

THE WORD OF TRUTH

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ACCORDING TO MY GOSPEL

We do violence to the Word of God when we fail to begin our studies at the beginning. This principle of Progressive Revelation will always work in our behalf in uncovering the truth. That which is learned in the opening chapters of the Word of God must never be forgotten as our studies go further into God's revelation.

The Bible begins with Genesis and not with Revelation. This statement may seem trite to many, yet an abnormal interest in prophecy has caused many to begin their studies with the last book instead of the first. And those who do not begin their studies with the last book usually begin with Matthew or John. In such study, all that God has spoken before has no bearing or influence.

In Genesis 1 we read of the glories of creation. In Genesis 3 we read of the entrance of sin into the world. As we read on through the first eleven chapters of Genesis we discover that we have passed from the heights of God's creation down to the depths of human degradation.

The divine description of the moral and spiritual state of the human race, at that point in history set forth in Genesis 11, is set forth in detail in the first chapter of Romans.

"Because when they knew God,

- (1) They glorified Him not as God,**
- (2) Neither were thankful,**
- (3) But became vain in their imaginations,**
- (4) And their foolish heart was darkened,**

(5) Professing themselves to be wise,

(6) They became fools,

(7) And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to fourfooted beasts, and creeping things"

Rom. 1:21-23.

In this passage we see seven steps downward; seven steps away from God; a seven fold giving up of God. This record begins with the positive statement that they knew God. This was true of Adam and Eve, and also true of the eight souls who came out of the ark. This God given knowledge of Himself could have been retained, developed, increased and passed on by the descendants of Noah. But they "did not like to retain God in their knowledge" (Rom. 1:28), and their end is that they lose all knowledge of Him. Their ignorance became so complete that when they tried to make a representation of God they made images resembling men, birds, beast and reptiles. As a result of this sevenfold giving up of God by man, we go on to read of a threefold giving up of man by God.

"Wherefore GOD ALSO GAVE THEM UP to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. For this cause GOD GAVE THEM UP to vile affections; . . . And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge; GOD GAVE THEM OVER to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient" Rom. 1:24-28.

The three statements printed in capitals above are identical in the Greek, and these set forth a threefold giving up of man by God. The tie that bound the Creator to his creatures is broken, and the creature took the initiative in breaking it. Therefore when we come to that point in human history marked by Genesis 11 we find that man has become God's enemy, man has given up God, so God has withdrawn, He has broken all connections, the severance is complete.

These truths have been set forth before in our pages and we make no, apology for repeating them here. It is our firm conviction that it is essential that all who would understand the Word of God should recognize that at the point marked by Genesis 11 that man has given up God and God has given up man. Man at that point cannot say that God belongs to him, and God does not acknowledge man as belonging to Him. God's testimony is that He gave man up. It is no wonder that the truth of reconciliation (re-connection) is not understood in 2 Corinthians and Romans if the student fails to see that the connection was broken at Genesis 11.

It must be remembered that when man gave up God and God in turn gave up man it resulted in a state of affairs that man, either individually or collectively, was powerless to alter. No man or group of men could restore the original relationship by deciding to again take God to be his God. At the present time "the vilest sinner can return" but that is because reconciliation has been accomplished and we are commissioned to beseech men to be reconciled to God. But even though man could not restore the relationship he once enjoyed with God, yet God could restore it and that is exactly what He did in the case of Abraham and his seed or descendants.

Abraham and His Seed.

The twelfth chapter of Genesis marks a new beginning. It begins God's dealings with Abraham and his descendants. From this point to Acts 28:28, Abraham's seed dominates the Word of God. This is true even in the Acts period when God visited the Gentiles to take out from among them a people for His name (Acts 15:14-16). This was done to provoke Abraham's seed to jealousy, therefore it had them distinctly in mind.

The details of the Abrahamic covenant are familiar, but the most important features are seldom emphasized. These features are found in Genesis 17 and are bound up in the words "**to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee**" also, in the words "**and I will be their God.**" See Gen. 17:7-8.

This promise of God is wholly gracious and unconditional. He promises to be Abraham's God and the God of Abraham's descendants after him. Therefore every man who could trace his ancestry back to Abraham could say in truth - "Jehovah is my God," We would emphasize that all that was necessary to make this statement true was for the man to be a descendant of Abraham. God had promised to be the God of Abraham's seed and He would not dishonor this promise.

At this point we would ask the reader to give due consideration to the following statements. To be born an Israelite (Abraham's seed) was to be well born. All who were thus born were born in covenant relationship with God, born with Jehovah as their God, born with a claim on the promises God made to Abraham, born as one of the people of God, born in the household of God. .

This was not true of one born of the nations (a Gentile). Such were born aliens from God's people, strangers from the covenants; born without hope, without promises, without God.

Ignorance of the Old Testament will cause many to look upon such a one as Nicodemus as a poor lost sinner, without God and without hope, but this cannot be true, Nicodemus was born well the first time. He was born the seed of Abraham, God was his God, he knew the true God, he was in covenant relationship with God, he had a claim on the promises. Of course he needed to be born again, but this became effective immediately when or if he believed that Jesus was the Messiah. See 1 John 5:1.

Cut Off From the Covenant

Every Israelite manchild was to be circumcised at the age of eight days, This fact alone proves that they were born in covenant relationship with God. This was not a rite performed upon one who had no connection with God, but an act performed on one of God's people. If this matter was not taken care of then that soul was cut off. He had broken the covenant. See Gen. 17:10-14.

Further search will demonstrate to the student that many transgressions and sins are listed which would also result in an Israelite being cut off, Even the whole nation could be cut off yet it was always possible for any individual or the nation as a whole to be restored. In case the nation as a whole was cut off it was always God's responsibility to seek them and restore them unto Himself. This was part of God's covenant obligations to the seed of Abraham.

Children of God

To the seed of Abraham Moses said: **"Ye are the children of the Lord your God" Deu. 14:1.**

In another place Moses said: **"Ye have been rebellious against the Lord from the day that I knew you" Deu. 9:24.** Yet he says they are the children of the Lord their God.

This is not generally understood. In "The Believers Magazine" January 1937, page four, we find the following statement. "Although there is a great similarity between the Jewish Passover and the Lord's Supper yet there is also a great distinction. The feast of the Passover was only given to the Israelites, so the Lord's supper was only given to the children of God."

All one needs to do is to turn to Deu. 14:1, and believe it, and he will find at once that this "great distinction" is a false one, for the people of Israel were said to be the children of God.

The importance of all this is seen as soon as we pass from the Old Testament into the Gospels. There we read of the birth of the Messiah promised to God's people Israel, and of Him it was said: **"And she shall bring forth a son, and shall call His name Jesus for He shall save His people from their sins." Matt. 1:21.**

"His people" means Israel, so there is not a ray of hope held out to any by this verse except "His people." Those who handle the Word in a superficial and careless manner glibly quote this passage and apply it as if it were a promise to all mankind. If we are honest with the Word we are forced to admit that it contains no promise to any but God's people Israel. There is no promise here for "the ungodly." No hope is held out to any who could not be classified as "His people."

In complete harmony with this passage is the commission of Christ to the twelve when they were sent forth.

"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: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Matt. 10:5-6.

The term "lost sheep" would not fit a Gentile then, neither will it fit a Gentile now. There was a difference between a sinner in Israel and a "sinner of the Gentiles." This distinction is set forth by Paul in the Galatian epistle: **"We who are Jews by nature and not sinners of the Gentiles." Gal. 1:15.**

A sinner in Israel was one who had been in covenant relationship with God, but he had been cut off from the covenant because of sin. As such he needed to be saved, and salvation restored him to his place in the covenant with God. Inasmuch as he was once one of God's sheep he was reckoned as a lost sheep who needed to be restored to the fold. A Gentile who claims to be a lost sheep is claiming to be something, which he is not. An unsaved Gentile is neither a "lost sheep" nor a "prodigal son." Of Israel it was said:

"We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture." Psa. 100:3.

"Ye are the children of the Lord your God." Deu. 14:1

Only God's sheep can become lost sheep, only His sons can become prodigal sons. If we would learn from God the true position of the sinning Israelite and the position of the sinning Gentile we must turn to **Matt. 15:21-26** where it is unmistakably set forth.

"Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But He answered and said, I AM NOT SENT BUT UNTO THE LOST SHEEP OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL. Then she came and worshipped Him saying: Lord, help me. But He answered and said, It is not meet to take the CHILDREN'S bread and cast it to the dogs."

It is generally taught that the explanation of the harsh treatment accorded to this Gentile woman is found in the supposedly incorrect manner in which she addressed Him. Scofield says:

"Addressed by a Gentile as Son of David, He makes no reply, for a Gentile has no claim upon Him in that character. Addressing Him as "Lord" she obtained an immediate answer." Scofield Bible, page 1020.

It is our judgment that in this matter Scofield is wrong. He who came to minister and not to be ministered unto was not interested in uninstructed men ministering unto Him correct and exact titles. None of His blessings were ever given or withheld because of the manner in which He was addressed. Neither is it true that she obtained an immediate answer when she addressed Him as "Lord," as an examination of the passage will clearly show. Her request was not granted even when she called Him "Lord."

In this passage we have a clear and emphatic statement from the lips of our Lord that He was **"not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."** Since we believe His every word, we believe this and follow it out to all its conclusions and accept all its consequences. And we refuse to believe this at this one point and then refuse its truth and force at every other point. Therefore, as we read the four gospels we never allow to slip from our mind the truth that He was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

The Lord Jesus classified the sinners in Israel as children and the Gentiles he classified as dogs. But in this figure the Gentile woman saw one ray of Hope. He called her a dog. Very well, she will take a dog's place but she will claim a dog's portion. She reminds Him that the little dogs sometimes eat the crumbs, which fall from the table. This display of faith brought her the desired blessing. Faith is simply taking God at His word and acting upon it. Even so this woman takes Christ at His word, takes her place as a dog, and claims that which is the dog's portion. Her blessing came as a result of her faith, and not as the result of properly addressing our Lord.

During the three years of our Lord's earthly ministry only two Gentiles received anything from Him. This Syrophenician woman got her daughter healed, and the Centurion got his servant healed. No Gentile was preached to, no Gentile was saved, no Gentile was baptized. The record of the woman of Samaria cannot be used to dispute this. She said "Our father Jacob which gave us this well." This proves she was an Israelite. Truly, He was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Even So Send I You

After the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus He appeared to the assembled disciples. After showing them His hands and side He said to them:

"Peace be unto you: AS my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." John 20:21.

These plain words are much stronger in the original. The word "AS" means "JUST AS." Christ was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. It was the Father who sent Him. Now just as the Father had sent Him even so sends He them - that is, only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Of course, they were sent into all the world (Mark 16:15) and they were sent among all nations (Luke 24:47) for only by so doing could they reach the lost sheep of the house of Israel. These were scattered among all nations throughout the world.

Some in their zeal to establish their views will reject these plain words of Christ and use the word "creature" in Mark 16:14 to contradict this. However even these will limit the words "every creature" to men only. A difficult passage must never be used to contradict plain ones. "Every creature" means the entire creation.

The strongest proof that the twelve were sent only to the lost sheep of Israel is the fact that these Spirit - filled, God directed men did just that thing.

Pentecost and After

The ministry of the twelve began on the day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2. It was a ministry entirely to Israel. See Acts 2:14, 22 and 36 to discover that Israel was addressed. No Gentile was ministered to until God definitely countermanded His previous order given through the Lord Jesus. This sent Peter to the house of Cornelius. That this was the beginning of Gentile ministry is proven by the dismay of the believing Jews at Peter's actions, and his defense as set forth in Acts 11. Note that he does not defend himself by any commission that Christ gave which would have been the reasonable thing to do if a commission had been given that included the Gentiles. But he defends himself on the ground that God had given a revelation and that his ministry resulted in the same effects as were seen on the day of Pentecost. If this was not the beginning of Gentile ministry then the words of **Acts 11:18** have no meaning.

"When they heard these things they held their peace, and glorified God, saying: Then hath God; also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."

We would welcome an exposition of this passage from any who hold that Gentile ministry began before Peter went to Cornelius.

It appears that this one household was the beginning and end of Peter's ministry to the Gentiles. His epistles are addressed to "the sojourners of the dispersion." (I Peter 1:1, compare 2 Peter 3:1). Soon after Peter went to Cornelius, the ministry of Paul began and it was he who was called to be the apostle to the Gentiles. It is in the words of the Lord to godly Ananias that we discover the character and scope of Paul's ministry.

He is a chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel" Acts 9:15.

Inasmuch as these kings were Gentiles we have here Paul's twofold ministry. He had a ministry to the Jews, that is, to the Circumcision; and he had a ministry to the Gentiles, that is, to the Uncircumcision. These two ministries were concurrent. It is however the purpose of this article to set forth a third ministry which superseded and set aside both of these. Beyond this third ministry Paul had a fourth ministry, which was that of the Secret. Paul's third ministry had to do with transcendent grace acting in regard to the salvation of sinners. Paul's fourth ministry had to do with transcendent grace acting in regard to the calling or position of the saved. Before we can understand Paul's third ministry we must give due consideration to his Circumcision and Uncircumision ministries. These two ministries are brought to our attention in the Galatian epistle.

In Galatians 2 Paul tells of his visit to Jerusalem accompanied by Barnabas and Titus.

"And I went up by revelation and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles," Gal. 2:2.

It is evident from this that the gospel, which Paul preached among the Jews was not identical with that which he preached among the Gentiles. Neither was it the same as Peter, James and John preached to. the Circumcision.

In conference, the Apostles could add nothing to Paul. He had every: thing that they had and he had a message, which they did not have. Peter, James and John had a single ministry and a single message, which was for the Circumcision. Paul had a twofold ministry with a distinct message for Jew and Gentile. This does not mean that these messages differed at every point. It does not mean that he preached another God and another Jesus and another means of approaching God. However; that gospel which fit a Jew would not fit a Gentile.

Some will object that there can be only one gospel. Certain popular preachers are attempting to make a great show of faithfulness by boldly declaring that there is now and always has been just one gospel. Let us consider this.

If the word gospel means good news or glad tidings then every distinct piece of good news in the Bible is a distinct gospel. We must not narrow the word gospel to the plan of salvation. In **Luke 1:19** we read:

"And the angel answering said unto. him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee to show you these glad tidings."

The word here translated "glad tidings" is the word usually translated "gospel" It is the same word as is translated "gospel" in Gal. 2:2 and 7. Did Gabriel reveal to Zacharias the gospel, which Paul preached? If not then he must have revealed one gospel to Zacharias and another to Paul. In Luke 1:19 "these glad tidings" constitute a distinct gospel.

The words "in thee shall all nations be Blessed" constitute a distinct gospel. God calls it "a gospel" We insist that it was a distinct gospel because it never was preached to any other man. See Gal 3:8.

And to clinch the whole matter that there is more than one gospel, we read **in Gal. 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."**

It is commonly stated that this is the same gospel but to different groups. This we deny for it is not a MINISTRY of the Uncircumcision but a GOSPEL of the Uncircumcision. God has a way of expressing "TO THE" and a way of expressing "OF THE" and in this place He breathed "OF THE," which is just what He meant. The word OF represents the Genitive case, and here it is the Genitive of relation. Thus it means the gospel or good news, which is related to the Circumcision, and the gospel or good news, which is related to the Uncircumcision.

We must not forget that Paul had two messages and two ministries. He possessed and preached both gospels. A clear example of the gospel of the Circumcision as preached by Paul is found in **Acts 13:14-43**. In this message he makes statements that could only be made to an audience of Jews for they would not be true if spoken to Gentiles. Note these words:

"The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers."

"Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham."

"And we declare unto you glad tidings that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same to us their children."

Another clear example of the gospel related to the Circumcision is found in Acts 3. The words could be truthfully spoken only to Abraham's seed. Note there the words:

"Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." Acts 3:25.

Such promises as these could not be spoken to those who were strangers from the covenants of promise.

Gospel of Uncircumcision

In the Acts we find very little concerning Paul's message to Gentile groups. In fact the only book that sets forth Paul's Uncircumcision message is the Galatian epistle. And even there we find more of a defense of his message than the message itself. Even so, the record is sufficient, and we find that he had preached to these Gentiles salvation by faith alone apart from circumcision or law keeping. Before Paul's ministry, Gentiles had entered into blessing by becoming Jews (proselytes), but Paul brings Gentiles into blessing and they stand as Gentiles, which believe. He warns the Galatians most emphatically: **"But though we or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Gal. 1:8.**

At this point in our message we hope to set forth a distinct change in Paul's ministry and message, yet when the record is examined we will find that Paul never preached a thing which in any way contradicts his message of salvation by faith apart from circumcision and the law.

He Died For All

And now we come to that which is the chief burden of this article. That is, that a distinct change comes in at that point marked by 2 Cor, 5:14. Paul himself insists that a

change has come and we must recognize it if we are to understand and enter into the fullness of Paul's message of transcendent grace in the Roman epistle.

In 2 Cor. 5:14 we discover for the first time (chronologically) in the Word of God the proclamation that Jesus Christ died for all. Up to this point the emphasis has always been upon the peculiar relationship of His death to Israel, but at this point God reveals that a greater work was accomplished on the Cross and the proclamation of this comes through God's chosen messenger Paul.

The death of Christ was essential in God's purposes and plans for Israel. As long as Israel dominates the Word of God the message is restricted to how the death of Christ was related to Israel. Note the following passages.

"He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare His generation for He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgressions of MY PEOPLE was He stricken." Isa. 53:8.

"He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of MANY" Isa. 53:12.

"Thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save HIS PEOPLE from their sins," Matt. 1:21

"And one of them named Caiaphas, being the High priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should DIE FOR THE PEOPLE, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself, but being the High priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die FOR THAT NATION; and not for that nation only, but that He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." John 11:49-52.

We have already learned from Matt. 15:26 that the "children" mentioned here cannot mean Gentiles. In Acts we find the same limited testimony.

"Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts 5:31.

"Of this man's seed hath God according to His promise RAISED UNTO ISRAEL A SAVIOUR, JESUS." Acts 13:23.

Even the Lord Himself had said in Matt. 26:28:

"For this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for MANY for the remission of sins."

The death of Christ as it was related to God's purposes for His people Israel is the burden of Scripture up to 2 Cor. 5. But at that point a proclamation is issued which sets forth the fact that Christ died for all. This is the first time that this glorious truth was made known, and it brings about a distinct change within the Pentecostal Administration. It is not an administrative change but a change in the administration. The revelation of this great truth brings about a radical change in Paul's ministry and message. He insists that a change is to be made.

"Wherefore HENCEFORTH know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we

have known Christ after the flesh, yet now HENCEFORTH know we Him no more," 2 Cor. 5:16.

We must not think of the flesh here as being something evil. **To know a man after the flesh was to recognize what he was by natural birth. It was** to recognize him as Abraham's seed and all that went with that position. To know Christ after the flesh was to emphasize his character as the Son of David (Rom. 1:3). This is His character as the King of Israel.

From Paul's words we learn that up to that time he has known men after the flesh. He has given due consideration as to whether they were Circumcised or Uncircumcised and has declared unto them their respective gospels. But from that time on he will know no man after the flesh. There can, therefore, be but one conclusion. He has reached a turning point in his ministry, and it will no longer be a two-fold ministry.

A New Creation

Up to this point the Jew being born well by natural birth needed only to be born again. This took place the moment he believed that Jesus was the Messiah. This second birth gave him a two-fold claim on all that God had promised to Abraham's seed. The Gentile who had nothing, and who was nothing, by birth had to be a new creation. But from this time on all this is changed.

"Therefore if any man be In Christ he is a new creation: old things are passed away; behold all things become new." 2 Cor. 5:17.

Since Paul had known Christ after the flesh, he had up to this time been proclaiming the King and the Kingdom. Entrance into the kingdom was by a new birth. But the words "new birth" are not sufficient to describe the great change, which took place in one who was a sinner of the Gentiles. For these far more than a new birth was needed, it required a new creation.

In a recent message which came over the radio we heard the speaker lay great stress on the fact that Adam was created, while all after Adam were born. To this we agreed, but imagine our surprise when near the end of the message the same speaker insisted that the new birth and the new creation are one and the same.

In birth there must be something to begin with, but creation needs nothing to begin with. In us God had nothing to begin with so all that we have and are came out of nothing in us. We are a new creation.

After Paul's proclamation the gospel of the Circumcision passes, the gospel of the Uncircumcision passes and the gospel of the grace of God supersedes. This gospel is for the whole human race and is suited to all mankind without distinction. In this gospel the new birth has no place, but it gives way to a higher truth, which is the new creation.

After stating that: all things are become new, Paul declares that. All things are of God, that God has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and that he and his fellow-laborers have been given the ministry of reconciliation. This means that unto them had been given the ministry that had to do with reconciliation. Then comes the majestic proclamation of their new message.

"To wit, that God was; in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." 2 Cor. 5:19.

The work that made this possible was done on the Cross. The proclamation that made it effective is given here through Paul. For example -the work that freed the slaves was the long, bloody and costly Civil war, while the thing that made their freedom effective was Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation.

The proclamation given by Paul declares an end to the enmity that began when God gave up man at Genesis 11 God declares that He is at peace with the world. He has reconciled the world of sinners to Himself, and now He is beseeching sinners to be reconciled to Him. When the sinner receives the Saviour, the one who is his peace, then there is mutual reconciliation between the sinner and God. The proof that God is at peace with the world is demonstrated by the presence of His ambassadors here on earth.

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.'" 2 Cor. 5:20.

In the day when He withdraws His ambassadors, it will be the signal that peace is at an end and that war is soon to be declared.

This new message of reconciliation is distinctively Paul's. It is not to be found anywhere else in the New Testament except in his writings, and only in his writings after 2 Cor. 5:14. This is the message that Paul calls "my gospel" But in 2 Cor. 5 reconciliation is only proclaimed in broad outline. No details are given, no questions are answered, no problems are solved. All this is left to the book of Romans where reconciliation is set forth in detail. There we find a message, which transcends all that has ever been revealed before concerning God's method of dealing with sinful man.

Let us remember that the gospel of the Circumcision was a message, which was suited to Abraham's seed, to those born in covenant relationship with God, to lost sheep who had strayed from the fold, to those who had the sign of. Circumcision upon them, who had been cut off and needed to be restored to the place of blessing. This is what Peter preached in Acts 2:38. Repentance and baptism were its chief requirements. What a tragedy that some are preaching this message to lost men today.

In Paul's gospel of the Uncircumcision we find a message suited to those who were sinners of the Gentiles in that day when God made a distinction between Jew and Gentile.

In Paul's message of reconciliation we find the gospel of the grace of God, and this message is suited to all humanity in view of the fact that a pronouncement has gone forth which declares that the whole world is guilty, that all are sinners, that all are in unbelief. This message sets aside the flesh and declares that Jew and Gentile stand before God on the basis of absolute equality as far as the need of salvation is concerned.

In the early days of our ministry, before the Bible as a whole became precious, we chose Romans as our favorite book. Everything good that was in print on this epistle came into our possession. As our knowledge of this epistle increased we realized that truth was set forth in it which stood in direct contradiction to the truth that was taught in the first epistle of John. Most writers on Romans solved this problem by holding down the truth of Romans to the level of 1 John. Others solved it by teaching both messages

even though they were in opposition. We saw precious truths in Romans, which we could not accept and declare as they were contradicted by John's gospel or his epistles. In the course of time we learned to distinguish between the gospels of the Circumcision and Uncircumcision, and finally the day came when we recognized John's epistle as part of his ministry to the Circumcision, and from that moment we were able to let the Roman epistle speak to us its message of transcendent, super-abounding grace without being hindered by the instructions of John to the Circumcision. We hope to show just how these two epistles contradict, but first of all let us consider certain portions of the Roman epistle.

There Is No Difference

In Romans we read: **"We have proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin. For there is no difference: for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" Rom. 3:9, 22-23.**

This is the first time we read such a statement as this in the New Testament. Peter, James and John never spoke a message such as this. Something like this had been said, Psalm 14, but was in no way as far reaching as this absolute declaration. This is made plain by the term "my people" in Psalm 14:4.

If we should try to approach God on the basis of Matthew 1:21 we find the door slamming in our face, for we could not qualify as one of "His people". But if we approach on the basis of **Romans 5:6 and 8** where we read:

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

"But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

It will be impossible for anyone to close the door against us. We may not qualify as "His people" or "lost sheep" or "children" but we know we can qualify as the ungodly.

In Romans, therefore, we find a message of salvation, which is based upon a declaration that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and it is only in Romans that we find a plan of salvation, which is predicated upon this great declaration. So to the Roman epistle we turn for a message of salvation, which will fit any and every man we meet today.

Peter, James and John never gave a hint that Christ died for the ungodly, or that enemies were reconciled to God by the death of His Son. This is Paul's message in Romans. Failure to discern Paul's message in Romans as a new and distinct revelation concerning God's present dealings with lost humanity accounts for most of the confusion that exists today concerning God's plan of salvation.

John's Message -Sin Imputed

If there is one fact that stands out clearly in the first epistle of John it is that sin is imputed (charged against) the believer until such time as that sin is confessed. In **1 John 1:9** we read:

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

This passage makes forgiveness dependent upon confession. According to John when a believer sins that sin is charged against him. It must be charged against him for it remains unforgiven until it is confessed. When it is confessed God will be faithful and just and forgive it. This verse cannot work just one way. If the sin is confessed it is forgiven, if it is not confessed it is not forgiven. Therefore, it remains charged against the believer.

Even more positive along this line is **1 John 5:16**. There we find that there is a sin unto death. This does not mean for the unbeliever but for the believer. This is established by the word "brother" in this passage. If there is a sin that brings death then sin must be imputed. These passages present such positive evidence as to John's teaching that it must be acknowledged that he teaches that sin is imputed.

Paul's Message-No Imputation

In Paul's gospel in Romans the one fact that stands out above all others is that there is no imputation of sin, and no condemnation! Even if we do sin.

"Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Rom. 4:8.

"Sin is not imputed when there is no law." Rom. 5:13.

"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Rom. 5:13.

If any of our readers should believe that God is now charging the believer with sin let him answer the question; in the last verse quoted. Who is it that prefers the charge against us? Does our Justifier do it? Does our Saviour do it? If not--then who does?

Since Paul teaches that sin is not imputed, and John teaches that it is imputed even to the extent of bringing a death judgment, their teachings are diametrically opposed.

Our teaching of these things will probably bring many charges from those who differ with us. We may be charged with teaching that a believer may sin all he desires since it is not charged against him. We answer by saying that we doubt if any man is a believer if he desires to sin. Sin has not been our desire since the day of our salvation. The doctrines of grace do not lead to sin, but to righteousness.

We may be accused of not believing in confession of sin to God. Our answer is that we do believe in confessing our sins to God, but we will not confess our sins in the hope of securing forgiveness.

Of course we will be charged with doing away with John's epistles, but all who hurl this charge only demonstrate that they have no understanding of the God given task of rightly dividing the Word of Truth.

In conclusion let us say that the message of Romans is the unveiling of a secret or mystery. It is not "the secret" which was hid in God but "a secret" which was hid in the Old Testament.

"Now unto him who hath power to establish you, according to my glad message- Even the proclamation of Jesus Christ, According to the revelation of a sacred secret, In age-past times kept silent, But now made manifest, And through means of prophetic scriptures, According to the command of the age-abiding God, for

obedience of faith unto all nations made known." Rom. 16:25-26. Rotherham Version.

Therefore, it is to Romans and not to John that we turn for our message and plan of salvation. Others will turn from Romans to John, for John speaks of love and love is desirable but grace is despised. It is in Romans that we find revealed the glories of God's transcendent grace. We refuse to hold down the truth of Romans to the level of John. Let Romans speak its own distinct message. Let us believe it in all its fullness, let it mean all that it can mean and thus be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

THE END

NOTES ON 1 CORINTHIANS

(Continued from Vol. II, No. 10)

10:23-24. In verse 14 Paul warned the Corinthians to flee from idolatry, after which he calls upon them to judge what he has to say on that matter. The idol was nothing and that which was offered in sacrifice to idols was nothing, but idolatry, or the worship of idols was very real. In fact, the worship of idols was really demon worship and this provoked the Lord to jealousy.

The Corinthian believers were free and they knew it. He spoke as unto wise men. They had been made free by the death of Christ. They had knowledge that an idol was nothing but a stick or stone or so much metal. They knew that God would not be jealous of such inanimate things. But these Corinthian believers were abusing both their freedom and their knowledge by associating with unbelievers in their sinful practices.

The Apostle would take nothing from their liberty so he does not bring to them any "you cannot do this-you cannot do that" arguments. He states that all things are lawful or allowable, but all things are not profitable. All things were allowable to him but some things did not build up. What he may do that would not harm him may bring positive harm to others. So he admonishes them not to be always seeking their own good but to seek the good of their fellowmen.

10:25-27. All that was for sale in the meat market they were to eat and ask no questions as to whether it had been sacrificed to idols or not. If they were invited for a meal at the house of an unbeliever and they were inclined to go they were to eat that which was set before them and ask no questions for the sake of conscience.

10:28-2,9. But if they were told, "this food has been offered in sacrifice," they were not to eat it for the sake of him that said it, and for the sake of his conscience. He explains that he means the conscience of the unbeliever.

10:30. Paul anticipates an objection. Some may ask on what ground their liberty of action is to be decided by another's conscience. If they partake with a grateful heart, and give thanks to God for what they eat, how then can fault be found?

10:31. Paul's answer to this is found in the wonderful conclusion that in eating, in drinking, or in whatsoever they do, do it all to the glory of God.

10:32. They are not to be causes of stumbling to Jews, to Greeks or to the Church of God. Dispensationalists have usually divided the human race into three classes - Jew, Gentile and Church of God--and have based the division on this passage. A little more care would have kept this erroneous division from getting started. The word HELLEN means Greek and not Gentile. The Revised Version corrects this translation.

10:33-11:1. Paul did not seek his own profit, but the profit of the many. This he did that men might be saved. On every hand today we find those who observe days, who have a sensitive conscience concerning the eating of certain foods, who class certain things as sacred and certain things as profane. We must deal tenderly with such that our liberty and knowledge does not become a stumbling block to them.

Paul beseeches the Corinthians to imitate him. This appears presumptuous, but it is not. They are to imitate him because he imitated Christ.

(Continued Vol. III, No. 3)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

M. J. R.-ENGLAND. The "high calling" of Phil. 3:14 has no reference to the translation of those who are alive at the moment of the out-resurrection mentioned in this passage. The word "calling" has a very definite meaning fixed upon it by its usage in the Word of God and it is not reasonable that it should take on a new and radically different meaning in this one place. The "on high calling" is a term used by Paul in speaking of the exalted calling of the members of the out-calling which is His body.

D. E. W.-CALIFORNIA. Romans 11 refers to individuals and not to the nations. "Thou standest by faith" in verse 20 is sufficient to demonstrate that Paul is speaking to Gentile believers. Of course, this passage is somewhat embarrassing to those who try to find the Church which is His body in this epistle. "Grafted into a good olive tree" is not the same position as being members of the Church which is His body.

F. E. B.-NEW YORK. At the present time only a few, comparatively speaking, are being saved out of the mass of lost humanity. Even if all the results of the boasting evangelists were real, yet the number would be very few. In the time when Israel regains her place then all Israel shall be saved. Everyone in that nation will know God from the least to the greatest. Then they will become the messengers which will disciple and baptize all nations. They will bring the world to God.

J. E. S.-INDIANA. The word for "tortured" in Heb. 11:35 is **TUMPANIZO**, and it appear to mean "to beat to death" or "to drum to death." It is what evil men did to the saints of God, but it is not what God will do to evil men. This is the only occurrence of the word.

TO OUR READERS

This issue marks the beginning of Volume 3 of THE WORD OF TRUTH, and so we feel it will be well to emphasize by restatement of certain things, which have been said before.

The Editor fully realizes that he is lacking almost every qualification, which is essential to writing and editing a periodical of this nature. We realized this before we sent forth the first issue, and we feel it more keenly as we begin the third volume.

The task of writing this magazine was virtually forced upon us. First, by the fact that every other door of witness was closed against us and we had to find means of making known the message which had been committed to us. Second, because of hundreds of letters that came to us seeking help on as many subjects. The best means of giving help to those who sought it was by a regular periodical.

The magazine will continue to be a personal message from the writer to the reader. From month to month we will set forth in these pages some of the results of our own labors in the work of uncovering and recovering the truth that is in the Word of God.

The Editor has no gift of teaching, therefore, does not write or speak by inspiration. Nothing we have ever written is final or perfect truth.

We write to provoke others to research and study in the Word of God. Some of our work is that of a pioneer. The pioneer only blazed or marked the trail. Where he went, some could not follow. But others did follow and cut down the trees, which made rough wagon roads. But no pioneer built the marvelous highways over which we speed today.

No week passes without bringing a number of letters, which contain words of deep appreciation for light given, blessings received and truth made known. These testimonies cause us to realize that our labors are not in vain in

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