

Galatians Devotionals 2

Galatians Devotionals

Devotional Illustrations

Our Daily Bread

F B Meyer

C H Spurgeon

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Galatians 1:15–16 It was the good pleasure of God ... to reveal his Son in me.

If you have truly believed in the Son of God, it is certain that He, by the Spirit, has taken up his abode in your heart. But perhaps He is hidden in the deeps of your nature, as the young Joash in the heart of the Temple. He is, therefore, unable to exert that influence on your inner thought and outward life that He should. Is it not befitting that you should ask the Father to reveal his Son in you? He has been revealed to you as the Divine Substitute, but not in you as the source and spring of holiness,

Beneath the body with its physical existence, and the mind with the play of intellect, lies the spirit of man, like the most holy place in the Temple of old. That is the shrine in which the Shechinah of Christ's presence shines, and in which we can hold fellowship with Him face to face. Alas, that so heavy a veil of unbelief, of absorption in the world around us, of inattention, hangs between Him and us! Would that the strong hands which rent the veil in twain when our Savior died would rend in twain all that deprives us of this inspiring and most helpful vision of the Son, so that we might anticipate the eternal years!

But such revelations are only given that we may better help others. Not for selfish enjoyment, but for ministering help. Hence the apostle says, "that I might preach Him among the Gentiles." Be pleased, O Father, to give us that revelation, that we may speak as those who have seen the great sight, and need no further conference with flesh and blood! Then, like the apostles of old, we shall go forth among men, saying, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." (**Meyer, F. B. Our Daily Homily**)

Galatians 2:10 Remember the Poor Devotional by C H Spurgeon

Why does God allow so many of his children to be poor? He could make them all rich if he pleased; he could lay bags of gold at their doors; he could send them a large annual income; or he could scatter round their houses abundance of provisions, as once he made the quails lie in heaps round the camp of Israel, and rained bread out of heaven to feed them. There is no necessity that they should be poor, except that he sees it to be best. "The cattle upon a thousand hills are his"-he could supply them; he could make the richest, the greatest, and the mightiest bring all their power and riches to the feet of his children, for the hearts of all men are in his control. But he does not choose to do so; he allows them to suffer want, he allows them to pine in penury and obscurity. Why is this? There are many reasons: one is, to give us, who are favoured with enough, an opportunity of showing our love to Jesus. We show our love to Christ when we sing of him and when we pray to him; but if there were no sons of need in the world we should lose the sweet privilege of evidencing our love, by ministering in alms-giving to his poorer brethren; he has ordained that thus we should prove that our love standeth not in word only, but in deed and in truth. If we truly love Christ, we shall care for those who are loved by him. Those who are dear to him will be dear to us. Let us then look upon it not as a duty but as a privilege to relieve the poor of the Lord's flock-remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Surely this assurance is sweet enough, and this motive strong enough to lead us to help others with a willing hand and a loving heart-recollecting that all we do for his people is graciously accepted by Christ as done to himself

GALATIANS 2:11-21 THE DANGER OF ERROR

Now when Peter had come to Antioch, [Paul] withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed (Galatians 2:11).

The apostle Peter, though a devoted follower of Jesus, made a serious mistake in separating himself from Gentile believers just to please his narrow-minded Jewish friends. So Paul rebuked him lest he lead others astray. He knew that even a dedicated Christian can err and bring great harm to the work of the Lord.

Hobart E. Freeman was a sincere pastor who helped many people find Jesus as their personal Savior. But when he spoke negatively

of doctors as "medical deities" and urged his followers not to seek medical attention, he caused them needless suffering. Apparently some died from illnesses that could have been cured. The Ft. Wayne News-Sentinel claims to have documented evidence of eighty-six deaths among Freeman's people. A young mother who had been a member of his church said that both she and her baby would have died if she had followed his directions. A doctor told her that she should have a Caesarean section, but she and her husband decided to follow Freeman's counsel and not have a doctor on hand for delivery. But when it became obvious that both mother and baby would die without medical attention, they quickly changed their minds.

We must be careful whom we trust. Even when people seem devoutly religious, sincere, and honest, we should test their teaching by asking the Lord for guidance, searching the Scriptures, and talking with knowledgeable, trustworthy Christians. Sincere people can be sincerely wrong. —H. V. Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Error is often dressed in the garb of truth.

Galatians 2:20 Crucified with Christ Devotional by C H Spurgeon

The Lord Jesus Christ acted in what he did as a great public representative person, and his dying upon the cross was the virtual dying of all his people. Then all his saints rendered unto justice what was due, and made an expiation to divine vengeance for all their sins. The apostle of the Gentiles delighted to think that as one of Christ's chosen people, he died upon the cross in Christ. He did more than believe this doctrinally, he accepted it confidently, resting his hope upon it. He believed that by virtue of Christ's death, he had satisfied divine justice, and found reconciliation with God. Beloved, what a blessed thing it is when the soul can, as it were, stretch itself upon the cross of Christ, and feel, "I am dead; the law has slain me, and I am therefore free from its power, because in my Surety I have borne the curse, and in the person of my Substitute the whole that the law could do, by way of condemnation, has been executed upon me, for I am crucified with Christ. "

But Paul meant even more than this. He not only believed in Christ's death, and trusted in it, but he actually felt its power in himself in causing the crucifixion of his old corrupt nature. When he saw the pleasures of sin, he said, "I cannot enjoy these: I am dead to them." Such is the experience of every true Christian. Having received Christ, he is to this world as one who is utterly dead. Yet, while conscious of death to the world, he can, at the same time, exclaim with the apostle, "Nevertheless I live." He is fully alive unto God. The Christian's life is a matchless riddle. No worldling can comprehend it; even the believer himself cannot understand it. Dead, yet alive! crucified with Christ, and yet at the same time risen with Christ in newness of life! Union with the suffering, bleeding Saviour, and death to the world and sin, are soul-cheering things. O for more enjoyment of them!

Galatians 2:20 Crucified with Christ Devotional by C H Spurgeon

When the Lord in mercy passed by and saw us in our blood, he first of all said, "Live"; and this he did first, because life is one of the absolutely essential things in spiritual matters, and until it be bestowed we are incapable of partaking in the things of the kingdom. Now the life which grace confers upon the saints at the moment of their quickening is none other than the life of Christ, which, like the sap from the stem, runs into us, the branches, and establishes a living connection between our souls and Jesus. Faith is the grace which perceives this union, having proceeded from it as its firstfruit. It is the neck which joins the body of the Church to its all-glorious Head.

"Oh Faith! thou bond of union with the Lord,

Is not this office thine? and thy fit name,

In the economy of gospel types,

And symbols apposite-the Church's neck;

Identifying her in will and work

With him ascended?"

Faith lays hold upon the Lord Jesus with a firm and determined grasp. She knows his excellence and worth, and no temptation can induce her to repose her trust elsewhere; and Christ Jesus is so delighted with this heavenly grace, that he never ceases to strengthen and sustain her by the loving embrace and all-sufficient support of his eternal arms. Here, then, is established a living, sensible, and delightful union which casts forth streams of love, confidence, sympathy, complacency, and joy, whereof both the bride and bridegroom love to drink. When the soul can evidently perceive this oneness between itself and Christ, the pulse may be felt as beating for both, and the one blood as flowing through the veins of each. Then is the heart as near heaven as it can be on earth, and

is prepared for the enjoyment of the most sublime and spiritual kind of fellowship.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live.

Clearly Paul intends us to understand that the life of which he was the center had been nailed to the Savior's cross, and that Christ's life had been substituted for it. Some have spoken of this real life of Christ in the soul as being mystical and untrue; but there can be no kind of doubt that it is the constant affirmation of the New Testament.

Death, the gate of life. — It is obviously so in nature. Once each year nature lies down in its grave, sleeps in unbroken repose, and steps forth again with the glory of a freshly-renewed beauty. Often the overclouding of one faculty has been the signal of the quickening of all the rest. The blind Milton becomes the author of the "Paradise Lost." Death of a twin-soul will often give to the survivor a new impulse toward a spiritual and transfigured affection. We cannot be possessed by the self-life and the Christ-life at the same moment. And wherever, by God's grace, we erect the cross and assign our own life to its nails, the Spirit of Christ will breathe life and power.

In the flesh, but not after the flesh. — We live our life in the flesh, as aforetime, doing the duties of our ordinary existence with careful precision; but we are no longer controlled by the selfish principle which too long dominated us. The attraction of earth is overborne by the mighty drawing of the eternal and unseen. The rush of the whirlpool is unable to prevail over the throb of the steam-propeller within.

Not I. — Yet loved and ransomed by the Son of God, each of us is distinct to his loving eye. He does not bulk us all together as a mass, but singles each out for the gift of Himself, his prayers, his blood, his ceaseless thought. (**Meyer, F. B. Our Daily Homily**)

Galatians 2:20 DYING TO LIVE

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me. (Galatians 2:20)

In her book "It Only Hurts When I Laugh", Ethel Barrett tells how outstanding servants of God died to self and sin. George Mueller, when questioned about his spiritual power, responded simply,

"One day George Mueller died."

D. L. Moody was visiting New York City when he consciously died to his own ambitions.

And evangelist Christmas Evans, putting down on paper his surrender to Christ, began it by writing:

"I give my soul and body to Jesus."

It was, in a very real sense, a death to self.

John Gregory Mantle wrote,

"There is a great difference between realizing, 'On that Cross He was crucified for me,' and 'On that Cross I am crucified with Him.' The one aspect brings us deliverance from sin's condemnation, the other from sin's power."

Recognizing that we "have been crucified with Christ" (Gal. 2:20), we should, as Paul admonished in Romans 6:11, consider ourselves "to be dead indeed to sin."

We still have sinful tendencies within, but having died to them, sin no longer has dominion over us. We die to our selfish desires and pursuits. But believers must also think of themselves as "alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ro 6:11 - see exposition of Romans 6:11). We should do those things that please Him.

Victorious Christians are those who have died—to live! - R. W. De Haan. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Galatians 2:20 CHRISTIAN LIVING

"I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Gal 2:20.

THE HEART of true religion is to believe that Christ is literally within us. We must not simply look to Him as our Mediator, Advocate,

and Example, but as being possessed by Him. He is our Life, the living Fountain rising up in the well of our personality. The Apostle Paul was never weary of re-affirming this great fact of his experience, and it would be well if each of us could say every day, before starting forth on our daily duty: "Christ is in me; let me make room for Him to dwell."

We must say No to self, that the life of Christ may become manifest in and through us, and our standing become a reality in daily experience and conduct. When evil suggestions come to us, we must remember that we have entered a world where such things have no place. We are no longer in the realm of the god of this world, but have passed into the realm of the Risen Christ. Let those who are tempted believe this, and assert it in the face of the tempter, counting upon the Holy Spirit to make their reckoning a living experience.

In Ephesians 6:13-17 is described the armour of the Christian soul; in Colossians 3:12-14 the habit or dress which he wears beneath his coat of mail. We must be careful to be properly dressed each day. If we lose our temper over trifles, or yield to uncharitable speech, it shows that we have omitted to put on the girdle of love; if we yield to pride, avarice, envy and jealousy, we must not simply endeavour to put off these evils, but take from the wardrobe the opposite graces. It is not enough to avoid doing wrong. Our Master demands that we should always do and be what is right. When we fail in some sudden demand, it is because we have omitted to put on some trait of Christ, which was intended to be the complement of our need. Let us therefore day by day say: "Lord Jesus, wrap Thyself around me, that I may go forth, adequately attired to meet life's demands." In Christ for standing; Christ in us, for life; we with him, for safety.

PRAYER - Set my heart on fire with the love of Thee, and then to do Thy will, and to obey Thy commandments, will not be grievous to me. For to him that loveth, nothing is difficult, nothing is impossible; because love is stronger than death. AMEN. (F B Meyer. **Our Daily Walk**)

Galatians 2:20 THE CROSS SPELLS "F.I.N.I.S."

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me. (Galatians 2:20)

A young man approached an older Christian with this question:

"What does it mean as far as this life is concerned to be 'crucified with Christ'?"

The believer replied, "It means three things:

- (1) a man on a cross is facing in only one direction;
- (2) he is not going back; and
- (3) he has no further plans of his own."

Commenting on this, T. S. Rendall wrote,

"Too many Christians are trying to face in two directions at the same time. They are divided in heart. They want Heaven, but they also love the world. They are like Lot's wife: running one way, but facing another. Remember, a crucified man is not coming back. The cross spells *finis* for him; he is not going to return to his old life. Also, a crucified man has no plans of his own. He is through with the vainglory of this life. Its chains are broken and its charms are gone."

In the light of these truths, would you say you are acting like a "crucified" Christian? - H. G. Bosch [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

GALATIANS 3:3 TRUE FREEDOM

Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? (Galatians 3:3).

An article in our local newspaper told about an inmate in a penitentiary who had lived all but sixteen months of his thirty-nine years in various penal institutions. Born in a women's reformatory of a convict mother, he spent the first fourteen years of his life in prison as a ward of the court. When he was released, he committed a succession of crimes. He explained his behavior by saying,

"I don't know how to live on the outside. My home is inside, and I want to stay here for the rest of my life."

This unfortunate man found security in his bondage.

Likewise, adhering to external religious restraints can be easier than serving God in the liberty of the Spirit. This is why some first-century believers in Galatia wanted to live under the Mosaic law, even though in Christ they were no longer bound by it. Apparently they discovered that "freedom" can be frightening.

Many Christians follow a similar pattern. They look for security by placing themselves under a legalistic system that calls for no more than good external behavior. In many instances, the do's and don'ts are merely cultural, not biblical. Although their outward conduct may be honorable, they are actually escaping into a subtle kind of bondage. Obedience to accepted standards has value only when our actions reflect a changed heart and express gratitude to God for His salvation.

We must not hide behind the walls of legalism to avoid the freedom of life on the outside. —M. R. De Haan II [Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Only those who are bound to Christ are truly free.

Galatians 3:14

That we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

"The promise of the Spirit" is the invariable term for the special Pentecostal gift; and this is to be equally received by faith as the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. To me this text once came as a perfect revelation. It was the clue to unravel perplexity, the point around which truth held long in solution suddenly crystallised. Before this verse spoke to my heart it had been my constant endeavor to feel the Spirit's presence as the sign of my having received; but now it became clear that one might receive by simple faith God's very richest communications, even though the emotion tarried long. The stages have been thus specified:—

There is such a blessing. — Yes; there can be no doubt of this; for it pleased the Father that the fulness of the Holy Spirit should dwell in Jesus, that He might communicate Him to each member of his Church.

It is for me. — At Pentecost Peter said, This promise is for as many as the Lord our God shall call.

I have not received. — It is very important to realize what your standing is. Paul's first inquiry of the Ephesians was to ascertain this.

I would give anything if it might be mine. — Because of the life, and love, and power it would bring into your life, and the immense increase of power over others, there is no sacrifice you should be unwilling to make.

I do now in humble faith receive. — There may be no coronet of flame, nor rush of wind, nor flash of joy; but if we have put ourselves in the right attitude towards God, and opened our hearts to receive — He who taught us to hunger and thirst must have bestowed. **(Meyer, F. B. Our Daily Homily)**

Galatians 3:26 Children of God by Faith in Christ

Devotional by C H Spurgeon

The fatherhood of God is common to all his children. Ah! Little-faith, you have often said, "Oh that I had the courage of Great-heart, that I could wield his sword and be as valiant as he! But, alas, I stumble at every straw, and a shadow makes me afraid." List thee, Little-faith. Great-heart is God's child, and you are God's child too; and Great-heart is not one whit more God's child than you are. Peter and Paul, the highly-favoured apostles, were of the family of the Most High; and so are you also; the weak Christian is as much a child of God as the strong one.

"This cov'nant stands secure,

Though earth's old pillars bow;

The strong, the feeble, and the weak,

Are one in Jesus now."

All the names are in the same family register. One may have more grace than another, but God our heavenly Father has the same tender heart towards all. One may do more mighty works, and may bring more glory to his Father, but he whose name is the least in the kingdom of heaven is as much the child of God as he who stands among the King's mighty men. Let this cheer and comfort us, when we draw near to God and say, "Our Father. "

Yet, while we are comforted by knowing this, let us not rest contented with weak faith, but ask, like the Apostles, to have it increased. However feeble our faith may be, if it be real faith in Christ, we shall reach heaven at last, but we shall not honour our Master much on our pilgrimage, neither shall we abound in joy and peace. If then you would live to Christ's glory, and be happy in his service, seek to be filled with the spirit of adoption more and more completely, till perfect love shall cast out fear

GALATIANS 3:19-29 THE MIRROR, FLASHLIGHT AND PLUMBLINE

Therefore, the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ (Galatians 3:24).

The law has never saved anyone, and it never will. God did not give it to redeem us from sin but to show us our need of salvation. That's why the apostle Paul called it "our tutor."

In an unforgettable sermon, evangelist Fred Brown used three images to describe the purpose of the law. First, he likened it to the small mirror dentists use. With the mirror they can detect cavities. But they can't drill with it or use it to pull teeth. The mirror reveals the decayed area or other abnormality, but it can't fix the problem.

Brown then drew another analogy. He said that the law is also like a flashlight. If the lights go out at night, you use it to guide you down the darkened basement stairs to the electrical box. When you point it toward the fuses, it helps you see the one that is burned out. But after you've removed the bad fuse, you don't insert the flashlight in its place. You put in a new fuse to restore the electricity.

In his third image, Brown likened the law to a plumbline. Builders check their work by using a weighted string. If this plumbline reveals that the work is not true to the vertical, the plumbline cannot correct it. The builder must get out a hammer and saw.

Like the mirror, flashlight, and plumbline, the law points out the problem—sin, but it doesn't provide a solution. The only way to salvation is through Jesus Christ, who fulfilled the law. Only He can save. —D. C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The law shows us a need that only grace can fill.

Galatians 4:19 Until Christ be formed in you.

Christ is in us, if we truly believe in Him, as the sap in the vine, the air in the lung, the steam in the engine; but He may not be formed in us.

Is it not possible that the indefinable sensation of joy and pain, of yearning and unfulfilled desire, are all attributable to this deep-seated process? Christ is being formed within our hearts, dispossessing the old evil self-life, and taking its place.

"O Jesus Christ, grow Thou in me, And all things else recede; My heart be daily nearer Thee, From sin be daily freed.

"Make this poor self grow less and less, Be thou my life and aim; Oh, make me daily through thy grace More meet to bear thy name."

The mention of travail in this connection suggests that this in-forming of Christ does not take place apart from suffering. And probably it is at times when we are in a furnace of pain that the Christ in us grows most quickly. "When my pain became unbearable," says one, "I became conscious that there is a part of our being which no physical pain, and no mental anguish, can disturb. And there came to me such a sense of God — so enfolding, so assuring, so satisfying — that I could as well doubt the shining of the sun." The Comforter had come — Christ was being formed within.

In the egg, when first laid, there is a tiny point of life amid the thick, viscous fluid; but this gradually increases, while the other diminishes, and at last there is hardly a trace of this left, and the chick is formed, the egg-shell is broken, and the tiny feathered thing steps forth. The chick is formed in the shell. (**Meyer, F. B. Our Daily Homily**)

Galatians 4:22–23 The Two Seeds

A Sermon
C H Spurgeon

It is written,; that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free woman. But he

**who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; But he of the free woman was by promise.—
Galatians 4:22–23**

Abraham had two sons, Ishmael and Isaac, who were beyond all dispute veritable sons of Abraham. Yet, one of them inherited the covenant blessing, and the other was simply a prosperous man of the world. See how similar these two were to each other. They were born in the same society, called the same great patriarch “father,” and sojourned in the same encampment with him. Yet, Ishmael was a stranger to the covenant, while Isaac was the heir of the promise. How little is there in blood and birth!

A more remarkable instance than this happened a little afterwards. Esau and Jacob were both born to the same mother, at the same birth, yet is it written, “Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated” (Rom. 9:13). One became gracious, and the other profane. So closely may two come together, and yet so widely may they be separated. Verily, it is not only true that these two shall be in one bed and that one shall be taken and the other left, but they shall come into the world at the same moment. Yet one of them will take up his inheritance with God, and the other will sell his birthright for a morsel of meat. We may be in the same church, baptized in the same water, seated at the same communion table, singing the same psalm, and offering the same prayer, and yet we may be of two races as opposed as the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent.

Abraham’s two sons are declared by Paul to be the types of two races of men who are much alike and yet widely different. They are unlike in their origin. They were both sons of Abraham, but Ishmael, the child of Hagar, was the offspring of Abraham upon ordinary conditions. He was born after the flesh. Isaac, the son of Sarah, was not born by the strength of nature. His father was more than a hundred years old, and his mother was long past age. He was given to his parents by the Lord, and was born according to the promise through faith. This is a grave distinction, and it marks off the true child of God from him who is only so by profession. The promise lies at the bottom of the distinction, and the power which goes to accomplish the promise creates and maintains the difference. Hence, the promise which is our inheritance is also our test and touchstone.

Let us use the test at once by seeing whether we have been formed by the power which fulfills the promise. Let me ask a few questions: How were you converted? Was it by yourself, by the persuasion of men, by carnal excitement, or was it by the operation of the Spirit of God? You profess to have been born again. Where did that new birth come from? Did it come from God in consequence of His eternal purpose and promise, or did it come out of yourself? Was it your old nature trying to do better, and working itself up to its best form? If so, you are Ishmael. Or was it that you, being spiritually dead and having no strength whatever to rise out of your lost estate, were visited by the Spirit of God? Did God put forth His divine energy and cause life from heaven to enter into you? Then you are Isaac. All will depend upon the commencement of your spiritual life and the source from which that life at first proceeded. If you began in the flesh, you have gone on in the flesh, and in the flesh you will die.

Have you never read, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh” (John 3:6)? Before long the flesh will perish, and from it you will reap corruption. Only “that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 3:6). The joy is that the spirit will live, and of it you will reap life everlasting. Whether you are a professor of religion or not, I beseech you, ask yourself, Have I felt the power of the Spirit of God?

Is the life that is within you the result of the fermentation of your own natural desires? Or is it a new element, infused, imparted, implanted from above? Is your spiritual life a heavenly creation? Have you been created anew in Christ Jesus? Have you been born again by divine power?

Ordinary religion is nature gilded over with a thin layer of what is thought to be grace. Sinners have polished themselves up and brushed off the worst of the rust and the filth, and they think their old nature is as good as new. This touching-up and repairing of the old man is all very well, but it falls short of what is needed. You may wash the face and hands of Ishmael as much as you please, but you cannot make him into Isaac. You may improve nature, and the more you do so the better for certain temporary purposes, but you cannot raise it into grace. There is a distinction at the very fountain-head between the stream which rises in the bog of fallen humanity and the river which proceeds from the throne of God.

Do not forget that our Lord himself said, “Ye must be born again” (John 3:7). If you have not been born again from above, all your church-going or your chapel-going stands for nothing. Your prayers and your tears, your Bible-readings, and all that have come from only yourself, can only lead to yourself. Water will naturally rise as high as its source but no higher. That which begins with human nature will rise to human nature, but it cannot reach to the divine nature. Was your new birth natural or supernatural? Was it of the will of man or of God? Much will depend upon your answer to that question.

Between the child of God and the mere professor there is a distinction as to origin of the most serious sort. Isaac was born according to promise. Ishmael was not of promise but of the course of nature. Where nature’s strength suffices there is no promise, but when human energy fails, the word of the Lord comes in. God had said that Abraham should have a son of Sarah. Abraham believed it and rejoiced therein, and Isaac was born as the result of the divine promise, by the power of God. There could have been no Isaac if there had been no promise. There can be no true believer apart from the promise of grace and the grace of the promise.

Gentle reader, here let me inquire as to your salvation. Are you saved by what you have done? Is your religion the product of your

own natural strength? Do you feel equal to all that salvation may require? Do you conclude yourself to be in a safe and happy condition because of your natural excellence and moral ability? Then you are after the manner of Ishmael, and to you the inheritance will not come. It is not an inheritance according to the flesh but according to promise.

On the other hand, you may say: My hope lies only in the promise of God. He has set forth that promise in the person of His Son, Jesus, to every sinner that believes in Him. I do believe in Him; therefore, I trust and believe that the Lord will fulfill His promise and bless me. I look for heavenly blessedness not as the result of my own efforts but as the gift of God's free favor. My hope is fixed alone upon the free and gratuitous love of God to guilty men. He has given His Son Jesus Christ to put away sin and to bring in everlasting righteousness for those who deserve it not.

This thinking is another sort of language from that of the Ishmaelites who say "We have Abraham to our father" (Matt. 3:9). You have now learned to speak as Isaac speaks. The difference may seem small to the careless, but it is great indeed. Hagar, the slave-mother, is a very different person from Sarah, the princess. To the one there is no covenant promise, to the other the blessing belongs forevermore. Salvation by works is one thing; salvation by grace is another. Salvation by human strength is far removed from salvation by divine power. Salvation by our own resolve is the opposite of salvation by the promise of God.

Put yourself under this inquiry and see to which family you belong. Are you of Ishmael or of Isaac?

If you find that you are like Isaac, born according to the promise, remember that your name is "Laughter" for that is the interpretation of the Hebrew name Isaac. Take care that you rejoice with joy, unspeakable and full of glory. Your new birth is a wonderful thing. If both Abraham and Sarah laughed at the thought of Isaac, you may certainly do so concerning yourself. There are times when, if I sit alone and think of the grace of God to me, the most undeserving of all His creatures, I am ready to laugh and cry at the same time. I become joyous that ever the Lord should have looked in love and favor upon me. And every child of God must have felt the working of that Isaac nature within his soul, filling his mouth with laughter, because the Lord has done great things for him.

Mark well the difference between the two seeds from their very beginning. Ishmael comes from man and by man. Isaac comes by God's promise. Ishmael is the child of Abraham's flesh. Isaac is Abraham's child, too. Then the power of God comes in, and from the weakness of his parents it is made clear that he is of the Lord—a gift according to promise. True faith is assuredly the act of the man who believes. True repentance is the act of the man who repents. Yet both faith and repentance may with unquestionable correctness be described as the work of God. Isaac is the son of Abraham and Sarah, and yet he is still more the gift of God. The Lord our God, who bids us believe, also enables us to believe. All that we do acceptably the Lord works in us. The very will to do it is of His working. No religion is worth a farthing which is not essentially the outflow of the man's own heart. Yet, it must beyond question be the work of the Holy Ghost who dwells within him.

O friend, if what you have within you is natural, and only natural, it will not save you! The inward work must be supernatural. It must come from God or it will miss the covenant blessing. A gracious life will be your own even as Isaac was truly the child of Abraham. Most importantly this life will be from God, for "Salvation is of the Lord" (Jon. 2:9). We must be born from above. Concerning all of our religious feelings and actions, we must be able to say, "Lord, you have formed all our works in us." (Spurgeon, C. H.. According to Promise)

Galatians 5:1 Christ Hath Made Us Free

Devotional by C H Spurgeon

This "liberty" makes us free to heaven's charter—the Bible. Here is a choice passage, believer, "When thou passest through the rivers, I will be with thee." You are free to that. Here is another: "The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee"; you are free to that. You are a welcome guest at the table of the promises. Scripture is a never-failing treasury filled with boundless stores of grace. It is the bank of heaven; you may draw from it as much as you please, without let or hindrance. Come in faith and you are welcome to all covenant blessings. There is not a promise in the Word which shall be withheld. In the depths of tribulations let this freedom comfort you; amidst waves of distress let it cheer you; when sorrows surround thee let it be thy solace. This is thy Father's love-token; thou art free to it at all times. Thou art also free to the throne of grace. It is the believer's privilege to have access at all times to his heavenly Father. Whatever our desires, our difficulties, our wants, we are at liberty to spread all before him. It matters not how much we may have sinned, we may ask and expect pardon. It signifies nothing how poor we are, we may plead his promise that he will provide all things needful. We have permission to approach his throne at all times—in midnight's darkest hour, or in noontide's most burning heat. Exercise thy right, O believer, and live up to thy privilege. Thou art free to all that is treasured up in Christ—wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. It matters not what thy need is, for there is fulness of supply in Christ, and it is there for thee. O what a "freedom" is thine! freedom from condemnation, freedom to the promises, freedom to the throne of grace, and at last freedom to enter heaven!

Galatians 5:16 - WALKING IN THE SPIRIT

"Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."-- Gal 5:16.

WHEN WE walk in the spirit we shall be led by Him. In the early stages of life we are apt to be headstrong and impulsive, as Moses when he felled the Egyptian. But as we grow in Christian experience, we wait for the leadings of the Spirit, moving us by His suggestion, impressing on us His will, working within us what afterwards we work out in character and deed. We do not go in front, but follow behind. We are led by the Spirit.

The man or woman who walks in the Spirit has no desire to fulfil the lust of the flesh. The desire for the gratification of natural appetite may be latent in the soul, and may flash through the thoughts, but he does not fulfil it. The desire cannot be prevented, but its fulfilment can certainly be withheld.

When we walk in the Spirit He produces in us the fruit of a holy character. The contrast between the works of the fleshly--i.e., the selfish life.--and the fruit of the Spirit, which is the natural product of His influence, is very marked. In works there is effort, the clatter of machinery, the deafening noise of the factory. But fruit is found in the calm, still, regular process of Nature, which is ever producing in her secret laboratory the kindly fruits of the earth. How quiet it all is! There is no voice nor language. It is almost impossible to realize what is being effected by a long summer day of sunshine. The growing of autumn arrives with noiseless footsteps. So it is with the soul that daily walks in the Spirit. There are probably no startling experiences, no marked transitions, nothing special to record in the diary, but every year those who live in close proximity witness a ripening wealth of fruit in the manifestation of love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control.

PRAYER - Gracious Lord! May Thy Holy Spirit keep me ever walking in the light of Thy countenance. May He fill my heart with the sense of Thy nearness and loving fellowship. Order my steps in Thy way, and walk with me, that I may do the thing that pleaseth Thee. AMEN. (F B Meyer. **Our Daily Walk**)

GALATIANS 5:16-26 "OLD LEAVES"

Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh (Galatians 5:16).

Some beautiful oak trees stand behind our home. Every fall I notice that some of them retain their crisp dried leaves long after the basswood, maples, elms, and walnuts become bare. Even the strong winds of winter and the early spring rains do not completely strip their boughs. But as springtime progresses, the scene changes. Small buds appear at the tips of the twigs. Soon the dried remnants of the preceding season drop away because of the surging forces of new life from within.

The Holy Spirit graciously works like that in Christians. Old habits cling to our lives with tenacity. Even trial and adversity do not remove all the lifeless leftovers of our fallen human nature. But Christ continually seeks expression from within us. As we confess our sin, pray, meditate on the Word of God, obey, and fellowship with our blessed Lord, the dead works of the flesh gradually drop away.

When all our efforts to turn over a new leaf or pluck off the old ones meet defeat, we can take a lesson from the mighty oak. Then we can thank God for the wonder-working power of the Holy Spirit within us. As we yield to His gentle urgings to be kind, loving, honest, and faithful, the Holy Spirit will take care of those "old leaves." —D.J. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

If Christ is the center of our lives, the circumference will take care of itself.

GALATIANS 5:16-26 THE SECRET OF SELF CONTROL

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells (Romans 7:18).

Several years ago we had a pet raccoon we called Jason. For hours he would entertain us by wrestling with our dog, MacTavish, a kind and gentle Scottish terrier. Jason, on the other hand, was a kind of schizoid terror. One minute he would snuggle up on your lap like a perfect angel and the next he'd be engaged in the most fiendish antics. If unrestrained, he would breakfast on dove eggs, raid the garbage can, or tear up the flowerbed. Although he was a delightful pet, we became increasingly aware that his destructive actions were governed by his wild instincts. Jason would always have the nature of a raccoon, and we had to watch him closely no

matter how tame he seemed to be.

Often when I observed Jason's behavior, I thought of the fallen, sinful nature that we as Christians retain even though we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Paul referred to this as the "flesh" in which "nothing good dwells" (Rom. 7:18). It may be repressed and restrained, but it is always there. Unless we are daily controlled by the Lord, our old "self" will demonstrate its destructive, pleasure-seeking capacity in some way or another.

Although we are new creatures in Christ, we still possess a tendency to sin. But we need not be governed by it, for we are united to Christ and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. By obeying God's Word and yielding to the Spirit, we can be victorious over the flesh—the "nature of the beast" within. —M. R. De Haan II ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The secret of self-control is to give control of ourselves to God.

Galatians 5:17 **Flesh lusts Against the Spirit** Devotional by C H Spurgeon

In every believer's heart there is a constant struggle between the old nature and the new. The old nature is very active, and loses no opportunity of plying all the weapons of its deadly armoury against newborn grace; while on the other hand, the new nature is ever on the watch to resist and destroy its enemy. Grace within us will employ prayer, and faith, and hope, and love, to cast out the evil; it takes unto it the "whole armour of God," and wrestles earnestly. These two opposing natures will never cease to struggle so long as we are in this world. The battle of "Christian" with "Apollyon" lasted three hours, but the battle of Christian with himself lasted all the way from the Wicket Gate in the river Jordan. The enemy is so securely entrenched within us that he can never be driven out while we are in this body: but although we are closely beset, and often in sore conflict, we have an Almighty helper, even Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, who is ever with us, and who assures us that we shall eventually come off more than conquerors through him. With such assistance the new-born nature is more than a match for its foes. Are you fighting with the adversary to-day? Are Satan, the world, and the flesh, all against you? Be not discouraged nor dismayed. Fight on! For God himself is with you; Jehovah Nissi is your banner, and Jehovah Rophi is the healer of your wounds. Fear not, you shall overcome, for who can defeat Omnipotence? Fight on, "looking unto Jesus"; and though long and stern be the conflict, sweet will be the victory, and glorious the promised reward.

**From strength to strength go on;
Wrestle, and fight, and pray,
Tread all the powers of darkness down,
And win the well-fought day**

Galatians 5:17

Ye may not do the things that ye would. (r.v.)

This is a notable rendering of the r.v., which throws a flood of light on the entire passage. The a.v. has it, "Ye cannot do"; it is more correct to say, "Ye may not do." It is always possible to go back and to fall under the tyrannous power of the evil self principle, the flesh, either in its more debased or refined form; but as long as we are led by the Spirit, live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, He energizes against the flesh, keeping it in the place of death, and allowing the life of Christ to work freely.

In Christian ethics there must be, first, a definite willingness to surrender ourselves to his death. Secondly, there must be a perpetual yielding to the indwelling grace and power of the Holy Spirit. He will deal with the self-life in the deep abysses of your nature. When the antiseptic influence of carbolic acid is in the atmosphere it counteracts the microbes of disease, so that they cannot do as otherwise they would in infecting healthy bodies with disease. An eminent surgeon told me the other day that he was accustomed to boil his operating instruments in antiseptic mixture, that they might not carry microbes to the open wounds. Oh that those of us who are used as instruments by God would take heed!

When the baleful effect of the self-life is arrested, the fruits of the Spirit appear naturally and easily. Note the distinction between work, in which there is effort, and fruit, which swells so imperceptibly and silently on the branch—pressed out from within. Each of these fruits is a variation of the first, which is love. Joy is love on wings; peace, with the wings folded; long-suffering, love in the sick-room; goodness, in business; meekness, in society; self-control, in the regimen of habit for the sake of others. (**Meyer, F. B. Our Daily Homily**)

Galatians 5:18 Led by the Spirit

Devotional by C H Spurgeon

We who looks at his own character and position from a legal point of view, will not only despair when he comes to the end of his reckoning, but if he be a wise man he will despair at the beginning; for if we are to be judged on the footing of the law, there shall no flesh living be justified. How blessed to know that we dwell in the domains of grace and not of law! When thinking of my state before God the question is not, "Am I perfect in myself before the law?" but, "Am I perfect in Christ Jesus?" That is a very different matter. We need not enquire, "Am I without sin naturally?" but, "Have I been washed in the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness?" It is not "Am I in myself well pleasing to God?" but it is "Am I accepted in the Beloved?" The Christian views his evidences from the top of Sinai, and grows alarmed concerning his salvation; it were better far if he read his title by the light of Calvary. "Why," saith he, "my faith has unbelief in it, it is not able to save me." Suppose he had considered the object of his faith instead of his faith, then he would have said, "There is no failure in him, and therefore I am safe." He sighs over his hope: "Ah! my hope is marred and dimmed by an anxious carefulness about present things; how can I be accepted?" Had he regarded the ground of his hope, he would have seen that the promise of God standeth sure, and that whatever our doubts may be, the oath and promise never fail. Ah! believer, it is safer always for you to be led of the Spirit into gospel liberty than to wear legal fetters. Judge yourself at what Christ is rather than at what you are. Satan will try to mar your peace by reminding you of your sinfulness and imperfections: you can only meet his accusations by faithfully adhering to the gospel and refusing to wear the yoke of bondage.

GALATIANS 5:19-26 ENVY

"For wrath kills a foolish man, and envy slays a simple one" (Job 5:2).

No one is more miserable than someone filled with jealousy or envy. They rob us of happiness and make our good accomplishments seem bad. Furthermore, they exact their own punishment.

On the wall of a chapel in Padua, an old city in northeastern Italy, hangs a painting by the Renaissance artist Giotto. The painter depicted envy with long ears that could hear every bit of news of another's success. He also gave to Envy the tongue of a serpent to poison the reputation of the one being envied. But if you could look at the painting carefully, you would notice that the tongue coils back and stings the eyes of the figure itself. Not only did Giotto picture Envy as being blind, but also as destroying itself with its own venomous evil.

Jealousy was one of the sins hurting the church at Corinth. The people had divided into factions because they were jealous of one another's gifts. Each believer strove for preeminence. Paul therefore instructed them to follow the "more excellent way" of love (1 Cor. 12:31), telling them that "love does not envy" (1 Cor. 13:4).

If we resent the success and accomplishments of others and find ourselves striking out at them with damaging words or insidious innuendoes, we have a problem with jealousy. But God wants to administer the antidote of love. That alone will keep us from becoming jealousy's victim. —D.C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

If we shoot arrows of jealousy at others, we wound ourselves.

Galatians 5:25 Live in the Spirit

Devotional by C H Spurgeon

The two most important things in our holy religion are the life of faith and the walk of faith. He who shall rightly understand these is not far from being a master in experimental theology, for they are vital points to a Christian. You will never find true faith unattended by true godliness; on the other hand, you will never discover a truly holy life which has not for its root a living faith upon the righteousness of Christ. Woe unto those who seek after the one without the other! There are some who cultivate faith and forget holiness; these may be very high in orthodoxy, but they shall be very deep in condemnation, for they hold the truth in unrighteousness; and there are others who have strained after holiness of life, but have denied the faith, like the Pharisees of old, of whom the Master said, they were "whitewashed sepulchers." We must have faith, for this is the foundation; we must have holiness of life, for this is the superstructure. Of what service is the mere foundation of a building to a man in the day of tempest? Can he hide himself therein? He wants a house to cover him, as well as a foundation for that house. Even so we need the superstructure of spiritual life if we would have comfort in the day of doubt. But seek not a holy life without faith, for that would be to erect a house which can afford no permanent shelter, because it has no foundation on a rock. Let faith and life be put together, and, like the two

abutments of an arch, they will make our piety enduring. Like light and heat streaming from the same sun, they are alike full of blessing. Like the two pillars of the temple, they are for glory and for beauty. They are two streams from the fountain of grace; two lamps lit with holy fire; two olive trees watered by heavenly care. O Lord, give us this day life within, and it will reveal itself without to thy glory.

GALATIANS 6:1-5 NOT THINKING HIGHLY OF SELF

For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself (Galatians 6:3).

Disaster always results when we try to build ourselves up by minimizing the worth of others. That's the message of a fable about a little frog who was startled when he looked up and saw an ox drinking out of the pond. He had never seen such a huge creature. Immediately he hopped away to tell his grandfather. Determined that no one should seem larger in the eyes of his grandson than he, the old bullfrog began to puff himself up as he asked, "Was he bigger than this?" "Oh, yes, Grandfather," answered the little frog, "much larger." Grandfather frog inflated himself more. "Bigger than this?" he queried. "Lots bigger!" replied the grandson. The old frog continued to puff until he exploded.

A good self-image is healthy, but there is a big difference between a sense of our God-given worth as His handiwork and an ego inflated by pride. That's why we must be quick to acknowledge that what we accomplish is done solely by God's grace. Only then can we see how foolish it is to promote our selfish interests.

Furthermore, humility will enable us to show appreciation for the achievement and position of others.

The apostle Paul put it clearly,

"For I say ... to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith" (Ro 12:3) .

If we puff ourselves up, we always get blown out of proportion. —P. R. V. [Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

God wants people great enough to be small enough to be used.

GALATIANS 6:1-9 REAPING & HARVESTING

For our transgressions are multiplied before You, and our sins testify against us (Isaiah 59:12).

A group of young people from Renaissance High School in Detroit cut classes to attend a rock concert in Hart Plaza. They probably thought they had gotten away with their truancy, but the next day, when the Detroit News appeared on the newsstand, it carried a color photo of the concert on the front page. And who was in that picture? That's right—the delinquent students of Renaissance High, easily recognizable to anyone. According to the paper,

"Eagle-eyed assistant principal Dr. Elijah Porter spotted the students and had a conversation with them."

As for the kids, it went on,

"There was nothing they could say."

The Bible teaches that we cannot hide our iniquities. We may be able to cover them up for a while and even get away with them for an extended period of time. But the time will inevitably come when we must face up to them, either in this world or in the next. Paul told the Galatians,

"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" (Gal. 6:7).

Whenever we have a sin we are hiding, we must confess and forsake it. Or, when we are tempted to pursue something we know is wrong, thinking we won't get caught, we must determine to go no further. Our picture may not appear on the front page, but the Bible says we won't get away with it. —D.C. Egner ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The seed of wrongdoing maybe sown in secret, but the harvest cannot be concealed.

GALATIANS 6:1-5 RESTORING BROKEN THINGS

If a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one (Galatians 6:1).

A few years ago, an angry man rushed through the Rijks Museum in Amsterdam until he reached Rembrandt's famous painting "Night-watch." Then he took out a knife and slashed it repeatedly before anyone could stop him. A short time later, a distraught, hostile man slipped into St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome with a hammer and began to smash Michelangelo's beautiful sculpture, The Pieta. Two cherished works of art were severely damaged. But what did officials do? Throw them out and forget about them? Absolutely not. Using the best experts, who worked with the utmost care and precision, they made every effort to restore the treasures.

Christians ought to have the same attitude toward believers whose testimony has been damaged by sin. When one of God's children falls into sin, our first and only thought should be to restore, not to condemn. Tenderly and compassionately we must pray and work to bring that one back to spiritual wholeness and fellowship within the body of Christ. The word restore in Galatians 6:1 is the same word translated mend in Matthew 4:21, where we read that James and John were mending their nets. It means "to make thoroughly fit." That should be the church's goal with any member overtaken in sin.

Condemning is easier than restoring. In disgust we may want to turn our backs on a sinning Christian. But the scriptural pattern is not for us to discard but to restore. —D.C. Egener ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We can't expect others to see eye to eye with us if we look down on them.

Galatians 6:2 BURDEN-BEARING

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."-- Galatians 6:2.

IN THESE words the Apostle is evidently thinking more especially of the trespasses and sins into which men and women fall. We are not to rejoice over their failure, nor talk about it to others, but to consider ourselves, remembering our own liability to fall in the event of temptation. We are to be tender, gentle, and compassionate, helping to bear the burden of temptation, remorse, and shame. There is great comfort for us all in these words, for surely, if our Lord expects us to forgive and restore our brother, we may count on Him to do as much for us!

But sin is not the only burden we are to bear with our brethren. The young man or girl who fails to make good; the business man who meets with sudden reverse; those who suffer bitter disappointment; when faces are averted, and tongues are busily engaged in criticism--let us seek out the one who has consciously disappointed everybody, and help by our strong and tender sympathy. It is like the coming of the good Ananias into Saul's darkness, with the greeting: "Brother Saul!"

We may help to bear the burden of bereavement--when the husband is suddenly stricken down, or the mother is taken away and there is no one to care for the children, then we may show our practical sympathy and helpfulness. All through His life on earth our Lord sought to carry the burdens of the people, and we are to follow in His steps. Sympathy means suffering with; and as we endeavour to enter into the griefs and sorrows of those around us, in proportion to the burden of grief that we carry do we succeed in lightening another's load. You cannot bear a burden without feeling its pressure; and in bearing the burdens of others, we must be prepared to suffer with them.

This was the law of Christ, the principle of His life, and the precept which He enjoined on His followers to fulfil. Let us remember, also, that in carrying the burdens of others, we often lose our own.

PRAYER

For friends above; for friends still left below;
For the rare links invisible between.
For sweet hearts tuned to noblest charity;
For great hearts toiling in the outer dark;
For friendly hands stretched out in time of need,

For every gracious thought and word and deed;

We thank Thee Lord! AMEN. (F B Meyer. Our Daily Walk)

Galatians 6:8 Spiritual Sowing

Devotional by C H Spurgeon

"For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life." ([Galatians 6:8](#)).

Sowing looks like a losing business, for we put good corn into the ground never to see it anymore. Sowing to the Spirit seems a very fanciful, dreamy business; for we deny ourselves and apparently get nothing for it. Yet if we sow to the Spirit by studying to live unto God, seeking to obey the will of God, and laying ourselves out to promote His honor, we shall not sow in vain. Life shall be our reward, even everlasting life. This we enjoy here as we enter into the knowledge of God, communion with God, and enjoyment of God. This life flows on like an ever-deepening, ever-widening river till it bears us to the ocean of infinite felicity, where the life of God is ours forever and ever. Let us not this day sow to our flesh, for the harvest will be corruption, since flesh always tends that way; but with holy self-conquest let us live for the highest, purest, and most spiritual ends, seeking to honor our most holy LORD by obeying His most gracious Spirit. What a harvest will that be when we reap life everlasting! What sheaves of endless bliss will be reaped! What a festival will that harvest be! LORD, make us such reapers, for thy Son's sake. (See Torrey's Topic "[The Reward of the Saints](#)")

GALATIANS 6:9-18 ITS ALWAYS TOO SOON TO QUIT

In due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart (Galatians 6:9).

If God has called us to a task, quitting is never fitting. Yet who hasn't trudged through the lowlands of discouragement, looking to every side road for an opportunity to leave a difficult and frustrating work. Satan is quick to suggest that we might as well give up, go elsewhere, or let someone who is more talented do the job. But we are where we are by God's appointment. If we're in this kind of situation, the noblest expression of faith is a dogged determination to go on with the task.

A minister had been pastoring a church for some time with seemingly little results. Then one night he had a dream in which he was trying to break a large granite rock with a pickax. Hour after hour he labored, but made no progress. At last he said,

"It's no use. I'm going to quit."

Suddenly a man appeared by his side and asked,

"Weren't you appointed to do this task? Why are you going to abandon it?"

The minister told him that the work was futile; he could make no impression on the granite.

"That is not your concern," replied the stranger. "The work is in your hands; the results are in another's. Work on!"

Taking up the ax again, the minister struck the rock; and at his first blow the granite flew into hundreds of pieces. When he awoke from his dream, a valuable lesson had been impressed upon his heart.

The "rocks" in our lives may seem harder than steel. Yet, if we are in God's will, they will one day yield. —D. J. De Haan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Perseverance comes not only from a strong will but also from a strong won't.

Galatians 6:9 GOD'S MYSTERIOUS WAYS

In due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart (Galatians 6:9).

After years of service in South Africa, the famous missionary Robert Moffat returned to Scotland to recruit helpers. When he arrived at the church one cold wintry night, he was dismayed that only a small group had come out to hear him. What bothered him even more was that the only people in attendance were ladies. Although he was grateful for their interest, he had hoped to challenge men.

He had chosen as his text Proverbs 8:4, "Unto you, O men, I call."

In his discouragement he almost failed to notice one small boy in the loft pumping the bellows of the organ. Moffat felt frustrated as he gave the message, for he realized that very few women could be expected to undergo the rigorous life in undeveloped jungles. But God works in mysterious ways. Although no one volunteered that evening, the young fellow assisting the organist was deeply moved by the challenge. As a result, he promised God he would follow in the footsteps of this pioneer missionary. And he remained true to his vow. When he grew up, he went and ministered to the unreached tribes of Africa. His name was **David Livingstone!**

Moffat never ceased to wonder that his appeal which he had intended for men had stirred a young boy, who eventually became a mighty power for God. - H. G. Bosch ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Galatians 6:9 "THE THIRD TIME'S THE CHARM"

In due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart (Galatians 6:9).

In a manufacturing town in Scotland, a young lady began teaching a Sunday school class of poverty-stricken boys. The most unpromising youngster was a boy named Bob. After the first two or three Sundays, he did not return. So the teacher went to look for him. Although the superintendent had given Bob some new clothes, they were already worn and dirty when the teacher found him. He was given another new suit, and he came back to Sunday school. But soon he quit again, and the teacher went out once more to find him. When she did, she discovered that the second set of clothes had gone the way of the first.

"I am completely discouraged about Bob," she told the superintendent.

"I guess we must give up on him."

"Please don't do that," he pleaded. "I believe there is still hope. Try him one more time."

They gave Bob a third suit of clothes, and this time he began to attend faithfully. It wasn't long until he became a Christian and eventually even taught in that same Sunday school.

Who was that obstinate, ragged boy who for a time seemed so unreachable? None other than Robert Morrison, who later became the first Protestant missionary to China. He translated the Bible into Chinese and brought the Word of God to teeming millions.

A. B. Simpson said,

"God has hidden every precious thing in such a way that it is a regard to the diligent, a prize to the earnest, but a disappointment to the slothful."

In service for Christ, keep "doing good."**Perseverance wins!** - H. G. Bosch ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Galatians 6:9-10 REAPING WHAT WE CANNOT SEE

Often we don't see the results of doing good until much later. Leslie B. Flynn tells about Dyson Hague, a chaplain in an English hospital who visited a ward of dying soldiers. One man asked him if he would write his Sunday school teacher and tell her he would die a Christian because of her teaching.

Chaplain Hague wrote the letter. A few weeks later he received this reply:

"Just a month ago I resigned my class of young men which I had been teaching for years, for I felt that my teaching was getting nowhere. Then came your letter, telling how my teaching had helped win this boy to Christ. I've asked for my class back. May God have mercy on me!" ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Galatians 6:10 TRUE BENEFICENCE

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men."-- Galatians 6:10.

WE ALL have a mission in the world, though we may never be called to cross the sea, or to visit distant lands to preach the gospel.

Christ's command to each of us, is begun with the person next to you. Do not wait to be neighbored, but neighbour somebody who is in need. The best way to bring in the Kingdom of God is to bring the person whom you can most easily influence to the Saviour. All great work in the world has commenced, not by committees, but by the consecration, self-sacrifice, and devotion of single individuals.

The Apostle indicates three methods of helping people. The restoration of the fallen (Gal6:1). How often in daily life a Christian man or woman is suddenly overtaken by some temptation, to which they yield, and which leaves a deep stain on character. Thus was David overtaken and also Peter! What an agony of remorse ensues! The Psalms are full of bitter repentance for such transgression. The sinful soul has to bear a heavy burden indeed; and too often his fellow-Christians pass him by with averted faces and frowns. No one visits him, or cares to be seen in his company, or tries to help him regain his former footing.

"Christ's law," which we are called to fulfil, is to seek out the erring one, to go after that which is lost, to restore the wanderer, to help carry his burden, considering lest we be tempted, and lapse into the same sin.

The care of Pastors and Ministers (Gal 6:6). If all who are being taught in Church and Sunday School would set themselves to minister to those that teach them, how many a weary servant of Christ would pluck up new courage and hope. Communicate helpfulness, sympathy, prayer, the grip of the hand, the expression of thankfulness for blessing received.

The ministry of all men (Gal 6:9-10). These opportunities of doing good are always recurring, and at every turn there are those who need a helping hand. "The poor," said our Lord, "ye have always with you." Let us bear a little of the burden of each, and specially do it for those who belong to the household of faith.

PRAYER - Give us grace to be encouragers of others, never discouragers; always making life easier, never harder, for those who come within our influence. AMEN. (F B Meyer. **Our Daily Walk**)

Galatians 6:10 DO WHAT YOU CAN

"So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith." (Galatians 6:10)

Our Scripture reading today says that we are to do good to all men, but that doesn't mean we have to reach every man. It means instead that we are to help anyone we have an opportunity to help. Let me illustrate.

Several years ago an article appeared in Time magazine about a doctor who lived through the terrible bombing of Hiroshima. When the blast occurred, Dr. Fumio Shigeto was waiting for a streetcar only a mile away, but he was sheltered by the corner of a concrete building. Within seconds after the explosion, his ears were filled with the screams of victims all around him. Not knowing what had happened, he stood there for a moment bewildered—one doctor wondering how he could ever handle this "mountain" of patients. Then, still somewhat stunned, Dr. Shigeto knelt, opened his black bag, and began treating the person lying at his feet.

When you are faced with the distressing spiritual needs of a lost world, don't despair. Do good to those around you. Pray and give sacrificially to missions. All God asks is that you do what you can. - M. R. De Haan II, ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Galatians 6:17 Let no man trouble me; for I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus

As a slave was branded with the initials of his owner, so was Paul. It was his pride to count himself the slave of Jesus, and to regard the scars which had eaten into his flesh as the brand-marks of his Master. Why should men try to deflect him from his course, when he was so absolutely implicated in the service of the one great Master, Christ?

The Service of Jesus. — It is founded in his blood, by which He purchased us to be his own; but it must be accepted by the glad consent of the will. We must awake each morning as his property, take his commands for the day, and lie down at night, only satisfied when He has said, Well done! We must own to ourselves that we have no personal rights, no locked rooms, no kind of reserve.

The Brand of Jesus. — The dislike which our religion engenders; the losses to which principle compels; the averted look, the distant manner on the part of those who could not make enough of us when we lived the life of the world — these are as much his brand,

the brand of his Cross, as the weals of recent scourgings on the apostle's flesh.

The Peace of Jesus. — "Let no man trouble me." My heart has cast her anchor; my soul her foundation; my life her aim. If He is satisfied, I am content, though the world is in arms. If He is with me, I have good company, though all forsake. The Master said, "Trouble her not." (**Meyer, F. B. Our Daily Homily**)

"Lord, as thy temple's portals close
Behind the outward-parting throng,
So shut my spirit in repose;
So bind it here, thy flock among:
The fickle wanderer else will stray
Back to the world's wide-parted way." W.E. Gladstone.

Devotionals by Theodore Epp
Strength for the Journey
Galatians

Galatians 1:1-10 DON'T MINIMIZE GOD'S GRACE!

The basic error the Apostle Paul was dealing with was the mingling of Law with grace. There are three grave errors that arise out of this.

First there is what we call "legalism." This is the teaching that people are saved by works or human effort. That, in this case, would include the keeping of the Law and observing the rituals and ceremonies found in the Old Testament covenant God made with Israel.

This same error is reflected today when someone claims to have done his best to keep the Ten Commandments. This to him is the way of salvation.

The second error that can undermine true faith in Jesus Christ is what we may call "false liberty."

The Christian is called unto liberty, but that liberty is defined for us in the Scriptures and not left to our imagination. Yet there are those who teach that because they are saved by grace, it makes no difference how they live or behave.

This Satanic error is answered in the Book of James. He wrote: "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (2:17). In other words, a faith that does not produce works is not real faith.

The third error is the one Paul deals with in his Letter to the Galatians. In fact, the error itself is often named "Galatianism." This false doctrine teaches that we are saved by grace but are kept saved by the Law.

In reality this makes salvation dependent on our works. Our works of righteousness are to be a supplement to our faith for ultimate salvation. One must endure to the end by keeping the works of the Law if he is going to be saved.

This is the error of Galatianism, the error that Paul combats in this brief letter.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

Galatians 1:11-17 The Response of Faith

Even though Abraham could not understand why God would command him to offer his son, he was not slow in responding.

Genesis 22:3 says, "And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him."

In Abraham's response there was no reluctance, no hesitation, no doubt, no staggering, no unbelief. Abraham did not delay. He did not endeavor to reason things out or spend time consulting with other people about the matter.

So also, when the Apostle Paul was called to preach the Gospel, he said, "Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood" (Gal. 1:16). This is important. There are occasions when no time should be taken to counsel with men.

God found ready faith in Abraham. Faith triumphed over natural affections, over reason, over self-will. God's grace found a ready

outlet through which it could manifest itself.

Might our faith be as Abraham's faith. As we yield our lives to the Lord, He will work in us "both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13). Then we will be able to say with the Apostle Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (4:13).

"For we walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7).

Galatians 2:1-10 THE MARKS OF A CHRISTIAN BY THEODORE EPP

Four marks of a Christian are set forth in the Book of Galatians.

First, a Christian is one who has the living Christ living in him. "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).

Second, a Christian is one who has the Holy Spirit within him, for in Galatians 4:6 we see, "And because ye are sons [if we are born again into His family], God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts."

He is the One who really begets us, or creates us anew, and makes us believers. He also creates in us the new character from which Christian conduct comes.

Christian conduct does not make a Christian, but a true Christian, one who is born of the Holy Spirit, will have Christian conduct as well.

In the third place, a Christian is one who has shared the cross experience with Christ as the basic solution of his personal problems. We all have come under this experience of the cross although we may not all have understood it.

The key text on this subject is "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (2:20). When Christ died, I died with Him, and when He arose, I arose with Him.

In the fourth place, the Christian is one who is possessed of a life that is so divine, so ideal, that it cannot be pushed into a mold of external regulations. We have a new life, a life from God, which is Christ Himself.

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves" (2 Cor. 13:5).

Galatians 2:11-21 DYING TO LIVE

The new life is life "in Christ." The word "in" does not in this connection speak of location, such as "in an automobile," but carries the idea of union.

We are in union with Christ. Through Him we are dead to the Law, having been identified with Him in His death and resurrection.

On the resurrection side of this experience we have His life. He has come to live in us. It is this that marks the real difference between the old life prior to our salvation and the new life now that we are saved.

It is necessary before the believer can enjoy victory in Christ for the power of the old life to be broken. This is accomplished through union with Christ in His crucifixion. This is not an experience that we must struggle to enter into now. It was accomplished for us in the past.

The King James Version is not clear on this point. The American Standard Version of 1901 will help us here. The expression "I am crucified with Christ" is translated in the ASV: "I have been crucified with Christ."

God got rid of the old self-life by crucifying it. We were separated from the old self-life when we died with Christ.

That this is a past transaction is clearly demonstrated from Romans 6. In verse 2 Paul says, "We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein?" (ASV).

In the third verse the apostle says, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" (KJV) Here the verbs are clearly in the past tense and describe the finished transaction.

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

Galatians 3:1-14 LAW, GRACE AND VICTORY

The Christian life is a "by faith" life not a "by Law" life. Paul makes a very strong statement at the end of Galatians 2 when he says,

"I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain" (v. 21).

If we could save ourselves and if we could live a righteous life by our own efforts, there was no purpose in Christ's dying in the first place. He might as well have stayed alive.

Many things were in vain if the Law was necessary for salvation. Not only was Christ's sacrifice unnecessary, but the sufferings of the Galatians because of their faith in Christ were also unnecessary if Judaism was the way of salvation (3:4).

Later on Paul said, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law" (5:4).

We do not downgrade the Law when we put it in the place God has put it. But we frustrate the grace of God if we try to substitute Law for grace.

When faith is given its proper place with grace, we find that a person is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law. The Law is not set aside by faith but is established.

The Law was never given to save people's souls, so whatever being "established" means, it is not that. The sinner establishes the Law by confessing his guilt and acknowledging he is justly condemned.

Furthermore, by Christ's assuming the sinner's place and enduring the penalty of the Law, He establishes the Law. The Law is righteous and condemns the sinner to death. When that death takes place, the Law is satisfied. Christ through His death, then, established the Law.

"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17).

Galatians 3:15-25 ADDED, NOT MIXED

The passage before us says that the Law "was added" (Gal. 3:19). It was added to something already existing. John the Baptist introduced our Lord to the public and said of Him, "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

The Law had a definite beginning. It began not with Adam but with Moses. There was not a God-given Law in all those 2500 years or more between Adam and Moses, but there was sin, and because there was sin there was death.

Adam had some very definite instructions from God as to what he was to do or not to do, and he disobeyed. For this he died.

But those who lived between Adam's day and the day of Moses died also, not because they had sinned exactly as Adam sinned but because they were sinners.

The Gospel is good news to all, past, present and future. But the Law was never good news. It was bad news. It was added to the good news, but it did not take the place of grace.

Neither was it mixed with grace. And it did not supplant grace. Grace was the good news, but the Law was not. The word translated "added" means "to place alongside of." The Law's being placed alongside of grace does not mean grace was removed.

This is wonderful to see, and yet it is all-important. Grace was there so that man could flee to it when the Law had done its work. When man saw himself condemned and cursed by the Law, he could turn to God's grace and find salvation.

"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Rom. 3:28).

Galatians 4:19-31 BORN FREE!

The lesson God has for us in Galatians 4:19-31 is that we cannot ever fulfill the commandments of God by our own human efforts. They can be kept only as we accept Christ as Saviour.

Then, through the indwelling Spirit, the life of Christ is fulfilled in us.

The bringing of Ishmael into the world was all of man's planning. God had nothing to do with it. That which is of the flesh displeases God, and He will not accept it.

Ishmael was a child born after the flesh; and since his mother was a slave, he, too, was a slave.

With Isaac it was entirely different. He was born of a freewoman. His coming into the world was due to God's work.

So the point made here is that we are considered through faith in Christ to be the brethren of Isaac. We are the children of promise, born through divine power and not through human effort.

There is a strong tendency on the part of those who insist that Law is necessary for salvation to persecute those who preach salvation by grace plus nothing. Those who insist on Law say that we who preach grace are making it easier for people to sin.

But this is not the case. Grace does not give people license to sin. It teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live soberly and righteously in this world. So even though opposition or even persecution comes, we should be ready to endure it.

But what is to be our attitude in this teaching of Law and grace? Are we to go along with the teachers of Law and say nothing?

The answer of Scripture is, "Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir to the son of the freewoman" (v. 30). The two will not mix. We are saved by grace. We are not in bondage to the Law. We cast it from us.

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1).

Galatians 4:22-26. RESULTS OF THE LACK OF FAITH

Genesis 16:6-16

After Hagar fled from Sarah's presence, before Ishmael was born, the angel of the Lord said to her, "Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren" (Ge 16:11,12).

The Arabs are the descendants of Ishmael, and this prophecy of international trouble is being fulfilled today.

The centuries-old conflict between the Arabs and the Jews had its beginning when Abraham tried to use the means of the flesh to produce a spiritual result.

Not only did Abraham's sin produce family and international trouble, but it also produced spiritual trouble. In the New Testament the Apostle Paul wrote of this trouble in Galatians 4:22-26.

When churches or believers leave the simplicity and liberty that is in Christ and return to the works of the flesh, there is nothing but bondage. When religious ceremonies or other activities are substituted for the work of the Holy Spirit, bondage results.

From this incident in Genesis we see the sad results of relying on the flesh to bring about spiritual results.

"And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief" (Matt. 13:58).

Galatians 5:1-7 THE LAW OF LIBERTY

The law of Christ is a law of liberty, a law of freedom made operative through the Spirit of God within us.

Nothing in our sin nature could produce a godly life. Indeed, it is opposed to righteousness. It is void of all power to do what pleases God.

Though we may know what the right standard of righteousness is because we have God's Law, we do not have in ourselves the ability to meet the Law's righteous demands. All the Law can do under such circumstances is to demand death as a penalty.

But since Jesus Christ paid the death penalty the Law required and has provided life and liberty, we are free to let Christ live His life in us. This is done through the working of the Holy Spirit.

Paul wrote in Romans 8:2: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

The word "law" does not refer to Old Testament Law but to a principle, a new method God has provided whereby the Holy Spirit produces the life of Christ in us. This is referred to in the Bible as the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2; 1 Cor. 9:21).

The Mosaic Law did not provide freedom from sin for us, nor could it produce righteousness in us because we were spiritually incapable of obeying it.

God, however, sent His own Son "in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). Christ judged, or dethroned, the power of sin and set us free so that it is possible for us to please God with lives of righteousness.

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2).

Galatians 5:13-26 CAST YOUR VOTE FOR VICTORY!

The flesh and the Holy Spirit are contrary one to the other. Their aims and purposes are diametrically opposed to each other. Each

one says no to the other. They checkmate each other.

This, of course, results in a stalemate for the Christian. This is why the apostle says, "Ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal. 5:17).

A mistake made by many of us Christians is that we try to gain victory over the flesh by our own will and efforts. But this is the same as pitting the flesh against the flesh.

We are trying to overcome the flesh by using the flesh. We might as well assign the Devil the task of conquering the Devil.

Someone has given the following as a solution to this problem: "The Lord has voted for me; the Devil has voted against me. Whichever way I vote, so goes the election."

If we determine to walk in the Spirit, we are casting our vote in the right way. This is the choice we must make if we are to overcome the lust of the flesh.

The way of deliverance, then, is to walk in the Spirit (v. 16). We are to be led by the Spirit (v. 18). And we are to live in the Spirit (v. 25).

If we give the Holy Spirit a free hand, if we let our lives be the practical day-by-day expression of His life in us, we will be victors.

"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Rom. 8:6).

Galatians 5:16-25 Galatians 4:30-31 Flesh and Spirit in Conflict

God did not refuse to bless Ishmael, but He caused Abraham to clearly understand that the covenant would be established with Isaac, who was not yet born.

Ishmael was not to be an heir with Isaac. The Scriptures build on this principle in showing that the flesh (Ishmael) cannot be heir with the Spirit (Isaac).

In the New Testament the Apostle Paul referred to Ishmael and Isaac and drew a parallel to Christians. Paul was emphasizing that the Christian is made mature through the freedom of the Spirit and not through the bondage of the Law.

He wrote: "Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free" (Gal. 4:30,31).

Paul continued the parallel in Galatians 5 when he said, "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (vv. 16,17).

In this same chapter Paul also wrote: "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (vv. 24,25).

"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not" (Rom. 7:18).

Galatians 5:16-26 Constant Grace

There are also many contrasts in the life of Abraham.

By faith he left his country; in unbelief he stopped short at Haran. By faith he entered the land; in unbelief he forsook it for Egypt.

By faith he returned to the land to sojourn; in unbelief he took Hagar to bear a child rather than waiting on God. By faith he rescued Lot; in unbelief he lied to Abimelech.

In Abraham we see the conflict of the two natures. The sin nature was constantly in conflict with the nature he had received from God.

This conflict of present-day believers is described in Galatians 5:16,17: "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."

Verses 24 and 25 of this same chapter tell us, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."

Like Abraham, we are frequently inconsistent. But God is calling so He might lead us through to triumph. The Lord referred to Himself as the God of Abraham, not because Abraham was always consistent, but because he allowed God to bring him through to victory.

God did not abandon His man, and in His mercy He will not abandon us. Grace is always at hand.

"God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (2 Cor. 9:8).

Galatians 5:16 Spirit-Controlled or Carnal?

Genesis 13:5-13 1 Corinthians 3:1-3

In considering the lives of Abraham and Lot, we see that Abraham's life was symbolic of the Spirit-controlled Christian, whereas Lot's life was symbolic of the carnal Christian.

Unconsecrated Christians who are living according to the flesh are referred to as "carnal" in the Scriptures (see 1 Cor. 3:1,3).

It is never recorded that Lot built an altar. He was not known for his communion with God. As a result, he got into trouble, just as any believer gets into trouble when he does not take time for daily fellowship with God.

I am not referring to a time when the entire family reads the Bible and prays together. This, too, is extremely important, but I am referring particularly to your personal time alone with God.

Perhaps you say you do not have enough time because you are too busy with life's activities. Anything that takes you away from this time of fellowship with God is sin.

Regardless of how much work you have to do, you can find some time to spend with God alone. As a believer, this is your number one prerogative.

The Devil will always see to it that we have little or no time to fellowship with God. But we can--and we must--make time for such fellowship. We must put first things first.

"Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16).

Galatians 5:17 Conflict is Inevitable

1 John 5:4 Genesis 21:9-21

After the birth of Isaac, the true nature of Ishmael was revealed. Nothing of his life is known before Isaac's birth.

Even this points out a significant truth for the believer. It is not until a person receives the new nature, through receiving Christ as Saviour, that he discovers the real character of his old nature.

The discovery is a painful one and even causes some to doubt their salvation as they see the struggle taking place in their lives. However, the very fact that there is conflict is proof of salvation.

There is no conflict when there is only the old nature. But when the new nature comes in to control the life, the old nature sets up an intense conflict.

Paul referred to this conflict when he said, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal. 5:17).

This is the condition that results when a person receives Christ as Saviour. He receives a new nature, which is in opposition to the old nature. There is conflict between the spirit of liberty and the spirit of bondage.

Even as in the case of Ishmael and Isaac, where one had to be expelled, the believer cannot yield to both natures but must choose the one he will obey.

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1John 5:4).

Galatians 5:22-23 Meekness: Strength Under Control

Numbers 12:3; Colossians 3:12 - Theodore Epp

In reviewing Isaac's life, we should also take special note of his spirit of meekness. All through his life his temperament was of a

passive nature rather than of an active or aggressive nature.

In childhood he was subjected to the insults of Ishmael, but there is no record that he became angry about them. As a young man he was taken to Mount Moriah to be offered as a sacrifice, and in meekness he surrendered and made himself available.

He did not even choose his own wife, as she was chosen for him through his father's arrangements and the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Isaac also accepted the rebuke of Abimelech in meekness. There were no reprisals. He and his men yielded whenever they were wrongly driven away from the wells they had dug.

Isaac's meek spirit brought forth praise from even his enemies. They testified concerning his great power and might and their realization that the Lord was with him.

The world thinks little of meekness, yet it is the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:23). The Apostle Paul urged all Christians: "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand" (Phil. 4:5).

Meekness involves the self-sacrifice of our own desires and interests. Because Isaac gladly gave up his own personal desires, it pleased God to refer to Himself as "the God of Isaac."

"For thus saith the Lord God,... In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength" (Isa. 30:15).

Galatians 6:1 RESTORING A BROTHER

Genesis 14:10-16

What should be our attitude when a brother is taken captive by the things of this world?

Some have a distorted concept of separation. When they see a brother fall into sin, they shout it from the housetops and publish it in their magazines. This is not what Christ instructed.

Galatians 6 tells us what our attitude should be toward a fallen Christian brother. The Apostle Paul exhorted, "Brethren, if any person is overtaken in misconduct or sin of any sort, you who are spiritual [who are responsive to and controlled by the Spirit] should set him right and restore and reinstate him, without any sense of superiority and with all gentleness, keeping an attentive eye on yourself, lest you should be tempted also" (v. 1, Amplified).

When Abraham realized what had happened to Lot, he became very bold. "When Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan. And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus" (Gen. 14:14,15).

God rewarded his courage because Abraham "brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people" (v. 16).

"If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one" (Gal. 6:1).

Galatians 6:7 Sowing and Reaping

2 Samuel 12:1-10

David's harshness and lack of pity were due to his being out of touch with God. No wonder he failed to remember the judgment prescribed by the Law. At this point the Holy Spirit gave Nathan boldness to say to David, "Thou art the man" (2 Sam. 12:7).

Through Nathan, the Lord reminded David of His sovereign choice of David, of His protection of him through the years of Saul's bitter enmity, of his elevation to the throne and of the abundance of God's provision for him. In spite of God's mercies, David had despised God's commandment. God hid nothing from His servant. David was forced to face his sin.

Nathan's message to David not only reminded him of God's tender mercy, love, abundant gifts and honor but also warned David that, because he had sinned, he would reap a harvest of sorrow. "Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife" (v. 10).

The Lord made it very plain in the New Testament that believers cannot escape reaping the kind of harvest they sow. We cannot hide our sin; we will not get away with it. The secrets of the night are not hidden from God.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7).

Galatians 6:8 The Effects of Selfishness

Genesis 27:30-37

Isaac is suddenly awakened to his failure to heed God's plan.

When Isaac learned that the last son to appear to him was actually Esau, he "trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed" (Gen. 27:33).

The key to Isaac's faith is that after he realized what he had done, he emphasized that the blessing would remain Jacob's--"and he shall be blessed."

Although we can never thwart God's plan, we can reap bitter results by sowing to the flesh. God's Word says that "he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption" (Gal. 6:8).

Although Isaac did not upset the plan of God, he reaped serious results from what he had sown. Jacob had to flee from home as a result of his conniving. Rebekah never saw Jacob again because she died before he returned.

Even though Isaac lived another 43 years after the incident of the blessing, nothing else is recorded about him except his death. After sending Jacob away, Isaac disappeared from the biblical scene.

About 30 years later Jacob saw his father again, but his mother had already died. The entire family was affected because they had sown to the flesh. They had sought their selfish desires rather than seeking to please God.

"In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves" (2 Tim. 3:1,2).

Galatians 6:11-18 Boasting That Brings Blessing!

It is remarkable to realize that the crucifixion is a way of life, not just a way of death. Christ's crucifixion was not the end of His redemptive work, for He arose from the grave and provided us with the resurrection life.

Romans 6:7 says, "But he that is dead [has died] is freed from sin." This means that the person who has died is free from the claims, power, slavery and allurements of sin.

The basis for Paul's glorying is the cross of Christ. The Judaizers had sought their own glory, but this led only to failure. The kind of self-life they lived through imposing rules and regulations ended in accomplishments that produced self-glory.

But all of these self-accomplishments were reached in the sphere of the flesh nature and therefore ended in pride.

This has always been a danger facing Christians, and it is no less today. There is too much Christian life and testimony on a fleshly level.

Paul's boast and joy and delight was in the One whom the world had crucified. God set His hand of approval on His Son, who was crucified, by raising Him from the dead.

What is your boast today?

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

Galatians 6: 16-23 FLESH AND SPIRIT IN CONFLICT

Jacob and Esau were the sons of Isaac and Rebekah. These two sons represent the conflict of the flesh and the Spirit. Esau represents that which is natural, whereas Jacob represents that which is spiritual.

The conflict between the natural and the spiritual is present in every believer's heart. It is the conflict of the two natures.

The Scriptures say, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal. 5:17).

However, believers are encouraged to realize that, because of the greatness of God, the Spirit will ultimately triumph and the flesh will be brought into subjection.

In Esau we see the profane nature that despises the riches and promises of God. In Jacob we see the desire for that which is godly, even though he used fleshly (carnal) methods to attain the benefit of the promises.

Jacob's life was one of conflict. In him we see the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit. This is the key to understanding his life. Jacob's life strikingly exhibits the power of the old nature, but it also exhibits the power of God's love and grace.

In Jacob we see the utter worthlessness and depravity of the human nature, but we also see the deepest instruction as to God's purpose and infinite grace.

"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25).