

Bible Lessons



**"Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,
we are CHANGED" II Cor. 3:18**

ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE

**Vol. 13, No. 4
Oct., Nov., Dec.
1981**

**Faith Pub. House
Guthrie, Okla.
73044**

Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People

(USPS054-680)

Volume 13

Oct., Nov., Dec., 1981

No. 4

Table of Contents

| | | Page |
|---------|---|------|
| Oct. 4 | The Covenant of Faith to Abraham | 1 |
| Oct. 11 | The Giving of the Law | 8 |
| Oct. 18 | The Purpose of the Law | 15 |
| Oct. 25 | Weakness and Failure of the Law | 21 |
| Nov. 1 | Corruptions and Misuse of the Law | 26 |
| Nov. 8 | Old Testament Saints Saved by Their Faith . | 32 |
| Nov. 15 | Jesus Christ Brought Forth Under the Law .. | 37 |
| Nov. 22 | The New Covenant Written in the Heart | 42 |
| Nov. 29 | The Righteousness of Faith Versus the Righteousness of the Law | 48 |
| Dec. 6 | The Law Fulfilled in Christ | 53 |
| Dec. 13 | Judgment and Mercy | 57 |
| Dec. 20 | The Need for a Saviour | 61 |
| Dec. 27 | The Spiritual Heavens Shaken in Christ | 64 |

**Publishing the Bible truths in the interest of
Jesus Christ and His Church
Edited by Leslie C. Busbee, and other co-workers**

Subscription Price—50¢ a copy for quarter of year, or \$2.00 per year, issued quarterly.

Second class postage paid at Guthrie, Oklahoma.

Published Quarterly By
FAITH PUBLISHING HOUSE
920 W. Mansur Ave.
GUTHRIE, OKLAHOMA 73044

THEME FOR FOURTH QUARTER, 1981

We feel greatly inspired for this series of lessons to set forth a study of the difference between the Law and Grace. There is a lot of this laid out and dealt with in the Scriptures. It is very needful for everyone to come to a clear understanding on this subject. We are fully aware that the main essence of this subject must be opened up and revealed by the Holy Spirit. This we trust will be to each and every one as they consider the truths brought out in these lessons. There is a danger of being unbalanced in our thoughts and understanding concerning the real basis of our acceptance and favor with God. There is a "law spirit" that can take hold of a person. This law spirit will not allow one to bear with his fellow man. This law spirit can blossom into spiritual pride, and the attitude that Jesus ran into in His earthly ministry. This law attitude is not dead in the world today. It is so prevelant and is easy to fall into. May God help us to see the real truth on what the grace of God is, and just what is the basis of our acceptance with Him. May we seek to be as the apostle Paul said, "found in him [Christ], not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Phil. 3:9. —Bro. Leslie C. Busbee

OCTOBER 4, 1981

THE COVENANT OF FAITH TO ABRAHAM

Gen. 12:1 Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee:

2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

17:1 And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

3 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,

4 As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

Gal. 3:15 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.

16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

Heb. 6:13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself,

14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.

15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.

MEMORY VERSE: Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Gal. 3:6.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: God established His relationship with mankind on the terms of faith and exemplified it in the covenant He made with Abraham.

WORD DEFINITIONS: *Covenant*: a compact, a contract, an agreement between two or more parties: *Confirmed*: ratified or made authoritative. *Disannul*: invalidate or make of none effect.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The first in our series of lessons on the subject of "The Law and Grace" will be that of the "Covenant of Faith to Abraham." Now Abraham is a very important character to the Christian. He is important because God laid the basis of His work with the souls of men in His dealings with Abraham. He showed in His dealing with this man that all of His goodness and mercies will be granted to mankind in accord with their believing and trusting in Him. Abraham obeyed God, but it was because of his faith that he obeyed. Faith comes before obedience, for it is the strength that one must have to muster courage and determination to believe. God's dealings with Abraham shows the goodness, longsuffering, forbearance, and patience of the Lord. Had He laid down a rigid law first, there would have been no room for

tolerance and pity. But we see God laying aside for the present the high-demanding standard of His law, and stooping in love to establish an accord with mankind on the terms of love and faith. One would have to read the entire story of Abraham to get the overall picture, but we make mention of Abraham's call from God at the first and then the revealing of His wonderful covenant (which came about 24 years later). All this time, God was working and dealing with Abraham, bringing him to the place of utter trust and dependence on Him. The law was placed to one side to make room for the establishment of faith. This is a very important thought. The law was not given until 430 years after this. Faith had the priority over the law. It was necessary for Abraham to draw near to the heart of God in confidence, love and assurance. This was accomplished in the covenant of faith that God made with him.

—L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What did God promise to do with Abraham and his seed?
2. What was God's purpose in making a covenant with Abraham?
3. How old was Abraham when the covenant was made?
4. Who was the "seed of Abraham" to whom the promises were made?
5. What did it take on Abraham's part to see the covenant confirmed and brought to pass?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

God singled out Abraham from the ancient world in the midst of idolatry and darkness. It seems that Abraham was the only man in his area that clung to the knowledge of the true God that had come down from the forefathers. In response to this integrity, God revealed Himself to Abraham and gave him the command to leave his native country and journey to a place which would afterward be shown to him. Thus began the life of faith that Abraham is so noted for. Worshipping, seeking, and pleasing God became the sole occupation of this dear man. Dwelling in the land of Canaan as a stranger, and enduring the long wait for a son who was to be his heir, Abraham rode out the years of his earthly pilgrimage devoted to the covenant that God had made with him. The promise of God's inheritance was his constant companion and guide. Triumphant in the final test put on

him by the Lord in the offering up of Isaac, this man emerged upon the pages of history as the "Father of the faithful" whose posterity reaches into the realm of the Christian age. We that are saved and redeemed through the blood and righteousness of Christ are blessed with faithful Abraham. The faith that he had was not just for his own benefit. It was for us, also, because it substantiated the great communion of man with God. It showed that God wanted man to trust in Him and not in his own abilities. God purposed to establish this truth to man. Thus He dealt with Abraham upon the principles of faith alone. And still today, God designs to establish in Christ every soul in a faith and a confidence that nothing will move. We are to have for the basis of our hope and fellowship with God, His righteousness revealed in what Christ did for us in the New Testament plan of salvation. God knew there would be an inclination in the soul of man to try to trust in his own righteousness and good works; thus He seeks to offset this temptation by working on the principles of faith first. If every soul could but grasp this truth and seek to come to God according to faith as He planned, there would be success and victory every time. It would heal a man's backsliding and forever hold him fast in the grace of God. —Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There was a place and a purpose for the law. If the heart of man had been without sin, God would not have found it necessary to institute the law. If people in general would have been receptive to God through faith, as was Abraham, God could have communed and led each individual as He desired to do from the beginning. Sad to say, in order to bring the people to an understanding of how to serve Him, God had to institute a very strict and demanding law.

Notice an instance in the life of Abraham that reveals a spirit of love and unselfishness, as opposed to the law spirit. When the time came for Lot and Abraham to separate, Abraham willingly allowed Lot to choose the best land for his possession. Lawfully, Abraham should have acquired it, but God was so pleased with Abraham's decision and attitude, that He said, "I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered." Gen. 13:16.

Isaac was a recipient of the same faith and trust in God that his father possessed. Consider the time Isaac dug the

water wells in the valley of Gerar. When the herdsmen of Gerar strove with Isaac's herdsmen over the well, Isaac moved on to dig another. He surrendered two wells before being left in peace.

The attitudes portrayed by these two servants of God were more indicative of the New Testament spirit of turning the other cheek and going the second mile, rather than the law spirit of an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.

—Wayne Murphy

CHRISTIAN AND WORLDLY WISEMAN

In *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, are found numerous illustrations of the difference between the Law and grace. The first one came at the point when Christian is on his way to the wicket (narrow) gate in obedience to Evangelist's directions.

Now as Christian was walking solitarily by himself, he espied one afar off come crossing over the field to meet him; and their hap was to meet just as they were crossing the way of each other. The gentleman's name that met him was Mr. Worldly Wiseman: he dwelt in the town of Carnal Policy, a very great town, and also hardby from whence Christian came. This man, then, meeting with Christian, and having some inkling of him—for Christian's setting forth from the City of Destruction was much noised abroad, not only in the town where he dwelt, but also it began to be the town talk in some other places—Master Worldly Wiseman, therefore, having some guess of him, by beholding his laborious going, by observing his sighs and groans, and the like, began thus to enter into some talk with Christian.

World. How now, good fellow, whither away after this burdened manner?

Chr. A burdened manner indeed, as ever, I think, poor creature had! And whereas you ask me, Whither away? I tell you, Sir, I am going to yonder wicket-gate before me; for there, as I am informed, I shall be put into a way to be rid of my heavy burden.

World. Hast thou a wife and children?

Chr. Yes; but I am so laden with this burden that I cannot take that pleasure in them as formerly; methinks I am as if I had none.

World. Wilt thou hearken unto me if I give thee counsel?

Chr. If it be good, I will; for I stand in need of good counsel.

World. I would advise thee, then, that thou with all speed get thyself rid of thy burden; for thou wilt never be settled in thy mind till then; nor canst thou enjoy the benefits of the blessing which God hath bestowed upon thee till then.

Chr. That is that which I seek for, even to be rid of this heavy burden; but get it off myself, I cannot; nor is there any man in our country that can take it off my shoulders; therefore am I going this way, as I told you, that I may be rid of my burden.

World. Who bid thee go this way to be rid of thy burden?

Chr. A man that appeared to me to be a very great and honourable person; his name, as I remember, is Evangelist.

World. I beshrew him for his counsel; for there is not a more dangerous and troublesome way in the world than is that unto which he hath directed thee; and that thou shalt find, if thou wilt be ruled by his counsel. Thou hast met with something as I perceive, already; for I see the dirt of the Slough of Despond is upon thee; but that slough is the beginning of the sorrows that do attend those that go on in that way. Hear me, I am older than thou; thou art like to meet with, in the way which thou goest, wearisomeness, painfulness, hunger, perils, nakedness, sword, lions, dragons, darkness, and, in a word, death, and what not! These things are certainly true, having been confirmed by many testimonies. And why should a man so carelessly cast away himself, by giving heed to a stranger?

Chr. Why, sir, this burden upon my back is more terrible to me than are all these things which you have mentioned; nay, methinks I care not what I meet with in the way, if so be I can also meet with deliverance from my burden.

World. How camest thou by the burden at first?

Chr. By reading this book in my hand.

World. I thought so; and it is happened unto thee as to other weak men, who meddling with things too high for them, do suddenly fall into thy distractions; which distractions do not only unman men, as thine, I perceive, have done thee, but they run them upon desperate ventures to obtain they know not what.

Chr. I know what I would obtain; it is ease for my heavy burden.

World. But why wilt thou seek for ease this way, seeing so many dangers attend it? Especially since, hadst thou but patience to hear me, I could direct thee to the obtaining of what thou desirest, without the dangers that thou in this

way wilt run thyself into; yea, and the remedy is at hand. Besides, I will add that instead of those dangers thou shalt meet with much safety, friendship, and content.

Chr. Pray sir, open this secret to me.

World. Why, in yonder village (the village is named Morality) there dwells a gentleman whose name is Legality, a very judicious man, and a man of a very good name, that has skill to help men off with such burdens as thine are from their shoulders: yea, to my knowledge, he hath done a great deal of good this way; ay, and besides, he hath skill to cure those that are somewhat crazed in their wits with their burdens. To him, as I said, thou mayest go, and be helped presently. His house is not quite a mile from this place, and if he should not be at home himself, he hath a pretty young man to his son, whose name is Civility, that can do it (to speak on) as well as the old gentlemen himself; there, I say, thou mayest be eased of thy burden; and if thou art not minded to go back to thy former habitation, as indeed I would not wish thee, thou mayest send for thy wife and children to thee to this village, where there are houses now standing empty, one of which thou mayest have at reasonable rates; provision is there also cheap and good; and that which will make thy life the more happy is to be sure, there thou shalt live by honest neighbours, in credit and good fashion.

Now was Christian somewhat at a stand; but presently he concluded, If this be true which this gentlemen hath said, my wisest course is to take his advice; and with that he thus further spoke.

Chr. Sir, which is my way to this honest man's house?

World. Do you see yonder high hill?

Chr. Yes, very well.

World. By that hill you must go, and the first house you come at is his.

So Christian turned out of his way to go to Mr. Legality's house for help; but behold, when he was got now hard by the hill, it seemed so high, and also that side of it that was next the wayside did hang so much over, that Christian was afraid to venture further, lest the hill should fall on his head; wherefore there he stood still, and wotted not what to do. Also his burden now seemed heavier to him than while he was in his way. There came also flashes of fire out of the hill, that made Christian afraid that he should be burned. Here, therefore, he sweat and did quake for fear.

(to be continued)

OCTOBER 11, 1981

THE GIVING OF THE LAW

Ex. 19:10 And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes,

11 And be ready against the third day: for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.

12 And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death:

13 There shall not a hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live: when the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount.

16 And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.

18 And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.

19 And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.

20 And the Lord came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up.

20:1 And God spake all these words, saying,

2 I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

18 And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off.

19 And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

31:18 And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.

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

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The law given to Moses on Mt. Sinai was accompanied with fearful and awesome signs and visible and audible manifestations of God's power and majesty, and was written by God upon tables of stone and given to Moses in the Mount.

LESSON BACKGROUND

It was in the third month since the children of Israel had departed from Egypt. They were camped in the wilderness before the mountain of Sinai. This was the same as mount Horeb where Moses had been visited by God in the burning bush. God was choosing this time to speak to them His Law and Commandments. This was a literal nation of people, and the commandments which God was to give them were to come accompanied with an outward show of power and audible sound. It was so fearful a sight that Hebrews 12:21, states that Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." Try to imagine from the language of our lesson just what it would have been like to have been there. Thunders and lightnings proceeded from the mountain enveloped in a thick black cloud. A loud trumpet blast being prolonged was heard in the midst of black smoke which ascended as from a furnace. The whole mountain was shaking greatly. Then God's voice spoke from the midst of all of this terrible sight. It caused the people to want to back off and flee. It did not draw them nigh to God. It filled them with fear and terror. God called Moses up into the mount and communed with him for forty days and nights. He presented unto Moses at the end of the forty days two tablets of stone with the Law written thereon with His own hand. This was the giving of the Law to the people by Moses. It is good for us to have this scene well stamped in our minds and to view its every aspect. Try to put yourself in the place of the people. It did not take long to show that the people were not of any disposition to keep these laws. At the end of the forty days, Moses found them in the camp worshipping a golden calf. The first two commandments were broken already. No wonder Moses felt like breaking the tablets of stone into pieces. What good were they if the people would not keep them? —L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What did God do at Mount Sinai?

2. What kind of things were seen there?
3. What effect did this administration of the law have upon the people?
4. Upon what were the commandments written by God?
5. What was the first commandment given? Read the other nine in chapter 20, verses 4 through 17.

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

It is good to remember two sayings in the New Testament as we consider this lesson. Paul said in Gal. 3:19, "Wherefore then serveth the law? (For what purpose was it given?) It was added because of transgressions." Then Paul stated in 1 Tim. 1:9, "that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient," that is, the unrighteous. God knew that all this throng of people were unrighteous. The law would serve as a restraint to the people, but it also was a means of causing them to sense their own personal guilt. This was to help prepare them for the sense of their need for the Messiah, Jesus Christ, who would come to be their Saviour. The law was given in the way and manner that it was to show man's inability to keep just a written, carnal commandment. This was God's way of showing us in the New Testament age not to preach or teach His Word with a law spirit. Just telling people is not enough. They must sense the Saviour's love and power for themselves. Those who promote and preach the gospel should possess the same spirit of grace that Jesus had. Yes, it was a frightening experience to see the terrible display of the power and judgment of the wrath of God on Mount Sinai. But for all of this power and display, how far did it get with the people? Did it justify them and give them victory to live spiritual and faithful lives? May God help us today. How do we administer His Word today? Are we guilty of this same error? Do we beat people with the gospel and merely try to show them their error? If we do, we have nothing less than a law spirit. If we do not point people to the bleeding sacrifice of the Lamb of God, dying on Calvary, our preaching will miss the mark. Our dealing with other souls will be defeated. No matter how hard we try, the soul remains in darkness and prison until he or she beholds the wonderful grace of God. Let us not be guilty of administering the laws of God as was done on Mt. Sinai. It will not work. The heart must be touched and softened by the Holy Spirit and won to full salvation. Then

the laws can be deposited in their rightful place. Of this we will study later.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

2nd Rev 2002
Consider the manner in which God communed with the people on Mr. Sinai. Do you think this was His ideal way of communicating with mankind? I think not. Compare the difference between God's lightning, thunder, dense black smoke, and forceful long trumpet blast on Mt. Sinai to the quiet communing with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. It is wonderful to possess a quiet confidence and faith in God that enables us to communicate with Him in a restful, reassuring manner.

In presenting the Law, God found it necessary to impress the people in a way that would make believers out of them. Because human hearts were not in a condition to believe, God had to manifest Himself in an external way so faith would grow in the heart of man.

This is the way the law spirit manifests itself today. It is not a serene faith and quiet confidence in God, but a spirit that strikes terror to the soul. The law can only deal with the superficial part of an individual. The law was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. In our present day dispensation, we can possess a firm belief and trust in God and have no need for a harsh, outward show of religion. Each child of God can be led by the Holy Spirit. Because the law dealt only with the people's emotions and outward condition, there was no change of heart and it was not possible for them to live without sin. Just as the children of Israel turned from the scene of Mount Sinai and created a golden calf, people can depart from a worship service in the same condition as which they entered, unless they come in contact with a spirit typical of the love of God.

—Wayne Murphey

CHRISTIAN AND WORLDLY WISEMAN

Taken from *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan

(continued from last lesson)

And now he began to be sorry that he had taken Mr. Worldly Wiseman's counsel. And with that he saw Evangelist coming to meet him; at the sight also of whom he began to blush for shame. So Evangelist drew nearer and nearer; and coming up to him, he looked upon him with a severe and dreadful countenance, and thus began to reason with Christian.

Evan. What dost thou here, Christian? said he: at which words Christian knew not what to answer; wherefore at present he stood speechless before him. Then said Evangelist further, Art not thou the man that I found crying without the walls of the City of Destruction?

Chr. Yes, dear sir, I am the man.

Evan. Did not I direct thee the way to the little wicket-gate?

Chr. Yes, dear, sir, said Christian.

Evan. How is it, then, that thou art so quickly turned aside? For thou art now out of the way.

Chr. I met with a gentlemen so soon as I had got over the Slough of Despond, who persuaded me that I might, in the village before me, find a man that could take off my burden.

Evan. What was he?

Chr. He looked like a gentlemen, and talked much to me, and got me at last to yield, so I came hither; but when I beheld this hill, and how it hangs over the way, I suddenly made a stand, lest it should fall on my head.

Evan. What said that gentlemen to you?

Chr. Why, he asked me whither I was going, and I told him.

Evan. And what said he then?

Chr. He asked me if I had a family; and I told him. But, said I, I am so loaden with the burden that is on my back, that I cannot take pleasure in them as formerly.

Evan. And what said he then?

Chr. He bid me with speed get rid of my burden; and I told him 'twas ease that I sought. And, said I, I am therefore going to yonder gate, to receive further direction how I may get to the place of deliverance. So he said that he would show me a better way, and short, not so attended with difficulties as the way, sir, that you set me in; which way, said he, will direct you to a gentleman's house that hath skill to take off these burdens; so I believed him, and turned out of the way into this, if haply I might be soon eased of my burden. But when I came to this place, and beheld things as they are, I stopped for fear (as I said) of danger: but I now know not what to do.

Evan. Then, said Evangelist, stand still a little that I may show thee the words of God. So he stood trembling. Then said Evangelist, "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that

spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven." He said, moreover, "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." He also did thus apply them: Thou art the man that art running into this misery; thou hast begun to reject the counsel of the Most High, and to draw back thy foot from the way of peace, even almost to the hazarding of thy perdition.

Then Christian fell down at his feet as dead, crying, "Woe is me, for I am undone!" At the sight of which Evangelist caught him by the right hand, saying, "All manner of sin and blasphemies shall be forgiven unto men. Be not faithless, but believing." Then did Christian again a little revive, and stood up trembling, as at first before Evangelist.

Then Evangelist proceeded, saying, Give more earnest heed to the things that I shall tell thee of. I will now show thee who it was that deluded thee, and who it was also to whom he sent thee. The man that met thee is one Worldly Wiseman, and rightly is he so called; partly, because he savoureth only the doctrine of this world (therefore he always goes to the town of Morality to church): and partly, because he loveth that doctrine best, for it saveth him best from the cross. And because he is of this carnal temper, therefore he seeketh to pervert my ways though right. Now there are three things in this man's counsel that thou must utterly abhor.

1. His turning thee out of the way. 2. His labouring to render the cross odious to thee. 3. His setting thy feet in that way that leadeth unto the administration of death.

First, Thou must abhor his turning thee out of the way; yea, and thine own consenting thereto: because this is to reject the counsel of God for the sake of the counsel of a Worldly Wiseman. The Lord says, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate," the gate to which I sent thee; for "strait is the gate that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." From this little wicket-gate, and from the way thereto, hath this wicked man turned thee, to the bringing of thee almost to destruction; hate, therefore, his turning thee out of the way, and abhor thyself for hearkening to him.

Secondly, Thou must abhor his labouring to render the cross odious unto thee; for thou art to prefer it before "the treasures of Egypt." Besides, the King of Glory hath told thee that he that "will save his life shall lose it"; and he that comes after him, "and hates not his father, and mo-

ther, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." I say, therefore, for man to labour to persuade thee that that shall be thy death, without which, THE TRUTH hath said, thou canst not have eternal life; this doctrine thou must abhor.

Thirdly, Thou must hate his setting of thy feet in the way that leadeth to the ministration of death. And for this thou must consider to whom he sent thee, and also how unable that person was to deliver thee from thy burden.

He to whom thou wast sent for ease, being by name Legality, is the son of the bond-woman which now is, and is in bondage with her children; and is, in a mystery, this Mount Sinai, which thou hast feared will fall on thy head. Now if she, with her children, are in bondage, how canst thou expect by them to be made free? This Legality, therefore, is not able to set thee free from thy burden. No man was as yet ever rid of his burden by him; no, nor ever is like to be: ye cannot be justified by the works of the law; for by the deeds of the law no man living can be rid of his burden: therefore, Mr. Worldly Wiseman is an alien, and Mr. Legality is a cheat; and for his son Civility, notwithstanding, his simpering looks, he is but a hypocrite and cannot help thee. Believe me, there is nothing in all this noise that thou hast heard of these sottish men, but a design to beguile thee of thy salvation by turning thee from the way in which I had set thee. After this, Evangelist called aloud to the heavens for confirmation of what he had said: and with that there came words and fire out of the mountain under which poor Christian stood, that made the hair of his flesh stand up. The words were thus pronounced: "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."

Now Christian looked for nothing but death, and began to cry out lamentable; even cursing the time in which he met with Mr. Worldly Wiseman; still calling himself a thousand fools for hearkening to his counsel; he also was greatly ashamed to think that this gentleman's arguments, flowing only from the flesh, should have prevalency with him as to cause him to forsake the right way. This done, he applied himself again to Evangelist in words and sense as follow:

Chr. Sir, what think you? Is there hope? May I now go back and go up to the wicket-gate? Shall I not be aban-

doned for this, and sent back from thence ashamed? I am sorry I have hearkened to this man's counsel. But may my sin be forgiven?

Evan. Then said Evangelist to him, Thy sin is very great, for by it thou hast committed two evils: thou hast forsaken the way that is good, to tread forbidden paths; yet will the man at the gate receive thee, for he has good-will for men; only, said he, take heed that thou turn not aside again, lest thou perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Then did Christian address himself to go back; and Evangelist, after he had kissed him, gave him one smile and bid him God-speed.

OCTOBER 18, 1981

THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW

Rom. 3:9b For we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;

10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

13 (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

7:7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.

Gal. 3:19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

22 But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterward be revealed.

24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

MEMORY VERSE: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. Acts 13:39.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Four hundred and thirty years after God had established the covenant of faith with Abraham, He inserted the Law to help man to be conscious of his errors and sins, and to help prepare man for the Saviour that was to come.

LESSON BACKGROUND

All the writings and statements of our lesson today are from the hand of Paul, being inspired of the Holy Spirit. He was dealing with the great problem that had arisen in his day concerning the departure from the old law system to the new life in Christ. This is yet a problem in our day—a problem that arises when many well meaning and sincere people fail to grasp the truth concerning the difference between the law and grace. In our lesson it is clearly stated that the real purpose of the law was not to justify mankind, but rather to bring mankind into condemnation. It was to awaken in the heart of man the knowledge of the sinfulness of his condition before God. It was to help him to realize his need of a Saviour. God did not want man to go on unaware of his sin, and yet He did not want man to have any feeling that by good works he would merit favor with God. Thus the law was added—added to the covenant of Abraham that was established 430 years before on the principles of faith. In Rom. 5:14, Paul mentions how that “death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression.” The time he was referring to, the time from Adam to Moses, were the years when there was no law given. Now Adam had a law; he had a direct command from God. He and Eve knew full well and had been warned

not to partake of the forbidden fruit. Their disobedience brought spiritual death immediately and the expectation of physical death. But after they were driven out of the garden and their posterity began to multiply in the earth, there were no commandments or laws given to them. Their conscience was their law, the only law that they had. And yet death reigned. Sin was there, but sin was not imputed against them; however, God recognized the presence of sin in their lives. God wanted man to be saved and brought into His fellowship. In His mercy, God instituted faith to bring righteousness before He dealt with the sin question. Then later He gave the law to help men to see their sin. View God's wisdom and longsuffering and love for mankind in this. —L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did God not give the law before the covenant of faith?
2. What would have happened if man would have been brought into condemnation before mercy was given?
3. How should this effect our attitude toward sinners and those without today?
4. Was the law given to justify man?
5. What was the purpose of the giving of the law?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

As the Israelites journeyed toward Canaan, they were under the terms of the faith that Abraham and God had covenanted on long before. This was the grounds for God's deliverance for the people from Egypt. It was the faith of Abraham that had merited for them this great inheritance promised for them in the land of Canaan and their own faith that brought them out of the land of bondage. Now the law was to be given. As we studied in our last lesson, the law was given—accompanied with terrible sights and sounds. Fear was stricken in the hearts of the people. They turned away in terror, entreating Moses to not allow that voice to speak again. But it was the faith of Abraham that they disregarded and broke when they failed to wait for Moses when he was up in the holy mount. It was not the breaking of the law that drew the wrath of God. It was their unbelief and idolatry. It is the same today: breaking moral laws is not the thing that brings God's displeasure. God's Son has shed His precious blood for this, and mankind can be freely forgiven for all manner of sin, but it is the unbelief and the

rejection of the Saviour that seals man's doom. We need to be aware of this. If a man is lost, it will not be because he is a murderer, or a gambler, or a drunkard. It will be because he rejected the plan of salvation and the faith of Jesus Christ. Now the law was added to the plan of faith so that mankind could see wherein he was guilty before God. It was never meant to bring righteousness. One could not successfully live up to the law in his own power and strength. We shall see in further studies that a traditional law system along with the ceremonial part of the law prevailed which, in so adhering to, man felt a sense of righteousness. But man lost sight of the spiritual element of the law. His false cloak of righteousness was whisked away before the plain teaching of Jesus and His apostles. The ceremonial and traditional laws crumbled, exposing the proud Jews to be just what they really were: sinners in the sight of God in need of a Saviour. What Paul spoke of in Romans 7, was his law experience. It did not bring life, but it rather brought death. The condemnation for his breaking of the law brought death—miserable and wretched death to his soul. It was this sense of condemnation and death that prepared his heart for Christ.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Romans 3:20, declares, "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." This is where the law was lacking. There was no lasting justification in it. However, there was a purpose for the law having been instituted. At a particular time, it was of benefit to many people.

Although the law failed to justify a person, one could still find favor in the sight of God by obeying it, just as Job did. We read in Job 1:1, that he was "perfect and upright, and one that feared God." David was a man after God's own heart. One could be pleasing in the sight of God, by obeying the law, yet God desired a more meaningful relationship with man.

In learning to obey the Old Testament commands the Jews were preparing themselves to become acquainted with God through the Spirit.

—Wayne Murphey

THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

by John Bunyan

Christian was introduced to the House of the Interpreter after he had entered the narrow gate. Here are some of the things showed to him there.

Inter. Then said the Interpreter, Come in; I will show thee that which will be profitable to thee. So he commanded his man to light the candle, and bid Christian follow him: so he had him into a private room, and bid his man open a door; the which when he had done, Christian saw the picture of a very grave person hung up against the wall; and this was the fashion of it. It had eyes lifted up to heaven, the best of books in his hand, the law of truth was written upon his lips, the world was behind his back. It stood as if it pleaded with men, and a crown of gold did hang over his head.

Chr. Then said Christian, What meaneth this?

Inter. The man whose picture this is, is one of a thousand; he can beget children, travail in birth with children, and nurse them himself when they are born. And whereas thou seest him with his eyes lift up to heaven, the best of books in his hand, and the law of truth writ on his lips, it is to show thee that his work is to know and unfold dark things to sinners; even as also thou seest him stand as if he pleaded with men; and whereas thou seest the world as cast behind him, and that a crown hangs over his head, that is to show thee that slighting and despising the things that are present, for the love that he hath to his Master's service, he is sure in the world that comes next to have glory for his reward. Now, said the Interpreter, I have showed thee this picture first because the man whose picture this is, is the only man whom the Lord of the place whither thou art going hath authorized to be thy guide in all difficult places thou mayest meet with in the way; wherefore, take good heed to what I have showed thee, and bear well in thy mind what thou hast seen, lest in thy journey thou meet with some that pretend to lead thee right, but their way goes down to death.

Then he took him by the hand and led him into a very large parlour that was full of dust, because never swept; the which, after he had reviewed a little while, the Interpreter called for a man to sweep. Now when he began to sweep, the dust began so abundantly to fly about that Christian had almost therewith been choked. Then said the Interpreter to a damsel that stood by, Bring hither the water and sprinkle the room; the which, when she had done, it was swept and cleansed with pleasure.

Chr. Then said Christian, What means this?

Inter. The Interpreter answered, This parlour is the heart of a man that was never sanctified by the sweet grace of the

Gospel; the dust is his original sin and inward corruptions that have defiled the whole man. He that began to sweep at first is the Law; but she that brought water and did sprinkle it is the Gospel. Now whereas thou sawest that so soon as the first began to sweep, the dust did fly about that the room by him could not be cleansed, but that thou wast almost choked therewith; this is to show thee that the Law, instead of cleansing the heart (by its working) from sin, doth revive, put strength into, and increase it in the soul, even as it doth discover and forbid it, for it doth not give power to subdue.

Again, as thou sawest the damsel sprinkle the room with water, upon which it was cleansed with pleasure; this is to show thee that when the Gospel comes in the sweet and precious influences thereof to the heart, then, I say, even as thou sawest the damsel lay the dust by sprinkling the floor with water, so is sin vanquished and subdued, and the soul made clean through the faith of it, and consequently fit for the King of glory to inhabit.

I saw, moreover, in my dream, that the Interpreter took him by the hand and had him into a little room, where sat two little children, each one in his chair. The name of the eldest was Passion, and the name of the other Patience. Passion seemed to be much discontented; but Patience was very quiet. Then Christian asked, What is the reason of the discontent of Passion? The Interpreter answered, the Governor of them would have him stay for his best things till the beginning of the next year; but he will have all now: but Patience is willing to wait.

Then I saw that one came to Passion, and brought him a bag of treasure, and poured it down at his feet, the which he took up and rejoiced therein, and withal laughed Patience to scorn. But I beheld but a while, and he had lavished all away, and had nothing left him but rags.

Chr. Then said Christian to the Interpreter, Expound this matter more fully to me.

Inter. So he said, These two lads are figures: Passion, of the men of this world; and Patience, of the men of that which is to come; for, as here thou seest, Passion will have all now this year, that is to say, in this world; so are the men of this world, they must have all their good things now, they cannot stay till next year, that is, until the next world, for their portion of good. That proverb, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," is of more authority with them than are all the Divine testimonies of the good of the world

to come. But as thou sawest that he had quickly lavished all away, and had presently left him nothing but rags; so will it be with all such men at the end of this world.

OCTOBER 25, 1981

WEAKNESS AND FAILURE OF THE LAW

Rom. 7:7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.

9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.

Gal. 3:21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

Heb. 7:11 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?

12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

15 And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest,

16 Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.

18 For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof.

19 For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

10:1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

MEMORY VERSE: For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. Rom. 8:3.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The Law was weak and failed because it did not provide an atonement sufficient to really justify the soul; it did not furnish victory and power to enable one to triumph over sin.

Word Definitions: *Lust, concupiscence:* Here these two words are from the same Greek word meaning "strong desire." *Disannul:* abrogate, which means to repeal, put away, or do away with.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We are entering for our lesson today the teachings of Paul. We see in these that by the law was the knowledge of sin, and not the deliverance from sin. Being honest and speaking the truth, he was forced to admit that the Law of God in itself had no other effect upon him but to bring him into condemnation. Therefore he declared that the law was a failure as far as really saving and justifying a man from his sin. The law was good and just and holy, as he goes on to say in this seventh chapter of Romans. But it was sin working in his heart and life that asserted itself in the face of the law and brought him into condemnation and bondage. Sin will do this. Sin has a power and a strong hold on a person. All the law did was to bring sin to light and magnify it. The law failed so that man could be brought to a sense of his real condition and need. The law concluded all under sin so that the promise of faith by Jesus Christ could be given to all. The priesthood of the law was insufficient. They were not suffered to continue by reason of death. The writer in Hebrews grasped the truth of Psalms 110:4, where in prophecy Christ was declared to be "a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." The law was changed, and the priesthood was changed. The law did not bring perfection because it was weak through the flesh. It had no power to work upon the heart and the affections and to change men from sin to righteousness. The blood of bulls and goats that were the atoning offerings was not sufficient to cleanse the conscience of man from the stain of sin. The law had failed and

mankind is found in a worse state than before. He lies buried in the graveyard of sin with the gates locked by the law. Who will deliver man from the awful plight that he is in? Is there a Saviour? Yes, thank God, there is a Saviour!

—L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the main factor in the heart of man that caused the law to fail?
2. What was the condition of Paul before the commandment came? What happened when the law came?
3. How could the holy and just law of God bring out sin in mankind?
4. Was the priesthood under the law good enough? Why?
5. Why could not the blood of bulls and goats take away sin?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The law of Moses failed to bring the true reformation of mankind. God wills that we be persuaded of this. Just to tell a man where he is wrong without providing means to correct and reform is the spirit of the law. When I was a little boy, one time my aunt was at our house taking care of my mother and her household duties on the occasion of a new baby. On this day she told me that I could go outside and play, but I was to stay in the yard. I found that to stay in the yard was not the desired pastime when across the street were some of my friends engaged in lively play. I had the law that I was not to go over there, but the desire overcame me. Soon I was across the street enjoying the company of my friends. Then I heard the front door slam and my aunt was on the porch. "All right, Leslie!" I was caught. I was condemned to a good hard spanking. When she finished she said, "Now you can go back out and play, but stay out of the mud." That was the law. We had just had a good rain and there was plenty of mud outside. It seemed that I could find nothing else to do but to play in the mud. Soon I found myself in the mud. I heard the back door slam and my aunt was on the porch. "All right, Leslie!" So I got another spanking. This is a good, clear example of the law. The law said, "Thou shalt not covet!" But there was a disposition in the heart of man void of the love of God for his affections to wander. Thus, lust took hold and man was caught. The law said, "Thou shalt not kill." But man, void of the love of Christ, knew not how

to handle injury and the offences of others. Hatred, the forerunner of murder, sprang up. Man was caught and condemned by the law. That is all that the law did. It failed in that it provided man no cure for his ills or escape from the bondage of sin. The law alone will still fail today. It takes the love of Christ, the grace of God, and the power of the Holy Spirit to liberate a man from sin. —L. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

I recall hearing of a mother who endeavored to teach her daughter the difference between right and wrong. The mother would point out areas in the life of her daughter that were erroneous and try to instruct her in the ways of righteousness. The young girl had no inclination to serve God, but chose rather to fulfill her own desires. The time came when the young lady openly declared that she wished she had never known of the ways of God.

Here is an example of what the law alone will do. Just a set of rules and regulations will bring us into condemnation and load us with a troublesome burden. However, if we possess the Spirit of God within us, His commandments become our desire. —Wayne Murphey

MORE SCENES FROM *THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS*

by John Bunyan

Christian is joined by Faithful in their journey to heaven. Faithful relates to Christian his meeting with Adam the First and Moses:

Faith. When I came to the foot of the hill called Difficulty, I met with a very aged man, who asked me what I was and whither bound. I told him that I was a pilgrim going to the Celestial City. Then said the old man, Thou lookest like an honest fellow; wilt thou be content to dwell with me for the wages that I shall give thee? Then I asked him his name and where he dwelt. He said his name was Adam the First, and that he dwelt in the town of Deceit. I asked him then what was his work and what the wages that he would give. He told me that his work was many delights; and his wages that I should be his heir at last. I further asked him what house he kept and what other servants he had. So he told me that his house was maintained with all the dainties in the world; and that his servants were those of his own begetting. Then I asked how many children he had.

He said that he had but three daughters: The Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, and The Pride of Life, and that I should marry them all if I would. Then I asked how long time he would have me live with him. And he told me, As long as he lived himself.

Chr. Well, and what conclusion came the old man and you to at last?

Faith. Why, at first I found myself somewhat inclinable to go with the man, for I thought he spake very fair; but looking in his forehead, as I talked with him, I saw there written, "Put off the old man with his deeds."

Chr. And how then?

Faith. Then it came burning hot into my mind, whatever he said and however he flattered, when he got home to his house, he would sell me for a slave. So I bid him forbear to talk, for I would not come near the door of his house. Then he reviled me and told me that he would send such a one after me that should make my way bitter to my soul. So I turned to go away from him; but just as I turned myself to go thence, I felt him take hold of my flesh and give me such a deadly twitch back that I thought he had pulled part of me after himself. This made me cry, "O wretched man!" So I went on my way up the hill.

Now when I had got about half way up, I looked behind and saw one coming after me swift as the wind; so he overtook me just about the place where the settle stands.

Chr. Just there, said Christian, did I sit down to rest me; but being overcome with sleep, I there lost this roll out of my bosom.

Faith. But, good brother, hear me out. So soon as the man overtook me, he was but a word and a blow, for down he knocked me and laid me for dead. But when I was a little come to myself again, I asked him wherefore he served me so. He said, because of my secret inclining to Adam the First; and with that he struck me another deadly blow on the breast and beat me down backward; so I lay at his foot as dead as before. So when I came to myself again, I cried him mercy; but he said, I know not how to show mercy; and with that knocked me down again. He had doubtless made an end of me, but that one came by and bid him forbear.

Chr. Who was that that bid him forbear?

Faith. I did not know him at first, but as he went by I perceived the holes in his hands and in his side; then I concluded that he was our Lord. So I went up the hill.

Chr. That man that overtook you was Moses. He spareth none, neither knoweth he how to show mercy to those that transgress his law.

NOVEMBER 1, 1981

CORRUPTIONS AND MISUSE OF THE LAW

Mark 2:23 And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn.

24 And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful?

27 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:

28 Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

3:1 And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand.

2 And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him.

4 And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.

5 And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

7:9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

10 For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death:

11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free.

12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother;

13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

MEMORY VERSE: But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully. 1 Tim. 1:8.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Because of the blindness and corruptness of man's heart, the law that God gave by Moses

was misused, misapplied, and corrupted by traditions and commandments of men.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Some of the greatest problems that Jesus encountered in dealing with the Jews and the Pharisees had to do with the Sabbath Day. We have two cases mentioned in our lesson today about this misuse of the law. It is very easy to be legalistic about a carnal commandment and lose sight of the real essence of the law and what its true purpose is. God never instituted any of His laws just to put man in a strait jacket or bondage. God's laws for mankind were given with man's betterment and profit in mind. The law had provided (Deut. 23:25) that one could pluck corn from his neighbor's land when passing thereby. But the Pharisees had lost sight of the true essence of the law. They counted the picking of the handfuls of grain as work that was forbidden. Because of limited space, we did not include in the scripture text of the lesson what Jesus said in response to the Pharisees condemnation of the disciples. But He reminded them of a time when David broke the law of the tabernacle by eating of the shewbread when he was hungry. Reading the story from 1 Sam. 21, shows that David, in his flight from Saul, was in a real strait. God was merciful to David. God had instituted His laws for the profit of mankind. Jesus said that the sabbath was made for man; that is, it was made for the profit and benefit of man. Man was not made for the sabbath. If he had been made for the sabbath, then the spirit of the law would have to be satisfied regardless. Jesus also said that He was the Lord of the Sabbath. What did He mean? Harmonizing with the context, we are persuaded that He meant that the Sabbath was His dominion and He could handle and control it as He willed. See the misuse and corruption that the Pharisees had allowed in their hearts concerning the law? The man with the withered hand could not be healed on the sabbath, according to their way of thinking. And yet at the same time, they had allowed traditions to creep in that would excuse a man from supporting his parents in their time of need if he would give the money to the temple and to them. Jesus sternly rebuked such evil. We have the same problems today. There is a danger of having a law spirit, and failing to realize the mercy and goodness of God.

—L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What law was the Pharisees endeavoring to uphold?
2. Is it possible to become unreasonable in upholding the law?
3. In what way was the sabbath made for man?
4. What had the Pharisees done to the law?
5. Can you think of how this can be done today?

ADULT'S AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Besides bringing mankind into condemnation and guilt because of sin and disobedience, the danger of corrupting the law arose among Israel. Along with the law sprang up traditions and formal obligations, imposed by the leaders. The law commanded: "Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother." But somehow through the years, through covetousness, crept in the idea that if a man would give the money that he would ordinarily use for the support of his parents to the Pharisees and the priests, he would be free from the obligation of taking care of his parents. Think of the mothers and fathers who suffered because of this tradition. This tradition had crept into the law system and the leaders held it over the people as important as the law. Think of the money that was padding the pocket of the temple leaders. Their tradition had a religious cast that attracted many. "Give your money to the Church!" A covetousness had taken hold of the people's hearts. They made the commandments of none effect through holding this tradition over the people. This is something that has bothered and hindered the work of the Lord many times. The taking advantage of the law for a man's own personal promotion or benefit is corruption of the law. It is very easy to just obey and do without really understanding the principles and essence of the law. This God does not want. To go through a motion or a ritual or a form of worship is not sufficient with God. He desires the person's heart and understanding to be enlightened so that he or she can be aware of just what is taking place in their relations with the Lord. Religion can be just a form. "Do this and you will be blessed." That is the religion of so many: it is a law spirit. The kind, compatible, merciful, attitude is gone. There is no love or mercy or forbearance. It becomes a cold, hard, legalistic procedure. This lays the way open for corruptions and misuse of the law. May God help us to keep in view the real end of the commandment, which is "charity out

of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." 1 Tim. 1:5.

—Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

When one possesses a legalistic attitude, often their interpretation and additions to the Word of God are appalling.

In Num. 11:16, 17, Moses was told to appoint seventy men to aid in directing the procedures of the law. In the New Testament time, this group of men were referred to as the Sanhedrin. This was composed of chief priests, scribes, and lawyers acting as a supreme council. Under the mandates of the law, this council set about to put Jesus to death. These same interpreters of the law considered John, Peter, Stephen, and Paul as teachers of error and deceivers of the people. The Jews had so misused and modified the law to suit their own purposes, that Jesus in one place referred to it as "your law." Christ no longer considered it as the Law of the Father.

When holding forth something as the standard of God, we should be certain that it is what we claim it to be, and not some deviation conjured up by the mind of man.

—Wayne Murphey

CONVERSATION OF CHRISTIAN AND HOPEFUL

Taken from *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan.

Then Christian began and said, I will ask you a question. How came you to think at first of so doing as you do now?

Hope. Do you mean, how came I first to look after the good of my soul?

Chr. Yes, that is my meaning.

Hope. I continued a great while in the delight of those things which were seen and sold at our fair; things which, I believe now, would have (had I continued in them still) drowned me in perdition and destruction.

Chr. What things are they?

Hope. All the treasures and riches of the world. Also I delighted much in rioting, drinking, swearing, lying, uncleanness, . . . , and what not, that tended to destroy the soul. But I found at last, by hearing and considering of things that are divine, which indeed I heard of you, as also of beloved Faithful, that was put to death for his faith and good living in Vanity Fair, that "the end of these things is

death." And that for these things' sake "the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience."

Chr. And did you presently fall under the power of this conviction?

Hope. No, I was not willing presently to know the evil of sin, nor the damnation that follows upon the commission of it; but endeavoured, when my mind at first began to be shaken with the Word, to shut mine eyes against the light thereof.

Chr. But what was the cause of your carrying of it thus to the first workings of God's blessed Spirit upon you?

Hope. The causes were: 1. I was ignorant that this was the work of God upon me. I never thought that by awakenings for sin God at first begins the conversion of a sinner. 2. Sin was yet very sweet to my flesh, and I was loath to leave it. 3. I could not tell how to part with mine old companions, their presence and actions were so desirable unto me. 4. The hours in which convictions were upon me were such troublesome and such affrighting hours, that I could not bear, no not so much as the remembrance of them upon my heart.

Chr. Then, as it seems, sometimes you got rid of your trouble.

Hope. Yes, verily, but it would come into my mind again, and then I should be as bad, nay, worse, than I was before.

Chr. Why, what was it that brought your sins to mind again?

Hope. Many things, as,

1. If I did but meet a good man in the streets; or,
2. If I have heard any read in the Bible; or,
3. If mine head did begin to ache; or,
4. If I were told that some of my neighbours were sick; or,
5. If I heard the bell toll for some that were dead; or,
6. If I thought of dying myself; or,
7. If I heard that sudden death happened to others;
8. But especially, when I thought of myself, that I must quickly come to judgment.

Chr. And could you at any time with ease get off the guilt of sin, when by any of these ways it came upon you?

Hope. No, not I, for then they got faster hold of my conscience; and then, if I did but think of going back to sin (though my mind was turned against it), it would be double torment to me.

Chr. And how did you do then?

Hope. I thought I must endeavour to mend my life; for else, thought I, I am sure to be damned.

Chr. And did you endeavour to mend?

Hope. Yes, for a while; but at the last my trouble came tumbling upon me again, and that over the neck of all my reformati^ons.

Chr. How came that about, since you were now reformed.

Hope. There were several things brought it upon me, especially such sayings as these: "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." "By the works of the law no man shall be justified." "When you have done all things, say, We are unprofitable"; with many more such like. From whence I began to reason with myself thus: If all my righteousnesses are filthy rags; if by the deeds of the law no man can be justified; and if, when we have done *all*, we are yet unprofitable, then 'tis but a folly to think of heaven by the law. I further thought thus: If a man runs a hundred pounds into the shopkeeper's debt, and after that shall pay for all that he shall fetch, yet his old debt stands still in the book uncrossed; for the which the shopkeeper may sue him, and cast him into prison till he shall pay the debt.

Chr. Well, and how did you apply this to yourself?

Hope. Why, I thought thus with myself: I have by my sins run a great way into God's book, and that my now reforming will not pay off that score; therefore I should think still under all my present amendm^{en}ts, But how shall I be freed from that damnation that I have brought myself in danger of by my former transgressions?

(to be continued)

NOTICE: If your subscription expires with this fourth quarter issue, your renewal notice with remittance must be received in this office by **Nov. 15, 1981**, to assure you of receiving the next quarterly issue.

NOVEMBER 8, 1981

OLD TESTAMENT SAINTS SAVED BY THEIR FAITH

Hab.2:2 And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.

3 For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.

4 Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.

Heb. 11:12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore innumerable.

13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises. but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.

22 By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

MEMORY VERSE: We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak. 2 Cor. 4:13.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: It took faith in God for the Old Testament saints to triumph in their lives for God.

WORD DEFINITIONS: *Faith:* Trust, reliance, confidence, believing concerning things unseen and not received as yet.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Habakkuk was an Old Testament prophet who was greatly concerned about the work of God. He stood upon his watch tower of prayer to see what God's answer would be to the great burden of his heart. "The just shall live by his faith." That was the answer of God to him. All down through the ages of the law it was the faith of the people that was to carry them through. It was to be faith in God as their real righteousness. Despite the failings and misgivings of the law, it would take faith and real steadfast persuasion to carry the souls of men forward to victory. From the eleventh chapter of Hebrews we draw a recounting of many of those heroes of faith. The writer starts in the first part of the chapter by saying that the elders (ancients, or saints of old) obtained a good report. The Greek text reads that by faith they were attested. In other words, they were tried and proven. The pressure and trying circumstances that these saints believed God in the midst of was a refining fire to their faith. It caused their souls to tread the high places of victory and salvation. Faith was manifested in Abel, Enoch, and Noah. Then the covenant of faith was established in Abraham. Sarah, the wife of Abraham, manifested faith in God, also. It took faith to conceive and bring forth Isaac in her old age. Note the fact that the early-day saints of God were human beings, but they had the qualities of faith in their lives. Such are we today if we are saved in Christ. We are human beings. We have mortal and physical occupations to render, but there must be sure and definite fabric in our lives of faith and trueness to God. These Old Testament saints have proven a great blessing even down in our day. The faith that they manifested and put on exhibition is the same faith that we need today to lead victorious lives for Christ. —L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What was the quality in the lives of the saints that enabled them to triumph?
2. Is faith needed yet today?
3. Of what value is the record of their faith?
4. What was "that better thing" provided for us today that they did not have?
5. Will their faith be of any value to them in the judgment?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The testimonies of faith and triumphs of the Old Testament saints are of great spiritual value to us today. We are joined to them in a mutual faith. Without us they could not be made perfect. And yet without them, we could not have had the faith that we now have. We have the fulfillment of their faith, and yet our faith is like theirs. We are reaching forth to the coming of Christ as they looked forward to the first coming of the Saviour. It was their faith in the future and the promises of God that had not yet been fulfilled that was accounted to them for righteousness. Their faith prevailed beyond death. The deadness of Sarah's womb, the extreme age of Abraham's body, Jacob's blessing to Joseph's two sons as he was dying, Joseph's command concerning his bones, Moses' renunciation of Egypt despite the wrath of the king—all of these were faith triumphing over the presence and threat of death. Time ran out on the writer; many more could have been rehearsed, but it was the same story with each of them. They held fast their persuasion and faith in God in the face of extreme contradictory forces. Overcoming daily with faith and steadfast confidence in God and His unfailing promises, these people went forth in their lives for the will of God. This is the same faith that we need today. As they needed it, so we need it. As they had it, so can we have it. The faith of Abraham is what brought the real work of God along through those many years of time. It is this faith that we need in Christian lives today. It is a mutual and shared faith. It is a tie that binds us together. It holds us fast to the will of God, and we are clinging to the promise and we dare not go against the good Lord. May we be inspired as never before to cling to and stand for the truth of Jesus Christ and keep His faith unto the end. —Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There was nothing within the law itself that could give one eternal life. Note the difference between the Old and the New Testament as it pertains to references of such things as everlasting life, eternal glory, and eternal inheritance.

The Old Testament dispensation instituted physical deeds to be completed for the forgiveness of sins. This in itself did not guarantee everlasting life. We understand that it is not by works that we are saved. This is why faith played such an important role. To gain eternal life, one was to have faith in the future appearance of a Saviour. Just as all of our religious endeavor would become void and fruitless if we failed to believe in Christ's death and resurrection, so the people of that time would have possessed a useless religion had they not believed in the coming of a Messiah.

—Wayne Murphey

CONVERSATION OF CHRISTIAN AND HOPEFUL

(Taken from *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan.)

(continued from last lesson)

Chr. A very good application: but pray, go on.

Hope. Another thing that hath troubled me, even since my late ammendments, is, that if I look narrowly into the best of what I do now, I still see sin, new sin, mixing itself with the best of what I do; so that now I am forced to conclude that, notwithstanding my former fond conceits of myself and duties, I have committed sin enough in one duty to send me to hell, though my former life had been faultless.

Chr. And what did you do then?

Hope. Do! I could not tell what to do, till I brake my mind to Faithful, for he and I were well acquainted. And he told me that unless I could obtain the righteousness of a man that never had sinned, neither mine own, nor all the righteousness of the world could save me.

Chr. And did you think he spake true?

Hope. Had he told me so when I was pleased and satisfied with mine own amendment, I had called him fool for his pains; but now, since I see mine own infirmity, and the sin that cleaves to my best performance, I have been forced to be of his opinion.

Chr. But did you think, when at first he suggested it to you, that there was such a man to be found, of whom it might justly be said, that he never committed sin?

Hope. I must confess the words at first sounded strangely, but after a little more talk and company with him, I had full conviction about it.

Chr. And did you ask him what man this was, and how you must be justified by him?

Hope. Yes, and he told me it was the Lord Jesus, that dwelleth on the right hand of the Most High. And thus, said he, you must be justified by him, even by trusting to what he hath done by himself in the days of his flesh, and suffered when he did hang on the tree. I asked him further, how that man's righteousness could be of that efficacy to justify another before God? And he told me he was the mighty God, and did what he did, and died the death also, not for himself, but for me; to whom his doings and the worthiness of them should be imputed, if I believed on him.

Chr. And what did you do then?

Hope. I made my objections against my believing, for that I thought he was not willing to save me.

Chr. And what said Faithful to you then?

Hope. He bid me go to him and see. Then I said it was presumption; but he said, No, for I was invited to come. Then he gave me a book of Jesus his inditing, to encourage me the more freely to come; and he said concerning that book, that every jot and tittle thereof stood firmer than heaven and earth. Then I asked him, What I must do when I came; and he told me, I must entreat upon my knees with all my heart and soul, the Father to reveal him to me. Then I asked him further, How I must make my supplication to him. And he said, Go, and thou shalt find him upon a mercy-seat, where he sits all the year long, to give pardon and forgiveness to them that come. I told him that I knew not what to say when I came. And he bid me say to this effect: God be merciful to me a sinner, and make me to know and believe in Jesus Christ; for I see that if his righteousness had not been, or I have not faith in that righteousness, I am utterly cast away. Lord, I have heard that thou art a merciful God, and hast ordained that thy Son Jesus Christ should be the Saviour of the world; and moreover, that thou art willing to bestow him upon such a poor sinner as I am (and I am a sinner indeed); Lord, take therefore this opportunity, and magnify thy grace in the salvation of my soul, through thy Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

NOVEMBER 15, 1981

JESUS CHRIST BROUGHT FORTH UNDER THE LAW

Gal. 4:1 Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father.

7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Rom. 3:19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference.

MEMORY VERSE: The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. Luke 16:16.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Jesus Christ was born, grew to manhood, and began His ministry under the law. He respected, honored, and obeyed the law, but it was for the purpose of redeeming those who also were under the law to the spiritual sonship of the New Covenant that He was to establish.

WORD DEFINITIONS: *Made under the law:* born under the law. *Adoption:* sonship.

LESSON BACKGROUND

In the previous lessons we have studied the establishing of God's relationship with man on the principles of faith and the giving of the law which came 430 years later. We have viewed the purpose of the law, why it failed to bring real perfection to the soul, how it was corrupted and misused, and how that faith was employed during the time of the law for those who really served God. Today we will behold the Saviour being brought forth into the world, born of a woman, born under the law. But let us bear in mind the truth that Christ was not born under the law to continue under the law. No, He was brought forth to rescue and to redeem those who were condemned and under the sentence of death by the law. He came to bring to men the access to eternal sonship with the Father. We see Him bearing the curse of the law for us. In other words, He took the punishment that the law prescribed for offenders. He became "sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself. 2 Cor. 5:19-21. The world had become guilty before God. The law had justified no one, and mankind lay in spiritual death and degradation. Satan had taken over many lives with evil bondage and disease. The religious system that professed to be holding to the law was corrupted with covetousness and self-righteousness. But Jesus came forth into the world, taking upon Himself human flesh. He was born of a woman just as every other man had been born. He entered into the realm of the great conflict with Satan. There was much importance and serious consequences at stake as Jesus made His advent into the world. But thank God, He came and we shall behold the glory and blessing of His salvation in the remaining lessons of this study.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Can you think of different incidents that showed Jesus being subject to the law?
2. Who does He want to redeem and what are they to receive?
3. In what ways is the Spirit of adoption superior to servitude under the law?
4. How was Christ made a curse?
5. Why can there be no flesh justified by the law?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Christ Jesus came forth into this world under the jurisdiction and authority of the law. Joseph and Mary respected and obeyed the laws of God. When Jesus was taken as an infant to the temple in Jerusalem, it was in obedience to the law. The law had given the commandment that every male child that was the first-born was to be holy unto the Lord. Mary and Joseph took Jesus to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord, and to offer the sacrifice that was commanded in the law—a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons. Luke 2:22-24. At the age of twelve Jesus was taken, after the custom of the law, to Jerusalem and the feast. Jesus alluded to the law many times in His ministry. The scriptural rebukes with which He overcame Satan in the days of temptation were taken from the law. The leperous men that He healed were commanded to go and show themselves to the priests, after the manner of the law. His quotations from the law were time and time again a reproof to the Jews who professed to be keeping the law. Jesus was fully aware of their problem. He knew that they were not keeping the law, and they knew it, too. Thus they were enraged when Jesus tore their play house down. He showed them that there was not any shelter in their superficial religious system. Christ was under the law, but He was bringing in a better hope all the time. There was an overlapping of the law system with that of grace. From the days of John the Baptist, God was bringing forth the New Testament Plan of Salvation. The animal sacrifices had lost their value in the face of the real sacrifice, the Victim for the salvation of men, who walked and talked in their midst. Christ was not bringing to the souls of men another carnal commandment of "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not." He was bringing the Spirit of adoption, or Sonship. He was the Son of God, and was to give His life on Calvary that we might be sons of God even as He was. Thus, we are to no longer be as servants who take commands, but we are to be in the bosom of the Father, obeying and serving Him with a joy of acceptance, being His heirs. It was no longer to be a system of where men obeyed to gain favor, but it was favor granted as a gift of righteousness, winning the heart and affection to an obedience that satisfied the obeyer and Obeyed. —Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Gal. 4:1-4, of our lesson likens the season of childhood to the law dispensation. During the primary years of life, rules and regulations are a necessity. Due to his total ignorance of right and wrong, a child has to be instructed as to what is permissible and what is not.

There comes a time when the child matures and develops into an adult. The rules of childhood no longer apply. The individual begins to form personal opinions and convictions. If the former rules are adhered to, it is likely due to a love and respect for early training and parental supervision and a realization that these values are right.

The society that Christ was born into was one in which the Law had been given and enforced. The people were instructed according to righteousness and wickedness. However, the time came when the Jews began to put their own interpretation on the law. God knew that if people were going to serve Him, there would have to be a cleansing of the heart. Being legalistic would not bring about the needed change as would a love and respect for God's laws.

—Wayne Murphey

CONVERSATION OF CHRISTIAN AND HOPEFUL

Taken from *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan

(continued from last lesson)

Chr. And did you do as you were bidden?

Hope. Yes, over, and over, and over.

Chr. And did the Father reveal his Son to you?

Hope. Not at the first, nor second, nor third, nor fourth, nor fifth; no, nor at the sixth time neither.

Chr. What did you do then?

Hope. What! why I could not tell what to do.

Chr. Had you not thought of leaving off praying?

Hope. Yes; an hundred times twice told.

Chr. And what was the reason you did not?

Hope. I believed that that was true which had been told me, to wit, that without the righteousness of this Christ, all the world could not save me; and therefore, thought I with myself, if I leave off I die, and I can but die at the throne of grace. And withal, this came into my mind, "If it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." So I continued praying until the Father showed me his Son.

Chr. And how was he revealed unto you?

Hope. I did not see him with my bodily eyes, but with the eyes of my understanding; and thus it was: One day I was very sad, I think sadder than at any one time in my life, and this sadness was through a fresh sight of the greatness and vileness of my sins. And as I was then looking for nothing but hell, and the everlasting damnation of my soul, suddenly, as I thought, I saw the Lord Jesus Christ look down from heaven upon me, and saying, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

But I replied, Lord, I am a great, a very great sinner. And he answered, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Then I said, But, Lord, what is believing? And then I saw from that saying, "He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst," that believing and coming was all one; and that he that came, that is, ran out in his heart and affections after salvation by Christ, he indeed believed in Christ. Then the water stood in mine eyes, and I asked further, But, Lord, may such a great sinner as I am be indeed accepted of thee, and be saved by thee? And I heard him say, "And him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." Then I said, But how, Lord, must I consider of thee in my coming to thee, that my faith may be placed aright upon thee? Then he said, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." "He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes." "He died for our sins, and rose again for our justification: He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." "He is mediator between God and us." "He ever liveth to make intercession for us." From all which I gathered, that I must look for righteousness in his person, and for satisfaction for my sins by his blood; that what he did in obedience to his Father's law, and in submitting to the penalty thereof, was not for himself, but for him that will accept it for his salvation, and be thankful. And now was my heart full of joy, mine eyes full of tears, and mine affections running over with love to the name, people, and ways of Jesus Christ.

Chr. This was a revelation of Christ to your soul indeed; but tell me particularly what effect this had upon your spirit.

Hope. It made me see that all the world, notwithstanding all the righteousness thereof, is in a state of condemnation. It made me see that God the Father, though he be just, can justly justify the coming sinner. It made me greatly ashamed of the vileness of my former life, and confounded me with the sense of mine own ignorance; for there never came thought

into my heart before now that showed me so the beauty of Jesus Christ. It made me love a holy life, and long to do something for the honour and glory of the name of the Lord Jesus; yea, I thought that had I now a thousand gallons of blood in my body, I could spill it all for the sake of the Lord Jesus.

-----o-----
NOVEMBER 22, 1981

THE NEW COVENANT WRITTEN IN THE HEART

Heb. 8:1 Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;

2 A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

6 But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

9 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:

11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for he shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

13 In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

2 Cor. 3:3 Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.

6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

7 But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away;

8 How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?

MEMORY VERSE: This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them. Heb. 10:16.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The laws of God are no longer a written set of rules that we must obey, but in Christ Jesus the Holy Spirit writes the laws of God upon the tables of our heart, with His power and love blending and harmonizing the holiness of the Lord with the humble, yielded soul.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The epistle to the Hebrews seems to be a special message to the Jews revealing the change from the Old Testament to the New, from the old law system to that which is through the grace of God. Paul is most generally regarded as the author, although some have speculated that the author could have been Apollos. But regardless of who wrote this wonderful book, it was surely inspired and anointed of God. While Moses was upon the holy mount receiving the commandments and pattern for the worship of God, he received two tables of stone whereon was written, by the finger of God, the ten commandments. Upon returning to the camp of Israel, he was dismayed and sad to see the people worshipping the golden calf. In his wrath, Moses cast the two tables of stone to the ground, breaking them to pieces. Later God called Moses up again unto the mount, and Moses hewed out two tables of stone and the commandments were written again on these stones. When Moses returned from the second stay in the mount, his face shone so brightly with the glory of God that the people could not look upon him. In the lesson for today, the law was termed a covenant. But now we see a new covenant that in Christ Jesus is being made with all who are saved in Him. This time, instead of on tables of stone, the laws of God are inscribed upon the tables of the

heart of man. This means that God's law of holiness and righteousness is impressed vividly upon the affections and desires. This is the work of the Holy Spirit in the new covenant. This is where the law of God should be. Merely to have the law written out to be obeyed is not enough. The soul of man must be cleansed from sin and the truth written indelibly upon the heart and mind. This is accomplished in the New Testament plan of salvation wherein the soul is saved and sanctified by the Spirit of God. —L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why did the law written on stones fail?
2. In Christ where are the laws of God written now?
3. What is the difference between the two?
4. Who writes the law upon the heart?
5. What is the result in the life of one who has the laws of God written upon his heart?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Oh, the wonderful truth of our lesson today! We are living in the time of abounding grace; there is no excuse for disobedience and sin today. God has not only commanded, but He has provided the wonderful free gift of righteousness that will justify us without the deeds of the law and has sent the Holy Spirit and made Him available to all. The Holy Spirit coming into the soul to take up His sacred abode, brings power and inspiration to do and to be. The Holy Spirit burns in holy love a standard of purity and holiness that is well pleasing in God's sight right in the soul of man. Sin is purged out and the love of God reigns supreme. There is no desire to do wrong. What temptations come by way of the flesh are subdued and overcome. Thus we are victorious over sin and death. "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 15:56-57. We overcome all things through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ who has conquered sin and the power of death. We are thus delivered from our enemies and the power of Satan so that we can live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world. See how firm and sure this is. See how uncertain and shakey the old system was. See how souls did fail under that way of the law! It was impossible to live up to the law, but in Christ Jesus the power of the Holy Spirit is made available to us. Oh, how we need to consecrate our lives and

yield our all to Him! He wants to sanctify the soul and make us His sacred dwelling. He wants to write upon every heart the laws and commandments of the Lord. Hereby the commandments of God are not grievous: the love of Christ constrains us. Look at the new covenant and compare it with the old. Behold, today this principle still is true. Trying to live for God in our own strength is to be under the law. It will generate bondage and self-righteousness and pride: but to fully realize our helplessness and plead for the mercy and grace of God will qualify us for receiving the grace of God and the gift of righteousness. Thus the laws of God are written and imprinted upon the mind and heart. We can live for God victoriously.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The religion of many people is similar to the ten commandments given by God to Moses—it is easily broken. Many people purpose to turn over a new leaf and some make New Year's resolutions. Do you ever question why so few are kept? It is because frail human will power and strength are pitted against a devil's wisdom. Satan has been at his business for over 6,000 years, and possesses a great deal of experience; however, when the power of God is brought on the scene, we can be more than conquerors.

The tables of stone which Moses received on Mt. Sinai were kept in the Ark of the Covenant. The ark signified a protection. This is true with the new covenant of today. God's law written upon our hearts serves as a protection from all the devices of the enemy. The devil can no longer exercise power over us unless we willingly lower our defences and surrender to him. With the law of God en-scribed upon our hearts we no longer face inward turmoil and strife as we endeavor to keep the commands of God.

—Wayne Murphey

CHRISTIAN DISCOURSES WITH IGNORANCE

Taken from *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan

Then directing his speech to Ignorance, he said, Come, how do you? How stands it between God and your soul now?

Ignor. I hope well; for I am always full of good motions, that come into my mind to comfort me as I walk.

Chr. What good motions? pray, tell us.

Ignor. Why, I think of God and heaven.

Chr. So do the devils and damned souls.

Ignor. But I think of them and desire them.

Chr. So do many that are never like to come there. "The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing."

Ignor. But I think of them, and leave all for them.

Chr. That I doubt; for leaving all is a hard matter: yea, a harder matter than many are aware of. But why, or by what, art thou persuaded that thou hast left all for God and heaven?

Ignor. My heart tells me so.

Chr. The wise man says, "He that trusts his own heart is a fool."

Ignor. This is spoken of an evil heart, but mine is a good one.

Chr. But how dost thou prove that?

Ignor. It comforts me in hopes of heaven.

Chr. That may be through its deceitfulness; for a man's heart may minister comfort to him in the hopes of that thing for which he yet has no ground to hope.

Ignor. But my heart and life agree together, and therefore my hope is well grounded.

Chr. Who told thee that thy heart and life agree together?

Ignor. My heart tells me so.

Chr. Ask my fellow if I be a thief! Thy heart tells thee so! Except the Word of God beareth witness in this matter, other testimony is of no value.

Ignor. But is it not a good heart that hath good thoughts? and is not that a good life that is according to God's commandments?

Chr. Yes, that is a good heart that hath good thoughts, and that is a good life that is according to God's commandments; but it is one good thing indeed to have these, and another thing only to think so.

Ignor. Pray, what count you good thoughts, and a life according to God's commandments?

Chr. There are good thoughts of divers kinds; some respecting ourselves, some God, some Christ, and some other things.

Ignor. What be good thoughts respecting ourselves?

Chr. Such as agree with the Word of God.

Ignor. When do our thoughts of ourselves agree with the Word of God?

Chr. When we pass the same judgment upon ourselves which the Word passes. To explain myself: The Word of God saith of persons in a natural condition, "There is none

righteous, there is none that doth good." It saith also, that "every imagination of the heart of man is only evil, and that continually." And again, "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." Now then, when we think thus of ourselves, having sense thereof, then are our thoughts good ones, because according to the Word of God.

Ignor. I will never believe that my heart is thus bad.

Chr. Therefore thou never hadst one good thought concerning thyself in thy life. But let me go on. As the Word passeth a judgment upon our *heart*, so it passeth a judgment upon our *ways*; and when our thoughts of our *hearts* and *ways* agree with the judgment which the Word giveth of both, then are both good, because agreeing thereto.

Ignor. Make out your meaning.

Chr. Why, the Word of God saith that man's ways are crooked ways, not good, but perverse. It saith they are naturally out of the good way, that they have not known it. Now when a man thus thinketh of his ways, I say when he doth sensibly and with heart-humiliations, thus think, then hath he good thoughts of his own ways, because his thoughts now agree with the judgment of the Word of God.

Ignor. What are good thoughts concerning God?

Chr. Even as I have said concerning ourselves, when our thoughts of God do agree with what the Word saith of him; and that is, when we think of his being and attributes as the Word hath taught; of which I cannot now discourse at large. But to speak of him with reference to us: Then we have right thoughts of God, when we think that he knows us better than we know ourselves, and can see sin in us when and where we can see none in ourselves; when we think he knows our inmost thoughts, and that our heart, with all its depths, is always open unto his eyes; also when we think that all our righteousness stinks in his nostrils, and that therefore he cannot abide to see us stand before him in any confidence, even in all our best performances.

Ignor. Do you think that I am such a fool as to think God can see no further than I? or that I would come to God in the best of my performances?

Chr. Why, how dost thou think in this matter?

Ignor. Why, to be short, I think I must believe in Christ for justification.

Chr. How! think thou must believe in Christ, when thou seest not thy need of him! Thou neither seest thy original nor actual infirmities; but hast such an opinion of thyself, and of

what thou dost, as plainly renders thee to be one that did never see a necessity of Christ's personal righteousness to justify thee before God. How then dost thou say, I believe in Christ?

(to be continued)

NOVEMBER 29, 1981

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF FAITH VERSUS THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE LAW

Rom. 10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

3 For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)

7 Or, who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11 For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

MEMORY VERSE For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Rom. 10:4.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The only true way to be righteous in the sight of God is to confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead. This faith and its confession makes us to be His workmanship and new creation unto good works that is pleasing to God.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We have for our lesson today a most sublime and clear teaching from the Bible. It brings the two righteousnesses to comparison, and declares that Christ brings an end to the law for righteousness. We may as well acknowledge the truth: there is no way that a man can be made righteous just by keeping God's commands. If man could keep God's commands, he might be made righteous that way, but man, without the grace and love of the Lord Jesus, is incapable of living up to the holiness of God. Thus the covenant of faith that God established with Abraham emerges as the triumphant link of God with man. As we have seen, the inserting of the law proved that faith was the only means by which a man could be justified. Truthfully and honestly, the law made nothing perfect, neither did it justify anyone. To be righteous by the law, one had to do what it said. But no one could really do what the law said. It paved the way for grace and mercy to come when it brought man to a sense of his own guilt. As we have already learned, the law was good and just, but the sin that was in mankind rendered the law incapable of bringing righteousness. But when Jesus came and paid the perfect price for man's redemption, clearing the offence to God out of the way, the Father's loving favor of strength and inspiration was brought down. And Paul's great desire was to see his fellow Israelites come to this realization. He wanted them to be saved. He bore witness of their zeal for God, but he was forced to confess that it was not according to knowledge. They were going about to establish their own righteousness. Beware of this! The danger of such a state is not past. It was because they were ignorant of what God's righteousness really was. Beware of this. May we gain an understanding of what God's righteousness really is, and escape the snare of self-righteousness. —L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What was Paul's concern for Israel?
2. What kind of righteousness were they going about to establish?
3. Were they aware of what they were doing?
4. Is it possible for us to do this today?
5. How can we be sure that we are not seeking our own righteousness?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The righteousness of the law was summed up as: The man that does those things shall live by them. Paul declares that this is foreign to the true righteousness. The law is not of faith. Gal. 3:12. To seek to get righteousness through the law is vain endeavor. The law was given to make man conscious of his sin. A sincere Israelite faithfully offered sacrifices for his sins with respect for the promised Saviour that was to come. He felt the load and guilt that his sins heaped upon him. The law made sin to be more exceeding sinful. In other words, the righteousness of the law was not a reality. It sounded good on paper, but it could not be brought into actuality. Instead of bringing righteousness, it brought more awareness of sin. Instead of bringing life, it produced death. But it was serving the wonderful purpose of preparing men to receive the wonderful gift of righteousness through the Lord Jesus Christ. It was as Paul said in Gal. 3:24,25, a "schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." The Greek word from which schoolmaster is translated is "paidagogue" which means a child leader, that is, a servant whose office it was to take the children to school. A school bus picks up a child at his home and transports him to school. Paul likens the law to this. When the school bus arrives at the school, the child gets off and has no further need for the school bus while he is at the school. The law was a means of preparing us for Christ. But when we receive Christ, we need the law no longer, for He is our law and we follow Him as our Shepherd. Note what the righteousness of faith says. It stills human endeavor and points the soul to rest and faith in Christ. "Say not, who shall ascend into heaven to bring Christ down? Say not, who shall descend into the deep to bring him up from the dead?" This is quieting the storm of our own frailty. It is the recognition of the supremacy of God's accomplishments over our own. It takes away all the boasting and replaces it with thanksgiving, praise, honor, and worship.

The righteousness of faith is taking hold of the promises and laying claim to their eternal value. It is the accepting of the plan of salvation as the gift of God. —Leslie Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The Pharisee of whom Jesus spake in the eighteenth chapter of Luke, is a prime illustration of the righteousness of the Law. If one could have been saved by works, this man would have undoubtedly been assured of a home in Heaven. The Pharisee's self-denial probably exceeds that of many Christians today; however, his virtues were of no avail because there was no inward righteousness.

Many people today enjoy exhibiting their religion. They are observed by others who view them and think, "That individual must surely be a child of God." Often, however, the true saint of God is the one secluded in the background. He is the one you can approach in confidence, knowing that you will not be received with ridicule or harshness.

By accepting God's salvation through faith and realizing our own righteousness is as filthy rags, we can obtain a righteousness that will gain for us a home in Heaven.

—Wayne Murphey

CHRISTIAN DISCOURSES WITH IGNORANCE

Taken from *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan

(continued from last lesson)

Ignor. I believe well enough for all that.

Chr. How dost thou believe?

Ignor. I believe that Christ died for sinners, and that I shall be justified before God from the curse, through his gracious acceptance of my obedience to his law. Or thus, Christ makes my duties that are religious acceptable to his Father by virtue of his merits; and so shall I be justified.

Chr. Let me give an answer to this confession of thy faith.

1. Thou believest with a fantastical faith, for this faith is nowhere described in the Word.

2. Thou believest with a false faith, because it taketh justification from the personal righteousness of Christ, and applies it to thy own.

3. This faith maketh not Christ a justifier of thy person, but of thy actions; and of thy person for thy actions' sake, which is false.

4. Therefore this faith is deceitful, even such as will leave thee under wrath in the day of God Almighty; for true justifying faith puts the soul (as sensible of its lost condition by the law) upon flying for refuge unto Christ's righteousness; which righteousness of his is, not an act of grace by which he maketh for justification thy obedience accepted with God, but his personal obedience to the law, in doing and suffering for us what that required at our hands. This righteousness, I say, true faith accepteth; under the skirt of which the soul being shrouded, and by it presented as spotless before God, it is accepted, and acquit from condemnation.

Ignor. What! would you have us trust to what Christ in his own person has done without us? This conceit would loosen the reins of our lust, and tolerate us to live as we list. For what matter how we live, if we may be justified by Christ's personal righteousness from all, when we believe it?

Chr. Ignorance is thy name, and as thy name is, so art thou; even this thy answer demonstrateth what I say. Ignorant thou art of what justifying righteousness is, and as ignorant how to secure thy soul through the faith of it from the heavy wrath of God. Yea, thou also art ignorant of the true effects of saving faith in this righteousness of Christ, which is to bow and win over the heart to God in Christ, to love his name, his word, ways, and people, and not as thou ignorantly imaginest.

Hope. Ask him if ever he had Christ revealed to him from heaven.

Ignor. What! you're a man for revelations! I believe that what both you, and all the rest of you, say about this matter is but the fruit of distracted brains.

Hope. Why, man! Christ is so hid in God from the natural apprehensions of the flesh, that he cannot be any man be savingly known, unless God the Father reveals him to them.

Ignor. That is your faith, but not mine; yet mine, I doubt not, is as good as yours, though I have not in my head so many whimsies as you.

Chr. Give me leave to put in a word. You ought not so slightly to speak of this matter; for this I will boldly affirm (even as my good companion hath done), for that no man can know Jesus Christ but by the revelation of the Father: yea, and faith too, by which the soul layeth hold upon Christ (if it be right), must be wrought by the exceeding greatness of his mighty power; the working of which faith, I perceive,

poor Ignorance, thou art ignorant of. Be awakened then, see thine own wretchedness, and fly to the Lord Jesus; and by his righteousness, which is the righteousness of God (for he himself is God), thou shalt be delivered from condemnation.

Ignor. You go so fast, I cannot keep pace with you. Do you go on before; I must stay a while behind.

Then they said,

Well, Ignorance wilt thou yet foolish be,
To slight good counsel, ten times given thee?
And if you yet refuse it, thou shalt know
Ere long the evil of thy doing so.
Remember, man, in time; stoop, do not fear,
Good counsel taken well, saves: therefore hear.
But if thou yet shalt slight it, thou wilt be
The loser, Ignorance, I'll warrant thee.

0

DECEMBER 6, 1981

THE LAW FULFILLED IN CHRIST

Matt. 5:17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

38 This is the first and great commandment.

39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Rom. 13:8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

8:3 For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

3:29 Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:

30 Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.

31 Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

MEMORY VERSE: Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Rom. 13:10.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: In Christ Jesus, only and through His grace, can the laws of God be truly fulfilled and obeyed.

WORD DEFINITIONS: *Jot or tittle:* In the Greek text it says one iota (letter "i") or fine point. *Fulfilled:* to make complete, finish, or satisfy; What the grace of God accomplishes in the soul of man fills up and satisfies what the law was really requiring.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We have already learned that the laws of God as they were given on Mt. Sinai were not sufficient to justify or bring righteousness to men. The law had its purpose and value, but it was not the answer to man's need. Our lesson today deals with the truth of the law being fulfilled through Christ and the grace that is found in Him for the soul of man. The Scriptures are very plain. To follow Christ, being a partaker of His power, grace, and resurrected life, and to obey His blessed commandments frees us from the obligations of keeping the law as it was in Moses' time. This covers many phases of thought. The law was a shadow, and a shadow is not the object. The real object was Christ and a shadow of His grace and salvation was cast in the law. Paul counseled in Col. 2:16, 17, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body [the object of the shadow, or the substance] is of Christ." Jesus spoke of all the law and prophets hanging on love—love supreme for God and love for man. No love was begotten in the heart by the righteousness of the law, but in Christ, the love and appreciation we have for Him and what He did for us constrains us to willingly obey His blessed voice. Knowing Christ in the Spirit lifts us to a plane higher

than the flesh. We walk not after the flesh but after the spirit; thus the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, thus the law is established. The holy experience of being justified and born again in Christ prepares us for the laws of God to be established in our hearts. The law is fulfilled in our lives because of His grace and love and not of our own human effort.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What did Jesus come to do with the law?
2. On what two commandments do the law and the prophets hang?
3. What is the fulfilling of the law?
4. In whom is the righteousness of the law fulfilled?
5. How is the law established?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

What a blessed truth for us to grasp and embrace today! Christ has fulfilled the law and by His grace we can walk in the way that will satisfy every demand that the law placed upon humanity. Mankind needed a Saviour, not only to save him from the awfulness of his sins, but generate and produce righteousness to be brought forth in his life. The right ways of the Lord and the standard of His holiness are the fruits of the New Testament Christian. The pattern that Christ layed out for us to follow through the inspirations, anointing, and guidance of the Holy Spirit satisfies the great demands and spiritual essence of the law. We do not have to keep the law any more because the real essence and vital life of the law are carried out in the fruit of our lives as Christians. It is not that we ignore the law and its precepts or seek to discredit it in any way, but it is a sense of our inability to do so. God wanted His law fulfilled, but realized that man could not fulfill His law on his own. Man needed a helper and a Saviour. Thus Jesus came into the world, setting forth the pattern of godliness and righteousness for us all to follow. His work was finished on Calvary, the law was satisfied, justice had been meted out on Calvary, and now by the grace of God we can live that spiritual, holy life that God is well pleased with. Instead of working and trying to win God's praise and favor, we become His workmanship, being created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath planned that we walk in. The boasting is excluded, and we only acknowledge the grace of God for every Christian virtue that

is seen in our lives. We are won to love Christ supremely, and this love for Christ gives us love for our fellow man—a love that looks more on the welfare and benefit of others than our own. The law is established, satisfied, fulfilled, met with all requirements, and fully blessed of God in the soul of man. Praise the Lord for His marvelous grace and the New Testament given to us in Christ! —Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The purpose of Jesus' life on earth was to institute a change from the Mosaic law to that of grace. It was a gradual change brought about by the daily teachings of Christ as He instructed the people in a new way of life. However, the time came when the law was totally done away with. This was accomplished when Christ made the supreme sacrifice of dying on the cross.

The Apostle John recorded Jesus' last words as being, "It is finished." Here a definite line can be drawn between the law and grace. This was the moment for which Christ had entered the world. It was the reason He endured the agonies of Gethsemane and the cruelties of the cross. He suffered that He might present a far superior plan of salvation to mankind.

We note that upon Christ's death the curtain in the temple between the holy and most holy place was torn in two. This was a divine act that symbolized the death of the old law and the beginning of the age of grace when salvation became available for all. —Wayne Murphey

OH, WRITE THY LAW

by C. W. Naylor

Oh, write thy wondrous law divine
Upon the tables of my heart,
That I may keep thy statutes, Lord,
And never from thy way depart.

Oh, write thy law of holiness
In living characters of flame,
That by a life of purity
I may be worthy of thy name.

Oh, write thy law of tenderness
And of compassion in my breast,
Till heart and voice and hand reach out
To help the weary and distressed.

Oh, write thy law, thy law of love,
Within me till my soul shall be,
By bonds no storm can ever break,
United to thy flock and thee.

Oh, may thy perfect law of truth
Thro' seasons' change, by day and night,
Be light and life and strength to me,
My meditation, my delight.

DECEMBER 13, 1981

JUDGMENT AND MERCY

Psa. 85:7 Show us thy mercy, O Lord, and grant us thy salvation.

8 I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly.

9 Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land.

10 Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

John 8:3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

James 2:10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

11 For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

12 So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

13 For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

Memory Verse: For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment. James 2:13.

Central Thought: The laws and judgments of God are to be administered with mercy. They are to be accompanied by the love of God and Holy Spirit inspiration. A harsh, unkind, critical law spirit is not the spirit of Christ.

Word Definitions: *Judgment:* justice or the divine law. *Mercy:* compassion, pity, tender feelings and regard toward, an unwillingness to mete out punishment and judgment.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The 85th Psalm was no doubt written concerning the return of Israel from the captivity in Babylon. God's judgment had been sore upon them, for their departure from His ways had been terrible, but it had been mixed with mercy. Mercy is being shown to them in their return to their own land. The judgment of God still stood in that He gave them warning about not turning to folly again. But mercy and truth are met together in Christ. The truth of man's wanderings and departure from God and God's holiness are met together in mercy and lovingkindness. Righteousness and peace have embraced, bringing soul rest to the one who has erred from the way. The Pharisees brought to Jesus the woman caught in adultery. In the way that our Saviour handled this clearly reveals how mercy and truth are met and righteousness and peace kiss each other. The truth of her sin was not denied, but mercy, instead of condemnation, was shown. Let us always remember that mercy rejoices against judgment. Notice especially the text of scripture in James. "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." If we judge by the law without mercy we shall be thus judged, but if we render judgment by the law of liberty, we shall be judged by the same. What is the law of liberty? It is the law that is based on love alone; the love of God burning in a man's soul sets him at liberty. This

liberty is being in bondage to Christ. It is being moved and inspired and strengthened by the grace of God. It is the opposite of the law of sin and death. The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. Just the cold letter of the law will fail. But the love of God with the grace of God will inspire man to the highest and most holy plane. A message was preached once in which sinners were pictured as being in the graveyard of sin with the gates shut and locked by the law, but Mercy came and opened the gates. This is true: mercy does rejoice against judgment.

—Leslie Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. How has the law and mercy been brought together in Christ?
2. How did mercy and judgment meet together in the case of the woman taken in adultery?
3. Did Jesus condone the evil that the woman had done?
4. What is the law of liberty?
5. What will be our judgment if we show no mercy toward others?
6. How does mercy rejoice against judgment?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

It is very easy to put out judgment on others and fail to show the mercy that is needed. It is easy to do this, but it is not so easy to reap that kind of judgment. Mercy rejoices against judgment. On the occasion when the Pharisees condemned the disciples for plucking ears of corn on the sabbath day, Jesus made this statement: "But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless." Matt. 12:7. Mercy rejoices against judgment. Oh, what depth is in these words! Quoting directly from Hosea 6:6, we see the heart of God reaching out to a lost world: "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." A merciful attitude toward our fellow man, and a constant growth in the true knowledge of God will satisfy the great heart of our Creator more than all the law system ever did. The Jewish nation was caught up in the ceremonial part of the law, having lost sight of the spiritual values and signification therein. The sacrifices, and the temple procedures of worship had become a form without life or meaning. Jesus came to bring us the life that we need. One man, after hearing Jesus explain that the greatest commandments

to keep were to love God with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbor as our self, summed it up very well. He said that to do so was "more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." Jesus told him that he was not far from the kingdom of God. Mark 12:32-34. Micah 6:8, says that we are "to love mercy." Now everyone loves mercy when it is coming his way, but when God really wants us to love mercy is when we must show it to our fellow man. Instead of condemning, we will be seeking to help. Hard feelings, anger, malice, jealousy, and such like are evidences of a lack of mercy. It is very evident that if we show no mercy, we will be given no mercy. The Pharisees were ready to see the woman condemned, but were not ready to accept such judgment themselves. If we refuse to have mercy on others now, we will not be able to walk out at the judgment: we will meet our judgment just as we gave it out. In the gospel of Jesus Christ the judgment is tempered with mercy giving souls a chance to recover themselves from the error of their way.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

A familiar scripture which illustrates God's love and sums up the series of lessons we have had, can be found in John 3:16, 17, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son . . ." All down through time, God has had a love for people. He has been restricted in His manifestations of love, due to the unbelief of human hearts. At various times, judgment was necessary to bring people to the place where God could reveal Himself in love. The supreme gift of His Son manifested this. "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This includes people of all ages: those who believed He would come, and those believing in Him now.

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world." The world was already condemned by the law and judgments of God. "But that the world through him might be saved." Through judgment, God could have lawfully condemned the people of all ages to eternal damnation: however, His love provided a way of escape. If we are to pattern ourselves after our Creator, we also must show forth the mercy of God and exclude the law spirit from our lives.

—Wayne Murphey

DECEMBER 20, 1981

THE NEED FOR A SAVIOUR

Heb. 9:24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

25 Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others;

26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

10:5 Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God.

8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law;

9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Memory Verse: And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:10, 11.

Central Thought: After the law had failed, God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to be the Saviour of mankind. He came in human flesh to make the perfect sacrifice for the atonement of sin so that we can be sanctified and free from sin and its bondage forever.

LESSON BACKGROUND

It is very evident that the Jewish nation in general was looking forward to the coming of the Messiah; however, as it was with other matters that had to do with their relationship with God, their minds were quite clouded and obscure as to what the work of the great Redeemer would be. The vain and self-righteous leaders viewed the Messiah merely from a political and fleshly aspect. Their hearts were set on being delivered from the jurisdiction of Rome. They wanted to become a great nation in the eyes of the world again. However, this was far from the truth. Christ's coming into the world was not concerning their political prestige. It was to deal with the issue and the root of their true condition: Jesus came to bring salvation for the soul. He came to make the sacrifice that would erase the wrath of God from the account. Men and women were to be changed from the ways of sin and evil to the strait and narrow way of righteousness and truth. God was not satisfied with the system of burnt offering and sacrifices that had been going on for years and years. The writer here in Hebrews draws from the Old Testament writings in the 40th Psalm a scripture, "Sacrifice and burnt offerings for sin thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me." In the Old Testament we read, "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened." Psa. 40:6. It is interesting to note the variation in the expression here. The writer translates the phrase "mine ears hast thou opened" into "a body hast thou prepared me." The raw Hebrew renders this, "ears hast thou digged for me." Let the reader draw his own conclusion, and bring the two texts together. The scripture in Psa. 40, is undoubtedly as prophetic of Christ as it can be. It was necessary for Christ to assume the nature of humanity. Thus He could share in their sorrows and perfect for them with His divine power the life that He willed for them to know. —L. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why was God dissatisfied with the sacrifices under the law?

2. Why did Jesus have to come in the flesh?
3. What sacrifice did Jesus make?
4. What was accomplished by this sacrifice?
5. How often was Jesus to make this sacrifice? Why?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The law was just a shadow of better things in the future. It foreshadowed the great sacrifice that Christ would have to make of Himself upon the cross of Calvary. The many animal sacrifices that were offered under the law did not suffice for man's sin. They were accepted only as a type and a shadow of Christ's offering of Himself. Jesus Christ became the victim for man's redemption. When Jesus came into the world He knew that He was destined for the cross. The burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin did not meet the approval of God. "I come to do thy will, O God. In the volume of the book it is written of me." Jesus stood on the pinnacle of time. Viewed from the past by those who had long before sealed their faith and testimony in death, He bears the weight of their sin. Believed on and adored by all who would thereafter look to Him, He perfects that which concerneth them. The sacrifice that He made on Calvary is sufficient to work deep into the human heart and cleanse it from every trace of sin. The law and its unnumbered sacrifices could not do that. Every year the people would return and offer the same sacrifices. Once a year the High Priest would don his holy garments and make the fearful approach to enter the Most Holy place. All of this was but a shadow: now, the real has come. The Substance of that Shadow now approaches. The fulfillment of all of those sacrifices is now offered upon the cross of Golgotha. Oh, the magnitude and wonder of these truths! Oh, dear reader, stand amazed and view the glory of this scene: let the Spirit of God burn it upon your soul. The Lord Jesus, the King of Glory, has brought a perfect plan for the souls of men. We can be saved from our sins forever! We can be sanctified wholly and made as pure as heaven! We can be lifted from the entanglements and sins of the world to a heavenly life in Christ, and live in preparation for His coming. Praise the Lord for His gift and great love!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Jeremiah 15:5, 6: "For who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem? or who shall bemoan thee? or who shall go aside

to ask how thou doest? Thou hast forsaken me, saith the Lord, thou art gone backward: therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting." This was the sad condition of those dwelling under the Law. The people would serve God for a season, then backslide. The cycle was repeated again and again, and God grew weary of it: He desired a more acceptable service and knew that it was only possible through a Saviour.

The question is asked, "Who will take an interest in the people and who will inquire after them?" We find the answer as we view Christ weeping over Jerusalem because of their rejection of Him.

God, though weary with the repeated repenting of the people, refused to cut them off from His mercy. His love compelled Him to send a Saviour to institute a better way of life.

—Wayne Murphey

—o—

DECEMBER 27, 1981

THE SPIRITUAL HEAVENS SHAKEN IN CHRIST

Heb. 12:14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

18 For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,

19 And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:

20 (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:

21 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)

22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that

of Abel.

25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh: for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:

26 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

27 And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

29 For our God is a consuming fire.

Memory Verse: See that ye refuse not him that speaketh: for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven. Heb. 12:25.

Central Thought: In the giving of the law of Moses the earth quaked fearfully. In the giving of the New Testament in Christ, the spiritual heavens, the realm of the souls of men, are shaken. We should give diligent heed, for we shall not escape if we do not yield to Him who speaks now from heaven.

LESSON BACKGROUND

This is the final in our series of studies concerning the law of Moses and the law of grace in Christ Jesus, the Lord. We have seen how faith was first implanted in the soul of man as a standard for God's dealings and man's responsibility. We have studied how the law was given, how it failed, why it failed, and why the Saviour needed to come. We have beheld the wonders of His grace and what it can do for the soul which the law could not do. For our final lesson, we have chosen to dwell on the serious side of the dispensation of grace. We are not only to welcome and rejoice at the inception of the grace of God into our lives, but we are to realize the seriousness and the responsibility that is ours thereby. When we receive the grace of God we become very responsible creatures. God is expecting something of us. Those who despised Moses' law and turned away from the voice that spoke on Mt. Sinai were punished. They did not escape. How

much more should we reverence and respect the voice of God that speaks to us now by way of the Holy Spirit, the Blood of Jesus, the Word of God? It is not for us to just take or leave; it is for us to receive and give allegiance and obedience to. If we refuse it, the consequences are dire and certain. If we receive it and then fail to diligently pursue the mark and yield to the will of God, we are going to face an awful judgment. We must not receive the grace of God in vain. 2 Cor. 6:1. We must give the more diligent heed to the things which we have heard. As the book of Hebrews also teaches, Christ has an inheritance above the angels. Therefore, we ought to sincerely and earnestly pursue the truth that is in Christ, and follow in His steps. Let us receive that kingdom that cannot be moved. For even though the wrath of God has been appeased in Christ, those who refuse His grace will merit a fiercer anger from God and from Christ.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What is our fate to be without holiness?
2. Is there any danger of losing the grace of God?
3. What is the fearful and serious warning in our lesson?
4. What are we come to in Christ?
5. How should we serve God? Why?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

There is a tendency for people to say, "We are under grace now, so we do not have to be so careful." This is erroneous thinking. We do not have to be under the strain of condemnation, but the dispensation of grace has brought great responsibility upon mankind. The grace of God has been provided for all, but there is much on our part to exercise and to do for the grace of God to be effectual in its administration. We must follow and pursue peace with our fellow man; we must follow holiness with God. Under the law we could not be holy, but in Christ we can and must be holy. We want the law of holiness to be written upon our heart that by lives of purity we may be worthy of His name. We must be diligently on our guard for any deviation from the strait and narrow way. Satan is not going to leave us alone. He will be permitted to try us from every quarter. We are not come to a phenomena such as was seen on Mt. Sinai. It was a fearful sight that caused Moses to even fear and quake, but we are come to spiritual realities. Instead of to the old literal

city of Zion and Jerusalem, we are come unto a spiritual experience in which we are raised up from fleshly and carnal appetites and living, to a close walk with God. It is not imaginary, but spiritual reality. This heavenly Jerusalem that we are come to in the grace of God is the Church which He purchased with His own blood. We come to it and are made a part of it when we are truly born again. Jesus is the Mediator of the new covenant. His blood sprinkled on the heart pleads for favor and mercy with God. Abel's blood cried out for vengeance, but Christ's blood cries out for mercy and pardon. This voice of the covenant shakes the spiritual places. It refines and purifies the soul; it leaves nothing in its path unturned. It is like an ever working leaven that spreads throughout the entire man. It has been the means of every spiritual awakening down through the Church age. This scripture in Heb. 12:26, 27, was one of the main texts that moved and inspired the early pioneer ministers and helped usher in the Evening Light Reformation. It is the New Testament Covenant of Grace. Mankind has a tendency to drift from it into formality and manrule which go along with a law spirit, but revivals and spiritual awakenings have restored it time after time. We today need to be constantly renewed in spirit and refreshed in the glory of the Spirit of the Living God sent down from Heaven. —Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Christ's advent to earth was the beginning of a definite spiritual upheaval. Old Testament stories of the manifestation of God differ from those of the New Testament. Rarely will one read of devils being cast out or evil spirits subdued until the dispensation of Christ. Consider King Saul's circumstance: he was often troubled by an evil spirit. There is no record of anyone attempting to absolutely deliver him from it. David was able to mollify it at times with his music, but it was still there. This is quite a contrast as compared to what occurred when evil spirits came in contact with Christ. Jesus conferred power over Satan to His disciples. When sending them forth His commission was, "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." The same power was given to the seventy when they were sent out.

If there are any excuses to be allowed, they would be to the people under the law dispensation. The devil held dominion in their lives and they were unable to live a sinless life.

God took that into account. There were many things which God winked at. The life of Christ has removed all excuses for us today. We must live a holy life. God will give us power and authority to do just that if we remain humble before Him.

I believe that Christ, in a human state, possessed a very deep realization of the need for a change. He was very close to the situation and understood the problems of adhering to the law. We find people in our country today who are political agitators. They demand change, change, change, but when one inquires as to what they desire changed, they can only generalize. They fail to be close enough to the situation to know what is good or bad, or which direction to take. Note some of the church reformers who caused the changes affecting us today: they were involved in the environment that was suppressing their religious beliefs. Some departed from the Church of England and some left Babylon. These reformers could relate to the situation.

Christ, as a youth, set about to familiarize Himself with the law. He knew what the weaknesses and deficiencies of the law were. As Christ set forth in His ministry, He could relate to the people's failures and sins because of His knowledge. This stimulated His deep sense of love and mercy. Consider the tax collector. Christ did not reject him as did those possessing a law spirit; Jesus associated with him for the purpose of teaching him a better way of life.

Those living under the law could surely treasure the dispensation of grace. If we were to dwell under the circumstances that the people under the law did and could relate to the inner turmoil and struggles they faced, as well as a politically corrupt synagogue, we could surely appreciate the reform that Christ brought about in His ministry on earth.

We must all beware lest the Church fall again into the same bondage. It can disintegrate into a political, manruled organization, creating strife, turmoil, and upholding human standards that the grace of God will not cover.

—Wayne Murphey

