

Covenants of God XII Justification by Works of Law *or* by Grace?

Fred R. Coulter

Let's just briefly review. What are we talking about? *The overall thing that we are talking about concerns justification!*

1. Justification by *a work of law*; which does not forgive sin spiritually before God the Father in heaven above!
2. Justification *by faith*; which is called *grace*, through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

Let's briefly review in Gal. 2. If you need to review the whole chapter see part 11 of this series. Here is what I want to cover so that we understand very thoroughly what we have.

Galatians 2:16: "Knowing that a man... [‘anthropos’—*a human being, a person*—men and women] ...**is not justified by works of law...**" Note that the *KJV* erroneously adds the word ‘the’ before works and law. When you read that here is the problem that people have and the problem that this presents for people who believe in keeping the commandments of God end up with a question:

- if we are supposed to be right with God
- if we are to keep the commandments of God

Why does the Bible say that a person is not justified by *the* works of *the* law? It creates a lot of confusion. It doesn't mean *the* works of *the* law, but it is *works of law—any law!* We are not talking about whether to keep commandments or not, ***we are talking about how one is justified to God.***

The reason that we need the justification of Christ is because there is nothing that we will ever do, which will be perfect enough to be accepted on its own merit. Why is that so? There is nothing that we of ourselves can do—*apart from God*—that would be perfect enough to be accepted of God. Why? ***Because we're human and we have the 'law of sin and death' in us! Nothing we can do will be perfect before God of it's on merit!***

So therefore, to be justified to God the Father in heaven above. It's not just what you do, it is whether you have Christ's Spirit *in you* is what we're talking about when we get to the end of the chapter here. God ordained it that we are justified through the sacrifice, that is the blood and the resurrection. God is ordained! That's how we are justified to Him, so anything you do—which is apart from God—cannot satisfy that requirement, because you are not Christ.

We'll see it's expressed almost exactly that way, v 16: "Knowing that **a man is not justified by works of law...**" Doesn't mean that you don't keep the laws or commandments of God. It doesn't bring you justification.

"...but through *the* faith of Jesus Christ... [Jesus' very own faith] ...we also have believed in [‘eis’—meaning *into*, showing what kind of faith we need] ...Christ Jesus in order that we might be justified by *the* faith of... [‘ek’—*out of this faith*] ...Christ and **not by works of law; because** ... [Here's the reason; it doesn't say don't keep the commandments of God; it doesn't say not to have the good works that God ordains; it is that works were not made to justify.] ...**by works of law shall no flesh be justified**" (v 16).

Works of law were not designed to bring justification. They're designed for what? *By the Law is the knowledge of sin*; that's what it's to bring. *By the Law* it exposes what sin is. That's what the Law was designed to do.

The English translation of Galatians 2 in the *KJV* is—on a scale of one to ten—probably six and a half. That's what the problem is. When you read the *King James* it becomes so confusing.

The *New American Translation* is not too much different from the *King James*. The only thing is it removes the *eths* and the *thees* and *thous*. Verse 16: "Nevertheless, knowing that a man is not justified by works of the Law..." That is not correct, and they even capitalize the word *law*. Remember, what Paul is talking about here is not the works of the commandments of God, but *he's talking about a work of Judaism* to separate people from eating—Jews over here because 'we're better' and Gentiles over there because 'you're no good and God loves us more than you Gentiles, because we separate. So, you Gentiles just also Judaize, because you eat over there and we'll Judaize because we're eating over here.' Paul said that's **wrong!** That isn't going to make you just before God, or accepted by God.

It does cause confusion. That's why I'm saying that we are at the most difficult point in the Bible to understand, because we're not only trying to understand a concept, we're trying to wade through mistranslations and we're trying to wade through the problems that commandment-keepers are confronted with, and believers in faith and grace are confronted with. I can understand where there would be some confusion. One of the biggest problems that you

have is that you can never establish doctrine by the *King James Bible* alone. It is a translation, not by any other translation can you establish doctrine. You have to go back to the original.

Where is the most confusion centered? *Right here in Gal. 2 & 3!* Why is that? *Because of improper translation and misunderstanding on people's part!* It does create a confusion. A person who doesn't want to labor through it—and you have to labor... As a minister, I've had to labor, struggle, pray, study, work it through. It is difficult! I agree, it is tough! I'm reading in the *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* {note: The Holy Bible in Its Original Order is used for this transcript} I'm not trying to add confusion to it, I'm just saying: Do we want to understand it? and If we do, how are we going to understand it? How is that going to be done? Then we have to plow into it. It gives a basis for all to understand it. We'll go through the complicated things, and then I'll try and say *the bottom line is this...*

A work of a law does not perform the function of the sacrifice of Christ! That's what it's saying. That's why I've said that if you don't understand let me know. There are times I can sail right over everybody's head, and if everybody says, 'Yes, I understand' then I think you understand. If you don't understand, let me know.

Right now we're right at the heart, core and meat of the toughest, most tangled problem that there is to understand in Christianity. It's been tough, confused and tangled from many different directions.

Brethren, one of the things I'm going to love to do at the resurrection is I want to corner Paul and say, 'Okay, let's just have a couple hours we can sit down and talk; tell me what were the problems that created this?' It is confusing. It gets discouraging to people.

Why did God write it in a difficult way? Even Peter said that Paul wrote things 'hard to be understood'—which people twist and turn. It's going to make you earn understanding. I'm sharing with you the results of my labors and studies of years as a minister. I know that it's difficult! I know it's hard! I'm not trying to do it in such a way as to be difficult, but we have to labor to get it.

This is one of the leaps we have to go through, though it's difficult. There are a lot of churches—even Churches of God—who have not really plowed through it to understand it. It's confusing to the mind if you're told to keep the Law and then you're told it doesn't do you any good. How does that make you feel? It does give you that

implication there when you read it in the *King James*.

Well the reason is this, brethren: We have to look to Christ. This is the whole thing, Paul is pointing to Christ. We'll get through this and then we'll go through Rom. 6 and we will see the personal, individual justification that we need, and the operation of how that is accomplished, because every religion in the world—except through Christ—is a religion of dos and don'ts, every one! Every one is by works! It covers all people. This is a vast, wonderful, fantastic thing, though complicated that it is.

“...because **by works of law shall no flesh be justified**. Now then, if we are seeking to be justified in Christ... [which is what we're trying to do] ...*and* we ourselves are found to be sinners... [Hasn't that happened? Haven't you gone to God and say, 'God forgive me,' and you still find yourself a sinner? And we're still seeking that continual justification of Christ—isn't that true? *Yes!* If we are sinners, did Christ cause it? Did Christ make that happen?] ...*is* Christ then *the* minister of sin? **MAY IT NEVER BE!**” (vs 16-17)—very emphatic!

Verse 18: “For if I build again those things that I destroyed, I am making myself a transgressor.” Christ doesn't make Paul a transgressor. Paul makes himself a transgressor. He's just explaining what happens to us as individuals. Do you doubt your conversion because you sin? *Some people do!* Some people are very frustrated because they think that they should not be sinning. You become the sinner; does that deny Christ? *Not necessarily!* Does that make you reject Christ? *No!*

Here's what it gets down to, v 19: “For I, **through law...**”—‘the’ is not there; to law—‘the wages of sin is death’ The Law defines sin! What brings the death penalty? *Sin!* What is the sting of the law? *Death!*

Paul is saying, “...I, through law, **died to law...** [as a means of justification. Why? *Because the means of justification is through Christ!*] ...**in order that I may live to God**” (v 19). A great distinction here. The Jews took the laws of God, built all kinds of other laws around them *to live to the law*. Do they live to the law and not to God even to this day? *Yes!* We are to be changed, that our lives are to be living to God.

“For I, through law, died to law...” as a means to justification] ...in order that I may live... [through Christ] ...to God. I have been crucified with Christ...” (vs 19-20). Was Paul really crucified with Christ? Was Paul hanging on the same cross with Christ? *No!* This is the means of the operation

of justification.

“...yet, I live.... [I still have life] ...*Indeed*, it is no longer I [‘ego’]... [It’s no longer me! His life is no longer for himself.] ...but **Christ lives in me....**” (v 20)—that’s the key. The whole purpose of justification through the sacrifice—the blood and resurrection of Jesus Christ—is to receive the Holy Spirit and Christ living in you. Is that not greater than law-keeping? *Yes!* That is so fantastic! It is like night and day. Does that mean that the Law does not serve a purpose? *No!* But Christ living *in us* has got to be the burning thing that is in our lives! That’s why to have a ‘religion’ is worthless! That’s what Paul is saying.

- *If* Christ is not in you
- *If* you’re not living your life with Christ living in you

What is your life? Jesus said, ‘What’s it going to gain a man, that he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?’ Or we can say that even though we’re steeped right in the middle of the most difficult Scriptures in the Bible, what good does it do if you think you understand the difficult things and you don’t have Christ *in you*? *None!*

Paul said, ‘If I have all knowledge and if I have all understanding...’ That’s a great person in the world—right? He says, ‘...*if I don’t have love, I’m nothing!*’ He’s saying, ‘*If I don’t have Christ, I’m nothing!*’ That’s what we’re dealing with here.

“I have been crucified with Christ...” but it is not for me that I’m living, “...but Christ lives in me. For *the life* that I am now living in *the* flesh... [which we’re privileged to do; I’m living in the flesh, you’re living in the flesh. We have the Spirit of God in us, Christ in us] ...**I live by faith—that very faith of the Son of God...**” (v 20). Christ’s very own faith in you! That is fantastic.

That’s why when we went through and we talked about the concept that you have to have faith. That’s true, but whose faith? Your faith? You show me one faithful individual anywhere. None of us are! ***Any faith we have comes from God!*** That comes from Christ! That begins with the operation of baptism.

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

- gave Himself up as being God
- made Himself lower than the angels
- became a human being
- died the death on the cross
- became the sacrifice for sin

- Who never sinned
- shed His blood
- raised from the dead

that we may be justified and receive the Spirit of God! That, brethren, is the Gospel; that is the most fantastic thing. Unfortunately, men have complicated it so now we have to un-complicate it. The way we un-complicate it is to understand the complications. That is the key.

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

John 16:26: “In that day, you shall ask in My name; and I do not tell you that I will beseech the Father for you, for the Father Himself loves you...” (vs 26-27). This is what the ‘good news’ is all about. This is the heart and core of the Gospel. God the Father Himself loves you, loves me, loves everyone He calls. Jesus Christ Himself loves you and has died for you and has shed His blood for you.

- What greater thing can be done? *Nothing!*
- What work can you do?
- What work can I do as an individual to equal that? *Nothing!*

That’s why ‘by works of law no flesh shall be justified’ because of the magnitude of what God has done.

Verse 27: “For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.”

Galatians 2:21: “I do not nullify... [frustrate (KJV)] ...the grace of God; for if righteousness is through *works of law*, then Christ died in vain”—or for nothing. Then you can do it by yourself. That, brethren, is exactly what this New Age religion is all about. You save yourself. You think yourself into becoming God.

If righteousness comes by law—we’re dealing with a principle; law in general. And that righteousness means in right standing with God through Christ. Whenever that term ‘righteousness’ is used, it means *right standing with God through Jesus Christ*.

To give you examples of law that ‘frustrates grace’ (KJV):

- every woman who walks through this door whose skirt is not below the middle of her knee shall not be excepted as a Christian.
- any woman who puts on any makeup and walks through the door of this church is not a Christian

That is *a* work of *a* law. Were there not people standing at the door to enforce that work of that law? *Yes!* Did that make a person a Christian or not? *No!* What makes a person a Christian or not is not the hair length, it is not the set of the eyes, it is not the color of the skin, it's not who you were fathered or mothered by. ***It is Christ in you that makes you a Christian, and you don't get it by a work of a law—any law!***

Will Christ be in you if you keep the Sabbath? *Not unless you're baptized!* That's the whole purpose of saying, 'Christians, keep My commandments,' with Christ in you vs the Jews over here attempting to keep the commandments *their own* way. Who has Christ? Who has law? Do you see the limitation of law?

Another good example of the limitation of law: Next time you see someone by the Wailing Wall with all of their garb on, their shawls on, and all of these things on and they're rocking back and forth and praying, hoping that God is going to hear them at this Wailing Wall. If your heart is not right, I don't care where you are praying.

Romans 6 is really going to open it up. Once you understand it brings the most beautiful fantastic thing that there is. Once you understand about Christ in you, and once you understand really the function of baptism—which we're going to cover; and then when we get to that one difficult verse, 'you're not under law but under grace,' you're going to understand it!

Romans 6:1: "What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin so that grace may abound?" We know that 'sin is the transgression of the Law,' so obviously then, we come back to the basics again:

- Do you keep the laws of God? *Sure, you keep the laws of God!*

That is a requirement for us to live before God.

- How are we made right before God the Father in heaven above?
- *Through the operation of baptism!*
- What kind of baptism?
- When you were baptized, did you really know this?
- *NO! You grow in the understanding!*

Verse 2: "MAY IT NEVER BE! We who died to sin, how shall we live any longer therein?... [How shall we still live any longer in it, living in sin?] ...Or are you ignorant... [Paul sometimes was really derogatory to the people he was writing to] ...that we, as many as were baptized **into Christ Jesus**, were baptized **into His death?**" (vs 2-3).

You are not just baptized in water. Water is

the vehicle that is used, but you are baptized *INTO* Jesus Christ, and *INTO* His death! That's something! God is accepting the death of Jesus Christ for the payment of your sins, so you are baptized *into* His death. You become part of the life of Christ, part of the death of Christ. Your human nature then dies, figuratively; not all of it, because you receive an earnest of the Holy Spirit. You have enough of the Holy Spirit of God so that you have hope and want more, and to go forward you still have plenty of human nature to make you discussed of the works of the flesh.

Verse 4—this becomes really exciting: "Therefore, we were **buried with Him** through the baptism **into the death...**" I'm trying to round this out so we get the feeling and the spiritual understanding that comes with it. This is how human nature is deflated. You don't do like the psychologists say, get up in the morning and say 'I love you and how great you are, and you're the greatest thing that has ever been and no one is ever going to roll over me ever again in my life.' *NO!* You wake up and say, 'I have been buried with baptism into the death of Christ. Therefore, anything that I live for is to Christ.'

There is not one human being on the earth that can overcome that against you. Keep that in mind; not one! So, it's by the power of God's Holy Spirit that you're able to function, work and do these things. Not be physical might. Not by great mental attitudes. I've heard these psychologists say that. Get up and tell yourself how good you are. *Nonsense!* How can we who are filled with sin say we're good? Talk about deceiving human nature. And they talk about self-esteem. The only way you can have enough self-esteem is that you have enough of Christ in you that you know where you're going.

You love God how? *With all your heart, mind, soul and being!* That's total dedication. *Your neighbor as yourself!* Get everything in the right perspective. We were buried with Him into that death. This is a great concept, brethren. Can we please get it at this point? If there's anything that can turn you on, if there's anything that you can grasp is this:

- Was Christ God before He became a human being? *Yes!*
- Was He Creator of all human beings? *Yes!*

For all of those who accept Christ and the penalty of the sin that Christ paid for:

- What was really crucified, symbolically?
All human beings through the Creator!

That is magnificent; do you grasp that? That's why there's going to be the second death for those who don't repent. Christ symbolized *all* human beings. His life was greater than every human being, because He

created all of them—whether by the operation of physically making Adam and Eve, or by the operation of creation through pro-creation. Now then, you understand why abortion is sin! God is the One Who is Creator.

In effect, that is a fantastic thing. When you are baptized, you are actually the same as crucified. That's what it says; it's clear! That's why repentance becomes so important. That you see the disgust of the wickedness of the human nature, and God—because He gave us human nature—took it upon Himself and He died to save all that believe. That is great! No wonder Satan wants to pervert it and have little twists and turns on it, to get everybody all confused.

“...we were buried with Him through the baptism into the death; so that, just as Christ was raised from *the* dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life” (v 4). That's the whole purpose we're going to see.

Here, brethren, is justification applied to you as a person, as an individual. How does it relate to you and God personally? Christ died for *you*. When you were baptized, you died that same death. You were as good as on that cross. Now God says, 'I want you to walk in newness of life'—which is following God's way. Newness of life with God's Spirit in your mind and heart:

- to guide you
- to lead you
- to believe God
- to follow God
- to let Christ live in you

Now do you see why the unpardonable is so bad? Do you see what's being rejected there?

Verse 5 (KJV): “For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.”

(FV): “For if we have been conjoined together in the likeness of His death, so also shall we be [conjoined] *in the likeness* of *His* resurrection.”

That's powerful stuff! *Conjoined!* The Greek there is 'sun'—*coming together, made a part of*. If we have been made a part of the likeness of His death, we are going to be made a part of the likeness of His resurrection. That is marvelous! What a future!

Verse 6: “Knowing this, that our old man was co-crucified with *Him*... [We were—right? The old self, the old person was crucified with Him] ...in order that the body of sin might be destroyed [annulled; canceled out; that's what the forgiveness of sin does, it cancels it out] ...**so that we might no longer be enslaved to sin.**”

(KJV): “...that henceforth we should not serve sin.” That does not bring it out, unfortunately. It should be: “...**so that we might no longer be enslaved to sin**”—the Greek is 'doulos'—*as slaves to sin*.

Now we're coming down to the overcoming part. When we get to v 14 it is going to be so beautiful and open up; it's going to be just marvelous.

Verse 7: “Because the one who has died *to sin* has been justified from sin.” We're talking about being freed (KJV) from sin, provided that you understand that you are not free from sin from that moment forth forever. You are justified from your *past sins*. How did you die? *By baptism, conjoined into His death, justified from the sin!*

Verse 8: “Now, if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from *the* dead, dies no more; death no longer has any dominion [rules] over Him. For when He died, He died unto sin once for **all**... [for everyone for all time He died once] ...but in that He lives, He lives unto God. In the same way also, you should indeed reckon... [calculate, figure, analyze, think about, make sure your faith is positive] ...yourselves to be dead to sin... [you're dead to sin; it's not going to rule over you. You may sin, but who rules over your life? *Christ rules over your life!*] ...but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord” (vs 8-11).

(go to the next track)

Verse 11. “In the same way also, you should indeed reckon yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord.” If you have any doubts concerning faith, let me ask:

- Have you been baptized? *Yes!*
- Have you received the Holy Spirit? *Yes!*
- Has Christ been raised to the right hand of God the Father? *Yes!*
- Does Christ live today? *Yes!*

Grab hold of that and figure the same thing, but ***you are alive unto God in Christ Jesus, your Lord!*** That's something! Alive to Him!

In a sense this makes you very independent of other people. Isn't that what God wants? That's why God told them, 'Don't rule over the brethren! You see how the whole concept gets out of whack when you try and make laws and make structure and do this and do that? When you try and impose a righteousness upon people? To try and make them Christian? Christ is the only One Who can make you Christian within!

Verse 12: “Therefore, do not let sin rule...

[have dominion] ...in your mortal body by obeying it in the lusts thereof.” You see, there’s a battleground going on. Don’t let sin rule. **Let Christ rule!**

Verse 13: “Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin; rather, yield yourselves to God as those who are alive from *the* dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not rule over you because you are not under law, but under grace” (vs 13-14). Very difficult Scripture to understand if you don’t understand: “For sin shall not rule over you because you are not under law [for justification] but under grace [for justification].”

What are we talking about all the way through here? *Justification by works of law, or justification by grace!* That’s what it means. An old interpretation of this was: *Sin shall rule over you, for you are not under the penalty of the Law.* That is a wrong interpretation. It could be a correct statement out here apart from the Bible, but that is a wrong interpretation.

Whatever you insert between *under law* you must also insert between *under grace*. If you insert: *Sin shall not have dominion over you because you are not under the penalty of the Law, but you’re under the penalty of grace.* Doesn’t make any sense!

So, if you have thought in the past that it was *under the penalty of law*, no, that is an incorrect thing, because we’re talking about *justification by law or justification by grace*.

So, it should read, v 14: “For sin shall not rule over you because you are not under law... [for justification] ...but under grace [for justification].” Or you could also have it this way: For sin shall not rule over you because you are not under *the works of law as a means of justification*, but *you are under the operation of grace as a means of justification*.

I tell you, the first time that I read Rom. 6:14, it threw me for a loop. And the first thing you want to do naturally is know that your thought on it is not right, so hence, you don’t want to understand it, and you say, ‘Oh well, that’s too hard for me to understand.’ But, hey, if we can understand it, let’s do it.

Sin will not rule over you, because you’re not under law for justification, but you are under grace for justification.

- Does sin rule over you?
- Does sin make you do what you do in your life? *No!*
- You’re here on the Sabbath, keeping the Sabbath? *Yes!*

- Are you doing what you should to your neighbor? *Yes!*
- Are you worshipping God? *Yes!*
- Who rules over you? *Christ does!*
- How? *Through grace!*

Because you are under grace for justification, through the sacrifice of Christ, and you’re not under the operation of law for justification—be it animal sacrifices or works of law.

Why does something so complicated all of a sudden become crystal clear? *Because we followed through with the complicated things, so it becomes crystal clear!*

Let’s see exactly what Paul says with the rest of it. And every time he comes to that point, v 15: “What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law... [for justification] ...but under grace... for justification]? **MAY IT NEVER BE!**” It must have a continuity all the way through.

Verse 16. “Don’t you realize that to whom you yield yourselves *as* servants... [bondsmen or slaves] ...to obey, you are servants of the one you obey...” Are you a servant to certain things? I’m just talking in the flesh? *Yes, we are! We’re servants to a lot of things!* We think we have a lot of servants serving us, but we are really enslaved to them.

- Are we dependent upon our cars? *Yes!*
- Are we servants to those cars in the flesh? *Yes!*
- Are we enslaved to electricity? *Yes!*

You can go right on down the line with every one of those things.

- Are you enslaved to sin? *No!*

You’ve been released from sin through the *justification through grace that comes from God the Father through the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ!*

- Does sin absolutely rule your life? *No, it does not! Christ does!*

I tell you, it’s wonderful when you really sit down and think about it. If you want you know how sin rules over someone, a good example would be this 14-year-old kid sent to the county jail—the first 14-year-old ever sent—because he escaped three times from the juvenile place. Every time he got out he stole cars and if the policeman would have come right in front of the garage door at the house where he was finally arrested after his third escape, he was going to shoot the policeman.

Well he was sent to the county jail—this 14-year-old—because this 14-year-old had made up his mind that he was going to live a life of crime—period! That’s it! Does sin rule in his life? Dedicated

totally to sin? *Yes!* So, when it says, ‘sin shall not rule in your life’ that’s what it’s talking about.

Verse 16: “Don’t you realize that to whom you yield yourselves *as* servants to obey, you are servants of the one you obey, whether *it is* of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” Showing that there are things to obey.

Verse 17: “But thanks *be* to God, that you were... [past tense, before your conversion] ...*the* servants of sin, but you have obeyed from *the* heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to you; and having been delivered... [freed from the clutches of sin] ...from sin, you became *the* servants of righteousness. I speak from a human point of view because of the weakness of your flesh; for just as you *once* yielded your members in bondage to uncleanness, and to lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now yield your members in bondage to righteousness unto sanctification. For when you were *the* servants of sin, you were free from righteousness” (vs 17-20).

Verse 21: “Therefore, what fruit did you have then in the *things* of which you are now ashamed? For the end result of those things *is* death. But now *that* you have been delivered from sin... [or having been set free from sin through justification] ...and have become servants of God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end result *is* eternal life. For **the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life** through Christ Jesus our Lord” (vs 21-23).

Now, maybe you understand more what those verse mean. I don’t know about you, but the more I study these things and the more I go over them, the more they live, grow in meaning and intensity in my heart, my mind and my being. I understand more that the ‘wages of sin is death!’ The way to that is miserable, terrible and horrible along the line. It just is!

We will skip over Rom. 7:1-6 and save that for Gal. 3, because I want to finish up this personal justification for you as an individual, as part of the covenant; then we will go back and cover Rom. 7:1-6 and connect that with Gal. 3, so we get the overview of the covenant relationship of everyone combined together. That’s what it’s talking about.

Romans 7:7: “What then shall we say? *Is* the law sin? MAY IT NEVER BE! But I had not known sin, except through the law. Furthermore, I would not have been conscious of lust, except *that* the law said, ‘You shall not covet.’” Isn’t that what causes all sin? *Covetousness!*

They’re cracking down on this money laundering thing in Southern Calif., all based on covetousness, giving themselves to sin, faking

everything, making it look like this, that and the other thing, when it really wasn’t.

Verse 8: “But sin, having grasped an opportunity by the commandment, worked out within me every *kind of* lust...”—concupiscence; evil. I have seen this, too. I have seen this in my own life, brethren. There are many times when I feel very inspired or I know that God has really done something. Boy, another day or two after that I do some dumb, stupid sin. It’s amazing how that happens!

“...because apart from law, sin *was* dead.... [If there was no law there would be no affect of sin.] ...For I was once alive without law; but after the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.... [through baptism (Rom. 6)] ...And the commandment, which *was meant* to *result in* life... [to give us a way to live] ...was found *to be* unto death for me” (vs 8-10)—why? *Because I couldn’t keep it!*

Verse 11: “Because sin, having taken opportunity by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed *me*.... [the wages of sin are death] ...Therefore, the Law *is* indeed Holy, and the commandment Holy and righteous and good. Now then, did that which *is* good become death to me? MAY IT NEVER BE! But sin, in order that it might truly be exposed as sin in me by that which *is* good... [How can ‘good’ work death? *Well, the law is good, but the law works death because you have broken it!* It’s a good law!] ...was working out death; so that, by means of the commandment, sin might become exceedingly sinful. For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am carnal, having been sold *as a slave* under sin” (vs 11-14).

The rest of the chapter is our desire to do good. Even the worst criminal when he’s right down to it, he still desires to do good, but he can’t find within himself to do so. I thought it was interesting with Ted Bundy’s interview with James Dobson. Here’s a guy, if you would have said, ‘Okay, I didn’t see any of the murders that were done; he’s sitting here telling me all of this and he looks like a good man.’ But he did all of that, and even down inside, in talking, there was just that little glimmer; he wished it wasn’t that way but there wasn’t a thing he could do about it. *That is sin within you, deceiving you, to slay you on a great magnitude.*

Verse 15: “Because what I am working out myself, I do not know. For what I do not desire to do, this I do; moreover, what I hate, this *is what* I do. But if I am doing what I do not desire to do, I agree with the law that *it is* good. So then, I am no longer working it out myself; rather, it is sin *that is* dwelling within me” (vs 15-17). There is sin

dwelling, always living with you; part of your very self, part of your very thought; part of your very being.

Verse 18: “Because I fully understand that there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any* good.... [That’s why we can say, ‘Thank God for Christ!’ Christ is living in us. That is the good! That is the right! That is the beautiful!] ...For the desire to do good is present within me; but how to work out that which is good, I do not find.” It’s almost true. Whenever you do something that is good, there is always going to be an evil thought right behind it—never fails. Am I the only one that’s experienced that? We’ve all experienced it!

Verse 19: “For the good that I desire to do... [the spirit is willing, flesh is weak] ...I am not doing; but the evil that I do not desire to do, this I am doing. But if I do what I do not desire to do, I am no longer working it out myself, but sin *that is* dwelling within me” (vs 19-20). Twice he said ‘sin dwells in me.’

Verse 21: “Consequently, I find this law *in my members*, that when I desire to do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the Law of God according to the inward man” (vs 21-22). That’s fine, that’s right, that’s good, but we’re talking about the works of the mind and of the flesh.

Verse 23: “But I see another law within my own members, warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin that is within my own members. Oh *what a* wretched man I am! Who shall save me from the body of this death?... [quite a struggle going on] ...I thank God *for His salvation* through our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of this, on the one hand, I myself serve the law of God with *my* mind; but on the other hand, with the flesh, *I serve* the law of sin” (vs 23-25).

That’s the greatest thing to understand about human nature. That’s why nothing you can do as an individual is ever going to be perfect enough that you’re going to force God to do something for you. Witness the whole example of Job, because he has the ‘law of sin’ dwelling in his members. Every human being does! That’s why we all need Christ. Granted, evil maybe less manifest in an overt way in some people than in others. But that doesn’t change human nature.

- Is a drop of water a drop of water? *Yes!*
- Is a bucket of water a bucket of water? *Yes!*

It’s the same thing just a whole lot more.

- Is an ocean filled with water and ocean filled with water? *Yes!*

It’s still water! It’s the same way with the ‘law of sin and death’ within you. You have it.

- How does it manifest itself?

- As a little drop and you’re noted as a good person in this world?

or

- Is the bucket full and you’ve had a lot of problems?

or

- Is the ocean full and you’re a notorious criminal?
- *Still human nature!*

Here’s the good news: Those of us who are Christians, Romans 8:1: “Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation... [by God] ...to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit.”

If God put in you *the law of sin and death* and He doesn’t provide a way out for you, you’re doomed—right? Isn’t that right? If He provides a way out for you—*which He does through Christ*—and if, because of *the law of sin and death* in you, you still find yourself sinning, does God condemn you? *No! **IF!***

That’s why Paul keeps saying—remember how many times he said: ‘What? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? What? Shall we continue in sin because we’re not under law but under grace?’ It becomes a very dangerous thing! God is so great that He’s saying, ‘I am not going to condemn you for the *law of sin and death* in you, ***because you’re in Christ!*** That’s marvelous! You grow up and you find out that God put the ‘law of sin and death’ in us and that wasn’t fair. So, God said, ‘I’m going beyond doing what’s fair.’

Verse 1: “Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit; because the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death” (vs 1-2). Christ has done that! You are loosed from it! You are justified from it through Christ!

Verse 3: “For what *was* impossible for the law to do, in that it was weak through the flesh... [You as a human being trying to keep the Law couldn’t do it—right? *Right!*] ...God, having sent His own Son in *the* likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; in order that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit” (vs 3-4).

If that is the case, then we can live in a continuous state of non-condemnation, or a continuous state of blessing, if we do what 1-John 1 tells us. Now we’re getting back to some basic Scriptures that we all know. Perhaps we have all memorized.

This then becomes a very important function. How many times is it... I know that when I've sinned, I'm ashamed to go to God and repent, because I've done something I know I shouldn't do. You finally come around to it, because you know that if you don't you're going to be in worse trouble—right? *So, you do repent! You do confess!* I have found—my own experience has been that when I repent the first time, it's not as great as the repentance when I really see it in its fullness. It's kind of like when I first come to God and I repent of it in the minute that I did it. He says, 'Okay, you're forgiven, but now what I'm going to do with this forgiveness, I'm going to let you see the magnitude of what you've done be revealed to you a little further down the road, so you understand it.'

1-John 1:7: "However, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another... [also with Jesus Christ and God the Father] ...and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, **cleanses**... [cleaning—active tense] ...us from all sin." Active cleansing from the blood of Christ.

Verse 8: "If we say that we do not have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the Truth is not in us. If we confess our own sins..." (vs 8-9). To Whom? *To God!* What good does it do to confess to a priest? *God only can forgive sins!* I can forgive you if you offend me. You can forgive me if I offend you. That's what we should do as far as the Scriptures say. We cannot approach the throne of God without forgiveness in our heart—that is true. Matt. 5 tells us that if we have anything and we go before God, that He's not going to hear our prayers.

He'll hear them, but it's going to be in such a way that there's going to be a hurdle between you and God with your prayers. "If we confess our sins..." He's going to sit up there and knock us on the head for every one, and He's going to hold it against us forever. *NO!* It says:

Verse 9: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." *Marvelous!* What would we have here if Paul were writing this? 'What? Shall we sin, that we may have forgiveness?' **GOD FORBID!**

Verse 10: "If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us."

1-John 2:1: "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin.... [that's John's way of putting it] ...And *yet*, if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate... [Christ is for you] ...with the Father—Jesus Christ *the* Righteous—and He is *the* propitiation for our sins; and not for our

sins only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world" (vs 1-2).

When we think on that, meditate on that, pray about that and really let it sink in, that is fantastic—*isn't it?* That is marvelous beyond comprehension! I tell you, that's why we need the Sabbath. We get out here and bang around humdrum things during the week. The Sabbath comes and sometimes you don't feel like doing too much and there are some Sabbaths when you've had such a bad week you just want to stay in bed and forget it.

But we need to get up and be rejuvenated with the Spirit of God. We need to understand that the great magnificent, almighty, wonderful Father in heaven above and His Son Jesus Christ loves us and has called us, and has applied that marvelous sacrifice of Jesus Christ that we could be conjoined into that very death of Christ. We have the Spirit of God and look forward to the resurrection. That makes the hair stand up on the back of my neck right while I'm telling it to you, brethren. That is marvelous!

Out of all of this complexity and confusion comes love and simplicity. But unless you can grasp some of these things as we go along, you won't appreciate the wonderful blessing that God has given us.

Brethren, once you grasp what we've gone through—especially parts 11 & 12—and you fully appreciate that, it is wonderful! It is absolutely magnificent!

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter (except where noted).

Scriptural References:

- 1) Galatians 2:16-20
- 2) John 16:26-27
- 3) Galatians 2:21
- 4) Romans 6:1-23
- 5) Romans 7:7-25
- 6) Romans 8:1-4
- 7) 1 John 1:7-10
- 8) 1 John 2:1-2

Scriptures referenced, not quoted: Matthew 5

Also referenced: *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry

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