

WHAT IS THE FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE LAW, GRACE AND LOVE

(Your questions and comments are welcome) (Scripture is from KJV and NKJV)
(**Bold type** and underlining in scripture text have been added for emphasis)

As a person reads theological commentary, and observes religious practice, that there exists within “Christianity” widely divergence perspectives of what God is doing with His people and how He is doing it, becomes most evident. Much of this diversity focuses on what affect the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ had upon the application of God’s law to His people.

Our approach to this consideration will begin by examining Old Testament scriptures that testify to the law as given by God through Moses, and then enquiring to determine the laws application, if any, to God’s children under the New Covenant.

First, we will view the “commandments” as recorded at:

Exodus 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.

⁴ Thou shalt not make unto thee **any graven image**, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

⁵ Thou shalt **not bow down** thyself to them, **nor serve** them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, **visiting the iniquity** of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation **of them that hate me;**

⁶ And **showing mercy** unto thousands of them **that love me**, and **keep my commandments.**

⁷ Thou shalt **not take the name** of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that **taketh his name in vain.**

⁸ Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

⁹ Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:

¹⁰ But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it **thou shalt not do any work**, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

¹¹ For in six days **the LORD** made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, **and rested** the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

¹² **Honour thy father and thy mother:** that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

¹³ Thou shalt **not kill.**

¹⁴ Thou shalt **not commit adultery.**

¹⁵ Thou shalt **not steal.**

¹⁶ Thou shalt **not bear false witness** against thy neighbour.

¹⁷ Thou shalt **not covet** thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

In the New Testament we are told that the “works of the flesh” include **adultery, idolatry, and murder**-Gal. 5:19-21. And, that they that practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Also, we are told to **put away lying** and to **speak truth** to our neighbor-Eph. 4:25, **not to steal**-v28, and that no **covetous** man who is an idolater has any inheritance in the kingdom of God and of Christ-Eph.5:5. Children are told to **obey their parents** and to “**Honor thy father and mother**; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth”-Eph. 6:1-3. We are told that we are to **cease from our own works as God did from His**-Heb. 4:3-11. These scriptures provide clear and unequivocal testimony that the law given through Moses has application in the lives of God’s children under the new covenant administration. *How it applies is the most pertinent question and will be considered in the discussion that follows.*

While there are numerous laws that were given to guide the relationships between and among the children of Israel, we will view several passages of scripture that reveal the essential nature of these laws.

Exodus 21

²⁸ If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die: **then the ox shall be surely stoned**, and his flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall be quit.

²⁹ But if the ox were wont to push with his horn in time past, and **it hath been testified** to his owner, and **he hath not kept him in**, but that he hath killed a man or a woman; the ox shall be stoned, and his owner also shall be put to death.

³⁰ If there be laid on him a sum of money, then he shall give for the ransom of his life whatsoever is laid upon him.

³¹ Whether he have gored a son, or have gored a daughter, according to this judgment shall it be done unto him.

³² If the ox shall push a manservant or a maidservant; he shall give unto their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.

³³ And if a man shall open a pit, or if a man shall dig a pit, **and not cover it**, and an ox or an ass fall therein;

³⁴ The owner of the pit **shall make it good**, and give money unto the owner of them; and the dead beast shall be his.

³⁵ And if one man's ox hurt another's, that he die; then they shall **sell the live ox, and divide the money** of it; and the dead ox also **they shall divide**.

³⁶ Or **if it be known** that the ox hath used to push in time past, and **his owner hath not kept him in**; he shall surely pay **ox for ox**; and the dead shall be his own.

Exodus 22

¹ If a man **shall steal** an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it; he **shall restore** five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep.

² If a **thief** be found breaking up, and be smitten **that he die**, there shall **no blood** be shed for him.

³ **If the sun be risen upon him**, there shall be **blood shed for him**; for he should make **full**

restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.

⁴ If the theft be **certainly found in his hand alive**, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep; **he shall restore double**.

⁵ If a man shall cause a field or vineyard to be eaten, and shall put in his beast, and shall feed in **another man's field**; of the best of **his own field**, and of the best of **his own vineyard**, shall he **make restitution**.

In the above referenced scriptures, according to the **principle that governs** relationships between people wherein one person causes **loss or detriment** to another, **justice requires restitution be made to the one suffering loss**. The amount of restitution is commensurate with the degree of culpability of the offending party, such as lack of knowledge, or did previous knowledge exist that suggested a particular level of care in the situation, and whether or not the offending party **intentionally** caused the detriment. ***These passages inform of the responsibility that rests on each person to live their life in a manner that does not cause detriment to the person, possessions or interests of another.***

Additional relationships are addressed in the following passage.

Exodus 23

⁴ If thou meet **thine enemy's ox** or his ass going astray, **thou shalt surely bring it back** to him again.

⁵ If thou see the ass **of him that hateth thee** lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, **thou shalt surely help** with him.

⁶ Thou shalt not **wrest the judgment of thy poor** in his cause.

⁷ Keep thee far from **a false matter**; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: **for I will not justify the wicked**.

⁸ And thou shalt **take no gift**: for the gift **blindeth the wise**, and **perverteth the words** of the righteous.

⁹ Also thou shalt not oppress **a stranger**: for **ye know the heart of a stranger**, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

¹⁰ And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof:

¹¹ But the seventh year thou shalt **let it rest and lie still**; that **the poor** of thy people **may eat**: and what they leave the beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard, and with thy oliveyard.

¹² Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day **thou shalt rest**: that thine ox and thine ass **may rest**, and **the son of thy handmaid**, and **the stranger**, **may be refreshed**.

¹³ And in **all things** that I have said unto you **be circumspect**: and make **no mention** of the name **of other gods**, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth.

The demands of the law in the above passage can be summarized:

- Consider and regard the interests and needs of our enemies and of those who hate us in the same manner that we show such deference to others.
- Do not take advantage of those who are poor, nor of those who are innocent and right in their cause.
- Keep uninvolved in and untainted by any matter in which there is deception.

- Refuse any gift that could have attached an obligation to the person who gives the gift. Such an obligation will place pressure on the recipient to ignore propriety, and to look away from truth and justice.
- Be sensitive to the heart of a stranger and treat him or her in an equitable and just manner.
- Consider the needs of those persons who are disadvantaged, and of those persons who are under one's authority.

The sum of these legal requirements is to be just and equitable to everyone and to worship and serve God without defilement. Surely, this is what Jesus had in view when He told His disciples at:

Matthew 6

⁹ After this manner therefore pray ye: **Our Father** which art in heaven, **Hallowed** be thy name.

¹⁰ Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Another passage of scripture that expresses the kindness and patience that God desires in His people:

Matthew 5

³⁸ Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

³⁹ But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

⁴⁰ And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

⁴¹ And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

In this passage we see that, while the Lord would have us to be **just** and **equitable** to others **we should not, personally and individually, be assertive** in demanding equivalent consideration and regard from them. Such condescension is abhorrent to **the nature** with which we have been gifted through Adam's sin-Romans 5:17-21. However, **God has made provision** in and through the Lord Jesus that we might partake of the Divine nature, and escape self-exalting pride and the other self-serving propensities of the carnal nature-2 Peter 1:2-4. Our heavenly Father is not placing on us a way of life that He has not provided for in His Son, and it is a way of life that His Son walked in here on this earth, **as we are told at:**

1 Peter 2

¹⁹ For this is thankworthy, if a man **for conscience toward God** endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

²⁰ For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

²¹ For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

²² Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

²³ Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

²⁴ Who his **own self** bare **our sins** in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Christ gave Himself for us that He might have as His own, a people whose hearts have been made clean from all defilement-Titus 2:14. Such cleansing is a process of growing up “into him in all things”-Ephesians 4:15. We must attend to this important matter and leave for the Lord the avenging of the injustices, if any, imposed on us by others. **For this is His way, as expressed at:**

Romans 12

¹⁷ Recompense **to no man** evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

¹⁸ If it be possible, **as much as lieth in you**, live peaceably with all men.

¹⁹ Dearly beloved, **avenge not yourselves**, but rather **give place unto wrath**: for it is written, **Vengeance is mine; I will repay**, saith the Lord.

²¹ Be **not overcome of evil**, but **overcome evil with good**.

The law of God as revealed to and through Moses is verbal expression of the virtues that will constitute the Divine character of the people in His kingdom. It is an expression with words of the very image of God in His people. This character and image is declared to be holiness.

Leviticus 19

¹ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

² Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, **Ye shall be holy; for I the LORD your God am holy.**

Leviticus 20

⁷ **Sanctify yourselves** therefore, and **be ye holy**: for **I am the LORD your God**.

⁸ And ye shall **keep my statutes**, and **do them**: I am the LORD which **sanctify you**

1 Peter 1

⁹ Receiving the **end of your faith**, even the **salvation** of your souls.

¹⁰ Of which salvation **the prophets** have enquired and searched diligently, **who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you**:

¹¹ Searching **what**, or what manner **of time** the Spirit of Christ which was in them **did signify**, when it testified **beforehand** the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.

¹² Unto whom it was revealed, that **not unto themselves**, but **unto us** they did minister the things, which are **now reported** unto you by them that have preached **the gospel** unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

¹³ Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for **the grace** that is to be brought unto you **at the revelation of Jesus Christ**;

¹⁴ As **obedient children**, **not fashioning yourselves** according to the former **lusts** in your ignorance:

¹⁵ But as **he which hath called you is holy**, so **be ye holy** in all manner of conversation;

¹⁶ **Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.**

¹⁷ And if ye call on the Father, who **without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work**, **pass the time of your sojourning here** in fear:.

1 John 2

¹ **My little children**, these things write I unto you, **that ye sin not**. And **if any man sin**, we have **an advocate** with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

² And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

³ And **hereby** we do know that we know him, **if we keep his commandments**.

⁴ He that saith, I know him, and **keepeth not** his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

⁵ But whoso **keepeth his word**, in him verily is **the love** of God perfected: **hereby** know we that we are in him.

⁶ He that saith he abideth in him **ought himself** also so to walk, even as he walked.

The scriptures referenced immediately above provide clear testimony that God expected His people, during His old covenant administration, and He now expects His people under His administration of the new covenant, to walk according to the righteous demands of the law. (“Righteous” is an English translation of the Greek word “dikaios”, which means “equitable” in character or act; by implication “innocent”, “holy”... Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance Of The Bible). With few exceptions, the words “righteous” and “just” are both translated from the Greek word “dikaios”.

The apostle Paul writes to the church at Corinth concerning the new covenant:

2 Corinthians 3

²You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; ³clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

⁴ And we have such trust through Christ toward God. ⁵Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, ⁶who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit;^[1] for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life...

¹⁷Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. ¹⁸But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. (NKJV)

The apostle Paul, in distinguishing the new covenant from the old covenant is explaining to the brethren at Corinth that while the law under old covenant administration was written on tablets of stone, **God administers the new covenant by writing His laws in their hearts by the Spirit.** The just demands of the law (letter) make us aware of sin, but provide no power to deliver us from sin—Romans 8:3. The resulting experience is death—v6 above; Romans 7:10. However, under new covenant administration *the Spirit not only gives us understanding and wisdom to live in accordance with the just and equitable demands of the law, the Spirit also frees us from the degrading demands of sin, so that we can live in accordance with those just and equitable demands*—v17 above; Romans 8:2,4. A summary of the scriptures referencing God’s laws on pages one through four shows that the legal requirements are that the Lord’s people be just and equitable to others, including those who hate us, and worship and serve God **without defilement**. When the veil (the flesh—Hebrews 10:19,20) that obscures the goodness of the Lord is removed **by the Spirit’s enlightenment through the scriptures, and the Spirits delivering us from sin in the flesh**, God’s children, **actually seeing the glory (justice and equity) of the Lord** are transformed into His image—

v18 above; Romans 8:28,29: 12:1,2. The statement “from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” is referring to such change *being a process of growing through the ministry of the Spirit*. This is not standing helplessly condemned before a list of legal demands that are either, **against** our internal defilement, or **for** endless ceremonial and ritualistic practices, but rather, it is **Christ being formed (fashioned) in us**-(Galatians 4:19; see also verses 4-10) as we **purify** our souls by **obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love** of the brethren-1 Peter 1:22.

When considering the law we must not refer to it in a manner that conveys a negative and demeaning impression to the minds of others. The scripture testifies that “...the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good”. “Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin”-Ro. 7:12,13.

This passage in Paul’s epistle to the Romans is explaining that the problem that one encounters when confronted with the law is rooted, not in the law, but in sin in the flesh. *Thus, our sin within is the culprit and the function of the law is to make us aware of it.* Let any disparaging thoughts or words be directed, not against the law, but rather, toward our sin. *God holds a very high view of His law and saw the keeping of it by the children of Israel as evidencing their wisdom and understanding before the other nations.* The following passage of scripture so attests:

Deuteronomy 4

⁶ **Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.**

⁷ **For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for?**

⁸ **And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?**

The word righteous in the above scripture passage is the English translation of the Hebrew word “tsaddiyq” which means *just* (Strong’s Conc.). “Tsaddiyq” is the Hebrew word that is most often translated **righteous.**

God is near and has great pleasure in His people when their lives individually and collectively show forth His goodness as the righteous and just God that He is. It was such testimony in His people Israel that moved the hearts of the people in other nations toward Israel’s God, as we observe at:

1 Kings 10

¹ **And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to prove him with hard questions.**

² **And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very**

much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, **she communed with him of all that was in her heart.**

³ And **Solomon told her all her questions:** there was not any thing hid from the king, which he told her not.

⁴ And when the queen of Sheba had seen all **Solomon's wisdom,** and **the house** that he had built,

⁵ And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the LORD; **there was no more spirit in her.**

⁶ And she said to the king, **It was a true report** that I heard in mine own land **of thy acts and of thy wisdom.**

⁷ Howbeit **I believed not** the words, until I came, and **mine eyes had seen it:** and, behold, the half was not told me: **thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard.**

⁸ **Happy** are thy men, **happy** are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and **that hear thy wisdom.**

⁹ **Blessed be the LORD thy God,** which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the LORD loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice.

That which the queen of Sheba saw in Solomon and the kingdom over which he ruled was *the glory that obtains when God brings joy to the hearts of His servants by enlightening their understanding through His law, and by His strengthening them that their indwelling sin does not have power over them.* We read at:

Psalm 19

⁷ The law of the LORD is perfect, **converting** the soul: the **testimony of the LORD** is sure, **making wise** the simple.

⁸ The **statutes of the LORD** are right, **rejoicing the heart:** the **commandment of the LORD** is pure, **enlightening the eyes.**

⁹ The **fear of the LORD** is clean, enduring for ever: the **judgments of the LORD** are **true and righteous** altogether.

¹⁰ More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

¹¹ Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.

¹² Who can **understand his errors?** cleanse thou me **from secret faults.**

¹³ **Keep back** thy servant also from **presumptuous sins;** let them **not have dominion** over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.

¹⁴ Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, **O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.**

Psalm 84

¹¹ For **the LORD God is a sun and shield:** the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them **that walk uprightly.**

¹² O LORD of hosts, **blessed** is the man that trusteth in thee.

All of God's provision for man, in and through Jesus Christ is within the meaning of the term **grace.** The Lord's people in the Old Testament were the beneficiaries of Divine grace just as are His people in the New Testament. ("...the

LORD will give **grace** and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them **that walk uprightly**”-Ps. 84:11). **They too had access to God’s grace through faith:** (“...**blessed** is the man that **trusteth** in thee”-Ps. 84:12; “THEREFORE being justified **by faith**, **we** have peace with God **through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we** have access **by faith** into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God”-Ro. 5:1,2). **The apostle Paul informs us that the grace of which the children of Israel were partakers was the grace of Christ.**

1 Corinthians 10

¹ Moreover, **brethren**, I would not that **ye** should be ignorant, how that all **our fathers** were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

² And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

³ And did all eat the same spiritual meat;

⁴ And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for **they drank** of that **spiritual Rock** that followed them: and **that Rock was Christ**.

Hebrews 11

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.

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.

Romans 3

²⁴ Being justified freely **by his grace** through the redemption that is **in Christ Jesus**:

²⁵ **Whom God hath set forth** to be a propitiation **through faith** in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

²⁶ To declare, I say, **at this time** his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him **which believeth in Jesus**.

The word “remission” in Romans 3;25 is the English translation of the Greek word “paresis” meaning...*toleration*. At all other references the Greek word translated “remission” is “aphesis” which means *freedom*; fig. *pardon* (Strong’s Concordance). Aphesis is translated *deliverance* at Luke 4:18, and is the only Greek word translated “forgiveness”. Thus, we learn that God’s mercy to those of faith **who lived prior to the first advent** of the Lord Jesus was a matter of “toleration” and “forbearance” pending His death, resurrection and ascension. **For the blood of calves and of goats could not remit or forgive sins as we learn at:**

Hebrews 9

²² And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

²³ It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with **better sacrifices** than these.

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**:

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.

Hebrews 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.

Further, observe in Psalms 84:1,2, cited above, that **walking uprightly** and **trusting** in the Lord are correlative. He gives **grace** to those who **walk uprightly** and He will not withhold **blessing** from those who **trust Him**. **Similarly, in the New Testament we are told that faith and walking in truth have a mutual relationship.**

James 2

¹⁴ **What doth it profit**, my brethren, though a man say **he hath faith**, and **have not works**? can faith save him?

¹⁵ If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

¹⁶ And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding **ye give them not** those things which are needful to the body; **what doth it profit?**

¹⁷ Even so **faith**, if it hath **not works**, is **dead**, being alone.

¹⁸ Yea, **a man may say**, Thou hast faith, and I have works: **shew me thy faith** without thy works, and **I will shew thee my faith** by my works.

¹⁹ Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

²⁰ But wilt thou know, O vain man, that **faith without works is dead?**

James 1

²⁵ But whoso looketh into **the perfect law of liberty**, and **continueth therein**, he being **not a forgetful hearer**, but **a doer** of the work, this man **shall be blessed** in his deed.

Romans 2

¹² For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;

¹³ (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

These passages of scripture are stating and explaining the elementary truth that *faith is always attended by faithfulness*. This is the point that James is making by comparing the claim of faith apart from doing God's will with telling destitute persons who are hungry to go on and be warmed and filled while giving them nothing to eat or wear.

There is a widely taught concept that faith and works are mutually exclusive, and there are statements in scripture, if not reconciled with other scripture, that seem to indicate such.

Romans 4

⁴ Now to him **that worketh** is the reward **not reckoned of grace**, but of debt.

⁵ But to him **that worketh not**, but **believeth** on him that justifieth the ungodly, **his faith** is counted for righteousness.

However, there is no conflict in the scripture testimony in the above referenced passages in Romans chapter two and in James chapters one and two with the passage referenced in Romans chapter four above. ***This apparent conflict***

introduces another important aspect of the relationship between God and His children. This aspect is addressed at:

Colossians 1

⁴ Since we heard of **your faith in Christ Jesus**, and of **the love** which ye have to all the saints,

⁹ **For this cause** we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be **filled** with the **knowledge of his will** in all wisdom and **spiritual understanding**;

¹⁰ **That ye might walk worthy** of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Ephesians 5

¹⁴ Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

¹⁵ See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

¹⁶ Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

¹⁷ Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

Living by faith, and by such faith, accessing God's grace wherein we stand in Christ is not Christ "living His life through us" as some contend, but rather, it is that we live our life through Him as the following passages of scripture attest:

1 John 4

⁹ In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that **we might live through him**.

John 6

⁵⁶ He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, **dwelleth in me**, and **I in him**.

⁵⁷ As the living Father hath sent me, and **I live by the Father**: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

We live through Him by knowing and doing His will. It is not that, "He lives His life through us", therefore we can assume that we are doing His will. We comprehend God's will in terms of **wisdom, and **understanding** received by the **enlightenment of the Spirit** as He ministers to us through **the word of God**. Such ministry of **grace** is granted on the basis of our *inward devotion and commitment to Him, which is faith*. Thus, we have a reservoir of knowledge, that according to our maturity may be large or small, through which we can **perceive God's will** in specific situations, and **by wisdom** that the Spirit grants us we can also see **how** to relate or not relate to those situations. This is how we walk worthy of the Lord, and also, how we can be fruitful in every **good work**. *That which gives any work the quality of good is that it is God's will. There is no work before God that is inherently good.***

Abraham's role in having the son that God had promised to him provides an example of this distinction concerning works. When Abraham, at Sarah's suggestion, took Hagar Sarah's handmaid to produce the son that God had promised to him, **he was moving according to the wisdom of the flesh**-Galatians 4:22,23. This was **not** God's **instruction** to Abraham, nor was Hagar God's **means**

for providing the son that He had promised. However, Abraham's effort by Sarah to have the son that God had promised to him was **as God instructed**, and being **God's will** was **therefore**, a **good** work (Read Genesis 16:1-4,11,12; 17:15-21; 21:1-3).

This account with Abraham introduces the practical aspect in doing God's will. The **end** that God intends to achieve can be realized only by the **means** that He chooses to employ. Both, God's immediate and ultimate objectives are declared in scripture. However, for a child of God to serve Him in His **means of achieving** such objectives requires, as with Abraham, that the servant **actually understand** the Lord's will in relating to **the means** of achieving His objectives. Such understanding rests on ones **being led of the Spirit**, as mentioned (in the scripture and comment on page 17). Even though we may be zealous in doing the "Lord's Work", if such effort is according to our natural wisdom-(1 Corinthians 2:12,13; 1 John 2:27), just as with Abraham, God will not accept it-(Romans 9:7-9).

Also, one's effort to obtain God's favor by ceremonial and ritualistic practices, whether prescribed by God in the Old Testament, or devised by man in the present age is dead works, as evidenced by the following passages of scripture:

Hebrews 9

¹¹ But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come,^[1] with the greater and more perfect tabernacle **not made with hands**, that is, not of this creation. ¹²**Not with the blood of goats and calves**, but with **His own blood** He entered **the Most Holy Place** once for all, **having obtained** eternal redemption. ¹³For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying **of the flesh**, ¹⁴how much more shall **the blood of Christ**, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience **from dead works to serve the living God?**

Galatians 5

¹ Stand fast therefore **in the liberty** wherewith **Christ hath made us free**, and be not entangled again with **the yoke of bondage**.

² Behold, I Paul say unto you, that **if ye be circumcised**, Christ shall profit you nothing.

³ For I testify again to every man **that is circumcised**, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

⁴ Christ is become **of no effect** unto you, whosoever of you are **justified by the law**; ye are **fallen from grace**.

⁵ For we **through the Spirit** wait for the hope of righteousness **by faith**.

⁶ For **in Jesus Christ** neither **circumcision** availeth any thing, nor **uncircumcision**; but **faith** which worketh **by love**.

⁷ Ye did run well; who did hinder you **that ye should not obey the truth?**

Colossians 2

¹³ And you, **being dead in your sins** and **the uncircumcision of your flesh**, hath he quickened **together with him**, having forgiven you all trespasses;

¹⁴ **Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances** that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, **nailing it to his cross**;

¹⁵ And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

¹⁶ 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:

¹⁷ Which are a **shadow** of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

Ceremony and ritual may encourage moral and social adjustments within the limits imposed by our carnal nature. But there is a subtlety of ritual that is in the limited, but real, **social benefits** accruing to both the individual and the general culture. Such benefits are often misconstrued to be spiritual both in origin and in nature.

However, spiritual content exists only in situations issuing from **divine initiative** and having **divine provision** for accomplishment. Such initiative, provision and accomplishment are always in accordance with the truth as revealed in **the New Testament** scriptures. Such situations involve interaction between the Lord and the individual, engaging the mind and the will, and also, witness in our spirit wherein we perceive the Lord's will, and then do it. **The absence of the Lord's involvement limits a religious activity to empty ceremony or ritual.**

When we come to Christ, *we have not come to some form of religion to be practiced, but rather, we have come to a new kind of life wherein we can and must learn how to live.* Gods provision and purpose for living on the basis of this new life is expressed in the following passage of scripture:

Titus 2

¹¹ For the **grace** of God that **bringeth salvation** hath appeared to all men,

¹² **Teaching us** that, **denying** ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should **live** soberly, righteously, and godly, in this **present** world;

¹³ **Looking for** that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

¹⁴ **Who gave himself for us**, that he might **redeem us from all iniquity**, and **purify** unto himself a peculiar people, **zealous of good works**.

¹⁵ These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

It is most important to understand that it is the clear and unequivocal testimony of scripture that Jesus' death on the cross and the attending shedding of His blood was **not only to free us from sin's penalty**, but equally significant He gave Himself for us **that He might free us** from the **desires, interests and all other propensities** of the flesh. **The apostle Paul identifies sin in the flesh:**

Galatians 5

¹⁹ Now the **works of the flesh** are evident, which are: adultery,^[1] fornication, uncleanness, lewdness,²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, **hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies,**²¹ **envy, murders,**^[2] **drunkenness, revelries, and the like;** of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that **those who practice such things** will not inherit the kingdom of God. (NKJV)

The bold type in the passages in Galatians chapter five above, and also, in Mark chapter seven below is to emphasize conduct that generally has our own individual acceptance, and also social tolerance by others, **but nevertheless it is sin**, and "those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God".

Jesus informs us that our heart is the source of our sin:

Mark 7

²⁰And He said, "What comes out of a man, **that defiles a man.** ²¹For from **within, out of the heart** of men, **proceed evil thoughts**, adulteries, fornications, murders, ²²thefts, **covetousness**, wickedness, **deceit**, lewdness, an **evil eye**, blasphemy, **pride, foolishness.** ²³**All these evil things come from within and defile a man.**" (NKJV)

Some of these activities are operative in each heart *apart from one's partaking of the provision for salvation that is in and through the Person and work of the Lord Jesus.* All of God's provision is within the meaning of the term **GRACE. And, the *purpose of this provision is to purify our hearts.* These scriptures are not about Christ's righteousness being imputed to us, but rather, they are addressing **our need for** and **our inward cleansing from** all of the defilement that is in our hearts. It has been said by a proponent of a particular theological persuasion that grace is focused on new birth. This is a gross understatement of the focus of God's grace. New birth, which is accomplished by grace refers to the inception of new life in Christ, however, the passages immediately above and other scriptures that will be cited testify to and establish as fact that *the focus of God's grace is on salvation from sin commencing with "new birth" and continuing with His cleansing and keeping power until the "end of your faith" is achieved, even one's deliverance from the presence of sin "in the last time"*-1 Peter 1:4,5,9.**

The above passage in Titus chapter 2 informs us that **the grace that brings salvation teaches us** concerning the matter of **denying sin and living free from it here in this present world.** With only few, if any exceptions, in the matter of sin and righteousness, scripture **is addressing God's children** to explain the nature of sin and of righteousness, and further, the **need for** and **means of** salvation from sin.

The apostle Peter, addressing "them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness [justice] of God and our Savior Jesus Christ:" also emphasizes **the need for** and **the means of** salvation from our indwelling sin. This passage of scripture informs us that it is through "the knowledge" of God and Jesus our Lord that grace and peace are increased to us, and that it is through "the knowledge" of Him that His divine power gives us "all things that *pertain unto life and godliness*". And further, that as we escape the "corruption that is in the world through lust" we *partake of the divine nature.* In this regard, we read at:

2 Peter 1

¹ Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us **through the righteousness** of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

² **Grace and peace** be multiplied unto you **through the knowledge** of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

³ According as his **divine power** hath given unto us all things that pertain unto **life and godliness**, through **the knowledge of him** that hath called us to glory and virtue:

⁴ Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that **by these** ye might be **partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped **the corruption** that is in the world **through lust**.

Grace, peace, and the divine power by which God gives His children all of the things that pertain to life and godliness increase through **knowledge that is of God**. Referring back to Colossians 1:9-10 cited at (the top of page 11 of this paper), the apostle Paul's desire and prayer for the "saints and faithful brethren" at Colosse was that they might be filled with **the knowledge of God's will**. Such knowledge is comprehended as **understanding** acquired by the ministry of **the Holy Spirit** to us through **God's word**. And, it is on the basis of such **understanding**, and of **wisdom** granted by the Spirit that we can "walk worthy of the Lord", be "fruitful in every good work" and increase "in the knowledge of God". ("For with thee is the fountain of life: **in thy light** we shall see light"-Psalms 36:9).

Scripture is quite clear that *we cannot do God's will apart from knowing what it is in specific situations*. We must not assume that we are doing God's will just because we are His children, nor because we are following the tenets of some theological system of thought and practice.

The apostle John said concerning Jesus:

John 1

⁴ In him was **life**; and the **life** was **the light** of men.

Jesus said concerning, both Himself, and those who follow Him:

John 8

¹² Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am **the light of the world**: he that followeth me shall not walk **in darkness**, but shall have **the light of life**.

John 9

⁵ **As long as** I am in the world, I am **the light** of the world.

John 10

⁴ And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth **before** them, and the sheep **follow** him: for they **know** his voice.

⁵ And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they **know not** the voice of strangers...

²⁷ My sheep **hear** my voice, and I know them, and they **follow** me:

John 14

¹⁵ If ye **love** me, **keep** my commandments.

¹⁶ And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you **another Comforter**, that he may **abide** with you for ever;

¹⁷ Even the **Spirit of truth**; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but **ye know** him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be **in you**.

¹⁸ I will not leave you **comfortless**: I will come to you.

¹⁹ Yet a little while, and **the world seeth me no more**; but **ye see me**: because I live, ye shall live also.

²⁰ At that day ye shall know that **I am in my Father**, and **ye in me**, and **I in you**.

²¹ He that hath my commandments, and **keepeth** them, he it is **that loveth me**: and he that loveth me **shall be loved of my Father**, and **I will love him**, and will **manifest** myself to him.

²² Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, **how is it** that thou wilt **manifest thyself unto us**, and not unto the world?

²³ Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man **love me**, **he will keep** my words: and my Father will love him, and **we will come unto him**, and **make our abode with him**.

Jesus tells His disciples that He is the light of the world, while He is in the world. However, He is going away to the Father, but He will not leave them comfortless, He will send them another Comforter who will abide in them. The Comforter whom He will send is the Spirit of truth. *Jesus is telling His disciples that in the Person of the Holy Spirit, He and the Father will come and dwell in them.*

The Holy Spirit has been and is a divinely active participant in accomplishing God's purpose with mankind. Grace is not something that exists of itself, but it is what God has done and is doing in and through the Person and work of the Lord Jesus to accomplish the salvation revealed in His word. The Spirit's role is expressed in the following passages of scripture:

Hebrews 9

¹⁴ How much more shall the blood of **Christ**, who **through the eternal Spirit offered himself** without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to **serve the living God**?

Romans 8

¹¹ But if **the Spirit** of him **that raised up Jesus from the dead** dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also **quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit** that dwelleth in you.

2 Peter 1

²⁰ Knowing this first, that **no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.**

²¹ For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but **holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.**

1 Peter 1

¹⁰ Of which **salvation** the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of **the grace that should come unto you:**

¹² Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which **are now reported** unto you by them that have **preached the gospel** unto you **with the Holy Ghost** sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

Ephesians 1

¹³ In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, **ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,**

¹⁴ Which is **the earnest of our inheritance** until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Romans 8

¹ There is therefore **now no condemnation** to them which are in Christ Jesus, **who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.**

² For the law of **the Spirit of life** in Christ Jesus hath **made me free from the law of sin and death.**

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.**

⁵ For they that are **after the flesh** do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

¹³ For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye **through the Spirit** do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

¹⁴ For as many as are **led** by the Spirit of God, they are **the sons of God.**

¹⁵ For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, **Father.**

¹⁶ The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are **the children of God:**

Galatians 5

¹⁶ I say then: Walk **in the Spirit**, and you shall not fulfill the **lust of the flesh.** ¹⁷For the **flesh** lusts **against the Spirit**, and the **Spirit against the flesh**; and these are **contrary** to one another, so that you **do not do** the things that you wish. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are **not under the law.**

²²But the **fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control. **Against such there is no law.** ²⁴And those who are Christ's **have crucified the flesh** with its passions and desires. ²⁵If we **live** in the Spirit, let us also **walk** in the Spirit. (NKJV)

We learn from these scriptures that the Holy Spirit is the one who actively administers God's grace. It is significant to note that:

- Christ offered Himself a sacrifice to God through the Spirit-Heb. 9:14.
- Christ was raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit-Ro. 8:11.
- The prophets of the Old Testament spoke by the Holy Spirit-2 Pet. 1:20,21.
- Those who proclaimed the gospel did so with the Holy Spirit-1 Pet. 1:12.
- We know that we are God's children on the basis of the Holy Spirit bearing such witness to our spirit-Ro. 8:16.
- Being God's children, the Spirit in this age is the "earnest" or a measure of the full inheritance to be received at the time of the redemption of the purchased possession (our body)-Eph. 1:13,14; Ro. 8:23.

We have read in 2 Peter 1:3 (top of page 15 above) that God's power has given us "all things that *pertain* to life and godliness through the knowledge of him that hath **called us to glory and virtue**". It is vital to "life and godliness" that as God's children we **understand** what we are **called to** in Christ. **Our calling is addressed at:**

1 Corinthians 1

⁹ God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto **the fellowship** of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

The word "fellowship" is the English translation of the Greek word "koinonia" which means *partnership*, i.e. (lit.) *participation*... (Strong's Concordance). Koinonia is also translated communicate, communication and communion. The Greek word "koinonos" from which "koinonia" derives means a *sharer*, i.e. *associate*..., and is translated "partakers" at 2 Peter 1:4 where Peter writes that by the promises of God

“ye might be **partakers of the divine nature**”. And, it is that as God’s children *we might partake of the divine nature, and escape the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

As we have read in some of the above referenced passages of scripture, the Holy Spirit is the active participant in applying the benefits of God’s grace to accomplish His purpose in and through His children. *We partake of the divine nature through the ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit.* Also, it is through the Spirit’s ministry to us in God’s word that we have recognition of the works of the flesh *within ourselves*, (Gal. 5:19-21 at bottom of page 13 above; Mark 7:20 at top of p. 14 above). Such recognition of our indwelling sin provokes in us a sense of guilt and condemnation until we have further recognition by the Spirit’s ministry through God’s word that it is by the power of the indwelling Spirit that we can walk free (salvation) from sin. **A passage of scripture that addresses such guilt and condemnation is:**

Romans 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.**

¹¹ For **sin**, taking occasion by the commandment, **deceived me**, and by it **slew me.**

¹² Wherefore **the law** is holy, and **the commandment** holy, and just, and good.

¹³ Was then **that which is good made death unto me?** God forbid. But **sin**, that it **might appear sin**, working death in me **by that which is good**; that sin by the commandment **might become exceeding sinful.**

¹⁴ For we know that **the law is spiritual**: but **I am carnal**, sold under sin.

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

¹⁹ For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

This passage in the seventh chapter of Romans is explaining the experience of a child of God who is discovering: 1) the unrelenting demands **of indwelling sin**; 2) their own **inability to perform** according to the demands of the law; 3) that the law is **not the cause** of the experience of death, but rather, that **the law reveals the problem to be sin**, which in turn, causes death; 4) and finally, **that it is God** who, by **the Spirit** that raised Christ from the dead will also **by His Spirit** free us from **the demands of sin** and the **attending condemnation** experienced because of **our inability to perform** according to our **newly discovered knowledge**-(Ro. 8:1,11 at page.16 above).

The passages of scripture from Romans chapter eight (at the bottom of page 16 and the top of page 17 above) and from Galatians chapter five (at page 17 above) provide

detailed explanation of how God's children can deny "ungodliness and worldly lusts" and "live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world"-Titus 2:12. And then, look for the glorious appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ "who gave himself for us, **that** he might redeem us from **all iniquity**, and **purify unto himself** a peculiar people, zealous of good works"-Titus 2:14. As mentioned earlier in this consideration, *Christ shed His blood, not just that our faith might be imputed to us for righteousness, but also, that by faith we might access His grace (Ro.5:2) whereby we are inwardly cleansed from sin in the flesh.*

We learn in Ro. 8:1-4 and Gal.5:16,18,22,23 (at bottom of page 16 and on page 17 above) **that by walking, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit:** 1. We are free from the power of indwelling sin-Ro. 8:2,3; Gal. 5:16; 2. We are free from the inward sense of guilt and condemnation-Ro. 8:1; Gal. 5:18; 3. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us-Ro. 8:4; Gal.5:22,23.

We are informed at Gal. 5:18 that "if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law". And, at Gal. 5:22,23 we are informed as to why: "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control. **Against such there is no law.**"

While the truth has expression by words, truth's meaning is comprehended **when we are taught it by the Lord** and then embrace its relevance to our inward state and to our outward behavior. *Thus, God's word, when effectual in a person, translates into walking not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. This is expressed at:*

Ephesians 4

¹⁷This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, **that you should no longer walk as the rest of¹¹ the Gentiles walk**, in the futility of their mind, ¹⁸having **their understanding darkened**, being **alienated from the life of God**, because of the **ignorance** that is in them, because of the **blindness** of their heart; ¹⁹who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to **lewdness**, to work all **uncleanness with greediness**.

²⁰But **you have not so learned Christ**, ²¹if indeed you have **heard Him** and have **been taught by Him**, as **the truth is in Jesus**: ²²**that you put off, concerning your former conduct**, the old man which grows corrupt **according to the deceitful lusts**, ²³and **be renewed** in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴and **that you put on the new man** which was created according to God, **in true righteousness and holiness**.

²⁵Therefore, **putting away lying**, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,"^[2] for we are members of one another. ²⁶"Be angry, and do not sin":^[3] **do not let the sun go down on your wrath**, ²⁷nor give place **to the devil**. ²⁸Let him who stole **steal no longer**, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. ²⁹Let **no corrupt word** proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, **that it may impart grace to the hearers**. ³⁰And **do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God**, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. ³²And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you. (NKJV)

The Ephesians passage instructs us that **understanding** Jesus involves **hearing Him** and being **taught by Him** as the truth is in Jesus. *One who walks after the Spirit manifests “the fruit of the Spirit”* (see Galatians 5:22,23 on page 17) *as they put off “the works of the flesh”*. Such *“putting off” is a process of growing in grace by the Spirits enlightening our understanding through God’s word*. As we increase in the knowledge of the Lord, we become aware of an expanding need for further deliverance (salvation) from the newly recognized sin within. **It is in regard to this process that we read in the epistle to the Hebrews:**

Hebrews 2

¹ Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, **lest we drift away**. ²For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, ³how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which **at the first** began to be spoken **by the Lord**, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him.

This Hebrews passage instructs us to be attentive to the truth. There is resistance to it, both from within and from without. Also, we are warned that there are consequences for neglecting or being careless with the matter of salvation.

The apostle Paul expresses this same concern when he writes to the saints at Philippi:

Philippians 2

¹² Therefore, **my beloved**, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling**; ¹³for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for **His good pleasure**.

¹⁴Do all things without complaining and disputing, ¹⁵that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God **without fault** in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom **you shine as lights** in the world, ¹⁶**holding fast** the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run **in vain** or labored **in vain**.

While there is a theological system of thought that objects to **obedience** being involved in salvation, the apostle Paul presents *obedience as essential to working out one’s salvation*. We “work out” our salvation on the basis of God working in us. As previously explained, **by the Spirit’s enlightenment** (read Ephesians 1:15-19) we recognize carnal workings within, and upon such recognition we can respond **by obeying (submitting to) God’s will** to reject the inward propensity toward such sin. *If our inward posture is that of devotion and commitment to God, not just for this sin issue but as our continuing and sustained inward position, which is faith*, then the Holy Spirit will strengthen us to deny, not only this sin, but all “ungodliness and worldly lusts” that we might “live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this **present world**”. Such divine provision is the grace of God-Titus 2:11,12. This is obedience to what we discern to be God’s will as we walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. This situation involves knowing and doing God’s will **as relates to sin**, however, *this is an explanation of how we know and do His will in any set of circumstances* (Read Colossians passage on page 11 of this

paper). This is simply walking after the Spirit-Romans 8:4, walking in the light as God is in the light-1 John 1:7, and living by faith-Romans 1:17, **these three functions having mutual coexistence. One does not exist apart from the other two.**

The preceding paragraph and scripture references provide a brief explanation of:

- How we partake of the divine nature and escape the corruption that is in the world through lust-1 Peter 1:4.
- How the **righteousness** of the law is fulfilled **in us**-Romans 8:4. (The commandment is the letter, **the way of the commandment is the life**).
- How the “fruit of the Spirit” (love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control) becomes our inward state-Galatians 5:22,23. **“Against such there is no law”**, therefore, God’s children who are **led of the Spirit** are not under the law-Galatians 5:18.
- How we keep His commandments and thereby we abide in Christ and He abides in us-1 John 3:24.
- How we walk in the good works for which we are created in Christ Jesus-Ephesians 2:10. As previously stated, what gives any of our works the quality of good is that they are **the Lord’s will**. And, knowing His will is requisite to **doing** it.
- How we live in God’s grace through **faith**.
- How the Lord Jesus purifies a people unto Himself-Titus 2:14.

The end result of the righteousness of the law being fulfilled in a child of God, and the means of accomplishment are concisely expressed at:

1 Peter 1

²² Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye **love** one another with a **pure heart** fervently:

This passage is a further declaration by scripture that one’s inward cleansing is accomplished in obeying the truth, obedience being possible through enabling by the Spirit of grace. But of great significance *is the inward realization of love that can only reside in a pure heart. A pure heart is one that has been cleansed of self-serving defilement that it can, without internal resistance, have high regard for others. The “just, and good” law (Romans 7:12) through the enlightening and the saving (or delivering) ministry of the Spirit of grace has achieved its intended function.*

When we see the end toward which the law is aimed our heart says with the Psalmist:

Psalm 119

⁹⁷ O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.

¹⁰⁴ Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.

¹⁰⁵ Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a **light** unto my path.

¹⁴⁵ I cried with **my whole heart**; hear me, O LORD: I will keep thy statutes.

¹⁴⁶ I cried unto thee; **save me**, and I shall keep thy testimonies.

The law achieves a noble purpose when it is used as God intended:

1 Timothy 1

⁵ Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:

⁶ From which some having swerved have turned aside **unto vain jangling**;

⁷ Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

⁸ But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;

While the law reveals sin in the flesh that it might make one aware of their sin, which is its legitimate function, to teach that one must keep the law's demands and not explain that it is the power of the Spirit that frees us from sin is “vain jangling**” or **empty discourse**. However, teaching that through the law is the knowledge of sin (Romans 7:7), and that such knowledge is used by the Spirit of grace to deliver us from the penalty and power of indwelling sin is a lawful or legitimate use of the law to purify the heart that sin might give place to love.**

The apostle Paul explains how love is the fulfilling of the law:

Romans 13

⁷ **Render therefore to all their dues**: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

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 neighbour as thyself**.

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

In this passage of scripture, we are told to render to all persons that which is due to them and to not owe anyone anything other than to love them. This is saying, in effect, *to live our lives in a manner that does not cause detriment to others and to have the same consideration and regard for the interests of others that we might have for ourselves*. Commission of any one of the forbidden acts mentioned in verse nine above would cause detriment to others. *Love fulfills the law in that one who loves others will avoid causing them detriment*. The “**just and good**” law explains love. To not cause detriment to others is a summation of the testimony of the law as referenced on pages one through four of this paper. (Rather than review those pages here the reader might return to them for review)

The law functions in at least two ways related to love. First, as previously mentioned, **the law** in providing us **with knowledge of sin** is **an instrument** used by **the Spirit** to purify our hearts **unto unfeigned love**. **Second**, the law gives definition to love so that love is not a vague and abstract concept shaped by the feelings and imaginations of people. *Love is not an alternative to walking in the*

truth, but rather, love is the motivation for so walking. Love does not define the law, but rather, the law **defines love**, which in turn **fulfills the law**. Thus, **the law is the vehicle employed by the Spirit to reveal how we are and how God wants us to be.** **Grace is the ministry of the Spirit, which ministry rests on the Person and work of the Lord Jesus, through which we are transformed into the image of God's Son.** **The end of this process of transformation is a pure heart, cleansed of the works of the flesh, and filled with love for God and for one's neighbor.** **This is the functional relationship between the law, grace, and love.**

Referring to love the apostle Paul writes to the saints at Philippi:

Philippians 1

⁹And this I pray, **that your love** may abound still more and more **in knowledge** and all **discernment**, ¹⁰**that** you may approve the things that are excellent, **that** you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, ¹¹**being filled with the fruits of righteousness** which are **by Jesus Christ**, to the **glory and praise** of God.

In this passage we learn that the apostle Paul prays that **their love may increase**, **but in a manner that is according to knowledge**, and **that is accompanied by discernment**. ***And to the end, that they being filled with the fruits of righteousness might bring glory and praise to God.***

Love is evidenced, not by what we say about it, **but by keeping the Lord's commandments**, and further, ***the Lord makes Himself known to us*** as we keep His commandments. **In this regard we read at:**

John 14

²¹He who has My commandments and **keeps them**, **it is he who loves Me**. And **he who loves Me** will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and **manifest Myself to him.**"

1 John 5

²By this **we know** that we love the children of God, **when we love God and keep His commandments.** ³For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And **His commandments are not burdensome.**

Here we are informed that God's commandments "are not burdensome". However, within the "Christian community" as one hears and reads theological commentary there is an intense effort to limit the law's application to the Old Testament or to those who are Non-Christians. This effort persists even though there is an abundance of scripture in the New Testament that applies the law to the Lord's people. Such an attitude toward the law is fueled, at least in part, by the **unsuccessful** struggle against sin by many of the Lord's people. ***The experience of death and condemnation that attends such struggle to comply with the requirement to walk in the truth (the law is truth) is caused by our inability to perform***, as explained in the seventh chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans, which is referenced above (on page 18).

A natural response to the struggle described in chapter seven of Romans, which response is held by some persons to be sound doctrinally is to blame and

reject the application of the law as being “legalism”, rather than blaming and rejecting sin in the flesh. *Walking in the truth, as set forth in scripture, is not legalism, but rather, legalism is trying to walk in truth with the weak resources of the flesh.* Therefore, a response and doctrine that blames the law is misplaced and tends toward hardening of the heart against the promptings of the Spirit and the conscience. **On the point of hardening of the heart we read at:**

Hebrews 3

¹ Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;...

⁵ And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

⁶ But **Christ** as a son over his own house; whose house are we, **if** we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm **unto the end**.

⁷ Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice,

⁸ **Harden not your hearts**, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

⁹ When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

¹⁰ Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway **err in their heart**; and they have not known my ways.

¹¹ So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into **my rest**.)

¹² Take heed, **brethren**, lest there be **in any of you** an evil heart of **unbelief**, in **departing from** the living God.

¹³ But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you **be hardened** through the deceitfulness of sin.

¹⁴ For we are made partakers of Christ, **if we hold the beginning** of our confidence steadfast unto the end;

¹⁸ And **to whom** swore he that they could not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?

Hebrews 4

¹⁰ For he who **has entered His rest** has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.

¹¹ Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. (NKJV)

This passage in the Hebrew’s epistle is applying to Christians the principles of God’s dealings with the children of Israel during their time in the wilderness after they had left Egypt and before they entered the “land” under Joshua’s leadership. From this passage of scripture we will note several points as follows:

- This passage is addressing **brethren** who are partakers of the heavenly calling-v1.
- Moses house (the nation of Israel) was a “testimony” of those things that were to be spoken of **at a future time**, referring to Christ’s house, which is the dwelling place of God in this age-vs5, 6.
- The children of Israel were exhorted to hear God’s voice and to not harden their hearts as their fathers did during the forty years that they spent in the wilderness-vs7-9.

- God was **grieved** with some of them **because they “err”** [roam (from safety, truth, virtue)-Strong’s Conc.] **in their hearts** and have **not known the Lord’s ways**-v10.
- Because they **moved away from the Lord in their hearts** and did **not know His ways**, He determined that they could not enter the “land” promised to them where **God would have given them rest from their enemies**-v11.
- **Such moving away in their hearts** from God is equated with **unbelief**-v18. Thus, they are **not continuing inwardly in their devotion and commitment** to God, which is **unbelief**.
- This passage is **prefiguring Israel’s rest** with being **“partakers”** “participants, i.e. (as noun) a sharer-Strong’s Conc.” **of Christ in this age**.
- **Faith**, and the faithfulness that always attends faith, was **a condition** for individual Jews to enter the land of Canaan, the place where God would give them **rest from their enemies**. So also, **the Christians abiding in Christ** where, through salvation from sin there is **rest from our own works**, entering into such rest **is contingent** on not **“departing from the living God” through unbelief**. We, too, can have an evil heart that is “hardened through the **deceitfulness of sin**”-vs12-14; Heb. 4:10, 11.

The above referenced passage of scripture from the Hebrews’ letter **conditions** one’s **continuing** fellowship with and partaking of the grace that is in Christ on our **continuing** in faith. This scripture from the Hebrews’ letter and other passages of scripture expressly explain that **faith is such a condition**, some scriptures clearly imply it, while others require it. **Several of these scripture passages are:**

Colossians 1

²¹ And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet **now hath he reconciled**

²² In the body of his flesh through death, **to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight:**

²³ **If ye continue in the faith** grounded and settled, and **be not moved away** from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

Matthew 8

¹⁰ When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found **so great faith**, no, not in Israel.

¹¹ And I say unto you, That **many shall come** from the east and west, and **shall sit down with** Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, **in** the kingdom of heaven.

¹² But **the children of the kingdom** shall be **cast out** into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Galatians 6

¹ **Brethren**, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, **restore such an one** in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted...

⁷ **Be not deceived**; God is not mocked: for **whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap**.
⁸ For he that soweth **to his flesh** shall of the flesh **reap corruption**; but he that soweth **to the Spirit** shall of the Spirit **reap life everlasting**.

Hebrews 10

⁶ For if we sin willfully after we have received **the knowledge of the truth**, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷but **a certain fearful** expectation of judgment, and **fiery** indignation which will **devour the adversaries**. ²⁸**Anyone** who has rejected **Moses' law** dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. ²⁹Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has **trampled the Son of God underfoot**, counted **the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified** a common thing, and **insulted the Spirit of grace**? ³⁰For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, **I will repay**," ^[1]says the Lord. ^[2] And again, "The LORD will judge His people (NKJV)

While the "Old Covenant" had immediate and physical application, it was the embodiment **of the principles** that are operative under God's administration of the "New Covenant". The "New Covenant" is **the substance** of that which the "Old Covenant" **foreshadowed** and has its **realization** in the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ (Hebrews 10:1,9,10). For instance, **mercy and forgiveness** were as much an integral part of the "Old Covenant" as they are of the "New Covenant", and were effectual through repentance (See Exodus 20: 5,6; Psalms 106:43-45). But also, *judgment for sin falls upon the Lord's people* under "New Covenant" administration as it did under God's administration of the "Old Covenant", as clearly evidenced in the, immediately above, referenced scripture passages. However, under "New Covenant" administration, *instead of being immediate, judgment is amassed or laid up, awaiting* "...the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. Who will render to every man according to his deeds" (See Romans 2:5,6).

There is a system of theological thought in which the proponents passionately contend that the initial act of faith through which one comes to the Lord Jesus secures a child of God from any penalty for his or her sin throughout eternity.

Some scriptures often cited for support of this view of security are:

John 3

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him **should not perish**, but **have everlasting life**.

John 5

²⁴ **Verily, verily**, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, **and believeth** on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

John 6

³⁹ And **this is the Father's will** which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should **lose nothing**, but should **raise it up again at the last day**.

⁴⁰ And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and **believeth** on him, **may have everlasting life**: and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 10

²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

²⁸ And I give unto them **eternal life**; and they shall **never perish**, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

²⁹ My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and **no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.**

This latter group of scripture passages provides us with **hope regarding our future, and confidence in the keeping power of God.** There are many scriptures that assure us of the adequacy of the Father's provision in and through the Person and work of Christ to completely and eternally deal with the issue of our sin. **The first, above referenced, group of scriptures does not minimize the promises concerning the divine provision, but rather, they instruct us concerning faith as being our access to it, as also, does the latter group. However, the first group of scripture passages emphasizes the consequences for unfaithfulness, while the second group does not.**

Among the proponents of the "one act of faith secures all" doctrine, it has been said that we should not trade a "verily, verily", as in John 5:24, for an "if", as in Colossians 1:23. Such a statement suggests that there is conflict between these two categories of emphasis that are present in scripture, which suggestion is not the case. *Each expression of scripture is in complete agreement with every other expression in scripture. Any apparent incongruity within scripture is the result of truth that is not yet a part of our knowledge, or of knowledge that we have which is inaccurate.* We should not embrace only those scriptures that provide a particular emphasis and ignore those scriptures conveying a different emphasis. *We come to an understanding of truth as the Holy Spirit's enlightenment reconciles the scriptures for us.*

While faith is a major topic of consideration in the scriptures, it is often treated by some bible commentators as somewhat optional after that we have "been saved". That God places a high value on faith is evidenced at:

1 Peter 1

⁴ **To an inheritance** incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, **reserved** in heaven for you,

⁵ Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto **salvation** ready to be revealed in the last time.

⁶ Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

⁷ That the trial of **your faith**, being **much more precious** than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, **might be found** unto **praise** and **honour** and **glory** at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

⁸ Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, **yet believing**, ye **rejoice with joy** unspeakable and full of glory:

⁹ Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

An examination of those persons who are mentioned in scripture for their faith, reveals that faith is not an abstract concept that need evade our

understanding. In the simplest terms, *faith is an inward posture of devotion and commitment toward God.* Such an inward posture is **expressed** by careful observance of **His will**; loyalty that **will not renounce or ignore** the relationship in the presence of temptation; and dependence on Him **when more comfortable options are available.** Such commitment and devotion is **a matter of choice,** and **rests on knowledge** that we receive by **the Spirit's ministry through the scriptures.** **That God bestows grace to those who are, in this way, inwardly disposed toward Him is clearly expressed at:**

James 1

² My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

³ Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

⁴ But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

⁵ If any of you lack wisdom, **let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally,** and upbraideth not; and **it shall be given him.**

⁶ But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

⁷ For **let not that man** think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

⁸ A **double minded** man is unstable in all his ways.

¹² Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the **crown of life,** which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

¹³ Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted **with evil,** neither tempteth he any man:

¹⁴ But every man **is tempted,** when he is drawn away **of his own lust,** and enticed.

¹⁵ Then when **lust** hath conceived, it bringeth forth **sin:** and **sin,** when it is finished, bringeth forth **death.**

James is instructing us that God gives most readily to those who are single of mind toward Him, however, if we are wavering between the ways of the flesh and the ways of the Lord, we will receive nothing from Him. **Jesus also emphasizes the matter of wholeheartedness at:**

Matthew 22

³⁶ Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

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 neighbour as thyself.**

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

In concluding this consideration, we will view another passage of scripture followed by comment:

1 John 1

⁵ **This then is the message which we have heard of him,** and declare unto you, that **God is light,** and in him is **no darkness at all.**

⁶ If we say that we have **fellowship** with him, and **walk in darkness,** we **lie,** and **do not the truth:**

⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, **we have fellowship** one with another, and

the blood of Jesus Christ his Son **cleanseth us** from all sin.

⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

⁹ **If we confess our sins**, he is faithful and just **to forgive us** our sins, and **to cleanse us** from all unrighteousness.

¹⁰ If we say that **we have not sinned**, we make him a liar, and **his word** is not in us.

Some significant points from this passage of scripture are:

- God is light and there is no darkness in Him.
- If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we are not being honest about our fellowship.
- If we walk in the light, we do have fellowship (with God and with others who are walking in the light).
- By walking in the light, the blood of Jesus Christ is effectual for us. (If we do not walk in the light, it is a proper inference that the blood is not cleansing us).
- When we sin, and confess such sin, God will forgive us that sin. (It is proper to infer that if we deny that we sinned He will not forgive us of that sin, nor grant us cleansing).

The faith through which God's children receive "justification of life"-Ro. 5:18, rests on the scriptural truth of "imputation", that our faith is counted to us for righteousness-Ro 4.3,5. ***Thus, because of a person's faith their sin is not imputed to them whereby they have standing or position before the Father and in the Son that they might work out their salvation on the basis of God working in them to accomplish His will and good pleasure***-Phil. 2:12,13. The above passage in first John is informing us that ***this standing is maintained by walking in the light, and if we sin, confessing our sin. So walking is equivalent to and coexists with, "living by faith"-Ro. 1:17, and "walking after the Spirit"-Ro.8:1,4. The blood is effectual if we walk in the light, and also, if when we sin, we confess that sin.*** John says, My little children, these things write I unto you, **that ye sin not. And if any man sin**, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:-1 John 2:1.

I am going to share a question and a partial response to the question. I read this on a web page. Only the partial response is being shared because it is pertinent to above referenced passage in first John chapter one:

Question: "What about 1 John 1:9, don't we have to confess our sins in order to be forgiven?"

Partial answer: "When an individual believes on Christ as Savior they are totally forgiven of all sins past, present, and future. Colossians 2:13 says, 'He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions.' In light of this we see that 1 John 1:9 is not a conditional promise. We do not have to keep on confessing our sins in order to be forgiven, as believers we abide in God's forgiveness."

Does the verse in Colossians stating, “having forgiven us all our transgressions” support the conclusion that “when an individual believes on Christ as Savior” all future sins are forgiven and, “as believers we abide in God’s forgiveness”? Upon reading this conclusion and the supporting verse, several other verses came to my attention. **Some of these verses are:**

John 1

⁹ That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that **cometh into the world**.

Does this scripture support the conclusion that **every** man, without condition, that **comes into the world** has light from the “true Light”, which is Christ? At John 14:21, Jesus says of those who keep His commandments and love Him: “...I will love him, and will **manifest myself to him**”.

(Also, read Ephesians 4:17,18 on page 19 of this paper).

Romans 5

¹⁸ Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon **all men unto justification** of life.

Does this scripture support the conclusion that **all** men, apart from any contingency, are justified in Christ? Romans 5:1 says, “being justified **by faith**.”

1 Corinthians 11

³ But I would have you know, that the head of **every man is Christ**; ...

Does this scripture support the conclusion that **every** man, apart from any condition, has Christ as his headship or chief authority? Eph. 1:22 says, “and gave him to be **the head** over all things **to the church**.” John 8:44 says, Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do”.

The answer to these four questions is -No. Faith is our access to God’s grace at the inception of life in Christ, and it is through faith that we have access to God’s grace by which we grow up in Christ as evidenced by the following passages of scripture:

Romans 5

¹ Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

² By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Ephesians 4

¹³ Till we all come in the unity **of the faith**, and **of the knowledge** of the Son of God, unto a **perfect man**, unto **the measure of the stature** of the fulness of Christ:

¹⁴ That we henceforth be **no more children**, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

¹⁵ But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in **all things**, which is **the head, even Christ**:

Certainly, the provision that our heavenly Father has made for us in and through His Son is abundantly adequate for time and eternity. I do not expect, nor would it be wise for anyone reading this paper to accept any of the comments and conclusions apart from seeing that they accurately reflect the testimony of

scripture. This and other bible study papers will bring to the reader's attention some scriptures that are not often presented with emphasis.

The apostle John, writing to “my little children”, informs them of something that is vital to their continuing relationship with Christ:

1 John 2

²⁶ These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you.

²⁷ But **the anointing** which ye have received of him **abideth in you**, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same **anointing** teacheth you of **all things**, and **is truth**, and **is no lie**, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

²⁸ And now, **little children**, abide in him; **that**, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and **not be ashamed** before him at his coming.

The above referenced scriptures in First John, and in John's gospel (on page 15 and top of page 16) are explaining the means by which God's children can sort out truth from fiction from among the many, including myself, who are speaking and writing about matters of “Christian” theology. The anointing referred to in First John is the Spirit of grace that enlightens God's children through the scriptures so that one can discern the truth. Nearly every person who comes to the Lord Jesus is or will become connected with some established system of theological thought and practice. While there are many of such systems, it is vital to one's spiritual progress that he or she search the scriptures to determine if the things that they are being taught are true. (Read Acts 17:10, 11)

1 Corinthians 13

¹ Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. ² And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³ And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned,^[1] but have not love, it profits me nothing.

⁴ **Love** suffers long and is kind; **love** does not envy; **love** does not parade itself, is not puffed up; ⁵ does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; ⁶ does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (NKJV)

Galatians 5

⁴ You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. ⁵ For we **through the Spirit** eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. ⁶ For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love. (NKJV)

Hebrews 13

²⁰ Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great **Shepherd of the sheep**, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, ²¹ make you complete in every **good work to do His will**, working **in you**^[1] what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. (NKJV)

