

False Prophecies, “Works of Law,” & Justification I

How the deception of this world’s Christianity compares to the Truth of God

Fred R. Coulter—January 7, 2017

Greetings, brethren! Welcome to Sabbath services.

- we’re living in a world of over-information
- we’re living in a world of confusion
- we’re living in a world where everyone does what is right in their own eyes

That can be good, if it’s done properly to use free moral agency *to know and understand God, to choose His way*. God has given every one of us independent free moral agency (IFMA). Constantly every day we have choices to make. We have things set before us. We have to understand truth from error, right from wrong.

How is it that we are able to protect ourselves, or be on guard against false prophets? Jesus told us the very first warning He gave His apostles was to beware:

Matthew 24:4: “...‘Be on guard, so that no one deceives you. For many shall come in My name, saying, “I am the Christ”; and they shall deceive many” (vs 4-5).

That’s the very first thing He told them when they wanted to know when the end of the age would come. Then He went on to explain all the things in Matt. 24, and the key thing toward the end-time to watch for is when they actually begin building the temple. When that happens, know that the end is near.

He also told us, v 24: “For there shall arise false Christs... [saying they are the Christ] ...and false prophets, and they shall present... [or show] ...great signs and wonders... [miracles] ...**in order to deceive, if possible, even the elect.**”

- What is your protection?
- What do we need to do?
- How will God respond to us?

Those many false prophets will come saying many good things, even quoting Scripture. You have to ask:

- How can we identify them?
- What is our protection?

First of all, the easiest category is other gods and other religions. We can dismiss them. The next one is Christianity. There are many brands of Christianity in the world, even among Sabbath-keepers. What is it that we do? What is our protection, because we must prove all things? Isa. 8

tells us ‘to the Law and to the Prophets. If they do not speak according to this word, it’s because there is no light in them.’ So, that’s one way.

Paul tells us to prove all things and hold fast to that which is good. Let’s see something else that comes along in the end-time. Acts 20—we’re also confronted with this today. This is the one that we have to be more careful for than anything else. We already covered about Jews and Judaism, Messianic Jews, etc. Here we find what the Apostle Paul said. We’ve also seen this; we’ve also gone through this.

- How many start out but fall by the wayside?
- How many say good and right things, only later to change it?

Paul was on his way to Jerusalem. He called for the elders of the church of Ephesus down to meet him in Miletus. So, Paul told them:

Acts 20:25: “And now behold, I know that you all, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the Kingdom of God, will see my face no more; wherefore, I testify to you on this day that I am pure from the blood of all, for I have not held back from preaching to you all the counsel of God” (vs 25-27). First protection!

- Do the Law and the Prophets agree with the words of God?
- Do they teach all or do they teach part?

That’s very important to understand, because as we saw in #7 *Christ and Our Calling: TROL: Truth, Repentance, Obedience and Love*, we need to discern between the Spirit of Truth—which is the Word of God—and the spirit of deception, or error.

Notice the warning here from the Apostle Paul and then we will see what Peter said about this. Verse 28: “Take heed therefore to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood.”

Very important: Every minister, elder, and deacon, and everyone in the Church, needs to know that we have been

- purchased through the blood of Jesus Christ
- purchased out of the debt of sin toward God
- bought back from Satan the devil

That is a tremendous thing we need to understand and realize. Let’s see what the Apostle Paul said. After he had been there, he taught them everything like that.

Verse 29: “For I know this: that after my departure grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.” We’ve seen that too, haven’t we? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 30: “And from among your own selves men will rise up speaking perverse things... [We’ll see what perverse things are] ...to draw away disciples after themselves.” (v 30).

Notice what Paul commanded the elders to do. This is what every minister and elder needs to do every day, because all thoughts are not good thoughts, and all thoughts are not from God. As we will see, we’ve got to be strong in the Lord. That’s important to really grasp.

Verse 31: “Watch, therefore, remembering that *for* three years I ceased not to admonish each one night and day with tears. And now I commit you, brethren, to God and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified” (vs 31-32).

- How do we do that?
- What is the first thing that we need to do?

Watch out for twisting and turning and perverting the Word of God!

What happens when a minister of God, supposedly, goes bad or seeks his own brand, separate from the Word of God?

Peter had all the Epistles of Paul; 2-Peter 3:14: “For this reason, beloved, since you are anticipating these things, be diligent... [you have to be zealous, diligent] ...so that you may be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless.”

This is what we need to chose every day. This is why study and prayer. So, in proving things—to the Law and the Prophets—study and prayer, as well as keeping the commandments of God.

Verse 15: “And bear in mind that the long-suffering of our Lord *is* salvation, exactly as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has also written to you; as *he has* also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them concerning these things; in which are some things *that are* difficult to understand, which the ignorant and unstable are twisting *and* distorting, as **they also twist and distort the rest of the Scriptures to their own destruction**” (vs 15-16).

We’ve covered some Scriptures that they’ve twisted and distorted, but we’re going to look at some more today. We need to understand:

- What is it that we need to do?
- What is it that we need to have,?
- What is it that we need to keep in mind?
- What is the way that we do it?

We look to the Word of God. That tells us.

Verse 17: “Therefore, beloved, since you know this in advance, be on guard against *such practices*, lest you be led astray with the error of the lawless ones, *and* you fall from your own steadfastness.”

We’ve seen that too. Yes, can some of them repent and come back? *Of course!* But these are the things that we need to be practicing every day. Now this is speaking of difficult Scriptures, this is one of the reasons why we have Appendix Z: Paul’s Difficult Scriptures, in the *Faithful Version Bible*, explaining of Paul’s difficult to understand Scriptures. They are easily twisted and turned! People especially do not understand where there are mistranslations. They do not understand Judaism and the way that it operates. So, they can be easily led astray.

Here is the thing we need to be doing constantly, v 18: “Rather, be growing in *the* grace and *the* knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* glory both now and into *the* day of eternity. Amen.”

The Apostle John reveals another very interesting truth. 1-John 4:1: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

What is this telling us? When there are false teachings—though they may sound nice and sweet and good, though they may even read some Scriptures—what if they’re twisting and turning like the Apostle Peter said? Here’s what we are to do: ***not believe until you have proved and proved by testing!*** How do you test? *You use the Word of God and compare what they say with the Truth!*

Verse 2: “By this *test* you *can* know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in *the* flesh is from God. And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. And this is the *spirit* of antichrist, which you heard *was* to come, and even now it is already in the world. You are of God, little children, and have overcome them because greater is He Who *is* in you than the one who *is* in the world” (vs 2-4). It has to be the Word of God!

Verse 6: “We are of God; the one who knows God listens to us...” You have to know God. How do you know God? First and greatest commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your soul, with all your being.

1. **with all your heart** means that you do not let your emotions get carried away on something that someone says, trying to take you away from God.

People are too emotionally led today!

2. **with all your mind** means you study and you learn and you know and you understand the Word of God.

You *think* and you use your free moral agency to constantly be growing in grace and knowledge. When you *think* the Scriptures of God, with His Spirit helping you to think, then you can see where the false prophets are wrong, even if they give you a sign or a wonder.

Verse 5: “They are of the world; because of this, they speak of the world, and the world listens to them.”

This also verifies what Jesus said. Jesus said, ‘Enter in at the narrow gate, the straight gate. For narrow is the way and difficult is the way that leads to life. But broad is the way and easy is the way that leads to death and **many** are those who go in that way.’ So, keep all those things in mind.

Verse 6: “We are of God; the one who knows God listens to us; the one who is not of God does not listen to us. By this *means*... [a test] ...we know the Spirit of the Truth and the spirit of the deception.”

The Spirit of the Truth begins with God, His Word, His commandments, His Sabbath, His Holy Days, and how we can grow in grace and knowledge to fulfill our destiny to become the sons and daughters of God. All of that comes together. That’s why we are to do it this way.

Let’s see what Titus says. Here’s the instruction to Titus, who is a minister. This is instruction for all ministers. We need to watch ourselves and we need to discipline ourselves. We need to repent, change and grow on a day-to-day basis, all the time, just like everybody else.

Titus 1:7: “For it is obligatory that as God’s steward an overseer be blameless...” What is a steward? We work for someone—in this case God, we are working for God—and what are we to do? *A steward is to increase for his master!* It’s not his own.

Just like Paul wrote to them in Acts 20, that God has made the elders overseers to see that everything is done in order, not overlords, and not overbearing, but to teach. Everyone has to learn to love God and to run their own lives exactly as God has shown in their own way, in their own circumstances, that are in accordance with loving God and keeping His commandments. That’s what we’re to teach.

- we are to watch ourselves
- we are to guard the flock
- we are to guard the Word of God
- we are to teach the Word of God
- we are to stand for the Word of God
- we are to properly interpret the Word of God

“...be blameless, not self-willed... [that’s when trouble begins] ...not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not a bully, not greedy for material gain; But hospitable, a lover of good, sound-minded, just, Holy, self-controlled, **holding steadfastly**... [never wavering] ...**to the faithful Word**...” (vs 7-9).

That’s what we have. That’s why we call this Bible a *Faithful* translation, because it conveys from the Hebrew in the Old Testament, and Greek in the New Testament, the proper translation that it needs to be and making sure that it is correct.

Notice why, v 9: “...so that he may be able both encourage with sound doctrine... [help brethren grow in grace, knowledge, Truth and understanding] ...and to convict those who are gainsayers.” Convict them that their ways are wrong.

Verse 10: “For there are many rebellious, and vain talkers and deceivers, especially those from *the* circumcision party... [bringing in a Judaism] ...whose mouths must be stopped; who are subverting whole households, teaching things which *they* ought not, for the sake of selfish gain” (vs 10-11).

What happens here? *We need to be alert to these things that they don’t come upon us!* Let’s see why there are so many versions of Christianity in the world, because everyone is doing his own thing.

2-Timothy 3:1: “Know this also, that in *the* last days perilous times shall come; for men will be lovers of self...” (vs 1-2).

Stop and think. What is one of the first things that happens when someone starts going astray? *They get all involved in ‘me, myself, and I.’* Remember what happened to Solomon. You couldn’t have started out any better, but think about it. Why did Solomon go astray? *The secret is found in the book of Ecclesiastes, chapters one and two!* He began to take to himself credit for what God gave him. You go back and read ~~the second chapter~~ Ecc. 2: 1, 1, 1. Is that not lover of self? Promoting self as

some great one? Isn't that what Simon Magus did? Was he a false prophet? *Yes, indeed!*

How about Eliamus bar Jesus, the Jewish false prophet? *Sorcerer!* They begin promoting themselves instead of God the Father and Jesus Christ.

“...lovers of money, braggarts, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, savage, despisers of those who are good, betrayers, reckless, egotistical, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God” (vs 2-4).

If you love God with all your heart, mind, soul, all your being, and your neighbor as yourself, and the brethren as Christ loves us, and even our enemies, then we avoid this pitfall and do not become self-serving. What we just read here is what we see in the world and what is happening everywhere.

Verse 13: “But wicked men and imposters shall become worse and worse, deceiving *others* and being deceived *themselves*. But *as for* you, continue in the things that you did learn and were assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*” (vs 13-14). Then he says *the Scriptures*.

Here's another way. Remember this, *all Scripture agrees with itself when properly understood!* You can't have misinterpretations because that's exactly how those false ministers who left the Churches of God do, as well as Protestant ministers.

We've read 2-Tim. 4 before, but we need to read it here into the record so we know. After telling Timothy that every Word of God is God-breathed (2-Tim 3:16), then he says:

2-Timothy 4:1: “I charge you...” All of us who are elders and ministers need to take this. This is a charge from Paul, from Jesus Christ. Listen carefully to what it says:

Verse 1: “I charge you, therefore, in the sight of God, even the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is ready to judge *the* living and *the* dead at His appearing and His kingdom: **Preach the Word!**....” (vs 1-2). That's what we are to preach!

If you examine Rev. 2 and 3, and the seven churches there, what was the problem with these churches in one saying? *They left off preaching the Word and got into themselves and false doctrines!*

Verse 2: “Preach the Word! Be urgent in season and out of season; convict, rebuke, encourage, with all patience and doctrine. For there shall come a time when they will not tolerate sound doctrine ...” (vs 2-3).

We've gone through that, and that's repeated over and over again. So, when there come along false prophets that do miracles and signs and wonders, and they say this has to be of God, you have to *look at what they do*. Jesus said you'll know them by their fruits.

Also, all the brethren need to be careful. This is why we all need to study and pray. We all need to keep learning and growing in grace and knowledge. That's what it means when Peter said, ‘But grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.’ How do you do that?

- by study
- by prayer
- by life
- by choices
- by everything that we do

But look at this. We've seen this fulfilled, too; v 3: “For there shall come a time when they will not tolerate sound doctrine; but according to their own lusts...”

Remember what is in Rom. 7. What starts all sin? *Lust!* What does the commandment say? *You shall not covet!* Think about that; that means you shall not go against the Word of God for things and ideas that are not in accord with what the Bible teaches us.

That's why Paul said he didn't understand the commandments. He was a leading rabbi and he didn't understand the spirit of it. He didn't understand how the carnal mind really, really works and the depths of its own self-deception. Then Paul said, ‘When the commandment came to me, then I understood.’

“...they shall accumulate to themselves *a great number of* teachers, having ears itching *to hear what satisfies their cravings*; and they shall turn away their own ears from the Truth; and they shall be turned aside unto myths. But *as for* you, be vigilant ... [Peter said to be on guard] ...in all things, endure hardships, do *the* work of an evangelist; fully carry out your ministry” (vs 3-5).

Tremendous things we need to understand so that we are not ensnared into a clever-sounding satanic trap. Some of the doctrines of Protestantism, in fact nearly all of them, are clever-sounding traps. They read part of the Scriptures and then draw conclusions. They misinterpret the Bible or use bad translations.

Let's review very quickly Rom. 1-7. I'm not going to get into too many detailed Scriptures here, but we need to see the flow of it so then we can understand more in Galatians.

- Rom. 1 shows the condition of the world in rejecting God and how God abandons them to their own lusts and it comes into self-destruction.
- Rom. 2—God gives repentance as well as judgment. When there’s repentance, you must start keeping the Law.
- Rom. 3 talks about justification by faith in the sacrifice and shed blood of Jesus Christ.

Big thing to remember here, most important to understand, which is this. ***Nothing***:

- no work
- no thought
- no idea
- no whatever
- no law

except the Law of God, but that comes after repentance! There has to be repentance for sin.

- no law of ritual
- no law of man

That’s why all Catholics are deceived, if they are told by their priest, ‘You do so many hundreds of Hail, Mary, and so many Our Fathers, and your sins are forgiven.’ *No man can forgive sin!*

- no work
- no man
- nothing

but the sacrifice and shed blood of Jesus Christ, and your complete repentance and acceptance of that shed blood can bring you justification to God!

- Rom. 4 shows how we are to continue walking in the truth.

The end part of Rom. 3 says after our sins have been forgiven, we establish law because when we repent and stop sinning, we are to walk in the way of God, *in newness of life*.

- Rom. 5 shows the sacrifice of Christ
- Rom. 6 shows the covenant of baptism

Christ died, shed His blood, now then in order to be part of the New Covenant, you must bring your sacrifice, *which is water baptism*. Paul speaks of that as dying, because we have been conjoined to the death of Jesus Christ. So therefore, we are not under grace in our relationship with God.

Before that, ‘under law’ means *everyone who is not baptized and have the Holy Spirit is under law, under judgment. The law rules over a man and woman as long as they live!*

- Rom. 7—when repentance comes and *we’re under grace*, we are now to keep the commandments of God in the Spirit

Not in the letter, *but in the Spirit*. We are to have them written in our heart and in our mind. That is how we change, grow and overcome. We still have to fight against sin, as Rom. 7 shows us.

Gal. 1 becomes very profound in speaking about false doctrines and false prophets, wrong teachings, assumptions that are not true and in particularly Judaism.

The first part becomes very important, because if someone comes along and they’re self-centered, self-willed, and they are not yielded to God to teach the Word of God, or any member in how they live, and so forth... This is why Gal. 1 and 2 is so important.

I want you to listen carefully to these words and I want you to let them sink deep into your heart and mind.

Galatians 1:6: “I am astonished that you are so quickly being turned away from Him Who called you into *the* grace of Christ, to a different gospel”

Everything about Catholicism and Protestantism is *a different gospel*. There are some Protestants who are for Jesus, but the question is, will they repent and really get on His side, rather than wanting Christ to come on their side. Likewise in the Churches of God. That’s why you need to understand about the churches in Rev. 7. Look at all the pitfalls and things. Everything that took place there was because of the teachings of men, a different gospel.

Verse 7: “Which *in reality* is not another *Gospel*; but there are some who are troubling you and are desiring to pervert the Gospel of Christ.”

Put in your own ideas. ‘I think this, I think that, I think the other.’ That should be substituted with ‘the Word of God says this, the Word of God says that, the Word of God says the other.’

This is why I have the cowbell for speculation. When we’re trying to think something through that we don’t know, and come to how the Word of God defines it for us, we can’t put in our own ideas and force them to work, because it’s not of the Word and the Spirit of God. That’s why I have the cowbell. It’s not absolute doctrine.

Notice how important it is to stick with the Word of God, v 8: “But if we, or even an angel from heaven, should preach a gospel to you *that* is contrary to what we have preached, LET HIM BE ACCURSED!” Notice, *an angel*.

1-Kings 13—this is important to understand. This is when a prophet of God was sent by God from Judah to warn Jeroboam_[transcriber’s correction] that his establishment of the new state religion of Baalism in

the ten northern tribes was contrary to the will of God and that he needed to repent. Jeroboam acted as a high priest himself.

1-Kings 13:1: “And behold, a man of God came out of Judah by the Word of the Lord, to Bethel. And Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. And he cried against the altar by the Word of the Lord... [notice how he conducted himself] ...and said, ‘O, altar, altar, thus says the LORD. “Behold, a son shall be born to the house of David, Josiah by name, and upon you he shall offer the priests of the high places who burn incense upon you, and men’s bones shall be burned upon you.” And he gave a sign the same day, saying, ‘This *is* the sign which the LORD has spoken. “Behold, the altar shall be torn apart, and the ashes that *are* upon it shall be poured out.” Then it came to pass when King Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God who had cried against the altar in Bethel, he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, ‘Lay hold on him!’ And his hand, which he put forth against him withered up so that he could not pull it in again to himself. The altar also was split asunder...” (vs 4-5).

Verse 6: “And the man of God prayed to the LORD, and the king’s hand was restored to him again and became as at the beginning.”

Did Jeroboam learn a single thing from that? *No!* Look at the self-centeredness that Jeroboam had. Verse 9 shows you how important it is to always stay with the Word of God, regardless of what anyone may say. This means you must understand the Word of God and rightly so, so that your stand will be true.

Verse 9: “For so was it commanded me by the Word of the Lord, saying, ‘Eat no bread nor drink water, nor return again by the same way that you came.’” That was in answer to, after healing the king, ‘Come and eat.’

(go to the next track)

Verse 10: “Then he went another way... [as God told him] ...and did not return by the way he came to Bethel. And a certain old prophet was living in Bethel...” (vs 10-11). This is interesting, because this man claims to be a prophet of the Lord, just like there are many ministers who claim they are ministers of Jesus Christ. Let’s see what happened:

“...and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel. The words, which he had spoken to the king they also told to their father. And their father said to them, ‘Where *is* this *man*? What way did he go?’ For his sons had seen what way the man of God had gone, who came from Judah. And he said to his sons, ‘Saddle me the donkey.’ And they saddled the donkey for him, and he rode on it, and went after the

man of God, and found him sitting under an oak. And he said to him, ‘*Are* you the man of God who came from Judah?’ And he said, ‘*I am.*’ And he said to him, ‘Come home with me and eat bread.’ And he said, ‘I may not return with you nor go in with you, nor will I eat bread or drink water with you in this place” (vs 11-16). He knew the instruction of God. This becomes important because notice what he did:

Verse 17: “‘For a word was *given* to me by the Word of the Lord, “You shall eat no bread nor drink water there, nor return again by the way that you came.”’ And he said to him... [the old prophet] ...‘*I am* a prophet also as you are. And an angel spoke to me by the Word of the Lord, saying, “Bring him back with you into your house, so that he may eat bread and drink water.”’ But he lied to him” (vs 17-18).

How many people have gone astray who have been in the Church of God because those who claim to be ministers or prophets of God lied to them? That’s going on right today.

To make a long story short, he went back with him. He ate, and then so God sent a lion to kill him, didn’t eat him, because he disobeyed God. That’s why Paul says here, let’s read this again:

Galatians 1:8: “But if we, or even an angel from heaven, should preach a gospel to you *that* is contrary to what we have preached, LET HIM BE ACCURSED!” That means cut off from God first. If there is no repentance, then that means ultimately the Lake of Fire.

Verse 9: “As we have said before, I also now say again. If anyone is preaching a gospel contrary to what you have received, LET HIM BE ACCURSED!”

Here’s why and this is the dedication that we all need to have toward God. All elders and ministers need to have in their mind toward their stewardship and responsibility with the Church and with the brethren.

Verse 10: “Now then, am I striving to please men, or God? Or am I motivated to please men? For if I am yet pleasing men, I would not be a servant of Christ.”

Think of that! You don’t do things and preach things to please people. That is political, that is wrong, that is against the Gospel, that is against God. Doesn’t matter who it is. Remember our Church experience in the past. Everything I’ve talked about in this sermon also came in, in degrees, some in greater degrees than others. What did God do to that Church? *Scattered it!*

Remember about Peter: he was the first one to go to a Gentile: Cornelius. He said, ‘I see that

God is no respecter of persons and that even those who are Gentiles, who do righteousness, God accepts. He stayed and ate with them, and so forth. All of those things were against the ‘works of law’ of Judaism.

Peter said, ‘You know that it is not lawful for a Jew to come into one of another nation to visit with, to associate with them, to talk with them, or any of those things.’ So, he knew better. But Peter had a political streak and it came out here.

Galatians 2:11: “But when Peter came to Antioch, I withstood him to *his* face because he was to be condemned.” This was a public act that Peter was doing.

This is here in the Bible to always have a reminder and safeguard against Judaism and their practices, and should never be admitted in the Churches of God. That means no phylacteries, no prayer cloths, no 15th Passover, no washing of hands, no separating yourself; because Peter reverted back and what he was doing was sinning and sinning his own conscience and sinning what he was shown by God directly concerning the Gentiles. So, Paul withstood him to the face because he was to be condemned.

Verse 12: “For before certain *ones* came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles.... [just like he did with Cornelius and all those in his household] ...However, when they came, he drew back and separated himself *from the Gentiles*, being afraid of those of *the* circumcision party.”

Here is the truth of the matter: In Jerusalem they still adhered to too many of the commandments of Judaism. They had a circumcision party, which was that the Gospel was for them and not for the Gentiles.

The Gentiles could come, like it was with the synagogue. If they would be circumcised they could sit over here in this part of the synagogue. ‘But all of us mighty uplifted Jews, we get to sit right up front in the synagogue. But you Gentiles stay in your place.’ That’s what Peter was doing here, being afraid of the circumcision party, *political*.

Verse 13: “And the rest of *the* Jews joined him in *this* hypocritical act...” *If Peter’s going to do it, we better do it too.* You see how people are led astray and how they get themselves in trouble.

“...insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy” (v 13). That’s something!

This was going to wreak havoc in the Churches of God from that time forward, all the way down to today, if that would have been allowed to

stand. Same way today; *we cannot allow Jewish traditional practices to become part of our way of worshiping God, and part of our way of fellowshiping together!* That’s the heart and core of it here. Many people are being assaulted today with Messianic Judaism.

But Paul writes, v 14: “But when I saw that they did not walk uprightly according to the Truth of the Gospel... [the very Truth which Peter was the first one to have it revealed to him in Acts 10] ...I said to Peter in the presence of them all...”

This was a mighty confrontation. You can imagine, here’s the Gentiles sitting over here and here are the circumcision party and the Jews and Peter and Barnabas over here. Paul walks in and he says to Peter in the presence of them all:

“...‘If you, being a Jew, are living like the Gentiles... [eating with them, not following the laws of Judaism] ...and not according to Judaism... [this had nothing to do with the law of God] ...why do you compel the Gentiles to Judaize?’” (v 14). *Why do you make them obey the laws of Judaism?*

Verse 15: “We who are Jews by nature—and not sinners of *the* Gentiles—knowing that a man is not justified by works of law...” (vs 15-16).

There it is again. Bad translation in the *King James Version*. They translate it ‘*the* works of *the* law.’ The two definite articles ‘*the*’ are not there in the Greek. This is a direct reference to a work of law of Judaism to seek to make themselves right with God ‘because we are better and we can’t associate with these Gentiles.’

This had nothing to do with the laws or commandments of God. Therefore, the translators who put the definite articles there regardless of the translation are giving a mistranslation and misleading people into believing that the Law has been abolished. That’s what was going on here.

Verse 16: “Knowing that a man is not justified by works of law...” No, it doesn’t bring you into right standing with God. What it does, it makes you sin against God and sin against other people. How is that loving the brethren as Jesus said, ‘As I love you’? *It’s not!*

“...but through *the* faith of Jesus Christ...” (v 16). Justifying only comes through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and His shed blood. It’s for Jew and Gentile, all who repent. So, you see how heinous a thing this was that Peter was doing, and he should have known better.

“...but through *the* faith of Jesus Christ...” In the Greek it is *Jesus’ very own faith*. That means if you receive the Spirit of God, which you do, if you receive the Spirit of the Father and Christ, and

They are dwelling in you—which they should be and are—then that makes you justified before God, not separating yourself to eat food by yourself.

And condemn the Gentiles and think, ‘We’re better than they are. After all, we’re Jews.’ God says they’re not better than anybody else, because *all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*. In fact, God says that all the world is under law and judgment of God by law, so that the whole world may become guilty before God.’

The only way to be in right standing with God is through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the forgiveness of sins. We’re to ask God to forgive us every day. That’s what we found out in Rom. 7. We are to keep the laws of God, yes. Where are they to be kept? Starting right in our minds, written in our heart and in our minds, and the love of God written in our hearts, written in our actions, written in our thoughts. I hope you understand how absolutely just devastating that this was.

“...we also have believed in Christ Jesus in order that we might be justified by *the* faith of Christ...” (v 16). Why is it the sacrifice of Christ? *His faith!*

- Did He believe the Father? *Yes!*
- Did They have an agreement? *Yes!*

It was that He would voluntarily lay down His life for the sacrifice for the sins of all mankind. So, it is His faith in His act of being crucified that He gives that to you *as a gift IF* you repent. There is an initial repentance before baptism, but there is continual repentance (1-John 1). When we sin we still need to repent.

“...justified by *the* faith of Christ, and not by works of law...” (v 16)—to separate yourself, to wash your hands, to wash your feet the way that the Jews did. Foot-washing for Passover is what Christ commanded. That’s not in there.

Everything that they have contrived as traditions or oral law, separate from the Bible—Old Testament and New Testament—any work that is done there is null and void and cannot put you in right standing with God.

“...not by works of law... [again the translators put ‘*the* works of *the* law’—incorrect] ...because by works of law shall no flesh be justified” (v 16). Because by doing that you are trying to replace the sacrifice of Christ and His whole work of coming to this earth and preaching the Gospel, and being offered as the sacrifice for the sins of the world. You’re trying to replace that with *your own works*.

Think about that in relationship to what the Catholics call the Eucharist, the sacrifice of the

Mass. Jesus never commanded that. That is a counterfeit. That comes straight out of Egypt and straight out of Babylon, and straight out of Rome. You must have *the works of faith*. What Peter was doing was diametrically opposite of faith.

Here comes the circumcision party from Jerusalem. Peter is eating with the Gentiles. What should Peter have done? Instead of saying, ‘Oh, they’ve come from James. I don’t want to get on the wrong side of James, the half brother of Jesus. I better eat separately.’

No, Peter should have said, ‘Hey, guys, remember I went to Cornelius. What did God reveal and teach us with that episode? Wasn’t it that God is no respecter of persons? These are all brethren with the Spirit of God. Let’s all sit down together and let’s enjoy the feast meal that we have here together without all of the carnal self-serving, self-centered arrogant uplifting religious laws of Judaism.’ Or we can say today, of Catholicism, or we could say of any other religion today.

Today we’re confronted with a problem of a ‘work of law’ that the radical Islamists do and that is to go out and kill people. They think they’re going to go to heaven. Just wait until the resurrection and they’re all going to be raised up. They’re going to say, ‘Where are the 72 virgins?’ Going to tell that was a lie. *What am I doing here?*

‘Jesus Christ has raised you from the dead because you were so deceived in serving Satan the devil and killing other people that you ignorantly thought you were doing service to God that He’s now going to offer you repentance. So now, that which you hated in your first life, you’re going to have to learn to love.’ That will be something!

Verse 16: “...because by works of law shall no flesh... [Jew or Gentile] ...be justified”—because only the sacrifice of Christ can do that, *nothing else!*

Verse 17: “Now then, if we are seeking to be justified in Christ, *and* we ourselves are found to be sinners, *is* Christ then *the* minister of sin? MAY IT NEVER BE!”

Here’s the lesson. You cannot take a humanly devised practice and put Christ’s name on it and say He approves of it. Why? *Because you’re trying make Him a servant of sin.*

All of you Sunday-keepers out there, listen up!

- Is that not what you are trying to do with Sunday-keeping?
- Is that not what you are trying to do with holiday-keeping?
- Is that not exactly what you are doing? *Yes!*

Therefore, you’re living in sin and your assumption that you are under grace is null and void. **Your understanding of grace is contrary to the Word of God**, because grace never gave anyone any freedom to sin, to do away with the Law of God, to misconstrue and misinterpret and twist and turn the Scriptures to your own selfish carnal satisfaction. “...MAY IT NEVER BE!”

Verse 18: “For if I build again those things that I destroyed...” When Paul repented, he repented of all the laws of Judaism. If he starts building that again, like Peter and the Jews were:

“...I am making myself a transgressor...” (v 18)—rather than making Christ the minister of sin. No one can make Him a minister of sin.

- think of that with Sunday-keeping
- think of that with holiday keeping
- think of that with the sacrifice of the Mass
- think of that with the ‘Lord’s Supper’

Do you even have a clue concerning what the Christian Passover really, really is? I don’t think the Protestants and Catholics realize how far they are from God in actual fact.

Verse 19: “For I through law... [wages of sin is death] ...die to *works of law*...” What does that mean? That doesn’t mean that you are free to transgress the commandments of God. He died to the traditional ‘works of law.’ He no longer did it because it was sin:

“...in order that I may live to God” (v 19). How do you live to God? What did Jesus say? *‘Man shall live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.’* Since Christ was God manifested in the flesh, every word that He preached. That’s why Paul died. How did he die? *Through water baptism!* Water baptism conjoins you to the death of Christ, because Christ died for your sins.

So again, to the Protestants, pray tell, why is it that you no longer baptize? Just a profession of belief in an emotional setting does not forgive a single sin unto eternal life. It is complete burial in water, emersion. You die! You are buried! *It’s a symbolic death!* That’s what Paul is talking about here.

Verse 19: “...for I through law died to *works of law*...” Forsook all the traditions of men. But he also wrote that we are to have the laws and commandments of God written in our mind and in our heart.

“...in order that I may live to God. I have been crucified with Christ... [through the operation of baptism] ...yet, I live.... [because he came up out of the watery grave] ...*Indeed*, it is no longer I; but Christ lives in me...” (vs 19-20).

That’s the whole thrust and purpose of Christianity. That’s the whole operation of grace on a day-to-day basis: **Christ living in us with His Spirit, helping us to grow in grace and knowledge and overcome and learn the Word of God and live by the words of Jesus Christ, the words of God!** There’s the difference.

“...For *the life* that I am now living in *the* flesh, I live by faith—that *very faith* of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me” (v 20).

When you repent, God takes that fantastic sacrifice of Jesus Christ and applies it to each one of us personally. It’s not like confession in a booth and it’s sort of a rub-a-dub thing between the priest and the confessor, and go do this work of law and you’re forgiven. No, repentance comes on your knees, with tears, with crying, with seeing that sin has killed and crucified Jesus Christ. That’s what it’s all about! There is nothing, *nothing*, **nothing** that can substitute for that. Nothing else can forgive sin; no other way. Doesn’t matter what they say or do.

“...Who loved me and gave Himself for me” (v 20). You need to understand God loves you; the Father loves you. All of these things are fantastically important. You need to understand it.

You have to understand what Paul was dealing with in Gal. 1 and 2. Gal. 3 is also important. So many people, especially Protestants, what do they do? They take new converts in and they get right into the book of Galatians.

- they know nothing about the Bible
- they know nothing about the traditions of Judaism
- they know nothing about ‘works of law’
- they know nothing about the correct translation of it

They give the appearance that if you just believe in Christ, you are no longer ‘under law,’ and you can just do anything that you can do and you won’t be sinning and everything will be fine with God. *Not so!* That is the spirit of deception, as we read in 1-John 4.

What happens when you revert to doing things of men and traditions of men?

Verse 21: “I do not nullify the grace of God... [that’s what you do if you do it] ...for **if** righteousness is through *works of law*, **then Christ died in vain.**”

Think on that! Now you know why Jesus said, ‘When the Son of man returns, will He find the true faith on the earth?’ **Will there really, really be enough people:**

- who believe Him?
- who love Him?
- who have dedicated their lives through repentance and baptism to live by every Word of God?
- How many will there really, really be?

This is why this is so mightily important.

So, Paul had to put up with this. We’re going to see in Gal. 3 and 4 that what God has called us into is so far above any religion. Religion in the world is really not worshiping God. It’s to conform to a certain set of standards which may have some things that come from God, but mostly it’s just men’s devising to try and make themselves better, try to appear to be really good and Christian.

The house they are building is on sand and not on the Rock, Who is Christ. Their house that they are building may on the outside look just beautiful, wonderful, attractive, but when you open the door to go in you realize that this is just a counterfeit front, like it’s straight out of Hollywood. The beautiful building on the street, but you open the door and it’s only a front for the movie. Behind it is nothing. That’s exactly what Christianity in this world is today when you really come to understand it, how it compares with the Truth of God.

A little caveat: Because they follow some of the precepts of the Bible, they actually do some good things. But those good things then are ‘works of law,’ that have nothing to do with the true Jesus Christ and the true sacrifice that He gave.

It’s important that we understand these and know how to detect the false prophets!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Matthew 24:4-5, 24
- 2) Acts 20:25-32
- 3) 2-Peter 3:14-18
- 4) 1-John 4:1-4, 6, 5-6
- 5) Titus 1:7-11
- 6) 2-Timothy 3:1-4, 13-14
- 7) 2-Timothy 4:1-5
- 8) Galatians 1:6-8
- 9) 1-Kings 13:1-6, 9-18
- 10) Galatians 1:8-10
- 11) Galatians 2:11-21

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Isaiah 8
- Ecclesiastes 1; 2
- 2-Timothy 3:16
- Revelation 2; 3
- Romans 1-7
- Revelation 7

- Acts 10
- 1-John 1
- Galatians 3; 4

Also referenced:

Sermon Series: *Christ & Our Calling: TROL: Truth, Repentance, Obedience, Truth*

Sermons:

- Overview of Romans 1-6 (Special Services)
- Meanings of “Law” in Romans 7 (Special Services)

From *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order*:
Appendix Z: Paul’s Difficult Scriptures to Understand

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