PAUL'S LETTERS TO THE CHURCHES OF GALATIA, EPHESUS, PHILIPPI, AND THE COLOSSIAN HOUSE-CHURCH LEADER, PHILEMON

In each of these letters Paul addresses situations in the church or churches to whom the letter is sent. The subjects discussed in these letters are important discussions for the church in every age, because human nature is the same in every generation. We begin by studying the letter to the Galatians.

THE LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

In contrast to Paul's other epistles, the letter to the Galatians was not addressed to a specific church or to a specific individual, but to the several churches that were in the Roman province of Galatia (see ADDENDUM A).

Luke always used the geographical area involved in his writing. Paul, on the other hand, always spoke of the Roman province that occupied a portion of that geographical area.[1] The Roman province of Galatia was in southern Galatia.

The Galatian churches to whom the letter is addressed were churches that Paul had founded. (1:8, 9: 4:18-19)

Paul visited Galatia during his first missionary journey (Acts 13-14)

He returned to Galatia on his second missionary journey (Acts 16:6).

There is evidence of a possible visit during his third missionary journey (Acts 18:23).

Apparently, Paul had not intended to have ministry in this region, but a physical infirmity had changed his plans resulting in his first visit to the region. (Galatians 4:13-14)

[13] but you know that it was because of a bodily illness that I preached the gospel to you the first time; [14] and that which was a trial to you in my bodily condition you did not despise or loathe, but you received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus Himself.

It was through Paul's preaching that the churches in Galatian were born. Evidently, after Paul established churches in Galatia these churches then gave birth to other churches throughout the province.

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[1] Frederic Rendall MA *The Expositor's New Testament*, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, (Grand Rapids, W.M. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company) 1976, pages 152ff

Judaizing teachers had invaded the churches and were teaching that in order to be saved, one had to obey the restrictions of the Mosaic Law, which gave the impression that a true Christian was an aesthetic.

In response to this incursion, Paul wrote the epistle to the churches of Galatia.

THE SALUTATION 1:1-5

Paul, an apostle (not sent from men, nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead), [2] and all the brethren who are with me, to the churches of Galatia: [3] Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, [4] who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, [5] to whom be the glory forevermore. Amen.

Because Paul is going to strongly condemn the heresy that the Galatian churches had embraced, it was important for him to establish the authority which qualified him for the role. Therefore, he began by declaring that his apostleship was the result of his having been put into that role by Jesus Christ and God the Father who had raised Jesus from the dead, rather than by any human authority. He further gave evidence of this in Galatians 1:17.

NOTE: In Greek, the language of the New Testament, there are two words for *send.*

- Πὲμπω (*pempoh*) which simply means *to send.*
- The other word is ἀποστέλω (*aposteloh*) which means to send with a commission and the authority to fulfill that commission - similar to a commissioned officer in the military.

The noun, ἀπόστελος (*Apostolos)* refers to the person sent with such a commission and the authority to fulfill the purpose of the commission. This is the term that in English is rendered as *apostle.*

Therefore, by claiming this title for himself, and the fact that it was bestowed on him by *Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead,* means that he claimed plenary authority for himself.

We cannot identify *all the brethren who are with me*. Many have speculated about the identity of his companions, but it is best to admit that we cannot know their identity with any degree of certainty.

The doxology emphasizing God's grace is a prelude for the central message of this epistle whose central message is God's grace as contrasted to earning salvation by obedience to restrictive law.

PAUL EXPRESSED SURPRISE AT THE SUDDEN DEFECTION OF HIS CONVERTS FROM THE ONLY TRUE GOSPEL AND PRONOUCES ANATHEMAS ON ALL PERVERTERS OF THE TRUTH 1:6-9

I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by, for a different gospel; [7] which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. [8] But even though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed. [9] As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed.

Paul evidently was somewhat startled by the news that the Galatian churches had given ear to the emissaries of the Pharisaic party which, as noted above, taught that the Old Testament law must be honored by the church. They taught that in order to be saved one had to be circumcised and keep all of the dietary restrictions of the Mosaic Law. This was not in harmony with *the grace of Christ*

The Greek term rendered, *deserting,* is μετατίθεςθε (*metatithesthe*) which means *you are removing*. This indicates that the Pharisaic agitators had not fully achieved their goal, even though the Galatians were lending an ear to their suggestions.

Paul pronounced the most severe punishment for those who were preaching this false Gospel - *let him be accursed.* The Greek term rendered, *accursed,* is ανάτθεμα (*anathema*) which refers to an offering offered under a solemn vow to be destined for death, as was true of the animal sacrifices of the Mosaic Covenant.[2]

Paul embarks on a mission to prove his case. His argument is similar to someone's testifying before a judge and jury.

PAUL DECLARED THAT THE DRAMATIC CHANGE IN HIS LIFE WAS EVIDENCE THAT THE GOSPEL HE PREACHED WAS NOT FROM MAN. 1:10-14

For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

11 For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. [12] For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

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[2] ibid

13 For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure, and tried to destroy it; 14 and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions.

10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a slave of Christ.

The account of Paul's dedicated persecution of the church begins in Acts 7:58-8:1 when he supported the stoning of Stephen, then resumes in Acts 9:1-2.

The account of Jesus' appearing to him on the road to Damascus, when Paul was on a mission to kill the Christians in that city, is recorded in Acts 9:1-19.

Concerning Paul's statement about his being a slave of Christ is explained in Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

Paul wrote the Corinthians, *Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? 20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body.* (1 Corinthians 6:19-20*)*

We have been bought with the greatest payment ever paid for anything and we belong to the one who purchased us – Jesus Christ purchased us by becoming sin in our stead and going to the cross, making atonement.

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (II Corinthians 5:21)

PAUL DECLARED THAT THE SOURCE OF THE GOSPEL THAT HE PREACHED AMONG THE GENTILES WAS FROM A HEAVENLY SOURCE. 1:15-17

15 But when He who had set me apart, even from my mother's womb, and called me through His grace, was pleased 16 to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood,

17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus.

This is the only information we have about Paul's going to Arabia, but the point he was making was that it was time spent with the Lord and it was during that time that he received the full gospel that he preached.

THREE YEARS AFTER BEING CALLED OF CHRIST TO PREACH THE GOSPEL AMONG THE GENTILES, PAUL MADE HIS FIRST POST-CONVERSION VISIT TO JERUSALEM WHERE HE MET CEPHAS (PETER) AND JAMES. 1:18-20

[18] Then three years later I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas, and stayed with him fifteen days. [19] But I did not see any other of the apostles except James, the Lord's brother. [20] (Now in what I am writing to you, I assure you before God that I am not lying.)

Again, Paul emphasized that he did not meet any apostles until after his call to be an apostle and had received the Gospel from Christ, not from any man.

WHEN PAUL BEGAN HIS FIRST APOSTOLIC MINISTRY, THE CHURCHES OF JUDEA, WHERE THE CHRISTIAN FAITH WAS BORN, ONLY KNEW HIM BY HIS REPUTATION 1:21-24

[21] Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. [22] And I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea which were in Christ; [23] but only, they kept hearing, "He who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy." [24] And they were glorifying God because of me.

The churches of Judea knew of Saul of Tarsus, the dedicated persecutor of Christians. They were filled with gratitude to God when they heard of his conversion and had become as dedicated preacher of the Gospel, as he had been as a persecutor. After his conversion, Saul of Tarsus became Paul the apostle of Jesus Christ.

Evidently, God knew the heart of Saul. Saul was a passionate believer in God, but knew God only as the God of covenant with Israel.

God sovereignly revealed to Saul the truth about Jesus and he became just as passionate for Christ that he had been passionate against Jesus before he learned the truth,

Saul was first called Paul in Acts 13:9

But Saul, who was also known as Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fixed his gaze upon him

The name, Paul, is a Latin name, meaning small, or, colloquially, shorty, which indicates that he may have been a man of short stature. It is the name that he used as he went among the Gentiles. Saul was a Hebrew name. King Saul, the first king of Isarael, being the most well-known person with that name. (I Samuel 9 and 10). In contrast to Paul's meaning shorty, Saul seems to have been a name meaning tall, since King Saul is described as a tall man.

And he had a son whose name was Saul, a choice and handsome man, and there was not a more handsome person than he among the sons of Israel; from his shoulders and up he was taller than any of the people. (I Samuel 9:2)

Regardless of the names background and the fact that King Saul was a tall man, the name became popular among the Jews and lost the indication that the wearer of the name was a tall man.

FOURTEEN YEARS AFTER PAUL BEGAN HIS MINISTRY AMONG THE GENTILES, HE AND HIS TWO ASSOCIATES, BARNABAS AND TITUS WENT TO JERUSALEM AND MET WITH THE LEADERS THERE. 2:1-2

Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also. [2] *And it was because of a revelation that I went up; and I submitted to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but I did so in private to those who were of reputation, for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain.*

Paul went to Jerusalem to meet with some of the original apostles to make certain that they fully accepted his ministry among Gentiles. In his ministry among the Gentiles, he did not require them to be circumcised, which was required for one to be in covenant with God during the Mosaic covenant.

Circumcision of males eight days after birth, made them in a covenant relationship with God (Genesis 17). It was replaced by immersion under the New Covenant which established a covenant relationship with Christ. Later in this epistle we will encounter Paul's further teaching on this subject.

WHEN PAUL, BARNABAS, AND TITUS VISITED THE APOSTLES IN JERUSALEM, THE APOSTLES DID NOT COMPEL THE GENTILE, TITUS, TO BE CIRCUMCISED 2:3-4

[3] *But not even Titus who was with me, though he was a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.* [4] *But it was because of the false brethren who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, in order to bring us into bondage.*

Acts 15:1-12 contain the account of these proceedings.

And some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." [2] *And when Paul and Barnabas had great dissension and debate with them, the brethren determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue.* [3] *Therefore, being sent on their way by the church, they were passing through both Phoenicia and*

Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and were bringing great joy to all the brethren. [4] *And when they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them.* [5] *But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed, stood up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses."* [6] *And the apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter.* [7] *And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brethren, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.* [8] *"And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us;* [9] *and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith.* [10] *"Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?* [11] *"But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are."*

PAUL STOOD HIS GROUND AND THE JERUSALEM BASED APOSTLES AFFIRMED PAUL'S MINISTRY AMONG THE UNCIRCUMCISED 2:5-10

[5] *But we did not yield in subjection to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you.* [6] *But from those who were of high reputation (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)-- well, those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me.*

Paul, continued to emphasize the fact that his apostleship and the ministry that he was conducting among the Gentiles received nothing from the apostles. Furthermore, Paul did not consider the Jerusalem apostles to be those whom he had to respect and gain their approval. He did acknowledge that they had a reputation among the churches.

[7] *But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised* [8] *(for He who effectually worked for Peter in his apostleship to the circumcised effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles),* [9] *and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we might go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised.* [10] *They only asked us to remember the poor-- the very thing I also was eager to do.*

From this point on Paul's ministry was considered by all of the churches to be equal to the ministry of the original apostles.

PAUL CONFRONTED PETER AT ANTIOCH FOR HIS INCONSISTENCY REGARDING FELLOWSHIP WITH NON-JEWISH CHRISTIANS, EMPHASISNG THE FACT THAT PEOPLE ARE JUSTIFIED BY FAITH 2:11-21

11 *But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned.* 12 *For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision.* 13 *And the rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy.* 14 *But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, "If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?* 15 *"We are Jews by nature, and not sinners from among the Gentiles;* 16 *nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified.* 17 *"But if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have also been found sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? May it never be!* 18 *"For if I rebuild what I have once destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor.* 19 *"For through the Law I died to the Law, that I might live to God.* 20 *"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.* 21 *"I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.*"

This is an important truth for all generations to remember. Those churches that have all sorts of restrictive rules, beyond what is prohibited because the Bible clearly identifies it as sin, are guilty of what Paul was accusing the Galatians.

PAUL REMINDED THE GALATIANS THAT THEY HAD RECEIVED THE SPIRIT BY FAITH AND NOT BY THE LAW 3:1-5

1 *You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?* 2 *This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?* 3 *Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?* 4 *Did you suffer so many things in vain-- if indeed it was in vain?* 5 *Does He then, who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?*

The Galatians had experienced miracles as evidence that they had received the Holy Spirit. Therefore, Paul posed a telling question as to how they had received

the Spirit. God had imparted the Spirit to them when they turned from their pagan gods and, by faith, had accepted Jesus Christ. The Law and its legalism contributed nothing to their receiving the Holy Spirit manifested in miracles.

THE EXAMPLE OF ABRAHAM'S FAITH 3:6-18

6 Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. 7 Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. 8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "All the nations shall be blessed in you." 9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer. 10 For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, to perform them." 11 Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "The righteous man shall live by faith." 12 However, the Law is not of faith; on the contrary, "He who practices them shall live by them." 13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us-- for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree "-- 14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. 15 Brethren, I speak in terms of human relations: even though it is only a man's covenant, yet when it has been ratified, no one sets it aside or adds conditions to it.

Abraham's example of faith and its results are mirrored in the faith of those saved through faith in Christ.

God's covenant, ratified by the sacrifice of Christ, cannot be replaced by some other means of pleasing God, rather than faith in Christ.

THE PROMISE MADE TO ABRAHAM'S SEED REFERRED TO ABRAHAM'S DESCENDANT, JESUS THE CHRIST 3:16

16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.

Clearly, Abraham did not understand that the promise concerning his "seed" was referring to Jesus Christ. Even so, he trusted God to fulfill that promise, whatever was referenced.

THE LAW GIVEN TO MOSES, FOUR HUNDRED AND THIRTY YEARS AFTER ABRAHAM, AS GOD'S COVENENANT WITH ISRAEL, DID NOT NULLIFY THE PROMISE MADE TO ABRAHAM 3:17-18

17 What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise. 18 For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise.

God's promises are immutable – they will not fail, regardless of circumstances that might threaten them.

The Law was given for a reason, but it did not invalidate the promise, which was not fulfilled until the birth of Christ, approximately 1800 years after Abraham's death.

THE LAW HAD AN IMPORTANT ROLE 3:19-24

19 *Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed should come to* whom the promise had been made. 20 Now a mediator is not for one party only; *whereas God is only one.*

The mediator, the one who presents the case, consisted of the angels who gave the Law to Moses. The angels who gave the Law to Moses, were God's representatives.

21 Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law. 22 But the Scripture has shut up all men under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. 24 Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith.

Law cannot give righteousness. It does reveal what is sin and yet, it has no power to prevent sin.

The Law, with all of its prohibitions and sacrifices, even though it did impart the knowledge of the great evil of sin, it could not fully change the heart of the sinners who offered the sacrifices.

IN PLACE OF THE LAW, FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST, EXPRESSED BY BEING IMMERSED INTO CHRIST RESULTS IN SALVATION. 3:25-27

[25] But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. [26] For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

[27] For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

This truth is expressed in many passages of Scripture, being first stated by Jesus in an early encounter with Nicodemus.

Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." [4] Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" [5] Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. [6] "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. [7] "Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' (John 3:3-7)

On the Day of Pentecost, when the Gospel age began Peter also expressed this truth.

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ-- this Jesus whom you crucified." [37] Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" [38] And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. [39] "For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself." [40] And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!" [41] So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls. (Acts 2:36-39)

THERE IS NO DISTINCTION IN RACE OR GENDER AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN IMMERSED INTO CHRIST 3:28-29

[28] There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. [29] And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

In some cultures, this is a difficult truth, especially in those cultures that insist on segregation of the races. When we are immersed into Christ, we become a part of a new race – children of God. Color of skin, language, gender, and race, no longer

define who we are. We are children of God and brothers and sisters of one another regardless of these human elements.

PRIOR TO THE COMING OF CHRIST, EVERYONE, EVEN THOSE WHO WERE FAITHFUL TO KEEP THE LAW, WERE SLAVES TO VARIOUS RELIGIONS. 4:1-3

[1] Now I say, as long as the heir is a child, he does not differ at all from a slave although he is owner of everything, [2] but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by the father. [3] So also we, while we were children, were held in bondage under the elemental things of the world.

This is the theme of this epistle. We are free from the bondage to Law, and by grace we are saved. Paul continues to present this truth in coming passages.

THOSE WHO ARE SAVED BY THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS AND ARE BORN AGAIN, ARE NO LONGER SLAVES TO LAW. THIS IS MANIFESTED THROUGH THE INDWELLING HOLY SPIRIT'S TESTIFYING THAT EACH ONE OF US IS A SON OF GOD. 4:4-7

[4] But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, [5] in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. [6] And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" [7] Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.

Paul wrote to the Corinthians,

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? (*1 Corinthians 6:19*)

There are two Greek words for temple

ιηῥον (*hearon*) This term refers to the temple and its surrounding grounds

νᾰ́ος (*naos*) This term refers to the Holy of Holies where the Ark of the Covent was kept. No one could enter this room except the High Priest, and he could do so only once a year on the Day of Atonement to sprinkle some of the blood of the sacrificed lamb on the Ark

This second term is the one used in I Corinthians 6:19, which means that the body of a Christian is a sacred vessel in which dwells the Holy Spirit.

As already noted, Paul stated that we are slaves to the one who bought us and who owns us.

Because the Holy Spirit inhabits the Christian, the Christian can cry out, *Abba*.

Abba, is the Aramaic term for *father,* which was the colloquial language of the Jews in New Testament times.

Paul then inserted the Greek form for father, which is, πατηὴρ (*pahteir*). He was translating the Aramaic into Greek for those Christians who spoke and wrote in Greek which was true of the Galatians to whom this epistle is addressed.

PAUL EXPRESSED WHAT HE HAD WRITTEN EARLIER, THAT HE WAS ASTONISHED THAT THE GALATIANS COULD RETURN TO A TYPE OF RELIGION THAT PRECEEDED THEIR ENCOUNTER WITH CHRIST. 4:8-11

[8] However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods. [9] But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again? [10] You observe days and months and seasons and years. [11] I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.

This statement is an echo of what Paul had written in the opening statements, that he was astonished that they had been so easily influenced by the Pharisaic teachers who were trying to convince them that in order to be saved, one had to keep the Mosaic Law.

AS NOTED IN THE INTRODUCTION, PAUL FIRST PREACHED THE GOSPEL TO THE GALATIANS BECAUSE A PHYSICAL ILLNESS HAD FORCED HIM TO INTERRUPT HIS MISSIOINARY JOURNEY, AND SPEND A SHORT TIME IN GALATIA 4:12-15

[12] I beg of you, brethren, become as I am, for I also have become as you are. You have done me no wrong; [13] but you know that it was because of a bodily illness that I preached the gospel to you the first time; [14] and that which was a trial to you in my bodily condition you did not despise or loathe, but you received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus Himself. [15] Where then is that sense of blessing you had? For I bear you witness, that if possible, you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me.

Once again, he expressed his amazement that they had forsaken the Gospel that he had presented to them and in its place had adopted a religion of laws. Paul asked them *where is that sense of blessing you had?* He was reminding them of the great blessing that they had experienced when they first accepted the Gospel of Grace that he had preached to them.

PAUL STATED THAT THE PHARISAIC TEACHERS HAD AS AN UNDERLYING MOTIVE THE DESIRE TO BE ELEVATED AS SOMEONE WHOM THE GALATIANS WOULD SEEK AND HONOR 4:16-20

16 Have I therefore become your enemy by telling you the truth? 17 They eagerly seek you, not commendably, but they wish to shut you out, in order that you may seek them. 18 But it is good always to be eagerly sought in a commendable manner, and not only when I am present with you. 19 My children, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you-- 20 but I could wish to be present with you now and to change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

Even though the Pharisaic teachers had a bad motive for coming to the Galatians, Paul stated that was good to be sought after when the one they sought after was not ambitious but one who had a right view of his role. Such a person was wanting to be sought after because he was fulfilling his God-given ministry so that he can impart the truths of the Gospel – not one who wants to be sought after in order to be elevated. Paul fit that description,

Again, he expressed regret that he could not be with them and see how they had changed, according to his instructions.

PAUL USED HAGAR AND SARAH AS ALLEGORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE LEGALISM OF SLAVERY TO THE LAW AND THE FREEDOM WE HAVE IN CHRIST 4:21-31

21 Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law? 22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman. 23 But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise. 24 This is allegorically speaking: for these women are two covenants, one proceeding from Mount Sinai bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar. 25 Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. 26 But the Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother. 27 For it is written, "Rejoice, barren woman who does not bear; Break forth and shout, you who are not in labor; For more are the children of the desolate Than of the one who has a husband." 28 And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. 29 But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also. 30 But what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, For the son of the bondwoman shall not be an heir with the son of the free woman." 31 So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman.

The account of Abraham's wife Sarah's giving birth to Isaac and Sarah's slave Hagar's giving birth to Ishmael is recorded in Genesis chapters 16&17. Abraham being the father of both sons.

Certainly, no one would have thought of using these two women as an illustration of the difference between slavery to the Law and the freedom that we have in Christ. No doubt the Holy Spirit was guiding Paul in how he continued to illustrate the difference.

PAUL EMPHASIZED THE FACT THAT THE GALATIANS HAD BEEN FREED FROM THE YOKE OF SLAVERY TO THE LAW AND URGED THEM TO STAND FAST IN THAT FREEDOM 5:1

Various translations render the Greek of this verse in different ways. Here and three examples and then the Greek text with an interlinear explanation of the BYZ Greek Text.

NAS **Galatians 5:1** It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.

NLT **Galatians 5:1** So Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don't get tied up again in slavery to the law.

YLT **Galatians 5:1** In the freedom, then, with which Christ did make you free -- stand ye, and be not held fast again by a yoke of servitude;

Τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ	ἡμᾶς	Χριστὸς ἠλευθέρωσεν·	στήκετε	
In the freedom	to you	Christ	set free	standfast accordingly
οὖν	ζυγῷ πάλιν	δουλείας	ἐνέχεσθε.	
not again	a yoke	of slavery	be subject to	

Regardless of how one renders this verse in good English, the point is clear: Christians have been freed from the yoke of slavery to a Law and are free to follow the Spirit in Christ.

Sadly, as noted earlier, some contemporary churches have ignored this epistle and instituted certain prohibitions that go beyond Scriptural norms.

When I was growing up, it was not unusual for some churches in Muskogee to have rules such as:

Don't go to the movies
Don't play cards
Don't dance
Don't go to the bowling alley or the pool hall and shoot pool
Don't smoke cigars, cigarettes, or tobacco pipes
Don't drink wine, beer, or any sort of alcohol

The spirit behind some of these may have had worthy concerns, but that definition of what it meant to be a Christian violated Paul's letter to the Galatians. Christianity is not defined by a long list of "thou shalt nots," although there are standards of Christian conduct that reflect the spirit of Christ ant not the spirit of the age.

CAVAET:
In spite of these prohibitions, I was greatly blessed to grow up in that church where I heard the Gospel, witnessed baptisms almost every Sunday and learned the word of God from very gifted teachers and preachers.

PAUL DECLARED THAT ANYONE WHO SUBMITTED TO CIRCUMCISON AS A REQUIREMENT FOR BEING A CHRISTIAN HAS LOST HIS/HER RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST 5:2-6

Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you. [3] And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law. [4] You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. [5] For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness. [6] For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.

Paul makes the point that Jews who came to Christ had been circumcised and the Gentiles who came to Christ had not been circumcised, but there was no difference as to which group one belonged, as long as circumcision was not considered to be required for one to be saved.

PAUL REVERTS TO THE MANNER IN WHICH HE BEGAN THE LETTER5 5:7-12

[7] You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth? [8] This persuasion did not come from Him who calls you. [9] A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough. [10] I have confidence in you in the Lord, that you will adopt no other view; but the one who is disturbing you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is. [11] But I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? Then the stumbling block of the cross has been abolished. [12] Would that those who are troubling you would even mutilate themselves.

Paul described the Christian life as a race and the Galatians were doing well in their running until these false teachers threw them off course.

Paul emphasizes that he and the others who first brought the Gospel to the Galatians were not the ones who brought this Gospel of the Law.

Although he does not use here the strong language that he used earlier – that the distorters of the truth be *anathema* – he states that those who are doing this will bear the judgement of God.

He then sarcastically wrote that those who are preaching circumcision might not only circumcise themselves but go further and mutilate themselves.

PAUL STATED THAT THE SPIRIT OF THE LAW IS CONTAINED IN CHRISTIAN'S LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER 5:13-15

. 13 *For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 15 But if you bite and devour one another, take care lest you be consumed by one another.*

Many of the rules of the Mosaic Law had to do with how one was to treat his fellow Jew. Paul summarized this foundational element of that portion of the Law by saying that it is fulfilled in the statement that believers are to love one another. The Greek term for love that Paul used is αγάπη (*agapay*). There are other Greek terms for love,[3] but this is the one used to describe a Christian's love for God and love for one another. The term is a volitional word – something that a person has to choose and implies an action that does not require emotion.

CHRISTIANS, BEING INDWELT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, ARE TO ALLOW THE HOLY SPIRIT TO GENTLY GUIDE THEM THROUGH LIFE 5:16-24

16 *But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. 17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. 19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control;*

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[3] ερος Eros, which refers to romantic and sexual love
στοργη Storgay which refers to familial love
φίλη Philay which refers to brotherly love

against such things there is no law. [24] Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. [25] If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. [26] Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.

Even though the many rules and regulations of the Law do not continue in Christianity, there still are standards of behavior.

More than once, Jesus said that those who loved him were those who kept His commandments.

John 14:15 *If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.*

John 14:21 *He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me; and he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and will disclose Myself to him.*

Those who live Spirit-filled lives will not be owned by fleshly desires that do not display the presence of Christ in one's life. Paul lists examples of *things like these* – to make clear his point.

Even though someone may have declared their faith in Christ and had been baptized into Christ, if he lives by the flesh, manifested in the sort of behavior that Paul mentions, *shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*

In contrast to the fleshly behavior of worldly Christians, one who is filled with and lives by the Spirit will experience the Spirit-given fruit of the Spirit.

Note that it is not *fruits of the Spirit* (plural) but *fruit of the Spirit* (singular). It as if one were describing a Johnathan apple as a fruit that is mottled red on the outside, white on the inside, contains seeds, has a stem and has a tart taste.

Anyone who lives by the Spirit will experience this fruit.

Those who are truly of Christ, will not *become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another*, but will live with the peace that comes from living a life in fellowship with God through the Holy Spirit.

There are a host of pleasures that God has given to us that cause us to be thankful to Him, but they do not rule our lives.

PAUL EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRISTIAN'S CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER AND HIS SETTING THE EXAMPLE OF BEARING ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS 6:1-5

[1]*Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted. [2] Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ. [3] For if*

anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. [4] *But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another.* [5] *For each one shall bear his own load.*

Christians should not be eager to judge or disfellowship someone who has fallen away into sinful behavior because of Satan's allurements.

Instead, Christians are to grieve over that fact that the brother/sister has fallen away and do all that can be done to restore the fallen one to his/her repentant relationship with the Lord.

Furthermore, each Christian should faithfully ask God to audit his/her life so that anything that does not display the character of Christ may be removed from one's life.

PAUL INSTRUCTED HIS READERS TO BE FAITHFUL IN SUPPORTING THOSE WHO TAUGHT THEM THE WORD, SO THAT THESE MAY SPEND THEIR TIME IN TEACHING, RATHER THAN HAVING TO SPEND THEIR TIME IN A MONEY-MAKING JOB. 6:6

[6] *And let the one who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches.*

In writing to the Corinthians, Paul stated that those who spend their time proclaiming the Gospel should be supported by believers.

1 Corinthians 9:14 *So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel.*

Even though this was a principle that Paul presented, he chose to support himself when possible.

He was a tentmaker by trade and when he came to Corinth and lived with Aquilla and Priscilla, who were tentmakers, he joined them in practicing the trade.

Acts 18:1-3 *After these things he left Athens and went to Corinth.* [2] *And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them,* [3] *and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and they were working; for by trade they were tent-makers.*

He must have made enough money working with Aquilla and Priscilla to carry enough funds with him so that he would not have to depend on others for his support.

He clearly speaks of this in I Corinthians 9:1-15, concluding with this statement in verses 9-12

1 Corinthians 9:9-12 [9] *For it is written in the Law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing." God is not concerned about oxen, is He?* [10] *Or is He speaking altogether for our sake? Yes, for our sake it was written, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher to thresh in hope of sharing the crops.* [11] *If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we should reap material things from you?* [12] *If others share the right over you, do we not more? Nevertheless, we did not use this right, but we endure all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ.*

PAUL ILLUSTRATED HIS TRUTH BY USING THE ANALOGY OF SOWING AND REAPING 6:7-8

[7] *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.* [8] *For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life.*

The point Paul makes is clear. One who lives only to satisfy the lusts of the flesh will die and his flesh will rot and be gone.

However, a believer whose focus of life is on God and spiritual matters, even though he/she has to be concerned about affairs of this life while living in the flesh, will live on forever. What a wonderful promise!

A BELIEVER WHO IS COMMITTED TO CARING FOR OTHERS, WHEN THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTS INTSELF, WILL REAP A REWARD 6:9-10

[9] *And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary.* [10] *So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.*

It is implied that a true believer will look for opportunities to do good to others and especially to one's fellow Christians.

PAUL PERSONALLY WR0TE THE CLOSING REMARKS IN LARGE LETTERS WITH HIS OWN HAND, WHICH INDICATES THAT THE BODY OF THE EPISTLE WAS WRITTEN BY AN AMANUENSIS TO WHOM PAUL DICTATED 6:11

[11] *See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand.*

There is no hint as to whom Paul did the dictating, but it obviously was someone whom he trusted and probably had accompanied him on some of his journeys.

IN CLOSING, PAUL COMPARES HIMSELF TO THOSE WHO SEEK TO AVOID PERSECUTION BY COMPLYING TO THE MOSAIC LAW, ESPECIALLY CIRCUMCISION 6:12-13

[12] *Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, simply that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.* [13] *For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may boast in your flesh.*

Many believers lived among Jews and some of these believers kept the law, especially the covenant act of circumcision so that they would not be persecuted.

Paul declared that one motivation of these individuals who were compelling them to be circumcised was their desire to be able to boast about succeeded in getting Christians to be circumcised.

PAUL EMPHASIZED THAT BELIEVERS ARE A NEW CREATION AND THAT WHETHER OR NOT ONE COMPLIED WITH THE MOSAIC LAW AND BECAME CIRCUMCISED, OR IF ONE WERE A GENTILE WHO HAD NOT BEEN CIRCUMCISED, WAS NOT RELEVANT TO ONE'S SALVATION 6:14-16

[14] *But may it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.* [15] *For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.* [16] *And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.*

Paul wrote that the only thing that he boasted about and this should be true of all believers, was in what Christ had done to redeemed sinful mankind.

He concluded by pronouncing a blessing by all who lived as he did by the rule he had just stated.

PAUL DREW TO THE CLOSE OF THE EPISTLE BY STATING THAT THE PRICE HE HAD PAID FOR PREACHING THE GOSPEL SHOULD EXEMPT HIM FROM BEING TROUBLED BY ANYONE AND HE ENDED BY PRONOUNCING A DOXOLOGY UPON HIS READERS 6:17

[17] *From now on let no one cause trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus.* [18] *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.*

In closing we once again recognize that the central message of this epistle is the grace of Jesus Christ, receiving the grace by faith contrasted with seeking salvation through works and obedience to the Law.

THE LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS

Ephesus was one of the major cities in the Roman empire. It was the capital of the Roman province of Asia. It was a massive, wealthy, and bustling Roman port city with an estimated population of 250,000 people (See ADDEMDUM B)

Ephesus controlled vital sea and trade routes along the coast of what is modern Turkey.

The city was famous for the Temple of Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world. The cult of the goddess Artemis deeply shaped the local economy, religion, and civic identity (see ADDENDUM C)

Paul first visited Ephesus near the end of his second missionary journey in the spring of 52 AD. He returned for major extended stay of nearly three years, from 52 to 55 AD during his third missionary journey. He made Ephesus his primary base for ministry in the Roman province of Asia.

While in Ephesus, he baptized believers who had only known John the Baptist's message. He also performed healings, and he faced a major riot led by local silversmiths who made shrines to the goddess Artemis.

The record of these visits and ministry in Ephesus is recorded in Acts 18:23-19:41.

Paul wrote the epistle to the Ephesians while he was under house arrest during his first imprisonment in Rome (Acts 28:30-31). He had a bracelet on one wrist to which was attached a chain and his guard had a bracelet attached to the other end of the chain. While under house arrest and chained to a guard, Paul wrote the epistles of Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. Tychicus delivered the epistle to the Ephesians, as well as Paul's epistles to the Colossians and Philemon. Philemon hosted a Christian congregation in his home in Colossae.

The content of the epistle can be summarized as focusing on the unity of the church and the identity of believers in Christ – bringing both Jew and Gentile into one new spiritual family.

AS HE HAD DONE WITH THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS, PAUL BEGAN THIS LETTER WITH A SALUTATION THAT EMPHASIZED THAT HIS AUTHORITY WAS THE RESULT OF HIS BEING COMMISSIONED BY JESUS CHRIST AND GOD THE FATHER 1:1

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are at Ephesus, and who are faithful in Christ Jesus:

Paul addressed the Ephesians as *saints.* The Greek term that in English is rendered as *saints,* is ἅγιος (*hagios*) which literally means, *set apart* or*, separate.* When

referring to humans, the term means, *set apart for God*. When the term is used for God, it means, *one who is separate and unique,* there is not another like Him.

PAUL BEGAN THE EPISTLE WITH HIS CUSTOMARY BLESSING OF GRACE AND PEACE ON THE EPHESIANS 1:2

[2] Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Grace is the English rendition of the Greek term, χάρις *(karis*) which refers to unmerited favor- it is a gift given without any effort on the part of the recipients to earn the gift.

PAUL QUICKLY LAUNCHED TO ONE OF THE MAIN THEMES OF THE EPISTLE, GOD'S GRACE AND PREDESTINATION

[3] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, [4] just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love [5] He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, [6] to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

The Greek term in verse 3 that the NASB renders as *blessed,* is the term, εὐλόγητος (*eulogaytos*) which is used only for God in the New Testament, and in this use, it means, *to be praised*. The term expresses the intrinsic character of God.[4]

The doctrine of predestination has been a major point of debate among Protestants.

Related to the question of predestination is the statement made in Romans 8:29.

For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren;

Other passages that speak of God's foreknowledge are I Peter 1:2; Jeremiah 1:5; Acts 2:23, 15:18; Isaiah 46:9-10;

The Scriptural statements concerning God's foreknowledge and predestination have been the origin of one of the most controversial doctrines in the Protestant reformation.

Here are the two theological doctrines that developed in the 16th Century.

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[4] S.D.F. Salmond D.D., *The Expositor's New Testament*, *The Epistle to the Ephesians*, (Grand Rapids, W.M. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company) 1976, page 244

CALVINISM

John Calvin (1509-1564) introduced the doctrine that came to be known as Calvinism. The doctrine has five foundational beliefs, that are labeled TULIP.

TOTAL DEPRAVITY: The fall of humanity corrupted human nature to the degree that no human being is able to seek God on his own.
UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION: God chooses whom He will save, based purely on His own mercy, but not on any foreseen human goodness or choice.
LIMITED ATONEMENT: Christ's sacrifice on the cross specifically secures the redemption of those whom God has chosen.
IRRESISTIBLE GRACE: The Holy Spirit draws to faith those whom He has chosen. This inward call cannot be blocked or resisted to the point of rejecting faith.
PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS: These chosen of God are protected by God from falling away and they will maintain their faith to the end of their earthly lives.

Several denominations are Calvinist, including Presbyterian, Continental Reformed Churches, Reformed Baptist Churches, and Reformed Anglicans.

ARMINIANISM

Jacobus Arminius (born October 10, 1560, Oudewater, Netherlands—died October 19, 1609, Leiden) was a theologian and minister of the Dutch Reformed Church. He opposed the Calvinist teaching on predestination. In reaction to Calvinism, he developed a theological system known later as Arminianism.

He developed the Five Articles of Remonstrance which state,

CONDITIONAL ELECTION: Based on God's foreknowledge as to who would freely choose to believe in Christ, rather than the Calvinist belief that God, based only on His choice chooses to save some and not others.
UNLIMITED ATONEMENT: Jesus died on the cross for every single human being, making salvation available to all, but His atonement is only effective for those who choose to actively believe.
PREVENIENT GRACE: Humanity is fallen and sinful, but God provides a universal enabling grace that empowers every person to respond to the Holy Spirit and to freely choose to accept or reject salvation through faith in the power of Christ's atonement.
DEPRAVITY AND RESPONSIBILITY: Acknowledging that original sin deeply corrupts human nature, individuals still retain the moral responsibility and freedom to cooperate with God's grace to attain faith, or to reject it.

CONDITONAL SECURITY: Believers are empowered to live victoriously but can ultimately forfeit their salvation through a willful sustained rejection of Christ.

Combining the statement in Romans and Paul's statement in Ephesians, there is a solid basis for Arminianism i.e., that God, because of His omniscience, was able to look down through the whole history of man and see who would respond to the Gospel message. These whom he foreknew, he predestined to be a recipient of the Grace given to man through Jesus Christ.

Here are some verses that require man's freedom to choose.

Deuteronomy 30:19 "*I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants,*

Joshua 24:15 *"And if it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."*

Isaiah 55:7 *Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the LORD, And He will have compassion on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.*

Matthew 23:37 *"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.*

Mark 8:34 *And He summoned the multitude with His disciples, and said to them, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.*

Romans 13:2 *Therefore he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.*

Revelation 3:20 *'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me.*

Contemporary churches that espouse some degree of Arminianism are the United Methodist Church, Holiness Churches (such as the Nazarene, Assemblies of God, Church of God in Christ,) Freewill Baptists., Churches of Christ and Christian Churches that are a part of the Restoration Movement.

Because of the Scriptures that assume that man has the ability to choose or reject, I personally, reject Calvinism and embrace the Armenian view of foreknowledge and foreordination.

CHRIST IS THE SOURCE OF MAN'S REDEMPTION 1:7-12

[7] In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, [8] which He lavished upon us. In all wisdom and insight [9] He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him [10] with a view to an administration suitable to the fulness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth. In Him [11] also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, [12] to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

Because of God's rich and all-encompassing grace, Christ was sacrificed on Calvary. His shed blood provides redemption for those who have in repentance and faith accepted Christ as their Savior.

Because of God's foreknowledge as to who would in faith believe and accept the sacrifice of Christ, God predestined these to receive an eternal reward.

THE INDWELLING HOLY SPIRIT IS THE GUARANTEE THAT THE BELIEVER WILL RECEIVE THE PROMISED INHERITANCE 1:13-14

[13] *In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation-- having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, [14] who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.*

On the Day of Pentecost, the day that the Gospel age began, the gift of the Holy Spirit was promised as a gift given to all who, in repentance and faith, were buried and resurrected in the watery grave of Christian immersion.

Acts 2:37-38 *Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

In ancient times, each person had his/her personal logo on a ring or a small piece of metal that was their *seal.* They would melt the wax of a candle on a legal document, or at the close of a letter and press their seal into the wax. The seal guaranteed that the document was from the person who sent the letter or agreed to the document.

The indwelling Holy Spirit given to all immersed believers, is the seal that guarantees that the promises associated with that seal will receive that which is promised.

PAUL EXPRESSED HIS GRATITUDE TO GOD FOR THE MANNER IN WHICH THE FAITH WHICH HAD BEEN BORN IN THE EPHESIANS AND WAS CONTINUING TO BLOSSOM 1:13-23

[15] *For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you, and your love for all the saints,* [16] *do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers;* [17] *that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.* [18] *I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,* [19] *and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might* [20] *which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,* [21] *far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come.* [22] *And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,* [23] *which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all.*

In his prayer of thanksgiving for the Ephesians, Paul expressed gratitude for several things:

- The Ephesians love for all of the fellow Christians, some perhaps whom they had not met, especially the Jews, but only heard about through Paul
- That Father God would give the Ephesians a spirit of wisdom and revelation (i.e. understanding) of the experiential knowledge of Christ.[5]
- That they would have enlightened hearts so that they could fully know what was awaiting them because of their faith and knowledge of Christ.
- These were theirs, not because of any great achievement on their part, but because of the greatness of the power of Christ
- The one who is granting these things to the believers was God the Father, not God the Son, although the Father could do so because of what the Son had done for the believers. God the Father had placed the Son in a place of supreme authority over everything, especially the Church.
- The Church is the contemporary expression of the Body of Christ, which, because of the Holy Spirit, is the fullness of Christ.

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[5] The Greek term rendered *knowledge,* in this passage is ἐπιγνώσις (*epignohsis*) which refers to experiential knowledge, not just head knowledge

The Lord Jesus said that the second great commandment was for Christians to love one another.

Matthew 22:34-39 *34 But when the Pharisees heard that He had put the Sadducees to silence, they gathered themselves together. 35 And one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, 36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" 37 And He said to him, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 "This is the great and foremost commandment. 39 "The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'*

Tertullian, prominent Latin Christian apologist of the early Second century wrote the following about how the surrounding culture commented on the Christian community.

"But it is mainly the deeds of a love so noble that lead many to put a brand upon us. See, they say, how they love one another, for they themselves are animated by mutual hatred. See, they say about us, how they are ready even to die for one another, for they themselves would sooner kill."

He further noted that they pooled their resources to care for orphans, something that surrounding culture would never do.

Clearly, the Ephesian Church fit Tertullian's description and Paul wrote of his admiration for that quality that was a characteristic of the Ephesian Church.

PAUL CALLED ATTENTION TO HOW, ACCORDING TO GOD'S GRACE. THE EPHESIANS HAD BEEN MADE ALIVE IN CHRIST 2:1-10

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. 3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, 7 in order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, that no one should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

The Greek term rendered as *dead,* is the adjective, νεκρός (nekros), which means literally, dead – a final state without life. The idea, of course, is spiritually dead. Satan is described as the spirit of the air, which, in contrast to the Holy Spirit results in spiritual death.

Such is the condition of everyone who is governed by the natural human lusts and desires, without any consideration of God's manner of life.

The Ephesians were delivered out of this state by God's great love and mercy. This was not because of any change of behavior that resulted in their earning spiritual life, but God, because of His great love and mercy, extended His grace to them and when they responded they became spiritually alive.

The term rendered, *raised us up,* is ςυνήγειρειν (*sunaygeiren*) which literally means, *resurrected.* The term refers, primarily to physical resurrection, which all Christians will experience, but also, to the moral/spiritual resurrection of those who by God's grace have been made spiritually alive.

The idea of being *seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus,* expresses one aspect of the truth that is also stated in Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.

The redeemed believer, having Christ in him through the indwelling Holy Spirit is spiritually, seated in heavenly places with Christ, even though the believer might not be consciously aware of it – what an astounding truth.

This is not something that has been earned but is an expression of God's amazing grace.

As a result of this transformation, the redeemed believer will live a life of good works and consider himself/herself to be an instrument that God is using while still in the flesh.

A WONDERFUL TRUTH TO THE UNCIRCUMCISED EPHESIANS – THE CIRCUMCISED AND UNCIRCUMCISED HAVE BEEN BROUGHT TOGETHER IN CHRIST 2:11-22

[11] Therefore remember, that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision " by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands-- [12] remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. [13] But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. [14]

For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, [15] by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, [16] and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. [17] And He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near; [18] for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. [19] So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, [20] having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, [21] in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; [22] in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

Prior to the New Covenant, only the Jews who followed the Old Testament laws were in a covenant with God. The Gentile Ephesians, not being in a covenant relationship with God, did not have any hope and were without God in this life.

With the coming of Christ, and what has been made true because of His atonement on Calvary, all races can be made alive spiritually by coming to Christ.

The apostles and prophets are God's representatives and they, being the first to be used of God in this role, are the ones who are qualified to bring the true message of salvation. Note that Acts 2:42 states that the newly born church,

And they were continually devoting themselves to the doctrine of the apostles and to the fellowship, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers.

Unfortunately, most English translations of the Greek text omit the definite article, *the,* in front of each of the elements of verse 42. It is important that these be included because they indicate that specific things are indicated.

We are fortunate to have the New Testament Scriptures which contain the doctrine of the apostles.

Under the New Covenant, Jew and Gentile are being built as a holy temple to the Lord – this is a description of the Church of every race and language in the earth.

Even though the apostles and prophets are the foundation of the temple, it would not be the temple of the New Covenant except for the fact that the chief cornerstone, which set the parameters and layout of the other foundation walls is Jesus Christ.

When a building that would have permanence was constructed, the cornerstone was put in place first. Then all of the walls conformed to the pattern, left and right,

of the cornerstone. For the Church, that cornerstone is Christ. The Spirit, which is the presence of God, inhabits that temple.

PAUL DESCRIBED HIS IMPRISONMENT AS BEING A PRISONER FOR CHRIST, FOR THE SAKE OF THE GENTILES 3:1-7

[1]For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles--
[2] if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you; [3] that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. [4] And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, [5] which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; [6] to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, [7] of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power.

As noted in the introduction Paul was under house arrest and chained to a guard when he wrote this epistle. He had been arrested by Jewish authorities as a result of his preaching the Gospel and being in the temple with a Gentile. The record of this series of events is recorded in Acts21:28ff. Because of the riot that ensued, Roman authorities arrested Paul. He viewed his imprisonment as his being a prisoner of Jesus Christ.

This would not have happened if he had not been preaching to the Gentiles

PAUL WAS AWARE OF THE FACT THAT IT WAS AN ACT OF GOD'S GRACE TO GIVE TO HIM THE SPECIAL CALL TO BRING THE GOSPEL TO GENTILES 3:8-13

[8] To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, [9] and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God, who created all things; [10] in order that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. [11] This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, [12] in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him. [13] Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory.

Because of his background of persecuting the Church and causing Christians to be condemned to death, Paul felt that he was the very least of God's family of believers.

Because of what he had been, Paul realized that it was a special act of God's grace to reveal Christ to him and then to give him the commission to take the Gospel to the Gentiles.

The Greek term rendered, mystery, is μυστήριον (*moosetayrion*). The term refers to some secret thing, or something that human reason cannot comprehend.

I Peter 1:12 informs us that this mystery is something that the angels are eager to look into.

It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven-- things into which angels long to look.

Prior to the coming of Christ, the revelation had been hidden and known only to God. It was the responsibility of the apostles to deliver to mankind what had been revealed in Christ. It was Paul's responsibility to bring these truths to Gentiles, whereas the original apostles were called to reveal these truths to God's chosen nation, the Jews.

The Church possesses this knowledge and as the Church fulfills its role in the world, humanity has the blessing of receiving this knowledge.

One mystery that was revealed was that all races formed the Church, thus creating one new race.

All of this was made possible through the coming of Christ and God's redemption plan fulfilled in Christ.

Because of this being God's eternal plan and purpose for Christ's coming, we have boldness when we present the Gospel because we are being God's spokesmen.

Because of this truth, Paul asked the Ephesians not to let his imprisonment and suffering deter their faith or joy.

PAUL STRONGLY INTERCEDED FOR THE EPHESIANS ASKING GOD TO GRANT THEM FULL KNOWLEDGE OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST 3:14-19

For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, [15] from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, [16] that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man; [17] so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, [18] may be able to comprehend with all the saints what

is the breadth and length and height and depth, [19] and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fulness of God.

One could not ask for a more powerful intercessor than the apostle Paul. His prayer for strength in the inner man is exactly what is needed in a world that the devil uses to cause us to lose our faith.

Paul wrote of his own vulnerability in Romans 7:19

For the good that I wish, I do not do; but I practice the very evil that I do not wish.

There is a peace that is available to all who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and whose life is focused on God the Father and Christ Jesus.

Isaiah 26:3 speaks to this point.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusts in thee.

Philippians 4:6-7 also addresses this topic.

Be careful of nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

The ultimate source of this peace is a knowledge of the love of God that is expressed in Christ Jesus and how God the Father used Christ's crucifixion to provide the path for all humans to come to God.

The indwelling Holy Spirit is the being who makes this possible in the soul of the redeemed believer.

Throughout these epistles, we have seen and will see the necessary role of the Holy Spirit in life of the believer.

PAUL CONCLUDED THIS SECTION OF THE EPISTLE WITH A DOXOLOGY THAT WE WOULD EXPECT AT THE CLOSE OF THE EPISTLE 3:20-21

[20]Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, [21] to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

It is the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit that enables the believer to do more than any normal human could do. It is important for those who preach the Gospel and witness to not approach their ministry as salesmen. Instead, with a grateful heart that they are the tool that the Holy Spirit is using and any genuine result of their effort will be the result of the Holy Spirit's empowerment.

PAUL EXHORTED THE EPHESIANS TO LIVE IN A MANNER THAT IS AN EXPRESSION OF THE CALLING THAT THEY HAD IN CHRIST JESUS 4:1-6

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, [2] with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, [3] being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. [4] There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; [5] one Lord, one faith, one baptism, [6] one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

Paul considered his imprisonment to be a prisoner of the Lord, as he had stated earlier in 3:1. He was in chains because he was fulfilling the call placed upon him.

In his exhortation for them to live lives worthy of the calling that God had given to them, he urged them to live in harmony with their fellow Christians. They were to consider themselves as being one with one another. He illustrated this by reminding them of the oneness of important things of the faith: There is one body, the Church; there is one Holy Spirit, not a plethora of spirits as was believed in false religions; they were called in one hope of the promised reward awaiting them; there is unity in the Godhead of Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit and this is an illustration of how they were to be in the Church.

PAUL CALLED ATTENTION TO THE VARIETY OF GRACE GIFTS GIVEN TO THE CHURCH AND TO INDIVUAL BELIEVERS 4:7-10

But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. [8] Therefore it says, "When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, And He gave gifts to men." [9] (Now this expression, "He ascended," what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? [10] He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

Paul cites Psalm 68:18 in which David wrote,
Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captive Thy captives; Thou hast received gifts among men, Even among the rebellious also, that the LORD God may dwell there.

Paul clearly considered David to have written Psalms under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Paul asks a very intriguing question, *Now this expression, "He ascended," what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? [10] He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.*

Biblical scholars differ on the meaning of *descended into the lower parts of the earth*

Three interpretations are advocated by different scholars.

- The planet earth, meaning that the *lower parts* simply mean the earth itself, when Christ descended from heaven to take on human form.
- The grave or death, referring to the physical burial of Jesus after the crucifixion.
- The realm of the dead, (hades/sheol) holds to the view that the expression refers to where Christ went between his crucifixion and resurrection.

1 Peter 3:18-19 lends credence to view three

f*or Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; [19] in which also He went and made proclamation* (κηρύσσω*) to the spirits now in prison,*

When Jesus died on Calvary, He said to the thief next to Him, the one who had defended Him, *today you will be with me in paradise* (Luke 23:43)

The Greek term rendered, *paradise,* is παράδεισσος (*paradaysos)* which refers to a royal garden.

The place where the spirits of those who have died in the flesh abode, is Hades.

Hades has two sections: one where the damned are awaiting judgment before the great white throne (Revelation 20:11-15) and the section where the redeemed are awaiting their appearance before the great white throne and receiving their reward for faithful obedience to God.

Luke writes of this in the parable of Lazarus and the rich man (Luke 16:19-26).

"Now there was a certain rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, gaily living in splendor every day. [20] "And a certain poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, [21] and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man's table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores. [22] "Now it came about that the poor man died and he was carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried. [23] "And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away, and Lazarus in his bosom. [24] "And he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue; for I am in agony in this flame.' [25] "But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and

you are in agony. [26] 'And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, in order that those who wish to come over from here to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us.'

Because of these statements and other similar ones, I personally accept the third view, that it refers to Christ's descent into the realm of the dead (hades) between His death and resurrection.

PAUL CITED THE GIFTS THAT GOD GAVE TO THE CHURCH TO PROMOTE THE BUILDING UP OF THE BODY OF CHRIST 4:11-16

[11] And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, [12] for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; [13] until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ. [14] As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; [15] but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, [16] from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

The ministry gifts that Christ gave to the Church are four: apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherd teachers (the term rendered as *pastors* is *shepherds*)

The Greek of verse 11 indicates that what usually has been rendered as pastors and teachers, refers to a single office.

Καὶ αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν τοὺς μὲν ἀποστόλους, του
δὲ προφήτας, τοὺς **δὲ** εὐαγγελιστάς, τοὺς **δὲ** ποιμένας **καὶ** διδασκάλους,

Two Greek words for *and* are used in this verse: **de** and **kai.** The transition indicates that Paul is describing four gifts to the Church: apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherd teachers.

Although most modern English versions render the word, ποιμενος (*poimenos*), as *pastors,* the Greek term refers to shepherds.

The Latin name for shepherd is *pastor,* as it is rendered in the Latin Vulgate. Vulgate was the dominant version used in the Church until the 1611 production of the KJV. The men who translated the King James Version often used terms of the Vulgate, rather than translating the Greek into English.

PRIOR TO THEIR RECEPTION OF THE GOSPEL, THE GENTILE EPHESIANS LIVED BY THE SINFUL TRAITS OF HUMANITY 4:17-24

[17] This I say therefore, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, [18] being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; [19] and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. [20] But you did not learn Christ in this way, [21] if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, [22] that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, [23] and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, [24] and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

Prior to becoming redeemed and transformed by one's receiving and accepting the Gospel of Christ, humans are governed by the lusts of the flesh and of the mind. Paul describes these as *lusts of deceit,* things that unredeemed humanity consider to be the things to live for and to practice.

This was the condition of the Gentile Ephesians who did not have the Old Testament revelation and the possibility of being in covenant with God, but lived by the very natural drives of the flesh. After coming to know Christ, their total perspective was changed.

THE HUMAN NEED TO BE RESPECTED OR OBTAIN SOME HUMAN DESIRE, CAUSES HUMANS TO MANIFEST SINFUL TRAITS 4:25-32

[25]Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth, each one of you, with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. [26] Be angry and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, [27] and do not give the devil an opportunity. [28] Let him who steals steal no longer; but rather let him labor, performing with his own hands what is good, in order that he may have something to share with him who has need. [29] Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear. [30] And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. [31] Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. [32] And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

Paul stated, *we are members of one another.* meaning that we should view our neighbor, especially fellow believers, as if we inhabited the same body. That is a somewhat striking image, but in a spiritual sense, it should be so.

Do not give the devil and opportunity, brings to mind James 1:13-15

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. [14] But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. [15] Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.

James indicates that each of us has embryo of lust that is dormant until Satan creates a situation that impregnates the embryo and sin is born.

It is important for each believer to examine himself and become aware of what embryo dwells in him/her and to be on guard to avoid situations that cause that embryo to give birth.

Paul urges believers to work and produce an income so that they can give to those in need. Certainly, each person works to provide an income to meet his needs, but Paul exhorts that in addition to working to take care of our personal needs, we should share what we have with those in need.

The exhortation, *Be angry and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,* exhorts anyone who is angry, to get rid of that anger by the end of the day. How one does that will differ from one person to another.

His exhortation, *And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you*, harmonizes with the model prayer recorded in Matthew 6:9-13 and the line, *And forgive us our debts as we have forgiven our debtors* (verse 12)

Even the language that believers use in conversation should be language that edifies, and not language that does harm to the hearers.

PAUL DESCRIBED THE RESULT OF OBEYING THE INSTRUCTIONS JUST GIVEN 5:1-2

[1] Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; [2] and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

Believers are urged to imitate Christ's behavior and example. The statement *just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us* echoes John 15:13, *Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.*

As believers, we look to the words and example of Christ. His sacrifice on Calvary, a sinless being dying for a world of sinners, is the greatest example of love that has ever been demonstrated.

PAUL CONTINUED THE RESULTS OF HIS THEREFORE BY DESCRIBING THE THINGS THAT NO BELIEVER IN CHRIST SHOULD MANIFEST 5:3-21

[3] But do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you, as is proper among saints; [4] and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. [5] For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. [6] Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. [7] Therefore do not be partakers with them; [8] for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light [9] (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), [10] trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. [11] And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; [12] for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. [13] But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. [14] For this reason it says, "Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you." [15] Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, [16] making the most of your time, because the days are evil. [17] So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. [18] And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, [19] speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; [20] always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; [21] and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

The behaviors just described are obvious manifestations of one who is not truly a believer and disciple Christ. Those who practice these things are without hope unless they repent, confess their sins, and from then on live a holy life (I John 1:9)

PAUL DESCRIBED HOW A MARRIED COUPLE SHOULD RELATE TO ONE ANOTHER 5:22-33

[22] Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. [23] For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. [24] But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. [25] Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; [26] that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, [27] that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless. [28] So husbands ought also to

love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself;
[29] for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ
also does the church, [30] because we are members of His body. [31] For this cause a
man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two
shall become one flesh. [32] This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference
to Christ and the church. [33] Nevertheless let each individual among you also love
his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her
husband.

The hierarchy in marriage should be a reflection of the model that is manifested in the relationship between Christ and the Church.

This model flies in the face of much of present-day culture, but this is how God has designed the relationship in marriage.

The responsibility of husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her can be a heavy responsibility – especially if the wife is a cantankerous woman.

Likewise, a domineering controlling husband probably would be difficult to love and obey.

However, if husbands loved their wives as Christ loved the Church and loved their wives as if they were their own body, this is the first step to a fulfilling happy marriage.

The second step is equally important, that wives should love their husbands whatever their personality should be.

The blessed bond of marriage is the reason that a man will leave his father and mother and begin a new life as one flesh with his wife.

PAUL CONTINUED INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING SOCIETAL RELATIONSHIPS AND THE EXERCISE OF AUTHORITHY 6:1-9

[1] Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. [2] Honor your father and
mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), [3] that it may be well with
you, and that you may live long on the earth. [4] And, fathers, do not provoke your
children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. [5]
Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear
and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; [6] not by way of
eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the
heart. [7] With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, [8] knowing
that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord,
whether slave or free. [9] And, masters, do the same things to them, and give up

threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

The first societal responsibility that Paul states, concerning obedience and authority, relates to a child's responsibility to properly relate to one's parents and the serious responsibility of godly parents -parenting, *fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*

The responsibility of parenting is a heavy one and difficult for fathers, who are prone to anger, rather than exercising wise parental authority with love for the child.

Paul continues discussing societal authority as to the relationship between slaves and masters. The authority of masters over slaves should be exercised with an awareness of the fact that Christ is the Master of both slave and slave owner.

Although our society does not have slaves, the principle applies to employers and employees.

PAUL MOVED TOWARD THE CLOSE OF THE EPISTLE BY GIVING INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING SPIRITUAL WARFARE AND THE SPIRITUAL ARMOR POSSESED BY BELIEVERS 6:10-20

[10] Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. [11] Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. [12] For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. [13] Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. [14] Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, [15] and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; [16] in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. [17] And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. [18] With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, [19] and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, [20] for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

The first injunction is to stand firm. Paul is not writing about how to aggressively move into battle and fight the enemy, but rather to stand firm…to hold one's ground and not give in to the enemy.

- The first piece of protective armor is God's provision of truth, which the believer is to know about and embrace.
- The second piece is the breastplate of righteousness, which means that the warrior is to be righteous in his daily conduct and habits.
- The third piece is the shoes of the preparation of the gospel of peace. This speaks of the peace that one can have if he lives in fellowship with God. This is the truth spoken of in Isaiah 26:3 *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee* (KJV)
- The fourth piece is the shield of faith. When one has a living faith with God, come what fiery darts of evil, the believer will not falter or fail.
- The fifth piece is the helmet of salvation. The helmet rests on the head, implying one's thoughts. If a person is truly saved, his Spirit-led thoughts will be those that are in harmony with God.
- The sixth piece is the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. The believer knows and believes the truths presented in Holy Scripture and thus is able to deflect any parries of the enemy's sword.
- The seventh piece is the first offensive weapon, the weapon of prayer. The exhortation is to pray *in the spirit.*

NOTE: praying *in the spirit,* is the exhortation here. This does not refer only to praying in tongues. Whether one prays in his known language or in the Spirit-given unknown tongues, all prayer should be *in the spirit,* meaning to be led by the Holy Spirit and with an awareness of the Spirit's presence in prayer. Sometimes someone exhorts those about him to *say a prayer.* One can just say a prayer, repeating words of a prayer, but not really *praying a prayer,* in fellowship with the Holy Spirit. This frequently happens when people repeat the model prayer (so called, Lord's Prayer) of Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:1-4). This is especially dangerous when a group is asked to join in repeating the model prayer.

PAUL CONCLUDED THE EPISTLE BY ASKING THE EPHESIANS TO BE FAITHFUL IN PRAYING FOR HIM IN HIS IMPRISONED CONDITION. HE SENT TYCHICUS TO EPHESUS TO REPORT HIS CIRCUMSTANCES AND THEN CONCLUDES WITH HIS PRAYER FOR THE EPHESIANS 6:21-24

But that you also may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you. [22] *And I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know about us, and that he may comfort your hearts.* [23] *Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.* [24] *Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with a love incorruptible.*

LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS

Philippi was a city in Macedonia (see ADDENDUM D). Originally, it was an obscure Greek inhabited city. In 356 BC, Philip II of Macedon annexed the region and gave his name to the growing city. A large military garrison was located in Philippi. In 167 BC, the Romans conquered Macedonia and the Romans settled many of their retired military veterans in the city and established it as a Roman colony. It's citizens usually spoke Latin and wore Roman dress.

There were many religions practiced in Philippi, with shrines devoted to each of them.

Paul visited Philippi on his second missionary journey (49-52 AD). While on this missionary journey, Paul and Silas were *kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia* (Acts16:6). They tried to go into Bithynia, *but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them* (Acts 16:7). When they reached the coast of Troas, Paul had a vision of a Macedonian begging him, *Come over to Macedonia and help us* (Acts 16:9). Paul took this as God's call, and he and Silas traveled to Philippi and the Philippians received the Gospel. The rather engaging story of what happened in Philippi is recorded in Acts 16. Paul visited Philippi two more times.

PAUL BEGAN THE LETTER BY PRONOUNCING A BENEDICTION UPON THE PHILIPPIANS 1:1-2

[1]*Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:* [2] *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

As it was his custom, Paul began the letter by pronouncing a benediction on the Philippians

Timothy was Paul's young traveling companion on many of his trips and as he wrote this letter, while in chains, Timothy was with him as a companion.

The Greek term rendered as *bond-servants,* is δοῦλος (*doulos*) which means, *slave.* Most English language Bibles have an aversion to using that term and so they render it by terms such as bond-servants. This is unfortunate because the term describes the self-identity that the writers, who wrote in Greek, wanted to communicate about their relationship with Christ.

As he had begun in his letter to the Ephesians, Paul called the addressees as *saints,* meaning, *separated ones.* (see page 22 of these notes).

He specifically mentions the *overseers and deacons.* The overseers are the elders. In his farewell address to the Ephesians

Acts 20:17, 27-28 *And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church…"For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God. [28] "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*

The term rendered, *deacons,* is a transliteration of the Greek term, διάκονος (*diakonos*), which means, servant.

The record of the birth of the role of deacon is in Act 6:1-6

Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. [2] And the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. [3] "But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. [4] "But we will devote ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." [5] And the statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. [6] And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them.

From that time onward, it became the custom to ordain elders and appoint deacons in every church.

PAUL INFOMED THE PHILIPPIANS THAT HE PRAYED CONSTANTLY FOR THEM, AND ONE REASON FOR DOING THIS WAS BECAUSE OF THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT HE RECEIVED FROM THEM 1:3-6

[3] *I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, [4] always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, [5] in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now. [6] For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.*

The church at Philippi had given financially to Paul so that he would not have to **spend** his time in a wage-earning job. He mentions this in 4:12-15. Their financial support made them co-laborers with Paul.

Paul wrote to the Corinthians that those who spent their time preaching the Gospel should be supported financially.

1 Corinthians 9:4 Do we not have a right to eat and drink? [5] Do we not have a right to take along a believing wife, even as the rest of the apostles, and the

brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? [6] Or do only Barnabas and I not have a right to refrain from working? [7] Who at any time serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard, and does not eat the fruit of it? Or who tends a flock and does not use the milk of the flock? [8] I am not speaking these things according to human judgment, am I? Or does not the Law also say these things? [9] For it is written in the Law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing." God is not concerned about oxen, is He? [10] Or is He speaking altogether for our sake? Yes, for our sake it was written, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher to thresh in hope of sharing the crops. [11] If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we should reap material things from you? [12] If others share the right over you, do we not more? Nevertheless, we did not use this right, but we endure all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ. [13] Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat the food of the temple, and those who attend regularly to the altar have their share with the altar? [14] So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel. [15] But I have used none of these things. And I am not writing these things that it may be done so in my case; for it would be better for me to die than have any man make my boast an empty one. [16] For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel. [17] For if I do this voluntarily, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have a stewardship entrusted to me.

However, if receiving pay for doing so is the motive for someone's preaching and teaching, then this is the wrong motive. Such a person is merely a hireling,

Jesus commented on the difference between one who is a hireling and one who is a true shepherd.

"He who is a hireling, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, beholds the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep, and flees, and the wolf snatches them, and scatters them. [13] "He flees because he is a hireling, and is not concerned about the sheep. (John 12-13)

PAUL HAD A SPECIAL AFFECTION FOR THE PHILIPPIANS 1:6-8

[7] For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me. [8] For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.

Not only had the Philippians supported Paul financially but continually interceded for Paul. It seems that he had a special affection for them.

PAUL PRAYED THAT THE PHILIPPIANS WOULD HAVE DISCERNEMENT WITH THE GOAL OF BEING BLAMELESS UNTIL THE DAY OF CHRIST 1:9-11

[9] *And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment,* [10] *so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;* [11] *having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.*

The term rendered as *real knowledge* is ἐπίγνοσις (*epignosis*) which, as noted earlier, is not just head knowledge, but experiential knowledge. Having this sort of knowledge resulted in the Philippian's being able to discern truth from error and embrace only that which was true.

Having this knowledge and living accordingly would cause them to look forward to the return of Jesus Christ.

PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT RESULTED IN SOME OF THE PRAETORIAN GUARD'S HEARING THE GOSPEL AND HIS EXAMPLE CAUSED MANY BELIEVERS TO BECOME BOLDER 1:12-14

[12] *Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel,* [13] *so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else,* [14] *and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.*

Acts 28:23-31 describe Paul's imprisonment and how it resulted in some of the Roman guard's hearing the Gospel. Had Paul not been imprisoned, the guards probably never would have heard the Gospel.

He considered whatever the price, allowing someone to hear the Gospel was worth the price.

- **THE PRAETORIAN GUARD**

- The **Praetorian Guard** was an elite unit of the Imperial Roman army that served as personal bodyguards, intelligence agents, and political power-brokers for the Roman emperors.
- They were general's personal bodyguard tent or escort used during the Roman Republic by commanders like Scipio Africanus, Sulla, and Julius Caesar.]
- Emperor Augustus formally established the permanent Praetorian Guard in 27 BC to protect his person and centralize power. [1, 2]
- Initially organized into nine cohorts (later expanded), they were housed in a heavily fortified barracks just outside OF Rome. They received higher pay, shorter military service terms, and greater prestige than regular frontier legionaries.
- They guarded the imperial palace, acted as secret police (*speculatores*), managed crowd control, and served as emergency firefighters in Rome.
- Because of their physical proximity to the throne, they frequently interfered in politics. They assassinated numerous emperors—including Caligula, Pertinax, and Caracalla—installed new rulers like Claudius, and famously auctioned off the imperial office to Didius Julianus in 193 AD.
- Septimius Severus purged the corrupt guard in 193 AD and restaffed it with loyal veterans from the regular frontier legions.
- The Guard backed the usurper Maxentius against Constantine I. After Constantine defeated Maxentius at the Battle of Milvian Bridge in 312 AD, he permanently disbanded the Praetorian Guard and demolished their barracks.

SOME OF THOSE WHO BEGAN PREACHING THE GOSPEL DID SO TO CAUSE PAUL DISTRESS, KNOWING THOSE WHO WERE ENEMIES OF THE GOSPEL WOULD BLAME PAUL FOR THEIR ACTIONS. SOME, HOWEVER, PREACHED WITH THE RIGHT MOTIVES 1:15-17

15 *Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ even from envy and strife, but some also*
from good will; 16 *the latter do it out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the*
defense of the gospel; 17 *the former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, rather*
than from pure motives, thinking to cause me distress in my imprisonment.

It is a sad commentary on the motives of those who preached the Gospel in order to cause Paul trouble. The enemies of the Gospel would view their actions as the result of Paul's preaching and blame Paul.

REGARDLESS OF THE MOTIVES OF THE PREACHERS, THE GOSPEL WAS BEING PROCLAIMED, WHICH WAS AN OCASSION FOR REJOICING 1:18

[18] *What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice, yes, and I will rejoice.*

Regardless of the motives of the preachers, people were hearing the Gospel and no doubt, this was resulting in the salvation of some of the hearers.

PAUL RECOGNIZED THE EFFICACY OF THE PHILIPPIAN'S PRAYERS BUT HE FELT THAT TO DIE AND BE WITH CHRIST WOULD BE BETTER FOR HIM 1:19-21

[19] *For I know that this shall turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,* [20] *according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I shall not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.* [21] *For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

Even though Paul was thankful for their prayers, it was the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ that assured Paul of his deliverance.

His controlling desire that whether alive or through his death Christ might be exalted – that Christ be exalted was the motivating desire of Paul's regardless of his personal circumstances. The body is the instrument that the Holy Spirit and one's human spirit uses in relationships.

Paul was so dedicated to Christ that it seemed to him that it would be Christ's benefit if he remained alive and served Him. However, it would be Paul's personal benefit if he could die and be with Christ.

PAUL WRESTLED WITH HIS DESIRE ON THE ONE HAND TO DIE AND BE WITH CHRIST AND ON THE OTHER HAND TO REMAIN ALIVE AND BE AN INSTRUMENT OF CHRIST'S BLESSING THE PHILIPPIANS 1:22-26

[22] *But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose.* [23] *But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better;* [24] *yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.* [25] *And convinced of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the*

faith, [26] so that your proud confidence in me may abound in Christ Jesus through my coming to you again.

Even though Paul longed to die and be with Christ he had sense that God was not through with him and that he would live on and be of benefit to the Philippians.

PAUL EXHORTED THEM TO LIVE LIVES THAT WOULD BE EXPRESSIONS OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST 1:27-29

[27] Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ; so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; [28] in no way alarmed by your opponents-- which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God. [29] For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, [30] experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

Paul hoped that even though he would not be with them, that he would receive reports of their standing firm in Christ regardless of what that would cost them.

The persecution that would come upon them from the enemies of the Gospel would cause them suffering but Paul had given them the example as to how one should live even though persecuted.

The actions of their persecutors would result in their destruction, in God's timing. If not in this life, then after their death they would find themselves on the way to hell.

PAUL CONTINUED HIS EXHORTATION BY INSTRUCTING THEM TO PUT OTHERS INTERESTS AHEAD OF THEIR OWN 2:1-4

[1]If therefore there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, [2] make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. [4] do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

Paul assumes that there is encouragement in Christ, consolation of love, fellowship of the Spirit, affection and compassion, which the Philippians would readily admit, therefore allowing Paul to make his point that they should put others interests ahead of their own.

PAUL URGED THE PHILIPPIANS TO FOLLOW CHRIST'S EXAMPLE OF GIVING UP HIS SUPERIORITY AS A DIVINE BEING IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A MEANS OF SALVATION FOR HUMANS 2:5-11

[5] Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, [6] who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, [7] but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. [8] And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

[9] Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, [10] that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, [11] and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Here is another example of translators shying away from the literal interpretation of the Greek term, δοῦλος (*doulos*), which refers to a slave and, in its place, to use the term, *bond servant*.

This passage presents one of the doctrines that has caused some division in denominations. The Greek term rendered, *emptied,* is ἐκένωσεν (ekenohsen) which is the aorist active of the verb, κενόω (*kenohow*). The term means, *to empty.*

What does it mean for Christ to have emptied Himself? This has resulted in serious debate and heavily defended points of view:

- Ontological Kenoticism which states that Christ literally divested Himself of essential divine attributes, such as, omniscience omnipotence and omnipresence. Thus, Jesus ceased to be God during His earthly existence.
- Functional Kenoticism holds that Jesus retained His divine attributes in essence but voluntarily restricted their independent use during His earthly ministry.
- Traditional Orthodox view states that Jesus voluntarily veiled His divine glory and chose to not independently exercise certain divine prerogatives, operating in obedience to the Father and through the power of the Holy Spirit while remaining both 100% God and 100% human.

The decision as to which of these is the best interpretation, or if there is another, is a very difficult decision. Various denominations have chosen one of these views.

Deciding which of these views is correct is not as important as the point that Paul states, *that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, [11] and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

PAUL URGED EACH INDIVIDUAL TO WORK OUT HIS OWN SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING 2:12-16

[12] So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; [13] for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. [14] Do all things without grumbling or disputing; [15] that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, [16] holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may have cause to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.

The Greek term rendered, *so then,* is ὥστε (*hostee*) which some versions render as *therefore,* and some as *wherefore.* The term means that because of the truths just stated, it is important to do what is the natural result of these truths.

Paul exhorts the Philippians that because of the truths just stated, that they move forward in fulfilling the results of these truths, whether he is with them or not.

The responsibility belongs to each individual to work out his own salvation. No one else can do it for us.

The Holy Spirit in each believer is a motivator and guide as each one works out his own salvation with fear and trembling.

The consequences of success or failure are such that Paul says that working out one's salvation should be done with fear and trembling. The idea is not to have tormenting misgiving but rather, with profound reverence and a wakeful conscience.

Whatever the circumstances of one's life, the Christian should move forward in faith without grumbling or disputing with God.

BEING IN CHAINS, PAUL WAS NOT ABLE TO VISIT THEM SO HE SENT HIS DISCIPLE, TIMOTHY, TO LEARN OF THEIR CONDITION 2:17-24

*[17] But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all. [18] **And** you too, I urge you, rejoice in the same way and share your joy with me. [19] But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition. [20] For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare. [21] For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus. [22] But you know of his proven worth that he served with me in the furtherance of the gospel like a child serving his father. [23]*

Therefore I hope to send him immediately, as soon as I see how things go with me; [24] *and I trust in the Lord that I myself also shall be coming shortly.*

A drink offering was a measured amount of wine poured out on an altar, it usually accompanied other things being offered, such as a lamb. It was codified in the Mosaic Law.

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF DRINK OFFERINGS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT:

Genesis 35:14: Jacob sets up a stone pillar at Bethel and pours a drink offering and oil upon it.

Exodus 29:40–41: Mandates a drink offering (a fourth of a hin of wine) to accompany the daily morning and evening lamb burnt offerings.

Leviticus 23:13: Prescribes a drink offering of wine (a fourth of a hin) alongside the grain and burnt offerings for the Feast of Firstfruits.

Numbers 15:5, 7, 10: Outlines specific quantities of wine required for drink offerings when presenting a lamb, ram, or bull.

Numbers 28:7, 14: Details the drink offerings required for daily, weekly (Sabbath), and monthly burnt offerings.

Numbers 29:6, 11, 16 (and throughout): Specifies drink offerings for the autumn festivals, including the Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Feast of Booths.

II Samuel 23::16: King David's mighty men pour out water from the well of Bethlehem as an offering to the Lord.

Ezekiel 20:28: Rebukes Israel for offering forbidden drink offerings to idols in the high places. [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6]

Paul described himself, imprisoned and facing probable execution, as a drink offering poured out for the Philippians salvation.

[25] *But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and minister to my need;* [26] *because he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick.* [27] *For indeed he was sick to the point of death, but God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.* [28] *Therefore I have sent him all the more eagerly in order that when you see him again you may rejoice and I may be less concerned about you.* [29] *Therefore receive him in the Lord with all joy, and hold men like him in high regard;* [30] *because he came close to death for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was deficient in your service to me.*

We do not know anything about Epaphroditus except what is stated here and in 4:18 where Paul thanks the Philippians for sending Epaphroditus to him with funds from the Philippians.

Paul was sending him back to Philippi so that they could see that he had been healed from a sickness that had come upon him while he was visiting Paul.

PAUL WARNED OF THE PERVERTERS OF THE GOSPEL WHO ASSERTED THAT CIRCUMCISON WAS NECESSARY TO BE SAVED AND CITED HIS EXPERIENCE AS AN EXAMPLE 3:1-7

Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things again is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you. [2] Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision; [3] for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh, [4] although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: [5] circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; [6] as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless. [7] But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

Paul wrote that physical circumcision was not true circumcision. With the coming of the Gospel of salvation by grace and faith, the true circumcision is spiritual – something that may not be known experientially but spiritually is true.

Circumcision was a requirement for being in covenant with God, under the Mosaic covenant. Under the new covenant physical circumcision has no place. It is all by faith and being immersed into Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38).

Paul had the credentials for being in covenant with God under the Mosaic covenant. In his zeal of persecuting the Church, he demonstrated his devotion to that covenant, until Christ grabbed him and revealed the truth to him. (Acts 9)

Once Paul came to know Christ and was baptized into Christ (Acts 9:18), he had a zeal for the new covenant that was equal to the zeal he had for the old covenant.

HAVING LEARNED THE TRUTH CONCERNING CHRIST, PAUL WAS WILLING TO LOSE EVERTHING IF THE RESULT WOULD BE KNOWING CHRIST 3:8-14

[8] More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ, [9] and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is

through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith, [10] that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; [11] in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. [12] Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. [13] Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, [14] I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus

Paul had lost his respected role among the Jews, but his respect given to him by the Jews did not compare to the indescribable blessing of knowing Christ.

Even though he had made this sacrifice, he still considered himself as needing to press on in his pursuit of fully knowing Christ.

These verses bring to mind the hymn, *I'd Rather Have Jesus.*

I'd rather have Jesus than silver or gold,
I'd rather be His than have riches untold;
I'd rather have Jesus than houses or land,
I'd rather be led by His nail-pierced hand:

Than to be the king of a vast domain
Or be held in sin's dread sway.
I'd rather have Jesus than anything This world affords today.

I'd rather have Jesus than men's applause,
I'd rather be faithful to His dear cause;
I'd rather have Jesus than world-wide fame,
I'd rather be true to His holy Name

Than to be the king of a vast domain,
Or be held in sin's dread sway.
I'd rather have Jesus than anything This world affords today.

He's fairer than lilies of rarest bloom,
He's sweeter than honey from out of the comb;
He's all that my hungering spirit needs
I'd rather have Jesus and let Him lead

Than to be the king of a vast domain,
Or be held in sin's dread sway.
I'd rather have Jesus than anything This world affords today.

PAUL URGED THE PHILIPPIANS TO FOLLOW HIS EXAMPLE AND NOT TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF THOSE WHO LIVE BY A DIFFERENT STANDARD 3:15-21

15 Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; 16 however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained. 17 Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. 18 For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things. 20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

The Greek term rendered as *perfect* is τέλειος (*teleios*). The term means, complete. Paul stated that anyone who is complete in their devotion to Christ and looks to their faith in Christ as the only means of salvation, is complete in their spiritual development.

He continues by stating that the believer's citizenship is a citizen of heaven. A believer probably is a citizen of a nation on the earth, but his identity is in his heavenly citizenship, which at times may require him to do things that violate the rules of his earthly citizenship.

PAUL URGES THE PHILIPPIANS TO STAND FIRM AND EXHORTS TWO WOMEN WHO HAVE SHARED IN PAUL'S MINISTRY TO LIVE IN HARMONY 4:1-3

Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, so stand firm in the Lord, my beloved. 2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord. 3 Indeed, true comrade, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

In Paul's description of the believers' armor in Ephesians 6:10-20, the same exhortation is given – *stand firm.*

This is the only information that we have on Euodia and Syntyche. Obviously, they had been Paul's co-laborers at some point in his ministry. Evidently, some sort of pride or jealousy had grown in their relationship and Paul urges the Philippian Church to help them to put aside their differences and to live in harmony, which is a theme present in all of Paul's epistles.

This also is the only information that we have on Clement. He probably had worked with Paul in establishing the Philippian Church.

PAUL EXHORTS THE PHILIPPIANS TO PLACE EVERY PROBLEM BEFORE THE LORD, IN PRAYER, AND THEY WOULD EXPERIENCE INDESCRIBABLE PEACE 4:4-7

[4] Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! [5] Let your forbearing spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. [6] Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. [7] And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Whatever the circumstances might be, Paul exhorts the Philippians to always rejoice in the Lord and to pray with thanksgiving. The result of this would be a peace with God that is not possible to explain or comprehend how or why it is so.

This brings to mind Isaiah 26:3, *Thou will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee.*

THE PHILIPPIANS ARE URGED TO PRACTICE POSITIVE THINKING AND TO MENTALLY DWELL ON THE RIGHT THINGS 4:8-9

[8] Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things. [9] The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things; and the God of peace shall be with you.

Paul had modeled this way of thinking when he was with them. They are urged to remember his example and to live and think as he had done.

PAUL HAD LEARNED TO BE CONTENT IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT HE EXPRESSED HIS GRATITUDE TO THE PHILIPPIANS FOR THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT THAT THEY HAD SENT TO HIM 4:10-20

[10] But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned before, but you lacked opportunity. [11] Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. [12] I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. [13] I can do all things through Him who strengthens me. [14] Nevertheless, you have done well to share with me in my affliction. [15] And you yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I departed from

Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone; [16] for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs. [17] Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account. [18] But I have received everything in full, and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God. [19] And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Harking back to what he had mentioned in 1:3-5, Paul expressed gratitude for the financial support, but also stated that whether he had abundance or was in poverty, he had learned to be content. Paul's example is a great model for all believers to emulate.

PAUL CLOSES THE EPISTLE WITH DOXOLOGY AND EXTENDS GREETINGS, NOT ONLY FROM HIMSELF, BUT FROM THOSE WHO ARE WITH HIM IN ROME 4:20-22

[20] Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen. [21] Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you. [22] All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household. [23] The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

As noted in the introduction, Paul was under house arrest and in chains when he wrote this letter and as a result of his imprisonment, even members of Caesar's household had become believers. None of these would have heard the Gospel had it not been for Paul's house arrest in Rome. (1:12-14)

LETTER TO PHILEMON

Philemon was a wealthy citizen of Colossae. He owned one slave named Onesimus. The Colossian church met in Philemon's home. Onesimus had run away and probably had stolen some money.

Because Rome was large and had a large population, runaway slaves often went to Rome where they sought to blend in with the population. Because of this, there was a group of men who were slave catchers. If a runaway slave were caught, he was branded with a large F on his forehead and sometimes had to wear and iron neck piece identifying him/her as a runaway slave. He was beaten with whips and rods and then, under guard, returned to his master.

Onesimus probably had met Paul when he visited Philemon and his house church.

When Onesimus arrived in Rome he sought out Paul, hoping to stay with him and avoid the slave catchers. We do not know how he found Paul, but when he did, he immediately took up residence in Paul's quarters. Paul lived for two years in his own rented housing and that is where he was detained under house arrest (Acts 28:30-31)

The purpose of Paul's letter to Philemon was to urge him to receive Onesimus back into his home and Paul said that if he had stolen anything, that Paul would restore it.

PAUL BEGAN THE LETTER WITH HIS USUAL GREETING OF PROUNOUNCING A BLESSING ON PHILEMON 1:1-3

[1] Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon our beloved brother and fellow worker, [2] and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house: [3] Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is another letter that Paul wrote while in chains. His young disciple Timothy was with him when he wrote the letter.

Apphia would have been Philemon's wife and Archippus his son. Philemon had reason to thank God for his son, whom Paul described as his fellow soldier. Archippus must have been doing the work that Paul did before his arrest – spreading the Gospel.

The letter not only is sent to Philemon, but also to the church that met in Philemon's house in Colossae.

BECAUSE OF PHILEMON'S FAITHFULNESS, PAUL HAD SPECIAL LOVE FOR PHILEMON AND PRAYED FOR HIM CONSTANTLY 1:4-7

[4] I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers, [5] because I hear of your love, and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all the saints; [6] and I pray that the fellowship of your faith may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake. [7] For I have come to have much joy and comfort in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.

Onesimus must have reported to Paul the spiritual life of Philemon. Therefore, Paul could write that he had heard about Philemon and his godly love for all fellow believers. The Christians of Colossae who met in Philemon's home were refreshed by the love and faith of their host.

PAUL THEN REVEALED THE PURPOSE OF THE LETTER – TO URGE PHILEMON TO RECEIVE ONESIMUS BACK, BUT NOW MORE THAN A SLAVE – HE HAD BECOME A BROTHER 1:8-17

[8] Therefore, though I have enough confidence in Christ to order you to do that which is proper, [9] yet for love's sake I rather appeal to you-- since I am such a person as Paul, the aged, and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus-- [10] I appeal to you for my child, whom I have begotten in my imprisonment, Onesimus, [11] who formerly was useless to you, but now is useful both to you and to me. [12] And I have sent him back to you in person, that is, sending my very heart, [13] whom I wished to keep with me, that in your behalf he might minister to me in my imprisonment for the gospel; [14] but without your consent I did not want to do anything, that your goodness should not be as it were by compulsion, but of your own free will. [15] For perhaps he was for this reason parted from you for a while, that you should have him back forever, [16] no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved brother, especially to me, but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. [17] If then you regard me a partner, accept him as you would me.

Paul presented the Gospel to Onesimus and he accepted Christ as his Savior and therefore, became a brother to Paul and Philemon. Paul wrote that he would like to keep Onesimus with him, but the honorable thing to do was send him back to Philemon.

As an apostle, Paul could have ordered Philemon to receive Onesimus back, but he chose to not exercise his authority. Instead of doing that, he appealed to Philemon to receive Onesimus back not just as a loyal slave, but also as a brother.

PAUL WAS SO EAGER TO HAVE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ONESIMUS AND PHILEMON TO BE AS BROTHERS WITHOUT ANY PROBLEMS BETWEEN THEM THAT PAUL OFFERED TO PAY BACK TO PHILEMON ANY MONEY THAT ONESIMUS HAD STOLEN 1:18-21

[18] But if he has wronged you in any way, or owes you anything, charge that to my account; [19] I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand, I will repay it (lest I should mention to you that you owe to me even your own self as well). [20] Yes, brother, let me benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ. [21] Having confidence in your obedience, I write to you, since I know that you will do even more than what I say.

Paul let Philemon know that he personally had written the letter – with his own hands.

PAUL HOPED TO BE FREED FOM HIS CHAINS AND IF AND WHEN THAT HAPPENED, HE LOOKED FORWARD TO PHILEMON'S PREPARING A PLACE FOR HIM TO STAY IN COLOSSAE 1:22

[22] And at the same time also prepare me a lodging; for I hope that through your prayers I shall be given to you.

PAUL CLOSED THE LETTER BY SENDING GREETINGS NOT ONLY FROM HIMSELF, BUT ALSO FROM OTHERS WHO WERE WITH HIM 1:23-25

[23] Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, [24] as do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, Luke, my fellow workers. [25] The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

We do not know anything about Epaphras' imprisonment, but Paul described him as his *fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus*.

The others whom Paul mentioned were with him were not prisoners, but they were companions who were not going to abandon their dear friend and apostle, while he was in chains.

Thus closes, a short but very personal epistle.

ADDEDUM A
MAP OF GALATIA

ADDENDUM B
MAP OF PAUL'S MINISTRY IN ASIA

ADDENDUM C
THE TEMPLE OF ARTEMIS AT EPHESUS

THE ARTEMIS IDOL

ADDENDUM D
MAP OF PHILIPPI AND COLOSSAE