

Galatians

Chapter 2

The Pharisees, Which Believed - 1 | Galatians

It was “certain of the sect of the Pharisees, which believed” who had caused all the trouble in the churches in Galatia, and called forth a letter to the Galatians. It was these also who had troubled the brethren at Antioch, and raised there the controversy abroad on the council Jerusalem. It was these who, even after the council, had caused Peter to swerve, at Antioch, from the truth of the Gospel, which, in turn, forced Paul to withstand him to the face. It was these of the sect of the Pharisees who spread a false gospel against the true, and subverted souls who were even already saved—as at Antioch and in Galatia. In a study of the Book of Galatians, it is, therefore, essential to know just what the sect of the Pharisees did hold.

When Jesus would give an illustration of “certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others,” he chose “a Pharisee.” And this Pharisee, even in praying, first thanked God that he was not like other men; and then presented himself to the Lord for approval upon what he had done. (Luke 18:9-12). It is therefore perfectly plain that the one great peculiarity of the sect of the Pharisees was self-righteousness—claiming righteousness upon what they have done.

Consequently everything that a Pharisee did was done that he might obtain righteousness by the *doing*. And if there was anything that he was not inclined to do, he must force himself to do it, by a direct vow, and then still claim the merit of righteousness in the *doing*.

And it was the very righteousness of God that was claimed as the merit and the result of the doing; because it was the word of God that was followed, it was the command of the Lord that was obeyed, in the doing.

The word “Pharisee” is from “*parash*,” which signifies “separated or set apart.” The Pharisees were those who were separated, set apart, from the rest of the people by their superior righteousness, which was because they had done more than any others; and they were separated, set apart, *unto God* because it was in the doing of the law of God that their righteousness consisted. Everything that God had commanded, required, or directed, must be done in order that righteousness may be obtained *in the doing*. And to be perfectly certain that they could rightfully claim the righteousness when the thing was done, it was essential that every obligation must be performed so exactly right that there could be no question. And in order that this might be so, every requirement in the word of God was drawn out in divisions and subdivisions to the smallest minutiae, even to each particular letter of each word, each one to be scrupulously and ceremoniously performed. “The very *raison d’etre* of the Pharisees was to create ‘hedges’ of oral tradition about the law” (*Farrar’s “Life of Christ,” Excursus 9, par. 1*). These “hedges” were of course to protect the law from violation. They were assurances to the doer of them that in the doing of them he was preserved from violating the law and that so he was a doer of the law.

This led to an utter perversion not only of every commandment and ordinance of the Lord, but of the very idea of every commandment and ordinance.

God had given the Ten Commandments, not as a means of obtaining righteousness by the doing of them, but (1) to give the true knowledge of sin, that forgiveness and salvation might be found by faith; and (2) to witness to the righteousness obtained by faith.

This was shown (*a*) in the service that was commanded, and (*b*) in the very terms used in speaking of the tables of the law. (*a*) In the service commanded it was plainly said that when

they had done anything against the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done, and were guilty, they were to bring a sacrifice of a young bullock, and confess the sin, and with the blood the priest should make atonement for them, and it should be forgiven them. (Lev. 4:13-21). Here were the Ten Commandments to give the knowledge of sin, and of the guilt; here was forgiveness and at-one-ment with God without the doing of the law, but solely through faith. (b) The term used in speaking of the tables of the law; was “the tables of the testimony”; the ark, in which was the law, was called the “ark of the testament”; and the tabernacle, in which was the ark, was called the “tabernacle of the testimony.” Now *testimony* is the evidence borne by a witness; and that this is the meaning of the word here is certain by the fact that the tabernacle was plainly called “the tabernacle of witness” (Num. 17:7, 8; 18:2; 2 Chron. 24:6). The tables of the testimony were the tables of *witness*, which in itself testified that the law was intended, *not* to be a means of the righteousness of God obtained by it, but to be witness to the righteousness of God obtained *without* it.

God had given the ordinances of sacrifice and offering and burnt offering and offering for sin, not as a means of obtaining righteousness by them, but as *expressions of the faith* that obtained the righteousness of God without them—faith that obtained the righteousness of God through a sacrifice and offering already made *by God*, and promised to be sent in due time.

God had given circumcision, not as a means of obtaining righteousness by it, but as a sign of the righteousness of God obtained by faith and held by faith before circumcision was performed.

Thus the Pharisees perverted into works and righteousness by works, all that God had given to be of faith. All that God had given to be a blessing and a delight they turned into a burden and a yoke of bondage. And when it did not give peace to the straining and toiling workers, as it could not, to the many fine-spun distinctions drawn upon the plain word of God they yet further added a multitude of exactions of their own. To the Sabbath commandment alone there were added four hundred and one requirements. A whole treatise was devoted to hand-washings (Mark 7:1-5); another whole treatise was occupied with the proper method of killing a fowl. “The letter of the law thus lost its comparative simplicity in boundless complications, until the Talmud tells us how Akibba was seen in a vision by the astonished Moses, drawing from every horn of every letter whole bushels of decisions” (*Farrar*).

Another evil was wrapped up in this: The facility of interpretation that was developed in drawing out the infinite variety of distinctions in sentences, in words, and even in letters, in order to discover the exact degree of obedience required to attain to righteousness, was readily employed in evading any obligation of the law of God that the covetous heart might desire. (Mark 7:9-13; Matt. 23:14-28). “We know the minute and intense scrupulosity of Sabbath observance wasting itself in all those *abhoth* and *toldoth*, —those primary and derivative rules and prohibitions, and inferences from rules and prohibitions, and combinations of inferences from rules and prohibitions, and cases of casuistry and conscience arising out of the infinite possible variety of circumstances to which those combinations of inference might apply, —which had degraded the Sabbath from ‘a delight, holy of the Lord, honorable,’ partly into an anxious and pitiless burden, and partly into a network of contrivances hypocritically designed, as it were, in the lowest spirit of heathenism, to cheat the Deity with the mere *semblance* of accurate observance. . . .

“Teachers who were on the high road to a casuistry which could construct ‘rules’ out of every superfluous particle, had found it easy to win credit for ingenuity by elaborating prescriptions, to which Moses would have listened in mute astonishment. If there be one thing more definitely

laid down in the law than another, it is the uncleanness of creeping things; yet the Talmud assures us that ‘no one is appointed and member of the Sanhedrin who does not possess sufficient ingenuity to prove from the written law that a creeping thing is ceremonially cleaned,’ and that there is an unimpeachable disciple, at Jabne, who could produce one hundred and fifty arguments in favor of the ceremonial cleanness of creeping things. Sophistry like this was at work even in the days when the young student at Tarsus set at the feet of Gamaliel” (*Ib.*, “*Life and Work of Paul*,” chap. 4, par. 2-6).

Thus the Pharisees in their exactions and ceremonialism had developed to perfection the self-love of self-righteousness in the merit of their own doings. A perfect illustration is found in what Rabbi Simeon, the son of Jochai, said: “If there were only thirty righteous persons in the world, I and my son should make two of them; and if there were but twenty, I and my son would be of the number; and if there were but ten, and I and my son would be of the number; and if there were but five, and I and my son would be of the five; and if there were but two, *I and my son* would be *those two*; and if there were but *one*, MYSELF should be that *one*” (*Emphatic Diaglott*, at Luke 18:11).

“They had received unsanctified and confused interpretations of the law given them by Moses: they had added tradition to tradition; they had restricted freedom of thought and action until the commandments, ordinances, and services of God were lost in a ceaseless round of meaning less rights and ceremonies. Their religion was a yoke of bondage.” “The views of the people were so narrow that they had become slaves to their own useless regulations.” “This confidence in themselves and their own regulations, with its attendant prejudices against all other nations, caused them to resist the Spirit of God, which would have corrected their errors.” “Thus, in their earthliness, separated from God in Spirit, while professedly serving him, they were doing just the work that Satan wanted them to do—taking a course to impeach the character of God, and cause the people to view him as a tyrant. In presenting their sacrificial offerings in the temple, they were as actors in a play. The rabbis, the priests and rulers, had ceased to look beyond the symbol of the truth that was signified by their outward ceremonies.” They expected to derive righteousness acceptable to God from the performance of the ceremony of offering a symbol, which to them was meaningless for any other purpose than as a means of gaining righteousness in the performance of the ceremony. The beginning and end, the all in all of the religion of the Pharisees, whether it related to the moral law, to the God-given ceremonial law, or to their own traditions, was ceremonialism, and ceremonialism alone. And Paul had been one of these Pharisees, of “the most strictest sect.”

And *this* is what those “certain of the sect of the Pharisees, which believed” thought to drag over and fasten upon Christianity. They wished to force even the divine faith of Christ into their low, narrow human ceremonialism. Oh, yes! It is well enough to believe in Jesus; but that is not enough: “except ye be circumcised and keep the law [their whole boneless system of interpretations of the law, moral and ceremonial, their whole mass of ceremonialism], *ye cannot be saved*.” And that even when they had done all that the system of the Pharisees supply and demand it, they could not be saved, was confessed in the despairing cry of the rabbis: “If but one person could only for one day keep whole law, and not offend one point, —nay, if but one person could but keep that one point of the law which affects the due observance of the Sabbath, —then the troubles of Israel would be ended, and the Messiah at last would come.” (*Id.*, par. 3). And from every really conscientious heart it forced that other despairing cry, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Rom. 7:24).

But in his great mercy and his divine goodness, without requiring all the burdens and toil of the Pharisaic ceremonialism, and in answer to the longing cry of every burdened heart, *the Messiah came*, and brought to all men the free gift of the righteousness of God, and of his full salvation. This righteousness and this full salvation, Saul the Pharisee found, and it made him forever Paul the Christian, nevermore to desire the “righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.” And then, having in Christ perfect righteousness, full salvation, and the power of an endless life; having found in Christ the living gospel instead of the dead form of law; because he would never more admit the multitudinous exactions, the vain strivings, the hollow self-righteousness, and the false gospel of the Pharisees, he was persecuted, and his work in the gospel of Christ was opposed, till the day of his death, by “the Pharisees, which believed,” as well as by all the Jews, who did *not* believe, by false brethren as well as by open enemies.

And this it was that called forth the book of Galatians.

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The Pharisees, Which Believed – 2 | Galatians 2:12

The opposition that those of “the sect of the Pharisees, which believed,” carried on against Paul and the true gospel, and the difficulty and confusion that they were able to create, were the stronger and more perplexing because of the encouragement they found, in the attitude of the apostles themselves, especially of Peter and James the Lord’s brother. We say, “the encouragement *they found*,” for no encouragement was really and intentionally given by these brethren to the work and course of the Pharisees who believed. Yet while no encouragement was intentionally given by the apostle, nor even by Peter and James the Lord’s brother, the temporizing and compromising attitude held by these was such that “the Pharisees, which believed” *found* in it encouragement, made a handle of it, and used it to the fullest possible extent in making their efforts effective.

These brethren, in their intended kindness of heart, thought to harmonize the two elements by occupying an intermediate position. They did not at once clearly discern the true and all-important issue that was really involved. They did not perceive that the difference between Paul’s teaching and that of “the Pharisees, which believed” was one of *principle*, essential and vital; they therefore thought to find a middle ground upon which—each side, especially Paul, modifying some of their “strong statements,” and yielding some of their “extreme positions” — there would be found a harmony. They did not at first discern that the two things were not so much alike that they gradually shaded into each other and would allow a new one to be formed, or developed, from both. They did not perceive that the two were of absolutely antagonistic principles; that they had no kinship to any extent whatever; and that therefore the only true course must be the utter abandonment of the old and the complete espousal of the new.

As Peter and James are both involved in the matter of the letter to the Galatians, and at least incidentally in the events that called it forth, it is essential to an intelligent study and understanding of the book of Galatians that this phase of the subject should be understood.

All know that as late as several years after Pentecost it required a special vision, and that the substance of the vision should be three *times shown*, to break down traditionalism in the mind of Peter, and to open his eyes to the divine truth that God is no respecter of persons. (Acts 10). And that this was the object and the necessity of the vision, is made certain by the words of Peter himself, speaking directly on that subject. For when, in obedience to the word of the Lord, he had gone to the house of Cornelius and begun to speak to the “many that were come together” there, the very first words that he said were these: “Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; *but God hath showed me* that I should not call any man common or unclean” (Acts 10:28). The Interlinear Greek, the word-for-word translation, gives Peter’s words thus: “Ye know how unlawful it is for a man, a Jew, to unite himself; or come near, to one of another race.” Not simply, ye know that it is an unlawful thing; but “Ye know *how* unlawful it is.”

But the truth is that it never was an unlawful thing at all, except by their pharisaic inventions and traditionalism. Those pharisaic inventions and traditions; and that traditionalism, were never entitled to any recognition whatever as law or obligation. And so far as they were so recognized, their only effect was to make void the whole word and Spirit of God both in the law and in the gospel of God. How unlawful it really was, however, by that Pharisaic ceremonialism, is worth stating here, and is seen in this piece of teaching of the rabbis: “He who eats with an

uncircumcised person, eats, as it were, with a dog; he who touches him, touches, as it were, a dead body; and he who bathes in the same place with him, bathes, as it were, with a leper” (*Farrar’s, “Life and Work of Paul,” chap. 15, note to par. 4 from end*).

In view of this, how expressive is the statement that when Cornelius fell down at his feet, and worshiped him “Peter *took* him up . . . and as he talked with him, he went in;” showing that Peter both touched him and walked and talked familiarly with him as with a brother. And the explanation of it all was that “God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.” In truth, *God* had never showed anything else: it was only the traditionalism and ceremonialism of pharisaism that had ever showed otherwise.

But that was not the last of it. “The apostles and brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God.” And not only this, but the news reached there of the awful thing that Peter had done in associating with Gentiles. “And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, *they that were of the circumcision contended* with him, saying, *You went in to men uncircumcised, and did eat with them.*” That the word of God’s salvation had been preached to lost men, and that *they had received it*, was nothing, yea, was less than nothing. In presence of the awful fact that a Christian should have associated with men uncircumcised, and had even eaten with them! “But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it in order unto them;” and after giving the full account, he appealed to themselves: “Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?” And “when they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life” (Acts 11:1-18).

Yet, though for that particular occasion they acknowledged the truth and the propriety of Peter’s course, they did not hold fast to the truth. For when the gospel began to spread among the Gentiles, it was some of these men of Judea who went to Antioch and taught the church saying, “Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved” (Acts 15:1). The controversy thus urged by the Pharisees who believed caused the council at Jerusalem. In the council, Peter stood firmly and openly for the truth, as the Holy Spirit had instructed him in the vision and, and as he had stood when called to account by those at Jerusalem. He said the same thing now as before. (Acts 15:7-11). The council decided the same way, and published to all the churches their decision accordingly.

Yet after all this, still the pharisaic ones nursed their traditionalism and ceremonialism, and soon began again to urge it, especially against Paul. However, when, after the council, Peter went to Antioch, he still stood firmly and openly in the truth, and “did eat with the Gentiles.” But presently “certain came from James” and from Jerusalem, and so strongly urged their traditionalism and ceremonialism that Peter actually abandoned his instruction in the vision; surrendered his firm and consistent stand at Jerusalem when called to account, and when in the council; and forsook brotherhood with the Christians who were from the Gentiles the uncircumcised. (Gal. 2:12).

This was caused, says the record, “by certain which came,” not from Judea nor from Jerusalem alone, but *from James.*” This shows that before reaching Peter they had affected James; and then, coming from James, had used the prestige of James to affect Peter and to draw him away. James, too, had stood firmly and openly for the truth in the council. It was his sentence that had settled the question in the council. The very words of his decision were adopted by the council,

and were published as the decision of the council. And yet even him the pharisaic traditionalists and ceremonialists “which believed” had succeeded in dragging back from the truth.

The real position of James at this time, and indeed to a much later time, is shown in the record of Paul’s last visit to Jerusalem—his last visit just because of this attitude of James; even long after the letter to the Galatians was written. The account is in Acts 21:18-26. This visit was made especially to win the brethren in Jerusalem. Paul and his company arrived at Jerusalem, and the brethren received them gladly. “And the day following Paul went in with us *unto James*; and all the elders were present. This shows that James was the chief one who was the object of the visit, though all the elders were present, yet Paul and his companions “went in ... unto James.”

And what did they meet there? —When Paul “had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him” —*what*, think ye? —They begin at once to try to drag even him away from the truth of the gospel to a compromise on traditionalism and ceremonialism.

“Instead of doing justice to the one whom they had injured, they still appeared to hold him responsible for the existing prejudice, as if he had given them cause for such feelings. They did not nobly stand in his defense, and endeavor to show the disaffected party their error: but they threw the burden wholly upon Paul, counseling him to pursue a course for the removal of all misapprehension” (“*Sketches from the Life of Paul*,” pages 211 212). And this even from James, who had stood so straight and true in the council, and who, after hearing from Paul a full statement of the gospel that he preached, could add nothing to it, and therefore had given him his right hand in fellowship!

They said unto him, “Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law; and they are informed of thee, that thou teach all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore? The multitude must come together: for they will hear that thou art come. *Do therefore this* that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; them take, and *purify thyself with them*, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and *all may know* that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walk orderly, and keep the law. As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only.” etc., etc.

“The brethren hoped that by this act Paul might give a decisive contradiction of the false reports concerning him. But while James assured Paul that the decision of the former council (Acts 16) concerning the Gentile converts and the ceremonial law still held good, the advice given was not consistent with that decision which had also been sanctioned by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God did not prompt this advice. It was the fruit of cowardice” (*Id.*, page 212).

These facts throw a strong light upon the expression that when “certain came from James,” Peter withdrew from the Gentiles and “separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.” This also gives a better idea of the powerful influence that was exerted to draw Peter back from the truth—the influence which; was indeed so powerful that even “Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.”

But Paul knew the gospel that he was set to preach. He knew that it was the truth. And though thus left to stand alone against, to him, the most powerful human influence in the world, he cared not for this. “But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, said unto Peter before them all, if thou, being a Jew, live after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compel then the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law, for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.”

Both Peter and James did finally come to clear faith; but it took time for them to do it; and while they were coming to it, their course had no little influence in creating the condition that called forth the letter to the Galatians.

[Advent Review and Sabbath Herald | September 19, 1899]

The Pharisees, Which Believed – 3 | Galatians

In a previous study on this subject—the fourth one—we remarked that while it is true that “the ceremonial law is the chief subject, *as to law*, in the book of Galatians,” yet even then it is not the ceremonial law as given by the Lord; that even where the ceremonial law as given by the Lord is involved, it is such a perversion of it as to make it altogether another thing than what it was in truth; and consequently that the great subject, as to law, as to works, is more ceremonialism—ceremonialism entire—than it is the true ceremonial law itself, in any phase of it.

That *traditionalism* was an essential part of the teaching of those who had driven back the Galatian Christians is certain from the fact that Paul cites it as a thing in his own experience, and shows how he had been delivered from it by the gospel, which he preached. “Ye have heard of my conversation [manner of life] in time past in the Jews’ religion . . . and profited in the Jews’ religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the *traditions of my fathers*. BUT when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, *to reveal His Son in me*, that I might preach Him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with fifth and blood” (Gal. 1:13-16).

That is to say: This very thing that these disturbers are trying to fasten upon you, I myself once held even more zealously than they; for “beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it.” But from that I was delivered and redeemed by the revelation of the gospel of Jesus Christ—by the revelation of the Son of God in me. I have preached to you, and am now preaching to you simply what I know through my own heart’s experience and the revelation of the gospel of Christ. I *know* that the gospel of Christ, the gospel which I preach, delivers the soul from all the burden and the toil of the traditions that those men bring to you, and sets the soul free in the light and liberty and joy of a perfect righteousness. I know that all that they seek by the many toilsome exactions of their traditions is found unto perfect and soul-rejoicing fullness in Jesus Christ, and that it is obtained simply by faith alone in him.

That one passage, in the connection in which it is placed, even if there were no more, would be sufficient to show that, whatever else was included, the ceremonies of “the traditions” of the Jews were assuredly involved.

But that is not all: the thing which brought the crisis at Antioch in the case of Peter, and which is the crisis in the introduction to the real subject in the book of Galatians, was the question of *eating with the Gentiles*, with men uncircumcised. This too, was the thing which marked the crisis in the work of Peter as to Jew and Gentile, as is shown in his experience in the vision at Joppa, and at the home of Cornelius; and which he himself summed up in the words. “Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company or come unto one of another nation; but God hath showed that I should not call any man common or unclean” (Acts 10:28).

But eating with the Gentiles was not an unlawful thing at all, *except by their own traditionalism*. This exclusiveness was never enjoined nor inculcated by anything, which the Lord had ever committed to the Jews. The Scriptures, which they themselves had, were against it. That exclusiveness was altogether of their own construction, built up from their own exclusive self-righteousness. Yet this was a vital point and an essential element in the contention of the “Pharisees, which believed,” that called forth the letter to the Galatians. And this being so, it is certain that the

traditional ceremonial law of the Jews was an essential part of the ceremonial law that is the chief subject, *as to law*, in the book of Galatians.

It is true that the ceremonial law that God gave is also included in the controversy that called forth the letter to the Galatians; and yet even that, *as God gave it*, is not included. Circumcision is included; but so far perverted from the true intent and meaning as God gave it, and so laden with traditionalism, as to be only another phase of sheer pharisaic ceremonialism.

From the history of James in this connection, especially in Acts 21, it is plain that the rest of the true ceremonial law was also included—even to self-contradiction in the offering of sacrifices for sin while professing to believe in Christ. For one of the offerings made in purification of the Nazarite was a “lamb of the first year without blemish *for a sin offering*” (Num. 6:14). And when Paul, out of deference to the brethren at Jerusalem, especially to James the brother of Jesus, had yielded so far for appearance’s sake as to accompany some men who were actually practicing this, to a believer in Jesus, self-contradictory, ceremony, it was *while “he was conversing with the priest concerning the sacrifice to be offered,”* that the mob broke loose, and dragged Paul away. However, it is not strictly correct to say that just then the mob broke loose: the truth is that just then God let loose the mob to save Paul from the effect of his deference to the ill advice of the compromising brethren.

When we consider Paul’s great desire to be in harmony with his brethren, his tenderness of spirit toward the weak in faith, his reverence for the apostles who had been with Christ, and for James the brother of the Lord, and his purpose to become all things to all men as far as he could do this and not sacrifice principle—when we consider all this, it is less surprising that he was constrained to deviate from his firm, decided course of action. But instead of accomplishing the desired object these efforts for conciliation only precipitated the crisis, hastened the predicted sufferings of Paul, separated him from his brethren in his labors, deprived the church of one of its strongest pillars, and brought sorrow to Christian hearts in every land.

The Saviour’s words of reproof to the men of Nazareth apply in the case of Paul, not only to the unbelieving Jews, but *to his own brethren in the faith*. Had the leaders in the church fully surrendered their feelings of bitterness toward the apostle: and accepted him as one specially called of God to bear the gospel to the Gentiles, the Lord would have spared him to them still to labor for the salvation of souls. He who sees the end from the beginning, and who understands the hearts of all, saw what would be the result of the envy and jealousy cherished toward Paul. God had not in his providence ordained that Paul’s labors should so soon end; but he did not work a miracle to counteract the train of circumstances to which their own course gave rise.

The same spirit is still leading to the same results. A neglect to appreciate and improve the provisions of divine grace has deprived the church of many a blessing. How often would the Lord have prolonged the life of some faithful minister, had his labor, been appreciated. But if the church permits the enemy of souls to pervert their understanding, so that they misrepresent and misinterpret the words and acts of the servant of Christ; if they allow themselves to stand in his way and hinder his usefulness, the Lord removes from them the blessing, which he gave.

“Satan is constantly working through his agents to dishearten and destroy those whom God has chosen to accomplish a great and good work. They may be ready to sacrifice even their own life for the advancement of the cause of Christ, yet the great deceiver will suggest: doubts, distrust, jealousy, concerning them, which, if entertained, will undermine confidence in their integrity of character, and thus cripple their usefulness. Too often he [Satan] succeeds in working through

their own brethren, to bring upon them such sorrow and anguish of heart that God graciously interposes to give his persecuted servants rest. After the hands are folded upon the pulseless breast, after the voice of warning and encouragement is silent, then death may accomplish that which life has failed to do; then the obdurate may be aroused to see and prize, the blessings they have cast from them” (*Sketches from the life of Paul,* ” pages 214, 231, 232).

On the part of the Pharisees who believed, the “false skulking brethren” who confused the Galatian Christians, and even weakened Peter and James, the moral law was not included, except incidentally. But the infinite variety of ceremonial observances, which by “oral tradition” had been invented and set up as hedges about the law, and which were more to them than the God-given law itself, —these were included, and were an essential part of their side of the controversy. Simply to neglect the washing of hands, etc., as referred to in Mark 7, “was as bad as homicide [murder], and involved in forfeiture of eternal life” (*Farrar’s “Life of Christ,” chap. 31, under “ablutions”*).

However, in the book of Galatians, in Paul’s setting forth of the only true gospel, the moral law is included, both in showing that it is impossible to be justified by any law whatever, even the moral law and in showing, that the very object of faith in Christ, the very object of the true gospel, is to accomplish in men the righteousness of that law, perfect obedience to the Ten Commandments.

If anything is needed to make plainer or more certain that ceremonialism altogether is the ceremonial law involved in the book of Galatians, here it is: —

“Tidings had been received at Corinth from the churches in Galatia, revealing a state of great confusion, and even of absolute apostasy. Judaizing teachers were opposing the work of the apostle, and seeking to destroy the fruit of his labors.

“In almost every church there were some members who were Jews by birth. To these converts the Jewish teachers found ready access, and through them gained a foothold in the churches. It was impossible, by Scriptural arguments, to overthrow the doctrines taught by Paul; hence they resorted to the most unscrupulous measures to counteract his influence and weaken his authority. They declared that he had not been a disciple of Jesus, and had received no commission from him; yet he had presumed to teach doctrines directly opposed to those held by Peter, James, and the other apostles. Thus the emissaries of Judaism succeeded in alienating many of the Christian converts from their teacher in the gospel. Having gained this point, they induced them to return to the observance of the ceremonial law as essential to salvation. Faith in Christ, and obedience to the law of Ten Commandments, were regarded as of minor importance. Division, heresy, and sensualism were rapidly gaining ground among the believers in Galatia.

“The *doctrine which the Galatians had received* could not in any sense be called the gospel; *they were the teachings of men*, and were directly opposed to the doctrines taught by Christ . . . In the Galatian churches, open, unmasked error was supplanting the faith of the gospel. Christ, the true foundation, was virtually renounced for the obsolete ceremonies of Judaism . . .

“The apostle urged upon the Galatians as their only safe course to leave the false guides by whom they had been misled, and to return to the faith which they had received from the Source of truth and wisdom. Those false teachers were hypocritical, unregenerate men, unholy in heart, and corrupt in life. Their religion consisted in a round of ceremonies, by the performance of which they expected to receive the favor of God. They had no relish for a doctrine, which taught,

“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Such a religion required too great a sacrifice. Hence they clung to their errors, deceiving themselves, and deceiving others.

“To substitute the external forms of religion for holiness of heart and life, is still as pleasing to the unrenewed nature as in the days of the apostles . . . Paul . . . describes the visit which he made to Jerusalem to a settlement of *the very questions which are now agitating the churches of Galatia*, as to whether the Gentiles should submit to circumcision and keep the ceremonial law” (*Sketches from the Life of Paul*,” pages 188-193).

And of the question as considered at Jerusalem, we read: —

“They [certain Jews from Judea] asserted, with great assurance, that none could be saved without being circumcised and keeping *the entire ceremonial law*. Jerusalem was the metropolis of the Jews, and there was found the greatest exclusiveness and bigotry. The Jewish Christians who lived in sight of the temple would naturally allow their minds to revert to the peculiar privileges of the Jews as a nation. As they saw Christianity departing from *the ceremonies and traditions* of Judaism, and perceived that the peculiar sacredness with which the Jewish customs had been invested would soon be lost sight of in the light of the new faith, many grew indignant against Paul, as one who had, in a great measure, caused this change. Even the disciples were not all prepared willingly to accept the decision of the council. Some were zealous for the ceremonial law, and regarded Paul with jealousy, because they thought his principles were lax in regard to the obligation of the Jewish law” (*Id.*, pp. 63, 71).

Thus the ceremonial law is the chief subject, *as to law*, in the book of Galatians. Is the ceremonial law both divine and human, but with the divine so perverted as in its perversion to be only human? And in a word, *ceremonialism* is dead formalism against a living faith.

[Advent Review and Sabbath Herald | September 26, 1899]

We Shall Be Saved, Even As They | Acts 15:7-11

As we have now passed the preliminaries, and have come to the study of the real substance of the book of Galatians, the first thing to be noted is the surpassing value of what is here to be studied. This is made known in chapter 1 in those remarkable words. “Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:8, 9).

This shows that if there could be any distinctions made among books of the Bible, then of all places in the Bible, the gospel, in its perfect sincerity, would be found in the book of Galatians. It would be found that whatever might be done with other books of the Bible, it must stand that in the book of Galatians the gospel is presented in such truth that even an angel from heaven could not alter it without incurring the curse. This being so, surely a study of the book of Galatians should enlist the most earnest attention and the deepest interest of every one who loves the gospel of Christ.

In our studies we have reached chapter 2:15. And, after the introduction, here, in Paul’s appeal to Peter upon principle, is where the real consideration of the gospel upon its merits is first entered upon. So much so is this, that it is acknowledged by some of the best scholars that it is impossible to tell just where Paul’s speech to Peter ends and his definite word to the Galatians begins. This indeed is natural enough; because Paul’s address to Peter was an argument and an appeal for “the truth of the gospel” (Gal.2:14), and the letter to the Galatians is the same identical thing. Therefore as his address and appeal to Peter was in very substance what his address and appeal must be to the Galatians, there was no need of any definite break to mark the point at which his direct word to Peter ceased and that to the Galatians began. Accordingly, after the introduction, chapter 2:15 is where is begun the direct re-presentation of the gospel to the Galatians.

“We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified” (Gal. 2:15, 16).

The word “law,” as used in these two verses is not any particular law demanding the definite article, “the law”; but in Greek is simply the word “law”—*nomos*—without any article. The word-for-word rendering is thus: —

“We Jews by nature, and not sinners of [the] nations, knowing that a man is not justified by works of law [nomou]; but through faith of Jesus Christ, also we on Christ Jesus believed, that we might be justified by faith of Christ, and not by works of law [nomou]; because shall not be justified by works of law [nomou] any flesh.”

By this it is plain that it is law in general, the idea of law, that is considered in this text; that men are not justified by any law at all, nor by all law together; but solely by faith of Jesus Christ without any works of any law whatever. Evidently it could not be otherwise. For to specify some particular law, and assert that men were not justified by *that* law, would leave the question open to the implication that men might be justified by some other law. But “the truth of the gospel” is

that men cannot be justified by any law at all, nor by all laws together; but only by the faith of Christ; simply by believing in Jesus.

The vital point in this appeal to Peter is not discerned without careful attention. It is this: We who are Jews by nature, who have all the advantages that pertain to the Jews, whose are the fathers, and the covenants, and the laws, and the ordinances, all given by the Lord himself directly to the Jews—we who are thus Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles; “even we have believed in Jesus Christ *that we might be justified by the faith of Christ*, and not by works of law; for by the works of law shall no flesh be justified.” The very fact that we Jews, with all the native advantages of all the laws of the Jew, have believed in Jesus Christ that we might be justified by faith, —this in itself is open confession and positive evidence that there is no justification in law.

And when this is so with us Jews who have all these advantages, what else can possibly be the hope of the Gentiles who have no shadow of any such advantage? When “even we” must be justified by faith, how much more must the Gentiles be justified by faith! When we who have all these laws cannot be justified by them, but must be justified by faith, without them, what shall the Gentile do who has none of these laws at all, if he is not to be justified by faith without them? And when we have confessed that we cannot be justified by these laws, how can we ask the Gentiles, which we ourselves were not able to bear, and which, by the liberty of the faith of Christ, we have thrown off? Therefore, “if thou, being a Jew, live after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews” —if you have abandoned the ground of the Jews, which, in order to be justified, is the right thing to do, and have gone over to the ground of the Jews, which, in order to be justified, is the right way to do, and have gone over to the ground of the Gentiles, why will you require the Gentiles to abandon their ground, and go over to that of the Jews, which we have confessed must be abandoned?

All this was simply, in other words, the very argument that Peter himself had made in his statement of the truth of the gospel in his own experience, in the council at Jerusalem. “Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago *God made choice* among us that *the Gentiles* by my mouth should hear *the word of the gospel* and believe. *And God*, which knows the hearts, *bare them witness*, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between *us* and *them* [note: not between *them* and *us*; but “between *us* and *them*], purifying *their* hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ *we shall be saved, even as they*.” Note again: not *they* shall be saved *even as we*; but *we* shall be saved, *even as they*. And “they” were justified by faith without the deeds of any law—they *must* be; for they did not have any; and “we,” the Jews, being saved *even as they*, must be justified by faith without the deeds of any law, even though “we” had all the laws that ever were. (Acts 15:7-11).

Thus by the instruction of God and the demonstration of the Holy Spirit, it was made plain to all that Jew and Gentile are saved in precisely the same way—by a common faith in Jesus Christ, without any deeds of any law; and that by this faith of Jesus Christ the middle wall of partition between them is annihilated, and all are made one with God and with one another in the blessedness, the righteousness, and the joy of the glorious gospel of the blessed, and the joy of the glorious gospel of the blessed God, who is blessed, and shall be blessed forevermore. Amen.

[Advent Review and Sabbath Herald | October 3, 1899]

Justified by Christ | Galatians 2:17

“But if, we while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid” (Gal. 2:17).

Having abandoned all law *as a means of justification*, have we abandoned all law *altogether*? — God forbid. For while seeking to be justified by Christ, it is possible that we might be found sinners. And what is a sinner? —“*Whosoever commits sin* transgresses also *the law*: for *sin is the transgression of the law*” (1 John 3:4).

And what law is it, the transgression of which is sin? —“I had not known sin, *but by the law*: for I had not known lust, except *the law* had said, Thou shall not covet” (Rom. 7:7). The word then—“Thou shall not covet”—belongs in a law: it is a part of a law. It is not simply the *commandments*; it is not, I had not known lust except the *commandment* had said, Thou shall not covet. But it *is*, “I had not know sin, but by the law.” It *is*, “I had not know lust, except the law had said, Thou shall not covet.”

Now *that law*, which says, “Thou shall not covet,” says also, Thou shall not kill, Thou shall not steal, Thou shall have no other gods before me, Thou shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. It is the Ten Commandment law: it is the law of God, which he spoke from heaven, and wrote *twice* with his own hand on tables of stone, and which he writes with his own Spirit on the tables of the heart of the believer in Jesus.

That is *the law* by which is the knowledge of sin. That is “the law,” the transgression of which is “*sin*.” And that is the law, and the only law, by which, while seeking “to be justified by Christ,” we *could* be “found sinners.” And as this word in Galatians recognizes the possibility that, while seeking to be justified by Christ, we might be found sinners; and as there is no knowledge of sin without the law of Ten Commandments, this is therefore conclusive evidence that, while it is true that all law must be abandoned *as a means of justification*, all law is *not* abandoned *altogether*. It is conclusive evidence that that law by which is the knowledge of sin, the law of Ten Commandments, is not abandoned *as the means of the knowledge of sin*.

That law, the law of Ten Commandments, while it, with all other law, *must* never be used, *as a means of justification* is not abandoned altogether; because *that* would make *Christ the minister of sin*. And against any such suggestion as that the Lord plunges his emphatic “God forbid” against all idea that the law of Ten Commandments is abolished or in any sense “loosed down” or done away.

The Lord Jesus did not come into the world to minister to sin, but altogether to save from sin. Sin is the transgression of the law of Ten Commandments; and as the Lord Jesus came to save men from the transgression of that law. By that law is the knowledge of sin; and as Jesus came to save men from sin, his mission would be completely nullified and altogether vain if the law were taken away: for to take away the law would take away the knowledge of sin and the very means of the knowledge of sin; and this in itself would make it impossible to save men from sin. And to make the coming of the Lord Jesus create a condition of things in which it would be impossible to save men from sin, would be nothing else than to make Jesus the minister of sin. It would make Christ confirm what would satisfy Satan forever. And why should not God cry out against it forever, “God forbid”?

Therefore “if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners,” transgressors of the law of Ten Commandments, does Christ sanction that? —“God forbid.” Does he justify men in order that they may be free to transgress the law? —“God forbid.” Does he save men from sin in order that they may continue in sin? —“God forbid.” Do we believe in Jesus in order that we may continue to be sinners? —“God forbid.” Do we “seek to be justified [made righteous] by Christ” in order that we may continue to sin? —“God forbid.” And let all the people forever say Amen.

Let it be borne in mind and upon the heart forever by every soul, that justification (being made righteous) by faith of Jesus Christ, means, in itself, in every sentiment of it, the total abandonment of sins, and the destruction of the body of sin in order that henceforth we should not serve sin. Otherwise I build again in works what I destroyed by faith: and “if I built again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a *transgressor*.” Faith will never justify sin. The two are eternal opposites; for “*whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*” And in Christ Jesus nothing avails but faith, which worketh by love that keeps the commandments of God.

[Advent Review and Sabbath Herald | October 10, 1899]

Without Law of Any Kind | Galatians 2:18, 19

“For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God” (Gal. 2:18, 19).

What is it that is referred to in the words, “If I build again the things which I destroyed”? There are at least two special thoughts involved in these words.

1. The one great idea of those who had turned back the Galatian Christians was justification by law. Whereas the truth of the gospel, which Paul had preached to the Galatians, and which even “an angel from heaven” could not contradict, is justification by faith.

Paul has already shown, in verses 15, 16, that even they who were Jews by nature, and so had all the laws that the Lord had given, had believed on Christ in order that they might be justified by *faith* and not by works of *law*: and this for the accepted reason that by works of law no flesh can be justified.

This was the utter abandonment and destruction of all idea of justification by *law*. And having abandoned all idea of justification by *law*, in order, by believing in Jesus, to be justified by the *faith* of Christ, *now*, being justified by *faith*, shall I set up again the idea and the hope of being justified by *law*? Having abandoned the idea of justification by *law*, in order to find justification by *faith*, having *found* justification by *faith*, shall I again adopt the idea of justification by *law*? —God forbid; for when, to be justified by faith, I must abandon all idea of justification by *law*, if I now adopt again the idea of justification by *law*, I must abandon justification by *faith*. But when I abandon justification by faith, I make myself a transgressor; for “whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” Therefore, if I build again the structure of justification by *law*, which I destroyed by justification by *faith*, I make myself a transgressor; because by the law is the knowledge of sin.

2. That which I destroyed by abandoning all idea of justification by law, and adopting justification only by the faith of Christ is “the old man,” “the body of sin.” And to build again that which I destroyed is only to bring back from the dead that old man, is only to make alive the body of sin, *and that* can only make me a transgressor.

Justification by the faith of Christ means *in itself* the total abandonment of all sins committed, the remission of all “sins that are past,” and also the *destruction of the body of sin*, so that “*henceforth* we should not serve sin.” Therefore while seeking to be justified by faith, we must not be found sinners. For if I build again the body of sin which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. And in again adopting the idea of justification by law, I *do* build again, in *works*, what I destroyed by faith; because all seeking of justification by *law* is seeking justification by *our own works*, and our own works are simply works of *the flesh*, which are all sin; for “the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like.”

And in building again the structure “of justification by *law*, which I abandoned in order to be justified by *faith*, I make myself a transgressor; “for I through the law am *dead to the law*, that I might live unto God.” Since abandoning the idea of justification by *law* and adopting justification by *faith* caused me to become *dead to the law* and *alive unto God*, then adopting again the idea of justification by *law*, which, in itself, is the abandonment of justification by

faith, would cause me to become *alive to the law* and *dead unto God*. But to be dead unto God is nothing but to be dead *in trespasses and in sins*. And as to be dead unto God is to be dead in trespasses and in sins, and to be dead unto God is to be alive to the law, then to be alive to the law is only to be a transgressor.

Therefore, my brethren, justification by faith forever, without any works of any law of any kind whatever, —this is the only ground of hope of salvation.

[Advent Review and Sabbath Herald | October 17, 1899]

Fact: I Am Crucified with Christ | Galatians 2:20

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

It may not be amiss to emphasize what this scripture *does* say, by noting what it does not say.

It does *not* say, “I want to be crucified with Christ.” It does *not* say, “I wish I were crucified with Christ, that he might live in me.” It *does* say, “I *am* crucified with Christ.”

Again: It does *not* say, Paul was crucified with Christ; Christ lived in Paul; and the Son of God loved Paul, and gave himself for Paul. All that is true; but that is *not* what the scripture *says*, nor is that what it means; for it means just what it says. And it *does* say, “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*.”

Thus this verse is a beautiful and solid foundation of Christian faith for every soul in the world. Thus it is made possible for every soul to say, in full assurance of Christian faith, “He loved *me*.” “He gave himself for *me*.” “I am crucified with Christ.” “Christ lives *in me*.” (Read also 1 John 4:15).

For any soul to say, “I am crucified with Christ,” is not speaking at a venture. It is not believing something on a guess. It is not saying a thing of which there is no certainty. Every soul in this world can say, in all truth and all sincerity, “I am crucified with Christ.” It is but the acceptance of a fact, the acceptance of a thing that is already done, for this word *is* the statement of a fact.

It is a fact that Jesus Christ was crucified. And when he was crucified, *we* also were crucified; for he was one of *us*. His name is Immanuel, which is “God with us”—not God with *him*, but “God with *us*.” When his name is *not* God with *him*, but “God with *us*,” and when God with *him* was *not* God with him, but God with *us*, then who was he but “*us*”? He had to be “*us*” in order that God with *him* could be not God with him, but “God with *us*.” And when he was crucified, then who was it but “*us*” that was crucified?

This is the mighty truth announced in this text. Jesus Christ was “*us*.” He was of the same flesh and blood with us. He was of our very nature. He was in all points like us. “It behooved him to be made in all points like unto his brethren” (Heb. 2:17). He emptied himself, and was made in the likeness of men. He was “the last Adam” (1 Cor. 15:45). And precisely as the first Adam was ourselves, so Christ, the last Adam, was ourselves. When the first Adam died, we, being involved in him, died with him. And when the last Adam was crucified, —*he* being ourselves, and we being involved in him, —*we* were crucified *with him*. As the first Adam was in himself the whole human race, so the last Adam was in *himself* the whole human race; and so when the last Adam was crucified, the whole human race—the old, sinful, human nature—was crucified with him. And *so* it is written: “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the *body of sin* might be *destroyed*, that henceforth we should not serve sin” (Rom. 6:6).

Thus every soul in this world can truly say, in the perfect triumph of Christian faith, “I am crucified with Christ”; my old sinful human nature is crucified with him, that this body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth I should not serve sin. (Rom. 6:6). Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me. Always bearing about in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus, —the

crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, for I am crucified with him, —that *the life also of Jesus* might be made manifest in my body. For I who live am always delivered unto death, for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in my mortal flesh. (2 Cor. 4:10, 11). And therefore the life, which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*.

In this blessed fact of the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, which was accomplished for every human soul, there is not only laid the foundation of faith *for* every soul, but in it there is given the *gift of faith* TO every soul. And thus the cross of Christ is not only the wisdom of God displayed from God to us, but it is the *very power of God* manifested to deliver us from all sin, and bring us to God.

O sinner, brother, sister, believe it. Oh, receive it. Surrender to this mighty truth. *Say* it, say it in full assurance of faith, and say it forever. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*." Say it; for it is the truth, the very truth and wisdom and power of God, who saves the soul from all sin."

[Advent Review and Sabbath Herald | October 24, 1899]

No Righteousness by Law | Galatians 2:21

“I do not frustrate the grace of God; for if righteousness come by law [*nomou*—law; not *ho nomos*—the law] then Christ died in vain” (Gal. 2:21).

This is one of those mighty, universal statements of eternal principles so frequently found in the writings of Paul. It is the climax of the argument begun in his protest to Peter when “before them all” Paul withstood him to the face because he “walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel” (Gal. 2:14). It will therefore make plainer to the reader the force of this climacteric, if we recall the issue as it was begun in Paul’s words to Peter: —

“When I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, If thou, *being born a Jew*, art wont to live according to the customs of the Gentiles, and not of the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to keep the ordinances of the Jews? *We who are Jews by nature*, and not sinners of the Gentiles, *knowing* that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, *even we* have believed in Jesus Christ, that [in order that] we might be justified by the faith of Christ and *not by works of law*: for by works of law shall no flesh be justified” (Gal. 2:14-16).

That is to say: We who are Jews by nature, who have all the advantages that pertain to the Jews, whose are the fathers, and the covenants, and the laws, and the ordinances, all given by the Lord himself directly to the Jews, —we who are Jews by nature and not sinners of the Gentiles, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by *the faith of Christ* and *not by works of law*: for by works of law shall no flesh be justified. The very fact that *we Jews*, with all the native advantages of all the laws of the Jews, have believed in Christ in order that we might be justified by faith—this in itself is open confession that there is no justification by law. When even we cannot be justified by all these laws, laws which even the Lord gave to us, but must be justified by *faith in Christ*, that is both confession and demonstration that there is no possibility of justification by law.

Nor in this is there any denial or frustration of the grace of God. It is true that it was the grace of God that gave to us all these laws, which are indeed all advantages; but these laws—any of them, or all of them together—were not given that we should be justified or find righteousness *by them*. The one great object of all these laws was and is *Christ*. In his great grace God gave to us all these laws that we might more plainly see, more clearly discern, and more fully know, *Christ*. They were all given that we should be justified—not *by the laws* but—by *Jesus Christ*; that we should find righteousness—not *by doing the laws*, but—by *believing in Jesus*.

Therefore when we who are Jews by nature, and who, as such, have all the advantages of all the laws ever given to the Jews, —when even we have believed in Jesus in order that we might find righteousness by faith of Jesus Christ and not by works of law, *in so doing we do not frustrate the grace of God*; for this is the very purpose of all these laws which themselves were given by the grace of God. And since Christ, and righteousness by faith in Christ, was and is the very object of all these laws, *then* “if righteousness come by law, *Christ died in vain*.”

And, finally, since Christ has died for our offenses, and is risen again for our justification, *now* for anybody to seek to be justified by law and not by *faith of Christ*, is to deny that Christ *ever* was the object of the laws, and so is to assert that justification is and always was by *works* and *not by faith*; and so is, in a word, the utter repudiation of Christ now and *ever*; because he is “the

Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,” and “who *verily* was foreordained *before* the foundation of the world.”

Consequently it is an eternal and universal principle that “if righteousness come by law, then Christ died in vain.”

“And let all the people say, Amen, and Amen.”

[Advent Review and Sabbath Herald | October 31, 1899]