grace of God as is also membership in the true Bible Church of this dispensation. These brethren could undoubtedly enjoy a friendly discussion of any of the doctrines of the Bible, except the teaching concerning water baptism. Concerning the one baptism of Ephesians 4:5 they disagree. If the interpretation of any one of them concerning water baptism is sound, Scriptural exegesis, that of each of the other is unscriptural theory.

Let me explain what I mean by referring to the teachings of these several men whom I have mentioned.

Dr. Donald Gray Barnhouse, pastor of the Tenth Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia is unquestionably one of the outstanding “Fundamentalists” of today. He is highly respected in “Fundamentalist” circles, as a true defender of the faith. He practices the baptism of both adults and infants, by sprinkling water on the head. He gives to the “water ceremony” the Presbyterian interpretation; that is, water baptism in the New Testament to take the place of circumcision in the Old Testament. If his interpretation is Scriptural, then I am sure that you will conclude with me that the interpretation given by the several other brethren, to whom I shall refer, is not only unscriptural but positively absurd.

I was told by a member of that church-organization that during Pastor Barnhouse’s absence from his pulpit the statement was made by Dr. H. A. Ironside that when any Scripture speaks of baptism, and it does not qualify the statement, it should be invariably interpreted as water baptism. Dr. Ironside teaches that water baptism is the believer’s testimony that he has died with Christ, and has been buried and raised again. This is known among Plymouth Brethren as “believer’s baptism”. Dr. Ironside teaches, in his printed “Baptism” booklet, that water baptism is a kingdom ordinance which began with the ministry of John the Baptist. He teaches that Christian baptism began on the day of Pentecost. But he admits that the twelve apostles did not receive Christian baptism, having been baptized with the kingdom baptism several years before the day of Pentecost. He offers no apology nor explanation for wholly disregarding the order of Mark 16:15 to 18 and Acts 2:38, for he insists that a believer must have the Holy Spirit and be saved before being baptized. For some reason, he seems to prefer not to practice the water ceremony himself, but turns it over to others. Perhaps I Corinthians 1:17.

Now, I am sure you will agree with me that there is as much difference between Dr. Barnhouse’s interpretation and practice, and Dr. Ironside’s interpretation and practice as there is between black and white. I quote from Dr. Ironside’s “Baptism” booklet what he says concerning the practice of Dr. Barnhouse

“In the case of what is called “christening”, the sprinkling of an unconscious infant, where is there any act of obedience on its part, or on the part of those performing the ceremony? It is surely absolutely unscriptural and often demoralizing: and in its worse phase, when coupled with the soul destroying dogma of baptismal regeneration, totally denies the Scripture doctrine of new birth by receiving the Word of God (I Peter 1:23); whereas, apart from that doctrine, it is a meaningless rite, and, as all know, borrowed from Rome. Shall I, then, because men choose to link the name of the Trinity with an ordinance of their own devising, fear to dishonor that name by rebaptism as it is called?”

Dr. Ironside has sweet fellowship with a brother who practices a demoralizing ceremony.

Moreover, Dr. Ironside teaches that his authority for water baptism is the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19 and 20. I quote from his “Baptism” booklet something of what he has to say concerning this commission.

“If indeed the nations as a whole become disciples, then to baptize them is in place, but THAT, though IT SHALL ACTUALLY BE, IS IN A FUTURE DAY. (Zechariah 14:16). At present, at least, it is, in my judgment, to individuals that the commission applies. Markedly enough, neither here, nor yet in Mark 16 is the believer or disciple told to be baptized, for it was to His servants that the word was addressed by the Lord.”

“It was the risen Christ about to be glorified who commissioned His apostles to go out, not simply to Jews, observe, nor yet to proclaim a second offer of the kingdom, as some say, but

to carry the Gospel to men of all nations, baptizing those who professed to believe, in (or unto) the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. This we see them literally doing throughout the early days of the Church, as recorded in the Book of Acts. Wherever preached, baptism is linked with it, NOT AS PART OF THE GOSPEL, Paul distinctly says, “Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel,” but as an outward expression of faith in the Gospel.”

Dr. Ironside eliminates from the Spiritual program of the Body of Christ the “Our Father” prayer, taught by the Saviour, on the grounds that that prayer is a kingdom prayer. And yet, he insists on having a water ceremony, which he acknowledges to be a kingdom ordinance. Any student of the Word of God can learn by reading John 1:31, Mark 1:3, Luke 3:13 and Acts 2:38, the significance of water baptism.

Shortly after Dr. Ironside had stood in Pastor Barnhouse’s pulpit Dr. James M. Gray occupied the same pulpit. According to my informant, he made the positive declaration that when the Scripture speaks of baptism, without qualifying the statement, it invariably refers to Holy Spirit baptism. We are reminded of the statement found in Mark 14:59, “neither did their witness agree”. You will notice that Dr. Ironside and Dr. Gray positively contradicted each other. Moreover, Dr. Gray was very insistent that the “Our Father” prayer is a prayer for every member of the Body of Christ. So we see that Dr. Ironside insists that the “Great Commission” is for this age but that the Prayer is not. And Dr. Gray insisted that the “Great Commission” is not for this age, but that the Lord’s Prayer is.

Shortly after these two men had preached in Philadelphia, Dr. Wm. L. Pettingill was there, and he was asked concerning his water baptism theory. He agreed with Dr. Gray that the Great Commission was not for the obedience of the Body of Christ in dispensation. He does not believe in the order of Mark 16:16, “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” He believes in a different order, “he that believeth and is saved shall be baptized.” I am sure that he would admit with any student of the Word of God that there is not a single verse of Scripture in the Bible commanding one member of the Body of Christ to baptize with water any believer who is already a member of that same Body.

Then a few months later, Dr. A. C. Gabelein of New York occupied Pastor Barnhouse’s pulpit. According to the testimony of Dr. Gabelein’s friends, some brethren have tried to persuade him to be immersed. He was sprinkled as an infant, according to their testimony, and has refused to be immersed as a witness to the world, believing that his spiritual life for years as a public servant of the Lord is his best testimony. And yet, Dr. Gabelein believes in household baptism as interpreted by the Plymouth Brethren, who would prove by I Corinthians 10:1 to 7, that believers and their household should be immersed. Dr. Gabelein, for some reason, prefers to keep silent as to what he believes concerning water baptism, except the statement in his written testimony which thoroughly disagrees with Dr. Ironside concerning the Great Commission.

Thus we see the utter confusion among men of God, otherwise sound in doctrine, who have such uncertain and varied theories concerning this religious ceremony which has done as much to destroy the unity of the Body of Christ as any other thing; whereas the unity is to be kept on the basis of “one baptism.”

Each of the five brethren is a “water heretic” in the judgment of the other four.

THE OLD MAN DEAD AND BURIED.

“HOW SHALL WE THAT ARE DEAD TO SIN, LIVE ANY LONGER THEREIN? KNOW YE NOT, THAT SO MANY OF US AS WERE BAPTIZED INTO JESUS CHRIST WERE BAPTIZED INTO HIS DEATH? THEREFORE WE ARE BURIED WITH HIM BY BAPTISM INTO DEATH: THAT LIKE AS CHRIST WAS RAISED UP FROM THE DEAD BY THE GLORY OF THE FATHER, EVEN SO WE ALSO SHOULD WALK IN NEWNESS OF LIFE.” Romans 6:2 to 4.

From these verses, Romans 6:2 to 4, certain immersionists teach that water baptism should be a burial under water (although they admit that Christ was buried above the ground). According to Romans 6:6, the believer's old man was crucified when Christ received His death baptism. Luke 12:47 to 51. To witness to the world that his old man was crucified, the believer should be immersed and thereby show that he has also been buried.

It is a known fact that nothing will arouse the immersionists' old man more than to question his peculiar theory of a watery grave, which was his witness that his old man was dead.

Every believer is dead to sin and raised to walk in newness of life and seated in the heavenlies With Christ the moment he receives Christ in salvation, without water baptism of any kind. How can he be dead and raised without being buried? The baptism into death and the burial baptism of Romans 6:2 to 4 is both meritorious and efficacious and produces the change in the believer. If it is water, then water is essential to salvation. Nearly all immersionists, who read water into Romans 6, become religious judges, judging saved Presbyterians, saved Lutherans and all other believers who repudiate their fanciful interpretation and reject their water theory. Every sprinkled saved Lutheran, Presbyterian and Methodist has been buried by baptism with Christ. Colossians 2:12. To read “water” into Colossians 2:12 is unsound exegesis.

HOUSEHOLD IMMERSIONISTS.

“MOREOVER, BRETHREN, I WOULD NOT THAT YE SHOULD BE IGNORANT, HOW THAT ALL OUR FATHERS WERE UNDER THE CLOUD, AND ALL PASSED THROUGH THE SEA; AND WERE ALL BAPTIZED UNTO MOSES IN THE CLOUD AND IN THE SEA.” I Corinthians 10:1 and 2.

“NOW THESE THINGS WERE OUR EXAMPLES, TO THE INTENT WE SHOULD NOT LUST AFTER EVIL THINGS AS THEY ALSO LUSTED. I Corinthians 10:6.

Undoubtedly there were thousands of little children who crossed the Red Sea with their parents, about 1492 B.C. Read Exodus 14:29: “The children of Israel walked upon DRY land in the midst of the sea”. These household immersionists should drain the water out of their baptisteries. Here then we have another fanciful theory; and that is, that believers' babies should be immersed because of I Corinthians 10:6, quoted above. But the “wherefore” of I Corinthians 10:12 is the key to the argument.

The children of Israel were baptized unto Moses by two great miracles, but in spite of other supernatural Divine tokens, Israel yielded to temptation. By the miracle of regeneration, by a Divine baptism not made with hands, we were joined to Christ. We should be careful about stumbling, remembering the experience of Israel in the wilderness. Some religious leader started this water theory and some splendid servants of the Lord followed their teaching; and thus another tradition; and little infants are immersed in bath tubs.

It is needless to say that these household immersionists are “water heretics” in the judgment of other immersionists who contend for “believer's” baptism. These two opposing factions have brought much grief into the ranks of the Plymouth Brethren, who are strong on the

water. Both factions believe that the Body of Christ began on the day of Pentecost; but they offer no explanation as to why they do not preach the water message and practice the order of Acts 2:38, Acts 8:5 to 15 and Acts 19:1 to 7. But all must acknowledge that during the “Acts” period households received water baptism. Acts 10:48 and Acts 11:14, Acts 16:15, Acts 16:33, I Corinthians 1:16. We may argue until we leave this world and dogmatically and Pharisaically contend for our water theories; but we cannot Scripturally prove that there were not some small children in some of those households. Neither can we prove by one single Scripture that sprinkling took the place of circumcision.

Thus we learn that all baptism ceremonies have been adopted, not by careful study of the Scriptures, but by the traditions of church fathers.

In the midst of such confusion, and with all the “big” Bible-teachers in disagreement, I am more and more inclined to believe that we are taught, by Ephesians 4:3 to 7 and Ephesians 3:8 and 9, that water has no place in the dispensation of the mystery;” only the one Divine baptism.

THE DOCTRINES OF SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISM

SPIRITUAL OR PERNICIOUS?

We receive very many letters asking us what we think about Seventh Day Adventism. It requires so much time to answer these letters separately that we have decided to write this short message in the magazine.

Now note, we are dealing with “Seventh Day Adventism” and not with Seventh Day Adventists. There are many splendid people who are numbered with this sect and we are sure that some of them are saved, in spite of their ignorance of God’s saving message and spiritual program for this day in which we live.

I have replied to a number of inquirers that the curative, or antidote, for this teaching, is “the Pauline truth”, designated by him, “the dispensation of the grace of God” and “the dispensation of the mystery.” Ephesians 3:1 and 2 and 3:8 and 9. The Adventists are as ignorant of this message as though it were not recorded in God’s Holy Word. To my mind, much of the teaching of the Adventists is not only unscriptural, unsound and unspiritual; but it is positively absurd.

Perhaps the most pernicious teaching is their interpretation of Daniel 8:14 and Leviticus 16:9 to 27. If you will read Daniel 8:14 you will find reference to 2,300 days. They interpret this, as years, and they teach that the sanctuary was not cleansed until the nineteenth century A.D. And even then, our sins were not entirely put away. Their interpretation of the sacrifices of the goats, in the 16th of Leviticus, is that the Lord Jesus was the slain goat and Satan is to be the scapegoat. Satan is to be turned loose in darkness for one thousand years, and during that period of darkness there will be the punishment of lawbreakers.

In the light of such-clear statements as I Peter 3:18, John, 19:30, Hebrews 9:14 and Ephesians 2:8 to 13, I am sure that you will agree with me that such teaching can be included in that which the Scriptures call “the damnable heresy”. II Peter 2:1. The Adventists claim to be the children of Israel, and therefore govern themselves by the prophecies made to that nation. They

claim that Israel's sabbath is the Christian's sabbath and should be observed by the members of the Body of Christ.

According to Exodus 31:13 to 17, the seventh-day sabbath was a sign between Jehovah and the children of Israel. The Adventists claim that only the ceremonial law was done away with at Calvary, and that the moral law is just as binding upon members of the Body of Christ in the dispensation of the grace of God as it was upon Israel during the dispensation of the Law.

In the light of Colossians 2:11 to 14, II Corinthians 3:5 to 12, Acts 15:7 to 19 and Romans 10:3 to 7, we see the absolute nonsense of such teaching. We know that even one circumcised is debtor to the whole law. Galatians 5:3. We know there can be no reign of law without Levites to execute judgment upon even the law-breaker who kindles a fire on the Sabbath.

Likewise the one who is debtor to the sabbath is debtor to the whole Law. The Lord Jesus Christ abolished the Law, took out of the way the handwriting of ordinances, which was nailed to His cross. Colossians 2:12 to 14. He took the sabbath to the sepulchre and arose from the dead to be the head of a new creation. By putting away sin, bringing the Law to an end and abolishing death, the Lord Jesus Christ established "the Law of the Spirit of Life in Himself". Romans 8:2. The language is very plain that Christians are not under the Law. Romans 6:14.

The Apostle Paul was the chosen vessel of the Lord to instruct members of the Body of Christ, and never once did he say in any message that members of the Body of Christ had any obligation toward Israel's sabbath. Not once did he give to any member of the Body of Christ the "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not" of Sinai.

Galatians 3:24 and 25 is the refutation and negation of the legalistic teaching of the Adventists. We quote these two verses: "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."

We say that some Adventists are saved in spite of their perverted gospel. God's Book tells us that the perverted gospel, that is, a mixture of law and grace, subverts the soul.

Galatians 1:6 to 10 and Acts 15:10 to 19. If the Adventists were really under the Law, as they think they are, they would be under the curse; for there is not one of them, no matter how he may strive to keep the whole Law, who does not offend in one point; therefore he is guilty of all.

They teach "soul-sleeping" in contradiction to the plain statements of God's Book in II Corinthians 5:7 to 10, Philippians 1:10 to 18, Acts 7:47 to 52 and II Peter 1:17 to 21. They also teach annihilation as the punishment for the unsaved. We have mentioned only a few of their unscriptural doctrines, but we mention sufficient to warn Christians against their fallacies and fantasies. Beware of false prophets. "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Galatians 5:1.

Read the allegory in Galatians 4:21 to 31. The Holy Spirit wrote this especially for Seventh Day Adventists.

HAVE YE RECEIVED THE HOLY SPIRIT

SINCE YE BELIEVED?

God has ordered that members of the Body of Christ, “endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit.” Ephesians 4:3. “There is one Spirit.” Ephesians 4:4.

Every sinner saved by grace is a member of the Body of Christ. “In Whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” Ephesians 2:22. The justified sinner becomes a member of the true Bible Church the very moment he believes on the Lord Jesus for justification, without any formality or reception by church officials. Every believer, from the moment of his salvation, is in the Spirit and the Spirit is in him.

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?” I Corinthians 6:19.

“If we live in the Spirit let us also walk in the Spirit.” Galatians 5:25.

Now for a little study of two Scripture expressions in the matter of the believer and the Holy Spirit.

Acts 19:2:

“And he (Paul) said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Spirit SINCE YE BELIEVED? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Spirit.”

Ephesians 1:13:

“In Whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in Whom also AFTER THAT YE BELIEVED, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.”

The two expressions: “SINCE YE BELIEVED”. Acts 19:2; “AFTER THAT YE BELIEVED”. Ephesians 1:13.

It is most interesting to know that both expressions are translated from one same Greek word. The word is “pisteusantes”. “Pisteusantes” is the participle of the Greek verb, “believe.” “Pisteusantes” should be translated “believing” or “on believing”, or “having believed”. The thought suggests, the very moment ye believed or “when ye believed.”

Paul did not say, in Acts 19:2, “Since ye believed”. The King-James translation said that. Paul did not write, in Ephesians 3:1, “after that ye believed”. The King James translation thus mistranslates it.

These two mistranslations have supported certain religious people in their unscriptural teaching that receiving the Holy Spirit is a Divine work subsequent to, and separate from, believing the Gospel for salvation. Paul asked in Acts 19:2, “believing received ye the Holy Spirit?” The answer “No”. They did not hear the Grace of God Gospel. Paul wrote in Ephesians 1:13, “believing (the gospel of your salvation) ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit.” They believed the Gospel of Grace. “By grace are ye saved through faith. and that not of yourselves: not of works—the gift of God.” Ephesians 2:8.

No sinner saved by the Grace of God tarries for a single moment for the Holy Spirit. We quote Galatians 3:14; “That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” And Galatians 3:2 and 3: “This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?”

The Holy Spirit has been sent down from heaven. I Peter 1:12.

The Holy Spirit is given to believers. Romans 5:5.

As eternal life is the free gift of God, so also is the Holy Spirit the free gift of God. No believer has eternal life unless he has the Holy Spirit. All Bible Christians have the Holy Spirit.

“Now He which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.” II Corinthians 1:21 and 22.

Note that the Greek word “Christ” is “Christos”. The Greek word “anoint” is “Chrio”. A Christian is a “Christ’s-one”—an anointed one. No one is a Christian unless the Holy Spirit is in him. In the true Scriptural meaning no Christian can receive a fresh anointing. This would mean to begin to be a Christian again. “The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him.” I John 2:27.

No member of the Body of Christ prays “take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.” Psalms 51:11. Even though a Christian may grieve the Holy Spirit he is sealed by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption. Ephesians 4:30.

But some one asks: “how about John 14:17?”

John 14:17:

“Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; for He dwelleth WITH you, and shall be IN you.”

At the time the Lord spake these words to His apostles, “the Holy Spirit was not yet given because that Jesus was not yet glorified”. (John 7:39),

They had the Holy Spirit with them but not in them, because they lived before the Holy Spirit was sent. John 16:7 and 8. Christians today have the Holy Spirit in them the moment they become Christians.

We could not have the experience of the Twelve, in the dispensation of the Grace of God, committed to Paul. Ephesians 3:1 and 2. The Twelve traveled with Christ on earth several years before the Holy Spirit came from heaven. The order of Acts 8:5 to 15 is not the Divine order for members of the Body of Christ in Ephesians.

Whatever we may mean by “the baptism of the Holy Spirit”, let us remember that we rightly divide the word of truth when we teach that the believer’s baptism, sealing and anointing of the Holy Spirit is never a future experience but always received at the time of salvation. Ephesians 5:18 is something different: “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.”

This experience is realized as the faithful Christian walks each day in the Spirit in obedience to the Word of God, rightly divided, in prayer, worship, spiritual service and practical daily Christian living.

We cannot spend too much time in genuine spiritual prayer for Holy Spirit control, but let us not be so unwise as to join in a tarry-meeting for the coming of One who came centuries ago. Neither let us be so unscriptural as to pray for more of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit does not enter a child of God on the installment plan.

BY THE GRACE OF GOD

Great statement is this one made by the Apostle Paul about 58 A.D.

BY THE GRACE OF GOD I AM WHAT I AM; AND HIS GRACE WHICH WAS BESTOWED UPON ME WAS NOT IN VAIN; I LABORED MORE ABUNDANTLY THAN THEY ALL: YET NOT I, BUT THE GRACE OF GOD WHICH WAS IN ME.” I Corinthians 15:10.

Can you say, “I am?” Not one of us can say, “I labored more abundantly than they all.”

I am. Are you? I am saved by the grace of God. I didn't labor abundantly or even for one moment to be saved by grace.

"If by grace then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace." Romans 11:6.

Perhaps you desire to "amen" this testimony: "I am not what I ought to be. I am not what I hope to be. But, by the grace of God, I am not what I once was."

When Christ was here on earth He said to those who would get a place in the kingdom of heaven, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able Luke 13:24. "Agonize" or "labour" to get in. That certainly is not our message for today, It is in direct contrast with Romans 3:24: "Declared righteous without a cause by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." For us the great preacher of Grace had "the dispensation of the grace of God." This differs from "the dispensation of law" and "the dispensation of the kingdom of heaven."

Eternal life is the free gift of God. Romans 6:23. It cost God more than can ever be computed or measured or even estimated. God spared not His Own Son. With Him He shall also freely give us all things. Romans 8:34. "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." "It is the Gift of God."

"We are His workmanship created in CHRIST JESUS, unto good works that God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Ephesians 2:10.

Rather a unique statement: "Walk in good works." This is the will of God concerning His children, believers who are in Christ. God demands that we must be IN CHRIST; before we can WALK IN GOOD WORKS.

In Christ we are the righteousness of God, accepted, perfect (in standing), complete and blessed with all spiritual blessings, free from condemnation. II Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:6; Hebrews 10:14; Colossians 2:10; Ephesians 1:3; Romans 8:1.

We are a redeemed people zealous of good works, saved to maintain good works, labourers together with God, fishers of men, shining lights, soldiers of Jesus Christ, witnesses, ambassadors, sowers and workmen that needeth not to be ashamed.

"Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." I Corinthians 15:58.

Our labour is not in vain, if it is in the Lord. Neither was Paul vain or boastful when he uttered that great truth, "I laboured more abundantly than they all" for there he gave credit to the grace of God. God is "the God of all grace". I Peter 5:10

Paul needed all the grace of the God of all grace. That all-sufficient grace was available. "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." II Corinthians 9:8.

Paul set himself up as a pattern; and while the same illimitable grace of God is available for every member of the Body of Christ, we can never measure up to Paul's standard. But let us do our very best to abound, by the grace of God, in good works.

"Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among ye shine as lights in the world." Philippians 2:14 and 15.

"Say not ye, There are four months and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." John 4:35 and 36.

“So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.” I Corinthians 9:24 and 28.