

the general turning of the Jews to Jesus as the Messiah. Therefore, I believe that the first portion, or "first fruits" were those few Jews in Paul's day who had accepted Christ. Because they had, they testified that all could if they would. And then looking back to the thought that the rejection of Israel was not final, we can see in this a picture of God's estimation of Israel. He looks upon them as "holy," not in the sense that they were saved, but his heart went out to them for all that they had been to him, and for what they could be to him if they would but accept his Son. Israel is not without hope; they will one day return, and even now God looks upon them as objects of his love. vs. 16. As to the meaning of the second picture, we quote from Moses E. Lard, page 360: "The same sentiment is reiterated, with the imagery changed. The root corresponds to the first Jewish converts, the branches to the rejected nation. Assuming the root of a tree to be holy, we naturally infer holiness of its branches. Such is the argument. The word "holy" has here the same meaning as in the preceding clause. If God has accepted the root, or first converts from the Jews, he will accept the whole nation when converted. Such is the import of the passage. It is a short, striking metaphor, with a perfectly clear meaning." Who were the branches in the last metaphor? Yes, the Jews. In verse 17 we have the statement that some of these branches were "broken off." This plainly speaks of the rejection of Christ among Israel. By that rejection they were "broken off." We do not maintain that these metaphor in verses 16 and 17 are connected in any other sense. There is no need to carry the application of these simple pictures any farther than the apostle does. He simply states that some of the branches were "broken off"; he does not allude to the tree. He places no emphasis upon the tree; why should we? The thought is rejection, and it is plainly stated—let us leave it there. vs. 17a.

Now appears once again the same comparison and thought of the Jew's rejection that has been dealt with throughout the discussion. The reception of the Gentiles is stated in these words: "And you, being a wild olive, have been grafted in among them." There were some branches who were not broken off; these of course were the Christian Jews. It was among these branches that the Gentiles were grafted in. The whole thought, of course, has reference to the salvation of the Gentiles as forming part of the church with the Christian Jews. vs. 17b.

297. Explain the first metaphor. Who is the first fruit? Who is the lump?

298. Explain the second simile. Who is the root? Who are the branches?

299. Who was broken off and who was grafted in? What is the tree?

In the midst of this imagery there is the practical note and admonition of the 18th verse. It is well to realize the blessing of partaking of the wonderful benefits of the gospel as described in "partaking of the root and fatness of the olive tree." But then we must not become high-minded or proud and speak against the Jews, for, "Remember," says the apostle, "that salvation came of the Jews." We do not mock the branches, but keep in mind that we owe a great deal to those branches, for without them we would have no Saviour, no revelation, no salvation. The Jews are like the root of the tree, and we are like the ingrafted branches of this tree. vs. 18.

A rather veiled objection is now raised by the imaginary Gentile. "Were not the branches broken off that I might be grafted in?" In a sense this might be true, for even as we have said, the Gentiles were given opportunity to hear the gospel through the refusal of the Jews. But on the other hand, it was not to be supposed by the Gentiles that God loved them or preferred them above the Jews, and because of this he cast out the Jew that he might receive the Gentiles. No, the Jews were broken off only because of their unbelief. And further consideration of the matter will show us that we only stand in God's favor because of our trusting reliance on Christ. Now if we begin to trust in ourselves and our position, we will have fallen into the same snare as the Jews. Considering this, "be not high-minded but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches (when they looked to self-effort) neither will he spare thee (if you act in the same manner)." vs. 21.

As a conclusion to this thought of acceptance and rejection, we have verse 22. In all that has been said, it is easy to see the immutable decisions of the Creator. We behold his goodness and severity. God must, and always does, maintain justice. Those who willfully refuse he must sever; but, on the other hand, his goodness is always accessible. The Gentiles were the recipients of God's goodness, which was summed up in the salvation they enjoyed. However, the Gentiles must also remember that a continuance in faith is as important as is the initial decision. The thought of continuing in God's goodness as here used refers to the steadfastness on the part of man in the provisions God has made for his life and hope, rather than trusting in his own wisdom or good works. So it was that Paul admonished the Gentiles to behold the overall picture and realize that a trusting, humble reliance upon God through Christ was the

300. What is the admonition of verse 18?

301. What is the objection of verse 21? How is it answered?

302. How can we see in this circumstance the justice of God? What warning is given?

only thing that could keep them from being cut off as was the Jew. vs. 22.

Now once again back to the thought of this whole section: The nation of Israel was not without hope, for if they would but cease in their course of unbelief they would be grafted in. There was only one barrier—their unbelief. God was ready and God was able to graft them in, even as he did the Gentiles. vs. 23. Yes, indeed, he can graft them in. In some respects their acceptance by the Almighty would be more natural than his receiving of the Gentiles. A further point of comparison is made in the olive tree simile to emphasize this thought. The usual grafting process has been reversed in the case of the Gentiles. No one acquainted with the laws of grafting would graft a portion of a wild tree into the root of a tame tree, but this God has, in his mercy and wisdom, performed. The wild branch of the Gentiles was grafted into the root of the Christian Jews. The plan of God was that the Messiah was predetermined to come to the world through the Jewish nation. Everything about him appeared in shadow and type in the scriptures of the nation of Israel. It should have been that Jesus would be welcomed as the crowning glory of Israel's heritage. The church should have been accepted as the wonderful new creation of the Messiah. Yes, the church was meant to be the Jews' "own olive tree," but they stumbled over the "suffering servant" and missed his glorious kingdom. But then, one day when they will finally open their eyes, how they will then understand it all, how then will the dark things be made plain and the great pattern of God all fit together! This we take to be the import of the thought of the grafting in of the Jews "into their own olive tree." vs. 24.

Text

11:25-32. For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in; 26 and so all Israel shall be saved: even as it is written,

There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer;

He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

27 And this is my covenant unto them,

When I shall take away their sins.

28 As touching the gospel, they are enemies for your sake: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sake. 29 For the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of. 30 For as ye in time past were disobedient to God, but now have obtained mercy

303. Explain the two "grafting in" processes.

by their disobedience, 31 even so have these also now been disobedient, that by the mercy shown to you they also may now obtain mercy. 32 For God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all.

REALIZING ROMANS, 11:25-32

494. How would ignorance of the "hardening of Israel" be a temptation to the Gentiles?
495. What is "the fullness of the Gentiles"? Remember what you said about the "fullness" of the Jews?
496. When the fullness of the Gentiles is reached, then the Jews in great numbers will turn to Christ. Is that the thought of this passage?
497. Do you know the significance of the name "Zion"? This is the key word in this passage. Explain.
498. The nation of Israel was both an enemy and beloved. Explain.
499. What "gifts" do we have from God in connection with this subject? What calling of God do we have?
500. The disobedience of man and the mercy of God provided salvation, *but* man must do something about it—both Jews and Gentiles. Explain the responsibility of both Jews and Gentiles in the light of God's mercy.
501. In what sense is God responsible for our disobedience? Before you answer, read vs. 32 again.

Paraphrase

11:25-32. For, brethren, that ye may not have an high conceit of yourselves, on account of your being made the people of God in place of the Jews, I must show you this secret, that the blindness of the Jews in part, will continue only till the generality of the Gentiles come into the Christian church. For that illustrious event will render the evidences of the gospel irresistible.

26 And so, laying aside their prejudices, all Israel, by believing the gospel, shall enjoy the means of salvation, according as it is foretold, Isa. lix. 20. The redeemer shall come to Zion, and to them that turn from transgression in Jacob.

27 For this is my covenant with them, when I shall take away their sins of unbelief. 'My spirit that is upon thee, O Messiah, and my word which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.'

28 With respect to the gospel indeed, they are, through their unbelief, enemies to God on your account; your reception into the

church. But with respect to their original election to be the people of God, they are still beloved of God, on account of the promise to their fathers, that he would be a God to them in their generations.

29 For God's free gift, and his calling Abraham's posterity by Isaac his people, are unalterable on the part of God, who, if they repent, will receive them again.

30 Besides, as ye Gentiles also in times past have disobeyed God by your idolatry, yet now have obtained the mercy of being admitted into God's covenant and church, through the disobedience of the Jews to the gospel;

31 Even so the Jews also have now disobeyed the gospel on your being admitted into Gods' covenant, yet so as by your receiving that great favor, the gospel being continued in the world, they also shall obtain the mercy of being at length admitted into God's covenant.

32 For God hath shut up together all under sentence of death for their disobedience, that, in admitting them into his covenant and church, he might make them sensible (aware) that he bestows a free gift upon all.

Summary

Hardness in part has come upon Israel until the full sum of the Gentiles come into the church. By that time the hardness of Israel will give way, they will then become believers, and so a great many of them will be saved. You Gentiles should know this mystery to keep you from becoming puffed up with self-importance. The rejected Jews are still beloved on their Father's account, and you Gentiles have now to preach the gospel to them, and so convert them to Christ. They are thus at last to realize the divine mercy through you. Their fall has proved a blessing to you, and your conversion is to prove a blessing to them.

Comment

c. Mercy to All; The Ultimate Purpose of God. 11:25-32

In verse 25 we have a bold statement of fact that has before only been given in analogy. Lest the brethren in Rome (a great share of whom were Gentiles) distort the aim of this figurative language into a conclusion concerning their own self-importance, Paul says, "For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part has befallen Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." The thought of "hardening in part" refers back to the thought that their rejection was not entire, but only "in part." The time element spoken of here points once again to the fact that their rejection is not final, only

until "the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." But what can the meaning of "the fullness of the Gentiles" be? We have had a reference to the "fullness" of the Jews (cf. vs. 12b). In this case we found the term "fullness" to be descriptive of the turning of the Jews to Christ, and in great numbers. Since then, the same subject is here being discussed, the turning of men to Christ, we could likewise say the fullness of the Gentiles refers to the extensive acceptance of Christ among these peoples. But there is one contrast in this comparison, for the fullness of the Gentiles is said to "come in." What is the thought here? This would seem to mean that there are a certain number of persons in that multitude, and when that number has been reached then will come to pass the fulfillment of the promise. We do not mean that no further Gentiles will be saved; indeed, we have already said that the fullness of the Jews would mean "life from the dead" among the Gentiles. The thought is that a change will take place as to who will carry God's good news. 11:25

The apostle emphatically affirms that when the fullness of the Gentiles has been reached, "All Israel will be saved." Along with the salvation of Israel, Paul promises that the words of Isaiah, the prophet, will find their fulfillment. How is it that all Israel shall be saved? How is it they were lost? This is not difficult to answer. They were lost because they turned from Christ; they then will be saved when they turn to Christ. Notice please that the turning of the Jews to Christ is tied up inseparably with the fullness of the Gentiles. This would give us some light on the reason for the turning of the nation of Israel to their Messiah. It would seem that there will be something in the bringing in of the fullness of the Gentiles that will cause all Israel to be saved. This could be nothing short of the faithful preaching of the gospel by the Gentiles to the Jews. When the Gentiles have accomplished this in the way and manner that God wants it done, then will come to pass the fullness of the Gentiles and the salvation of Israel. That it could take place in any other way seems inconsistent with God's means for man's salvation. To state that "all" Israel will be saved does not necessitate the salvation of each individual in the nation, but only as the word "all" is used in other instances which speak of a large portion as "all." The "Deliverer" who was to come out of Zion could be none other than Christ. Zion in this instance would refer to Israel and the results will be that ungodliness will be taken from Jacob. Since the Jews

304. What temptation was possible on the part of the Gentiles at Rome as they read this chapter?

305. How did Paul combat this temptation?

306. What is the meaning of "the fullness of the Gentiles"? How can it be said to "come in"?

are descendants of Jacob, this would refer to them. When the day comes that Israel accepts the salvation provided in Christ, then will they be able to look back upon these words of Isaiah and behold their fulfillment. The covenant made by God with Israel concerning this was probably made with Abraham and now finds its fulfillment in Christ. vs. 26-27

Still speaking of Israel, the inspired writer speaks of their relationship to the gospel. When Jehovah views Israel in the light of the gospel he must say, "They are my enemies." It is not that God has refused them, but rather that they have refused him. But as has been considered before, God used this as a means of saving the Gentiles. When viewing Israel in relationship to his eternal purposes or "election," he says, "They are beloved." Why were they beloved and in what sense? As to why they are beloved, we have the answer given: "For the fathers' sake." Who are the fathers here spoken of? Notice that it does not refer to the heavenly Father, but rather to "the fathers." This we take to mean the fathers of the Hebrew nation, namely, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, etc. Because of the promises made to these great men of God, he yet loves Israel. The 29th verse serves to explain his consideration of Israel for the fathers' sake. He is saying in essence that many among the Jews will one day turn to Christ, for he so purposed it when he promised to these men of old that he would be their God and they his children. These are called "gifts and calling." God is not sorry that he thus made these promises, for although it might now appear as a mystery, it will one day be made plain, even as he purposed. 11:28-29

In conclusion to this whole matter of the salvation of the Jews and Gentiles, we have the statement of verses 30-32. Let us read verse 32 first and then see how it finds its explanation and fulfillment in verses 30-31. Notice: "For God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all." Consider first the disobedience of the Gentiles. This was described in the first chapter of this book, but was purely introductory and had nothing to do with mercy. Now we notice the disobedience of the Jew. This was so for a twofold purpose: not only that Gentiles might obtain mercy through Christ, but that we might bring the gospel to the Jewish people and thus cause them to enter into God's mercy. This only more firmly established the thought we before expressed, which

307. How will the "fullness of the Gentiles" save "all Israel"? What is meant by the term "all Israel"?

308. Who is the "Deliverer out of Zion"?

309. Explain in your own words verse 28.

is that the turning of the Jews to Christ is dependent upon the preaching of the gospel by the Gentiles. So then, we can indeed see that God shut up all unto disobedience, (in the case of the Gentiles, before Christ; in the case of the Jews, after Christ) "that he might have mercy upon all." Of the fulfillment of this we have just written. 11:30-32

Text

11:33-36. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! 34 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? 35 or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? 36 For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him be the glory for ever. Amen.

REALIZING ROMANS, 11:33-36

502. What would prompt the doxology in vs. 33-36?
503. Show the difference between "knowledge and wisdom" as here used. cf. vs. 33a.
504. Since we cannot know the mind of the Lord, what should be our attitude toward his will?
505. We are so much in debt to God. Explain how this is true, and the response we should make to the debt.
506. Concerning God, we are "of him," "through him," "unto him." This calls forth a response on our part which is "to him." Explain each.

Paraphrase

11:33-36. In surveying the divine dispensations, instead of finding fault, We ought to cry out, O the greatness, both of the wisdom of God in contriving and ordering these dispensations, and of the knowledge of God in foreseeing the effects which they would produce! How unsearchable are his determinations, and his ways past finding out!

34 For what man or angel hath comprehended all the reasons of God's determinations, so as to be able to judge of his ways? Or who hath given him advice, respecting either the planning or the managing of the affairs of the universe?

310. What is meant by the "gifts and calling" of God?

311. Show how all were shut up unto disobedience that all might obtain mercy.

35 Or has any one laid an obligation on God, by first conferring a favor on him? Let him show the obligation, and he shall have full recompense.

36 For from him all things proceed, and by him all things are governed, and to his glory are all things both made and governed. To him alone be ascribed the glory of the creation, preservation, and government of the universe, for ever. Amen.

Summary

Great is the depth of God's resources, and wisdom, and knowledge in working out the redemption of the world. We cannot know beforehand what his decisions are, nor how he moves in effecting his ends. No one has ever been privy to his counsels, nor any appointed to aid him. All things originate in him, and all things are for his honor and glory.

Comment

d. Conclusion: 11:33-36

We can think of no better words to express the thought of this conclusion than the paraphrasing of these verses as given by W. Sanday on p. 333 in the International Critical Commentary. 11:33 "When we contemplate a scheme like this spread out before us in vast panorama, how forcibly does it bring home to us the inexhaustible profundity of that Divine mind by which it was planned! The decisions which issue from that mind and the methods by which it works are alike inscrutable to man. 34 Into the secrets of the Almighty none can penetrate. No counsellor stands at His ear to whisper words of suggestion. 35 Nothing in Him is derived from without so as to be claimed back again by its owner. 36 He is the source of all things. Through Him all things flow. He is the final cause to which all things tend. Praised forever be His name! Amen."

Text

12:1,2. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service. 2 And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

PART THREE

The Practical, The Hortatory, and Conclusion. 12:1-16:27

Our Duties to God and Man. 12:1-15:13

REALIZING ROMANS, 12:1-2

507. "Beseech" is a strong word. Would we be disobedient if we fail to obey what is taught in these verses?
508. How have chapters one through eleven formed a background for the conclusion here stated?

Rethinking in Outline Form

5. This rejection neither total nor final. 11:1-36.
- a. Their rejection not total. 11:1-10.
 - (1) Reasons for concluding it was not total. 1-5.
 - (a) Paul was an Israelite, but he was not rejected. 1, 2a.
 - (b) Conditions then were like those in the days of Elijah. 2b-5.
 - (2) Reasons for their rejection. 11:6-10.
 - (a) Acceptance is by grace. 6.
 - (b) The elect found it—not Israel. 7a.
 - (c) The rest were hardened. 7b-10.
 - b. Their rejection not final. 11:11-24.
 - (1) Their fall was an advantage to the Gentiles. 11.
 - (2) Their fall was a blessing to the Gentiles but it does not compare to the blessing their fullness will be to the Gentiles. 12.
 - (3) The Jews will one day turn to Christ. This will be like life from the dead. One day God will graft in the branches that are now broken off. The rejection of the Jews should be a warning to the Gentiles. 12-24.
 - c. Mercy to all the ultimate purpose of God. 11:25-32.
 - (1) The hardening of Israel will last only until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in. 25, 26.
 - (2) God is able to show mercy to all. 27-32.
 - d. Conclusion. 11:33-36.

We can cry out in amazement at the great wisdom and love of God. 33-36.

REALIZING ROMANS, 12:1-2

509. Upon the basis of God's mercies, not his condemnation, we are called upon to make a living sacrifice. Explain this.
510. Our bodies are to be "a living sacrifice." Explain in your own words how this relates to your body.
511. If our bodies are not so presented to God, are they acceptable to him?

512. It would help you in your understanding of the inspired text if you would read it from several translations. In doing this you would find a new meaning for the word "spiritual" in vs. 1b. What is the meaning of the word?
513. Is the fashion of the world always wrong? How can we tell just what is fashionable with the Lord and with the world?
514. Isn't it wonderful to know we can be transformed? Not just changed or improved, but transformed!! Honestly now, do you believe this is possible? Transformed into what?
515. "The renewing of the mind": If we never had "new" minds to begin with, how could they be "renewed"? How often should this process be practiced? How often is it practiced with you?
516. Here is experimental religion in its purest form. We can come to prove to ourselves, to others, and most of all to God that which is good, acceptable, and perfect in life. We are here saying that we believe the practice of God's will in our lives will produce the greatest amount of real happiness for man. Do you agree? Tell why.

Paraphrase

12:1-2. Since the Jewish church, with its sacrifices, is removed, and the Christian church is erected in its place, I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present to him your bodies, wherein sin formerly ruled, a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, by consecrating its members to his service, which is your reasonable worship.

2 And be not fashioned like to the men of this world, by adopting their corrupt principles, their carnal temper, their rotten speech, and their vicious practices, but be changed from what ye were, by having your understanding enlightened, that ye may approve what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God, which is made known in the gospel.

Summary

We are continually to present our bodies a living, holy sacrifice to God. This is made our reasonable service by all the facts and teachings in the foregoing part of this letter. Our minds are to be changed by being renewed. This change is necessary in order to understand God's will correctly.

1. Full consecration to God. 12:1, 2

Comment

Whereas we cannot comprehend many aspects of the nature of

God, there is one quality of God which we can understand, and which calls for a response on our part. We can understand the mercies of God. A review of the history of his dealings with both Jew and Gentile will show "he hath not dealt with us after our sins nor rewarded us according to our iniquities." The goodness of God should indeed lead us to repentance, to "a change of mind." We are not abused at all, but marvelously blessed. In the heart of Paul so strong was this concept of God's goodness that he used a very strong word in calling for our response to God's mercies. He said, "I beseech you." It is as if he were saying, "Come here apart with me, and let me impress upon you face to face the inescapable responsibility each of us have as Christians in response to mercies to us." In the chapters to follow, Paul is to call upon believers to do many things, both for God and man, but now there is but one injunction which was inclusive of all others: "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God." When this is done, all other expressions of devotion and service will issue forth. Note, please, that the body does not present itself. "We" must offer it up to God. By God's grace and in response to his mercy, we *do* have control over this body of flesh; we *can* make it an offering to God, or Paul would never have called for it. Other Christians have done it; they are now doing it. Can we do less?

When we thus present our bodies to God, he will deem them holy and acceptable. Not that we by such a surrender become sinless or infallible, but he who looks on the heart so counts us holy and acceptable on the basis of his grace and our offering. Such action and devotion on our part is but the natural, sensible response of the heart and life to God. Anything short of this reflects upon our willingness to follow out the divine plan of God in dealing with man through Christ.

In verse two are the details of the living sacrifice. If our bodies are to be laid upon the altar of devotion to God, it will be because the volitional, responsible part of man has been renewed, not once but day by day, for that is how often this sacrifice is to be made. Perhaps a morning and an evening oblation would be in order. How shall we dress? How shall we talk? How shall we think? If we see and follow only those things and persons which are near, we shall be like them, corrupt, full of lust. But it is wondrously possible to

312. We can know one quality of God. What is it? How do we discover this quality?

313. Why should the goodness of God lead us to repentance?

314. Is it unreasonable to expect such a complete commitment of fallible man?

315. When we fail to present our bodies to God we fail our own selves also. How is this true?

set a "new fashion" by following Christ, who is the "fashion designer" of the Christian. To be in "fashion" with Christ calls for time, thought, energy on our part. All of this means we must set our minds on the things that are above, and not once, but continually, to have that divine power work in us both to will and to do his good pleasure. When our minds are renewed, so is our life. Our bodies then become "instruments of righteousness."

What are we trying to prove? Better yet, *to whom* are we trying to prove it? We are proving the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God, or that God's will is good, acceptable and perfect. When once we have made this surrender, we will know it ourselves. It will be good, acceptable and perfect to us—life indeed! It will likewise appear so to other Christians, some who need such demonstration. Above all, it will prove to Satan that God's way is the best way, *good, well-pleasing, and perfect*. We feel the emphasis is upon proving it to ourselves, but the other aspects of the thought are also true.

Text

12:3-16. For I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but so to think as to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith. 4 For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office: 5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another. 6 And having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of our faith; 7 or ministry, let us give ourselves to our ministry; or he that teacheth, to his teaching; 8 or he that exhorteth, to his exhorting: he that giveth, let him do it with liberality; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.

9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. 10 In love of the brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another; in honor preferring one another; 11 in diligence not slothful; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; 12 rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing stedfastly in prayer; 13 communicating to the necessities of the saints; given to hospitality. 14 Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not. 15 Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep. 16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Set not your mind on high things, but

316. What is the responsible part of man?

317. How can we be "in fashion" with Christ?

318. The Christian is trying to prove something. What is it?

condescend to things that are lowly. Be not wise in your own conceits.

REALIZING ROMANS, 12:3-16

517. What is "the grace" of vs. 3?
518. We are not to think of ourselves "highly," but rather "soberly." Explain.
519. God has granted to each man "a measure of faith." I thought faith came by hearing, and hearing of the Word of God. (Cf. Rom. 10:17) In what sense are both of these ideas correct?
520. There are persons, some of them in the dark, who are prejudiced against God for making them the way they are. This is tragically wrong. Explain why.
521. We all have some God-given office to hold in his body. Is this the thought of verses 4 and 5?
522. We are not only members of the body of Christ, the church, but of one another. Explain this thought.
523. Prophecy is a gift. How could "the ministry" be a gift? Are these natural or supernatural gifts?
524. It would seem from vs. 8 that exhorting was a separate function or office in the Roman church. Should it be so today?
525. How could "giving" be a gift of God? Are we not all to give?
526. Is showing mercy a gift? Some of these gifts are present in the church today. Designate which ones.
527. What are some of the masks worn by those who are insincere in love?
528. What a wonderful quality is hate when directed toward evil. Explain the word "abhor" in vs. 9.
529. We are "to be glued" to that which is good. In a very practical way show how this is done.
530. If we fulfilled the injunction of vs. 10, would we be accused of emotionalism? Explain why.
531. In an everyday example, show how we could "in honor" prefer one another.
532. Isn't vs. 11a a contradiction? How could a person be "diligent" and "slothful" at the same time?
533. What "spirit" is meant in vs. 11?
534. The sense of service for the Lord escapes us many times; as a result, we begin to serve ourselves or one another. What is the outcome?
535. What "plus factor" must be present in our hearts if we practice the blessed trinity of vs. 12? Cf. Rom. 8:28.
536. Please remember as you read vs. 13 that you are not the recipient but the giver. Do the saints of today have needs we can

meet? How would you define "hospitality"? How are we to consider these words: as suggestions, or ideals, or commands?

537. Just how can we practice blessing those that persecute us? Give an example.

538. Many times we are too busy to have a sincere interest in the happiness or sorrow of others. When we fail to do this, who do we fail? Can we be like Christ without this interest?

539. Is Paul suggesting a loss of individuality in vs. 16? What is he saying?

Paraphrase

12:3-16. Also, by the apostolical authority which is given to me, I command every one among you, without exception, not to have an higher opinion of himself, nor a lower opinion of others, than he ought to have, but to think of both justly, so as always to behave wisely in his own station, without aspiring after offices in the church which he is not fit for; and to employ himself in the duties of his station and office, according as to each God has distributed his measure of spiritual gifts.

4 These gifts are necessarily different, both in their nature and dignity, (ver. 6.) For, as in one body we have many members, but all these members have not the same office in the body;

5 So we, the many disciples of Christ, are but one body, or religious society, under the government of Christ; consequently we are all members of one another, receiving edification and comfort from each other.

6 Having then spiritual gifts, differing according to the offices assigned us in the church; if our gift be prophecy, let us prophesy only according to the extent of our inspiration, without adding to or taking from the revelations made to us, or meddling with subjects not revealed to us:

7 Or if our gifts fit us for the stated ministry of the word, let us be diligent in preaching, not disheartened by dangers: or if one's gifts fit him for teaching the ignorant, let him be diligent in teaching such:

8 Or if they fit him for exhorting, let him employ himself in exhortation. He whose gifts fit him for distributing the church's alms, let him do it with honesty, disinterestedness, and impartiality: he whose gifts fit him for presiding, let him do with assiduity and prudence: he whose gifts qualify him for taking care of the sick, the afflicted, the imprisoned, and of widows and orphans, let him perform these services with cheerfulness.

9 Let your professions of love be real: abhor every evil action: adhere closely to a virtuous course of life.

10 In love to one another as brethren in Christ, show that kindness

of affection which near relations bear to one another. In every honorable action, go before, and leading on one another.

11 In caring for each other, be not slothful. In spirit be fervent, when ye serve the Lord in the ordinary duties of religion, or in spreading the gospel.

12 Rejoice in hope of eternal life. Be patient in affliction. And as the best consolation in trouble, continue earnest in prayer, although your prayers be not immediately answered.

13 Communicate your riches, for relieving the necessities of the brethren. Practise hospitality to strangers, especially those driven from their homes by persecution.

14 Bless them who persecute you: bless them by praying God to bless them, but never curse them.

15 Rejoice with them who are in prosperity, and grieve with them who are in adversity: these things are acceptable both to God and man.

16 Be of the same hospitable, forgiving, sympathizing disposition towards one another, as towards strangers and persecutors. Do not aspire after the grandeur of this life; nor affect the company of those who are in high stations: rather associate with men who are weaned from the world. And be not puffed up with an opinion of your own wisdom, lest it make you despise instruction.

Summary

We should not be high-minded because we are gifted, but we must be right-minded, that we may place a proper estimate upon everything, especially upon gifts, our own as well as those of others. If we have a gift, we must exercise it, neither being proud of it, nor looking down upon others as inferiors because they have a less shining gift. Whatever we are best qualified to do, that we must do, and nothing else. This alone gives success.

Our love must be unfeigned, for otherwise it is hypocrisy. It is not enough that we simply oppose evil; we must abhor it. We must cling to what is good at every cost. Our love for the brotherhood must be very tender, while in the matter of showing esteem, we must be examples to one another. In serving the Lord, we must be full of zeal, and fervent in spirit. In affliction, we must be patient, constant in prayer, and full of hope. We are to share each other's wants, lovingly caring for strangers in our homes. We must bless even our persecutors, and never curse them. We are not to pattern after proud ways and high life, but evince a preference for lowly ways and meek life.

Comment

2. Duties to those within the church. 12:3-16

Paul was inspired, and his utterances came by divine inspiration, but he was not so blessed of God because he deserved it. He had such a ministry through the unmerited favor of God. We should heed his words as the words of God, and all the more so when we see reflected in the life of the inspired spokesman the very truths he seeks to impart. The church at Rome was graced with a number of spiritual gifts. There were men in the congregation who had the gift of prophecy (vs. 6); evidently some had the gift of supernatural wisdom or knowledge (vs. 7; cf. I Cor. 12:8.) Others were ministering (vs. 7a) and still others exhorting (vs. 7b). They were ministering and exhorting only by God's power and wisdom. There was a strong temptation to misuse these gifts, particularly in the area of pride. Let us put ourselves in their place. If we were blessed with the gift of prophecy, would we not consider such a power the greatest blessing of our lives? Would it not be a strong temptation to convince every other member of the church that what we had received from God was indeed high and holy? Find ten men and women with this same idea, and there will be confusion and collision!

What is here said of spiritual gifts is also applicable to the ordinary places of service in the church today.

A clear "renewed" mind will reveal reality. Sober judgment will be made and sound decisions formed. In the exercise of the supernatural gifts, faith on the part of the one gifted had to be exercised. For example: Peter and John could not heal the lame man at the beautiful gate without faith (Acts 3:1-10), but it was not the faith of the lame man but of Peter and John (cf. Acts 3:16). "The measure of faith" had reference to the power exercised by those possessing the gifts. The expression, "according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith," would seem to refer to the gift itself. It does so only in the sense that sometimes the result is put for the cause. The result was the exercise of the gift; the cause was the faith of the gifted. The faith, too, was a "gift" of God.

In verses 4 and 5, the human body as compared to the spiritual one is discussed. This passage is not the first time Paul uses such a comparison, nor the last one. (cf. I Cor. 12:12-27) There is perfect unity through diversity in the human body. The hidden, though inevitable, conclusion is that such is only true because there is a unified

319. Paul's words are all the more meaningful to us because of his life. Why?

320. Why was instruction concerning the proper use of spiritual gifts necessary?

321. Why are we admonished to think "soberly"?

response to the one head. In the spiritual body, the church, Christ is the head (Eph. 1:22, 23). There should be that perfect willingness on the part of each one to count the other better than himself and as necessary as himself—no one indispensable and yet all doing what none other can do. When we realize that our proper relationship to the head depends upon our proper relationship to every other member of the body, we will work together without highmindedness.

Note, please, the attitudes to be adopted by those who exercise their gifts, as in vs. 6-8. The gifts differ, but not the source. The expressions differ, but not the purpose. Each is to be used to its fullest extent, but with no attempt to control the use of another of God's gifted ones. There are seven areas of services here mentioned. In four of them we can see a need for special supernatural gifts: in prophecy, in ministry, in teaching and in exhorting, but not in the remaining three. We conclude, therefore, that the admonition is both specific and general. To those who are divinely blessed, as well as to those who serve without such needed aid, "do it with all that in you is" without thought of comparison with others. "He that giveth" evidently refers to those who have of this world's means and yet love the Lord. They are to give with liberality, perhaps realizing how rare such a person is and how needed is the gift. The rulers are doubtless the elders of the churches. Idleness or indifference will not produce an elder who rules well. A real word of emphasis needs to be sounded on "he that showeth mercy," or perhaps better translated, "he that showeth pity." It is easy enough to show pity or mercy to someone who is ill or shut-in the first time or the second or third visit, but how is our cheerfulness after the 100th call on the same unfortunate one? It should be the same as the attitude we expect from God when we ask him to attend to our needs (and many times the same ones) the 100th time.

In verses 9-13 are a list of attributes to be found in the life of a genuine Christian. Let us not love in word, but in deed and in truth. If we pretend in our love, it is only a pretense to man; God is not deceived. In our relationship to one another, our motives and purposes should be transparent.

It is not enough to pronounce a definition of evil; we must have an aggressive opposition to it. Within our inmost beings we must

322. What is the meaning of the expression "measure of faith"?

323. Why does Paul use the figure referring to the human body?

324. In what sense are we all essential yet not indispensable?

325. Both to those with supernatural aid and to those without what was the word of admonition?

hate sin. It is fully as necessary to speak out against evil as it is to speak up for righteousness. This marks a very vital aspect of our relationship to Christ and God. If our emotions are not involved in our religion, we worship in vain. Intellectual assent to right and wrong will never accomplish God's will in our lives. There must be within us an emotional response to God's will, or we simply do not love the Lord.

We are "to be glued to what is good." We are to adhere with all our hearts to the good. How many Christians are truly "lovers of good"? Too many are *grey* instead of *white* in their conception of good and evil. As a result, there is no conviction in either direction. We can be sure they are in the power of Satan.

In our love for each of God's family, we should have no mere polite acceptance of one another. Must we always find some attribute of loveliness in someone before we can love them? If our Lord had so waited, we would all be lost. Let us love one another with a true feeling of the family relationship for Jesus' sake.

"In honor preferring one another" could also be translated, "setting an example for one another." Let us challenge (provoke) one another to love and good works. "If he can do it for Christ, so can I," is the thought here.

In the care of the needs of one another do not be negligent. What a reproach this is to the average church! We do not even know the needs of one another, physically or spiritually; if we do, many times we do nothing about it. "It's the job of the preacher," or, "Let the elders take care of that," is often heard. Here it is enjoined upon all.

In zeal be "boiling over." Someone defined zeal as "communicated feeling." We love the Lord and one another, but our love is of no help to others or to our Lord until it is communicated.

"Serving the Lord": never for an instant should we lose the sense of serving him, as a slave to a worthy Master.

Here is a trinity of triumph for every Christian: (1) the hope of heaven; (2) the providence of God; (3) steadfast prayer. These qualities must become a veritable part of us. The factual knowledge that, on the basis of the death of Christ, we have the hope of glory is not at all enough. There must be the eagerness of a pilgrim going home, the joy of a true child at a family reunion. We can and will be patient with complete abandon in any and all tribulation. "All

326. Who are those who rule?

327. Why is it difficult to show mercy with cheerfulness?

328. How do our emotions become a vital part of our religion?

329. What is the meaning of "in honor preferring one another"?

things work together for good to them who love God and are called according to his purpose." All our hope and trust must be undergirded with constant, fervent prayer.

When one suffers, all suffer. We come to the aid of one another as a loving brother or sister. When a brother in the flesh is seriously ill, how concerned we become. What of the ills of the spirit and the flesh of our brothers in the Lord?

Moses E. Lard translates the next phrase, "keeping on in love for strangers." This was an Old Testament practice. It should indeed be the practice of each and every one as a Christian. Perhaps this could have reference to Christians who are strangers, but it should not stop there.

Continuing the list of those wonderful qualities of a true child of God: "Bless the persecutors, bless and curse not." This was the admonition and practice of our Lord. Oh, that we might practice it today with those who misunderstand us and spitefully use us! A genuine feeling of good will toward those who are unfriendly to us is the only Christian attitude.

Verse fifteen contains a real barometer of our spirituality, showing how we can sympathetically share the joys and the sorrows of others when we have the mind of Christ. He bore our sorrows and carried our griefs. How this is needed today!

"Let there be no distinction of persons" is the admonition of verse 16b. There are natural preferences that develop among brethren. The Christian, and especially any leader of God's flock, cannot allow such personality traits to cause him to show a distinction to the extent of slighting one and honoring another.

"Condescend" is a meaningful and strong word: "Be *carried away*" by (or "condescend to) the things that are lowly. Not only "things" but people are involved in this. It should be our desire to be hidden as much as possible by the work we do. No task or person should be too small or menial in the service of Christ.

"Be not wise in your own eyes." This is not an admonition concerning wisdom alone. Paul here says we should manifest our wisdom or sound judgment before God and men rather than before the mirror. The estimate we hold of our wisdom should be one of true humility, seen in the light of our mistakes and lack of knowledge.

330. Is Paul suggesting that all are responsible for the needs of others?

331. Define "zeal."

332. How can we bless our persecutors?

333. Give the "trinity of triumph" for the Christian.

Text

12:17-21. Render to no man evil for evil. Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men. 18 If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, be at peace with all men. 19 Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath of God: for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord. 20 But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. 21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

REALIZING ROMANS, 12:17-21

540. How do the two thoughts of vs. 17 relate to each other?
 541. Is Paul suggesting in vs. 18 that after we have tried to maintain peace and found it impossible that we are at liberty to fight?
 542. Human vengeance is destructive in two ways. Name them.
 543. It is difficult to believe that finally justice will prevail, and yet the Scriptures plainly teach it. When will we see it?
 544. We know from vs. 20 that the "coals of fire" are good deeds. In what manner do they become "coals of fire"? Who is being burned?
 545. Is it always possible to overcome evil with good? If not, are we less obligated?

Paraphrase

12:17-21. Unto no one return evil for the evil he hath done you. Premeditate how to make your actions beautiful in the sight of all men; of your enemies as well as of others.

18 What relates to you is, live in peace with all men, whether friends or foes, if it can be done consistently with piety and truth.

19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves of your persecutors, but give place to the wrath of God, whose prerogative it is to punish. For it is written, Deut. xxxii. 35. Vengeance belongs to me, I will repay, saith the Lord. See also Lev. xix. 18.

20 Therefore, if thy persecutor hunger, instead of avenging thyself by suffering him to perish, give him meat; and if he thirst, give him drink: for by so doing thou wilt soften him, and make him lay down the enmity which he bears to thee.

21 Be not overcome of evil, so as to be made evil yourselves, but overcome the evil dispositions of your persecutors, by doing them all the good ye can.

334. How can we tell whether we have the mind of Christ?

335. The Christian should be "carried away" with something. What is it?

336. What is the meaning of being "wise in our own eyes"?

Summary

Injuries, we must not retaliate, and we are to be thoughtful to do what, in every one's estimation, is right. As Christians we must strive for peace.

We must never attempt to avenge ourselves, but leave that wholly to the Lord. On the contrary, if our enemy be hungry, we must feed him; if thirsty, we must give him drink. We must be God-like in dealing with him. We must not allow his evil to conquer us; rather we must conquer his evil by our good.

Comment

3. The Christian's duties toward those without the church. 12:11-21.

This is a fine sentiment, "Render to no man evil for evil," but who does it? The desire to get even with those who do evil to us is not the Christian attitude. Rather, let us make it a rule of life that we shall not retaliate. If such a conviction is developed ahead of time, we shall be able to so respond when someone does evil to us.

In contrast to the "eye for an eye" attitude is that in vs. 17b. We are to take thought beforehand so as to conduct ourselves in such a manner that all men, Christian and non-Christian, will come to appreciate our concern for them, and will see the consistency of our profession. A Christian will never go out of his way to offend anyone. On the other hand, he will make a conscious effort to bring happiness to all.

Verse eighteen seems to be an amendment of vs. 17. It will not always be possible to avoid conflict. Others will force evil upon the child of God. Never let it be said that any blame is due the Christian. We can be at peace with others, even though others are not with us.

What is the distinction between verse nineteen and verse seventeen? It would seem that verse nineteen is stronger, in the sense that some not only retaliate with an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, but they actually become the judges, meting out what God alone has wisdom or power to do. If we believe God is concerned about our lives, we will allow him to act as judge in matters that hurt us. The Lord's anger is always pure—ours never. Besides these considerations is the bald fact that God has stated the case in plain words, "Punishment is mine, I will repay it."

337. How shall we ever be able to fulfill the admonition "render to no man evil for evil"?

338. We should plan ahead of time to so conduct ourselves that our actions will show something to all. What is it?

Someone is certainly going to say that the thought of verse twenty has gone too far. This is true from a human standpoint. We would never think of treating our enemies as here described. But we are partakers of the divine nature. God does daily feed and care for those who are his enemies. Can we refuse to do it?

The "coals of fire" of verse 20b probably refers to the burning of the conscience of the one so treated. When we return good for evil we are making an attempt to stir up his conscience to a recognition of his own guilt and our innocence. In this condition he is a candidate for the truth.

Who will win in this great contest of right and wrong? Either we give place to wrath and are overcome, or we overcome the wrath of others by returning good for evil. We must overcome the desire to give evil for evil within our own heart before we can hope to conquer evil in the heart of anyone else.

Looking back over the twenty-one verses of chapter twelve, we can now see in all its practical reality what it means to be transformed by the renewing of our minds.

Rethinking in Outline Form

Part Three

The Practical, The Hortatory, and Conclusion. 12:1—16:27.

A. Our duties to God and Man. 12:1—15:13.

1. Full consecration to God. 12:1-2.

2. Duties to Those Within the Church. 12:3-16.

a. Paul speaking as an apostle. v. 3a cf. Rom. 1:5; 15:15.

b. Addressed to all. v. 3b.

c. How to think. v. 3c. cf. I Cor. 8:2; 10:12; Gal. 6:3.

d. Many members yet all in one body. Each part has its function vs. 4-8.

e. Love to be true. v. 9a cf. II Cor. 6:6; I Tim. 1:5.

f. Abhor evil, cleave to good. v. 9b.

g. Tender love for the brethren. v. 10a. cf. I Thess. 4:9; Heb. 13:1; Jn. 13:34-35.

h. In honor preferring one another. v. 10b cf. Phil. 2:3.

i. In diligence not slothful. v. 11a.

j. Fervent in spirit. v. 11b.

k. Serving the Lord. v. 11c cf. Matt. 6:24.

l. Rejoicing in hope. v. 12a cf. 5:2.

339. In what way does verse eighteen amend verse seventeen?

340. Explain the difference between verse seventeen and verse nineteen.

341. In what very practical way could we say we have fulfilled verse twenty?

342. What are "the coals of fire"? Why are they so called?

- m. Patient in tribulation. v. 12b cf. 5:3-5.
- n. Continuing steadfastly in prayer. v. 12c cf. I Thess. 5:17.
- o. Communicating to the necessities of the saints. v. 13a.
- p. Given to hospitality. v. 13b.
- q. Bless them that persecute you. v. 14 cf. Matt. 5:44; Lu. 6:28; I Cor. 4:12.
- r. Share joys and sorrows. v. 15.
- s. Be of the same mind one toward another. v. 16a cf. 15:5; II Cor. 13:1.
- t. Keep the mind on lowly things. v. 16b.
- u. Be not wise in your own conceits. v. 16c cf. 11:25; Prov. 3:7.
- 3. The Christian's Duties to Those Without The Church. vs. 17-21.
 - a. Render to no man evil for evil. v. 17a.
 - b. Take thought for things honorable in the sight of all men. v. 17b cf. II Cor. 8:21.
 - c. Be at peace with all men. v. 18 cf. Mk. 9:50; Rom. 14:19.
 - d. Leave vengeance to the Lord. v. 19 cf. Deut. 32:35.
 - e. How to treat your enemy. v. 20 cf. Prov. 25:21-22; II Kgs. 6:21-23.
 - f. How to overcome evil. v. 21.

Text

13:1-7. Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God. 2 Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment. 3 For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldest thou have no fear of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same: 4 for he is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil. 5 Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience' sake. 6 For this cause ye pay tribute also; for they are ministers of God's service, attending continually upon this very thing. 7 Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

REALIZING ROMANS, 13:1-7

546. Are we not a bit hasty in referring to "the higher powers" as the government? Why not think of the higher powers as the power of God instead of man?

547. God is not the author of confusion, war, etc. Is God the one behind all types of government? Explain vs. 1.
548. Remember that Paul was writing under the Roman government. Is he saying that disobedience to Roman law was disobedience to God?
549. God has placed rulers as a means of "terror to evil." Explain.
550. We should respect "the powers that be." Why?
551. The policeman is a minister of God. In what way?
552. There are two reasons for obeying the laws. Give them. Does this apply to driving over the speed limit?
553. Suppose we are charged an exorbitant amount of tax. Should we pay it?
554. In what other area of living could we apply the principle of verses 1-7?

Paraphrase

13:1-7. Let every man, whatever his office in the church or his spiritual gifts are, be subject to the established government. For there is no power of government but from God; and the governing powers in all countries are subordinate to, and useful for carrying on God's benevolent government of the world.

2 Wherefore, he who opposeth government, by disobeying its wholesome laws, or by attempting the lives of the governors, or by obstructing the due execution of their office, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they who do so shall be punished

3 For rulers are appointed not to terrify those of the citizens who do good works, but who do evil. Wouldst thou then live happily in any country, without being afraid of the magistrates and the laws, carefully do the good actions which they enjoin, and thou shalt have protection and favor from the same.

4 For the ruler, according to the true design of his office, is a servant of God, appointed to make thee and the rest happy, by maintaining all in their just possessions. But if thou do evil, if thou are rebellious, impious, injurious, or addicted to any vice inconsistent with the peace of society, be afraid of the magistrate, because the power of punishing is not committed to him by God and the people in vain: for he is a servant of God, appointed to avenge the community by punishing evil doers.

5 For these reasons, it is necessary for you to be obedient to the laws and rulers of the countries where ye live, not only from the fear of punishment, but also from a principle of conscience.

6 From the same principle, pay ye taxes also to the magistrates, because they are public ministers, appointed by God to attend con-

tinually to the affairs of government, and to the distribution of justice, that the people may live in peace.

7 Render, therefore, to all, without fraud, what is due by law. To whom tax is due, tax: to whom custom for merchandise is due, custom: to whom fear is due, as having the execution of the laws in their hands, fear: to whom outward respect is due on account of their office or rank, outward respect.

Summary

All civil governments derive their origin and authority from God, and when doing right, have his sanction. He therefore requires his children to be obedient to them; where they fail, they resist not merely the government but him. Civil officers, too, are designed to be for good to God's children, and not a source of fear. Neither, therefore, must they be resisted. Consequently, there are two reasons why we should obey the constituted authorities of the State: first, that we may avoid being punished, and, second, that we may not violate our conscience. Moreover, for these same reasons we pay tax, customs, etc. Besides, whenever it may be necessary, we must go farther and even honor those in authority. By all these acts we shall please God and promote our own happiness.

Comment

Duties to the Civil Government. 13:1-7

Law and order are principles which come from God. The condition of a people governed by law and the resulting order originated in the mind of God. Here is a general principle which must be heeded without question, as long as the authorities do not demand of us anything inconsistent with our Christian profession. There is no authority but from God. God is the original source of all power—not that he ordains power to do wrong, but he does originate the power of authority, and sets it into operation through civil government.

To the Jew it would be no light thing to ask him to submit to the government of Rome as being ordained of God. Paul goes farther—not only is government ordained of God, but whoever resists, resists God. It would not always be easy or convenient, but the true Christian has no choice if he is to obey God.

The Christian has no need to fear the rulers of a land whose laws

343. Must we always be in subjection to the higher powers?

344. What divine reason is given for submitting to the government?

345. We need never fear the appearance of a policeman. Why?

346. Give the twofold obligation of the Christian to the government.

do not conflict with the Word of God, and no terror need rise in the heart of that child of God when he sees a policeman. The Christian is in subjection to God's more perfect revelation through Christ; such makes him the very finest of the State's citizens. To be free from the fear of government interference, we of the free world do that which is good. We as Christians will be honored by God because of our exemplary conduct.

Those in power are to be obeyed because they are God's servants and are so serving to do us good. There are always some so-called "free spirits" who want to throw off all restraining influences and live by their own rules; even among Christians this is true. To such, the words of Paul have particular force, "an avenger for anger upon him who does evil."

The Christian has a twofold obligation to the government—not only because he naturally fears the just anger of those in power, but for a much higher motive: his conscience has been educated by the Word of God, and upon such a basis he obeys.

An application of the above truths could be: pay your taxes. When we fail to comply with those who collect taxes, we are disobeying God. This is a very pointed, up-to-date application in light of much loose thinking and acting on such matters today.

Verse seven is a generalization and conclusion of all that has been said in the previous verse (1-6):

Pay dues on exports and imports, and all other legal dues.

Pay your taxes; they are your legal, as well as divine obligation.

Pay proper respect to authorities.

Pay with honest commendation those who serve well in public office.

Text

13:8-10. Owe no man anything, save to love one another: for he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law. 9 For this, thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. 10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: love therefore is the fulfillment of the law.

REALIZING ROMANS, 13:8-10

555. Does verse eight cancel all credit buying?

556. We all have a great debt. What is it?

557. If we truly loved our neighbor, would there be any need for law? Explain.

558. Was there some particular purpose in using part of the ten commandments as examples of law?

559. Show how the purpose of law is fulfilled in love.

Paraphrase

13:8-10. Pay all your debts, and owe no man any thing, unless mutual love; because that debt can never be fully discharged. He who loveth another, hath fulfilled the law respecting his neighbor.

9 For the precepts, Thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, thou shalt not covet; and if there be an other commandment prescribed in the word of God, or dictated by right reason, which hath others for its object, it is summed up in this precept, namely, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: love him as a part of thyself, on account of his usefulness in promoting thy happiness.

10 For love restraineth a man from doing evil to his neighbor, and leadeth him to do his neighbor every good office in his power; wherefore love is the fulfilling of the law respecting one's neighbor.

Summary

Christians must pay to all whatever is due them, whether tax, customs, or honor. The only exception is that we must be always owing one another a debt of love, which we are to be constantly paying, yet never able to pay in full. We are never to feel that we have finally discharged the debt. The reason is that he who loves another is sure to keep the whole law towards him. We will not only never injure him whom we love, but will do him whatever good we can.

Comment

Duties of love to all men. 13:8-10

We must produce a good report from Christians and non-Christians. Here are personal obligations that must be paid. "Owe no man anything," would be a good motto to hang on the wall of the preacher's study, or on the wall of the elder's home. But we *do* have a debt—an obligation of love. Perhaps one is inseparately linked to the other. We cannot love one another if we fail to pay what we owe. We need not worry about moral regulations when we love in deed and in truth. We shall find, to our joy (and that of our neighbor), that we have gone far beyond whatever regulations man has set up for right or wrong.

347. In what sense are we to "owe no man anything"?

348. Show how the debt of love relates to debts of money.

349. In what way should we go beyond the law man has set up?

The Ten Commandments are all summed up in one word—"love." How could we commit adultery, kill, steal or covet if we love our neighbor?

Text

13:11-14. And this, knowing the season, that already it is time for you to awake out of sleep: for now is salvation nearer to us than when we first believed. 12 The night is far spent, and the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. 13 Let us walk becomingly, as in the day; not in revelling and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy. 14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

REALIZING ROMANS, 13:11-14

560. We can indeed know "the times and the seasons" in one particular. What is it?
561. In what sense is salvation nearer today than when we first believed?
562. The eternal morning is about to dawn. Cast off "the works of darkness." Would the Christians in Rome be involved in such things? Why does Paul give the command?
563. What a glorious expression: "Armor of light." Explain its appropriateness.
564. If you are looking for prohibitions against many of the popular sins of our day, you will find them in vs. 13. The incentive for laying such aside is there. What is it?
565. Do a little research on the meaning of "chambering and wantonness."
566. Please notice that the sins of strife and jealousy are also "works of darkness." What are the indications of strife and jealousy?
567. Is it possible to "make *no* provision for the flesh"? The word "put ye on" is a theatrical word referring to "getting into character." How does it apply to us?

Paraphrase

13:11-14. This also I command: Form a better judgment of the present season, that it is already the hour for us to awake out of that sleep into which the sensual practices of heathenism have cast us; for now the doctrine of salvation, the gospel, is better understood by us than when we first believed.

12 The night of heathenish ignorance is drawing to a conclusion, and the day of gospel light is about to shine with meridian splendor in all countries. Let us, therefore, who know this, put off the works

of darkness which we used to perform in honor of idols, and let us put on the armor proper for the day of the gospel.

13 Let us walk about decently habited (dressed) as becometh those who walk in the day, not employing ourselves, like the idolatrous Gentiles, in revellings and in drinking to excess; not in lying with harlots, and in lasciviousness, whether in action, discourse, or dress; nor in quarrelling about riches, or honors, or opinions, and in envying the prosperity of others.

14 But be ye clothed with the dispositions of the Lord Jesus Christ; his piety, temperance, purity, charity; in short, his whole character; and, like him, make no provision for gratifying the lusts of the flesh.

Summary

It is now time for us to awake from the sleep of the old unregenerate night through which we have been passing, and to do our whole duty in everything. The reason is that the day of salvation will soon be upon us, and for it we must be ready. All our former evil deeds must be utterly abandoned, and the new life in Christ fully assumed. Henceforth we must live for the Savior, not for the flesh.

Comment

The Fact of Salvation Before Us Helps to Enforce These Duties.
13:11-14.

We all need an incentive to prompt us to obey. God has surely supplied such. If the eyes of our understanding were enlightened, we should see how near we live to eternity. We can patiently endure hardship and tribulation when we see Heaven just ahead. Each day brings us one day closer to our eternal home. Could it be that some of the saints in Rome were sleepy? The night of life is nearly over; the morning of eternity is already streaking the eastern sky. Wake up! Dress up! Go to work! (We are all working on a night shift.)

We are preparing for another time and place of work, in the Father's house. To enter here we must have on "the armor of light." We cannot have on the panoply of God's soldier, and the clothes of darkness at the same time. To quote Moses E. Lard on vs. 13a:

"The *komos* was a sort of carousal in which a number of persons participated, and which commonly ended by the whole party parading the streets with music, songs, and dancing. It was simply a noisy drunken frolic. The *komoi* were very common among the idolatrous Gentiles, particularly among the devotees of Bacchus." (Romans, pp. 408, 40a)

How could it be said that some Christians were involved in such

sins as prostitution and lewdness? In Rome such was the rule among the populace. Many of "the saints" in the Roman church had once walked in these things. The strong desire to yet practice them was with many. Paul bluntly states that such things cannot be practiced if we are to walk in the light of the eternal day.

The marvelous solution to the whole problem of returning to the old life is found in vs. 14. The expression, "put ye on," can have reference to the theater. Actors and actresses "put on" the character they attempt to portray. It is sometimes called "getting into the character." The true actor literally "becomes" another person. We are not play-acting—this is real—but we are to "become" the living representation of the Lord Jesus. How shall we do this if we do not know "the script"? We have a copy of it—the New Testament—in which is found the eyewitness account of our Lord by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Many actors and actresses memorize as much script copy as is in the New Testament to portray one of the prostitutes or drunkards spoken of in vs. 13. We can become another man, another woman, by the transformation of our minds. Christ is then formed within us. "It is no longer I that live—"

Rethinking in Outline Form

4. Duties to the Civil Government. 13:1-7 cf. Tit. 3:1; I Pet. 2:13-17; Matt. 22:17-21; I Tim. 2:1-2.
 - a. Law and order ordained of God. v. 1.
 - b. Law and order a terror to the evil, but a blessing to good. v. 3-4.
 - c. To be in subjection because of wrath and conscience. v. 5.
 - d. Tribute, dues, custom, fear, honor. vs. 6-7.
5. Duties of Love to All Men. vs. 8-10.
 - a. Owe no man anything. v. 8a.
This no doubt refers back to the taxes and dues of the preceding verses.
 - b. Love your neighbor and you fulfill the law. vs. 8b-10.
6. The Fact of Salvation Before Us Helps to Enforce These Duties. 13:11-14.
 - a. Eternal salvation nearer each day. v. 11 cf. Jas. 5:8; I Pet. 4:7; II Pet. 3:8-11; Eph. 5:14; I Thess. 5:1-11.
 - b. Cast off darkness and put on armor of light. v. 12 cf. Eph. 5:11; 6:11-17.

350. What wonderful incentive for obedience has God given us?

351. In what sense are we all "working on a night shift"?

352. What is the preparation necessary for working in the Father's house?

353. Explain the meaning of the expression "put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ."

- c. To walk becomingly. v. 13 cf. I Thess. 4:12; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:18; I Pet. 4:3; II Tim. 2:14, 23-24; I Tim. 6:3-5.
 d. To put on the Lord Jesus Christ. v. 14 cf. Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:9-10; Gal. 5:16-24; I Pet. 2:11.

Text

14:1-12. But him that is weak in faith receive ye, yet not for decision of scruples. 2 One man hath faith to eat all things: but he that is weak eateth herbs. 3 Let not him that eateth set at nought him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. 4 Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? to his own lord he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be made to stand; for the Lord hath power to make him stand. 5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let each man be fully assured in his own mind. 6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord: and he that eateth, eateth unto the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, unto the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. 7 For none of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself. 8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. 9 For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. 10 But thou, why dost thou judge thy brother? or thou again, why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of God.

11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, to me every knee shall bow,

And every tongue shall confess to God.

12 So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God.

REALIZING ROMANS, 14:1-12

568. What is the meaning of the word "receive" in 14:1?
 569. How would one be received for "decision of scruples"?
 570. Someone must be right in this matter of eating. Who is it?
 571. Is strength or weakness in faith dependent upon knowledge? In what way?
 572. There is one mutual responsibility. What is it?
 573. How could God receive someone who was not correct in his views?
 574. Is Paul teaching "irresistible grace" in vs. 4? Please explain the phrase, "for the Lord hath power to make him stand."
 575. Could we apply the principle here stated to Christian baptism or the Lord's Supper? Why?

576. Should we esteem the Lord's day as above all other days? How will the instruction here given apply if we do esteem Sunday?
577. Why is it so important that we be fully assured in our own mind?
578. Why should we feel the Lord has any interest in eating or days?
579. How deeply grateful we should be to our Heavenly Father. In everything we should give thanks. How can we do this if there is a difference of opinion as to right or wrong?
580. It is easy to see how none of us lives unto himself. How is it that "none dieth unto himself"?
581. We belong to the Lord Jesus by right of purchase. It then becomes no matter of choice with us. How must we settle all questions?
582. Christ is Lord of the dead according to vs. 9. How is this so?
583. Should we delay our judgment on all matters in favor of the final judgment of God? Explain.
584. Are Christians going to stand before the judgment seat of God? If so, for what purpose?
585. Does gossiping about the ignorance or frailties of our brethren constitute judging? Will we be judged for such action?

Paraphrase

14:1-12. The Jewish Christian who is weak in the faith concerning meats and days, receive ye into your company, but not in order to passionate disputations concerning his opinions.

2 The Gentile Christian, indeed, believeth that he may eat every kind of meat; but the Jewish Christian, who is weak in the faith, eats vegetables only in heathen countries, because he cannot find meats which he thinketh clean.

3 Since both act from conscience, let not the Gentile who eateth every kind of meat, despise the Jew who eateth not certain kinds; and let not the Jew who eateth not certain kinds, condemn the Gentile who eateth all kinds: for God, by the spiritual gifts bestowed on the Gentile, declareth that he hath accepted him.

4 Who art thou that condemnest another's household servant? He is accountable to his own master, and not to thee; so that by his own master's sentence he must be acquitted or condemned: and he shall be acquitted; for God hath power to acquit him at the judgment, and will do it, if he hath acted conscientiously.

5 With respect to days, the Jewish Christians, indeed, thinketh one day more holy than another; the new moons, for example, and sabbaths: but the Gentile Christian, better informed, thinketh every

day alike holy, because the law of Moses is not the law of Christ's kingdom. Let every one direct himself according to his own conviction.

6 He who observeth the Jewish holy days, observeth them in obedience to Christ, who he thinks hath commanded them: He who doth not observe these days in obedience to Christ, he doth not observe them, knowing that Christ hath abolished them. He who eateth all kinds of meat indiscriminately, eateth them in obedience to Christ, who has permitted them to be eaten; for he giveth God thanks for them, in the persuasion that they are permitted; and he who eateth not every kind, in obedience to Christ he eatest them not, and sheweth his persuasion that they are not permitted, by giving God thanks for the food he is allowed to eat.

7 In thus declaring their subjection to Christ, both of them act properly: for none of us liveth by his own will, and none of us is allowed to die by his own will.

8 But whether we live by the will of Christ: or whether we die, we die by the will of Christ. Whether we live therefore or die, we are Christ's subjects; and should not, in religious matters, be guided either by our own will or by the will of others, but by his.

9 To this implicit obedience from all he hath the completest title: for to this end Christ both died and rose, and liveth again in heaven, that he might rule and judge both the dead and the living.

10 But thou Jew, why dost thou condemn thy Gentile brother, because he neglecteth the distinction of meats and days? Or thou Gentile also, why dost thou despise thy Jewish brother as a weak bigot, because he observeth these distinctions? In such matters we should not judge one another; for we shall all be placed before the judgment-seat of Christ, to be judged by him.

11 This was declared to the Jews long ago; 'For it is written, I have sworn myself, saith the Lord, the word is gone out of my mouth,' and also, 'That unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear.'

12 Well, then, every one of us shall give an account concerning himself to God, whose indulgence to the sincere will make many ashamed of their harsh judgments.

354. How does the discussion of the weak and strong relate to the renewing of the mind?

355. Why not attempt to instruct the weak brother?

356. What is meant by saying some matters are matters of "indifference"?

357. Explain the phrase "for the Lord hath power to make him stand" (vs. 4b).

Summary

A brother who is weak in belief, and consequently narrow in his views, we are nevertheless cordially to accept, but in receiving him, we must let alone those thoughts of his which arise out of his weakness. Their correctness or incorrectness is not a question for our decision. And where one brother regards certain days as sacred, while another holds all days to be alike, the rule is to let each be fully satisfied in his own mind, and act accordingly. In this case, the strong who esteems every day alike, is not to despise the weak; nor is the weak, who thinks one day better than another, to judge the strong. The same rule applies also in the case of meats thought to be clean or unclean. In matters of indifference, each man is a law to himself. Accordingly, in such cases we must leave each to act out his own sense of right. And as to judging one another in such matters, we must wholly abstain from it. We are accountable to God only, and he will judge us.

Comment

*Forbearance in Matters of Opinion for Those
Who are Weak in the Faith. 14:1-15:13.*

1. The weak in the faith should not be harshly judged. 14:1-12.

Once again we could say: if we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, here is a guide to our thinking. The Christian brother who feels a thing to be wrong and a sin for him to engage in, let him be. Do not argue with him about it. Receive him into your fellowship as a Christian brother. In particular, the reference Paul has in mind has to do with eating. There were those persons who did not have a complete knowledge of God's will on this subject. They felt it would be wrong for them to eat meat. "When you talk with him," says Paul, "please do not invite him to your table at which you serve meat. On the other hand, the weak brother ought not to feel he has a superior type of righteousness and attempt to instruct you in the ways of the vegetarian." In all of this conversation between the two brothers, there is much more than mere discussion. The action of judgment also enters in when one says, "I am right and you are wrong; *therefore* you are condemned." There are many matters of indifference, matters not wrong within themselves. Since each saint is responsible for a knowledge of "the faith," (Jude 3) and each member of the body is answerable to the head, who are we to judge our brother? To use the figure of Paul: "This man does not work for you; he is employed by another, even the Lord. To whom then is he answerable? To his own master. If the Lord is pleased with him, who are you to be displeased? You may be dis-

pleased, but this must never enter into the area of judgment. It is not necessary for either of you to understand or "see" how each can stand in the day of judgment. God is able to make each do so by his own divine power and wisdom."

Now, as to "special" days—are we at liberty to insert the word "special" as related to "days"? I think not. We can infer that here is a discussion of the desire of certain Jewish Christians to put a special emphasis upon the seventh day and certain other days in the Jewish calendar. I do not believe that Paul's teachings uphold the observance of "special" days. When the Jewish law was abolished was not all responsibility toward holding one day above another also abolished? Is it not what we do on Sunday that is sacred rather than the day itself? At least there were some in the Roman church who felt every day was just alike. All days are the gifts of God. The observance of the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week does not make the day (all twenty-four hours) holy; at least we have no word of scripture to say so. This will not at all be the opinion of some who read this. Very well—one regards "all days alike" because he feels it pleases the Lord, and one regards some days as "special" for the same reason. Let each mutually agree not to set the other at naught. There are two very important considerations for each Christian. However one regards the matters of indifference, let it be *his* opinion and not just the mouthing of someone else's reasoning. One must be "fully" assured in his *own* heart. The second is equally important. Whatever one does, do it unto the Lord. Let him thank God with sincerity for vegetables if he will not eat meat, thank God with sincerity if he observes Sunday (the day) as sacred. The opposite must also be true.

The great, eternal reason behind such conduct is found in verse seven. We are responsible to and for others. In our living we influence others—we are not living an exclusive life—we are constantly associated with others and in the presence of God. We should be careful so to live in eating and drinking and observing as to never put a stumbling block in our brother's path. There is one act which we shall all perform: we must all die; but even dying can be an example to others. Indeed it shall be—for good or bad. We can read into this verse that we are responsible for the eternal destiny of the souls of our brothers and sisters. They will come up to

358. Is Sunday a special day? In what respect?

359. What is the meaning of the expression—"Let each one be fully assured in his own heart."?

360. What is the great, eternal reason behind our need for full assurance of faith?

death in about the same way you do. Will this be adequate? Are you ready to die? If you are not, and others are following you, are you not also responsible to and for them? Let us live in such a manner in all things that our life will be a true example of the preparation for death.

Verse eight is the foundation on which this whole discussion (vs. 1-7) rests. We live for the honor of Christ and we die for the honor of Christ; i.e., in such a manner as to bring him honor. This we do because we belong to him. Being the living property of another, we essentially have no will in the matter. Most especially is this true when we consider the circumstances of our purchase.

What a wonderful Lord we serve. He not only rules as king here, but also over those in eternity. We indeed belong to him for he "ever lives." We are owned and ruled by him in heaven as well as on earth.

There is a question for the weak and the strong in vs. 10. Paul asks the weak, "Why do you judge your brother?" He asks the strong, "Why do you despise your brother?" Paul also has an answer: "We all shall appear before the judgment seat of God." This being true, why should we enter into the prerogatives of God? Since every inequality will be balanced, every question answered, why attempt it ourselves? Indeed, we sin when we do. The prophet Isaiah speaks of God's lordship. It shall be enough to account for our sins on judgment day. Our brother rests in the hands of an all-wise God.

Text

14:13-23. Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge ye this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock in his brother's way, or an occasion of falling. 14 I know, and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean of itself: same that to him who accounteth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. 15 For if because of meat thy brother is grieved, thou walkest no longer in love. Destroy not with thy meat him for whom Christ died. 16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of: 17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18 For he that herein serveth Christ is well-pleasing to God, and approved of men. 19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another. 20 Overthrow not for meat's sake the work of God. All things

361. We have no will in certain matters—what are they?

362. In what way is Christ the "Lord of the dead"?

363. We shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. We should not therefore judge one another. Show how the two thoughts are related.

indeed are clean; howbeit it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. 21 It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth. 22 The faith which thou hast, have thou to thyself before God. Happy is he that judgeth not himself in that which he approveth. 23 But he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

REALIZING ROMANS, 14:13-23

586. It would seem some brothers will stumble over anything. Are we to remove all objections for all brothers? Explain.
587. Why not ask the "weak brother" to study and become strong?
588. Verse fourteen contains a principle for all of us to learn and apply. Be careful how it is applied. Be more careful that it is applied. Is any meat "unclean" today?
589. We could and should forego many things because of those who are weak. How does this relate to tobacco or the theater or TV? Are any weak ones destroyed by these things?
590. What is "the good" in vs. 16?
591. Is the church the kingdom of God? We are not to spend our time and energies on matters of eating and drinking. On what should we expend our time and energies? What is "joy in the Holy Spirit"?
592. Who are "the men" of vs. 18?
593. Verse nineteen should be made into an attractive plaque and sold in stores frequented by preachers and Sunday School teachers. Mention one practical application of this verse to everyday living.
594. Who is involved in vs. 20b? i.e., who is eating with offence?
595. The stumbling in vs. 21 has reference to the loss of the soul, not the "loss of face." Do you agree?
596. On matters of indifference we are to keep quiet. Sometimes when we speak we do so to our own hurt. Explain how with special reference to vs. 22b.
597. If faith cometh by hearing, (Rom. 10:17) and we are in chapter fourteen dealing with matters of indifference, how could the principle of vs. 23 be applied?

Paraphrase

14:13-23. Let us therefore no more judge one another bigots or profane persons, because our opinions and practices are different: but ye Gentile Christians, pass this sentence rather on yourselves, that ye will not do any thing which may endanger your brother's virtue, or occasion him to sin.

14 I know by the light of reason, and am persuaded by revelation from the Lord Jesus, that there is no kind of meat unclean naturally. Nevertheless, to him who believeth certain kinds to be unclean, to that man they are unclean; and he will sin if he eat them, either to indulge his own taste or to gain the favor of others.

15 Wherefore, if thy brother, who thinketh certain meats unclean, is made to sin through thy eating such meat, whether it be by hating thee as a profane person, or by following thy example contrary to his conscience, or by apostatizing to Judaism, thou no longer actest according to the love thou owest to thy brother. Do not become the occasion of destroying him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

16 Let not then the good liberty which belongeth to you be evil spoken of, as an indulgence of appetite to the prejudice of others.

17 Ye need not use your liberty always; for the religion of Christ does not consist, either in abstaining from or in using meat and drink, but in a righteous and peaceable behaviour, and in joy in the Holy Ghost.

18 And the brother who, by righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, serves Christ his Lord, (vs. 9), is acceptable to God, and will be approved of men.

19 Well, then, let us pursue the things which promote peace, and the things which advance that mutual edification which we ought to reap from one another's example.

20 Do not for the sake of the pleasure of eating this or that kind of meat, destroy your brother's virtue, which is the work of God. All kinds of meats, indeed, are clean under the gospel; yet that meat is bad to the man who eateth it, not from a persuasion of its lawfulness, but through the influence of example.

21 It is commendable neither to eat flesh of any kind, nor to drink wine, or to do any thing, however innocent, whereby thy brother is brought into danger of sinning, or is made to sin, or is weakened in his attachment to the gospel.

22 I own thou hast a just persuasion concerning the lawfulness of all kinds of meat. Hold that persuasion fast, so far as respects thine own conduct in the presence of God; but do not use thy liberty, so as to lead others to sin. Happy is he who doth not subject himself to punishment, by doing what he approveth as lawful.

23 For he who seeth a difference in meats, is liable to punishment, if through thy example he eat what he thinks unclean; because he eateth not from a persuasion that it is lawful, but to please others. This is wrong; for whatever is done without a conviction of its lawfulness, is really a sin, though it be lawful in itself.

Summary

Instead of judging one another in questions respecting days and meats, let each decide, rather, that he will be very careful not to place a stumbling-block or occasion of falling in the way of his brother. This is the proper kind of judging for Christians. But in the matter of meats, and in all similar cases, if eating it grieves a brother, an effect which he may be unable to prevent, we are to abstain from it in deference to his feelings. Should we not do so, we may either drive him from the church, or induce him to follow an example which he is in danger of following too far, and so ruin him. In order to avoid these results, we must abstain from eating meat, where any one is hurt by it. We must not do anything that will imperil the salvation of a brother. The strong belief which enables us to do so many things that the weak cannot do, we must keep to ourselves. We are not at liberty to use it, when by so doing we injure others.

Comment

2. The Liberty of the Gospel Should not Be Used to the Injury of Others. 14:13-23.

Speaking of judgment, we have no need to judge one another. Indeed, to do so is wrong. If we wish to exercise our powers of evaluation, let us do it in this regard—that we place no stumbling block in our brother's way. This is addressed particularly to the strong. The weak brother might actually lose his soul over this matter. Let us be careful in what we consider indifferent—it is not so to him. If someone persuades him to eat meat, he could in his present frame of mind be sinning. He might feel he should go farther, since he sinned in eating meat, and become an idolater. It is not likely he would go back to idol worship, but neither would he remain with the church. He could not continue to associate with such, and would withdraw himself from fellowship.

In verses 14 and 15 is a most marvelous principle—a principle which, if exercised, would solve so very many of today's problems. Paul presents it by stating, "No meat is unclean." Paul knew this, since he knew the mind of Christ. But all men do not have this knowledge—to those who do not, the meat is unclean. One's attitude toward it changes it for him. Let us not force a man to violate his conscience even on a matter of indifference. When we wilfully act in opposition to our own sense of right and wrong, we break down our walls of defense against Satan. More than this, if we continue to insist in

364. We are to judge one another—but in what regard?

365. How could the weak brother lose his soul over eating meat?

this matter of food, we no longer act out of love. Our consideration for the weak brother is woefully lacking.

Let it be noticed please that the eating of meat by the stronger brother was no sin, and the weak brother was not to look upon it as such *for the stronger brother*. On the other hand, since it offends the weak brother, the one who is strong will refrain from eating in the presence of the weak. Since Christ died for both, neither should judge the other. It is possible even to cause the loss of the soul. If Christ loved him so much as to come all the way from heaven to die for him, we can show a little consideration in these matters.

"I see nothing wrong in that." "The practice of such doesn't hurt me." Such expressions are often heard. When self alone is involved, such might be true, but we do not live unto ourselves—others are watching. What appears permissible to us may be offensive to them and cause criticism for the whole body. What then is good to us becomes a point of offense. What shall we do? Give up that which we thought "good" for the sake of the cause of Christ. Someone else wants to know just how far one should go in applying this rule. The answer is—just as far as is necessary to avoid criticism of the cause of Christ.

Some persons, of course, who raise such an objection do not want to apply the rule at all. They raise such a question as a subterfuge behind which they can hide.

The important matters in the church, or the kingdom of God, are not meats and days, eating or not eating, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. We should give the greatest attention to whether we are right by divine law, not by human opinion, to a settled peace in our own heart and the promotion of peace in the church as a whole—blessed indeed are the peacemakers—and to the joy which the Holy Spirit himself alone can give. . . . joy, that delicate regard for the feelings of one another which, under the strengthening presence in all of the Holy Spirit, shall give joy and not grief."

The Christian who thus serves Christ is acceptable to God (whether some brethren ever accept him or not) and approved by all men who stand on the sidelines to observe the Christian race. Such was the position of the Jerusalem church when they said (and meant) that "nought they possessed was their own. They were one heart and one soul." In this they found unity among themselves and

366. Even if eating meat is not a sin, thinking it is a sin will make it wrong. Why?

367. The strong is not to eat meat in the presence of the weak. Why?

368. How far can we go in applying the rule of being careful for the weak?

369. State the important matters in the Kingdom of God.

"favor with all the people." Let's make it the aim of our lives to pursue the ways and words of peace, not contention. We are here to help, not hinder one another. In verses 19 and 20 is a description of a house being built and pulled down, the house of God. We are either engaged constructively or destructively in our work on God's home, the church. "For the sake of food pull not down the work of God."

It is good to know that all food is clean (from the distinctions of the law) but even then it can become very evil to us when we, through our eating, cause our brother to stumble or apostasize.

Verse 21 sums up in one sentence the whole point of the section. It is not a matter of right or wrong, but rather of love and concern for our brother. Does it injure him? Abstain from it.

Remain quiet about your superior knowledge of meats and days; it is a matter of indifference or opinion; not of faith. Hold it to yourself. If you do not, (speaking to the strong brother) you will condemn yourself by the very thing in which you condemn others. God will judge the man who causes the weak to fall.

Verse 23 states the principle from which all service to God must spring. What we do must be done because we believe he approves of it. When we act in doubt or even against what we feel is right, we are destroying the basis of obedience—faith in God. This we must never do, nor lead others to do so.

Rethinking in Outline Form

7. Forbearance in Matters of Opinion for Those Who are Weak in the Faith. 14:1—15:13.
 - a. The weak in the faith should not be harshly judged. vs. 1-12
 - (1) To receive the weak brother. v. 1.
 - (2) Not to judge in matters of food. vs. 2-4.
 - (3) Not to judge (that is condemn) one who esteems certain days. v. 5.
 - (4) Everything one does is to be done as unto the Lord. vs. 6-9.
 - (5) There is to be no judging of others for all alike will stand before God. vs. 10-12.
 - b. The liberty of the gospel should not be used to the injury of others. 14:13-23.
 - (1) Not to put a stumbling block in our brother's way. v. 13 cf. I Cor. 8:7-13.

370. How shall the Holy Spirit produce joy in our lives?

371. Who is acceptable with God and "the people"?

372. We are all workmen of one type or another in the house of God. Explain.

373. How do some condemn themselves in their judgment of others?

- (2) All food is clean. v. 14 cf. Lev. 11; I Tim. 4:3-5.
But to him that accounts it unclean, to him it is unclean.
- (3) If we, through our actions or words, cause our brother to stumble in this matter then we had better take note that we are in sin. vs. 15-16.
- (4) The essential character of the kingdom. vs. 17-19.
- (5) Do not overthrow the work of God for a non-essential. That is, in your manner of observance. v. 20.
- (6) Do nothing that would cause others to stumble. v. 21.
- (7) Be careful that you do not judge yourself in the way you seek to bind that opinion upon another. v. 22.
- (8) To act without conviction is a principle condemned by God. This principle of action is condemned in verse 23.

Text

15:1-12. Now we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let each one of us please his neighbor for that which is good, unto edifying. 3 For Christ also pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell upon me. 4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope. 5 Now the God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of the same mind one with another according to Christ Jesus: 6 that with one accord ye may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Wherefore receive ye one another, even as Christ also received you, to the glory of God. 8 For I say that Christ hath been made a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, that he might confirm the promises given unto the fathers, 9 and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written,

Therefore will I give praise unto thee among the Gentiles,
And sing unto thy name.

10 And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.

11 And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; And let all the peoples praise him.

12 And again, Isaiah saith, There shall be the root of Jesse, And he that ariseth to rule over the Gentiles; On him shall the Gentiles hope.

374. Chapter fifteen discusses the obligations of one brother. Who is it?

375. Why should the strong "give in"? In what manner should the strong bear the infirmities of the weak?

REALIZING ROMANS, 15:1-13

598. Why would it be displeasing to anyone to bear the infirmities of the weak?
599. What is the nature of the weakness here described?
600. Should we make some definite effort to please our neighbor, or should this happen in the so-called ordinary way of life?
601. In what sense did Christ not please himself?
602. Who is the "thee" of vs. 3b? What is the meaning of such an expression?
603. Show the connection of vs. 3 and 4.
604. Should not the holy scriptures be a source of comfort to us every day? Why is this *not* true in our life?
605. Our God is one of patience and comfort. How can we find this to be true personally?
606. How was Paul's prayer of verses 5 and 6 to be answered?
607. We are to glorify God with our mouth. If you were to attempt to fulfill such an admonition right now, how would you do it?
608. Verse seven presents a principle whereby all hesitation in receiving one another should be removed. Why?
609. What "truth of God" is referred to in vs. 8? What are the promises? Name two.
610. Who is singing in vs. 9? Why?
611. Why this array of references to the Gentiles? cf. verses 10, 11, 12.

Paraphrase

15:1-12. We then, who are well instructed in the Christian doctrine, ought so to behave towards the ignorant, that their errors may hurt them as little as possible; and should not please ourselves only in what we do.

2 Wherefore, let every one of us please his neighbor in things innocent, to the promoting of his virtue and peace, for the sake of edifying the body of Christ.

3 For even Christ pleased not himself: his own pleasure was not the object of his actions, but the glory of God and the good of others; as it is written, The reproaches of them who reproached thee, have fallen on me: the punishment due to the wicked, who by their speeches and actions dishonored God, was laid to me.

4 But whatever things were before written in the scriptures, were written for our instruction, that through our recollecting the patience wherewith holy men have borne reproaches and sufferings for the glory of God, and the consolation which they received, all

recorded in the scriptures, we might have hope of attaining the like patience and consolation in the like circumstances.

5 Now may God, the author of the patience and consolation of the saints, grant you to have the very same disposition towards one another always, according to the will and example of Christ Jesus;

6 That, joining together in religious worship, unanimously with one voice ye may praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for his love to man.

7 Wherefore hold communion [have fellowship] with one another, notwithstanding ye differ in opinion about meats and days, even as Christ also hath received us all into his church, to the glory of God.

8 To Christ's receiving the Gentiles, it is no objection that he never preached to them: for I affirm, that Jesus Christ became a minister of the circumcision, on account of establishing the truth of God, in order that, by converting the Jews, and sending them to preach to the Gentiles, he might accomplish the promises made to the fathers concerning the blessing of the nations;

9 And that the Gentiles might praise God on account of the mercy showed them, as it is written, 'Thou hast made me the head of the heathen; therefore I will glorify thee, O Lord, among the heathen: My disciples will glorify thee for making me the head of the heathen; and sing unto thy name, on account of their being saved by me.'

10 And again, Moses, fortelling the subjection of the Gentiles to God, saith, 'Rejoice ye Gentiles with his people.'

11 And again, 'O praise the Lord, all ye nations; praise him, all ye people.' Praise the Lord, because ye enjoy the privileges of the gospel along with the Jews, whereby his 'merciful kindness is great towards us.'

12 And again, Isaiah saith, (chap. xi. 10). 'In that day there shall be the root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; and to it the Gentiles shall seek for protection, government, and salvation. 'And his rest shall be glorious.'

Summary

The strong are under obligation to bear with the weak, even though it subjects them to inconvenience. This was the course pursued by Christ, and he is our example. As the Savior has accepted us, notwithstanding our imperfections, so must we accept one another regardless of differences on immaterial questions, such as eating

376. How shall we determine when we are indulgent and not helpful?

377. Give the meaning of the expression "Even Christ pleased not himself."

378. Explain how the Old Testament scriptures are a source of help in our helping the weak.

meat and the like. The whole section is devoted to unity of feeling, forbearance, and harmony in action. Every form of alienation among the children of God is wrong, and therefore to be studiously guarded against.

Comment

3. *Exhortations to Mutual Helpfulness.* 15:1-13

Chapter fifteen continues the thought of fourteen. We are to further understand the proper relationship of the strong to the weak. Particularly is this a discussion of how the strong are to act toward the weak. Those who have no scruples about meats and days should patiently bear with those who do. Since the conscience of the strong would not be violated by observance or lack of observance of these matters, it is altogether reasonable to call on the strong to acquiesce in the matter. Let the strong behave as God does with them—bear (not begrudgingly) with the imperfections of the weak. If the strong in faith were to assert himself and rebuke the weak, it would be on a matter of opinion, and would only please the strong—not God, nor the weak. None of us must act with the thought of self-indulgence.

Our efforts as those who are strong are to be only for the purpose of help. When our neighbor (weak or strong) asks for assistance in doing anything contrary to the will of God, he should be rebuked, not helped. A great deal of wisdom is necessary in determining when we are helpful and not indulgent. If we have a sincere desire to see our fellow Christian advance in wisdom and grace, we shall find ways of helping such a growth.

The attitude of Christ toward others is here given as an example for the action of the weak. Was it always easy for our Lord to bear with the ignorance and misunderstanding of his followers? It would have been easier to please himself—and his pleasure was always right—but this he did not do. If he who had such a divine prerogative did not take it, who are we to insist upon pleasing ourselves? The prophecy of *Psa.* 69 finds a fulfillment in the attitude of Christ toward the weak. The reproaches of men fell upon Christ. If Christ was willing to bear so much to help all, can we not manifest something of the same love toward one another?

Paul makes an explanation of the purpose of using this reference from the Psalms. He says: "The Old Testament scriptures were written for our instruction—particularly in the area of helping the weak." The scriptures are a great source of patience and comfort. When we do what is right, we retain our hope.

Verse five seems to have the element of a prayer. It is Paul's deep-

est desire that the God who can produce patience and comfort should so work in their lives as to cause them to be of the same mind, according to the example of Christ.

The true purpose of receiving one another is seen in vs. 6: That we might present to the world one choir of praise to God. This God is the father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, the conclusion: Let us accept one another in the same way we were accepted by God in Christ. If God is willing to overlook all our imperfections, why should we hesitate, especially when we know it brings glory to God. God will be honored even by the unbelieving when they see his power and love in the lives of his followers.

Verse seven begins a new thought, yet one which is associated with the preceding. Christ came to reconcile both Jew and Gentile in one body, and this he did. The application is—if he came to do this, are we not frustrating his purpose if we divide among ourselves? The details of this argument are: Christ was born of the Jewish race in order to save them. He came in fulfillment of promises made by God to the fathers. Not one promise failed—not one word proved untrue. The end result was the salvation of all the world.

We are yet developing the thought of mutual helpfulness. Verses 9-12 contain a series of Old Testament prophecies which show in their promise and fulfillment the unity of Jews and Gentiles. Note: In 9b David is in the midst of the Gentiles confessing the name of God and singing with the Gentiles. In Deut. 32:43 are the words of 10a. Moses is here called to support the thought. In this example the Gentiles are represented as rejoicing among the Jews. Once again in Psa. 117:1 the acceptance of the Gentiles is stated. The joy they have in this acceptance is described. The inference is obvious: "Christ has accepted all; do you then accept one another."

The final word on the subject is given by Isaiah. The "root out of Jesse" was to be exalted at God's right hand for the purpose of ruling the world. All in the world who accept his rule shall find salvation. This is for both Jew and Gentile. The point still carries of mutual acceptance of one another.

Text

15:14-33. And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. 15 But I write the more boldly

379. What new thought is introduced by verse seven?

380. Why the use of the Old Testament prophecies in verses 9-12?

381. How does the thought of Christ ruling the world relate to mutual helpfulness?

unto you in some measure, as putting you again in remembrance, because of the grace that was given me of God, 16 that I should be a minister of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 17 I have therefore my glorying in Christ Jesus in things pertaining to God. 18 For I will not dare to speak of any things save those which Christ wrought through me, for the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed, 19 in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Spirit; so that from Jerusalem, and around about even unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ; 20 yea, making it my aim so to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build upon another man's foundation; 21 but, as it is written,

They shall see, to whom no tidings of him came,
And they who have not heard shall understand.

22 Wherefore also I was hindered these many times from coming to you: 23 but now, having no more any place in these regions, and having these many years a longing to come unto you, 24 whensoever I go unto Spain (for I hope to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first in some measure I shall have been satisfied with your company)—25 but now, I say, I go unto Jerusalem, ministering unto the saints. 26 For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem. 27 Yea, it hath been their good pleasure; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, they owe it to them also to minister unto them in carnal things. 28 When therefore I have accomplished this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will go on by you unto Spain. 29 And I know that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of Christ.

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; 31 that I may be delivered from them that are disobedient in Judea, and that my ministration which I have for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints; 32 that I may come unto you in joy through the will of God, and together with you find rest. 33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

REALIZING ROMANS, 15:14-33

612. Paul gives a very generous compliment in vs. 14. If they were full of both goodness and knowledge, why did he write them as he did?

613. Does the phrase "able to admonish one another" suggest the "order of service" in the Roman church? Are we doing today what they did then in this matter of admonishing one another?
614. Paul wrote to the saints in Rome to stir up their memory. What would they be able to remember that would help them? He gives his authority for so writing. What was it?
615. Paul seems to look upon himself as both a minister and priest in vs. 16. Show how. What is the meaning of "sanctified by the Holy Spirit"?
616. Is the word "boasting" a good synonym for "glorying" in vs. 17?
617. Paul had spoken of many other things even to these brethren. How are we to understand vs. 18?
618. What distinction is there between "the power of signs and wonders" and "the power of the Holy Spirit"? cf. vs. 19.
619. Locate Illyricum on the map and marvel with me at the accomplishments of the Apostle. Is Paul here speaking of his own personal preaching or the preaching he directed?
620. Why would Paul be reticent to "build upon another man's foundation"?
621. Verse twenty-one has marvelous application today. There are 120 countries and only 28 of them have gospel preaching. Why is it we do not answer the call of those who have never heard?
622. Why was Paul hindered from coming to the saints in Rome?
623. From where was this epistle written? What is meant by saying "having no more place in these regions"?
624. Paul planned an evangelistic tour of Spain. Did he go?
625. What were the saints in Rome going to do for Paul on his journey to Spain?
626. At the time of the writing Paul was on his way to Jerusalem with an offering. Read the references in his other letters regarding this offering. Why was it taken? How long did it take to obtain it? Who carried it? From whom was it taken?
627. Paul felt Gentiles had a debt to pay to the Jews. What was it?
628. In what sense is money "carnal"?
629. "Sealed to them this fruit"—what a picturesque phrase. What does it mean?
630. Wasn't Paul a little presumptuous to assume help from the brethren in Rome?
631. What is "the fullness of the blessing of Christ"?
632. Is the "love of the Spirit" in vs. 30 the Spirit's love or our love for the Spirit?
633. Note and number the three requests of Paul's prayer.

634. What effect would prayers have on the disobedient in Judea?
635. Give the meaning of the word "strive" in vs. 30. Are we to "strive" in our prayers? Do you do it?
636. There is in vs. 31 a most wonderful picture of unselfishness. Paul requests earnest prayer on behalf of the reception of an offering. Show the unselfishness in it.
637. Paul came to Rome, but not to rest. What were the circumstances of his coming?
638. In all the doxologies and benedictions there is a request. Just how would it be fulfilled? If it were, how would we know it?

Paraphrase

15:14-33. However, my brethren, though I have given both instruction and reproof, I have not a mean [low] opinion either of your knowledge or virtue. For even I myself am persuaded concerning you, that, in general, ye are full of good dispositions; and that, being filled with all knowledge of the Christian doctrine, ye are able also to instruct one another.

15 But, notwithstanding my good opinion of you, I have written the more boldly to you, brethren, partly as calling things to your remembrance, which I am qualified to do through the grace of apostleship given me of God. (Rom. i. 5. xii. 6.).

16 In order to my being a public minister of Jesus Christ among the Gentiles, ministering to them as a priest the knowledge of the gospel of God, that by their believing it, there might be an offering of the Gentiles most acceptable to God, being cleansed from their former impurities by the influences of the Holy Ghost accompanying my preaching.

17 I have therefore cause of boasting, through Christ Jesus, with respect to my success in things pertaining to God; my success in presenting the Gentiles an acceptable offering to God.

18 Now, though I might justly claim praise on account of the success of my disciples, yet I will not, in this boasting, dare to speak any thing of what Christ hath not wrought, but of what he hath wrought by me personally, in order to make the Gentiles obedient to the gospel, both in profession and practice, (see Rom. i. 5. xv. 26.)

19 By the power of miracles, performed by me on the sick and maimed, and what is still greater, by the power of the gifts of the Spirit of God, communicated by me to the Gentiles; so that, beginning at Jerusalem, and going through the countries round about as far as Illyricum, I have fully and successfully preached the gospel of Christ.

20 And it became me thus diligently to preach the gospel, not where Christ was acknowledged, that I might not build on another man's foundation: that would have been to perform the office of a subordinate teacher, which is far more easy than that of an apostle.

21 But I have preached to the most ignorant nations, so that, as it is written, they shall know the Saviour, to whom nothing hath been told concerning him by their instructors; and they who have not heard the method of salvation explained, shall understand it fully.

22 For which reason also, that I resolved to preach the gospel to those who had never heard it, I have been oftentimes hindered from coming to you.

23 But now, having no more opportunity in these parts to preach to persons who have not heard the gospel, and having for many years entertained a strong desire to come to you who are in Rome,

24 Whensoever I go towards Spain, I will come to you: For in my journey to that country, where, by preaching the gospel, I expect to turn the idolatrous inhabitants from Satan to God, I hope to see you at leisure, and to be accompanied a part of my way thitherward by some of you, after I shall first be made happy for a while with your company.

25 But at present I go to Jerusalem with the money I have collected for the brethren in Judea.

26 For the churches in the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a liberal contribution for the relief of the poor of the brethren who are in Jerusalem in great distress.

27 They have been pleased, verily, to make this contribution: and they have done well; because they are under great obligations to the Jewish Christians. For if the Gentiles have received of their spiritual things, if they have received from them the knowledge of the gospel, they ought certainly to minister to them of their worldly goods in their present need.

28 Wherefore, having finished this business, by delivering the money at Jerusalem, and having secured to the Jewish saints the fruit of the love which the Gentiles bear to them, I will go from Judea by you into Spain.

29 And from my experience of God's working by me, I know that when I come, I shall come empowered to bestow on you abundantly the gifts of the Spirit, (Rom. i. 11.), which are the peculiar blessing of the gospel of Christ.

382. How can God fill us with hope and joy?

383. What is the relationship to the joy of the Holy Spirit in our being at peace with one another?

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, by all that the Lord Jesus Christ hath done for you, and by the love which the Spirit hath showed to you, in giving you his manifold gifts, that ye strive together with me, by earnestly praying for me to God;

31 That I may be delivered from the disobedient in Judea, and that my service, in making the collections, which I am performing to the saints in Jerusalem, may be acceptable to them; and contribute to remove the prejudices which they entertain against the Gentile Christians for not obeying the law:

32 That in joy, on account of the reconciliation of the Jewish to the Gentile brethren, I may come to you by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed by the happiness following that reconciliation.

33 Now, may God, the author of peace, and who I hope will produce peace between the Jews and Gentiles, be with you all: and to show my sincerity in this wish, I say Amen.

Summary

The Apostle prays that the God of hope may fill the disciples in Rome with all peace and joy in believing what he has written. Although he has spoken plainly to them, and signified his disapprobation of certain things among them, still he is far from thinking meanly of them. On the contrary, he is persuaded that they are full of knowledge, and altogether able to teach and admonish one another. His bold manner in places is assumed in virtue of his apostolic office. The great object of his labors is that he may be enabled at last to present the Gentiles as a glorious and acceptable offering to God. He mentions the vast extent of his labors, and assigns the reason for wishing to preach where Christ had never been named.

The Apostle's multiplied labors in different countries had often hindered him from executing a purpose long since formed of one day visiting Rome. But now being without a place in those regions to preach the gospel where it had not before been preached, he decides to make the visit soon. But, first, he must go into Judea to carry a contribution from Greece and Macedonia to the poor brethren in Jerusalem. This service performed however, he proposes next a journey to Spain, and decides to see Rome on his way. He very ardently desires to be delivered, while in Judea, from the unbelieving Jews there, and that his alms may be acceptable to the poor disciples for whom they were intended.

384. Why have we said verse fourteen is "a delicate piece of diplomacy"?

385. Why the sharp application in parts of the letter?

386. In what sense did Paul consider himself a priest?

387. How could Paul boast and still be humble?

Comment

II. Conclusion. 15:13—16:27

1. Personal Matters. 15:13-33

Paul is to now speak of some of the results of applying the principles discussed in earlier verses. The great God who is the source and foundation of our hope of heaven can fill us with joy and peace if we believe what has been said about getting along with one another. Only when we are thus full of peace and joy can the Holy Spirit produce in us with power the abounding hope of glory. The importance of being at peace with one another is surely here pointed out.

Verse 14 is indeed "a delicate piece of diplomacy." Paul says that he has the greatest confidence in their goodness and knowledge. He suggests that he is not writing to them because he feels they are stubborn and ignorant. On the contrary, most of them were ready to receive his instructions and well able to carry them out. It is not to be thought that all the saints in Rome were "filled with goodness" or "filled with knowledge," but this was true of many of them. Paul wants to compliment them, and by so doing, to encourage those who lacked, to measure up.

"Parts of this letter are very sharp in application to personal life," says Paul. "This is true so that you saints in Rome might recall to mind the truths you learned when you became Christians, and some of those since that time." Paul says he has done this because of his apostolic office. God has constrained him so to write. Most especially is this true because he was called to minister to the Gentiles. The Roman church had many Gentiles. Paul came to them and to all nations, performing his sacred function in administering the good news of God that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Paul looks upon himself in analogy, as one standing before the altar of God as a priest offering the Gentiles who have believed up to God. This sacrifice or offering will be acceptable because it is pure and holy, pure because the Holy Spirit has made it pure. It is here stated that we as Christians are kept pure by the Holy Spirit so that one day we will be accepted by God. What a wonderful, encouraging thought!

Because many Gentiles had been presented to God by Paul, he was enabled to "boast in Christ"—which is something far different from boasting in himself—in matters relating to God. Paul rejoices in God's wonderful accomplishments through him.

388. In what sense was the gospel "fully preached"? Did every person hear?

389. Why was Paul hindered in coming to those in Rome? What caused the hindrance?

390. What did Paul expect from those at Rome?

Verse 18 indicates that Paul will mention only those things in which he was personally concerned. "It would be difficult to evaluate the work of another, but what Christ has done in and through me I can most certainly tell." This seems to be the meaning here.

Now follows in three short phrases the summation of all of Paul's work. What did God through Christ accomplish by Paul? Here it is: (1) Many, many wonderful acts by the power of the Spirit; (2) much inspired teaching and preaching by word and deed; (3) the words and deeds fully confirmed in those who heard and received, by signs and wonders. All of this was to one glorious end, "the obedience of the Gentiles."

In carrying out the commission given to him, Paul says that, considering Jerusalem as a geographical center, he has "fully preached the gospel of Christ" even as far as Illyricum. When Paul was in Ephesus "all Asia" heard the word. Paul so labored himself and so encouraged others that the message was spread throughout the whole district in which he preached. Surely he "labored more abundantly than them all."

It was a matter of personal honor with the apostle to work in virgin territory. There might be several reasons advanced for so doing, but the one Paul gave was that he "might not build on another man's foundation." This has real advantages, as any preacher of experience will agree.

Paul saw in this type of preaching a fulfillment of prophecy from Isaiah. To those who have never heard, to those who do not see—to these shall I bring divine understanding and sight. What a grand objective for every preacher.

For the very reason just cited, that he had found so many places where Christ had not been preached, Paul was often hindered in his desire to visit the church at Rome. At the writing of the epistle the situation had changed. In all of the area around the great city of Corinth he had fully preached the gospel. One cannot but wonder just what is entailed in "fully preaching" to the thousands who lived near Corinth. How was it done and who did it?

Paul is not planning a visit to Rome just to see the saints there, but to be helped by them on his way to evangelize Spain. Did Paul fulfill his wish to see Rome? We know he did, but under far different circumstances than he first planned. Did he preach in Spain? We do not know.

391. For whom was the offering taken? How many participated? How long was it in gathering?

392. The love of Christ was surely perfected in Paul. What indicates this?

393. Name the three requests in the prayer of Paul.

It is both encouraging and different to read of Paul's attitude toward the support of the gospel by those in Rome. Paul had never seen them, and yet he assumes in all confidence they will offer him financial and material assistance when he sees them on his way to Spain. Paul expected to be equipped by the brethren in Rome. While there, Paul also expected to rejoice with them in their mutual faith. In this he could not be fully satisfied, for time would not permit.

The time and place of the writing of the epistle are indicated in vs. 25, 26. By referring to the Acts account and other references, we conclude that Corinth and the third missionary journey were the place and time.

The saints of Judea and Jerusalem were very much in need of food and clothing. This need was met, upon the insistence of Paul. It was more than a year in gathering, and seven men were used to carry it. It was taken from a wider area than just Macedonia and Achaia, reaching even to Galatia.

Paul lays down a principle in vs. 27 that would find application in his relationship with many of the Gentile Christians in Rome. The Gentiles of Macedonia (in the churches of Thessalonica, Philippi, Berea) felt a debt must be paid to those in Jerusalem. The offering was a payment in material means for the spiritual blessings of the gospel. The gospel came from the Jews: we are their debtors.

Verse 28 is very much like vs. 24. The addition in vs. 28 is the route he is to take on his way to Rome, and the reason for it.

When Paul arrived in Rome he would come with the "whole council of God." To the holy in Rome he would impart the marvelous blessings of the gospel. There would be signs and wonders to confirm the word, but the spiritual benefit would be in the teaching and preaching.

Verses 30, 31 give an insight into Paul's feelings regarding his visit and gift to the poor in Jerusalem. He says in thought, "It is my most earnest desire that you battle with me in prayers that I might be protected from the merciless hands of certain who hate me in Judea." In addition to this, he says, "Allow the love of Christ and the love of the Holy Spirit to prompt you to join with me in the most earnest of petitions that none in the Jerusalem church will refuse the money I bring for them." How the love of Christ had been perfected in Paul can here be seen. He prayed for those who hated him, for those who misunderstood him, and not in a perfunctory manner but with all his heart and called upon Gentiles to do likewise.

394. What seems to suggest that Phoebe was the one who delivered the letter to Rome?

395. Was Phoebe a "deaconess"?

We might add vs. 32 to the prayer request, for it is a part of it. The whole request has three parts: (1) To be delivered from evil men; (2) the offering to be acceptable; (3) to arrive in Rome with joy and refreshment. The first part was not answered. The second was. The third was modified. Thus does God grant an answer that is better than our requests. He knows what is best, and we are satisfied to rest in this confidence.

Verse 33 contains a most beautiful and meaningful benediction. What more could anyone ask or wish than to have the assurance that God was with him always?

Text

16:1-16. I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church that is at Cenchreae: 2 that ye receive her in the Lord, worthily of the saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever matter she may have need of you: for she herself also hath been a helper of many, and of mine own self.

3 Salute Prisca and Aquila my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who for my life laid down their own necks; unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles: 5 and salute the church that is in their house. Salute Epaenetus my beloved, who is the firstfruits of Asia unto Christ. 6 Salute Mary, who bestowed much labor on you. 7 Salute Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also have been in Christ before me. 8 Salute Ampliatus my beloved in the Lord. 9 Salute Urbanus our fellow-worker in Christ, and Stachys my beloved. 10 Salute Apelles the approved in Christ. Salute them that are of the household of Aristobulus. 11 Salute Herodion my kinsman. Salute them of the household of Narcissus, that are in the Lord. 12 Salute Tryphaena and Tryphosa, who labor in the Lord. Salute Persis the beloved, who labored much in the Lord. 13 Salute Rufus the chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. 14 Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brethren that are with them. 15 Salute Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints that are with them. 16 Salute one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ salute you.

Rethinking in Outline Form

c. Exhortations to Mutual Helpfulness. 15:1-13.

- (1) The strong to help the weak. v. 1 cf. 14:1; Gal. 6:2.
- (2) To please others. vs. 2-3.

This is to be limited by pleasing them only in the

things that are good and lead to edifying. This is exemplified by Christ. cf. 14:19; II Cor. 8:9; Psa. 69:9.

- (3) Things written aforetime are for our learning. vs. 4 cf. II Tim. 3:16; I Cor. 10:6-13.
- (4) To be of the same mind one toward another. vs. 5-7.
 - (a) To be of the same mind. v. 5. This condition is from God and according to Christ.
 - (b) With one mouth we are to glorify God. vs. 6.
 - (c) To receive one another even as Christ received us. v. 7.
- (5) Christ made a minister of the circumcision that the Gentiles through the confirmation of the promises given unto the fathers, might glorify God. vs. 8-12.

Verse 10 is found in Deut. 32:43. verse 11 in Psa. 117:1. verse 12 in Isa. 11:10.

B. Conclusion. 15:14-16:27.

1. Personal Matters. 15:14-33.

- a. Paul's confidence in the Roman brethren. v. 14.
- b. Reason for writing so boldly. vs. 15-16.
- c. His labors as an apostle. 15:17-21.
 - (1) His glorying all in Christ. vs. 17-19a.
 - (2) He had fulfilled his mission of preaching the gospel. v. 19b.
 - (3) He endeavored to preach in new fields. vs. 20-21.
- d. His purpose to visit them on his way to Spain. vs. 22-29.
 - (1) Had been hindered by the many new fields opening to preach the gospel. v. 22.
 - (2) Now looking toward new frontiers in Spain. vs. 23-24.
 - (3) His going to Jerusalem with an offering for the poor. v. 25-27.
 - (a) The comparative references that explain this offering are as follows: Acts 24:17; 19:21; I Cor. 16:1-2; II Cor. 8:1-2; II Cor. 9:2.
 - (b) The word "contribution" in verse 26 is the same as "fellowship" in Acts 2:42.
 - (c) The Gentiles of Macedonia and Achaia owed the Jews material support since it was through them they received spiritual life. v. 27.
 - (4) To visit the Romans as soon as he was finished. vs. 28-29. His plans were changed. He was taken prisoner to Rome.

e. Requests for prayers for himself. vs. 30-33.

(1) The nature of the request. v. 30.

(2) That he might be delivered from disobedient ones.
v. 31a.

(3) That his ministration will be acceptable. v. 31b.

(4) That he might come unto them in Rome with joy. v. 32.

REALIZING ROMANS, 16:1-16

639. Was Phoebe a deaconess?

640. If she wasn't an official servant, why does Paul so speak of her as in vs. 1? Locate Cenchreae.

641. Give the meaning of the expression "worthily of the saints."

642. In what possible manner would Phoebe need the saints in Rome?

643. What work can women do in the church? What assistance do you imagine Phoebe was to many and to Paul?

644. Paul has high words of praise for Prisca and Aquila. At what possible time and place did they risk their lives for Paul?

645. Give three facts about these two as found in other references.

646. Name three churches of the Gentiles that could have been involved in the thankfulness.

647. Did the whole church in Rome meet in the house of Prisca and Aquila?

648. What quality of character does the mentioning of all these names suggest?

649. Someone had been in jail with Paul; they had become very well known and respected by the apostles. Who were they?

650. There was one in Rome to whom Paul sent greetings who had proven himself by suffering. Who was it?

651. How many women and men are mentioned? Count them.

652. Did Paul have relatives among these in Rome? Who were they?

653. Why call the kiss of greeting a "holy kiss"?

654. Is the church ever referred to as "the church of Christ"? Be careful: is it "church," or "churches"?

Paraphrase

16:1-16. I recommend to you who are in Rome, Phoebe our sister in the faith, who is a deaconess of the church which is in Cenchreae.

2 And I desire that ye may show her the respect due to a faithful servant of Christ, as becometh his disciples to do to a person of her excellent character, and assist her in whatever business she may have

need of your good offices. For indeed she hath been a helper of many, and of myself also.

3 In my name wish health to Priscilla and Aquila her husband, my assistants in preaching the gospel at Corinth.

4 These excellent persons to save my life exposed themselves to death; to whom therefore, not I only am thankful, but even all the churches of the Gentiles, who consider themselves as indebted to them, for preserving the life of their apostle and spiritual father.

5 Likewise, with health to the members of the church which is in their house. Salute Epænetus, whom I dearly love because he is the first person I converted in the province of Achaia.

6 Salute Mary, who underwent great fatigue in spreading the gospel along with us.

7 Salute Andronicus and Junias my kinsmen, and formerly prisoners with me for the sake of Christ, who are in high estimation among the apostles on account of their talents and virtues, and who were in the church of Christ before me.

8 Salute Amplias, whom I dearly love on account of his sincere attachment to Christ.

9 Salute Urbanus, who assisted me in preaching Christ; and Stachys, whom I sincerely love on account of the goodness of his disposition.

10 Salute Apelles, who, by sustaining many persecutions, hath approved himself a firm Christian. Salute the brethren who are of the family of Aristobulus.

11 Salute in my name, Herodion my kinsman. Salute those members of the family of Narcissus who are converted to Christianity.

12 Salute Tryphaena and Tryphosa, women who employ themselves in maintaining the cause of Christ at Rome. Salute Persis, the beloved of all who know her, and who hath laboured much in promoting the cause of Christ.

13 Salute Rufus, who is a most excellent Christian; and do the same to her who is his mother, and, because of her affection to me, my mother also.

14 In my name salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren in their families.

15 In my name salute Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the Christians who are in their families.

16 To show that Christian affection which ye bear to each other, salute one another with a chaste kiss. The churches of Christ at Corinth and Cenchreae, and in all the province of Achaia, salute you.

Summary

Phoebe, a deaconess of the church in Cenchreae, is commended to the disciples, while they, on their part, are requested to receive her as the holy should receive the holy, and to aid her in whatever business she might need them. After this, various brethren, several of them Paul's kinsmen, and also various sisters, are most honorably mentioned, and the brotherhood requested to greet them. Usually, as each person is named, some distinguishing trait or circumstance is named with him, showing how closely the Apostle studied characters, and how generously he awarded praise. The section sheds much light upon the religious life and social habits of life in the first century.

*Comment*2. *Commendations, Warnings, Salutations and Benedictions.* 16:1-27.

A Commendation and Salutations. 16:1-16

The fact that Phoebe alone is commended by Paul to the brethren in Rome suggests the thought that she was by herself, and possibly the one who delivered the letter to the church at Rome. Was Phoebe a servant of the church at Cenchreae in the official sense? It makes little difference since she served the church. We really cannot know. She performed her service with "the Apostle's sanction." Whether such women are officially appointed or not, we need more of them. The poor, the sick and the untaught in the community need them. Cenchreae was the seaport of Corinth. Paul visited here on his second missionary journey.

Here is a high recommendation for Phoebe. "Receive her as a Christian; help her in whatever way she may need you, for she has been a helper of many and of my own self." We have no way of knowing what "the business" was in Rome. Evidently Phoebe came for that very purpose. What a splendid epithet, "a helper of many." Did Phoebe have money of her own to enable her to do this? Was she a widow, since no husband is mentioned? These are conjectures of the commentators. The nature of the assistance given to Paul is also a conjecture.

Since Paul is writing this letter from Corinth, the names of Prisca and Aquila are very much in place since Corinth was where Paul met them. Even when first mentioned, we learn they had once lived in Rome. They are now again in the imperial city. From the nature of the greeting, we could suggest they were at Rome to labor for

396. What high recommendation did Paul give to Phoebe?

397. Give three facts about Prisca and Aquila.

398. Who was Epaenetus?

399. Mary of verse six is an example for women today. How?

Christ. Paul worked with them as a tentmaker and they worked with him in preaching and teaching Christ. Prisca and Aquila had the high honor of offering their life for that of Paul. Just where and when we are not told, Paul was in danger many times and in many places. It could have been at Ephesus or even Corinth. The churches in the region around Corinth and Ephesus join in the gratitude expressed to these two. Could it be that the churches of the Gentiles heard of how Paul's life was spared?

In the home of Prisca and Aquila a group of Christians met to worship. To this assembled group Paul wanted greetings sent. Would not this be the answer to the problem of moving into a community where there is no church? Start one in your home.

Verse five mentions one held in high esteem by Paul. One of the first to accept Christ in Asia was at Ephesus, or Philadelphia, or Laodecia. We know not, but Epaenetus was first in conversion and one of the first in memory.

What is the work of the women in the kingdom of God? There is much to be done. In verse six we find a Mary who found much to do for the saints in Rome. Did she do it at Rome, or was it done for them at some other place? Both are possibilities. The point is, she labored much and so should the women of today.

In Andronicus and Junias we might have a suggestion as to how the church began in Rome. It could have been as Lard suggests, and several others, these two men were among "the strangers of Rome" in Acts 2:10. This would account for them being in Christ before Paul and of becoming of note among the apostles. What they did to receive this distinction most assuredly related to service for Christ. Just when these two were imprisoned with Paul, we do not know, but Paul remembers them with him in one of the several prisons where he was held. These two men seem to be blood relatives of Paul.

What a great man was Paul! He need not mention all these persons in his letter, but he does. He has a sincere word of commendation for each one. "He was great in intellect, ardent in feeling, and tender in affection as a woman." Why did Paul especially love Ampliatus? Could it be because he was one of his converts?

Verse nine introduces two interesting persons. When had Urbanus labored with Paul? It must have been for an extended period of time

400. Is there any hint in these verses as to how the church started in Rome?
If so what?
401. How is the greatness of Paul seen in the mention of the names of so many in his greetings?
402. Who was Apelles?
403. Which one was Paul's relative?

to give him this title. We wonder what close association Paul had with Stachys to give him such a tender greeting.

It is good to know someone who has come through many tribulations with robes pure and white. Such a "tried" disciple and friend was Apelles. The family of a man named Aristobulus comes to mind. The family was in Rome. Where was Aristobulus? We simply do not know. Any answer is only conjecture.

In verse eleven it would seem one of Paul's relatives had not distinguished himself, for no descriptive word is given. Yet Paul does want to send him greetings. The house of Narcissus was one of great repute in the days of Paul. Not all in the house were in the Lord. The ones who were Christians were the object of the greeting.

Verse twelve indicates Tryphaena and Tryphosa were engaged in working for the Lord as the letter was being written. What was the work of these two women? There were many Apollos's to be taught. There was much in the area of special service for the church, even as there is today. Persis is yet another woman who worked for Christ. How can we think Paul felt that women had no place in the church when so many are here mentioned as fellow laborers?

Verse thirteen suggests two different expressions concerning Rufus, "chosen in the Lord," and the mother of Rufus, "his mother and mine." How shall we interpret these expressions? "Chosen in the Lord" refers to the character of the man, not to "elected" in the sense used by some. Rufus was regarded by Paul as an outstanding person, endowed with abilities, and in this sense chosen. As to the mother of Rufus, we believe the expression is used in a figurative manner. "—his mother literally, mine by courtesy." Such a relationship exists today with certain elderly women whom we call "mother" in respect.

There is a great deal of traditional material available regarding each of the names in this chapter. Since it is only tradition we do not deem it worthy of mention. In verse fourteen are five brothers and certain others, probably their families and other relatives. Of them, we know nothing more than they were worthy of a greeting.

Verse fifteen gives another list of worthy persons unknown to us. The mention of "all the holy brethren with them" might suggest a church in the section of Rome where they live. The same would be true of verse fourteen. It could be that such men were elders in the churches.

404. Was Rufus "elected" by God? Explain.

405. There seems to be a suggestion of several congregations in these verses—how so?

406. Give the meaning of the expression "holy kiss."

407. How is the name "churches of Christ" here used?

The greeting of the early Christians is enjoined in verse sixteen. The custom of so greeting one another existed when Paul wrote. He says make the greeting "holy" or pure. It is easy to see how it could be otherwise. We do not use this mode of greeting; therefore it is not applicable to us. Paul does not create a form of greeting for Christians; he rather shows how to use the one then existing.

The churches in Achaia, and they were no doubt numerous, are here designated "churches of Christ." What they are called in plural form we assume they could be called singly. Perhaps some heard of Paul's letter to Rome and came to send their greetings on behalf of the "churches of Christ." Surely this is a very worthy name, but no more so than any other scriptural designation.

Rethinking in Outline Form

2. Commendations, Warnings, Salutations and Benedictions. 16:1-27.
 - a. Commendation. vs. 1-2.
 - b. Salutations. vs. 3-16.
 - (1) Prisca and Aquila. vs. 3-5a cf. Acts 18:2; I Cor. 16:19; II Tim. 4:19.
 - (2) The many salutations. vs. 5b-15.
 - (3) Salute one another with a holy kiss. v. 16a.
 - (4) The greeting of the churches of Christ in Corinth and in other places to those of Rome. v. 16.
 - c. Warnings to those who cause divisions. v. 17-20.
 - (1) Mark those who cause the divisions. v. 17a.
 Probably the Judaizing teachers who wanted to impose the law upon the Gentiles.
 - (2) They are bringing a contrary doctrine. v. 17b.
 - (3) To turn away from them. v. 17c.
 - (4) Who they serve. v. 18a.
 - (5) The method of their deception. v. 18b.
 - (6) What they do. v. 18c.
 - (7) Paul rejoices in the Roman's obedience and wants the troublemakers put down. v. 19.
 - (8) God to give the victory. v. 20.
 - d. Salutations of Paul's companions. vs. 21-24.
 - (1) Timothy with Paul at this time. cf. Acts 20:4.
 - (2) Lucius. cf. Acts 13:1.

408. Account for the introduction of the subject of division at this place.

409. Who in particular are to be noticed here?

410. Why do some want to have a following of their own?

411. What should we do with our opinions?

- (3) Sopister. cf. Acts 20:4.
- (4) Tertius. The scribe unknown.
- (5) Gaius. cf. I Cor. 1:14.
- (6) Erastus. cf. Acts 19:22; II Tim. 4:20.
- (7) Quartus. Unknown.

e. Closing Doxology. vs. 25-27.

- (1) Commended to God. v. 25 cf. Eph. 3:20; Jude 24.
- (2) That God would establish them in truth which in times past was a mystery but now has been revealed through the message Paul brought; namely, the salvation of the Gentiles. vs. 26-27.

Text

16:17-27. Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them. 18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent. 19 For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I rejoice therefore over you: but I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple unto that which is evil. 20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

21 Timothy my fellow-worker saluteth you; and Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen. 22 I Tertius, who write the epistle, salute you in the Lord. 23 Gaius my host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the treasurer of the city saluteth you, and Quartus the brother.

25 Now to him that is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal, 26 but now is manifested, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, is made known unto all the nations unto obedience of faith: 27 to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever. Amen.

REALIZING ROMANS, 16:17-27

- 655. How can we account for the abrupt change of subject?
- 656. Could the persons mentioned in verses 17, 18 refer to those who caused stumbling because of days and meat?
- 657. How would such persons be "marked"?
- 658. What is meant by "turn away from them"? Is this practiced today?

- 659. Did Paul know of such persons?
- 660. How could false doctrine relate to the stomach?
- 661. In what sense were certain persons "innocent"?
- 662. Paul was confident the Roman brethren would follow his word. Why was he so confident?
- 663. How could it be possible to be "simple unto that which is evil" when Paul was discussing it at such length?
- 664. What a marvelous word of encouragement is found in vs. 20. How could Paul be so confident of this victory? How is Satan here pictured?
- 665. What is the meaning of the term "grace" as used in vs. 20b?
- 666. Some of the names in this chapter we have noticed before in Paul's letters. Does this mean that here we meet them again? Which ones?
- 667. Paul didn't write the letter himself. How was it written?
- 668. Gaius must have had a spacious house. Why do we so conclude?
- 669. The gospel reached a few notable ones. Erastus is an example. Why were there not more?
- 670. The eternal God is able not only to save us from our sins but to keep us from our sins. How?
- 671. What is the mystery now manifested?
- 672. Is this benediction applicable to us? Specify in what ways.

Paraphrase

16:17-27. Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them who set up separate assemblies for worship, and who occasion the weak to fall by false doctrine, or by enjoining things indifferent as necessary, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned from me in this epistle, and avoid them.

18 For such teachers, whatever they may pretend, do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own lusts; and by plausible discourse and hypocritical wishes of happiness, they draw away the affections of the innocent, who have no suspicion of their wickedness.

19 Now your obedience, in turning from idols to the true God, is reported through the whole empire: I therefore rejoice on your account. Nevertheless, I wish you to be wise with respect to good, so as to discern and practice it habitually, and to be pure with respect to evil, by avoiding all false doctrines and wicked actions.

20 And God, who is the author of peace, will produce peace among you by bruising Satan under your feet soon: I mean the unbelieving Jews and Judaizing teachers, who make divisions among you. The favor of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

21 Timothy, my assistant in the ministry, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, who are at present with me, salute you.

22 Tertius, who wrote this letter from the apostle's autograph, am permitted by him to salute you as the disciples of Christ.

23 Caius, with whom I lodge, and who shows hospitality to all the members of the church here, wishes you health. So doth Erastus, the chamberlain of Corinth, and Quartus, one of your own church, who at present is with me.

24 Loving you affectionately, I give you my apostolical benediction a second time. (See vs. 20.) The favor of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

25 Now to him who is able to establish you in the belief, that by faith and not by the law the Gentiles shall be saved, according to my gospel and the preaching concerning Jesus Christ by all the apostles, according to the revelation of the mystery to them, which though contained in the covenant with Abraham, was kept secret in the time of the Mosaic dispensation,

26 (But is now fully published to the world, by the preaching of the gospel; and, according to the commandment of the eternal and unchangeable God, contained in the prophetic writings of the Jews, is made known to all the Gentiles, in order to produce in them the obedience of faith),

27 To the wise God alone, who possesses all perfection in and of himself, through the illumination of Jesus Christ, I say with understanding, to him be the glory of the salvation of the world ascribed for ever. And for the truth of all that I have written, I appeal to God, by saying Amen to the whole.

Summary

In this section, the subject of divisions or factions is strangely isolated, and made to receive special notice. The brotherhood are commanded to watch such as cause divisions and occasion stumblings, and to turn away from them. Such persons are severely characterized as not serving Christ, but their own stomachs.

After this digression, the Apostle returns to the subject of personal greetings. These ended, he closes his great letter with a most wonderful outburst of praise—wonderful, because of its comprehension, complexity, and strength.

412. When we teach as a doctrine of God our own conclusions we merit what from God and the elders?

413. What should be done with those who cause divisions? Who is to do it?

414. The defeat of Satan in Rome was only temporary. Why say this?

415. Name three who were with Paul when he wrote.

Comments

b. Warnings to those who cause the divisions. 16:17-20.

We must say with Moses Lard: ". . . why he should have introduced the subject of divisions just in this particular conjection is not easily seen." Perhaps after thinking of all the wonderfully good people in the church in Rome he wanted them to know he was aware of the other element also. At whatever purpose this section does stand out separate and apart as a warning to all. We are not here to notice apostates or sectarians, but those who produce parties in the church. There are always some men who want the preeminence and they will have it in one way or another. In the cases here cited, such men draw aside the disciples after them for the purpose of feeding their own stomachs. The method employed by such involves opinionated teaching. Such men could not get a following by teaching the plain truth of the scriptures. An opinion must be taught as God's truth, or such divisions would never occur. In opinions we should have the greatest of liberty, but whenever we enforce our conclusions from the Scriptures with anathemas to all who do not so conclude, we cause stumblings and divisions. We may not do it for the same reason as those of Rome, but we are guilty of the same sin and merit the same censure. One characteristic mark of such division makers is their sanctimonious attitude. The unlearned and weak soon fall victims to such. What are we to do with these people? Mark them first; i.e., take note who they are, then turn away from them, avoid them, separate yourself from them. To do this two things are essential, neither of which we have in any large degree: a knowledge of the Bible and a holy courage to apply it in all cases."

Verse nineteen suggests the thought that such remarks as above (vs. 17-18) do not necessarily apply to the Roman brethren. Verse nineteen is somewhat in the form of an apology. The faith and unity of the Roman saints had been spoken of far and wide. Paul had heard of the reputation of the Romans, and in it he did rejoice. Paul sounds a note of warning in 19b. His earnest desire is to have these brethren very wise in matters of unity and love and very unlearned in matters of parties and sects. This might suggest the seeds of division were ever present in the church at Rome.

Verse twenty contains a wonderful promise and encouragement. "The God of peace" is referred to in contrast to the spirit of faction and war. The promise of the defeat of Satan amounts to a promise of unity. If Satan was crushed in Rome (and we believe he was), then he surely came to life later, for Rome has become well-known

today for its scriptural disunity. It is good to read this blessing, "The favor of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you." "If the favor of Christ prevails, Satan will be crushed and division will cease."

d. Salutations of Paul's companions. 16:21-24.

Who is with Paul as the letter is written? Verse twenty-one gives a list of Paul's friends in Corinth who send their greetings. We know of Timothy; Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater are kinsmen of Paul's, probably in the sense that each of them belong to the tribe of Benjamin. Lucius is supposed by some to be the Lucius of Cyrene of Acts 13:1, and Jason the one mentioned in Acts 17:5-7. We do not know if such is true. They do have the same names.

Paul did not himself write the letter, but dictated it to a scribe named Tertius. Evidently Tertius was known to the Christians in Rome, so he sends his personal greetings to them.

The house of Gaius must have been a very spacious one to entertain the whole company with Paul, indeed on one occasion "the whole church." Gaius greets the Romans. How good it is to have men of means to help the cause of Christ.

The influence of the good news in Corinth reached among the leaders of the city. The treasurer of the city was found among the faithful and wished to let it be known to the saints in Rome. We know nothing of Quartus.

Once again Paul wishes the favor of Christ for the holy of Rome. Some ancient manuscripts omit this second benediction.

e. Closing Doxology. 16:25-27.

This is a most beautiful manner in which to close the letter. Such is done in a number of others. cf. Jude 24. Paul states that according to his preaching of Jesus Christ, God is able to establish the saints in Rome so firmly in the faith that no one or no circumstance can move them from it. This good news respecting Jesus Christ was before now a mystery and kept secret. It was a secret until the days of the prophets when it began to be revealed by the command of the everlasting God to these men who wrote by inspiration a prophetic description of the one that was to come. The purpose of the present revelation of Christ through the gospel was to produce faith and obedience among all nations. In other words, "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." cf. Mk. 16:15, 16.

416. Who wrote the letter for Paul? From where?

417. The gospel had wide influence in the city of Corinth. How do we know?

418. We can be so firmly established in the faith that no one or no circumstance can move us from it. How?

419. What was the purpose of the gospel?

420. What was involved in "the obedience to the faith"?

Verse twenty-seven concludes the letter in a most appropriate manner. The omniscience of God and the eternal glory coming to him through Jesus Christ are called upon for the benediction. May we be able to say of ourselves and the church where we worship and serve—"Amen."

ARE THE HEATHEN SAVED?

SPECIAL STUDY ON 2:12-16

1. *What is the spiritual standing of the "Jews" and "Greeks" under consideration in these verses?*

Answer: They are sinners, both Jews and Greeks, not having accepted the gospel. We say this for the following reasons:

- a. Since Paul is discussing the universal need of the gospel, it is only logical that he should illustrate this need by those who did not have access to the gospel and those who, having had access to the gospel, had not accepted it. Inasmuch, therefore, as the Jews and Gentiles under consideration had not accepted the gospel, they were sinners, not Christians.
- b. Paul places the basis of judgment for the Jew as "the law." This would NOT be the case if these Jews under discussion had been Christians, for they would then have been under the law of Christ, hence, would be judged according to the gospel as Christians.
- c. The Greeks are spoken of as having "sinned without the law" and thus they would "perish"—be judged "without the law." If they had been Christians they would be judged by the gospel, and it would have been placed as the basis of judgment.
- d. It is self-evident that the Gentiles described in the verses being discussed (1:18-32; 2:14-15) were sinners and could under no consideration be counted as Christians. To suggest otherwise seems absurd.

Therefore, we must conclude that Paul is discussing those Jews and Gentiles of his day who had not accepted the gospel. Let us not forget that in this discussion he demonstrates their desperate need of the justification found in the gospel. Both the Gentile (chap. 1) and the Jew (chap. 2) when measured by their own law are found guilty.

2. *Why take the gospel to the heathen of today if they can be saved without it?* The answer is threefold.

- a. We should take the gospel to the heathen of today because they are not saved in their present state.
 - (1) They are lost, but not because they rejected Christ, for they never had the opportunity to either accept or reject him. If they had had this opportunity through access to the gospel, it would be a different matter; but we are discussing those who never had the opportunity to accept Christ.

- (2) The heathen of today are surely, actually and eternally lost because they are not conscientious about keeping their law and because they actually try to withstand God. Notice what Paul has to say upon this point.
 - (a) In describing the Gentiles in chapter one, he says, among other things, that they "hinder the truth in unrighteousness"; "they exchanged the truth of God for a lie"; "they refused to have God in their knowledge"; "wherefore God gave them up . . ." (1:18b, 25, 28). Thus using the pronouns (they, their and them) with no qualification whatever, he places the greater part, if not all, of the Gentile world under the wrath of God.
 - (b) Again in chapter three in summing up the matter, he writes in verses 9-12: ". . . for we before laid to the charge both of Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none that seeketh after God; They have all turned aside, they are together become unprofitable; There is none that doeth good, no, not so much as one."

Here it would seem beyond a shadow of a doubt that the vast majority of Gentiles (and Jews) are lost and consequently under the wrath of God.

- (3) "Well," someone says, "what about those spoken of in chapter two, verses 6-7 and 10, who were going to be given eternal life, glory, honor and peace because they were patient in well doing and sought for glory and honor and incorruption, and yet never heard the gospel?"
 - (a) Well, where are those persons and who are they? According to Paul the number of such persons is practically nil (0).
 - (b) God *will* give to such persons **JUST WHAT HE PROMISED** and upon **EXACTLY** the basis he promised it; but on that great day when God begins to judge the secrets of the hearts of men, who will be there to enter into eternal life on this plan?
 - (c) The message of these verses (2:6, 7, 10) is the basis of God's judgment; the persons referred to are hypothetical.
 - (d) In light of what we have just considered, it would seem to our fallible, human understanding that ac-

tually there will be but an infinitesimal portion of the Gentiles who will receive eternal life on the basis stated by Paul in the verses under consideration.

Thus we conclude that since the heathen are not saved in their present state, we should take the gospel to them.

b. We should take the gospel to the heathen because of the great, glorious, and immediate benefits to be found in the reception of the gospel. Think for a moment of some of them.

- (1) The present knowledge that our sins are all forgiven.
- (2) That we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous.
- (3) That we are the temple of God, the sanctuary of his Spirit.
- (4) That we have God's power through his Spirit and word to help us in defeating Satan.
- (5) That the purpose of life and creation is now clear to us.
- (6) That we are prepared for the judgment.

All these wonderful possessions and more are given to the heathen who accepts Christ. Are not these sufficient reasons for taking the glad news to them? Have we no sympathy for the man who has no present knowledge that his sins are forgiven; who is driven to make appeasement to a dumb idol? Have we no compassion upon those poor benighted souls who have some knowledge of what is right and wrong (unless they have been misled) and yet who, like us, are human and too weak to overcome the efforts of Satan to lead them in the wrong road? Have we no sorrow for those millions who have no inclination to follow in the path of righteousness? Why take the gospel to the heathen? Let us examine our hearts, brethren, if we can see no reason in the above stated information!

c. We would take the gospel to the heathen because the highest authority in heaven and earth has commanded us to take this message to "every creature." The condition of the souls of men the world around is a great constraining force, but above and beyond that is our obedience to our King. He whom we call "Lord" has intrusted us with this task, and to fail is to fail him, yes more, to disobey him. Why preach the gospel to the heathen?—because Christ asked us to do it.

Conclusion: We should preach the gospel to the heathen because they are lost in their present state, because of the benefits they will receive upon accepting it, and because Christ asked us to do so.

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3. *How could the conscientious, but nevertheless sinful, persons be saved who never heard of Christ or his blood?*

Answer: The same way that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and others were saved. cp. Mt. 8:11. Because of their "patience in well doing" or conscientious (though imperfect) obedience to the law, God mercifully accepted their faith as righteousness and anticipatively extended to them the blood of Christ to justify them from their sins. "Abraham believed God and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness." Rom. 4:3. Thus we see a principle whereby the blood of Christ could be applied to those before Christ who had never heard of him. Though we have shown essentially that there are no heathen who are conscientiously trying to keep God's law, they could by the same principle have Christ's blood applied to their sins also.

4. *What about other scripture references which seem to teach that every last Gentile who has not heard the gospel is lost, regardless of what he does?*

a. We will begin our answer by asking two questions:

(1) Are the persons involved in the reference those that have done the very best they could to obey the law of nature?

(2) If so, then are they spoken of as being lost?

b. The writer has found no scriptural reference to any person who could be counted as lost, who never heard the gospel or had opportunity to hear and yet lived up to the law of his conscience according to Romans 2:14-15.

c. Find a reference that speaks of a Gentile who never heard of Christ or had opportunity to hear and yet was lost in spite of his "patience in well doing"—faithful obedience to the law of nature (Rom. 2:7, 14-15)—and we will have a case, but not until then.

5. *Would not this teaching give hope to all those who, in all sincerity, were and are following false doctrines? In other words, if conscientiousness is a basis for eternal life in one case, why wouldn't it be in all cases?*

Before we answer this question, please understand that it is *not* our desire that anyone should be lost. cf. II Pe. 3:9. It is the truth we are interested in, for while we might like to see every conscientious person saved, we realize that our personal feelings will not be the basis of judgment on that great day. Jesus said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day." Jn. 12:48, Rev. 20:12

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Is conscientiousness in itself a sufficient basis for receiving eternal life? Answer: No, in the light of revealed facts. Here are the facts:

- a. The law of nature, Biblical history and the plain statements of Scripture seem to prove that conscientiousness alone is insufficient.
 - (1) The law of nature definitely teaches this fact.
 - (a) Suppose that in all sincerity you take some ant poison, thinking it to be cough syrup—will your conscientiousness save you from sickness or possibly death?
 - (b) Remember the time you were traveling when you unknowingly took the wrong road? Did your sincerity make the wrong road the right one?
 - (2) Biblical history substantiates this fact.
 - (a) Saul of Tarsus was as conscientious as any man could be and yet he was lost. Acts 22:3-4; 23:1; Gal. 1:13; I Tim. 1:15
 - (b) The Jews of Paul's day were conscientious and yet lost. Rom. 10:1-3
 - (c) The Gentiles who had neither the law of Moses nor the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1-2) were not to be judged on the basis of sincerity alone. Rom. 2:14-15. We will discuss more about this in division b.
 - (3) Some plain statements of Scripture which seem to bear out this fact.
 - (a) "Can the blind guide the blind? shall they not *both* fall into a pit?" Lu. 6:39
 - (b) "For they that lead this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed." Isa. 9:16
 - (c) "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; But the end thereof are the ways of death." Prov. 14:12; 16:25
 - (4) All known facts seem to prove conclusively that conscientiousness alone is no guarantee against being eternally lost.
- b. Conscientiousness in relation to the truth is what will count in the day of judgment.
 - (1) This principle illustrated.
 - (a) If you suddenly discover that you are about to take a spoonful of ant poison instead of cough syrup, what will you do?—go ahead and take it, hoping that because you are sincere all will be well?

- (b) Suppose on your journey across the country you find out that you are on the wrong road, what will you do?—continue on the wrong way, hoping to arrive at your destination regardless?
 - (c) When Saul of Tarsus found out that he was persecuting Jesus Christ, he ceased, and as a result became Paul, the apostle.
 - (d) The Gentile of Romans 1-2 was to be judged not upon conscientiousness alone, but upon his sincere (though imperfect) obedience to the truth revealed in nature. This truth was plain enough for all to see who would see (Rom. 1:18-20). cf. Mt. 13:14-15
 - (e) Only an honest concern for and obedience to the truth will bring anyone to his desired destination. cf. Jn. 3:36 A.R.V.; Jn. 3:5
- (2) Application of this principle and conclusion. (While this principle may be applied to many groups of people, we will deal only with two of them at this time.)
- (a) When we apply the above principle to those who profess to believe the Bible and claim salvation in Christ through faith only, apart from baptism (immersion), we base our conclusion upon two facts inherent in the principle.
 - i. The truth is that if the Bible says anything at all, it says that faith, repentance, confession and baptism are conditions upon which salvation is conferred.
 - ii. In their relationship to the truth, they are overlooking or disregarding it and disobeying it.
 - (b) Will such people be saved simply because they are conscientious? If so, God has not revealed it to us either through nature or revelation. In the light of all known facts, we can only say to such people: "Why risk your life by taking this uncertain pathway? Be safe and go by the sure highway which God has revealed in his word."
 - (c) It is not within the scope of this book to discuss the application of this principle to those who have been "baptized into Christ" and yet continue to follow false teaching—unscriptural names and practices and other denominational tendencies.

- (d) We are responsible to see that all such people receive the truth. Surely, if they are conscientious and we give them the proper teaching and example, they will turn from false teaching and obey only the truth.
- 6. *Why do injury to those who never heard by preaching to them and thus making them more responsible and liable to condemnation?*
 - a. It might be well to refer to what has already been said which gives good and altogether sufficient reasons for taking the message to the heathen.
 - (1) They are lost in their present state.
 - (2) There are such great and precious benefits in the acceptance of the gospel that can be found nowhere else.
 - (3) Christ has commanded us to preach "among all the nations."
 - b. If we but think for a moment, we can see that to take the gospel to them would be to make them responsible to a law that is far easier to fulfill than the one under which they live. Thus, practically speaking, their responsibility would be lessened rather than increased. This of course is true because of the assistance given by God through Christ to the person who obeys the gospel.
 - c. Then, too, the persons who are "continuing steadfastly in well doing seeking for glory and honor and incorruption" would be the first ones to accept the gospel message; those, among the others, who do not accept the gospel are all lost anyway.
 - d. This objection is a shallow one from the logical standpoint.

Questions on the Special Study

1. Does the failure to accept Christ figure into the lost estate of the Gentiles? If not, explain why this is not true.
2. Will the Gentiles be judged by law? What will be the result?
3. How can we know the Gentiles are lost being judged by their own law?
4. How many without the gospel are without hope? What does *the text* say?
5. Do verses 2:6;7:10 give hope to any who have never heard of Christ? (No "yes" or "no" answers.)
6. How many do you think there are among the heathen who will be saved according to the standard Paul sets up here?
7. Name from memory three benefits we obtain in Christ Jesus.
8. Why are these benefits sufficient reason for carrying the gospel to the lost?
9. How does the authority of Christ apply to carrying the gospel?

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10. Give from memory the three reasons for taking the gospel to those who have never heard.
11. What is the meaning of the word "anticipatively"? If you do not know, look it up.
12. Honestly now, do *you* know of a scripture reference that states *that heathen are lost regardless of what they do?*
13. What *two* thoughts must be in the reference before it would apply to the case?
14. What is the proper attitude as we approach a discussion of the sincere but lost?
15. What is meant by "the law of nature"?
16. Cite two cases of Biblical history which point out that sincerity alone is not enough.
17. What did Jesus mean by "the blind"?
18. With what must sincerity be linked to be of any value on judgment day?
19. Give an illustration of this principle.
20. Were the Gentiles described in Romans cp.2 judged on sincerity alone? If not, why not?
21. What sad conclusion are we forced to make when we apply this principle to those sincere souls among the "faith only" groups?
22. How do *you* feel this principle would apply to those who are following ANY false doctrine?
23. Would we make the heathen more liable to condemnation by taking the gospel to them? If not, why not?
24. Who among the heathen would be the first to accept the gospel?
25. Show how their responsibility would be lessened.

ROMANS REALIZED

A SURPASSING RECONCILIATION

By WILBUR FIELDS

Romans 5:12-19

INTRODUCTION: 5:12-14

1. God reconciled the world to himself through Christ.
2. To reconcile us, God had to overcome the effects of Adam's sin.
 - a. Sin entered through Adam.
 - b. Death entered through his sin.
 - c. Death passed to all men, because all sinned.
3. The reconciliation which we have in Christ supersedes every evil effect we suffer in Adam.

PROPOSITION: Some aspects of man's surpassing reconciliation.

- I. THE POWER OF ADAM'S SIN IS COMPLETELY OVERCOME IN CHRIST. 5:15
 1. The power of Adam's sin brought the death penalty to all.
 2. Christ has power to reverse the death penalty and to provide escape from our own sins.
- II. THE SENTENCE OF ADAM IS ECLIPSED BY THE CONTRASTING GIFT OF CHRIST. 5:16
 1. Adam's sentence came because of one sin, which brought condemnation to all men.
 2. Christ's gift brings justification from many sins.
- III. THE REIGN OF DEATH THROUGH ADAM'S SIN IS WONDERFULLY OVERTHROWN IN CHRIST. 5:17
 1. Because of the trespass, death reigned through the one man.
 2. Because of the free gift, they that receive it shall themselves reign in life through Jesus Christ.
- IV. THE EFFECTS OF ADAM'S SIN ARE CONTRASTED WITH THOSE OF CHRIST'S GIFT. 5:18-19
 1. Through the trespass, judgment came upon all men to condemnation.
 2. Through the one act of justification, the free gift came to all men, bringing justification and life.
 3. This is explained in the fact of imputed conditions.
 - a. The many were made sinners in Adam.
 - b. The many were made just in Christ.

CONCLUSION

A SURPASSING RECONCILIATION

Introduction

"Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned:—for until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, who is a figure of him that was to come. But not as the trespass, so also is the free gift. For if by the trespass of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto the many. And not as through one that sinned, so is the gift; for the judgment came of one unto condemnation, but the free gift came of many trespasses unto justification. For if, by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one; much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, even Jesus Christ. So then as through one trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous." Romans 5:12-19

1. In Christ Jesus God was reconciling the world unto himself. Mankind had made itself an enemy to God because it had rejected its creator. But God "reconciled us to himself through Christ,"¹ and "we can rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation."²

2. One of the deepest gulfs that God had to span to reconcile us to himself was the gulf created by the violation of Adam.

a. Through this one man Adam, sin entered into the world. Sin is any violation of God's law, and, of course, it makes a man a criminal in the sight of God. Adam's eating the forbidden fruit brought this terrible fact of sin, and all its penalties, into the world.

b. Death entered through that sin. With Adam's disobedience came its penalty, the death of the body of man. The question will inevitably come up, "Was not the death that came upon Adam (and through sin, upon us) SPIRITUAL death?" Our reply is that while Adam's sin certainly had spiritual effects upon him, the only death spoken of for him in the Scriptures is physical death. He lived 930 years "and he died."³ And if it be objected that it had to be spiritual

1. II Cor. 5:18.

2. Romans 5:11.

3. Gen. 5:5.

death because God said he would die "in the day that thou eatest thereof."¹ Let us remember that although he may have been dead that day in trespasses and sin, God's grace later allowed that these sins be covered by sacrifices. As for his physical death, the Scriptures plainly tell that he did not die that very day, but that God in his grace allowed him to live to bring into being "the seed of the woman"² by which they would all be redeemed from the curse of death, "the seed" of course referring to Christ. Furthermore, Paul's words in verse 14 about "death reigning from Adam to Moses"³ most certainly refer to physical death. Also, other passages will show us that the death that came into the world through Adam's sin must surely be only physical death.

c. This death passed to all men, because all sinned in Adam. This must be the meaning of the statement, "so death passed to all men, for that all sinned."⁴ Adam is our progenitor; he is the head of the human race, and by God's decree we as children of Adam all suffer the effects of his sin with him. That is the reason why we die. Of course, our own sins *would* bring death to us, but Adam's sin is THE cause of physical death to mankind. If this be doubted, that we all die because all sinned in Adam, let us remember the period of time from Adam until Moses. There was sin in the world during that time. The Sodomites all died because of their iniquity. But what about their infants who died? They did not share the penalty of death because of the guilt of their wicked parents. There was no law that would transfer the penalty of parents' guilt to the children.⁵ But many of these surely died. The only explanation is that physical death spread to them, as to us, because they all were in Adam. Death had full sway during that period, reigning like a king over small and great. None of these person's sins affected their posterity, as did Adam's, but all died, showing that death spread to all in Adam. If one finds this hard to understand, let him remember that the Scriptures say that the Levitical priesthood paid tithes to Melchizedek, whom they had never seen, because Abraham, their distant ancestor,

1. Gen. 2:17.

2. Gen. 3:15.

3. Rom. 5:14.

4. Rom. 5:12.

5. This I take to be the meaning of "but sin is not imputed where there is no law," and "had not sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression." Certainly there was law at that time, and with a death penalty attached for certain sins. cf. Gen. 9:6. But there was no law that would transmit such penalty to offspring, as did Adam's. When we come to the time of Moses, there MAY be such a law and penalty. cf. Ex. 34:7; 20:5; Dt. 5:9.

so did. "And so to say, through Abraham, even Levi who receiveth tithes, hath paid tithes; for he was yet in the loins of his father (Abraham) when Melchizidek met him."¹ In the same way, we participate in the effects of Adam's sin, because we were in him, as surely as the sons of Levi participated in the effects of Abraham's act.

3. God looked down upon us, and saw us doomed to die physically, because all are in Adam whose sin affected those after him, and all doomed to die spiritually because all will sin. God saw that to save us he must supply one who would affect those after him, as Adam affected those after him, but who would affect them for good, not evil, and who would do it in such a way as to overcome every evil thing we suffer in Adam. MY PROPOSITION is that the reconciliation which we have in Christ supersedes every evil effect we suffer because of Adam's sin. I submit Paul's demonstration of this proposition to you:

1. The Power of Adam's Sin Is Overcome in Christ.

Paul observed that Adam was a type of Christ because his act had effects upon those who followed him. But he had scarcely expressed this thought when the contrasts between the two struck him as being the more prominent. And so he says immediately, "but not as the trespass, so also is the free gift."² The power of the two is vastly different, both in their aim and their degree. We notice the power of the act of each one.

1. Note the power of Adam's trespass upon us. Because of that one violation, the many died. By "many" Paul evidently means "everyone," and it is in this sense he uses the term all through his argument of the surpassing reconciliation which we have in Christ. The power of Adam's sin was to bring death to everyone, beginning with himself, to his own children, and down to our very selves.

2. Be the power of Adam's sin so great, a comparison with the gratuitous gift of Christ makes it seem weak. For because of the free gift of Christ, the Holy Spirit, through Paul, says, "Much more did the grace of God, and gift by the grace of the one man Jesus Christ abound unto the many."³

God's favor because of Christ's death abounded first of all to redeem us all from the grave. "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive."⁴ But what would it profit us to be raised from the death we suffer in Adam, ready only to face God as criminals sentence to death for our own sins? This makes it necessary

1. Heb. 7:9-10.

2. Romans 5:15.

3. Tim 5:15.

4. I Cor. 15:22.

for the gift of Christ, to be sufficient, to do more than redeem us from the grave.

God not only graciously provides in Christ the reversal of the effect of Adam's sin, but also makes a way in him to wash away our own sins. Thus it becomes MUCH MORE powerful than Adam's sin. To summarize, Adam's sin has power to bring death to all. Christ's gift has power to reverse the death we suffer in Adam, and "much more" to provide the escape from the penalty of our own sins. Truly the power of Adam's sin is much more than overcome in Christ.

II. *The Sentence of Adam Is Eclipsed by the Contrasting Gift of Christ.*

The Scripture says, "And not as through one that sinned so is the gift."¹ This passage makes very little complete sense in itself, without understanding it in the light of its explanation which says, "for the judgment (or sentence) came of one (sin) unto condemnation."² Therefore we believe that it is Paul's exact thought to say, "The sentence pronounced upon the one that sinned is not like the (outcome of the) gift." The sentence or the judgment of Adam is eclipsed by the entirely different gift of Christ.

1. The sentence through Adam was pronounced because of one sin unto condemnation. One act condemned all to die. Not that we are guilty with Adam of that sin, but our relationship with him causes us to suffer his fate. A foolish helmsman on a boat may be the cause of the sinking of a ship during a storm. Just as he may perish in the sea for his folly, so will the passengers, though they are innocent. So we, being as it were "in the same boat with Adam," he being the progenitor of the race, suffer the sentence or judgment of death with him.

2. But lo! Take a glance at what happens through the gracious gift of Christ. Whereas Adam's one sin brought condemnation to many, Christ's act takes people, bearing the sentence of Adam's sin, and brings them to justification. In God's sight people who are in Christ are "not guilty." We saw that Christ's gift had power to reverse the death which passed to all in Adam's sin, and furthermore, it had power to do "much more." Now we can see even more plainly than previously what that "much more" is. It is that power to take us, with the sentence of Adam's sin upon us, and many of our own sins, and make us just in God's sight.

1. Rom. 5:16.

2. Rom. 5:16.

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Some will probably have noticed that the power of Adam's sin and the sentence that came through him amount to one and the same thing, physical death to the whole human race. But the value of considering these various aspects of the disobedience is found in the fact that each view of it gives new light upon the surpassing qualities in Christ's work of reconciliation.

III. *The Resulting Reign Through Adam's Sin Is Wonderfully Overthrown in Christ.*¹

A still more striking contrast between the free gift of Christ and the trespass of Adam may be seen in the resulting reigns which came through the two acts.

1. Because of the trespass of the one man, DEATH reigned through that one man. In his action death found a channel through which to exercise its dominion. We have suggested this thought previously, and now it is stated plainly.

2. However, because of the free gift of Christ, they that receive the abundance of grace and the abundance of the gift of justification shall themselves "much more reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ."² Notice that through Christ WE shall reign, not death. Death's dominion over us is wonderfully overthrown in Christ. Not that we do not die, but death has no power to hold us, and, if we receive the abundance of the gift of justification, WE shall reign in life, when once we be resurrected, and redeemed once for all from death's kingship. Death is overthrown, and we are no longer of them "who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."³

IV. *The Effects of Adam's Sin Are Contrasted with Those of Christ's Gift.*

Paul began his comparison of Adam's sin with the reconciliation which we have in Christ in verse twelve. In entering into the discussion of Adam's sin, however, his main thought was interrupted, and not really picked up again till verse eighteen. If we connect verse twelve with the last half of verse eighteen we get the main thought of this entire Scripture. "As through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin," "even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification to life."⁴ Verse

1. Although vs. 17 is introduced as though it were explanation by Paul, I treat it as a third comparison, as do authors MacKnight and Sanday.

2. Rom. 5:17.

3. Heb. 2:15.

4. I translate this "justification to life," rather than "of life" with the common versions.

eighteen not only completes the argument, but it sums up all the contrasts that have been presented about the power, the sentence, and the resulting reign through Adam's sin, and tells HOW these came about.

1. Through one trespass, Adam's act of eating the forbidden fruit, "judgment came upon all men to condemnation"¹ of death. This summarizes all that has been said about the power, sentence and reign through Adam.

2. However, just as judgment came upon all men through Adam's act, even so "through one act of justification the free gift (of Christ) came unto all men to justification to life."² Incidentally, this verse proves positively that the death which the human race suffers in Adam is ONLY physical death, because it is stated unequivocally that as surely as Adam's sin condemns everyone, so does Christ's act save everyone from that condemnation. Of course, we know that no unbeliever will be saved, and so this passage must be understood to say that Christ justifies everyone to physical life, and not to spiritual or eternal life.

3. But how does it work out that a single act on the part of both Adam and Christ completely affects all men, one for bad and the other for good? It was by God's appointment that it is so. In the case of the former decision, God was eminently just, and in the case of the latter, unbelievably gracious.

a. No man sinned personally in Adam. How could anyone have done so? But the Scriptures say that through the one man's disobedience the many, meaning ALL, as in verse eighteen, were MADE sinners. You cannot MAKE a sinner out of a person when he is one already. So it was that in Adam, we, not having sinned personally, were made or constituted sinners by God's appointment, and were imputed the sentence of his disobedience. THUS we were made sinners, in suffering the effect of his act with him. Any other interpretation makes verse eighteen pronounce universal and unconditional salvation, which the word emphatically denies.

b. But God, the just and the justifier, also imputes a righteousness or justification to us, which will enable every man to stand alive before the presence of God in the last day. For "through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous,"³ that is, justified from the eternal power of Adam's penalty. Then shall those who have received the Lord Jesus find themselves eternally alive; and free from all sin, and not merely raised to suffer eternal punishment, the second death, for their own sins.

1. Rom. 5:18a.

2. Rom. 5:18b.

3. Rom. 5:19.

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Conclusion

The power, and the sentence, and the resulting reign because of Adam's act are changed, through Christ, from facts bringing everlasting doom to us. If we receive the abundance of God's grace, and the abundance of Christ's gift of justification we have no need to fear the fleshly state we are in; for as surely as death may have reigned over us, we shall reign in life through Jesus Christ. It is no far away theological vagary. This is life itself. And thanks be to God for the unspeakable gift!

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