



FUNDAMENTAL BIBLE STUDY

Galatians

30 April 2017

Lesson 3: Chapter 1:3-5

Thrust: *Paul's Ministry of Grace and Peace*

1. Pauline Apostleship

- a. The resurrected Christ gave Paul: 1) authority, 2) audience & 3) a foundation message – 1Tim1:16

2. 1:3-4 – Foundation Message: The Dispensation of Grace & Peace

"Only Christians possess this victorious knowledge given from above. These two terms...constitute Christianity." – Martin Luther, Galatians Commentary: p.6

- a. Grace and peace can only be enacted and proclaimed by God, but on what merit?
- b. Peter preached *last days* repentance to Israel before Christ's return to judge – Ac2:16; Isa13:4-13
- c. Yet Paul, contemporary with Peter, preaches "*Grace...and peace*" to all men in his letters...why?
- d. Christ reveals to Paul that all men, including Israel, were counted in unbelief – Rom11:11,25,32
- e. God's light & truth were rejected by all; for this, destruction should have come from the Almighty
- f. But...as God's wrath was revealed, Christ "*gave himself for our sins*" – Rom5:6-11
- g. Christ was set forth to assuage God's wrath for all, freely...Rom3:23-26; 1Thess5:9,10
- h. All born of Adam are sinners, worthy of wrath, but Christ was made sin "*for us*" – 2Cor5:21
- i. All are cursed for breaking God's law, but Christ was made a curse "*for us*" – Gal3:13
- j. Christ's work was so sufficient God is not imputed trespasses – 2Cor5:19; 1Tim2:5,6; Col1:20,21
- k. Grace reigns, you can be at peace w/God by trusting Christ's cross-work – Rom5:1,2,20,21

3. Deliverance From This Present Evil World (see charts)

- a. Is there any question as to whether or not we live in an evil, wicked world? – Eccl4:1-3
- b. Worldwide abortions = ~1.4 billion since 1980 / ~2,500 in US just yesterday (~99,000 worldwide); Cf. US Conflict Death toll: ~1.2 million
- c. God's truth delivers from the way of evil – Prov2:1-10
- d. In time past, the faithful asked "*How long, LORD?*" before you judge those in darkness – Ps94
- e. We live in a world where knowledge of God & the cross is foolishness – Rom1:28; 1Cor1:18-21
- f. This world has a god & a course that people walk ignorantly by – 2Cor4:3,4; Eph2:2; 4:17-21
- g. "*the will of God*" deliverance from the power of darkness by saving knowledge – 1Tim2:3,4
- h. The gospel of Christ enlightens men and sets their heart at liberty – 2Cor4:4-6; Gal5:1; 2Tim1:9
- i. Position: in Christ, we have been moved from darkness to light, death to life – Col1:12,13; 3:1-7
- j. We are given a new pattern/path to walk after the Spirit redeeming evil time – Eph5:6-18
- k. Paul speaks of deliverance from persecutions because of resurrection – 2Cor1:7-12; 2Tim3:11-17
- l. Grace believers are not ignorant of suffering...we know it's not comparable to glory – Rom8:18
- m. The instruction to weep/rejoice/abound/suffer need recognizes the reality of this world
- n. If our hope in Christ is only for the here and now, we are to be most miserable – 1Cor15:19-21

<p>Evil def. – crooked; unjust; wicked; corrupt; perverse; producing sorrow</p> <p>Good def. – true; straight; line or course; just; pure; full; equal; sound; complete</p> <p>Deliver def. – to free; release; set at liberty; to transfer power from one to another</p>
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4. God Our Father (When did that become possible?)

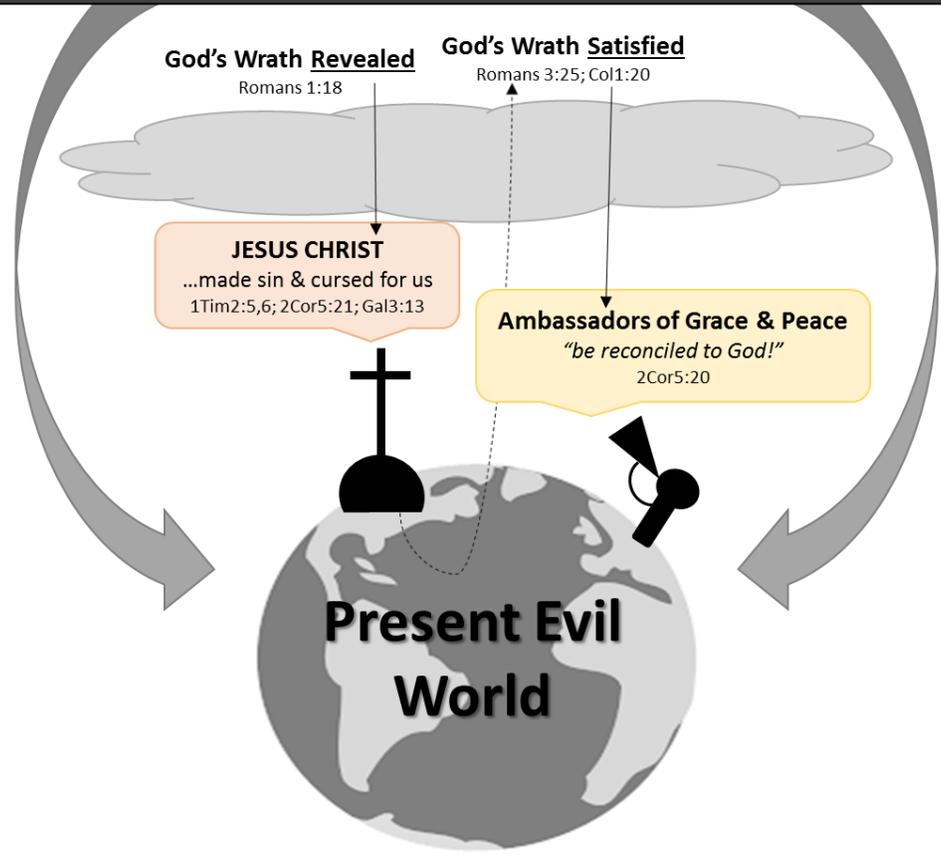
- a. *Father* def. – he who begets a child; the first ancestor; progenitor of a family
- b. Adam is the father of the human race; Abraham is the father of the Israelites
- c. The nation Israel alone had God as their Father – Gen12:2; 17:8; Ex4:22; Cf. Jn4:22
- d. Illustration: Israel were VIPs given an all access, backstage pass to God – Rom9:3-5
- e. Christ taught his disciples to pray to their Father – Mt3:9
- f. Gentiles had no access to God apart from Israel...no opportunity to call him Father – Eph2:11,12
- g. We are made sons of God by Spiritual adoption through faith in the gospel – Eph1:5,13; Rom8:15



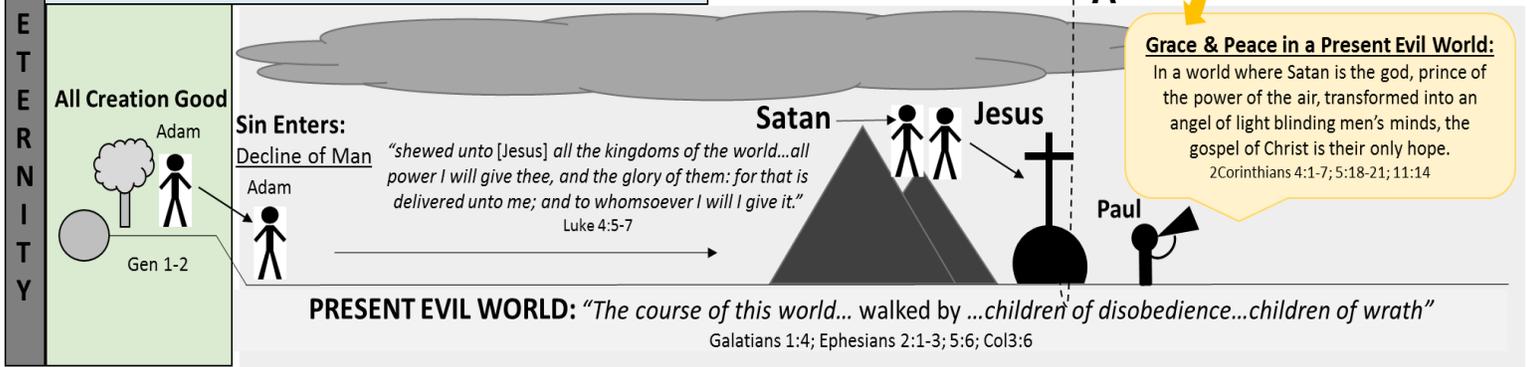
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God has Reconciled the World to Himself

Romans 5:6-11; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21



The Bible's Description of this Present Evil World





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The Silence of God

By Sir Robert Anderson (1897)

A SILENT Heaven is the greatest mystery of our existence...

But earnest and thoughtful men face these realities, and have ears to hear that cry; and their indignant wonder finds utterance at times in some such words as those of the old Hebrew prophet and bard, "Doth God know? And is there knowledge in the Most High?"

Society, even in the great centres of our modern civilisation, is all too like a slave-ship, where, with the sounds of music and laughter and revelry on the upper deck, there mingle the groans of untold misery batted down below. Who can estimate the sorrow and suffering and wrong endured during a single round of the clock...What mind is competent to grasp the sum of all this great world's misery, heaped up day after day, year after year, century after century?

Human hearts may plan, and human hands achieve, some little to alleviate it, and the strong and ready arm of human law may accomplish much in the protection of the weak and the punishment of the wicked. **But as for God - the light of moon and stars is not more cold and pitiless than He appears to be!**

And what is the element in all this that most exasperates the public sentiment? It is that the Sultan has the power to prevent all this, but will not. That, while possessing ample means to restrain and punish, he remains unmoved, and in the safe seclusion of his palace gives himself up to a life of luxury and ease. But has Almighty God no power to check such crimes? ... But in vain do we strain our ears to hear some voice from the throne of the Divine Majesty. **The far-off heaven where, in perfect peace and unutterable glory, God dwells and reigns, is SILENT!**

"So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and behold, the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter." (Eccl4:1)

And this in a world ruled and governed by a God who is Almighty!

And when we withdraw our thoughts from the great world around us, and fix them upon the narrow circle of His faithful people, the facts are no less stern, and the mystery grows more inscrutable. Devoted men leave our shores, forsaking the security, the comforts, the charms, the countless benefits of life in the midst of our Christian civilisation, to carry the knowledge of the true God to heathen lands. But by and by we hear of their massacre by the hands of those whom thus they sought to elevate and bless. And where is "the true God" they served?

The little band of Christian men who were in a special sense His accredited ambassadors, noble women too, who shared in their exile and their labours, and little children whose tender helplessness might excite the pity of a very devil, in their terror and agony cried to Heaven for the succour which never came. The God they trusted might surely have turned the hearts, or restrained the hands, of their brutal murderers. Is it possible to imagine circumstances that would more fitly claim the help of Him whom they worshipped as all-powerful both in heaven and on earth? But the earth has drunk in their blood, and a silent Heaven has seemed to mock their cry! And these horrors are but mere ripples on the surface of the deep, wide sea of the Church's sufferings



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throughout the ages of her history. From the old days of Pagan Rome right down through the centuries of so-called "Christian" persecutions, the untold millions of the martyrs, the best and purest and noblest of our race, have been given up to violence and outrage and death in hideous forms. The heart grows sick at the appalling story, and we turn away with a dull but baseless hope that it may be in part at least untrue. But the facts are too terrible to make exaggeration in the record of them possible. Torn by wild beasts in the arena, torn by men as merciless as wild beasts, and, far more hateful, in the torture chambers of the Inquisition, His people have died, with faces turned to heaven, and hearts upraised in prayer to God; but the heaven has seemed as hard as brass, and the God of their prayers as powerless as themselves or as callous as their persecutors!

But most men are selfish in their sympathies. Some private grief at times looms greater than all the sum of the world's miseries and the Church's sufferings. If ever there was a saint on earth, it is the mother to whose deathbed sons and daughters have been summoned from various pursuits of business or of pleasure. In all their wanderings that mother's piety and faith have been a guiding and restraining influence. And now, thus gathered once more in the old home, they are keen to watch how, in the solemn crisis of her last days on earth, God will deal with one of the loveliest and truest of His children. And what do they behold? The poor body racked with pain that never ceases till all capacity for suffering is quenched by the hand of Death! If human skill could give relief the attending physician would be dismissed as heartless or incompetent. Is God, then, incompetent or heartless? To Him they look to relieve the death agonies of the dying saint, **but they look to Him in vain!**

Or it may be some grief more selfish still. The crash of some great sorrow that turns a bright home into a waste, and leaves the heart so be-numbed and hard that even the so-called "consolations of religion" appear but hollow platitudes.

Why should God be so cruel? Why is Heaven so terribly silent?

The most prolific fancy, the most facile pen, would fail to picture or portray, in their endless variety, the experiences which have thus stamped out the last embers of faith in many a crushed and desolated heart. "There are times," as a Christian writer puts it, "when the heaven that is over our heads seems to be brass, and the earth that is under us to be iron, and we feel our hearts sink within us under the calm pressure of unyielding and unsympathising law." How true the statement, but how inadequate!

If it were merely on behalf of this or that individual that God failed to interfere, or on one occasion or another, belief in His infinite wisdom and goodness ought to check our murmurs and soothe our fears. And, further, if, as in the days of the patriarchs, even a whole generation passed away without His once declaring Himself, faith might glance back, and hope look forward, amidst heart searchings for the cause of His silence.

But what confronts us is the fact, explain it as we may, that for eighteen centuries the world has never witnessed a public manifestation of His presence or His power. "Doth God know?" At first the thought comes up as an impatient yet not irreverent appeal. But presently the words are formed upon the lip to imply a challenge and suggest a doubt; and at last they are boldly uttered as the avowal of a settled unbelief. And then the sacred records which awed and charmed the mind in childhood, telling of "mighty acts" of Divine intervention "in the old time," begin to lose their vividness and force, till at last they sink to the level of Hebrew legends and old-world myths. In presence of the stern and dismal facts of life, the faith of earlier days gives way, **for surely a God who is entirely passive and always unavailable is for all practical purposes non-existent.**