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Paul's Doctrinal Teachings

Christ Jesus himself had done no writing. Through the preaching of the apostles and other evangelistic ministers the facts of Jesus' divine Sonship and ministry, his message of the kingdom, his crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, and their significance were passed on by word of mouth to new believers in the Church. A short time after the birth of the Church some of Jesus' sayings began to be preserved and come into circulation, but for some two decades (30–52/53 A.D.), until Paul began to write, the Church had little in written form to guide its theology and conduct. Paul's letters, coming before the Gospels, were the first Christian literature to define and develop the doctrines of grace latent in the teachings of Jesus Christ and to apply them to the spiritual life of the Christian and the Church. His writings bridge the interval between Jesus' ascension and Christ's Revelation as given by John, with its prophetic fulfillment of Christ's Second Coming.

Paul's place in the early Church was tremendously important. His extensive missionary journeys to Asia Minor, Greece, and Rome vastly widened the scope of Christianity. His leadership and apostolic authority were dominant in the many churches he founded and supervised. His burning love and labors for Christ and his intellectual capacities as a theologian made his thinking a vital influence throughout the Christian world.

Paul's express calling by Christ was a continuation of the divine plan for the salvation of men. He was specially equipped to lift Christianity beyond the restrictions of Judaism into its true sphere of universal religion. In the process of planting the gospel in the cities and outposts of the Roman Empire Paul crystallized Christian doctrine for the Church. His letters developed so fully the spirit and depth of Christ's life and gospel that they inevitably became part of Christian Scripture. His terminology indicated the analytical quality of his thought as well as the distinct individuality of his approach to Christianity. He gave new meaning and application

to Old Testament words and concrete form to Old Testament ideas that were precursors of Christian doctrine, expanding the significance of these terms by relating them to Christ.

reconciliation
atonement
redemption
salvation
faith
fellowship
glory
the way
image of God, of His Son
kingdom of God, of Christ
grace of God, of Christ
power of God, of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost

He also introduced many new words and phrases into the Christian vocabulary, among them:

mortality, immortality
corruptible, incorruptible
carnally minded, spiritually minded
fullness of God, fullness of Christ
fellow citizens, fellow heirs
predestined
communion
revelation
edification
justification
sanctification
spiritual wickedness
spiritual body
spiritual gifts
spiritual understanding
fruit of the Spirit
mind of Christ
Godhead

Salvation is in Jesus Christ! This was the Church's message to the world; its universality was given definite expression by Paul. He had experienced this salvation; it had revolutionized his life, giving him an entirely new concept of God and His Messiah. He perceived God's great love for man through the atoning work of His Son, and saw man no longer a sinner but a "new creature" in Christ. His absolute conviction that Jesus was the saving Christ was the heart of his unshakable faith. Reason coincided with faith when he understood the Father's plan of redemption, and his experience in Christ's service only deepened that faith. One definition of *experience* is "personal acquaintance with reality." Paul testified positively: "I *know* whom I have believed." The verb *know* appears many times in his writings.

The visions and revelations of the Spirit vouchsafed to Paul so illumined his consciousness that he reached the point where life in Christ became the only reality: "For to me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21). From that transcendent holy place of communion—the "paradise" of which he spoke in Second Corinthians

(12:2–4)—he who thought after the manner of the Spirit, "comparing spiritual things with spiritual," beheld the path of glory that Christ Jesus had blazed for man up to the throne of God. Jesus' atoning work so translated itself in Paul's thought into the "new and living way" of salvation that, in terms of incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, he correlated that "way" to himself and to the Christian.

His basic doctrines are taken up here under the following headings:

Incarnation
Crucifixion and the Cross
Resurrection and Glory
Salvation by Grace
Justification by Faith
Sanctification

Incarnation

Paul stressed from the outset of his ministry the doctrine of the incarnation of Christ (see p. 391). His first testimony on behalf of Christianity was his affirmation in Damascus that Jesus "is the Son of God" and that "this is very Christ" (Acts 9:20,22). This was wholly in accord with the Messianic prophecy that Christ would come through the Abrahamic line in the seed of David. Paul understood that this Son, "the image of the invisible God," had come in the flesh that he might fulfill the divine purpose in destroying sin; that his coming was the evidence of God's love for humanity and the means of man's reconciliation and redemption.

"Of this man's [David's] seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus." (Acts 13:23; compare Rom. 1:2–4)

"When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. 4:4,5)

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." (Rom. 8:3; compare Phil. 2:6,7)

The incarnation was the cornerstone of the Church's faith. Paul's writings developed this doctrine of the incarnate Christ, as did the writings of Peter and John (I Pet. 4:1; II Pet. 1:16–18; Jn. 1:14; I Jn. 1:1–3; 5:6). The indisputable fact of the historic Christ enabled the Church to withstand persistent persecution and the corrupting influence of the Gnosticism that would later deny his incarnation (I Jn. 4:2,3; II Jn. 1:7).

Crucifixion and the Cross

Paul referred to his gospel as "the preaching of the cross," seeing in "the blood of Christ" the efficacious means of reconciling men to God. The unity of God and man, disrupted by sin on the part of men, had been earnestly sought throughout Old Testament history in the vicarious sacrificial system established under Mosaic Law (see p. 55). But the blood of bulls and goats was not sufficient to take away sin and reunite man with God. Only the atoning work of Christ made reconciliation possible because it effected a purification in the hearts of men that led to a repentance and reformation which enabled them to do the will of God (Col. 1:20-23). Though hatred had put Christ Jesus on the cross, his outpouring love canceled and forgave all the world's sin, and thereby revealed the infinite love of the Father.

The devout Jew found the cross an obstacle to his acceptance of Jesus as Israel's Messiah because of the Mosaic curse upon any man whose dead body hung upon a tree (Deut. 21:23). To the non-Jew it was an obstacle also, for crucifixion was a stigma, an infamous mode of punishment inflicted on rebels and criminals by many mid-Eastern nations: Assyrians, Persians, Egyptians, and later the Greeks and Romans.

"The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. . . . We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness. . . ." (I Cor. 1:18,23)

Paul taught that the sinless Jesus, the perfect Son, by his submission to death for the sins of the world and his victory over it, purchased for the whole human race the means of freedom from the bondage of sin. Jesus' sacrifice on the cross was the ransom that nullified the penalties of God's violated law, opening the way of salvation through faith.

"You, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. . . ." (Col. 2:13,14)

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." (Gal. 3:13,14)

The message of the cross, then, was not one of humiliation, but a glorious one of reconciliation and redemption. By his voluntary sacrifice Jesus made full atonement for sin, thus enabling the Christian believer to stand justified before God in a state of grace.

"God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." (Rom. 5:8-11)

Jesus had warned his disciples that following him would entail cross-bearing, and Paul gladly took up the cross. To him it meant crucifying all that was unlike Christ. He demonstrated in his own life the power of the cross to overcome sin, and taught its practical meaning for everyone.

Of himself he said: "I die daily" (I Cor. 15:31).

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. 6:14).

Of Christians he said: ". . . we are killed all the day long" (Rom. 8:36).

". . . our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Rom. 6:6).

"They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal. 5:24).

Resurrection and Glory

The doctrine of resurrection was a basic teaching of the Apostolic Church. In the Old Testament the great truth of immortality was shadowed forth in the translation of Enoch in the Antediluvian Age (Gen. 5:21-24; Heb. 11:5,6) and confirmed in the translation of Elijah in the Prophetic Age (II Ki. 2:1-12). Job's thought touched on it in hope; Psalms and the Prophets whispered it in prophecy (Job 14:13-15; 19:25-27; Ps. 17:15; 71:20; Is. 26:19; Dan. 12:2). Jewish eschatology of Jesus' day relating to resurrec-

tion of the dead and a future life was a development of the intertestamental period (see p. 92). The Pharisees (but not the Sadducees) taught the hope of resurrection after the final Judgment. Their views, however, were in the main materialistic, their concept going no higher than the resuscitation of the body and the resumption of physical life, including procreation (see p. 304). The common Jewish belief in resurrection is seen in Martha's words to Jesus about her brother Lazarus: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (Jn. 11:24). With Jesus' overcoming of death and the revealed truth of his words "I am the resurrection, and the life" (Jn. 11:25), the teaching of resurrection took on new meaning and force. It immediately became a basic hope and element of Christian belief.

Though many had testified explicitly to Jesus' resurrection—the apostles, the five hundred, the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, the women—only Paul's personal experience at conversion, when the ascended Christ called him on the road to Damascus, convinced him that Jesus had indeed risen and was the living Savior. Henceforth Jesus' resurrection was to him incontrovertible fact, and his testimony regarding it was as emphatic as the eyewitness testimony of the Twelve.

Paul thereafter taught resurrection as the Christian's hope and as the goal of a new life, a goal crowned with divine glory and immortality. He did not teach it as a hope for the future alone but as the quickening power of the Spirit at work here and now in the Christian's daily life, enabling him to "put off the old man" and "put on the new."

Of himself he said: "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord . . . that I may win Christ, and be found in him. . . . That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Phil. 3:8–11).

Of Christians he said: "God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power" (I Cor. 6:14; compare Acts 17: 31).

Paul's most explicit exposition on, the subject of resurrection is contained in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians. It was an answer to the assertion of some in the Corinthian church that there was no resurrection of the dead. To deny resurrection, he declared, was to deny the resurrection of Jesus himself; to impugn Jesus' resurrection was to make Christian faith worthless. Rather, the Son's resurrection had given mankind a sure pledge of immortality—that in him all would rise.

"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," (I Cor. 15:20–22)

Paul departed from the Pharisaic view of mere revivification of the physical body to teach that a man would be given a new body. He was familiar with the account of the transfiguration of Jesus' body that Peter, James, and John had beheld. He was familiar, too, with the apostles' testimony concerning the distinctive nature of the body of the risen Jesus at his appearances during the forty days between the Resurrection and the Ascension. Also at the time of his conversion Paul himself had seen the radiance of the risen Christ. Thus he was led to conclude that the risen body would be of a different character. Christ "shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory" (RV Phil. 3:21).

In the same treatise (I Cor. 15) Paul expounded the nature of the resurrection body (vv. 35–57). When Jesus had prophesied the manner in which his glorification would be made manifest, he had used the metaphor of a grain of wheat which, sown in the ground, brings forth "much fruit" (Jn. 12:24). Paul employed the same example of the seed and the transforming law of nature to show the manner of resurrection, the preservation of identity and the new spiritual body with which a man will rise.

He began his exposition by propounding the rhetorical question "Some men will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?"

"Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

"All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts. . . . There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

"There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.

"So also is the resurrection of the dead.

"It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:

". . . sown in dishonour . . . raised in glory:

" . . . sown in weakness . . . raised in power:

“. . . sown a natural body . . . raised a spiritual body.

“There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

“And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit

“The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven [RV the second man is of heaven].

“As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”

Paul realized that, because the nature of the fleshly body was in such great contrast to that of the spiritual body, mortality could not lay hold of the spiritual realities of the kingdom of God. There must of necessity be a change. The perishable nature must clothe itself with the imperishable, a change that must begin on earth and be consummated in heaven. When the transformation is complete, the resurrection life will have been fully achieved and the sin which brought death into the world will have been overcome (compare Rom. 5:12). Through life in Christ men win this victory.

“Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

“So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” (Compare II Cor. 5:4)

Paul envisioned the universal harvest of Christ's resurrection in its sequence and glory (I Cor. 15:23–28): first in Christ's rising; then in the resurrection of his followers at his Coming (compare I Th. 4:16,17); Christ's reign would continue until all enemies, including “the last enemy”—death—had been subdued; the Son would then deliver up the kingdom to the Father; and after that the Son himself would also become subject to Him “that God may be all in all” (the grand sequence seen in prophetic fulfillment in John's Apocalypse).

Salvation by Grace

In the Old Testament, *grace* denoted the favor or kindness of God to men, or of men toward each other; it also denoted beauty or comeliness. In the New Testament it had a much richer connotation. It signified the outpouring of God's love and mercy to men without regard to merit, a divine bestowal in and through His Son—“the sum of all blessing that comes from God through Christ: ‘grace’ the source, ‘peace’ the stream.”¹ Grace is “the influence or spirit of God operating in man to regenerate or strengthen.”²

No one was better equipped than Paul to understand God's grace or to expound its meaning, for no sinner had been a greater object of His mercy and pardon. Paul had been converted—“turned”—on the road to Damascus by what he afterward learned was God's grace. For the first time he found release from the burden of sin and condemnation under the Law, and experienced the forgiveness and reconciliation with God which comes through Christ. When he came to understand the magnitude of that saving grace, he gave it full emphasis in the Christian system. (The word *grace* is used more than a hundred times in his epistles.)

Paul defined *grace* as “the free gift” of God (Rom. 5:15), God's “kindness toward us through Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:7), “the power of Christ” (II Cor. 12:9) which effects salvation (Eph. 3:7). To Paul the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ were one (Rom. 8:9). He perceived that Christ Jesus was not only the means of God's grace but that he was that grace embodied and exemplified—God's perfect manifestation of boundless love (Eph. 1:23; compare Jn. 1:14,16,17). Christ's grace was to him the regenerative divine influence which brings the sinner up from the depths of hell, reaches out to embrace all men, lifts humanity to the heaven of God's presence, and shows man his divinity (Eph. 3:17–19; Tit. 3:7). To Paul there was only one way—faith in Christ Jesus—by which to obtain this grace of God, for faith in Christ carried with it faith in the Father who had sent him.

Of himself he said: “I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus” (I Tim. 1:12–14).

“By the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain;

but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (I Cor. 15:10; compare Eph. 3:7,8).

"I do not frustrate the grace of God. . . ." (Gal. 2:21).

Of Christians he said: "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. . . . For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:4–6,8).

The salutation of every epistle Paul wrote spoke "grace" and "peace" in a twofold way: from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ; and Paul's benedictions invoked the blessing of the manifested grace of the Son on all. This continued use of the word *grace*, far from being repetitious, gains in emphasis. These greetings and benedictions were unique to Paul, a mark of his authorship, employed by no other of the New Testament writers.

The Law Superseded

The Jew had been taught that salvation could be earned only by a righteousness obtainable through obedience to Mosaic Law (the legislation found in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). To this the Pharisees and scribes had added a large body of traditional law (see pp. 216–217). The moral law of Sinai taught the meaning of sin and the need to overcome it, since sin came under divine condemnation. But the Mosaic sacrificial and ceremonial system brought no deliverance. Rather, it added a burden, for those who did not keep the whole Law came under its curse (Gal. 3:10). As a conscientious Pharisee Paul had been rigorously trained in its precepts. He had been faithful to his highest concept of righteousness but, zealous as he was in law-keeping, he had not been saved from sin or brought into spiritual life.

Having been saved by Christ, he was forced to re-examine the place of the Law in the divine plan of redemption. He knew that the Law was good insofar as it taught obedience and righteousness, but he saw it as a temporary and subsidiary provision, a preparatory dispensation to bring men to Christ. The righteousness the Law could not bestow was obtainable through Christ's grace. Paul at no time disparaged the Law, recognizing its blessings to Israel (Rom. 3–7), but once Christ had come "the works of the law" ceased to be the way to gain acceptance with God.

"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." (Rom. 10:4)

"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not

by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." (Tit. 3:4–7)

Paul found substantiation in Scripture for his teaching of the primacy of faith over the works of the Law. The covenant with Abraham, "to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee," had come by promise and was conditioned by the patriarch's faith. That covenant had been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Pharisaic Law interpreted the covenant as pertaining only to the descendants of Abraham—"the circumcision"—but Paul, removing its application from the realm of biological descent, declared the promise that had been accepted in faith by Abraham was the inheritance of all who accepted Christ in faith; they thereby became the spiritual seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:7).

"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

"Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made. . . .

"But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:16–19,22–26)

The new way of faith liberated the Jew from the legalism of Mosaic Law, with its burden of guilt and condemnation. But beyond this, Christ's redemptive grace was effectual in delivering all men from the natural law of sin and death (the carnal law of the flesh to which the whole Adamic race was subject). Paul himself had experienced a measure of spiritual power and freedom from sin (Rom. 7:14–25).

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not, after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Rom. 8:1-4)

Justification by Faith

Closely allied to and implicit in the Christian doctrine of grace is the doctrine of justification by faith. To justify is "to show to be just," "to show to be righteous"; "to vindicate"; "to absolve from guilt." Hebrew Scripture taught that all men were guilty of sin, being the sons of Adam, and came under God's condemnation of sin. The Jew was acutely aware of sin and guilt, having received the moral law of the covenant. He had long sought vindication through the "works of the law"—through personal righteousness and good deeds—but his hope had not been realized, for he had not kept the Law's moral precepts and personal merit was not sufficient to wipe out sin.

The Christian sought vindication through faith in Jesus Christ and found it attainable. God's righteousness was manifested in Christ and through Christ's propitiatory sacrifice (which fulfilled in type the Jewish concept of atonement); and when a man through faith acknowledged the righteousness of Christ that righteousness was imputed to him and his past sins were forgiven. Justified, he was now acceptable to God, standing in a new relation to Him—in a state of grace. "God can justly declare a sinner righteous who has faith in Christ because his face is turned to the light; he is in sympathy with Christ, and desires to follow His example."³

Paul made clear the one requirement necessary to win this justification—faith in the Son of God. The faith that saved was the acceptance of Jesus Christ as that Son, through whom God's righteousness is manifested. "The firm foundation of faith is the essential supreme perfection of God; his unerring knowledge, immutable truth, infinite goodness, and almighty power."⁴ Inasmuch as faith was the only condition, God's salvation was for all men, Jew and non-Jew. This requirement did not invalidate the Law but "set the principle that God's will must be done on a firmer basis."⁵ Of all the New Testament writers Paul most clearly defined the doctrine of justification by faith. His two principal treatises on this subject are

to be found in his epistles to the Romans (chaps. 3-5) and to the Galatians (2:15-3:29).

"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation [RSV expiation] through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare . . . at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. . . . Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." (Rom. 3:19-28)

As justification was not dependent on works of the Law, neither was it dependent on circumcision, the cherished practice of the covenant people. Using Abraham as a Scriptural illustration, Paul showed that the father of the Hebrew race had himself won justification by faith in God's covenant promise before circumcision was instituted, and therefore all who had faith were Abraham's seed and were justified through that faith.

"What saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. . . . How was it then reckoned? . . . Not in circumcision . . . he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also." (Rom. 4:3,10,11)

Sanctification

Paul's doctrine of sanctification (inner purification) was a necessary corollary of the teaching of justification. Sanctification completes justification and leads to holiness and perfection. The believer, having been forgiven his past sins and now made one with Christ through faith, is required to put off his former sinful

manner of life. He must strive to become Christlike and to rid mind and body of fleshly affections and lusts, "for the risen life must begin in a very real sense here below if it is to be perfected hereafter (Col. 3:1)."⁶

As Jesus had declared for himself the great fact of pre-existence with the Father, so Paul grasped this great truth and declared it for Christians—"he [God] hath chosen us in him [Christ] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love" (Eph. 1:4). All through Paul's writings runs his concept of what man is in God's image. (For Paul's delineation of that man and his teachings as to attaining the full stature of manhood in Christ, see charts on the Old Man, New Man, and Perfect Man, pp. 454-458).

Paul taught that growth in grace is effected through the agency of the Holy Spirit, the indwelling power that enables the believer to put on the spiritual graces of Christ until he reaches the perfection of manhood in Christ (compare Rom. 8:1-17; Eph. 4:13).

"... God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." (II Th. 2:13)

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (II Cor. 7:1)

The Life of the Christian

Paul had much to say about the life or "walk" of the Christian. It was plain that the follower of Christ, born again, must lead an entirely new life, for being in Christ he was "a new creature." To maintain this new state he now must grow into full manhood in Christ. He must eschew all evil and love the good; he must love his fellow man in the spirit of Christ and bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. Paul's epistles are full of instruction and rules relating to Christian conduct in personal life, in church life, and in the body politic.

"Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called" (Eph. 4:1), "in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16), "in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4), "in love" (Eph. 5:2), "as children of light" (Eph. 5:8).

"Overcome evil with good." (Rom. 12:21)

"Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." (Eph. 5:11)

"Follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness." (I Tim. 6:11)

"Set your affection on things above" (Col. 3:2), "fight the good fight of faith" (I Tim. 6:12).

"Be kindly affectioned one to another

with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another. . . . As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." (Rom. 12:10,18)

Paul's Discipleship

The Master's example and the demands of Christian discipleship became rules from which Paul did not swerve. What Paul preached he also exemplified in both spirit and action. He unflinchingly endeavored to bring his life into line with Christ's and to adhere to his commands for Christian perfection. At all points his life after conversion was consistent with the gospel.

Jesus had taught a new birth (Jn. 3:5). Paul was born again. Jesus had yielded to the divine will at Gethsemane; Paul yielded to the divine will on the road to Damascus. Jesus had asked, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" (Jn. 9:35); Paul declared, "I know whom I have believed" (II Tim. 1:12).

Jesus had commanded, "As I have loved you . . . love one another" (Jn. 13:34); Paul had loved selflessly: "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you" (II Cor. 12:15). Jesus had warned, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt. 26:41). Paul was tempted by bodily suffering and mental anguish, but he reached a point in his experience where he could say "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13).

Jesus had commanded the apostles: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk. 16:15); Paul, the apostle "born out of due time, " carried out this commission faithfully: "I laboured more abundantly than they all" (I Cor. 15:10; compare Acts 26:22,23). And, in consonance with Jesus' promise "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Mt. 24:13), Paul was able to say with confidence, "I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness" (II Tim. 4:7,8).

Paul left an indelible mark upon the world. Though martyred for his beliefs, his was a triumphant life. He was responsible for the spread of Christianity into the Mediterranean world in a string of organized churches from Syria to Rome, and, in a large measure, for the development and cohesive unity of the doctrines of the new religion. As a result of his correspondence the Church came into possession of a unique body of literature which has preserved those Christian doctrines and nourished its spiritual life. The religious philosophy of Christianity with its new note of love and brotherhood was destined to permeate the thinking of mankind, to affect the rise and fall of nations, and change the lives of countless millions. His message is not restricted to past ages. It is vital and vibrant in meaning for the Christian today.