

THIS IS THE *TRUE* GRACE OF GOD

(Part I)

“By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand” (1 Peter 5.12)

This is the first of a two-part study of grace.

The main aim of this section is to consider grace in its relation to justification.

The intention in Part II is to consider grace in its relation to sanctification, based on a detailed study of the much misused and misunderstood words, *ye are not under the Law but under grace* (Romans 6.14).

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(PART I)

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FOREWORD

This work was born of a desire to proclaim the freedom in God's grace that I have personally experienced.

To feel the Holy Ghost exercise His ministry of Comforter after suffering the anguish of satanic accusation is a joy indeed. Having seen so many others undergo this same anguish, I have long desired to share with my fellow pilgrims the inexpressible sweetness of the ministry of the Spirit of adoption. I am so thankful that God is a living God. I wish this to be experienced by others, and for the enemy's tactics to burden hearts under the weight of his accusations to be defeated.

In many ways this booklet is a sequel and a companion to my earlier study, "The Power of the Blood". But in the present volume I have desired to go much further than simply showing how to overcome the evil one's tactics. I desire most earnestly to magnify the Lord to His proper place in modern-day evangelistic ministry. I yearn to see God-centredness restored to Gospel preaching, with man taking his proper place before the Almighty. So I have particularly sought to emphasise the place of the Law in reducing man to a speechless silence in order to put grace in its proper context. I hope thereby to emphasise the greatness of our salvation, by showing how grace, far from being opposed to the holy standards of the Law, actually enables us to live a Life impossible of ourselves.

Oh, precious blood! Oh, manifold grace!

This study is not geared to the popular market. I have sought God's guidance at each stage, not wishing just to add to the abundance of existing Christian literature. His direction is that it be aimed at those prepared to study His Word carefully, and who are very sensitive to the rare jewel they possess in this most blessed Book. I particularly hope it will help and inspire those who minister the precious Word and hope their preaching may be enriched thereby.

I sincerely acknowledge my debt to the Lord in this work. He has repeatedly encouraged me when my spirits have been low, and has assured me of that which ultimately is the only thing that matters: that it has been His desire that I write this. I am very grateful to be allowed to be used in the service of my God and to comfort those who mean so much to Him.

I also wish to thank those of my friends who love His Word. It is the knowledge of this love that has been a constant inspiration for me to write. I speak sincerely and not artificially when I say that I hope these words are of help to you. I shall grieve if they fail you, and rejoice if they strengthen you. My desire is to give you the best I can receive from our Lord. Your love for His Word and your fellowship in the Spirit is my comfort and reward. My brethren, I long to hear your voices cry with the full freedom of grace, and to hear you preach to others that true grace of God which humbles then exalts the sinner.

Finally acknowledgements must go to my late wife, Carol, for her unstinting and heartfelt assistance in the arduous task of preparing the initial typescript. Her keenness to help was a constant cheer.

INTRODUCTION

(a) It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace

One of the grandest themes of the whole Bible is the grace of God. It has been the inspiration and joy of countless saints throughout the ages, and given rise to some of the finest compositions in our hymnbooks.

The word *grace* means, “an undeserved kindness bestowed upon someone, an unearned and undeserved favour”. The Greek word for grace is *charis*.

An indication of the major importance of this doctrine can be gauged from the fact that *grace* appears 129 times as the uniform translation of *charis* in the New Testament.

This word *charis* is allied directly with the Greek word *charisma* which means “a gift of grace; a favour which one receives without any merit of his own”. In the AV this is usually translated *gift* or *free gift*, although on 17 occasions it is translated *grace*. (Ro 1:11; 5:15—16; 6:23; 11:29; 12:6; 1 Cor 1:7; 7:7; 12:4, 9, 28, 30, 31; 2 Cor 1:11; 1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6; 1 P 4:10).

A further indication of the importance of grace is seen in how it pervades and is absolutely basic to all of Paul’s letters. With the sole exception of the opening of the epistle to the Hebrew Christians, every one of his epistles both opens and closes with a prayer for grace for the readers. This is no mere formality, nor is it simply Paul’s way of saying “Dear Sir” or “Yours faithfully”. His words are highly significant.

In his epistles to the Romans and Galatians he especially develops this theme. Like the subject of the blood of Jesus Christ, grace is not a topic for the amusement of theologians and students with nothing better to occupy their minds. It is something of very great practical importance and power in the daily life of all who confess Christ. Many Christians do not enjoy the deep fellowship they could or should with their Father because they are unsure within their hearts of their standing before Him. This standing is based on grace.

It is not only our initial salvation which is by grace (Eph 2:8; Ti 3:7). The whole basis of our continuing daily relationship with God is also founded on this same grace. Grace is not a once-and-for-all thing. It is a continuing need. It is imperative not only to understand this mentally, but also to learn how to make effective practical use of the grace of God in our daily lives as we seek to follow after Him.

Unless we learn this, we shall fall into the same error and bondage as the Galatians. They sought to receive the Holy Spirit and also to be made perfect (i.e. sanctified) by attempting to keep God’s standards by their own efforts, instead of relying on grace (Gal 3:1—5). This can only ever lead to inner bondage, because it is not possible for the human heart from its own resources alone to perform that which is good (Ro 7:18—23; Gal 5:17), even if it wants to. The sincere heart living under such a condemnation will only find itself more and more entangled and depressed as it tries all the more desperately to please God the more it becomes aware of its shortcomings. The only escape from this vicious circle lies in throwing ourselves completely upon His grace.

To show the importance of throwing ourselves on God's grace, let us look at some Scriptures stressing our need to seek grace:

- **Hebrews 4:15—16** In time of temptation and deep consciousness of our weaknesses and liability to sin's assault, we are exhorted to come to the throne of grace to obtain grace. Normally it is precisely at such times that we feel least worthy to come to God's throne. The deep realisation that this is a throne of grace, and that it is for grace (and not for our just desserts) that we come should, however, give us a humble confidence.
- **James 4:6a** If the difficulty becomes greater, so does the undeserved help.
- **2 Corinthians 12:9** Our sufficiency lies in His grace, and that alone. We must not in any circumstances place our confidence in anything but God's undeserved and unmerited grace. If we leave that ground we shall fall.
- **1 Peter 4:10** God's grace is manifold, i.e. extremely diverse. This comes from a word meaning "many-coloured, intricate, resourceful to meet any occasion or any emergency". In other words, there is no situation that the grace of God cannot rise to, no circumstance with which it cannot cope. Truly His grace is sufficient.
- **2 Peter 3:18** The term "grow in grace" does not mean primarily what it is commonly thought to mean: to deepen the Spiritual life by reading the Word, prayer, evangelism etc. It means exactly what it says: grow in grace i.e. grow and mature into a progressively fuller understanding of the free unmerited mercy of God. We are not only saved by grace; all through life we are to progressively grow in grace.
- **2 Timothy 2:1** It is important not only to know about grace, but also to strengthen and fortify our hearts by it. This is because one of the evil one's chief tactics is to cause us to believe that our relationship with the Lord is based upon how much we have measured up to, or come short of, the standard He expects of us. Since we invariably fall short of that holy standard we seek to live unto, then unless a proper understanding of God's free grace strengthens our heart, we will fall into continual inner condemnation.
- **Hebrews 13: 9** The Hebrew Christians had particular difficulty in readjusting to Paul's teaching of grace. They were overmuch preoccupied with their grounds of approach to God being dependent on their keeping of the Law. Many Christians, though not perhaps in exactly the same way as these Hebrews, are similarly troubled by their coming short of God's holy standards. To avoid leaving ourselves open for the accuser of the brethren, it is a good thing for the heart to be established with, and strengthened by, grace.

In conclusion, I hope I have made abundantly clear the importance of the doctrine of grace in the New Testament, and the stress laid therein for Christians to establish and firmly ground themselves in this truth, both with respect to their initial salvation and also their subsequent growth.

Having laid this foundation, let us now consider how grace is utterly basic to man's relationship with God, and why this is so. I then wish to show how man, once he has thoroughly accepted grace and its implications as the only basis of all his dealings with God,

can withstand the evil accuser of the brethren in full humble confidence.

In short, my aims are:

1. to glorify God by vindicating His absolute sovereignty over man, and
2. to establish man on his intended sure foundation before God, humbled by the thorough realisation and acknowledgement of his true state, yet emboldened by the revelation of God's unmerited, but sure, love towards him.

As I consider the full scope of grace and all it embraces I can only feel a helpless sense of awesome wonder at the greatness of our God:

*O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
how unsearchable are His judgements, and His ways past finding out!
For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor?
Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?
For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things:
to Whom be glory for ever. Amen
(Romans 11:33—36)*

*Oh come.... Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.
(Psalm 95:1,6)*

(b) Interpreting Spiritual truths to those who possess the Spirit

The Bible says:

The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received.... the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.... The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are Spiritually discerned. But he that is Spiritual judgeth all things.... for....we have the mind of Christ (1 Cor 2:11-12,14—16).

This cannot be stressed sufficiently. Even the educated and learned mind cannot grasp Spiritual things in its own power. It does not possess the necessary faculties.

I do hope this is properly understood. From observation and experience I suspect that even though some more learned believers to agree with this because they cannot very well deny Scripture, there can be, at the same time, a feeling of inner resentment against it, together with an attitude of quietly determined self-confidence.

To such the Scripture says:

Be not wise in your own conceits. Mind not high things but condescend... (Ro 12:16)

Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks himself to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise. (1 Cor 3:18).

On the other hand, let not the less intelligent (naturally speaking) make this a pretext for remaining ignorant of the Word. Ignorance is no more a qualification for Spiritual understanding than knowledge. Both alike stand in need of the Spirit of wisdom and revelation. I say this because there is sometimes a trend to glory in ignorance. *In understanding be men* (1 Cor 14:20)

In short it is not the learned, nor the unlearned, who understand. It is those who are Spiritual. That does not mean a religious or well-read and theologically informed man, but one who is able to know the Spirit's mind and thoughts, receiving them in living faith, and acting in obedience to that mind. As it is written:

As many as are led by the Spirit... they are the sons of God (Ro 8:14); and

It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall be all taught of God'. Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh to me. (Jn 6:45).

Incidentally, do not confuse 'spiritual' with 'religious'. For example:

- The term 'spiritual' man, is not equivalent to 'believer'. It means quite literally what it says: a Spiritual man, i.e. a man of the Spirit, who knows the Spirit's mind and direct leadings (see e.g. Gal 6:1; 1 Cor 3:1; 14:37).
- 'Spiritual songs' means not 'Christian music' but songs given by the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:19; Gal 3:16); and
- 'Spiritually minded' (Ro 8:6), does not mean those who *think about* Christian matters, but those who *know* what the mind of the Holy Spirit is.

How is this relevant to the theme of grace?

In this way. Like any other truth, the doctrine of grace must be understood by the inner teaching of the Holy Ghost (cp 1 Jn 2:20,27). In other words, by revelation. When the unspiritual mind tampers with Spiritual things, it can never properly understand them. Indeed, as we have just seen, Scripture says they cannot know them. It is not just that they *will* not, but they simply do not have ability to grasp Spiritual matters.

As a result, the doctrine of grace was misunderstood early in the Church's history (and still is) by the unspiritual. It was also opposed by evil men inspired by seducing spirits who taught doctrines of demons (1 Tim 4:1). Consequently two major false ideas spread rapidly, taking grace erroneously to one or other of two extremes: Judaism and antinomianism.

- Judaism stressed the necessity of keeping the Law of Moses, thus robbing grace of its power as undeserved free mercy wholly unrelated to works of righteousness.
- Antinomianism taught that it was not necessary to worry unduly about sinning since there was always free pardon available. Indeed, so evil was this blasphemous doctrine that its adherents went so far as to say the more we sin, the more God's grace would be magnified by showing how forgiving He was. Thus were the blessed sanctifying effects of grace robbed and liberty was turned into a pretext for licence.

To expose these great evils (and also their modern-day significance and counterparts) and to show that priceless jewel of grace in all its original perfection, we must embark on a detailed study of the relationship between the Law and grace.

Though it cannot be lightly skimmed over, it will richly reward those willing to obey God and *give attendance to reading...to doctrine* (1 Tim 4:13). Could it be said of you that, *When for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk and not of strong meat* (Heb 5:12)?

In doing so, however, we must remember the introduction to this section. Seek the Lord for His light, praying with depth and meaning, *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy Law* (Ps 119:18). Truly, only *In Thy light we shall see light* (Ps 36:9).

GRACE AND THE LAW IN JUSTIFICATION

a) *Desiring to be teachers of the Law*

In this section I wish to:

- examine the conflict between the doctrine of grace and those who sought to enforce the necessity of observing the Law for salvation.
- consider Paul's attitude to those whose weak conscience still tied them to some degree to the Law because of their lack of faith.

Having established that the works of the Law can play no part in our justification, in the following section I wish to show the real purpose of God in the Law.

Early church conflicts over circumcision and the Law of Moses may at times seem far removed from daily experience. But the underlying principles involved most certainly are not.

There lies within the heart of man that which longs to find within its own resources something of which to boast, and in which to place its hope for self-justification. It is a pride that will not acknowledge its need of help.

The Jews used the Law to bolster this pride (Ro 2:17—20). God's intention, however, was very different. The Law was to be the means whereby all self-confidence was destroyed. Grace can only effectively operate in acknowledged human weakness. The Law was intended to bring man to recognise and admit this weakness.

The first converts of the early church were primarily people - whether Jews or Gentile proselytes - who were well grounded in the Law of Moses. On the day of Pentecost the converts were all followers of the Jewish faith (Acts 2:5). As the Word increased, a great number of Jewish priests were converted (Acts 6:7).

Even after the first persecution over Stephen scattered many believers far from Judea, they only preached to the Jews and Grecians, or Hellenists, (i.e. Greek-speaking and foreign-born Jews) (Acts 8:1—4; 11:19—20). Even the Ethiopian eunuch was already a Jewish proselyte.

Although Philip extended the field somewhat into Samaria, it was only after the conversion of Saul (Acts 9:15) and the vision given to Peter (Acts 11:18), that the church began to grasp the full world-wide significance of the Lord's last commission before His ascension (Acts 1:8b). Henceforth the Gentiles were to hear the word as well as the Jews.

Owing to the initial strong Jewish influence on the church however, a crisis arose very early on over the new Gentile believers' attitude to the Law of Moses.

As a result a special gathering took place at Jerusalem (Acts 15:1—29). Believers from the sect of the Pharisees (vv 1, 5) had been going from Judea to newly formed Gentile churches teaching that circumcision and observance of the Law of Moses were essential to salvation. Their words had troubled the believers, unsettling their minds and throwing them into confusion (v 24). Gone was their first confidence in Christ alone.

After much discussion, Peter recounted how in the household of Cornelius God had purified the Gentiles' hearts by faith alone. Salvation is only through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was foolish to ask Gentile disciples to bear a yoke (obedience to the Law) which the Jews themselves had been unable to carry (vv 7-11).

In his summing-up, James recommended, with the agreement of the others, that the Gentiles be not troubled. A letter was to be circulated to the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia putting them at rest. The only request was that they abstain from certain practices (vv 19-29).

Even this request was intended not so much a condition of salvation, as to avoid undue harm to the weaker consciences of Jews who, despite their new-found faith in Christ, had still not been able to totally free themselves from the need to observe Moses' Law (cp v 21: *FOR Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him...*).

Despite the clear decision of the Jerusalem Council, many genuine Jewish Christians continued to feel conscience-bound to the Law to a greater or lesser degree, even though trusting in Christ for salvation.

An indication of the extent of the continued zeal for the Law of many of the Jewish believers is seen in the account of Paul's visit to Jerusalem (Acts 21:17—26). We are told, *how many thousands of Jews there are which believe and they are all zealous of the law* (v 20). Even Paul himself was asked to demonstrate publicly that he was not teaching the Jews of the Dispersion to forsake Moses, but that he walked in observance of the Law (vv 21—24).

Despite making allowances for Jewish prejudice, however, the church at Jerusalem held by the decision of the earlier gathering that Gentile believers need observe no such things, other than those specified (v 25).

Here we have an example of Paul's statement: *unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the Law, as under the Law, that I might gain them that are under the Law* (1 Cor 9:20).

This is why he had Timothy circumcised before taking him on his journeys (Acts 16:3). It in no way contradicted his statement in Galatians 5:2: *If ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing*. Paul's motive was not to earn merit before God, for salvation or anything else. (*Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, Gal 5:6; 6:15*). It was purely to remove any future hindrance to his winning the Jews for Christ. As his custom was to minister in the synagogues, and as it was an abomination for the circumcised Jews to eat with the uncircumcised, his ability to win them would have been severely impaired. When, however, faced with those who sought to enforce Titus' circumcision as necessary for salvation, he resisted them strongly, that the Truth of the Gospel might stand: *by grace...through faith...not of works* (Gal 2:3—5).

A further instructive example of the Christian's relationship to the Law is found in Romans 14. This concerns those whose conscience bound them to observe the Mosaic feasts and laws of clean and unclean foods, and those who felt no such constraint (vv 1—6). Both were to receive one another. There is no doubt, however, in Paul's mind, which is correct. The former is weak in faith. In other words the motive of such a one's observance of the Law is because he has not found full confidence in the totality and all-sufficiency of the work of Christ apart from all works of the Law. Having been so long taught the Jewish reverence for the Law, there were yet inner scruples over ceasing to observe it, and trusting wholly in Christ.

The significance of Romans 14, then, is similar to that of Paul's attitude to circumcision, and the Jerusalem decree of Acts 15.

There is no obligation to keep the Law in order to be saved. If some believers chose to continue in various of its precepts, as did many of the Jewish believers, their sensibilities were to be recognised by the Gentiles who had no such Mosaic background.

It was acknowledged, however, that such precepts contributed nothing to our salvation,. This is by grace, through faith alone. It was further recognised that those who still felt conscience-bound to the Law, whilst trusting in Christ for their salvation, were yet weak in faith. Observance of the Law indicated a failure to fully cast themselves on unmerited grace.

When he speaks of *doubtful disputations* (Ro 14:1) Paul does not mean that there is any uncertainty over which view is correct. He means that those who are strong in faith should not dispute with the weak over their doubts and scruples as to the eating of unclean foods and the observance of Jewish feasts.

Despite Paul's clear teaching, however, and the decision of the Jerusalem assembly ratified by the Holy Ghost (Acts 15:28), there were those, usually called Judaizers, who wilfully continued to spread false doctrines concerning the Christian's relationship to the Law. Wherever the true Word went, the spirit of error sent his agents. The latter did not oppose from without, but worked from within: *false brethren secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ* (Gal 2:4). These enemy agents, whose object was to hamstring the power of grace, were a constant source of peril to Paul (2 Cor 11:26b).

Initially the chief effect of the Judaizers was on the brethren in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia (modern-day Syria and S E Turkey) (Acts 15:23). When Paul went on his second missionary journey, however, he found it necessary to bring to the new churches in Galatia (central Turkey) the decision of the Jerusalem gathering (Acts 16:4). Later still it is evident that the attempt to bind the Gentile believers back to the Law, taking them from under grace, was spreading. Paul sent Timothy to Ephesus (in western Turkey), among other things to counter the doctrines of those who sought to teach the Law, whilst not understanding its true significance for the believer (1 Tim 1:3—11). Titus was likewise sent to Crete (Ti 1:9—16). From Paul's letter to the Philippians, it can be seen that this error had spread from the Near East into mainland Europe (Phil 3:2—3).

In order to gain a full understanding of the significance of the conflict between the revelation of grace to Paul, and the stress laid by the circumcision party on the necessity to observe the Law, it is necessary to read thoroughly the letter to the Galatians. From it we see the serious inroads of this false teaching and the Galatians' deception by it. (Gal 1:6; 3:1; 4:11—21; 5:7—12; 6:11—13).

So great was the influence of the circumcision party that even Peter, the apostle of the circumcision, was affected when he visited Antioch.

- **Gal 2:11—13** His blameworthy conduct. A Jew would not eat with an unclean Gentile (Jn 18:28; 11:2—3). But God had shown Peter there was now no difference between Jew and Gentile (Acts 10:28). He had acted on this, and now ate with Gentiles. The influence of the circumcision party (cp Acts 15:1,5), was so great, however, that even Peter, and the other Jews after his example, had ceased to mix with the Gentiles for fear of the former's opinions.

- **2:14** Peter's inconsistent action publicly repudiated so that the implications and application of grace may not be lost through the fear of men.
- **2:15—16** The renewed emphasis. Even Jews, who are not sinners like the Gentiles, had to be justified by faith in Christ, exactly like the Gentiles. Possession of the Law did not justify them. Jews (who possessed the Law) had to come in exactly the same way as the Gentiles who were without the Law.

It is very important to catch the full force of Paul's attitude to these "false brethren" and their teaching. I suspect there is not a sufficient grasp of the fundamental importance of grace in our every dealing with God - whether in justification, sanctification or any other realm. It is vital to perceive the underlying spirit of the conflict between an improper use of the Law and grace. It is much more than an irrelevant early church doctrinal controversy. The Holy Spirit in Paul was so antagonistic to this error as to utter a solemn curse on its propagators (Gal 1:6—9). No wonder Paul called them "dogs" (Phil 3:2 i.e. abominable to God (Dt 23:18)) So they were!

The reason for this strong antagonism is that the root of grace is the humbling of man and the exaltation of God to His true place. Grace is the essential¹ basis of all our dealing with God, To approach Him on the basis of law is to lay claim to a self-achieved righteousness. The power of the Gospel of Christ, however, is the unveiling of the righteousness of God when man has reached the end of his own resources. As it is written: *The Lord our Righteousness* (Jer 23:6).

b) Wherefore then serveth the Law?

So far, we have considered the attempt to rob grace of its power on the one extreme by an improper emphasis on the importance of the Law. It has been established, however, that *a man is not justified by the works of the Law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ., .for by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified* (Gal 2:16; cp Ro 3:20).

Later we shall consider how the effectiveness of grace can likewise be nullified at the opposite extreme by an unscriptural disregard of the holy standards represented by the Law.

For the present, however, my objective is to explain the true nature of the Law and God's purpose in it.

Let us first consider its nature.

It must be emphasised from the start that contrary to much thinking there is nothing wrong or defective about the Law.

- **1 Tim 1:8** *we know that the Law is **good***
- **Ro 7:12** *the Law is **holy**, and the commandment **holy, just and good***
- **Ro 7:14** *the Law is **Spiritual***

Furthermore, there is no conflict between the purposes of the Law and those of the promises of God in Christ. (The difference lies not in the purposes but in the means of attaining those

purposes. The Law is based on works; the promises are received by grace through faith). Both Law and promises were designed to bring Life, and all that implies (cp Lev 18:5; Gal 3:21b); i.e. to be made partakers of the very Life of Christ. This is salvation (cp Ro 5:10b).

- **Gal 3:21a** *Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not.*
- **Ro 7:10a** *The original design and intent of the commandment was to give Life.*

I particularly wish to emphasise these two points. The Law is Spiritual. Both it and grace (as experienced through faith in the free promises of God) have the same objective. It is very important to understand this. There is today a trend to regard the Law as inferior, and to think of Law and grace as being at cross-purposes.

This is because of a misunderstanding of the significance of Paul's repeated contrasts between the Law on the one hand, and grace, faith and the Spirit on the other; between the old and the new covenants. But Paul argues that the defectiveness of the Law does not lie in any shortcoming in its own inherent nature or purpose. It lies in the weakness of those for whom it was given.

- **Ro 8:3** *What the Law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh...*
- **Ro 7:14** *We know that the Law is Spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.*

The Law itself then is good and Spiritual. It was designed to bring Life. In theory it could have brought the same blessings as the promises. But in practice it was hamstrung through sin in the flesh of those for whose benefit it was given.

- **Gal 3:21** *If there had been a law given which could have given Life, verily righteousness should have been by the Law.*

The Law could not give Life, however, because of the incapacity of carnal man, sold under sin, to observe those precepts which potentially would have given Life. (Lev 18:5).

We are now able to understand the true meaning of a verse such as *the letter killeth but the Spirit giveth life* (2 Cor 3:6). The current warped view of the Law is often such as to suggest that the existence of a set written moral standard is in itself harmful. This is not so.

The point of Paul's argument in 2 Corinthians is not the contrast between a prescribed moral code compared with being led by the Spirit. It is that the commandment would give Life **if kept** - but if not, it prescribes death. Since man's innate carnality prevented his keeping the commandment, then the very thing which could have brought him Life in effect had to condemn him to death. Paul fully develops this theme in Romans 7:7—14.

In view of the old Law's inability to give Life to man, God annulled it, and introduced the new covenant, based on faith in God's promise, and not the observance of the Law.

- **Heb 7:18—19** *There is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. FOR the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by the which we draw nigh to God. The Law was weak (not of itself but through the flesh: Ro 8:3), unprofitable (it could not bring Life: Gal 3:21) and made nothing perfect.*

- **Gal 4:9—10** The term weak and beggarly elements does not mean worldly pleasures (as will be shown later) but an elementary form of religion, in this case, the Jew's religion. Paul's meaning is that the Galatians are foolish to seek to place themselves under the Law again as it is both lacking in strength ("weak"), and destitute of wealth and influence, helpless and powerless to accomplish its end and bringing no rich endowment of Spiritual treasure ("beggarly").

It must be strongly emphasised that the annulment of the Law did not imply the abandonment of its holy standards. We have already seen how the initial purpose of the Law (to give Life) was never invalidated but a better covenant was brought in to achieve this same end. And the purpose of this same better, new covenant was to enable the fulfilment of the standard of the old. The old covenant laid down the perfect standard; the new covenant gave the Life to fulfil it. The old Law could not make perfect; the new law of Christ could.

(A fuller study of the relationship between the Law and sanctification must await Part II. For the present my objective is only to show the purpose of the Law in justification.)

Before continuing, let us review our progress to date. We have seen the nature and theoretical purpose of the Law. Owing to its inability to achieve this purpose (to give Life) it was abrogated and a new covenant enacted which was able achieve this object.

Despite this, the Law still has a major role to play in our justification. An all-wise God, whose first thought is perfect, certainly did not need to devise an alternative to achieve what His first plan failed to do. No, the Law did. not fail in its purpose.

1. Its true ultimate purpose was not to justify us, but to lead us to the place where we might obtain justification.
2. To achieve this, however, it had first to bring us to see our dire need.

Let us now examine how these two things are achieved.

Firstly, conviction of sin, when we realise our dire need:

- **1 John 3:4** *Sin is the transgression of the Law.* In other words, the Law identifies the nature of sin.
- **Ro 3:20b** *By the Law is the knowledge of sin.*
- **Ro 4:15** *Where no Law is there is no transgression.*
- **1 Tim 1:7-9** *The Law is not made for the righteous but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners.*

The Law not only clearly defines the nature of sin. It also reveals the extent of our own sinfulness.

This is achieved by observing the reaction of the heart to the Law's precepts. Previously dormant sin is actually stirred into life by the latter. The astonishing effect of hearing the commandments, which were designed to bring Life, is thus to awaken sin and death. Thus the malignity of indwelling sin is exposed. Until then, all may have seemed well.

- **Ro 7:7—10** *I had not known sin, but by the Law: for I had not known lust except the law had said 'thou shalt not covet'. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the Law, sin was dead: For I was alive without the Law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment which was ordained to Life I found to be unto death.*
- **Ro 7:13b** ... *in order that, through the commandment (i. e. the Law) sin might be shown up clearly to be sin, that the extreme malignity and immeasurable sinfulness of sin might plainly appear. (Amplified)*

A careful study of Romans 7:7-14 will confirm God's purpose in using the Law to reveal the depths of the degradation of our own inner being. As shown earlier, the Law was not given to justify from sin, but to expose it, and thereby to reduce every man to a contrite acknowledgement of his need before God.

- **Ro 3:19—20** *We know that whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

Let us now look at the second part of the Law's mission in our justification. Having reduced man to self-despair, the Law is then able to lead us to grace and the place where we may obtain justification. Though seemingly diametrically opposed to grace, the Law is the very means designed to throw man onto grace.

Let us see how by a detailed analysis of Galatians 3:19—25.

- **Gal 3:19** *The law ... was added because of transgressions: [not to check them (for it had no power to do so), nor to justify from them, but to bring them into clearer view; to expose sin for what it really is, and to cause conviction. It was only an interim measure] until the Seed should come...*
- **3:21—22a** The Law (which is of works) and the promises (which are of faith through grace) are not at cross purposes. Both were designed to bring Life. The Law was unable to achieve this, however, since the Life it promised was conditional upon the keeping of its precepts. Indeed, instead of bringing Life, it has in fact concluded all under sin. Some alternative translations of v.22a are:
 - *consigned all without exception to the custody of sin (Moffatt)*
 - *makes all men guilty of sin (Norlie)*
 - *has all men imprisoned for their sins because they are found guilty by the Law (Phillips)*
 - *But the Scripture pictures all men as sinners, shut up and imprisoned by sin (Amplified)*
- **3:22b** All this had a definite goal in view : *THAT the promise... might be given...* Here is the key to God's using the Law to stop every mouth. It is to drive men in self-despair on to Christ alone. No longer can they trust in their own efforts. They are driven on to God's free promise, which implies they see no help in themselves; since it is given, as opposed to a duly earned reward (cp Ro 4:4; 11:6). Being driven onto accepting a free gift of grace is equivalent to acknowledging all hope of self-righteousness is lost. *That every mouth must be stopped and all the world may become guilty before God.*

- **3:23** The Law again shown to be an interim measure (...**unto the faith**...). We were guarded by it, kept in custody in preparation for the faith to be revealed (Amp). This is the effect of the “shutting up” of v.22, cutting off every avenue of escape in seeking some form of self confidence, till the only hope lies in grace, and a total confession of helplessness and incapacity to find any other means of justification.
- **3:24** We have now arrived at the chief aim of the law - to be a schoolmaster (= tutor, pedagogue, servant entrusted with the upbringing of a son) to bring to Christ, that through confidence in Him alone we should seek justification. By concluding all under sin, and keeping them in custody under it, the law undercuts every escape route apart from a humbling request for free mercy and grace, offered through trusting in the sole merit of Christ.

So we see the true intent of the law in justification. Though unable to justify itself, it plays an essential role in bringing men to the only place of justification and righteousness before God.

A glance at one more verse should suffice to conclude this point.

- **Ro 5:20a** *The law entered that the offence might abound.* Literally, “entered” means “came in sideways, incidentally, or parenthetically”. In other words, the Law was not the mainstream of God’s purpose; it was “added” (cp Gal 3:19) as a subordinate means to bring men to the prime means: Christ Himself. *Christ Jesus...is made unto me...righteousness* (1 Cor 1:30).

c) **Lest any man should boast**

At last we can now look at the full significance of grace.

It has first been necessary to develop the intent of the Law because grace is only effective in recognised and acknowledged human weakness. It is essential to fully appreciate this. Grace is not the wishy-washy term of modern-day anaemic evangelicalism. Grace exalts the righteousness and the sovereignty of God, and annihilates every confidence in self-attainment. God alone is magnified.

Yet such is the tenderness of our Lord that, having reduced human pride to utter confusion, He exalts humbled God-acknowledging man to heavenly places.

- **1 Sam 2:7b,9b** *(The Lord) bringeth low and lifteth up... by strength shall no man prevail*
- **Job 5:18** *He maketh sore and bindeth up: He woundeth and His hands make whole.*

In this section I wish to emphasise two principal points:

- a) that grace’s effectiveness in our personal life lies in acknowledged and willingly accepted human weakness; and
- b) that such an acknowledgement is the foundation of the exaltation of God to His due place where our only boast is in the Lord. As it is written: *He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord* (1 Cor 1:31).

Let us now develop the first point.

Grace is inoperative until human ability is exhausted and this is acknowledged. Only when we are conscious of being altogether powerless to save ourselves is Christ's death effective in our lives. Only when we are weak - and we feel it - does grace impart His strength. Grace is only available to those who recognise their inability, and acknowledge God. The proud - those who are confident in their own resources - He sets Himself in array against.

- **Ro 5:6** *When we were yet without strength, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly.*
- **2 Cor 12:9** *My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.,*
- **1 Pet 5:5b** *God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.*

Remember, only when the Law has reduced to utter self-despair can grace fully operate. This must not merely be accepted mentally. It has to be felt by bitter experience.

There lies within the human heart that which resents deeply the thought that of itself it can do nothing. Herein is the very root of sin: independence of God; the desire to act and live apart from Him.

- **Ps 19:13** *Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.* The essence of the very first sin was to act apart from God. Presumption implies forwardness and self-confidence.

There is a paradox in grace, however. Once it has brought us to cast off all excuses, evasiveness, self-defence, and half-confessions, and left us utterly exposed in our true state, it is then we find our full security. A security based on telling only half the truth is uncertain. But when the whole unqualified truth about ourselves is acknowledged — whether at conversion or any subsequent stage on the Christian pathway - then the full security of God's love will be found. When we see that His love is still certain despite all that we are, then we can go on knowing that our security is founded on His unchanging love, not on our changing spiritual state.

He only brings low to lift up. He only humbles us deeply so that we may know the true joy of His love. His purpose in reducing us to self-despair is not to break our spirit, but to destroy all hope in self, so as to throw us onto the full riches of His grace. The Heavenly Father Who exhorts fathers not to so provoke their children as to make them dispirited and leave them feeling inferior (Col 3:21) is certainly not going to do what He forbids others to do.

Let us illustrate the foregoing with two examples from the prophets. Both show the proper attitude to God in acknowledging the justice of His chastening, whilst at the same time experiencing a humble yet sure confidence in the Lord's mercies in the midst of that confession.

In the first example Jeremiah, representing the remnant of Israel, acknowledges the justice of her punishment in the destruction of Jerusalem, whilst looking to the Lord in a sure hope.

- **Lam 3:22-23** ready acknowledgement of guilt and need of mercy.

- **3:24-26** a hope only in God for help, not in self.
- **3:27—30** acknowledgement of the just desserts of sin, no self-justification.
- **3:31—36** a sure confidence in God's mercy, and recognition of His true ways. A true revelation of our sin and God's grace never leads to a despairing and overburdened spirit. Along with the recognition of our sin comes the precious revelation of His compassion. It is not God who would crush man's spirit, but the evil accuser of the brethren.

In the second example, Micah reveals a truly penitent heart in describing prophetically the prayer of repentant Israel.

- **Micah 7:7-10** *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against Him, until He plead my cause.* How beautiful a prayer. Israel looks only to the Lord and waits upon Him. She will not justify herself but acknowledges her true state. Yet this is not a cry of despair —only of self-despair. There is a confident hope in the Lord alongside the acknowledgement of guilt. Her accuser cannot break her spirit - her sure hope is in the Lord.

How different the ready acknowledgement of guilt in these examples compared with the evasiveness and blame-passing in the garden of Eden

There is a fear of total confession, lest God should no longer love us. Yet if when we feel utter failures we throw ourselves on His mercy alone in self-despair, we experience the joy of the living ministry of the Comforter. After repeatedly tasting this grace, there grows a very deep inner security in the love of God, even though every hope in our selves of meriting that love is undercut. Oh, the relief and joy of no longer having to search desperately for reasons in ourselves on which to base an assurance of God's love. The repeated awareness that, even after failing utterly, He still draws near to the contrite heart, produces great joy. A fountain opens up within. When exhausted and unable to make any further effort, then the grace of God is revealed. We can only weep, for we know well it is undeserved. This is the secret of Biblical joy — that in the Lord, and not in ourselves, is our ground of acceptance.

In this joy lies the heart of the second point I wish to bring out in this section : that grace exalts God alone.

Before proceeding, let us examine a well-known — yet I suspect somewhat misunderstood — Scripture to find a proper context from which to gauge the full meaning of joy in the Bible.

- **Phil 3:1—3** Paul's injunction to *rejoice in the Lord* (cp Phil 4:4) is not so much to avoid sadness, as to counteract any tendency to self-confidence. The context is the heresy of the Judaizers. Rejoice (i.e. boast) in Christ Jesus and in what He has done, not in works of human ability.
- **3:4—6** Paul's theoretical basis for self-confidence in approaching God.
- **3:7—9** Paul's true sacrifice in v 8 is not in giving up home, possessions, comfort etc., but his pride in his theoretical basis for self-confidence. Great sacrifices can sometimes be made to enhance one's self-esteem (cp 1 Cor 13:3). But Paul has sacrificed every claim of self-confidence so that his only confidence might be Christ.

From the foregoing we see that the converse of rejoicing in the Lord is not rejoicing in the pleasures of the world, but having confidence in the flesh, that is, human ability. Biblical joy therefore is not so much our feeling happy, but making our boast in the Lord. The essence and nature of that joy of which the Bible speaks so often is revealed in a constant glorying in what God has done and can do even in spite of our weaknesses.

How different from the usual man-centred references to joy in evangelical pulpits today. It is usually implied that man should be happy instead of being unhappy, rather than that he should exult in the righteousness of the Lord. The true secret of joy is not to be an optimist, but to have no confidence in the flesh: *Rejoice in the Lord*. Biblical joy can never co-exist with human pride. All boasting must be in the Lord alone.

- **Ro 3:27a** *Where is boasting then? It is excluded.*
- **4:2** *If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to boast - but not before God.*
- **5:11** *We joy (=boast) in God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*
- **2 Cor 11:30** *If I must needs glory (= boast) I will glory in the things which concern mine infirmities.*
- **Gal 6:14** *Far be it from me that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.*
- **Eph 2:9** *not of works, lest any man should boast.*

It is not by chance that the root meaning of certain of the Hebrew words translated "praise" is "to confess, to stretch out the hand". True praise of God is founded on recognition and acceptance of human inability.

How paradoxical that recognition of total inability should be the very origin of true joy!

It is often very difficult to convey the depth of meaning behind orthodox terms such as 'having no confidence in self'. I fear that evangelicals today have lost the power of their orthodox belief.

I fear there are many self-righteous orthodox believers with great confidence in themselves. They do not boast in the Lord in a spirit of self-despair.

I also fear that contemporary preaching does not bring the unconverted to self-despair before God, deeply conscious of having no hope in themselves.

This lack is critical. I cannot adequately stress that the secret of the power of the Gospel lies precisely in the stopping of every mouth that all the world might acknowledge its guilt before God. Grace apart from this is not Biblical grace. The true grace of God must be encased in

an atmosphere which humbles man and exalts God. Peter spoke of the true grace of God (1 Pet 5:12) in the face of that false grace which in effect turned grace into lasciviousness (Jude 4). Paul also spoke of understanding what God's grace really is (Col 1:6b).

Why is grace so crucial? Because in it lies the essence of the revelation of the righteousness of God. This is the heart of the Gospel.

- **Ro 1:17** *therein (i.e. in the Gospel) is the righteousness of God revealed (i.e. unveiled).*
- **3:21** *Now the righteousness of God, without the law, is manifested.*
- **3:25** *Jesus Christ... Whom God hath set forth... to declare His righteousness.*

It was the Jews' refusal to submit to this righteousness which caused their stumbling (Ro 10:3). They used their possession of the Law as a grounds for self-righteousness instead of seeing that the Law was intended to lead them to Christ (Ro 2:17-18; Gal 3:24).

I sometimes wonder if evangelicals today look upon 'faith' just as the Jews did their belief in the Law as in itself a means of justification, instead of that self-abasement before God that is the evidence of Biblical faith. The essence of the righteousness of God is man unreservedly acknowledging his true position before God, justly meriting death. But that just penalty was graciously borne in our stead. So, God's righteousness is now unveiled in that He is both just (in punishing sin) and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus (Ro 3:26).

The Jews' reaction to this (Ro 10:1—3) and Paul's testimony (Phil 3:1—9) make plain, however, that this is intensely humbling to human self-sufficiency and no mere doctrinal juggling with words. The absence of all hope apart from mercy has to be acknowledged.

This is the true spirit and intent of Romans 9 –11, which speak much of the sovereignty of God. Their motive is not to reduce man to a feeling of helpless despair, caught up in the inevitable wheels of a predetermined fate. It is to bring the whole world, both Jew and Gentile, to give God His rightful place, abandoning all claim on God as of by right.

- **Ro 11:32** *God hath concluded them all in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all.* This is highly significant. Man is brought to self-despair till he is forced to abandon pride and self-justification and to sue for undeserved mercy.
- **Ro 9:15-16** *For He saith to Moses 'I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it depends not upon man's will or exertions, but upon God's mercy (RSV).*

The doctrine of grace thus robs man of every legal claim on God. God is absolute sovereign, freely and without any obligation giving mercy. He is indebted to no man.

- **Ro 11:35** *Who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed again?*
- **Job 41:11** *Who hath first given unto Me that I should repay him (i.e. as a due debt)? Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is Mine*

In conclusion, do not think this truth does not apply to those who lived under the Law.

Like us, they too could not boast of works, but were justified by faith (Hab 2:4). Abraham was one example (Gen 15:6; Ro 4:1—3). So was David (Ro 4:6-8) who often said in the Psalms in Old Testament terms what Paul expounds in the New. Psalm 130 is a good example. It was of great comfort to John Wesley on the 24th May 1738, the day his heart was “strangely warmed”. Another example of the foundation truth of abandoning all confidence in personal ability and trusting only in God’s mercy is Psalm 147:

- **Psalm 147:10-11** *He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: He taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy.*

In the Psalms is also found that rejoicing in the Lord of which Paul spoke.

- **Psalm 34:2** *My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof and be glad.*
- **Psalm 44:8** *In God we boast all the day long.*

Finally Isaiah, who had a splendid vision of the sovereignty of God, conveys the same spirit. He foresaw the day when self-righteous Israel would boast only of the Lord. In Him Alone would they have righteousness.

- **Isa 41:16** *thou shalt rejoice in the Lord and glory in the Holy One of Israel.*
- **45:22-25** *Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to Him shall men come: and all that are incensed against Him shall be ashamed. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.*

Not only would Israel acknowledge Him. At last the whole earth would be humbled, and no honour save His alone would be heard.

- **Isa 2:11,17** *The lofty looks of man shall be humbled and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.*

Amen!

d) By Grace are ye saved, through faith... not of works

Whilst we affirm absolute and unswerving belief that the basis of salvation is grace through faith alone, wholly apart from works of merit which we have done, we must not to fall into the trap of despising or neglecting good works. They are indicative of true repentance, necessary evidences of a true faith, and a God-ordained after-effect of conversion.

As mentioned in the Introduction, the unspiritual mind perverted the doctrine of grace at two extremes

1. On the one hand it robbed grace of its nature of pure grace by making salvation conditional upon observance of the Law.

2. On the other grace was so stressed that good works in any capacity were abandoned.

So far we have corrected the first error, seen in the Judaizers' erroneous insistence upon the works of the Law for salvation, by examining the true purpose of the Law.

Having exposed the wrong emphasis on good works, let us now consider their proper role in the plan of salvation.

i) Repentance from dead works

Jesus said, *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish* (Luke 13:3,5). The teaching of repentance and conversion as essential prerequisites to salvation is found throughout the whole New Testament, not only in the Gospels in the ministry to Israel, but also in Acts when God visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His Name (the Church).

The word "repentance" itself, in Greek, signifies basically a "change of mind", in the sense of a deep and abiding change of inner purpose, intent and direction. An automatic consequence of this inner change of attitude is a change in behaviour, for, *As he thinketh in his heart, so is he* (Pro 23:7a). This explains the injunction for the wicked to forsake his thoughts and inner purposes (Isa 55:7). To do this would lead to an automatic change of the actions inspired by the wrong thoughts.

The word "conversion" is equally plain. It signifies a clear-cut change of behaviour. Its basic meaning in Greek is "to return or to bring back".

In the case of both repentance and conversion there is a clear about-turn in the way being followed, so as to face the opposite way from the way previously taken.

Let us now see how John the Baptist, Jesus, Peter and Paul all proclaimed this same message.

- **Mark 1:4** *John did... preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.*
- **Mark 1:15** (Jesus said) *Repent ye, and believe the gospel.*
- **Luke 24:47** (To the disciples going forth to call out the Church Jesus had said) *Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His Name among all nations.*
- **Acts 2:38** (Peter on the day of Pentecost) *Repent and be baptised for the remission of sins.*
- **Acts 3:19** (Peter at the gate Beautiful) *Repent ye therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out.*
- **Acts 20:21** (Paul at Miletus, describing his ministry) *Testifying... repentance towards God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*
- **Acts 26:20** (Paul's testimony to Agrippa) *But shewed. . .that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.*

(For further reference see: Matt 9:13; Acts 11:18, 13:24; Heb 6:1; 2 Pet 3:9).

An fuller examination of the implications and consequences of true repentance is highly instructive. This is important in that repentance is the essential foundation and prerequisite of the faith that alone can save. Why is this? Because unbelief is directly connected with hardness of heart (See Mk 6:52, 8:17-18, 16:14; Acts 19:9; Heb 3:12—13). A hard heart is an impenitent (i.e. unrepentant) heart (Ro 2:5). Repentance, therefore, leads to a change of heart, and a softening which makes possible the impartation of that faith which saves.

So, the preaching of salvation by faith through grace must be based on an initial foundation of repentance: repentance first; faith second (cp Mk 1:15; Acts 20:21), in that order.

Let us consider the effects of the repentance preached by John, Jesus, Peter and Paul.

- **Luke 3:2-14, 18-20** John expected repentance to be evidenced by its fruits. The change of life had to correspond to the solemn implications of the baptism they sought. He was not beguiled by the large numbers professing repentance as many would be today. His insistence on fruits before he would baptise (vv 7—9) led to serious inquiry as to what had to be done by the people (vv 10-11), tax—collectors (vv 12—13), and soldiers (vv 14—15). Note how specific were his replies. He also left Herod, the ruler of Galilee, in no doubt as to his need to change his life (vv 19—20). Not for John the doubtful privilege of having some famous public celebrity attracted to his congregation at the expense of some ‘slight’ amendment to the Word. His audience was seriously exhorted to mend its ways.
- **Luke 19:1—10** Note the evidence of Zacchaeus’ faith which enabled Jesus to say that salvation had come to his house (vv 8—9). He wanted to make amends for past misdeeds.

Herein lies another much-neglected doctrine of Scripture: restitution. Much present-day confession of sin and repentance is so vague as to be meaningless. A conviction leading to heart-felt repentance should produce a desire to rectify where possible previous sins. The Bible gives specific examples of this in Lev 6:2-7 and Nu 5:5—8. These show that when repenting of a sin, not only was a trespass offering brought to the priest, but also specific public confession and restitution made together with one fifth extra. The confession must have been very humbling, not the light and jokey ‘confessions’ and ‘testimonies’ sometimes heard today.

The same happened in John’s ministry. When baptised the people did not merely admit that “they were sinners” (to use today’s terminology). They confessed their actual sins (Mk 1:4—5). Confession and restitution are integral parts of repentance.

The extent of Zacchaeus’ repentance may be gauged from his desire to restore four-fold. This was the penalty for a thief who was found out without admitting his sin (Ex 22:1—4; 2 Sam 12:6), instead of the extra one fifth only which was the legal requirement where the crime was freely admitted.

- **Acts 2:37—41** Peter’s call to repentance (v 38) was enlarged upon in many words (v 40). Their substance was a solemn warning and appeal to extricate themselves from the wicked age in which they lived. In other words, he proclaimed that friendship with the world was enmity with God. Repentance is linked with separation from worldliness.

- **Acts 24:24—6** Paul's gospel emphasis was not solely on faith. Though doubtless speaking of righteousness through Christ, he meant by this more than just our legal standing through the Blood. For Paul "righteousness" implied changed behaviour as well as a changed legal standing. (Compare the Amplified rendering of this word: "conformity to the divine will in thought, purpose and action"),

Felix found Paul's preaching uncomfortably personal, direct and specific, just as Herod did John's. He spoke to Felix of temperance (i.e. self-restraint, continence) and coming judgement. His words were not idle, for the testimony of history about Felix is that he ruled with a mixture of cruelty, lust and servility, thinking himself at liberty to commit every sort of crime with impunity. Paul's preaching explained to him all too plainly the specific ways in which he needed to alter his life.

How important it is that preaching does not get lost in a woolly description of the blessings of being a Christian, without realising very clearly that God expects self to be crucified, and that He will judge sin.

- **Acts 19:18—20** Paul's preaching produced strong conviction with its effects. As with John we see open and public confession, not in a meaningless, stereotyped way, but out of spontaneous repentance. Confessions were evidently not vague nor woolly, but specific and clear-cut. Would that we had such Gospel services today, with a bonfire behind the church.

In conclusion, then, it is evident that God expects conversion to be very meaningful and practical. We have seen how repentance, not only by its literal meaning, but also by its attributes, involves restitution, clear-cut specific public confession of sins, separation from this present evil world and a complete break with previous ways displeasing to God.

Again, we see how grace is only effective where there is open and whole-hearted confession and honesty.

ii) Created unto good works

The Bible not only teaches that saving faith is preceded by a true repentance involving a turning away from previous ways and attitudes contrary to God's will. It also teaches that it is followed by a devotion to good works.

Although the motive of such works is not to merit salvation, they are nonetheless the outward evidence of an already experienced salvation.

In order to emphasise the importance of good works, consider the following Scriptures:

- **Matt 5:16** *that they may see your good works*
- **Acts 9:36** *this woman was full of good works*
- **2 Cor 9:8** *that ye.....may abound to every good work*
- **Gal 6:9-10** *And let us not be weary in well doing... as we have therefore opportunity let us do good unto all men.*

- **Col 1:10** *that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful unto every good work.*
- **2 Th 2:7** *(May God) stablish you in every good word and work.*
- **2 Th 3:13** *be not weary in well doing.*
- **1 Tim 2:9-10** *I will therefore that women adorn themselves (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.*
- **1 Tim 5:10...** *(a widow) well reported of for good works... having diligently followed every good work*
- **1 Tim 6:17-18** *Charge them that are rich in this world... that they do good, that they be rich in good works.*
- **2 Tim 2:21** *prepared unto every good work*
- **2 Tim 3:16-17** *All Scripture... is profitable for... instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*
- **Heb 10:24** *let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works.*
- **Heb 13:16** *To do good... forget not*
- **Heb 13:20-21** *The God of peace....make you perfect in every good work to do His will*
- **1 Pet 2:12** *that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works which they shall behold glorify God in the day of visitation.*
- **Rev 2:2,9,13,19** *I know thy works.*

I do not intend to detail the nature of these works here. This can be ascertained from the contexts of the above verses. Suffice it to say that good works are expected as a normal and regular consequence of our faith.

Let us now examine the Biblical relationship between faith, grace and good works.

- **Eph 2:8-10** *A beautifully concise summary of this relationship. Salvation is by grace through faith, wholly apart from works of merit. But the end of salvation is that we be created unto good works, i.e. for that specific intention. God planned beforehand that we should walk in those works He predestined us unto. Saved by grace, not of works, but unto works.*

This divine purpose is further seen in Titus where good works are very prominent.

- **Ti 2:11- 3:8** *Paul compares the Cretans' past lives (3:3) with what is now expected of them (3:1-2,8). They should be different and ready for every good work. Yes, they were saved through God's kindness, love and mercy, and justified by His grace (3:4-7). Their own efforts could not achieve righteousness (3:5). But, though not saved by works, they were expected to produce them because saved.*

Paul desired Titus to lay special stress and to firmly and strenuously insist upon it. Indeed, he was to speak with absolute certainty (3:8). No man must disregard or make light of it. He was to keep on teaching, insisting and urging on them this truth. If necessary it was to be done with full authority (2:15). Yes, grace had appeared bringing salvation to all men (2:11). But the true grace of God teaches those who experience it to turn from their previous ways (2:12). Jesus died to redeem us from all iniquity, not only from its penalty but from its dominion and practice. So He was able to obtain for Himself a people who were eager, ambitious, and with a real enthusiasm for good works (2:14).

The theme of grace leading to changed behaviour and good works pervades this epistle. Titus himself was to be a pattern or model of good works (2:7). The Cretans were to be zealous of good works, ready to every good work, careful to maintain good works, and to learn to maintain good works (2:11; 3:1,8,14).

The reason Paul emphasises this, even telling Titus to rebuke believers sharply if necessary that they be sound in the faith (1:13), was the existence of false teachers. They were of the Jewish circumcision party (1:9-14). Professing to know God, their works spoke differently. They were *unto every good work reprobate* (1:16). A profession without works is a lie.

Herein lies a great danger to the evangelicals of today - emphasis on orthodoxy of doctrine without a corresponding emphasis on orthodoxy of life.

This leads to a question of extreme gravity. Does the mere acknowledging of evangelical terminology justify a person's claim to be saved? It will doubtless be readily agreed that someone who merely "believes in God" is not thereby justified. But I wish to go much further and ask a more serious and disturbing question. Does the registering of a decision to become a Christian and the acknowledging of the doctrines of salvation by faith through grace alone justify the claim to be a Christian? If there is no radical change of heart and behaviour, can we say that the true grace of God has been experienced? Can we say there has been revelation instead of a mere learning of the relevant terminology? Will a profession of faith in the efficiency of grace and faith alone, apart from works of righteousness which we have done, suffice to excuse a lack of the true evidences of that faith? In other words, does all faith save? The Bible answer is an emphatic, "No!"

I wish now to show the serious error of the popular evangelical view that the purely mental "faith" of a person such as just described will save him, even though he will lose his reward.

Just as a faith not preceded by repentance is without Scriptural foundation, so also is a faith not followed by the fruits of salvation. It is not simply a question of loss of reward. It is far more serious. There can be no Scriptural salvation to start with. Such a faith is not by revelation. It is a mere mental assent to correct doctrine. Such a faith will not save.

Read Acts. Examine every case of true conversion. Note the initial acts of repentance and the actions after their initial assurance of salvation. Obviously, of course, we are not speaking of perfection here; there are always shortcomings. But a significant change of life there must be. To be a friend of the world is to be an enemy of God (Jas 4:4), To have the love of, and for, the world is not to have the love of, and for, the Father (1 Jn 2:15).

Of the Corinthians, often cited as an example of poor quality converts, Paul could still write:

*Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such **were** some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus (1 Cor 6:9-11).*

Problems there may have been, but there had certainly been a fundamental change. This was not merely a doctrinal change in standing before God, but a practical change of life. Concerning those whose lives did not correspond with their profession, he said, *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith* (2 Cor 13:5) i.e. whether they were Christians at all.

- **1 Thess 1:3-10** Paul's confidence that the Thessalonians were elect of God was based on the effect of his preaching (*knowing your election of God. For.... vv 4-5a*). In vv 5—10 he details the basis of this confidence.

Their faith produced work: *work of faith* (v3). Their work was not an attempt to give them faith and assurance of salvation. It was the very assurance which had already come at the revelation of God's grace through Paul's preaching (v5) that led them to begin to work. Their work was grounded on faith, not their faith on their work.

- **Gal 5:6** Outward legal observance is unavailing, only faith. Yet not merely a mental assent but a faith which expresses itself and is active. In other words, only a faith that produces outward actions is of any avail. Other forms of sterile mental belief will not lead to salvation, no matter how orthodox their doctrinal content.

James referred to this very problem of the relationship between faith and works in his epistle.

Luther, the prime expositor of the doctrine of justification by faith alone, found great difficulty in accepting James as part of the inspired writings. This was because of Luther's over-emphasis on the legal aspects of salvation (i.e. our legal standing before God purchased through the Blood) to the neglect of the practical outworking of that previously experienced salvation. Small wonder then that the Reformers were upbraided by some of their contemporary breakaways from the church of Rome for throwing works without faith so far to one side that they had erected a faith without works.

As Balthasar Hubmeyer said, in the camp of the Reformers:

men had only learned the first two of three pivotal doctrines of the Christian faith. The first was "we are saved by faith"; the second, "of ourselves we cannot do any good". Both of these are true enough, he says. But under cover of these two half-truths all evil, unfaithfulness and unrighteousness have gained the upper hand completely. Everybody wished to pass for a Christian and a good evangelical as far as taking a wife is concerned, eating flesh (in Lent), making no further sacrifice, fasting not, saying no prayers any more; but otherwise one saw nothing but drinking, gluttony, blaspheming, practising usury, lying, cheating, ... playing, dancing, flirting, loafing, committing adultery etc. The third lesson which men in the Protestant camp had not mastered, said this Hubmeyer, is that faith without works is dead. ("The Reformers and their Stepchildren", L Verduin Paternoster Press, p 105)

The preaching of John Wesley re-united faith and works. He emphasised both the initial assurance of salvation through the inner witness of the indwelling Holy Ghost and the essential need of holiness and the evidence of a changed character following conversion.

Let us now read carefully James 2:14—26.

This contains a vital message for many raised under today's doctrinally orthodox evangelical and pentecostal preaching, yet who lack any true signs of those works which are the evidence of a saving faith - *faith without works is dead* (vv 17, 20, 26). The devils confess the orthodox truths of Scripture. But they are not thereby justified. Oh, degenerate Protestantism. You decry the evils of the Roman confessional, and of their adherents' vain ritualistic absolution. But do you likewise abuse God's grace, constantly committing the same sins, yet making but a formal, vain and equally ritualistic confession?

In James we see quite clearly that a faith without works cannot save (v 14). Examples of such works are given (vv 15-16). The answer to a man claiming to have faith (and so to be saved) is that his faith can only be demonstrated by his actions. In other words, without works, there is no evidence of a justifying faith.

How do we reconcile James with Ephesians 2:8-9, and Paul's doctrine of justification by faith alone without the deeds of the law (Ro 3:28)? In the following way.

Paul does not decry good works in themselves, only when these are seen as a means of gaining acceptance before God, and of allowing a man to claim he can be righteous before God. This undercuts Paul's exposition of man's utter helplessness before God. Good works cannot justify or save. Only a heartfelt abandonment of all attempt to find some ground of merit before God, and a complete trust in the sole merits of Christ's death will achieve that.

When James speaks of works, however, he uses the word in a totally different context. He does not mean works done with a view to becoming good enough to be saved. He means those actions which naturally flow as a consequence of having a living faith in God. In other words, they are not done to give grounds for faith that one will be saved, they are done because one already *is* saved. If works are missing, there is no salvation, not so much because the works are missing, but because there is an absence of that faith which is evidenced by works.

Let us now consider James 2:21-26 in the light of this.

According to verse 21, Abraham was justified by works. Yet verse 23 says he believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness. How do we reconcile these? As follows: Abraham's offering up Isaac as described in Genesis 22 was not the grounds of his justification. He had already been justified earlier in Genesis 15 because of his faith in God's promise. The meaning of verse 21 is that his work of faith in offering up Isaac (cp Heb 11:17) demonstrated, but did not contribute to, his already possessed justification. Thus verse 23 says his belief in God was the grounds of his righteousness.

The meaning of verse 24 then is that a man's justification is based on a works-producing faith. Without that, there is no justification, and hence no salvation. How do modern evangelical churchgoers measure up to that yardstick?

Likewise with Rahab. Scripture says her action was prompted by her faith (Heb 11:31). And that faith-motivated action was the basis of her justification. Had her work been done in order to merit justification, it would have been in vain. It is a works-producing faith that saves, and not a righteousness-seeking work.

So then, I trust that the faith-works relationship is now abundantly clear. Salvation is by faith wholly apart from works of merit. But a profession of faith that does not produce good works will not save. Indeed, as Paul, the chief expositor of the doctrine of grace, made plain, the whole purpose of God's plan of salvation by faith through grace wholly apart from works was specifically designed to lead to a new creation Church created unto good works. This is how he could speak of obedience to the faith (Ro 1:4; 16:26).

iii) By which also ye are saved..., unless ye have believed in vain

Having now established the proper place of good works in God's plan of salvation, let us show from Scripture the existence of religious people who, although they believed in orthodox truth, were not saved because of their lack of accompanying works.

In case the seriousness of the implications of this are not fully realised, it may not be amiss here to point out that the Pharisees were strict fundamentalists (in contrast with the modernistic Sadducees) and earnest evangelists (Matt 23:15). But, were they saved? It is essential that evangelical preaching and profession of grace and faith matches up to the contexts of these words in the Holy Scriptures.

- **Matt 7:21—27** Evidently this speaks of believers - and religiously active ones at that. Furthermore they expected to enter the Kingdom of Heaven and were surprised at their exclusion. Their exclusion was because although calling Jesus 'Lord', they did not do what He said.

Though called workers of iniquity, this does not necessarily mean socially criminal acts. "Iniquity" means literally "lawlessness". It implies disregard of God's word, not man's. Evil in God's eyes may mean something very different from what we think. (e.g. 1 K 11:6; 2 Chr 12:14). Perhaps these were moral living citizens. But although religiously active they were disobedient to the Word. (See also Luke 13:22—29).

- **Matt 22:1—13** Whatever the full significance of this passage, it is another picture of a man greatly surprised at not being allowed into the kingdom of heaven.
- **Lk 3:7-9** Evidently the people had great faith in their religious ancestry. John, however, plainly stated that orthodox faith was inadequate apart from evidence of repentance. It was precisely because he bore this fruit that Jesus said to Zacchaeus that he had truly become a son of Abraham (Lk 19:9).
- **Lk 12:42—48** This is a man who knew the Lord's will, and was in His service, holding some distinction therein. Yet, though a believer, his portion was to be with the unbeliever. This means more than simply a loss of reward! (See also Matt 24:45-51).
- **Jn 8:39—47** Another example of the Jews' claim to spiritual wellbeing on the grounds of their orthodox lineage. There was nothing wrong with being a son of Abraham. This meant to be saved (Lk 19:9). But here is the crux of the matter: "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham" (v.39). Likewise if modern-day professors of salvation by grace through faith were saved, they would do the works that accompanied such a salvation in the Bible. Here is the evidence of orthodox profession - orthodox fruit.
- **2 Tim 3:1—5** This describes professing believers. Only such would profess some kind of love for God, and a form of godliness. Yet, does this save them?

- **Rev 3:14—22** A professing church is described. They really think all is well (v17). Yet they lack the robe of the righteousness of Christ (v18; Rev 19:8). Christ Himself is outside the church (v 20). How can a lukewarm Christianity plead orthodox doctrine as a defence if her life is no different from the Laodiceans (vv15-16)? It is not that she is acting criminally, just that she is half-hearted towards God. Like the man without a wedding garment, one day she too will be speechless (Matt 22:12).

If it is desired to further study this subject, John's first epistle will give much food for thought. Though written to give assurance of salvation, I suspect that it would give anything but that to many who have been instilled with 1 John 5:12-13 by rote rather than by revelation in today's counselling sessions.

Let me give some examples

- **1 Jn 2:3-4** *Hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith. I know Him and keepeth not his commandments is a liar and the Truth is not in him.*
- **2:6** *He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk even as He walked.*
- **2:29** *Ye know that everyone that doeth righteousness is born of Him.*

See also 1 John 1:6; 2:5,9,15; 3:7,10,14,19,24; 4:13,20; 5:2.

iv) *Though a man say he hath faith*

We have considered the true nature of grace by examining the Biblical context in which it is found, in an effort to show how this can only function in an atmosphere of heartily acknowledged human weakness and God-exaltation.

Just as grace has lost much of its true Biblical sense today, so also has faith with which grace is intimately linked. I have therefore sought to give faith back some of its lost meaning by showing that repentance and good works always precede and follow it in Scripture. This is important because any profession of faith today should likewise be preceded and followed by similar attributes. To illustrate, examples have been given of professions of faith which have not led to salvation. As James so well puts it:

What is the use, my brethren, for anyone to profess to have faith if he has no good works to show for it? Can such faith save? (Jas 2:14, Amp.)

Having considered the attributes of faith I now wish to finish by examining the essence of faith itself in view of the emphasis on it in current evangelism. Since our whole salvation hinges on this word, it is essential to have a proper understanding of its God-given sense.

The Bible meaning of a particular word has to be assessed from the Biblical contexts in which it is found, not from its modern English usage. So, to properly appreciate the true nature of faith, we must recall how often it is contrasted sharply with the works of the law. Since works are a basis of self-confidence, faith must imply the lack of this. Works give scope for boasting. So faith must suggest humility and confession of helplessness.

Let us illustrate from two examples where great faith is attributed to those showing great humility.

- **Matt 8:8-10** *Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof... When Jesus heard it, He marvelled and said to them that followed: Verily I say unto you, I have not found **so great faith**, no, not in Israel.*
- **Matt 15:21—28** *He answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, **great is thy faith...***

This is fundamental to an understanding of why so much faith today is spurious. The whole basis of faith is not so much belief in God and His Word, as a helpless casting of the heart on Christ as the only hope of righteousness. Faith and boasting are in absolute opposition.

- **Ro 3:27** *Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Boasting is turned out of doors and prevented from coming near. Faith is certainly not intended to re-introduce it.*
- **1 Cor 1:31** *He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*

This is important. There can be a tendency almost to be proud *because* we have faith, as though faith itself were a work of merit. Oh, that the true evidence of revelation faith were to be seen more often. It is a sure trust and confidence in Christ properly born only when the heart is smitten with the recognition of its own awful state before a holy God, and of the unavailing nature of its every work designed to justify itself. It is not so much a belief in Christ's death for our sins, as a self-despairing abandonment on that death as our only hope. Just as the intent of the law was to reduce self-despair and to drive to Christ as our only hope robbing of all grounds of boasting, so faith also gives no scope for self-satisfaction:

through faith... so that it may be impossible for any one to boast (Eph 2:8-9, Weymouth).

Not only does the possession of faith rob all grounds of self-congratulation. The obtaining of it is hindered by the desire for praise and honour from men:

How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another and seek not the honour that cometh from God only? (Jn 5:42)

How essential it is to fully taste the spirit of Biblical faith; how essential to grasp the full implications of the words "Salvation is of the Lord". From start to finish man has no part to play, but to confess his need. Here alone is the opportunity for grace to work.

Not only are we saved by His undeserved grace through faith. That very faith in Christ's merits alone is not of ourselves. Even this is the gift of God. Not only does the very nature of faith preclude boasting, even its possession is by the gracious workings of the Holy Ghost.

- **Acts 3:16** *the faith which is by Him...*
- **Eph 2:8-9** *by grace,... through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.*

- **Heb 12:2** *Jesus, the Author (= Beginner; the one furnishing the first-cause) of our faith.*

How important it is to recognise this. Only by the Holy Ghost is conviction wrought and the soul cast entirely on God's mercy, professing no prior claim on Him at all.

God hath concluded them all in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all... Who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed to Him again? (Ro 11:32,35)

Then as total despair in self engulfs the heart, the Holy Ghost imparts that living faith in Christ; the assurance that Christ's death atoned for our own personal sins.

Oh, that it could be understood how deeply everything the Church possesses is from God alone! Faith is not a mere intellectual assent to fundamental doctrine. It is the supernatural gift of a living God.

Now we come to a further significant point: Biblical faith and Spiritual revelation are one and the same thing. True faith is not mental assent to Biblical truth, but the humble believing response of the heart to divine revelation.

- **Matt 16:16-17** *And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said, unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but My Father which is in heaven'.*
- **Matt 11:27** *No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.*
- **1 Cor 2:14** *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. You must have the Spirit to see their real value. (NT in the Language of Today).*
- **1 Cor 12:2b** *No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost. Many call Him Lord, but is it by tradition or by revelation?*

I wish I could sear this indelibly into the mind. Biblical faith is based on the living supernatural revelation of the Holy Ghost to the individual heart. Churches are filled with mental believers, who believe orthodox doctrine by tradition and not by divine revelation. Why else does one man's face light up with a divine joy when you speak with Him of the Word of our Father, and another remains unmoved and expressionless.

The full explanation lies deeper than I can develop here. In essence, however, it is the difference between Jacob and Esau. The one knew and "believed" the promise. He "went to church" because his father brought him up to go. Yet the Bible calls him profane (= godless, irreligious); a despiser of the divinely-revealed promise (Heb 12:16-17). The other craved for the Spiritual Word. Though deficient in his trust in God, his motives and objectives were sound. He knew the birthright carried with it the inheritance promised by the Almighty, and what God gave he wanted (Heb 11:13—16).

Churches today have an oversupply of Esau believers. Like Ishmael, born after the flesh, they are Spiritually blind, and cannot understand the desire and love of the true Spirit-born

believer for the living revelation of the fresh Word from heaven. Like King Saul with the Ark, they do not even know how to make use of those Spiritual treasures which they do possess. Just as Ishmael mocked Isaac (Gen 21:9; Gal 4:28—29) despite his supernatural birth, they persecute him that is born after the Spirit. As Joseph's brothers with Joseph, they sorely grieve and shoot at the Spiritual believer who separates himself from the carnal, worldly churchgoer (Gen 49:22-26). Yet they shall not succeed.

But his (= Joseph's) bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob. (Gen 49:24)

I hope by now I have conveyed a fuller impression of the full implications of Biblical faith.

It must be seen as a gift of God in order to remove all grounds of boasting.

- **John 3:27** *A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven.*
- **1 Cor 4:7** *What hast thou that thou didst not receive?... why dost thou glory...?*

As with grace, so faith, too, is God-centred and not man-centred. As emphasised before, the essence of the Gospel is the exaltation of God and the humbling of man to his proper place.

Modern preaching must proclaim a faith which is not a mere mental assent to orthodox evangelical, fundamental doctrine, but a trust in that which is supernaturally revealed by the Spirit. *Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* (Isa 53:1).

If not we shall reap what we sow: a crop of spiritual hybrids. Oh, evangelicalism! How formal and lifeless is your orthodox faith! How lacking the quickening touch and eye-salve of the Holy Ghost!