

The Circumcision Wars V Mistranslation Causes Confusion

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We've been going through the book of Galatians, one of the most difficult to be understood epistles of the Apostle Paul. That's why they had the circumcision wars. This applies to Galatians more than anything else.

One of the really big tragedies about the book of Galatians is that not only do the Protestants misunderstand it, because of their animosity—even hatred—toward the laws and commandments of God, but also because of the problems in the translation from the *King James* that came from the Greeks.

I realize that even without very much knowledge in the Greek, at least you can pick up a few things, like I'm going to show you today that will help you understand the truth vs why the Protestants and the Catholics are not correct in it.

One of the tactics of Satan the devil is that he will let you have what God wants you to have, but he will inspire misunderstanding. Think about that for a minute! If you have a misunderstanding or a misinterpretation, what has happened concerning Truth? *You have missed the mark!* If you have missed the mark—one of the terms for sin in the Greek, 'hamartema'—then you don't have the understanding that you really need.

This is how we are able, today, to have the whole of the Bible, and yet, have more misunderstanding concerning it than ever before, especially when you're dealing with carnal-minded men who do not have any concern for the Law of God, because the carnal mind is hostile or an enemy of the Law of God, 'not subject to the Law of God and neither indeed can be.'

This is what Peter wrote, 2-Peter 3:15: "And bear in mind that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation, exactly as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has also written to you; as *he has* also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them concerning these things; in which are **some things that are difficult to understand...**" (vs 15-16). Why are they hard to be understood?

1. because of the way that Paul presented it
2. because of the misinterpretations that people bring to it and the misconceptions that they add to it when they study it

"...which the ignorant..." (v 16)—unlearned, they don't know the Scriptures. This also tells us in order

to understand the Apostle Paul you have to have a certain level of learning or understanding.

"...and unstable..." (v 16)—they are not secure in the faith. What happens when you're not secure in the faith? *You look for a way out!* Is that not true? *Yes!*

Those who are unlearned and unstable "...are twisting *and distorting*, as *they also twist and distort* the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction" (v 16).

Having the Scriptures in your hand is no guarantee of anything but that you have it in your hand. Unless the Bible is properly understood, unless there's a certain level of understanding, it's very hard to understand the Epistles of Paul.

Notice what happens, v 17: "Therefore, beloved, since you know this in advance, be on guard against *such practices*, lest you be led astray with the error of the lawless ones, *and* you fall from your own steadfastness." These misinterpretations can cause people to fall. We've seen many of them fall because of misinterpretation, because of going back and trying to understand the Scriptures according to those who do not believe in keeping law.

Verse 18: "Rather, be growing in *the* grace..." How do you grow in grace? *Through loving God, keeping His commandments!* Let's understand something very important—Eph. 2:

- God is the One Who calls us
- God is the One Who justifies us from sin
- God is the One Who has given us the way to walk

"...and *the* knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* glory both now and into *the* day of eternity. Amen" (v 18). We have three things going here:

1. difficult Scriptures can be twisted and turned

In particularly in the age in which we live today where everything is counted as an opinion. That's why talk shows are so popular. People can call and give their opinion. Once in a while you get someone who has a few moral things—like Dr. Laura; she nails some of her callers quite well. She does well by saying that if you're not married you are 'shacking up.' She particularly hits that.

2. you have to understand the Scripture

3. you have to beware that you are not led away with the error of the wicked

Let's understand something about *growing in grace*. This is very necessary to repeat, Ephesians 2:8: "For by grace... [God's goodness, mercy; it is His gift] ...you have been saved... [from your past sins] ...through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works..." (vs 8-9)—of works that you can do; there are a lot of good works that people can do.

They think that with their good works somehow the scales of judgment for eternal life will be balanced out. If you have more good works than bad works, St. Peter is going to say 'enter in.' If you have more bad works than good works then St. Peter is going to say 'go to purgatory.' If you don't have any good works, then he's going to say 'go to hell.' None of those stories are true! But that's how people view it.

"...so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship... [which is a *work of grace!* If God is working in your life with His Holy Spirit, is that not grace? *Yes!*] ...created... [salvation is creation] ...in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works... [that God has given] ...that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them" (vs 9-10).

Let's take a contrary view to those who believe in no law.

- Did God create us? *Everyone would have to answer 'yes' to that!*
- Did God put laws in our bodies for how we function? *Yes!*

And we are very fragile! If you don't breathe in the next 15 minutes we'll call the coroner. It's just that simple. You can't get any more fragile than that. Or, if you haven't taken care of yourself, you could have a heart attack and in two minutes be dead right here. Whatever!

- He's also given us spiritual laws—hasn't He?

Notice the key word 'given.' What is a gift? *A gift comes because of grace!* Did any of the patriarchs earn the commandments of God? *No!* But they kept them—didn't they? Same way when God gave the commandments to the children of Israel. Those are the good works of God.

Let's understand that there is no controversy between keeping the commandments of God and grace, they go hand-in-hand. That's why Paul says *grace establishes law*. That's what's important to understand. Therefore, the commandments quite contrary to the disbelief of many people actually are rooted in the grace of God. For a lot of people,

they're going to think hard on that, because they don't understand it.

Therefore, in keeping the Sabbath and walking in the good works of the Sabbath and the Holy Days and all the commandments of God, we are in His grace, walking in the good works, which He has foreordained that we should keep them.

As I've pointed out many times, God has never asked us to do anything that is not good for us. Is there anything that you can think of that God has asked you to do that is not good for you? *No!* But men like to come along and *think* that they can improve upon God's way, because in *their opinion* or *interpretation* they can make it better.

Romans 3:1: "What then *is* the advantage of the Jew, or what *is* the profit of circumcision? Much in every way. Primarily, in that they were entrusted with the oracles of God. For what if some did not believe?...?" (vs 1-3). That's the whole history of the Old Testament, a cycle of disbelief and rebellion, coupled with the revival to obedience and then to disbelief and rebellion. All of the books of the Old Testament reflect that, especially with the children of Israel coming down through the Judges and the Kings, 1st and 2nd Samuel and so forth. Of course, before the Flood it reflected the same thing.

Even in the Church of God, when you understand about the seven churches in Rev. 2 & 3 you have the same thing. You start out and then human nature takes over. You get into problems and troubles and then there has to be repentance and a revival; that's just the way it is with human beings. But when you look at other people's behavior and you see that that behavior does not match the Bible, or as it is here, that some disbelieve.

"...Shall their unbelief nullify the faithfulness of God?" (v 3). In other words, because they don't believe, does that mean that God is not true? *or* that God is not faithful? *NO!*

Verse 4: "MAY IT NEVER BE! Rather, let God be true but every man a liar, exactly as it is written: 'That You [God] might be justified in Your [God] words, and might overcome when You [God] are being judged *by men.*'" Do men judge God? *Yes!* That's how they misinterpret all the Scriptures of the Apostle Paul, because they come with a preconceived notion that God's grace does not require commandment-keeping or law-keeping.

Now, let's look at the book of Galatians and let's just review a little bit. We will also look at the Interlinear as we go along, because we will see there are some critical mistranslations by the *King James* translators. It doesn't mean that there's anything wrong with the Greek. There is nothing wrong

whatsoever with the Greek; the problem is with the translation into the English.

Galatians 2:11: “But when Peter came to Antioch... [Peter was one of the apostles to the circumcision] ...I withstood him to *his* face because he was to be condemned; for before certain *ones* came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles. However, when they came, he drew back and separated himself *from the Gentiles*, being afraid of those of *the* circumcision party” (vs 11-13).

Let’s understand something concerning this whole situation: We have seen time and again that Peter was very political. Even after Jesus asked him three times, ‘Do you love Me?’—when Jesus said ‘Feed My sheep’ three times—Peter turned around and immediately said, ‘What’s going to happen to him?’ pointing at John.

There is a weakness all the way through of politicizing. Jesus said, ‘It really doesn’t matter what’s going to happen to him (John), you’re going to be led around when you get old where you don’t want to go. What is it to you if I say that he should remain until I come? You go do as I told you.’

Peter, when he is good—like a lot of people—is very good. Look at what happened in the first part of the book of Acts. But now here we are a little later on down in Antioch—which has a combination of Jews and Gentiles—and he “...separated himself *from the Gentiles*, being afraid of those of *the* circumcision party.”

Remember: ***We are not dealing with a commandment of God or a law of God at all in this situation***—period! There is *no law in all* of the Scriptures which says, ‘If thou art a Jew thou mayest not eat with a Gentile.’ That is a creation of the Jews through the code of Jewish law so that they are justified in what they do by that law. ***God never gave it!***

That’s why Paul talks so strongly, v 13: “And the rest of *the* Jews joined him in *this* hypocritical act... [Having a double- standard! Is that not what God called the Pharisees? *Hypocritical!* You do one thing, you say another thing.] ...insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they did not walk uprightly according to the Truth of the Gospel, I said to Peter in the presence of them all, ‘If you, being a Jew, are living like the Gentiles, and not according to Judaism, why do you compel the Gentiles to Judaize?’” (vs 13-14).

It has nothing to do with the commandments of God! Most people do not understand that Judaism is a separate pagan religion of the Jews, contrived of their own traditions, not much different than Catholicism—just take away the idols and Sunday-

keeping and you have Judaism—it’s really no different.

This is important to understand. That’s why Peter was to be corrected. He was not to be corrected for keeping the commandments of God, because there is no correction in keeping the commandments of God that anyone should give to anyone. But if you are breaking the commandments of God—which is hypocrisy—claiming that you are ‘doing good’ to God, by this action, you are a hypocrite. That’s exactly what took place here.

Verse 15: “We who are Jews by nature—and not sinners of *the* Gentiles—”

Here’s where the difficulty comes, v 16 (*King James*): “Knowing that a man is not justified by **the** works of **the** law...”

The Interlinear shows that there are no definite articles for *works* and for *law*, v 16 (*Int*): “Knowing that is not justified a man **by works of law...**” This can refer to two things:

1. any of the commandments of the Old Testament for temple justification *via* animal sacrifices
2. any traditional law that Judaism created in their paganized religion to make themselves justified

None of those justify you before God! Important information to understand!

Even if—which it’s not—they were talking about the laws contained in the book of Moses, all the sins that were justified and forgiven under the Old Covenant at the temple—with the exception of those that God intervened and called, like David and the Prophets—their sins were only forgiven to the temple. That’s all! ***They had forgiveness in the flesh!***

The justification that the New Testament brings is the *true justification* in heaven above. It’s a totally different thing. Under the Law of Moses, or the Old Covenant, if they sinned you can read Lev. 1-6 all the different offerings they had to bring. But those never brought justification to God the Father in heaven above—only to the temple.

Let’s look at it this way: Suppose you were to take a trip to New York City and that was the ultimate goal, but you ended up in Chicago and thought you were in New York City. Were you in New York City? *or* Chicago? Same way with the sacrifices. The sacrifices never went beyond the temple on earth to God the Father in heaven above. The justification under the Old Covenant and through Judaism was all a *physical justification in the flesh!*

The justification that we have is before God

the Father in heaven above. So therefore, the means and methods of justification by law cannot accomplish what the sacrifice of Jesus Christ can do. If it's by law, then Christ died in vain.

If you understand that, you're going to understand the rest of the book of Galatians, because this is the most difficult section right here and in Gal. 3. That's why I'm going to review it, so that everyone understands it thoroughly.

Acts 13:38—Paul was preaching to the Jews in the synagogue, and after he told them about Christ and the resurrection he said: “Therefore, be it known to you, men *and* brethren, that through this man [Jesus Christ] *the* remission of sins is preached to you. And in Him [Christ] everyone who believes... [in the sacrifice of Christ, His death and resurrection] ...is justified from all things...” (vs 38-39).

You are to *believe*; that is a *spiritual work!* To do an external work of sacrificing an animal or separating yourself from Gentiles has no belief required. It eliminates Jesus Christ, because you are trying to do something that only the sacrifice of Christ can accomplish.

Verse 39: “And in Him [Christ] everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses.” Either way—be it a sacrifice from the Law of Moses, or be it a *work of Judaism*—it cannot accomplish what the sacrifice of Christ can do.

Let me draw another analogy: Let's suppose that you said, ‘I am going to go to the moon.’ You bought yourself the most powerful 747 you could buy. You won't get there will you? A 747 is not designed to go to the moon—is it? *No!* How do you get to the moon? *Well, with today's technology you must have a rocket!* Is that completely different than a 747? The next time you see one of the shuttles take off with all the blasting that it has, you know it's entirely different than a 747.

In the same way you cannot take the *physical things of physical acts* that you do—whether animal sacrifice, or separation from Gentiles, or hand-washing, special hats, special curls, phylacteries, or special prayer shawls—and expect those thing to accomplish the *spiritual belief of believing* in Jesus Christ. It won't work!

This is what Paul is talking about. Therefore, it should be translated, Galatians 2:16: “Knowing that a man is not justified by works of law... [because law cannot substitute for the sacrifice of Christ] ...but through *the* faith of Jesus Christ, we also have believed in Christ Jesus in order that we might be justified by *the* faith of Christ, and not by

works of law; because by works of law shall no flesh be justified”—because *works of law* cannot do what the *sacrifice of Christ* does any more than a 747 can fly to the moon. It cannot be done!

Let's read it in the *Interlinear*, and you're going to see—and it's very important thing to understand in the Greek—when the definite article is not there it should not be put in there unless you italicize it to make sure that you note that you have added it. What does it do in this case when the definite article is there? *It makes you think that it's talking about all the commandments of God!* That's why this simple little mistranslation has misled so many people.

Verse 16 (*Int*): “Knowing that is not justified a man **by works of law**... [There's no definite article for *works*] ...but through faith of Jesus Christ, also we on Jesus Christ believed, that we might be justified by faith of Christ, and not by **works of law**; because shall not be justified **by works of law any flesh**.”

When I first understood that that really opened my mind! We're going to see in other places that Paul uses the definite article, and when he does it refers to the covenant given to Israel. That's why it's so hard to understand Galatians. It may be one word, but one word can mean a whole lot.

Let's understand what justification means: ***Your sins have been forgiven and you have been justified from them and put in right standing with God!***

What we are talking about here is the operation of these things as it pertains to those who have been called unto salvation. Today we have people in the world who believe in Jesus ***in their own way***. What if they repent and ask forgiveness? Will their sins be forgiven? *Yes!* *In the same way that it was under the Old Covenant, since they do not have the Holy Spirit!*

Only those who have been called, who have accepted the call, who have repented and have been baptized and received the laying on of hands, having the Holy Spirit have entrance into the Holy of Holies in heaven above by prayer.

God is not going to neglect those people who—in lack of knowledge, but in their own sincerity—pray and ask for forgiveness. He will grant them forgiveness, but not unto salvation, unless that repentance is unto salvation. There are a lot of people who pray and ask forgiveness for something they have done, because they are ashamed of what they have done, but that is not repentance unto salvation.

We will see how much clearer this will be. Remember, v 16 (last sentence): “...because by

works of law shall no flesh be justified.” No law can forgive any sin—period! Only repentance and accepting of the sacrifice of Christ can you have sin forgiven and be justified.

Verse 17: “Now then, if we are seeking to be justified in Christ, *and* we ourselves are found to be sinners, *is* Christ then *the* minister of sin? MAY IT NEVER BE! For if I build again those things that I destroyed, I am making myself a transgressor” (vs 17-18). What did he destroy? What was Peter building again? *Judaism!*

This also tells us very clearly that if you rebuild on Judaism you are sinning. All of those who are being Judaized out there wherever you are, pay attention. You are making yourselves sinners. Judaism has nothing to do with Christianity. {see sermon series: *Scripturalism vs Judaism*}

Galatians 1:13: “For you heard of my former conduct when I was in Judaism... [the *King James* says ‘the Jews’ religion’] ...how I was excessively persecuting the Church of God and was destroying it; and I was advancing in Judaism *far* beyond many *of my* contemporaries in my *own* nation, being more abundantly zealous for *the* traditions of my fathers” (vs 13-14).

The separation between Jews and Gentiles was *not a law of God! It was a tradition of Judaism!* Therefore, Paul was correcting Peter. What Peter was doing was building again the things Paul destroyed. How do you destroy those things? *By repentance!* When you repent of sin, what do you do? *You leave it! You forsake it! You go away from it! You don’t go back to it!* These *traditions* constitute sin.

Galatians 2:17: “Now then, if we are seeking to be justified in Christ, *and* we ourselves are found to be sinners, *is* Christ then *the* minister of sin? MAY IT NEVER BE! For if I build again those things that I destroyed, I am making myself a transgressor” (vs 17-18). Judaism and their religion is sin! Why is it sin? *Because it’s not of God!* That applies to any other religion. Any other religion, if you’re attempting to find salvation in it, you are making yourself a transgressor, because you are not doing what God has said; *you’re not believing in Christ!*

Verse 19 (*Int*): “For I **through law to law** died, that to God I may live.” That is a very difficult phrase—*isn’t it?* What does this mean? In either case, either one of the two words *law* have no definite article. How did he die to law? Most people misinterpret that and say that you don’t have keep any laws. That’s not what it’s saying! Here’s where the misinterpretation comes from.

Verse 19 (*FV*): “For I, through law, died to law...” How did Paul write this epistle? Have you ever received a letter from a corpse? *No!* You could almost read it: ‘Here am I lying in this cold grave down here and just wanted to tell you I really miss you. So, I’m sending this letter, there’s a special little slot that I can put it up there and the postman will take it.’ *NO!*

How did Paul die? *Through baptism!* ‘The wages of sin is death!’ When you’re baptized, you’re baptized into the death of Jesus Christ. You are conjoined into that death, and you of yourself now died. But to be raised up out of the watery grave to walk in ‘newness of life’ according to the ways of God led by the Holy Spirit. That’s how Paul died!

“...in order that I may live to God” (v 19). If you’re going to live unto God, you’re going to walk in the good works that He has foreordained that we should walk in them. Not in any way of a man. Not in any of the animal sacrifices under the Old Covenant.

Catholics would have you do this: ‘Father, I have sinned.’ I was talking to a Catholic and she said that this little girl went into confess her sins and the only thing she could think of was that ‘I got mad at the teacher.’ So, he says, ‘Go do 25 ‘hail Marys’ and 25 ‘our fathers’ and your sins are forgiven. That is a *work of law!*

When you repent of your sins to Christ and accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. But you’re not to get up off your knees and go live in sin. He explains it very clearly.

(go to the next track)

Verse 20: “I have been crucified with Christ... [through baptism and you died] ...yet, I live.... [even though he said that he died, he’s still living] ...*Indeed*, it is no longer **I**...” Greek: ‘ego’—‘epsilon gamma omega’ (Greek alphabet); which is very interesting, because what is ‘ego’ in psychology? *The self!* You’re no longer living for yourself. Who are you living for? *Christ!*

Notice how you do it: “...but **Christ lives in me**...” If you have the Spirit of Christ and are led of the Spirit of God, Christ lives *in* you. **That becomes your life!**

“...For *the life* that I am now living in *the* flesh... [back to reality, we still have the flesh] ...I live by faith—**that very faith of the Son of God**...” (v 20). This is in the possessive, meaning that *it’s the very faith of Christ in you*. It’s not *your* faith, but *Christ’s faith in you*. It doesn’t say that you’re living by faith in Christ—which you are, but you are living by **the faith of the Son of God!** Christ’s faith in you! That’s a whole other total motivation—*isn’t it?*

Instead of living for the self!

“...Who loved me and gave Himself for me”
(v 20). Who was Christ?

- God manifested in the flesh!
- He died for your sins!
- He is there to forgive your sins!

Can you have any greater operation of the forgiveness of sin and justification before God, and put in right standing before God, than having God die for you?

- What can replace that?
- What can you do to equal that?
- *You can't! Only God did!*

That's why it is the faith of the Son of God, but He gave Himself up for you! Let's stop and think about the magnitude of this, and let's apply it right here in this little congregation that we have here.

Here we have a Holy Day going on, apparently, and you have Peter coming down from Jerusalem. In years past we would reflect on that as Pasadena. Remember when some big mucky-muck came from Pasadena? What he said and what he did was really important.

Here's Peter, apostle to the Gentiles, and he ought to really know and understand the Word of God—right? He's coming from James, who was the brother of the Lord! See all the politics involved here? Coming from those in Jerusalem who said you've got to circumcise the Gentiles otherwise they aren't going to make it.

Since they already solved the circumcision problem, now they come down to visit during one of the Holy Days and they still stick their noses up in the air and go eat over in the other room. Just picture that here. Here you come with your plate of food to go and eat with them, and someone is standing there at the door and says, 'Well, you're a Gentile, you're not good enough to eat with us; you go eat over here. Your presence contaminates us.'

That was the problem! If Paul would have given into that, everything else of Judaism would have come. With whose authority? *James and Peter!* You can't get any higher than that—can you?

Here's also a good lesson, too: When someone who is a minister or teacher makes a grievous error, is it to be corrected? *Yes!* Is it to be known publicly if it affects everyone publicly? *Yes!* Can you imagine the startled services that they had when Paul got up there and directly confronted Peter to his face in front of everybody? You talk about a dynamite, electric-charged service! Boy, that was one! Especially Paul being called later.

When we read that to open up in 2-Peter 3, it was a hard thing for Peter to come to really love Paul, but he did. Peter could have said, 'Didn't you used to persecute the Church? Didn't you used to kill people? What makes you so uppity-uppity being an apostle here.' You can just hear the political comeback in a carnal way. This is what was going on.

“...Who loved me and gave Himself for me”
(v 20). Therefore, there can be nothing greater that anyone, including you, can do to give you forgiveness of sin and justification before God in heaven above. Only Christ can do that. If you seek any other way of doing it, what are you doing? *You're denying Christ!*

Verse 21: “I do not nullify the grace of God; for if **righteousness...**” Right standing before God. When I first read that I could not understand it. I'll tell you why. This is especially difficult for people to understand. If through law is righteousness, if you're commandment-keepers, this is hard to understand, because:

Psalms 119:172: “My tongue shall speak of Your Word, for all Your commandments are righteousness.” Here's the dilemma; this is where the Protestants get totally off the track. They say you don't have to keep the commandments of God. But for a commandment-keeper, you read Psa. 119:172 and you see: “...all Your commandments are righteousness.” Then you read Gal. 3:21: “...if through law is righteousness...”

How do I understand this thing? You understand it this way: They are both correct! First case, Gal. 2:21^[transcriber's correction] “...or if righteousness come by the law...” that is right standing before God through forgiveness of sin, that is true. The righteousness in Psa. 119:172 is the fact that all the commandments of God are righteous, but no law brings justification.

So, you have a righteousness that is in the law, which is true; now you have a righteousness before God the Father in heaven above through the forgiveness of your sins. That is right standing with God through justification. But you cannot substitute the righteousness of law-keeping for the righteousness of the forgiveness of sin through Jesus Christ. That's where the battle ends.

He's saying there is something higher than sacrificial law or traditional law. Let's use another analogy so we can understand it:

If you're going to plow a field, you get a tractor with plows. You get the right equipment and you do it. Wouldn't it look silly if you got a motorized bicycle and you put a hoe behind it and

you said you're going to plow the field? You're using the wrong equipment. The bicycle cannot do, was never designed to do what the tractor was.

Likewise, the commandments of God were never designed to forgive sin. They *define* sin. Forgiveness is another operation. The commandments are righteous, and when you transgress the commandments you have sinned. When you are forgiven, then you are put back in right standing with God and that righteousness is the righteousness that we are talking about here, which is *right standing with God in heaven above*. Only Christ, as the Sacrifice and High Priest, can accomplish that—*nothing else can do it!*

That's why there have been such controversies over the book of Galatians, especially chapter two, and it hinges virtually on one word: *the definite article* 'the.' How important is a word?

Another analogy: You have the law of gravity and what goes up must come down. It always functions. However, you can reach a certain point where you can have a certain speed—putting a satellite into orbit—and you don't negate the law of gravity, you are using another law, which is greater than the law of gravity to keep it from falling.

The use of those two laws, one does not negate the other, or do away with the other. Simply because the satellite is orbiting around the earth does not do away the law of gravity on the earth, that everything that goes up must come down. Even the satellites are subject to that—aren't they? When they run out of speed to keep it in equilibrium. What happens to the satellite? *It comes down!*

Likewise, if you draw that analogy to what we're talking about here, the righteousness, which is of Christ, is to lift us up above the self, and to lift us up above sin. But, as human beings, we tend to run out of speed and we fall.

What Paul is going to do is go from what we have just went through into the two covenants. Gal. 3 is also another chapter that is very difficult to understand if you look at from the point of view of the Protestant mentality. Or, if you look at it from the point of view of a carnal mentality, which is you don't want to keep the laws of God. Or, if there's a way out of having to keep it, 'I'm going to find the way.' Both create problems when you try and understand Gal. 3.

Galatians 3:1: "O foolish Galatians... [unthinking, brainless] ...who has **bewitched** you..."—*bewitched* is a little bit different than deceive. It's kind of mind-control. Someone has come in and manipulated what you believe.

"...into not obeying the Truth..." (v 1). Here

we have something important: *obey the Truth*. What is Truth?

- all Your Word is Truth
- the whole life, death and resurrection of Christ
- the operation of the forgiveness of sin
- the right standing with God the Father in heaven above

"...before whose eyes Jesus Christ, crucified, was set forth in a written public proclamation?" (v 1). Why?

The *Interlinear* says, "openly set forth" which is a hyphenated word, but this part of the word is the Greek word 'graphe'; so the whole word is 'proe-graphe.' 'Graphe' means *written*, from which we get the English word *graphics*.

2-Timothy 3:15: "And that from a child you hast known the Holy Writings... [ta hiera grammata]—you have the 'gra': 'graphe'—the sacred letters you have known] ...which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture..." (vs 15-16)—'pasa graphe' is exactly the same word in Gal. 3:1, 'proe-graphe' Here it's not 'proe' because that means *written openly* for you to read.

'Graphe' means that it was written. What does this do for some of the theories of canonization? *It's knocks it all in a cocked hat!* Why? *Because Paul was saying to the Galatians, 'You have those things written about Christ!' It wasn't tradition. It wasn't by oral understanding that they had this. It was written!*

When I was translating Galatians I about fell out of my chair! Then I checked it in the Greek Lexicons and sure enough when the word is used in other places, it means *an open public written proclamation*—'graphe.'

This means that what they were doing was of greater importance than what we've understood because they had the written Word of God. What it's telling us is that they had the written understanding of the sacrifice of Christ, which means that they must have had the book of Matthew, which totally goes through the whole thing of Christ being crucified.

Galatians 3:1: "...before whose eyes Jesus Christ, crucified... [written in a public proclamation that He was crucified] ...This only I desire to learn from you: did you receive the Spirit of God **by works of law**..." (vs 1-2). No definite articles for either *works* or *law*.

Verse 2 (KJV): "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by **the** works of **the**

law...” You can see why people are easily misled! ‘You don’t need to keep the commandments of God in order to receive the Spirit of God.’ Wrong conclusion based upon a mistranslation and a misunderstanding of *works of law*.

“...did you receive the Spirit of God **by works of law** or by *the hearing* of faith?” (v 2)—‘akoes’—*hearing*—the English word ‘acoustic’ comes from the same Greek word. It’s interesting there, “...did you receive...” because that is a aorist tense.

How did you receive the Spirit of God? *First of all in studying*, and if God is calling you, one of the first things He’s going to do is send the Spirit of God *to be with you!*

John 14:17: “*Even* the Spirit of the Truth, which the world cannot receive because it perceives it not, nor knows it; but you know it because it dwells **with** you, and **shall be within** you.” That’s a very interesting phrase there—isn’t it?

- How is that one-day you began to understand the Scriptures where you didn’t understand it before?
- How is that one day you desired to know about God, where you didn’t desire to know about God before?
- *God sent His Spirit to be with you!*
- What will the Holy Spirit of God do?
- *Lead you!*

I’m sure that there are many people that God sends His Spirit to be *with* them to lead them. But if they do not follow the lead then the Holy Spirit will be pulled back from them.

Jesus says, “...shall be **within** you” (v 17). When do you receive the Holy Spirit to be *within* you? *After you have been baptized for the forgiveness of sins upon repentance and receive the laying on of hands!* Then the Holy Spirit is *in* you as a begettal.

In the same situation that came along, when you began to understand—which it was with me. I went down to Pasadena to be baptized, and I wasn’t ready. I wasn’t keeping the Sabbath. I knew about it, but I wasn’t keeping the Sabbath, yet. I was still eating my favorite bacon and tomato sandwich—I worked as a chef in a restaurant. I did like everybody else, I cooked it well-done! That’s somehow supposed to make pork better. Cooking it well-done doesn’t change it. I would have my bacon and tomato sandwich on rye toast. I would have that before I began my shift.

I was still doing that, so I was given the advice to go home and start keeping the Sabbath and

you can come back and talk to us later. I go back to my boss, and here’s a guy who would work seven days a week, and one summer I worked two shifts all summer. I would work anytime! Here I come in and I talk to my boss: I can’t work from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday, because of my religion. He looked at me and said, ‘When did you become religious?’ I said, ‘See if you can work it out.’ He went back to the schedule and he came back and promptly told me that he couldn’t work it out. I said, ‘Okay then, you’ve got my two week’s notice.’ *Now wait a minute!* I said, ‘No, no! I’m going to quit. Would you mind if I go back and look at the schedule.’ *Go ahead!* He didn’t want to lose me.

So, I went back and I figured out that the chef would love Friday off, because he has to prepare all the things for the weekend. I proposed to substitute for the chef and come in at 8 o’clock in the morning on Friday and work till 4 o’clock in the afternoon then he would be happy with that. Then I proposed that I would still work on Saturday, howbeit the graveyard.

That’s past sunset and I didn’t come on to work Saturday until one o’clock Sunday morning. Therefore, I was able to keep the Sabbath. If you do, in sincerity, try and keep the Sabbath—as God’s Spirit is leading you—then you will begin to understand more and more of God’s Word.

- Did my Sabbath-keeping forgive my past sins? *No!*
- Did my Sabbath-keeping merit me right standing before God? *At least I wasn’t a castaway!*

But I didn’t have justification for sins because I was not baptized. I didn’t have the Holy Spirit *within* me, only *with* me. This is the significance of the verse in John 14. I came back and was baptized on October 19, 1960.

Galatians 3:2: “This only I desire to learn from you: did you receive the Spirit of God by works of law, or by *the hearing* of faith?... [because you believed in Christ] ...Are you so foolish? Having begun in *the Spirit*, are you now being perfected in *the flesh*?” (vs 2-3). That’s what’s happened to a lot of people in the Church of God. They begin in the spirit with the Spirit of God and now they come along with all sorts of rules and regulations and dos and don’ts and wear this and not wear that. In some cases it is true and it needs to be taken care of properly.

But then in this case they were separating from the Gentiles. The Gentiles would be over here, the Jews would be over there. Is that going to *perfect* you? *No!*

Verse 4: “Have you suffered so many things

in vain, if indeed it *has been* in vain? Therefore, *consider this*: He Who is supplying the Spirit to you, and Who is working deeds of power among you, *is He doing it* by works of law or by *the* hearing of faith?" (vs 4-5) *By faith!*

What is the greatest miracle of all? *Conversion of the mind!* Then he comes here to Abraham:

Verse 6: "*It is exactly as it is written*: 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness.' ... [Gen. 15] ...Because of this, *you should* understand that those who *are* of faith are the *true* sons of Abraham" (vs 6-7). That's what we are in the New Covenant, we're the spiritual sons of Abraham. Not the Jews, they're the physical sons of Abraham. Physical sons of Abraham do not participate in the spiritual things unless they likewise repent and are baptized to become spiritual sons.

The Jews would come along and say, just like they told Jesus—when Jesus said that if you 'obey the Truth it will set you free'—'we've never been in bondage to anyone. We be Abraham's seed.' Christ said that 'you are Abraham's seed.' He said, 'I know you're Abraham's seed, but you seek to kill Me'—which is sin.

Now Paul is making it clear. It's not the sons of the flesh—even though they be of Abraham—but the sons through Christ who are the *spiritual sons*. Remember, we have in Gen. 15 of the 'sand of the sea and the stars of heaven' and we are the seed of the stars of heaven.

Verse 8: "Now, *in* the Scriptures, God, seeing in advance that He would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the Gospel beforehand to Abraham, *saying*, 'In you shall all the nations be blessed.' *It is* for this reason that those who are of faith are being blessed with the believing Abraham" (vs 8-9).

Verse 10 is another tricky verse. Here's why the Protestants say that anyone who keeps the Sabbath is under a curse. I'm beginning to understand this about Protestant theology: Any claims that they make are generally the opposite of what they say.

Verse 10 (KJV): "For as many as are of **the** works of **the** law are under the curse..." Therefore, 'if you keep the commandments of God you are under a curse.' That's not what it means!

Verse 10 (FV): "For as many as are *relying* on **works of law** are under a curse..." Meaning that if you seek by a work of law to receive salvation, you're under a curse, because you're trying to do it with physical means. You receive salvation:

- by believing in Christ
- by believing in the forgiveness of your sins

No sacrifice involved other than the sacrifice of Christ, which is greater than all!

- no works have to be done
- you don't have to separate yourself from the Gentiles

But you are to walk in the good works of God!

"...because it is written, 'Cursed *is* everyone who does not continue in all things that have been written in the book of the Law to do them'" (v 10). There is a mouthful!

Let's understand something: Under the covenant with Israel they had to do all the things written in the book of the Law. If they didn't do the things in the book of the Law they were cursed, because they sinned. Now then comes the New Covenant. We have a whole different proposition in justification, and we have a higher standard of keeping the Law, which is in the spirit.

This has several different meanings and applications:

1. If you are going to go back and do Judaism, and rigidly follow the Law of Moses—all of it—you have to do it all of it!
2. Christ comes, what does He do? *Matthew 5-7!* He redefines the Law with the *spiritual* application. His sacrifice replaces all animal sacrifices. His Word nullifies all tradition.
3. Now we have a Church that is going to go into all nations.

{see sermon series: *Refuting Sunday-Keeping—The Administration of Death*} Of course, the Protestants don't have a clue regarding that either—which is basically this: What is contained in the Old Covenant and the Law of Moses is also civil law and theological law. They were to administer the death penalty for those who sinned.

Just like today, in the civil law the authorities who govern the sovereign nations must execute the death penalty. God gave that to all nations (Gen. 9). You cannot have a separate entity move within a sovereign nation and take upon itself the sovereignty of executing the death penalty. God never gave it to the Church.

All of those laws that have to do with executing the death penalty, as stated in the Law of Moses, are not to be carried out by the Church. Since we cannot carry those things out, if we try and obtain salvation through the terms of the Old Covenant, we are under a curse because

1. we have the wrong means
2. we cannot do everything written in the Law to execute those things

Those in Galatia did not have:

- a temple of God there
- the courts of Moses there
- sacrificial altars there

So, if they are going to go back and follow a form of Judaism and claim all the sacrificial laws and everything, then if they don't do that they're under a curse.

I hope you understand that. That's a very important thing to understand. The Truth is, under the New Covenant—because the laws have been magnified and amplified with their spiritual application, and the priesthood laws and the sacrificial laws and civil law of carrying out the death penalty when someone grievously breaks a law—have not transferred to the Church. Only the commandments and laws of God to bring us in spiritual right standing of God through the sacrifice of Christ. That's why we keep:

- the Ten Commandments
- the Holy Days
- all of those laws

Because we don't keep everything in the Old Testament, if we tried to accomplish salvation that way we'd be under a curse because God never gave that means as a way of salvation.

Since the Church is in all nations, if you go into different nations and seek to execute the death penalty or hang someone for a violation of law, then you're breaking their law. In other words, if God did that, He'd be double-minded. He gave the sovereignty to the nations. Christ is sovereign over the Church.

Isn't it interesting how the twisting of one word in a mistranslation can cause so much confusion?

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter (except where noted)

Scriptural References:

- 1) 2 Peter 3:15-18
- 2) Ephesians 2:8-10
- 3) Romans 3:1-4
- 4) Galatians 2:11-16
- 5) Acts 13:38-39
- 6) Galatians 2:16-18
- 7) Galatians 1:13-14
- 8) Galatians 2:17-21
- 9) Psalm 119:172
- 10) Galatians 3:1

- 11) 2 Timothy 3:15-16
- 12) Galatians 3:1-2
- 13) John 14:17
- 14) Galatians 3:2-10

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 2; 3
- Leviticus 1-6
- Genesis 15; 9

Also referenced: Sermon Series:

- *Scripturalism vs Judaism*
- *Refuting Sunday-Keeping*

FRC:bo
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