

- **ROMANS 15:1-7** — **The godly LABOR portion of *receiving the instruction of equity.***

- As we are so familiar with by now—the issue of **godliness** is the issue of the effectual working of God’s word within us to produce God-like-ness—to produce a “Like Father, like son/daughter” likeness (which has always been God’s intent with the pinnacle of His creation: man).

- Godliness does NOT occur automatically once a person has been saved/justified unto eternal life; nor does it occur by mere church attendance; nor does it occur by church activities or church programs; nor does it occur by observing religious holidays or a religious calendar; nor does it occur by prayer; nor does it occur by peaceful mediation in some serene environment; nor does it occur by dedicating your life to God/Christ; nor does it occur by good intentions and doing good to others and in general doing good things; nor does it occur by giving money to the church, or to missions, or to religious organizations, or to charities, or giving money at all; nor does it occur by perfect Sunday School attendance, or perfect church attendance; nor does it occur by acquiring ‘church-language’ such as Christian slogans or Christian clichés; nor does it occur by mortification of the flesh, or acts of denying the flesh; nor does it occur by a miracle or by many miracles; nor does it occur by being ‘slain in the Holy Ghost’; nor does it occur by God speaking to you in an audible voice; nor does it occur by speaking in tongues; nor does it occur by any book found in any Christian bookstore written by any “modern” Christian author (from 68 AD to the present).

- Godliness occurs by the effectual working of God’s word, rightly divided, and properly handled; in other words, godliness occurs by the effectual working of Romans-Philemon in the order and the sense and sequence God wrote, compiled, and arranged those 13 letters of the apostle Paul.

- Therefore, godliness occurs by the inner man (the soul & spirit) of a man/woman being progressively ‘built up’ or edified by the information or by the sound doctrine contained in Rom-Phil, and in that specific order.

- This is called by the apostle Paul, ***godly edifying which is in faith (1 Tim. 1:4).*** Therefore godly edification (and the godliness that it produces) occurs by means of education; by sonship education.

- [and the vast majority of Christians alive on this earth at this very moment **don't know even this much!**]

- And the 'mechanical means' for godly sonship edification is accomplished by **GRACE** (by all that God has made us to be "in Christ" justification-wise and sanctification-wise—and by the benefits of the New Testament) when we respond to God's grace and His gracious provisions for our godly edification through **FAITH**.

- And in order for a man to be godly—the living words of the Living God must live in him in order to produce 3 major features or aspects of what godliness is all about:

- 1) Thinking the way God does;
- 2) Living the way God does;
- 3) Laboring together with God in all that He is presently doing.

- Our *instruction of equity*—as the 4th & last of the sonship decision-making skills—is one single Component that runs from Rom. 14:1 — Rom. 15:7, and because of that, this entire section of scripture is broken down into those 3 Aspects of Godliness.

- 1) Rom. 14:1-12 = Godly Thinking;
- 2) Rom. 14:13-23 = Godly Living;

... and now we come to the 'natural outlet' for the godly Thinking & godly Living of Equity—which is 3) The Godly **Labor** which is contained in Romans 15:1-7.

- Romans 15:1-7 are going to deal with how we are to Labor together with our Heavenly Father with godly equity in all that He is doing in this dispensation of grace in which we now live.

- And when I say, "with godly equity" - that means with all that you have been taught and educated in and edified with from Rom. 12:3-14:23—[wisdom, justice, judgment; godly L&C; godly hatred, disdain, & abhorrence for the *works of darkness*; awareness of round-one of Satan's PoE against you; and *the spirit which is of God* ... just to name a few].

- And with all that 'under your belt' edification-wise, that puts you in RARE COMPANY! ("***We then that are strong***") ... but don't get high-minded: you're barely a sophomore!

- a 'shift' does take place here—because, while the *weaker* bro. does get mentioned (:1), a 'widening' (so to speak) takes place as the issue of Laboring together with God in what He's doing gets broadened to the issue of 'pleasing ones *neighbour*' in (:2).

- In other words—the use of godly Equity can be taken out of the WB situation and can be used in far more ways than that.

- We are closing-in on a major accomplishment in our sonship education and edification—we are nearing the completion of what the 'Table of Contents' sets forth are essential to get accomplished for our Level I Sonship Education—that is, to have effectually working within us those 4 sonship decision-making skills.

- And as we close-in on the end of our Level I Sonship Education, some very important things are expected to be taking place with us ...

... we are getting ready to finish having the basic and essential "heart" of our Father instilled within our "heart ...

... we are going to be finishing up having the very character and features that distinguish our Father (and His Son) AS the Father that He is—(His "Fatherly" features) instilled within us by means of the effectual working of His word.

... what might be called the 'formative' years—

- (see chart # 34)

- And there is a very **important** and very **powerful** aspect of His character & features that is supposed to; and expected to get well on its way to being fully developed here at the end of the book of Romans.

- And it's really laid out in detail in (:5 & :6) of Rom. 15—(see)

- Note the issue of "ONE" - (not a new concept—cf. Rom. 12:4-5, 16)

... but a real advance is made on it: "YE" (:6) ('interface' - "**knit**" [*Col. 2:2; 2:19*])

- Let's approach it this way—

- God has designed godly sonship edification to produce a particular “image” in YOU and in the BODY has a whole.
- Our English language has a term that is used to talk about producing an ‘image’ in a person—the word “morph”.
- “morph” = (modern slang) changing smoothly from one image to another by small, gradual steps using computer animation.
- μορφή (*form*) - Mark 16:12
 - Rom. 2:20
 - Gal. 4:19
 - Phil. 2:6, 7
 - 2 Tim. 3:5

(*con-formed*) = “with” + “together”; together with
 σύμμορφος **- Rom. 8:29**

- (see 2 Cor. 3:18—from notes: Rom. 8, pgs. 951-953)

- Another thing to notice before we begin dealing with all the details of (:1-7) is that we now have emerging (especially in the first 4 verses) the 7th and final Major Feature of Godly Love & Charity.

- This Feature (while not named, per se), is found in (or emerges out of) (:1-4 [read]) especially —

- And if you think about it—what are you doing when you are “*bearing the infirmities of the weak*” and “*not pleasing yourself*” - when you are “*pleasing your neighbour for his good to edification*”? ...

... and what was the Lord displaying (as a feature of godly love & charity) when He “*pleased not himself*” and endured the *reproaches* of those who hated God upon Himself?

... to put it another way—what did the sinless, matchless, perfect Son of God DO (and was Willing to do; and was Glad to do) to Himself in order to come to this Earth and function as the Redeemer? ... does it call to mind any portion of God’s word? ...

- Does it call to mind: Phil. 2:1-11? (read)

- While “humble” is very similar to what we’re after, and very close to the issue—I’m persuaded that there is an even more precise word that God Himself uses in His word that in this one word—it can ‘capture’ and ‘encapsulate’ everything that the word “humble” means, but has a shade of meaning that “humble” doesn’t—which makes it the most excellent word of all to use to describe this final Major Feature of Godly L&C.

- But while we are here in Phil. 2—(by the way Phil. 2 is almost an analysis of this 7th Feature) — but here in Phil. 2 we do see that the same aspects that accompanied the 6th Feature of Self-Sacrifice also accompanies this 7th Feature:

- and that is the issue of being WILLING & GLAD!

- (see :6 *Who, being in the form of God, thought it NOT ROBBERY to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.:*)

- **“thought it not robbery” = He was both Willing to do so; and Glad to do so!**

- Now if you read that Phil. 2 passage—and you see there that it says outright that He *“humbled himself”* (:6) - is there another way that you can state (or put into one word) what it is that you (or the Lord) are doing when you are in a ‘higher’ position and then intentionally put yourself in a “common” position with another who is below you in rank, or in grade, or in standing, or in *estate*, ... ???

- The word that God uses is: **“ABASE”** —

- The 7th Major Feature/Characteristic of Godly Love & Charity is: **Willing & Glad Self-Abasement (as taught in Rom. 15:1-4)**

- We’ll do a much more in-depth and detailed study of the word when we get to into Rom. 15:1-4.

- *Abase* is used in 3 variations in God’s word: “abase” — “abased” — “abasing”

- and it is used only 9x in the Scriptures.

- 4x in the OT

- 5x in the NT

- 3x in the gospel accounts

- 2x in Paul's epistles

- (used mostly in the OT in connection with indicting Israel for their lack of humility and godly L&C)

- Ezek. 21:26-27

- Dan. 4:37

(used in the gospel accounts in connection with indicting Israel's Vain Religious Leaders & System)

- Mat. 23:1-12 (:12)

- Luke 14:7-11 (:11)

- Luke 18:9-14 (:14)

- *** **2 Cor. 11:1-7 (:7)**

- *** **Phil. 4:10-12 (:12)**

- "*abase*" (ταπεινώω) = does mean to make or bring low; to bring into a humble condition; **to reduce to 'meaner' circumstances.**

(**meaner** = common to two or more persons or things; possessed jointly)

- One of the major issues in Willing & Glad Self-Abasement (in general; and as it is used in our curriculum for our sonship education/edification) is the issue of Willingly and Gladly becoming **absorbed in the welfare of another!**

- SKEAT = from the L. *ad* = "to" + *base* = "low" - hence, to bring low.

- OED = (1) To lower (physically); (2) To lower in rank, office, condition, or character; to humble, humiliate; often with the sense of degrade, make base. (3) To lower in price or value, to depreciate, debase.

- WEBSTER 1828 = to cast down; to reduce to a low state; to depress; to humble; to degrade; applied to the passions, rank, office, and condition in life.

- CRABB—To *abase* expresses the strongest degree of self-humiliation, (the L. prefix *ad* intensifying the word *base*). In Latin, *basis* (the base), is the lowest part of a column. It is used principally in the Scripture to imply the laying aside all the high pretensions which distinguish us from our fellow-creatures, the descending to a state comparatively low and mean. *Humble* (coming from the L. *humilis*, and *humus* (the ground), naturally marks a prostration to the ground, and figuratively a lowering the thoughts and feelings.

The modest man *abases* himself by NOT insisting on the distinctions to which he may be justly entitled (hence, the close relation of *abase* to *equity*); the penitent man *humbles* himself by confessing his errors.

- SMITH—To *abase* is to bring low or to lower in such a way as that the person lowered shall be deeply conscious of the lowering. But this is NOT of necessity on account of great guilt or disgraceful conduct. That of which the person abased is primarily conscious is unworthiness in reference to others' estimation of him or to his own. In *abatement* we suffer a contradiction of, or voluntarily forgo, as the case may be, our own peculiar pretensions. It may even be meritorious to *abase* or humble one's self (of these two *abase* is the stronger term). In either case of humble or *abase*, a conquest is gained over pride, arrogance, or self-will.

- SMITH (continued) — ABASEMENT—expresses the act of bringing low or the state consequent upon this, and always implies a former state more elevated. *Abatement* is voluntary or involuntary. Voluntary *abatement* is a virtuous act of the soul, by which it seeks to counteract and repress the natural tendency to pride.

- And now—the high honor & privilege to participate in a grace-given Operation of God our Father with all He has taught us justification-wise; sanctification-wise; and in our Level I Sonship education and edification—having now, the effectual working of all 4 of the Sonship decision-making skills and all of the parallel doctrine that goes with it ...

ROMANS 15:1 *We then that are strong out to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.*

- And the “Labor” aspect of our *instruction of equity* should be something we are greatly looking forward to—we should be in a ‘fever pitch’ of godly desire and godly ambition and godly zeal & enthusiasm to enter into an Operation of our Father’s business that has taken so much time, so much work, so much of God’s word to effectually work within us—so much ‘*conformity to the image of God’s Son*’ **just to get to this point! just to get to this particular Operation of God’s business!**

- And it’s possibly an Operation of God that is ‘nearest & dearest’ to His own heart! - it’s an Operation of God that God’s own Son shed His blood for at the cross!

- And it’s an Operation of God that the Adversary of God will set his sights on—and will work to hinder it; to oppose it; to resist it; and if possible: TO DESTROY IT! — it’s a signal to the adversary that he can now ‘up the ante’ (so to speak), or to intensify his attack upon you and the local assembly in which you gather!

- It really should have the ‘feel’ to it that you are now being allowed access to something that only a very privileged few will ever be allowed to participate in!

- (And only those who are **properly prepared by the Father** can ever participate in this Operation of God in truth: to His “glory”!)

- It’s one of those ‘sonship graces’ - a grace-given opportunity to work along side with the Father; and to work together with Him in the ‘body-building’ business—in His business of building the body of the one new man; the body of Christ.

- You’re going to be dealing with the very ‘building-blocks’ of **LIFE!** ... the ‘building-blocks’ of **ETERNAL LIFE!**

... (of functional life; of the very Life of God Himself)!!

- You are going to be allowed to do God’s ‘house-keeping’!

- 1 Cor. 3:1-9 (:9) - [*husbandry* = administrator; manager of a household, estate, farm!]

- 1 Tim. 3:14-16 (:15)

- 2 Tim. 2:14-21 (:20—it’s a **great house!**)

- So—what is that Operation of God? what is this Operation of God’s business that is so ‘near-and-dear’ to His heart? ... this Operation of God in this Dispensation of grace that He is more concerned with than any other Operation that He has???

A: It is the Operation of God’s business that has to do with godly **EDIFICATION**—it’s God’s **edification** business (both individually, [meaning, YOU, personally]; and the edification of the body as a whole [meaning, the LOCAL ASSEMBLY in which you gather])!

- In both cases—God is involved in an Operation of His business that is designed to produce a particular *image*—an *image* that gets manifested; that gets SEEN—and by seeing it, and by observing it, and by hearing it, it is designed to have an IMPACT upon the angels (both fallen and fallen); upon the *creature* (the heavenly places); and particularly upon the Adversary, Satan himself!

- that’s not to say it won’t have an impact upon this world and the men of this world—because it will—but that’s not the primary impact of godly edification in this dispensation of grace!

- So now—by virtue of being qualified by the effectual working of Romans 1:1-14:23 — you now have the high honor; and the high privilege of working together with God the Father, and with His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ in the Godly Edification Process Operation of God’s business!

- It’s NOT ‘monkey-business’ - it’s NOT ‘light’ house-work
- it’s NOT the foolish work of ‘Cultural Christianity’ or of denominational Christianity, or of Mega churches, or of any of the non-biblical, nonsense, and foolishness that wastes the time of most Christians today!

- It’s SERIOUS business—it’s the business of LIFE (functional) & DEATH (functional)! ... it’s the business of godly HONOR or DISHONOR ... it’s the business of GLORY or DAMNATION!

- Simply put, it’s WAR—it’s real, genuine, spiritual **WARFARE!** (2 Cor. 10:3ff; 1 Tim. 1:18)!

... and there’s NOTHING you can spend your time doing that is greater than this! ... or that can even compare to this!

- Now—with that in view—and with that ‘exhortation’ and frame of mind ...

- ROMANS 15:1 *We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.*

- Let’s begin by looking at the 1st phrase (down to the comma) ...

- ***We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak,***

- ***“We then that are strong”***

- The “*strong*” = the *strong* ones in the faith—that is, those who have the effectual working of Rom. 1:1-14:23 doctrine doing its effectual work within them.

- And that’s far too much doctrine to review—but to put it in a ‘nutshell’ - it’s the doctrine that teaches you all about who God has made you to be “in Christ” justification-wise and sanctification-wise—it’s the doctrine that teaches you what the godly Edification Process **is** and **how it works!** **(and you are now being held responsible for it! and held accountable for it!)**

- And notice that God has Paul start off the verse with “**We**” ... which not only includes the Romans saints, and by extension, all the saints in this local assembly who qualify; but it includes Paul himself! (and his team)!

- Paul is not saying that YOU are now as strong as he is (edification-wise), but he **is** saying that you are at a point (edification-wise) where you meet the minimal requirement for being considered a *strong* one in the faith.

... and that should make a very powerful impact upon you at the very least—by Paul now being able to inject himself and his own edification into the picture at this point along w/ your sonship education & edification—it should tell you just how big of a deal Romans doctrine is! ... it should make you all the more appreciate the tremendous power and value God places upon Romans doctrine!

- (Personally, if you only get 1 book of the Bible properly understood & appreciated ... get ROMANS!)

- “*We then ...*” — the “*then*” tells you that something significant has been accomplished—and now, we are being exhorted to take that which has been accomplished (which is the effectual working of our *instruction of equity* in Rom. 14:1-23) and to now put it into practice — the very thing for which God ever designed it to do in the first place—which is to Labor together with Him in the Edification Process!

- “*We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak*”

- “*ought*” to bear ... *ought* is a word that is still very commonly used today and very familiar to all of us—but as so many common, everyday words are, they are often either not all that well understood, or just given very ‘light’ thought or attention (if we ever think about them at all).

- *ought* = the general verb to express duty or obligation of any kind; strictly used of moral obligation, but also with various weaker shades of meaning, expressing what is befitting, proper, correct, advisable, or naturally expected.

- (this is why I say that you are now being held responsible and accountable for receiving Romans doctrine, and the *instruction of equity* especially)

- In the Present Tense, you are bound under obligation; **it is your DUTY to do it**; it is the **RIGHT** thing that should now be done **in view of your awareness of your incurred obligation!**

- And to put it into the context here of the Edification Process and godly Equity in dealing with the *weaker* bro. situation: **IT IS RIGHTEOUSNESS TO DO IT—IT IS GODLY TO DO IT! It is exactly what your Father would do Himself!**

- It is a “*labor of love*” - and it’s a *labor of love* because it’s a work **OF FAITH** (1 Thes. 1:3)

- And in this particular context—(even though we often treat the word *ought* lightly—as if it’s only a mere ‘suggestion’ or a take-it-or-leave-it type thing) ... the context here (being a Fatherly exhortation in view of what you’ve already learned) ... *ought* is NOT being treated ‘lightly’ - it’s NOT being treated as a ‘suggestion’ or a ‘take-it-or-leave-it’ type thing!

- *We then that are strong **ought** to bear the infirmities of the weak, ... we that are strong **OUGHT** ...*

... **ought**—as the righteous and godly thing to do—it is a **duty** that a person (that you, as a properly educated “son” at this point in Romans doctrine) **cannot neglect! ... and if you do neglect it, you incur a guilt—an offence toward the weaker bro. that will be caught & judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ!**

- Now—if we’re being told that we *ought* to do something—and that the word *ought* carries the sense of **duty** or **obligation**—then that therefore means that something (some **power**) is imposing that obligation upon us.

- (an easy illustration is in the legal field—a **law** [such as wearing your seatbelt] imposes [or applies legal pressure] upon you to obey it [with the consequences of a fine if you don’t obey it]) — you receive a penalty or punishment.

- Now—in view of that—what is it; what is that ‘power’ that is imposing this obligation upon us whereby we *ought to bear the infirmities of the weak?* ... What ‘force’ is being imposed, or is being applied, or is at work within you at this point, which, if you are put in a *weaker* brother situation, imposes an obligation upon you to *bear the infirmities of the weak?*

A: GODLY LOVE & CHARITY!

- All 7 Features of Godly Love & Charity!

- But you can’t think about this ‘compartmentalized’ or as ‘categories’ of doctrine! - because that would be disastrous! - that would end up being **in-effectual!** that would **not** be sufficient to do the effectual job that Godly L&C is designed to do!

- If all you can do is simply ‘recall’ what the 7 Features are (like taking a test/quiz) - and can rattle them off: Selfless; Kind; Tenderhearted; Meek; Benevolently Good; Self-Sacrificing; and Self-Abasing — that’s NOT sufficient for their effectual working ... why? ... because that’s NOT how God, your Heavenly Father TAUGHT them to you!

- Your Father taught those 7 Features of Godly L&C to you as a ‘parallel’ doctrine to your Level I, Phase 2 Sonship Education—He taught them to you **interwoven** or **interfaced** with your instruction in those 4 major Sonship Decision-Making Skills (*wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity*)!

- Truth is—without those 7 Features of Godly L&C being interfaced with the doctrine contained in Romans 12:3 through 14:23, you really don’t have anything more than ‘Bible data’ ...

... you really don’t have any of the effectually-working godly ‘power’ or ‘**desire**’ that is designed to have the effect of putting you in a position of being under a godly OBLIGATION ...

... that makes it so you realize and recognize in your own mind and in your own human spirit that, in view of now having acquired these things—and in view of the effectual working of these very things within you—they are expected to have generated a godly **OUGHT** ...

... a willing & glad incurred obligation toward the *WB* — and godly obligation (**desire**) to work together with God in the most important, sacred, and holy Operation of the Edification Process!

- And at the outset—your first thought (and perhaps your only thought) that occurs to you when you think about those words, *We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak*, is the matter of having Godly L&C for the *WB* ... because you understand and appreciate (because of “Body” type thinking) the details of the *WB* being part of the body of Christ ... part of YOUR body ... of *being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another (Rom. 12:5)*.

- And that’s good, but that’s not sufficient enough! (truth is, that’s only half of it) — the contextual ‘backdrop’ for the entire section of God’s word dealing with the *WB* situation (and for *receiving the instruction of equity*) has another thing in view! ... and you’re taught to LOVE it with Godly L&C as well ... (see Rom. 14:15, 19; 15:2) — ... and that other object of your Godly L&C (in full-working force) is the EDIFICATION PROCESS!

- 1 We then that are strong ought to **bear the infirmities of the weak**

- What does it mean to **“bear the infirmities of the weak”**?

- **“bear”** = as a verb: to carry, to support the weight of a thing while moving from one place to another ...

... and that basic concept applies to our *bearing the infirmities of the weak*—especially the idea of ‘supporting’ a thing (or a person [figuratively]) while moving from one place to another—because in the Edification Process that’s what you’re doing—you’re moving from one place (i.e., where you are at the moment edification-wise) to another (i.e., to the next form of doctrine in the Edification Process).

- **“bear”** = to sustain, to support—but we’re not dealing with a material burden (like ‘bearing’ the support of a building) - but rather, we’re dealing with an **immaterial burden** ...

... and in that sense, *bear* can mean to sustain anything that is ‘trying’ to you; to suffer or endure without succumbing to or giving way to disastrous or ill effects ...

... (the ‘disastrous ill effects’ being what (14:1) said, *“doubtful disputations”* which end up in *schisms* and *divisions* in the body of Christ).

- and we’re **NOT** going to *‘bear the infirmities of the weak’* in the sense of **‘supporting their weakness or supporting their mishandling or misapplying God’s word!’**

- But **“bear”** also has a shade of meaning that is often used in the phrase, **‘To bear with’** — meaning, **to put up with; to make allowance for ...**

... and this is where we really get down to the meaning of the word *bear* that is relevant to, and is consistent with (or has a bearing upon [pun]) the context at hand in (:1) ...

... Now what is it that you are doing (what ‘virtue’ are you displaying) when you are ‘putting up with’ or ‘making allowance for’ something or someone? ...

A: YOU’RE BEING PATIENT!

- Now—while that issue of being **patient** is a BIG issue here—notice that God does **not** have Paul say, 'We then that are strong ought to be patient with the infirmities of the weak...' — (and this is important)

- *Patience* is most definitely in this context (:4 & :5) - but the way you're introduced to the Godly Labor aspect of the instruction of equity; and the way in which the Father says it; you're expected to perceive something here in the nature of **kind** of Labor you are to be doing ...

... and just that issue of Godly Labor, alone, (or labor itself) means that you are **DOING** something!

- And I say that because it's quite possible for you to be *patient* with someone **and not do anything at all! or not be participating in anything that has to do with the one you are being *patient* with!**

(Ex., If you go shopping with your wife, you can be very *patient* while she tries on a whole bunch of dresses — but, that doesn't mean that you are 'participating' with her in trying on a whole bunch of dresses! ...

... you may be *patient*, (even politely *patient*), but you're not helping her out in any way!)

- But by our Father telling us that in our working together with Him in this Operation of His business that deals with godly Edification—by saying it the way He says it (*We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak*) - by using that word **bear**—we're supposed to perceive (and understand/appreciate) that we are supposed to; (and expected to); **be doing something; to be actively engaged in helping the WB in his godly Sonship Edification!**

- In other words—you can be *patient* and not be doing anything at all with the person you're being *patient* with ...

... but you can also be *patient* with a person and all the while be **actively engaged** with that person and with that person's need—you can be *patient* and all the while be **HELPING** them! (**and that's the issue here in :1!**)

- As an aspect of Godly Labor, you're not just going to 'put up' with the WB, and kind of ignore him while he gets to be up with where you are in the Edification Process ...

... truth is, [Godly Love & Charity actually FORBIDS that]!

- Rather, being a *strong* one in the faith—and knowing, therefore, **what** the Edification Process **is** and **how it works**—you’re going to determine a course of action to take in being a HELPER of that WB—a *helper of his joy* (2 Cor. 1:24 *Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy*).

- You’re going to **PATIENTLY WORK WITH** the WB’s infirm.!

- Now—you are probably at this point asking yourself, “How am I going to do that?” ... well, that’s a ‘sonship decision’ you’re going to have to make all on your own! (depending upon the situation/circum.)

- *1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak,*

- “*infirmities*” = Prefix *in* = not + *firm* = a condition of not being ‘firm’; weakness or want of strength; lack of power to do something.

- Often thought of in the sense of physical weakness, frailty, debility, even old age.

- But we’re not dealing with physical weakness; nor are we dealing with the “poor & needy” (so to speak) ...

... in other words, this little phrase “*We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak*” can often be lifted out of its context to validate the roll of a (“good”) Christian, and the roll of the Church is to alleviate the suffering of the ‘poor & needy’ - and while there are passages in God’s word do speak about our individual responsibility along these lines—this verse is NOT one of them!

- So, we’re not dealing with physical weakness—or *infirmity* in the physical realm (such as having no job, no money, no place to live, no car, no cell phone, no cable tv, etc., etc.).

- Then, what are these *infirmities* that God is having Paul talk about here in (:1)?

- The *infirmities* are actually contextually controlled and contextually defined by the meaning of the word *weak*—which has already been defined back up in 14:1.

- The *infirmities* (Pl.) of the *weak* are **EDIFICATIONAL INFIRMITIES!** (and there are **many** of them!)

- These are all **edificational** in nature! - these are all **spiritual infirmities!**

- And the genius of God is to make sure and use the word *infirmities* here, and not some other word like ‘failings’ or weaknesses’ ...

... because the WB is NOT “failing” (NIV, RSV, NEV) anything at all!!! [that would be like saying that every incoming freshman in college/university is **failing** from his 1st day in class!]

- And the term ‘weaknesses’ (apart from being really bad English— ‘We then that are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of the weak’???) — the term “weak” still isn’t the most excellent way to describe the condition that the WB is in ...

- As “*weak in the faith*” (:1), he is in a condition of being IN-FIRM (NOT-FIRM) in his godly sonship education & edification — he is simply and honestly ignorant of the Pauline doctrine for his edification.

- And when you are not “firm” in your mind about your own godly edification—then your own status as a “son” has not yet become just as (:5) says—**fully persuaded in your own mind!**

- It is completely appropriate and most excellent (and in perfect keeping with the context) to say that the WB has some *infirmities* in his godly edification—because as one who is, (by definition) *weak in the faith*, he’s not going to be ‘fully settled’ yet, or ‘fully persuaded’, or ‘**firmly settled**’ yet in his own mind about **many** things related to the Edification that God has composed and written and designed for us to have as members of the body of Christ in this disp. of grace. (Rom-Philm)

- So—***We then that are strong*** (Rom. 1:1-14:23) ***ought to*** (based upon a godly generated desire to labor together with God in this most important Operation of His business [for a believer]: Edification) ***bear the infirmities of the weak*** (patiently and joyfully take a course of action that will help the WB in his own edification process), ...

- And now—with all the proper context in mind—and allowing the context to govern what we think about every word in this verse—you should have no trouble at all with the last phrase of (:1) ...

... *“and not to please ourselves.”*

- What does He mean when He says that? ...

- What is the word *“please”* referring to?

A: our SONSHIP LIBERTY!

- In other words—we are not to go around satisfying our own Sonship Liberty pleasures to the detriment (or the destroying) of the *weaker* brother’s own Edification Process and the Edification Process of the local assembly to boot! (in the process)

- And *“not to please ourselves”* indicates that there are 2 Major Features of Godly L&C that MUST be utilized if this is going to take place: #6 Willing & Glad Self-Sacrifice; and #7 Willing & Glad Self-Abasement!

- Those 2 Features make it so that the 5 Core Features can be properly utilized as your ‘Divine Guidance System’ in making all of the sonship decision you’re going to have to make, in order to be a *helper* of the WB’s *joy* (or sonship edification)!

- and without #6 & #7, you’re going to end up being NO HELP AT ALL!

- Any questions? comments? on (:1)? _____

- If you’ve got (:1) down, you should have no trouble with (:2)

- ***ROMANS 15:2—Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.***

- **“Let”** - again, another one of those ‘sonship commands’ whereby a father expressly gives his son a directive where he bids him to act in accordance with a clear principle or principles that he has already been taught in his sonship education—and in doing so, let those principles that he has learned govern his decision-making.

- And we've had many principles given to us as we deal with the WB situation with godly Equity from Rom. 14:1-23— but (:1) of ch.15 actually acts as one of those Principles itself.

- The governing Principle as we Labor together with our Father in the Operation of His business that has to do with the Edification Process in a WB situation really is: *We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.*

- Now— based upon that governing principle in (:1), we have a Fatherly directive in (:2) where we are bidden to act in accordance with that clear principle of (:1).

- And this Fatherly directive can be 'broadened' a bit (so to speak) - to not only be singularly dealing with the WB—but also to deal with your "*neighbour*".

- And the godly Sonship Decision-Making Skill of Equity can be used—(not only in a WB situation) - but in ALL/EVERY situation(s) where the Edification Process is concerned!

- "*Let every one of us (that is, those of us who are strong or weak or anywhere in between) please his neighbour (that is, your 'Near-Body') for his good to edification.*"

- (:2) is a difficult verse to break down into a 'word-study' type analysis—because (to put it my way), Every word that's said in it is dependent upon every other word that's said in it.

- For example: "*Let every one of us please his neighbour*" — that's **not** saying that you are commanded to mow your neighbor's lawn; or change his oil; or take out his garbage; or bake him a cake; or wash his car—or any other thing that ends up being just a bunch of 'do-good-isms' where you think that if you do good to others, then good will come back to you. [that's KARMA—Hinduism/Buddhism]

- And even though the verse plainly states that we are to 'please our neighbor FOR HIS GOOD' — we know that it's not talking about that kind of "good"! Why? Because the "*good*" here is **defined** by God in the next 2 words: "**TO EDIFICATION**"!

- And the truth is—if Godly Love & Charity is doing its effectual job; then **all 7 Features of it are going to work to that end: edification!**

- All 7 Features of Godly Love & Charity are ultimately for the purpose of getting godly **Edification** accomplished!

- (review “Edification”, if necessary)

- **ROMANS 15:3-4**—The Lord Jesus Christ, Himself, as our example of Laboring with God and working together with God in Sonship Equity.

- Since the **FORMAT** of how a father teaches a son is the same in both programs—we can look (and we are expected to look) at the very sonship life of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself as an example for us as to how we are to go about laboring together with our Heavenly Father in this Operation of His business that has to do with the Edification Process—and to do so based upon the effectual working of godly Equity as the ultimate sonship decision-making skill.

- (and the Supreme Test of His godly Love & Charity).

- And to do that—God has the apostle Paul take you back to a particular portion in God’s word that has to do with His “Time Past” program with the nation Israel ... to a particular Psalm that is designed for you to make some ‘connections’ that should generate some godly zeal & enthusiasm for working together with God in His Operations of the Edification Process.

- And (:3) and (:4) deal with this issue of Christ as our example of a properly educated and edified Son of God who is able to successfully deal with others whose ‘estates’ are different than His own (putting it mildly) - and to take a particular course of action—a course of action that consists of laboring & working together with His Father in the business Operations of His Father—and to **please** His Father to the ‘nth’ degree by making decisions with godly Equity that are the exact same decision the Father would make Himself. **(and to do so when, as an adult Son Himself, He could have chosen not to—and to please Himself)!**

- And the Psalm that God has the apostle Paul quote from is the 69th Psalm (Psa. 69:9) - a Psalm that has a lot to say about the very Cross Work of the Lord Jesus Christ—and therefore He IS the supreme example of godly Equity (and the proper use of **all 4** of the sonship decision-making skills; as well as the fulness of the Features of Godly Love & Charity—[especially Willing & Glad Self-Sacrifice and Willing & Glad Self-Abasement]).

- And it's interesting to see how our Father utilizes such things as "examples" or "illustrations" in His teaching and educating us as His "sons" —

... Examples/Illustrations are very helpful and powerful tools in the education process—and the timing of using an example or illustration is crucial—(some are good at it, and some are not so good at it [like me]) ...

... but examples/illustrations are most helpful when they can easily be grasped by the student (the son), and most importantly, when they can be easily attached to or connected with the recent information that the Father has just gone over with the son.

- And the real 'power' of an example/illustration comes in the son being able to SEE and PERCEIVE with the 'eyes of his understanding' those connections & applications—because in doing so, it produces confidence, assurance, and a fully settled mind that a course of action that he's bidden to take by the Father is the only consistent thing to do in light of the sound doctrine he's just been given.

- examples/illustrations can be very helpful in taking an remaining & lingering 'reluctance' out of the way of going into immediate action. [that is, when they are used properly & wisely by a Father that knows what He's doing].

- And when done properly, a wise, well-timed example or illustration can be utilized to produce an appropriate zeal and enthusiasm and determination for doing the job at hand and seeing it to its completion!

- In other words, **for not being SLOTHFUL in business; but fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; (Rom. 12:11)**

- So, why is the Lord Jesus Christ being utilized by God as our example or illustration here instead of the apostle Paul?

- Doesn't Paul say, "*Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me. (1 Cor. 4:16)* ?

- yes—but Paul also says, *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.* (1 Cor. 11:1)

- and also, *Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;* (Eph. 5:1)

- and even, *For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:* (1 Thess. 2:14)

- So why is the Lord being utilized as our example/illustration and not the apostle Paul?

- If you examine the context carefully of the “followers” passages, when the context is focusing upon something of the unique nature of this dispensation of grace in which we live, and where Paul’s apostleship is in view, then we are to be “followers” of Paul ...

... but Paul is NOT the one whose “image” we are being “conformed” to ... we are being *conformed to the image of his (God’s) Son (the Lord Jesus Christ), that he (Christ) might be the firstborn among many brethren.* (Rom. 8:29)

- So, since that’s the case, instead of God utilizing Paul and his many sacrifices as the illustration for the wise & proper godly labor of equity—it’s the Lord Jesus Christ Himself (the very One that we are being “conformed” to) that becomes the most excellent example or illustration of a “Son” laboring together with His Father in the **supreme** example/illustration of the use of godly equity along with godly Love & Charity toward others.

- And while a wise and well-timed example/illustration can produce the things we just talked about (i.e., zeal, enthusiasm, and determination for doing the job at hand and seeing it to its completion) — a wise & well-timed example/illustration can also produce some other things—and those ‘other things’ are the aim, goal, and objective of this particular illustration—and those ‘other things’ are actually given to you in (:4) ***that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope***—**THAT’S THE AIM, GOAL, & OBJECTIVE OF THIS ILLUSTRATION!** (the objective is: *patience; comfort; hope*)

- **Romans 15:3—For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.**

- “For” = a “for” of reason—i.e., here is the ultimate & supreme reason for us as *strong* ones “in the faith” to *bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves* (by exercising our Sonship Liberty when it would put a *stumblingblock* in the WB’s way) ...

... and here is the ultimate & supreme reason for us to *please our neighbour for his good to edification*. (in other words, for us to be beneficial, profitable, and contributing to all that God has made our ‘near-body’ to be “in Christ” sanctification-wise so that his godly sonship education and edification will be successfully and effectually working within him).

- “For even Christ pleased not himself;”

- “For even Christ” - “**even**” - “**even Christ**”

- “**even**” is being used here by the Father to make a logical appeal to the “son” — actually, both a logical appeal, and an appeal based upon sound doctrine.

- And “**even**” being a word that in general means, ‘to be equal to’ - this very powerful appeal being presented to you is an appeal to take the godly Thinking of your instruction of Equity—and having put it properly into effect in your Conduct & Behavior—the appeal is to now Labor together with your Father with that godly Equity in the field of the Edification Process (& do so consistent w/ Equity learned) ...

... and in order to do that Labor properly—it’s going to take the Power of Godly Love & Charity to do it ...

... and the Major Features of godly L&C that’s going to enable you to be successful in laboring together with God in the Operation of His business is especially the 6th & 7th Features: Willing & Glad: Self-Sacrifice / Self-Abasement!

- And one of the major things that’s going to stand in your way is an aspect of Pride and Arrogance and Selfishness that is one of the most **POWERFUL** forces /desires that can act upon a human heart: **the desire to please yourself!**

- And when genuine godly Equity combined with the Willing & Glad Self-Sacrifice & Willing & Glad Self-Abasement effectually work within you by means of the doctrine contained in Romans 14:1-15:2 — **nothing** generates the **power** to check (deny) your own **pride, arrogance, and selfishness** greater than that!

- and the truth is—like it or not—the Edification Process is vulnerable to being greatly hindered by something that you may not want to own up to ...
... **YOUR FEELINGS—the way you FEEL about it!** (it’s a real thing—and the Adversary knows it!)

- Even the simple act of reading God’s word—let alone studying things out in it—if you’re honest with yourself, there are times in which your mind & soul seem to be fighting against you.

- And this is why Sonship Education/Edification is far MORE than just getting Bible Doctrine! (the doctrine can only do so much) [got to have the “heart”] - {godly sentiment}

- *“For even Christ pleased not himself”*

- Now this issue of the Father making an “appeal” to you really isn’t a new thing at all—in fact, you should have something begin to occur to you (something come to mind) that, when you read this passage seems quite familiar—something you’ve been through before ...

... because what you’ve really got going on here (for sure) is an “appeal” being made by the Father to the son—but it’s even more than that ...

... you should be able to tell (by what God has the apostle Paul say to you in :3 & :4) what **kind** of an appeal is being made to you—in other words, what is the appeal being based upon?

- [what’s the last word of :4? ... **hope**]

- so, what kind of an ‘appeal’ is your Father making to you here? **A LOVE-BASED CONVINCEMENT!**

- The ‘appeal’ (granted) is an appeal to be fully convinced & fully persuaded based upon sound doctrine—(it’s a godly appeal) — but since a further aspect of our “hope” is going to get brought into the picture, the expectation is that this is going to be another one of the Father’s Love-Based Convincements ... and it is.

- And a Loved-Based Convincement has 2 features to it:

- 1) It has an Intellectual Appeal;
- 2) It has an Emotional Appeal.

- Ex. Rom. 8:28-39 (see #67)

- Here in Rom. 15:3 ...

1) *For even Christ pleased not himself;*
that’s the Intellectual Appeal;

2) *but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.* that’s the Emotional Appeal.

- (:4) is the expansion of the Hope Doctrine that has a particular ‘salvation’ attached to it!

- And when you put it all together—what you’ve got is a Fatherly Love-Based Convincement! [assurance/salvation]

- “*For even Christ pleased not himself;*” - and the way in which that is said to you—(with that phrase: *For EVEN CHRIST pleased not himself*) — that word “*even*” acts as a logical, Intellectual Appeal.

- Logically (but not with mere logic), and Intellectually, you are being appealed to on the basis of the sound doctrine you’ve been taught, to recognize that the doctrine of your sonship education is designed and composed to *conform you to the image of Christ*—and the very One you have been conformed to so far—(Christ Himself) — **EVEN HE pleased not himself — *EVEN Christ* (“even”= equal to; that is, **no more and no less than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself so functioned upon godly Equity and Willing/Glad Self-Sacrifice & Willing/Glad Self-Abasement; that He did not please Himself, but took a course of action equal to His Father!****

... and the only thing consistent with your *instruction of equity* is to Labor with the Father just as Christ Himself did with His *instruction of equity*.

- “*For even Christ pleased not himself;*” - and the intellectual appeal to that is found in the very historical account of the Lord’s own Willing & Glad Self-Sacrifice and Self-Abasement that you have already been taught and encountered back in the gospel accounts and in Rom. 1:1 up to this point in Romans 15:3 ...

... and it can be seen in such a passage as we’ve already looked at—*Phil. 2:6-8*

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in the fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

- Rather than being content to remain in the state of absolute deity as the 2nd Member of the Godhead—and NOT becoming true humanity by enfleshing Himself into the line of the seed of David and undergoing all of the sufferings of the Redeemer—He willing & gladly chose to become the Redeemer of Israel, and of all mankind! (**motivated by GL&C**)

- And that Redemption wasn’t just for the benefit of your justification—but for the benefit of your sanctification as well—in other words, the Sacrifice & Abasement of the Lord Jesus Christ **extends** to the issue of **godly Edification!**

- (there’s your Intellectual Appeal)

- Now the Emotional Appeal is what is contained in the remainder of (:3) ... ***but as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.***

- And all that Emotion in the Emotional Appeal portion can be found back in Psalm 69.

- And together, (Intellectual/Emotional appeals), they are designed to produce the aim, goal, and objective of the **hope** of (:4). [with its accompanying ‘salvation’]

- **“but** (adversative conjunction = strongly the very opposition of what was just said), **as it is written**, [then a quote from Psa. 69:9]

- **As it is written** = indicates that what you are after is NOT a direct application of a verse out of God’s program w/ Israel — but rather that there are situations and circumstances that, (in this case) the Lord Jesus Christ will be in (or has been in) that has a similar or parallel issue to what we, as members of the church the body of Christ will find ourselves in.

- (which is what’s going on here)

- **For it is written** = indicates that we are expected to go back to where this quotation sits in God’s word and recognize that the EXACT issue that’s sitting back there is the SAME issue that’s sitting right here!

- And even though it comes from a portion of God’s word that deals with God’s program with Israel—
this is an issue that is true in BOTH programs!

- Now for the quotation from Psalm 69:9—***The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.***

- Now before we deal with the details of this verse—I want to set the stage for it by dealing with the CONTEXT of the 69th Psalm.

- (see # 68-70 charts)

- **Context of Psalm 69**—it’s in the second book of the Psalms, which runs from Psalm 42 through 72.

- And in this second book of the Psalms you’re dealing with the **deliverer and his deliverance**, which is the second mandate of the Davidic covenant.

- And in Psalm 69 you are nearing the end of the second book of the Psalms which ends in Psalm 72.

- When you get here to the 69th Psalm (a Psalm of David), a Messianic Psalm — the cross work of the Lord Jesus Christ is going to be looked at again—and David is dealing with the deliverer & his deliverance... and he is doing that because when the Lord Jesus Christ functions as the redeemer— he produced the ability to effect redemption for his nation, (particularly his remnant) from a **power** that the Adversary had that was impossible for anybody to **deliver** himself from.

- The Adversary had the power of death, he had the keys to a realm of death, he held the keys of death and hell, (key's plural), two keys to death and hell— and in order for his people, especially the remnant, to be **delivered** in the day when that power would be taken away (through the use of those keys), that power was going to be put on display as being a sort of a kicking and a biting and a scratching and a resistance that the Adversary would be performing in that day against the Lord putting into effect that power that he stripped away from the Adversary in connection with His cross-work.

- And the remnant of Israel was going to experience that out in the Day of the Lord — and in connection with that, the 69th Psalm declares to them what their Messiah has done for them and that He's been where the adversary wants to put *them* and that he's come out of that realm victorious!

- And because of what the Messiah/Redeemer has been through—and what He has given to them—even though they may physically die they've been **delivered**! (delivered from the power of the Adversary to hold them).

- The 69th Psalm is all about the issue of the Messiah entering into, and experiencing all the **horrors** associated with Satan and his possession of the power of death.

- Hebrews 2 — notice here the reality of this when the remnant of Israel is taught about it—and that it becomes a big issue for them when it comes to them appreciating the work that the Messiah has done for them.

- (see Heb. 2:14-15)

- Notice: [:14] ... *“that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;”* — Through death (the death of the cross), the Messiah produces the destruction of him (the devil) who has the power of death.

- Satan had the power of death—and in the 69th Psalm, the Messiah functions as the Deliverer and does the delivering. (and going through His death is what the 69th Psalm is describing).

- and I don't mean that the 69th Psa. is describing the Lord's physical death in medical terms ...

... but rather, it's the issue of His soul & spirit in preparation for departing His body and going down to hell (the pit) - and passing through the gates of death—and having the doors being opened up and going in there—and the Adversary trying to slam the doors behind Him and keep Him there—and the bars of the pit holding Him in there.

- Peter talks about this issue in Acts 2:24 when he says of the Lord, *Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the **pains of death**: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.* — BUT! the attempt was made to do that very thing, and the 69th Psalm describes it.

- (In fact—this very issue needs to be understood and appreciated by **us** in this disp/grace because there are some things Paul says to us in describing even the “mystery” aspects of the Cross-work of the Lord that we should appreciate that He did all this for **us too!**)

- So the 69th Psalm takes you to the time when the Lord Jesus Christ was nailed to the cross—and in connection with the battle on that cross—the Lord knows what's coming—(which is why He talks about the *waters* and the *deep mire* and sinking into it—because He knows where He's going to go in connection with death!

Next we dealt with Rom. 10:14-15

- (1) Psa. 69
- (2) Isa. 65
- (3) Rom. 10:14-15

- dealt with background/backdrop of Israel's prog. for their worthiness of the 5th CoP—and their condition being so bad (even worse than the Gentiles) to get an appreciation for the “reproaches” issue.

- REVIEW (:3)

- Now with all the background/backdrop work we've done for Psa. 69:9—you should be able to perceive the severity of these *reproaches* that the nation of Israel cast back upon God Himself; and that consequently “*fell*” on the Lord Jesus Christ as part of what He suffered in His cross-work.

- And you should be **suitably impressed** with it—just as God Himself is when it comes to the issue of the **high price** of godly edification!

- It's a rather easy thing (or common thing) to think about the high price of our salvation/justification.

- Much has been said about it—much has been written about it—and scores of sermons (past and present) are preached on the subject with great passion (and rightly so).

- And the preaching and teaching of the high price of our salvation (being the suffering and cross-work of the Lord Jesus Christ) is so frequent, that it has become common ... (or at least it was that way) ...

... and tragically, it became so common that it started to become 'ordinary' - and by becoming 'ordinary', it became passé (or out of date; out of fashion) ... and as a result, the churches are now so influenced by "the course of this world" that the high price of our salvation has been exchanged for the high price of the Preacher's latest sermon series DVD's.

- And there is a great and powerful resistance & opposition to that message by the Adversary, Satan himself. And his cohorts continue to assault and pervert that message—and that perversion is far greater today than ever before in history ... and it will continue to worsen as time goes on.

- And when it comes to "the gospel of Christ" today—it is becoming a rare thing to hear it clear and plain, and without perversion ... and it is even more rare for persons to respond positively to it.

- And where "the gospel of Christ" is concerned, it can be said (and rightly so), that it is a "battle", it is a "fight", it is a "war" ... and the resistance and opposition to it from this present evil world; from the spirit of this world; from the wisdom of this world; and from the Adversary and his cohorts who spawned it is perhaps at its most powerful point of all time.

- But—as God your Heavenly Father looks at it—that's only one-half of the story!

- And it's only one-half of the story because it's only one-half of what God has done for you in order to make you spiritually fit for His use (to be a "help meet" for Him).

- The “gospel of Christ” isn’t just God’s ‘spelled-out-message’ of how you can escape God’s wrath and eternity in the lake of fire but instead, go to God’s heaven when you die possessing eternal life.

- (that’s half of it—and it’s the first half that every person has to deal with—and rightly so).

- But the “gospel of Christ” (and the cross-work of Christ) is also about the other half of being spiritually fit for God’s use—which is the issue of you being spiritually fit right now; here on earth; in the body you currently have; with sin still in the members of your earthly body; and still having to live in this evil, ungodly world.

- The “gospel of Christ” and the cross-work of Christ also includes God’s ‘spelled-out-message’ of how you can begin at the moment you believe the “gospel of Christ” for your salvation from the debt & penalty of your sins and obtaining eternal life—to also functionally live unto God with functional life—spiritually functional life that is acceptable and pleasing to God Himself.

- And the “gospel of Christ” (and the suffering of the cross-work of Christ) has NOT ONE, but TWO major issues in view:

1) Justification and its results; 2) Sanctification and its results.

- Justification and Sanctification are the 2 things that you MUST have in order to be spiritually fit for God’s use!

- NOTE: **You have to have both of them; you have to have both of them given to you by grace; and they are BOTH necessary for you to be fit for God’s use!**

- **And this is NOT just my opinion (or just what I think might be the case) - this is the testimony of God Himself in Scripture! ... isn’t that what is called for in the New Covenant or New Testament? (Jer. 31:33-34)**

- And that is true in both God’s program w/ Israel, and with us, the body of Christ in this dispensation of Gentile grace!

- And in God’s program with Israel, justification & sanctification (or eternal life & functional life) - or spiritual fitness is going to be utilized in 2 major ways:

1) Individually; 2) as a Nation, the Nation Israel—for the purpose of repossessing the earth.

- And in this present dispensation of grace in which we currently live—justification & sanctification (or eternal life & functional life) - or spiritual fitness is going to be utilized in 2 major ways:

1) Individually; 2) as a Body—the church, the body of Christ—for the purpose of repossessing the heavenly places.

- Justification and sanctification are inseparable in God’s sight when it comes to being spiritually fit for His use—there are no loopholes—there is no compromise ...

(see Col. 1:9-29)

- Willing & Glad Self-Sacrifice/Abasement—since godly edification as “sons” occurs in both programs—and since godly Love & Charity is edification’s inseparable partner—you can find the issue of Willing & Glad Self-Sacrifice & Abasement being spoken about along with godly edification in both programs ...

- [our Disp/Grace] - Phil. 2:5-8 [which we have already looked at] — Col. 1:9-29 [which we have already looked at]

- [God’s prog. w/Israel]
(see Heb. 2:1-11 [esp. :8-11])

- NOTICE the Willing & Glad Self-Sacrifice and **Self-Abasement**!!! ... which was for MORE than their justification, but for their sanctification (and by extension, for their EDIFICATION!)

- The reason why God has the apostle Paul quote Psalm 69:9—(and not some other passage like Isaiah 53:4-9 [take your pick of any of those 6 verses]) - is due to the context in which the 69th Psalm sits (which is what is going on in the mind of the Lord Jesus when He is on the cross and looking toward the “battle” that He will fight with the adversary immediately upon His physical death—and that “battle” will end up with the Lord being victorious, NOT merely over matters that pertain to our justification—but also all matters pertaining to our sanctification (and by extension, so that our godly edification can take place)!

- And that’s impressive—and we’re to be suitably impressed w/ that.

- But that's not all we're supposed to be suitably impressed with.
- In Romans 15:3, our Father is giving us a very powerful statement (and by its effectual working) we are to have our minds fully settled; fully persuaded; fully convinced; and having full conviction that working together with our Father in the Operation of God that has to do with the Edification Process succeeding with **OTHER MEMBERS OF THE BODY/ASSEMBLY** is the **TOP PRIORITY** for us as "sons" being *"one body in Christ, and every one members one of another"* (Rom. 12:5)

... it's a clear and powerful statement as to what is going on in our Father's mind concerning godly edification at the end of Level I, Sonship Edification—of what God our Father Himself thinks when it comes to the successful edification of another member of the body of Christ! (And our thinking is to equal/match His!)

- And the full complement of the 5 Core Features of Godly Love & Charity—along with the 6th & 7th Features (of Willing & Glad Self-Sacrifice/Abasement) [by their effectual work] provides the POWER by which you can intellectually and emotionally participate and labor with God in this Operation of His Edification Process without the priority of it and the compelling, pressing nature of it calling you to immediate action never wanes, abates, or decreases (or gets 'sluggish')—but rather, continues to grow, increase, and intensify!
- That's the level of POWER (the powerfulness) of Godly L&C that operated in the Lord Jesus Christ Himself—(just as it equally did in God the Father) — and the effectual working of your Sonship Edification from Romans 12:3-15:3 is designed to produce that same degree of POWER in you! [LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON!]
- You can't get a person to do something (especially over the 'long haul') by a simple example, no matter how great the example is—you have to produce a lasting, abiding LOVE for it! (otherwise, it's likely to wane/abate & sluggishness sets in)
- The reason why God says what He says in Rom. 15:3 is to produce within you a GODLY COMMITMENT to the Edification of OTHERS! (and that godly commitment is nothing new to you at all—it's the same commitment that you committed to back in your Sonship Establishment back in Romans 8:16-39 and the corresponding Exhortations back in Proverbs 2:1-20)!

- [Note to self: at this point we reviewed the Measures of Commitment with special emphasis upon commitment to ANOTHER'S godly sonship edification—also with special emphasis upon the issue of “THE Top Priority”
- review from Rom. 8, pgs. 326-370]

- Commitment to godly Sonship Edification:

- 1) YOUR commitment to get it;
- 2) Your commitment to OTHER'S getting it!

- Sacrifice / Abasement!

- The whole thing is built upon HOPE! (Heb. 11:1)

- **ROMANS 15:4**

- 2 “background” or “review” issues:

1) If Israel's scriptures (i.e., *whatsoever things were written aforetime*) are indeed *written for our learning*—and for the further issue of *that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope*—then we need to be able to understand/appreciate that the book we hold in our hand really IS “*the scriptures*”!

- Note the connection with “*whatsoever things were written aforetime*” and “*the scriptures*” —

- My understanding is that “the scriptures” that were written “aforetime” is talking primarily about Genesis—the opening chapters of Acts.

2) The Father leaving our primary education in Level I, Phase 2 Sonship Edification of our instruction in Wisdom, Justice, and Judgment, and Equity here in (:4) - that is, these are the Final Words our Father says to us in our instruction of the 4 sonship decision-making skills—and more than that, the issue of HOPE being (literally) the “last word” of that instruction—I want to review an issue we learned about a long time ago—back in Romans 4—that has a bearing upon how we are to look at our “hope doctrine”.

Romans 15:4

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

- Even a cursory reading of this verse (even a quick scan of it) should tell you that you are now going to have to face some things of a particular nature ...

... but ... when you take into account the context in which this verse sits (which is the issue of Laboring together with your Heavenly Father in the Operation of God that has to do with godly Edification) ...

... *and* when you consider and take into account that these are the FINAL WORDS of your Father to you in the ‘formal education’ phase of your Level I Sonship Education ... you should realize that something is being said to you here that is of GREAT importance; **even the GREATEST IMPORTANCE of all that your Father has said to you so far!**

- So what do you perceive is the ‘tone’ or the ‘nature’ of what is being said to you here? ... what is the ‘nature’ of the things you’re now going to have to face at this point of attainment in your godly sonship edification? — **SUFFERING & DANGER!!!**

- And words like “*patience*”, “*comfort*”, and “*hope*” tell you that this passage is not just some ‘light advice’ or some kind of “fluffy”, “sappy” sentiment, that you can just ‘take it, or leave it’ type thing ...

... rather, by exactly what God says to you here, you know that this is of GREAT importance; of even GRAVE importance—it is critical, it is vital, and it’s even *foreboding* (= it has a sense of **impending evil!**)

- and it should “grip” you just that way!

- After realizing & recognizing; and properly appreciating the tremendous gravity & weight of (:3) — that *even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me (Psa. 69:9)*. — and the full, effectual working and impact of the EXTENT to which the Lord Jesus Christ went in order to give YOU the opportunity for godly edification to take place within YOU (gladly Sacrificing/Abasing Himself **FOR OTHERS’ edif.!**) ...

... and that same effectual-working of Godly Love & Charity of Willing & Glad Self-Sacrifice/Abasement for the successful godly Sonship Edification of OTHERS (other members of “the body of Christ”) really IS effectually working within YOU ...

... this now, throws another ‘signal’ to the adversary that he can begin to resist and oppose this ‘body edification’ on a greater level than the “*tribulation*” that has already been directed at you since Romans 13:11-14!

- Get ready for some “*distress*”! = (Crabb) “the pain felt when in a strait from which we see no means of extricating ourselves” ... (go back and review Rom. 8:35ff)

- *distress*—when you’re feeling direct pressure being applied to you in order to **prevent** you applying the aims, goals, and objectives of your sonship life—the pressure to hide it or to opt for another competing form of wisdom or competing *form of godliness that denies the power thereof* (that sonship is the only acceptable *form of godliness* that God your Father will accept and be pleased with)—and because of some pressure that would come along and ‘hit a nerve’ in your spirit, begin to **interfere with your mind** of calmness and assurance and confidence and *hope*—and create in your heart ‘unsettledness’ of mind and the feeling of helpless suffering (helplessness) - whereby ‘panic’ would normally then set in!

= MENTAL SUFFERING!

- Remember the success you’ve had in regard to Satan’s Plan and Policy of Evil:

- he never wanted you to get your hands on a perfectly preserved word of God ... yet you have!;
- he wanted to keep “the mystery” a mystery ... yet you have come to know “the mystery of Christ”;
- he wanted you to never “rightly divide the word of truth” ... yet you have done it;
- he wanted you to never come to understand or appreciate your “adoption” as a “son” of God ... yet you have;
- he never wanted you to know what godly edification is and to have a “form” of godliness that denies the power thereof ... yet you have come to know what it is & how it works!

- and if he couldn't keep your own personality/individual godly sonship edification away from you—he REALLY never wanted you to understand and appreciate BODY EDIFICATION! ...

... so how do you think he feels about you (about us) at THIS point of attainment in Romans 15:4??? (it really doesn't "sit well" with him, **to put it mildly!**)

- So now—in view of all that—(and in view of the effectual working of [:1-3]

1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

2 Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.

3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

- Rom. 15:4

For whatsoever things were written aforetime (that portion of God's word that was written before Paul's epistles—basically, Genesis—opening chapters of Acts) - [perhaps even Heb-Rev]

were written for our learning,

- "*learning*" = basically, the receiving of instruction or the acquiring of knowledge—a very broad term generally meaning, the gaining or acquiring of the knowledge of something.

- The portion of God's word that was written to, for, and about His program with Israel for the repossession and reconciling of the earth from the adversary and his cohorts (especially what we know as the OT) was *written for OUR learning* ...

... and "learning" is an ON-GOING process—hence we will constantly be *learning* necessary things from that portion of God's word that pertains to Israel's program—especially the OT.

- And what that means is—it is oftentimes pointed out that we're told by Paul that such things as the OT are only written

for our *learning* and NOT for our “doctrine” - (which is absolutely TRUE) - and that is a MAJOR thing, NOT to be minimized!

- (In fact, the KJ translators took enormous care in translating the Greek word *didaskalia*—which is always translated “*doctrine*” except in only 2 cases: Rom. 12:7 “*teaching*” and here in Rom. 15:4 “*learning*”).

- So while we are to have a very healthy appreciation for God’s word written to, for, and about Israel and His program with Israel NOT being for our “doctrine” — to many folks who do “rightly divide the word of truth” and who appreciate the uniqueness of Paul’s apostleship and the great change God made in temporarily suspending His program with Israel and bringing in a new and distinct dispensation of Gentile grace — many of those folks often have an UN-healthy appreciation for the OT scriptures and for “*whatsoever things that were written aforetime for our learning*”.

- And what I mean by that is that it is often thought that we should not be going back in the OT scriptures for **any** reason at all ... or the position is sometimes that we should treat the OT scriptures in such a way that going back to a book like Proverbs and seeing the “format” for a son’s education—and that the way in which God arranged Paul’s epistles (and the information within those epistles) perfectly matches that “format” for a father educating his son is somehow illegitimate, heretical, and a violation of “rightly dividing the word of truth”.

- But the truth is—just as the OT scriptures are for our *learning* as to the God-ness of God; the Fatherly-ness of our Heavenly Father; the very crosswork of our Lord Jesus Christ; and a whole bunch of other things that our apostle Paul expects us to have LEARNED about before we ever get to Romans — so, too, is the “format” for sonship education!

- The result is—that among a lot of those who “rightly divide the word of truth”, there is often a very shallow understanding of God’s program with Israel that results in a

great amount of corrupted doctrine being circulated and accepted. (such as a person in the OT was saved by “grace plus works”!) — not to mention some real problems with such things as doing “*good works*” in this dispensation of grace; the judgment seat of Christ (rewards); and being a “*joint-heir with Christ*”—[which is a misunderstanding of true, godly sanctification—which is a problem of not being taught Romans 6, 7, and 8 properly!!!]

- Point is—the Scriptures that were written to and pertain to God’s program with Israel have far more to teach us (and for us to *learn* about) than many folks give them credit for; or regard for!

- Note: We **DO** need to be careful not to cross the line from “*learning*” to “*doctrine*” for sure ... but we need NEVER be ashamed to go back to the OT (such as Proverbs [and many other books]) for our **LEARNING!**

- Failure to do so is why many ‘grace folks’ edification is deficient! (and why the ‘grace camp’ is as divided as any denomination [Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, etc.]

- So we have: ***For*** (further explanation/amplification) ***whatever things were written aforetime*** (the scriptures of the OT [Gen-Acts], and even Heb-Rev) ***were written for our learning*** (our continuing acquisition of proper Biblical knowledge),

- “***that***” (Purpose Clause = in order that)

- “***we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.***”

- My understanding is that the **final purpose** of those *scriptures that were written aforetime* is **ultimately that we might have HOPE.**

- And that is going to be accomplished by 2 particular things that those *scriptures* (when *learned* properly) produce:

1) PATIENCE;

2) COMFORT OF THE SCRIPTURES

(those are 2 things) - and they are **critically & vitally important** to one of the most important things you have been given in godly Sonship Edification—and to the success of it both individually (for you) and as a body (for others)! **HOPE!**

- “*patience*” (Gk., ὑπομονή [hupomonē]) is another term that has not stood well through other English translations. It is often translated as ‘steadfastness,’ ‘perseverance,’ or ‘endurance.’ But “*patience*” is the more excellent word, as the CONTEXT bears out.
 - The general definition of *patience* is the suffering or enduring of pain, evil, or trouble with calmness and composure; suffering under pressure.
 - Simply put—*patience* is the enduring of pain, suffering, or trouble with composure and without discontent or complaint.
- (Ref: English Synonymes by George Crabb - 1830, pg. 149)
- “*Patience* applies to any troubles or pains whatever small or great. It consists in the abstaining from all complaint or indication of what one suffers. There are perpetual occurrences which are apt to harass the tempter, unless one regards them with *patience*.
Patience applies only to the evils that actually hang over us.

As *patience* lies in the manner and temper of suffering, and *endurance* in the act: we may have *endurance* and not *patience*: for we may have much to endure and consequently *endurance*: **but if we do not endure it with an easy mind and without the disturbance of our looks and words, we have not *patience***: on the other hand we may have *patience* but not *endurance*: for our *patience* may be exercised by momentary trifles, which are not sufficiently great or lasting to constitute *endurance*.”
 - Because of the nature of the context, “*patience*” is similarly the more excellent choice over ‘steadfastness’ or ‘perseverance,’ which any study into the exact shade of meaning of these terms will show.
 - We have actually had some long-term experience with the issue of *patience* and how it is part of the ‘mechanics’ our Father taught us in how to handle the “tribulations” of the gospel way back in Rom. 5:1-5 (read).
 - And the way we were taught to handle the *tribulation* type opposition to the gospel of Christ was 3-fold:

1) *patience* = enduring pain, suffering or trouble with composure and without discontent or complaint.

2) *experience* = the arriving at a particular or specific CERTAINTY with respect to something previously unknown.

- *experience* is the certainty of something due to past trial or proof.

- *experience* is therefore an unerring guide which no man can desert without falling into error.

- *experience* serves to lead us to a particular truth.

- *Experience* denotes **certainty—proven certainty through trial.**

- [and all that leads finally to]: ...

3) *hope* = (ἐλπίς [elpis]) = absolute confidence.

- But here in Romans 15 we are not facing the “tribulations of the gospel” as we were in Romans 4—in Romans 15 we are facing the *distress* in connection with the opposition we are going to face to our continued godly edification (individually), and more specific: to our continued successful godly edification **as A BODY!**

- Opposition in the form of *distress*—the mental suffering and dis-comforting that is common to such things as *divisions*, *schisms*, *contentions* and becoming *dis-joined* as our communion, fellowship, and concord comes under assault from the adversary’s Policy of Evil—in order to bring a halt to our Body Edification!

- (**see 1 Cor. 1:10-11**)

- And the godly ‘mechanics’ for how to handle such opposition to Body Edification is 2-fold in Rom. 15:4 ...

1) *patience* 2) *comfort of the scriptures*

- And since “*hope*” is the result—(an enlarging of our hope doctrine)—God has designed for us to gain CONFIDENCE as His properly educated/edified “sons” by honestly FACING any and all opposition to our Body Edification - and to take the opposition that is designed to intimidate us and make us ashamed—and end up with that opposition making us more skillful and bold than without it! (i.e., ***more than conquerors!***)

- and as *more than conquerors*—we end up with far more **confidence** in our “*hope*” than ever before!

- we overcome the tendency to be intimidated in the face of opposition by becoming skillful and confident in dealing with it!

- However—the issue of being intimidated and losing *hope* is NOT the only effect that *distressing* opposition is designed to produce.

- Just as it was back in Romans 5 in connection with your justification (and being permanently justified) - opposing your HOPE isn’t just designed to shatter your hope and cause you mental anguish/distress in your human spirit ...

... but it’s also designed to have a negative impact upon your REJOICING IN GLORY!

- (Rom. 5:2 ... *rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*)

- (Rom. 15:6,7 *That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.*)

- Wherever there is a danger of the adversary’s policy of evil opposing your HOPE (and having a negative impact on it); there is at the exact same time a negative impact that is made upon a particular GLORY that God Himself is designed to RECEIVE! (and that may not seem like a very big deal at the present time—but in reality it’s a HUGE issue! ... as we will see as that issue of GLORY gets developed in Level II Sonship Edification!)

- The objective of the adversary is to **shake your mind!** on the importance and TOP PRIORITY and godly LOVE of the Edification Process (in you; and in others [body]) - and shake your mind in any real “hope” of that having any real impact upon the creature/ the angels/ the adversary & his cohorts ... of any real “hope” in the “reward of your inheritance” as a “joint-heir with Christ” ... and just SHUT UP AND GIVE UP! (after all, I can draw the “rightly dividing” chart! It’s that enough?)

- And where *patience* is concerned—even in common things around you in the world at-large, there are analogies to this—(for example, in learning how to drive) - (in book learning vs. practical experience)

- You're going to experience some 'trouble/distress' out there on the road—and when you realize that **when you do what you were told to do (and taught to do): it actually works!**

- First, you learn something. (*whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning*)

- Then trouble/distress comes along.

- And when you're educated in how to put something into effect, when trouble & distress comes along, the first thing you're taught is: **DON'T PANIC!**

- **And PATIENCE is the opposite of PANICKING!**

- And when you patiently respond to something, you don't panic - you think clearly about how you are supposed to take what you have learned and apply it to the situation.

- And so you make the application to the situation, and that patience works experience. Because when you patiently apply the knowledge to the situation, you gain the experience that the knowledge works!

- And as the knowledge works and gives you the experience; the experience works to produce hope - or the confident expectation that the knowledge I learned will work, and it will work the next time I need it, and the next time, and the next, and the next

- So that is a maxim or an axiom or precisely correct procedure in connection with anything you have learned that is designed to operate in a situation where adversity, contrariness, or trouble or distress can exist.

- And it's done by means of GRACE through FAITH—by means of the sound doctrine of your Sonship Edification Process (the doctrine found in Rom-Phlm) PLUS the proper appreciation of *whatever things that were written aforetime for our learning ... by what we know!* ... NOT by something mystical or magical that God gives us or does for us!

- And this troubling & distressing opposition to your “hope” really has sinister and far-reaching effects:

- It **negatively** effects:

- GLORY that is to be received by God;

- your HOPE;

- godly LOVE & CHARITY;

- your FAITH

- and ultimately, God’s GRACE!

(Glory; Hope; Love; Faith; Grace) - [domino effect]

- Now: notice that this is all within the context of the LABOR aspect of godliness in connection with *the instruction of Equity* ...

... it’s all being said in the context of laboring together with God in what is arguably THE most important of all His business Operations: The Edification Process!

- And when you see this issue of *patience* being brought up (in a Labor aspect of an Operation of God—and in a context dealing with Laboring with God in the Edification Process)—there is more often than not, the issue of being involved in an Operation of God that is going to be opposed—and opposed to the extent that the opposition is going to attempt to get you to **FAINT!** (= to lose heart or courage, become depressed; give way; become **sluggish**; avoid your duty!)

- see 2 Cor. 4:1ff; 4:16; Gal. 6:9; Eph. 3:13

(Let’s look at some things that were *written aforesaid for our learning* in connection with *patience*!)

- Ecc. 7:8

- Psa. 37:1-7 (whole chapter) - [didn’t FAINT]

- Psa. 40 (whole chapter) - [7 = Heb. 10:7-9] - didn’t FAINT

- Heb. 6:9-20—[15 (*patience* tied to an *inheritance*!)]

- Heb. 12:2-3

- 1 Pet. 2:20

- Even Rom. 2:4—(*forbearance & longsuffering* are a species of *patience*)

- 1 Thes. 1:3-4—(God is developing this ‘Edificational Trinity’ back here in Romans!)

- 2 Thes. 1:4ff

- By means of the very terminology that our Father utilizes here in Romans 15:1-3 it becomes apparent that in this particular Labor Aspect of godliness in connection with laboring together with God in the Operation of the Edification Process (both individually, and as a body) - the terms the Father uses here “prompt” us and make us keenly aware of the kind/nature of the problems we are going to face in being successful in this Operation of His business (godly Edification) ...

... *“not to please ourselves” (:1)*

... *“please his neighbour” (:2)*

... *“even Christ pleased not himself” (:3)*

... and, as it has been all along in putting your sanctified “position” in Christ into “practice” - *“reckoning yourself dead indeed unto to sin, but alive unto God”*; *“yielding your members as instruments of righteousness unto God”*; being *“servants of righteousness”*; *“walking after the Spirit”*; *“minding” the “things of the Spirit”*; *“mortifying the deeds of the body”* ...

... plus all of the godly Labor aspects of (now) 12 Components that make up your *“instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity”* ...

... one of the things you have to face is that among the many things this “sound doctrine” is designed to do—is to do something quite extraordinary / even seemingly impossible—and that is: TO GET YOU TO DO SOMETHING THAT YOU NATURALLY (by nature) DO NOT WANT TO DO! (you naturally don’t desire to do it)

- (which is why you need to have to be *“transformed by the renewing of your mind”* by means of the excellency of the effectual power of God’s word!)

- And here in these first 4 verses of Ch.15, you are confronted with the most common & most powerful resistance & opposition to getting that very thing accomplished—(especially in connection with the godly edification **of others**, and dealing with the *weaker brother* situation) ...

... and that most common/powerful resistance & opposition is going to come from **your own natural and powerful desire to please yourself!**

- And the only way in which to overcome that powerful, natural desire to please yourself is by means of the effectual working of God's word—(and in this case, the effectual working of Godly Equitable Thinking as found in Romans 14:1-12!)

- And once you're operating upon that sound doctrine—and it is effectually working within your inner man—(which is what the godly Living Aspect of Rom. 14:13-23 provides for) — only then can you ever be successful as a “help meet” for God in the Edification Process.

- And the adversary knows that he has a ‘ready ally’ that exists within you by nature—this ‘ready ally’ of your natural and very powerful **desire** to PLEASE YOURSELF ...

... it's a ‘ready ally’ that naturally exists within you—and if it hasn't been properly dealt with by the most excellent power of the word of God to ‘transform you by the renewing of your mind’ ...

... then you're going to be easy prey for the adversary to get you to **FAINT**—to shut up & give up—to become a “**sluggard**”!

... to settle for getting YOUR OWN edification [at most], but “to heck with the rest of the body”!

- And one of the most clever & powerful tactics of Satan's PoE that is designed to get you to “faint” early on in your sonship edification is the issue of **SHAME!**

- Shame has the power to do just what you are directed by your Father NOT to do—(*NOT to please yourself*, but rather, *please your neighbor for his good to edification*) ...

- shame has the power to shut you up—and shut down any further advance you are making on the “path” you are on—and instead opt for a “path” that is **more pleasing/desirable!**

- And this is why you often find that where “shame” is dealt with—it's often connected with your “*hope*” doctrine—and the remedy is often connected with some “*patience*” — [see, for example, **Rom. 5:3-5**]

- Let's look at the issue and power of SHAME:

- English: "*Ashamed*" - from the *a*-intensive prefix, plus "shame," hence, to be affected with shame. Shame is an emotional reaction of feeling guilt or disgrace. It is the painful emotion arising from the consciousness of something dishonoring, ridiculous, or unbecoming in one's own conduct or circumstances.

- The effects of shame is **RETREATING SILENCE**.

- Shame occurs most often in the context of being caught in something disgraceful or accused of something disgraceful.

- Of the three similar terms: dishonor, disgrace, and shame, shame is the most severe .

- When someone is fully "ashamed" they will manifest it most often by becoming QUITE. For example, in children, when they realize something they are doing or saying is wrong or unaccepted (or simply being accused of being wrong, whether they really are in the right or not) results in bashful and shameful retreat into silence.

- This is designed to be a tactic of the Satanic Policy of Evil that attacks our "hope" and produces a reaction in the ambassador for Christ that is **MOUTH-STOPPING !**

- And the doctrine contained in Romans 15:3 (just as was the package of doctrine contained in Romans 5:5-10) is **not** designed to merely assuage inner doubts, but to be the antidote or remedy for a real and present danger of the venomous attacks of the Adversary!

- And just as you learned back in Rom. 5 that "*the love of God*" being "*shed abroad in your heart*" is the godly remedy to any shame-produced opposition of the adversary—the same is true here in Rom. 15—(especially :3)!

- (And note that the doctrine that is supposed to be the remedy or antidote to counter the attack on your "*hope*" is NOT the "Doctrine of the Theology of the Love of God" - even though "*the love of God*" is the big issue. Because, the "*love of God*" is not explained in that Rom. 5 passage (or in Rom. 15:3) - and that is because what is to be understood about "*the love of God*" has already been encountered and so well understood that it goes without saying.

- So it's not the full-blown doctrine of "*the love of God*" that is the remedy/antidote, **but what that "*love of God*" does in our hearts!**)

- (see “The Power of Shame” - Rom. 5, pg. 51-54)

- By this point in your sonship edification & education—so strong and so powerful is your own godly Love & Charity—(i.e., your strong & powerful godly **love** for the **Edification Process** and for the **Sonship Status**) ...

... that the godly **Labor** is going to consist of you (as a “*strong*” son in the faith), working together with God in making wise and **equitable** sonship decisions that will create, generate, and provide for the local assembly in which you gather together with other “sons” (and with “*weak*” sons in the faith) **to have a proper and godly environment for godly edification to take place.**

- Specifically, to provide for a **peaceful** and **comfortable** environment for any “son” to grow up from being a *simple* adopted son, into a *man of understanding*.

- This will require an environment where you, (the *strong*) **and** the *weaker brother* are at all times AT PEACE with one another (Rom. 14:16-19).

- However—this does NOT mean that we (as *strong* ones in the faith) consent to, or comply with, or agree with any doctrinal error—but rather, in godly and persistent patience—and with godly love & charity, *bearing the infirmities of the weak*, and allow for the same Edification Process to effectually work within the *weaker* brother as it did with you!

- This means that the “environment” you are going to produce and provide for in the local assembly is going to major upon the truth and sound doctrine of God’s word being taught—that is, God’s word being properly handled and rightly divided—where “*the mystery of Christ*” as revealed to the apostle Paul (in Paul’s epistles) are our ‘marching orders’ for us today in this disp. of grace in which we live.

- In other words—we are NOT to do as the wisdom of men/world do (and our public schools do) - which is to **pretend** that a *weak* one in the faith is really as strong as the *strong* ones in the faith! [making a mockery out of God’s truth!]

- (the very terminology *weak* & *strong* goes against the grain of public schools and modern culture!)

[REVIEW—ROM. 15:1-4 so far]

- So—in view of Laboring together with our Father in the Operation of His business that has to do with the Edification Process (a rare and grand privilege of His grace):

- we (the *strong* in Pauline doctrine) are to be *bearing the infirmities of the weak* (i.e., by means of the power of godly L&C, we will be longsuffering with the *W/B* while he is in the state of not yet being fully “firm” or “stablished” in sound Pauline doctrine) ...

- and we will not be *pleasing ourselves* by freely and fully utilizing all of our sonship liberty at the expense of (and to the ruin of) the *W/B* ...

- rather, we will labor in godly L&C to *please our neighbour for his good to edification* in view of how much we understand, appreciate, and LOVE the Edification Process and the Sonship Status ...

- and just as Christ Himself is an example of One *not pleasing himself*, but rather *pleasing OTHERS for their good to edification* as seen in His cross-work as per Psalm 69:9—as was **His** ‘labor of love’ (as was **His** Self-Sacrifice and Self-Abasement in order for godly edification to take place) ...
so, too will our ‘labor of love’ for edification be ...

- and now in (:4) - to amplify upon all that—when it comes to understanding and appreciating that godly Loving & Cherishing the Edification Process and the Sonship Status (and being **longsuffering** in order to get that edification accomplished) is NOT unique to our disp./grace—but rather, it is put on display in *whatsoever things were written aforetime* (OT, and especially in the Gospel accounts)—and we are to ever *learn* from *those things* about the *longsuffering* and *pleasing* of OTHERS **TO EDIFICATION** ...

- the final clause of (:4) says, ***that we through patience*** (enduring suffering and distress with composure and without discontentment or complaint—and the persistent refusing to give up on the *W/B* and/or the Edification Process) ...

... we now have the ‘faithful, ever-present companion’ to *patience* with the *W/B* and the Edification Process ...

- *comfort of the scriptures*

- “*comfort*” = L. *cum* (*con*) = together with + L. *fortis* = strong; hence, to strengthen, to fortify.

- Hence, definition-wise, - *Comfort* = to strengthen

= (the noun form) has 6-10 different meanings—such as (OED) strengthening; encouragement, aid ... even physical support / refreshment.

- but the meaning of *comfort* in a context such as Rom. 15:4 where there is no actual physical suffering or physical pain in view—but rather where there is the potential for mental distress or mental affliction (due to these ‘doctrinal estate differences’ between the WB and the SB) the meaning of *comfort* that matches up with the context at hand, is really the idea of **RELIEF**.

= (WEBSTER) Relief from distress of mind; the ease and quiet which is experienced when pain, trouble, agitation or affliction ceases. It implies also some degree of positive animation of the spirits; or some pleasureable sensations derived from **hope**, and agreeable prospects.

- Crabb also gathers as synonyms to *comfort* the words *to cheer* and *to encourage*—as well as *comfort* and *pleasure*.

SMITH’S

Comfort relates to relief brought from previous trouble of mind through the aid of admonition or reflexion.

- (to paraphrase Smith) - *comfort* has both a negative aspect and a positive aspect—the actual substitution of thoughts. *Comfort* has the action of removing the painful and troublesome thoughts (the negative) AND the replacing of those thoughts with happy, pleasing, and hopeful thoughts (the positive), [thereby fortifying the **human spirit**].

- *Comfort* also implies that the mind is in a state of pain and distress in which it does not have the power to adequately remedy—and therefore the remedy must come from an outside source (i.e., in this case, God’s word: *comfort of the scriptures* !)

- The issue in Rom. 15:4 being the production of, the maintenance of, and the strengthening of HOPE!

- SMITH (again) - “*Comfort* has acquired a twofold meaning: 1, a state of quiet enjoyment flowing from a sense of **complete supply** of every want; and 2, relative ease afforded under mental trouble, in which sense it is nearly the same as *consolation*; but *consolation* is more active.”

- Now at this point we need to stop for a moment and see if we can perceive something that is NOT outright said—but that is implied by what IS said ...

... and what we’re after here is some insight & perception into what the kind or nature of the Labor is going to be with the WB situation (and his successful edification) ...

... by just what it says: *that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures ... might have hope.*

... What does that phrase, “*comfort of the scriptures*” imply (as an aspect of godly Labor)?

... What does it mean is going to take place with the WB?

... What does it mean is going to take place with you, the SB?

... in other words, just how is the *comfort* or the **relief** going to take place?

... how will the *comfort* / **relief** from the distress of mind of the WB take place with *the scriptures*? ... do you just toss him a Bible and say, “Read it!” ????

- What I’m after is that by exactly what God has the apostle Paul say; and the way He says it—it **implies that you are going to ENGAGE the WB—you’re going to interact with him—you’re going to TALK with him about “the scriptures” — you’re going to have to use your MOUTH; and speak WORDS!**

- (that’s why the issue of “*one mouth*” is going to be brought up in [:6], in the Sonship Checkpoint!)

- Notice again what George Crabb says:

“We *console* others with words; we *console* or *solace* ourselves with reflections; **we *comfort* by words or deeds.**”

- (and we’ve talked somewhat [and focused somewhat] upon the ‘deeds’ part of the Labor involving you generating & producing an environment in the local assembly that is one of PEACE and now COMFORT for any “son” to grow spiritually and to be edified into that *man of understanding*)

- but now we are going to have to focus our attention upon WHAT WE SAY to the WB—and what we SAY is intended to be *comforting* to the WB’s mind because we’re saying something to him (and pointing him to) ***the scriptures themselves!* (THE WORD OF GOD)**

- Have you ever noticed HOW MUCH God’s word has to say about what YOU say? ... about “the tongue”?

- And there’s a great deal that God’s word has to say on the subject:

- Comfort & the use of the tongue
- The use of words and answers
- Wise lips
- Learned and unlearned questions
- Speaking “in season”

- (what does *the strange woman* use? WORDS!)

- Isa. 50:4-9 - (:4) - “*me*” = the Son (the Lord Jesus Christ) - the “*Lord God*” is His instructor;

- “*the tongue of the learned*” = an intelligent tongue.

- Pro. (a ‘study guide’ for godly Equity)

- 10:11-14, 17-21, 31-32

- 11:9, 11-13 (not to repeat information concerning others; not a *talebearer*; “don’t air another person’s dirty laundry”)

- 12:6, 13 (instruction of godly wisdom; don’t provoke the situation, but rather, defuse it.)

- 12: 18-25 (use the tongue not to hurt, but to heal)

- 15:1-7 (*disperse knowledge* [:7] = benevolent goodness—looking for opportunities to do good)

- 15:13-17 (examples of using knowledge right), - (:23)

- 16:1, 20-24

- 25:11-12

Eph. 4:11-16 (:16 *fitly joined together and compacted*—a joint effort!)

Eph. 4:29 (use of the mouth for what the w/b is ready to hear & bear)

4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures **might have hope**.

- “**might**” - this is NOT *might* in the sense of, ‘Maybe it will, maybe it won’t’ — this is the *might* of intent and purpose—in other words, ‘I did this first so that this other thing *might* happen’.

- “**have**” in the sense of ‘continuing on’ - (*that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might* [continue on having] *hope*).

- “**hope**” = complete and ABSOLUTE confidence—often thought of as only some kind of ‘wishful thinking’ - to look forward to something that may or may not happen—but the Greek concept of [elpis] is **confident expectation** and **absolute assurance** related to something that will take place in the future.

- Expansion of our ‘Hope Doctrine’

- In context: the hope of our successful Sonship Edification (both ours, individually, and as a BODY!)

- This is “hope” in the success of the NT benefits and provisions for sonship edification that conforms us to the image of Christ!

- There is a “hope” we all share as a BODY!

- “Hope” of making an impact where it is supposed to be made—upon the creature / angels. [fellowship/communion] [producing a ‘culture of Christ’ in the creature]

- And it’s not outside of the context at all to say it is the *hope* of what will be called later on, the hope of *the reward of the inheritance* ... [judgment seat of Christ (Rom. 14:10)]

... and by extension, the “hope” of *his inheritance in the saints* (Eph. 1:18)

- POST-DOCTRINAL EXHORTATION—(PART “A”)
- (Proverbs 6:6-11)

EXHORTATION / EXHORTATIONS

- Designed to countermand the effects of the Policy of Evil’s attempt to neutralize or stop the progress of Sonship Edification.

- 1 Tim. 4:13—*Till I come, give attendance to **reading**, to **exhortation**, to **doctrine**.*

- “doctrine” (brick)
- “exhortation” (mortar)

- Review: Pre-Doctrinal Exhortation

- Part A—Proverbs 5:15-23
(see Chart #49)

- Part B—Proverbs 6:1-5
(see Chart #50)

- “cast of characters”:
- 1) The **surety**
 - 2) The **friend**
 - 3) The **stranger**

- 1) The **surety** = the **son** (who has taken on the debt of another [his **friend**]—**he** is now liable for another’s debt)

- 2) The son’s **friend** = the primary debtor/liable person.

- 3) The **stranger** = the **creditor** to which the son’s **friend** owes a debt to (money or otherwise).

... the whole underlying principle behind a son putting himself in the position of being a **surety for his friend** and **striking his hand with a stranger** (the creditor) - is that when you put yourself in the position of a **surety** ...

YOU ARE PUTTING YOURSELF UNDER THE POWER OF ANOTHER!

(you are putting yourself IN the POWER and UNDER the POWER of another) ...

... You’re putting yourself under the **power** of someone OTHER than your FATHER ... and HIS plan ... and HIS purpose ... and HIS will!!!

- 1 Corinthians 6:6-12 (:12)

- 1 Corinthians 10:23

- 2 Corinthians 1:19-24 (:24) - *dominion* (both in Greek and in English) = **to be lord of**—as a king has a *dominion*—
- *dominion* = the **power** or right of governing & controlling; sovereign authority; lordship; rule; sway; control; influence.

- At this point in your sonship education, the Father's expectation is that you are supposed to "see" (from His perspective; and with "the eyes of your understanding") that **your successful godly sonship education (to this point) has been successful by being under the power of your Father (the word of God your Heavenly Father; and the leading of the Spirit through it) — and NOT by being under the power of any one else!**

- **And when it comes to dealing with the weaker brother in godly equity—you will never, ever attempt to put him under YOUR power!**
... because if you do, you will DESTROY his godly sonship edification!!!

(end review)

- Post-Doctrinal Exhortation—Part "A" - Pro. 6:6-11

- (:6) - "**ant**" - focus is upon a particular attitude that is the direct opposite of the *sluggard*.

- Go back and learn from Rom. 12:11—*Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;*
— learn what God's definition is of *slothful* and the opposite of *slothful* = DILIGENCE (and its 3 components [gravity/ambition/pleasure])

- The *ant* has that kind of DILIGENCE.

- But the particular focus is upon the attitudes & virtues specifically dealt with in (:7 & :8) ... but before we look at that—let's make sure we know what a *sluggard* is, and what aspects of it are in view ... and what aspects are NOT in view.

- A “slug” is a slow-moving, slimy, gasteropod or ‘land-snail’ without a shell.

- And a “sluggard” is usually and most commonly thought of as a description of a person—most commonly, a slow, lazy, or idle person who is disinclined to any kind of work or exertion.

- And without a proper understanding of what these exhortations in Proverbs are all about—(that is, without having a proper understanding and appreciation of the CONTEXT of Proverbs as a whole [which is the issue of Sonship Education & Edification]), then all a person is left with is to just make some shallow comparisons between the “ant” and the “sluggard” where the ant is industrious to provide her food—even to the point of looking ahead to winter, and puts up enough for her to survive the rough winter months.

Whereby the “sluggard” is lazy and idle, and fails to provide for his winter month’s food ...

... the ant eats and is comfortable; the sluggard starves and is suffering; the ant is wise; the sluggard is foolish.

- All of which is true—but that only gets to about 30% of what’s going on here! ... in fact, you can get that from Aesop’s Fables or a “Silly Symphony” cartoon!

- The keys to understanding what’s going on here is to:

1) Understand the “sluggard” properly (in the context of sonship edification/education);

2) Where the “ant” is concerned—the ‘key’ is not so much what (:8) says, but what (:7) says!

1) The “sluggard” properly understood:

- In the context of Sonship Education/Edification, my understanding is that the “sluggard” of Proverbs 6:6 isn’t simply looking upon a person who is inactive, lazy, indolent, slothful, or idle, **per se** (i.e., those may be characteristics or features of a “sluggard” - they may be definitions of a “sluggard” ... but the issue is, rather, that there is something more important being focused upon here—something that actually **describes** the reason **why** a “sluggard” has these featured characteristics.)

- WHY is the “ant” so wise and the “sluggard” so foolish?

- My understanding is that the “sluggard” issue here in Prov. 6:6 (in the context of sonship education) is different from *inactive, lazy, slothful, idle, & so forth*—in that the real focus of attention is upon the fact that the person is not **‘gripped’** by the proper measure of excitement, zeal, and enthusiasm for doing something that **ought** (Rom. 15:1) to be done.

- The “sluggard” is mentally wrapped up in the **present**—in his present **pleasure** (pleasing himself) ... and as such, he is NOT impelled to action by any **future consequences!**

(judgment seat of Christ)

- Again—by virtue of still having ‘sin in our members’ - by nature, we all have an inherent danger at this particular point in our sonship education, of *pleasing ourselves* rather than *pleasing our neighbour to his good for edification* ...

... that is, it’s a danger IF the measure of our Father’s “heart” that Romans doctrine provides for has not properly become our “heart” by the effectual working of His word in our inner man!

- And this is a great and most opportune point for the attack from the Satanic Policy of Evil to neutralize or stop the progress of our Sonship Edification (especially BODY edification)!

- (again :6)

- (:7) - this is the 2nd critical ‘key’ to understand what’s going on here!

- This is Sonship terminology—this is the most important verse of this whole exhortation!

- “*no guide, overseer, or ruler*” = that’s sonship; no ‘tutor or governor’ - not under the “power” of another person/son ...

... this is a “son” who has been properly taught/educated by his Father

... a “son” who has the “spirit” of his Father—and who can act and function all on his own without his Father being there to watch over him—and to function EXACTLY as the Father Himself would!

... this is a “son” who is properly ‘gripped’ by the proper measure of zeal, excitement, and enthusiasm for doing what OUGHT to be done — impelled to action by future consequences—**not** pleasing himself!

- (:8)
- (:9) - “sleep” being likened to the issue of not going on to do the work that OUGHT to be done!
- (:10) - notice the progressive development of the verse:
 - *Yet a little sleep* = naps
 - *a little slumber* = sound sleep (maybe in a chair—Barney)
 - *a little folding of the hands to sleep* = going to bed, lying down, and stretching out for a FULL sleep! — this folding of the hands across the chest is the posture and gesture of a “sluggard”!
 - Study out how improper, ungodly sleeping is dealt with in God’s word—(Mat. 26:40, 43; Mar. 14:40)
 - “sleep” used as the quintessential picture of a person who is pleasing himself!
 - interesting, even in the military “sleep” can be an offence punishable by DEATH! (sleeping on guard duty)
- (:11) - notice the terminology that’s used is intentionally that of the danger of being ATTACKED (the adversary & his PoE).
 - *“So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth”* = just as sure as a traveler will eventually come to his destination, the “sluggard’s” *poverty* will just as surely eventually come to him! (no sonship wealth; no reward at the judgment seat of Christ; no being a joint-heir with Christ)
 - *“and thy want as an armed man”* = (“want” = being without; lacking something; deficient) - “armed man” = an armed robber!
 - ... your “want” will come to you with irresistible fury, and you are found not able to oppose it!
 - “poverty” and “want” = found poor & wanting— that’s no way to appear before the judgment seat of Christ! (or in your Father’s sight!)
- This should make a deep impact / suitably impressed with the real and destructive force of being your own worst enemy (*sluggard*)!

- ROMANS 15:5-7—SONSHIP CHECKPOINT!

- Sonship Checkpoints are just a natural part of sonship education. They are provided by the Father (who wrote the curriculum and composed the curriculum) for Him to have a way to examine and inspect **the measure of the son's intelligence**.

- they act as a test or an inspection that the Father gives to the son, in order for both the Father and the son to have absolute assurance that the quality and accuracy and the genuineness of the effectual working of what the Father has taught the son (especially from the last checkpoint up to this checkpoint) has done its job.

- is the son 'faking it'?; are there any 'holes'?; has the son 'short-cut' anything?; etc.

- simply put—the Sonship Checkpoints allow the Father to make sure (to both Himself and the son) that the sons' godly edification is **SOUND! (the doctrine is sound-doctrine)** — therefore it is, (in essence) a **major volitional testing point** in the sons' education.

- And it's an exciting time—because a major form of doctrine has just been accomplished in the son—and standing before the son is the prospect of advancing on to more advanced doctrine and godly edification—(but even more importantly), the opportunity to take ALL that HAS BEEN learned, and by the upcoming doctrine that will **build** upon all that has been learned, to have the ability / capacity to enter in to even more Operations of the Father's business.

- And while we can say that we truly now have Phase 1 and Phase 2 of Level I of our Sonship Education & Edification complete—and the only thing standing in our way (so to speak) to becoming “The Young Man” in Level II of our Sonship Edification are the final things that God is going to have the apostle Paul say to us in Romans 15:8-16:27.

- in other words—the zeal, excitement, and enthusiasm level should be at an 'all time high' (so to speak) because the 4 Sonship Decision-Making Skills that Phase 2 of Level I calls for have now been properly learned, and are doing their proper job within us—and the completion of Romans doctrine is now coming to a close at this point—(even though there are still 53 verses to go)!

- REVIEW:

- #55—Successful Completion of Level 1; Phase 1&2
Sonship Edification / Education

- #72

- #73

- So while a great deal has been accomplished—and you’re so close to the end of Romans you can almost ‘taste’ it—you still have these 3 verses of Romans 15:7, 6, & 7 standing in your way.

- And really, that’s what a checkpoint does—it stands in your way, and has to be passed before you are allowed to get to the place where you want to be.

- And more often than not—as you stand at a checkpoint—the place you want to be is right in front of you—you can see it; smell it; hear it, etc.—but you can’t get to it until you pass the checkpoint. (And that’s the case right here).

- General Definition of a CHECKPOINT = a stop where someone is inspected for certain qualities and/or authenticity in order to verify their clearance to move on.

- And in essence, that’s what we’ve got in Romans 15:5-7.

- But it’s actually much more than that—because there are several features to this Sonship-type of Checkpoint that are essential to both the Father and to the son that are designed to indicate that the education can get underway honestly—with no pretense on the son’s part, and with full assurance on the Father’s part that His son is responding positively and properly to all he has been told up to this point.

- So here we go: (read Rom. 15:5-7)

- **“Now”** - (continuative conj.) — [look at all of the beginning words of all the verses from 14:1-15:4] - (utilizing those “English Words of Logic”) - this is the 1st time we have *Now* in the 1st position.

- My understanding is that this “*Now*” used in the 1st position (and with no accompanying words like “then”) - *now* is being used here to indicate that something has now been fully accomplished at this time or this present moment—and under the present circumstances of the context (having accomplished our *instruction of equity*), that **in view of these facts**—the following information is going to be set forth as the LIVING AND REAL RESULTS or THE **ACTUAL LIVING PROOF** that the previous information contained primarily in Rom. 14:1-15:4 is doing its effectual job within us! (undeniable, indisputable proof)

- ***IF*** it’s doing its job—it **will** produce the following as the AUTHENTICATION of the effectual working of it!

- (this makes it so the effectual working of 14:1-15:4 **can NOT be FAKED!**)

- *Now the God of patience and consolation ...*

- This expression, “***the God of ...***” — this is the very 1st time in all of our Sonship Education (in fact, in all of Romans itself) that God does this.

- This is the very 1st time God is going to come along give Himself a **NAME**—(an appellative; a descriptive title) to draw attention to a particular characteristic or attribute that we’re to have a particular appreciation for.

... that, as our Father—THIS is what He wants us to perceive about Himself **right now**.

- And as you get to the end of Romans here—there are 3 times that we’re confronted with perceiving our Father in 3 very special ways.

1) ***the God of patience and consolation—15:5***

2) ***the God of hope—15:13*** (w/ another “*Now*”)

3) ***Now the God of peace—15:33***
(repeated again in 16:20)

- This becomes the focus of our “godliness” at this particular point.
- In other words—all the doctrines that has been taught up to this point are designed to **work together** now—and by them working together, they are designed to produce **a cumulative aspect of godliness**—and the cumulative aspect of godliness they produce at this particular point in Romans 15 is ***patience and consolation as we deal with one another***.

- (that’s why this is a fitting end to the *weaker brother* issue).

- Once all of the 1st round of our sonship education whereby we have *received the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity* is gone through—they collectively work together and produce a **characteristic godliness attribute** within us—that our Father Himself possesses; and that we possess also—and in this case, it’s the issue of ***patience and consolation***.

- Our God and Father is a God of “patience and consolation” - and at this particular point in our sonship education—and we being “Like Father, Like son” - **that’s to be said of us, and known of us!**

... that we are “sons” of *patience and consolation* (which is why the issue is “*grant you to likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus.*”)

- And we’re to be **dealing** with one another on **that** basis—we’re to be **KNOWN** to one another as being *patient* and *consoling* to one another.

- “***patience***” (see # 74) ... (see Summary Statement)

- “***consolation***”

- What’s the difference between *comfort* and *consolation*? (see Rom. 15:5 cp. 2 Cor. 1:3—God is called BOTH ‘the God of *comfort*’ and ‘the God of *consolation*’)

SKEAT

- CONSOLE = to comfort, cheer, cherish, solace.
- L. con (cum) commonly meaning *together*—but in an intensified sense, it means *fully* + L. solari = whole, comfort, relief—hence, “fully whole” or “fully comforted”
- The root of the word *consolation* is the word *solace* which comes to the English from both the Greek and Sanskrit—both words meaning “whole”.

OED

- CONSOLATION = the action of consoling, cheering, or comforting; the state of being consoled; alleviation of sorrow or mental distress.
- CONSOLE—to comfort in mental distress or depression; to alleviate the sorrow of a person; to free from the sense of misery.

WEBSTER'S 1828

- CONSOLE = to give rest or quiet—the sense is to strengthen, in which case it coincides with the root of *solid*.
= to comfort; to cheer the mind in distress or depression; to alleviate grief, and give refreshment to the mind (or spirit); to give contentment or moderate happiness **by relieving from distress**.
- CONSOLATION = comfort; alleviation of misery, or distress of mind; refreshment of mind or spirit; a comparative degree of happiness in distress or misfortune, springing from any circumstance that abates the evil, or supports and strengthens the mind, as **hope**, joy, courage and the like.

CRABB'S SYNONYMES

- *Console* and *solace* are derived from the same Latin source, meaning 'the ground which nourishes all things.'
- *Console* and *solace* denote the relieving of pain. We *console* others with **words**. *Console* is used on more important occasions than *solace*. We *console* our friends when they meet with afflictions.
- The greatest consolation which we can enjoy on the death of our friends is derived from the hope that they have exchanged a state of imperfection and sorrow for one that is full of pure and unmixed felicity. The idea being that one is *consoled* or *solaced* during times of the fatigue of labor or weariness with the contemplation of its reward.

SMITH'S SYNONYMS DISCRIMINATED

- *Comfort* and *console* both relate to relief brought from previous trouble of mind through the aid of admonition or reflexion; but *comfort* denotes the actual substitution of happy thoughts; while *console* denotes only the removal or diminution of the unhappy. *Comfort* and *consolation* both address themselves to the intellectual nature.
- (Rambler) - *Consolation* or *comfort* are words which in their proper acceptation signify some alleviation to that pain to which it is not in our power to afford the proper and adequate remedy. They imply rather an augmentation of the power of bearing than a diminution of the burden.

- *Consolation* and *comfort* are nearly the same in that they both give ease of mind under mental distress or trouble—but of the two, *consolation* is more active.

- Basically & simply put:

- *Consolation* = not shaken in mind; to comfort in mental distress.

- So—when you look at both terms together:

- CONSOLATION—basically = to relieve a troubled mind by words or exhortations.

- COMFORT—basically = to strengthen together with something (words or deeds) that brings relief to a troubled mind.

- BOTH TERMS HAVE IN COMMON THE ISSUE OF **HOPE!**

- So—what’s the difference? ... actually, what we have here is really not all that satisfying ... it really only tells us that these 2 words are extremely close in meaning—and in this case, even their ‘shade of meaning’ differences are extremely close ... so how do we nail this down? ... how can we get a ‘shade of meaning difference’ that *does* give us some satisfaction?

- Let’s put on the board some information we’ve covered that should give us some clues ... #87

- well, the ‘satisfaction’ we’re after isn’t so much as what these terms mean definition-wise TO MEN (in any dictionary) ... but rather, what is the discriminating difference between these 2 terms in God’s mind when He uses them in His word? ... what do they mean to GOD?

- In order to cut down on searching out every instance of the words *comfort* and *consolation*—let’s look at a passage where both words are used ... **2 Cor. 1:5-7**

- My understanding is—the shade of meaning difference we’re after as God Himself uses these 2 terms is this:

- COMFORT = the context intends the focus to be upon the **SUPPLY**.

- CONSOLATION = the context, intends the focus to be upon the actual labor and the **ENDURANCE** of it (**with** that **supply**).

- “*supply*” / “*supplied*” / “*supplieth*” - all are Pauline!

- *supply* is very important to a “son” and to godly sonship edification! (vital / ‘life-blood’ / life-giving)

- **Eph. 4:16; Phil. 4:19**

- *supply* is directly connected to **intelligent sonship PRAYER**—(for instance, this is why you have so often, the apostle Paul talking about *supplication* in connection with prayer) - Eph. 6:18; Phil. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:1; 1 Tim. 5:5

- CONSOLE—(*consolation*—see Acts 4:36 “Barnabas”)

- 2 Cor. 1:5-7

- 2 Cor. 7:5-7

- Phil. 2:1

- 1 Thes. 3:5-8

- 2 Thes. 2:13-17

* **NOTE** * - this may very well correspond & connect with the Sonship Commitment Levels back in Proverbs 2!

1) Commitment to Learning the Doctrine/Curriculum (Pro. 2:1-5) - where comes the *comfort* ??

2) Commitment to the Effectual Working of the Doctrine/ Curriculum (what you Learn) - where comes the *consolation*? (Pro. 2:6-20)

- So as we stand now at this Sonship Checkpoint—having had the 1st Level of our sonship curriculum (Romans doctrine) accomplish all that it has called for up to this point—and having accomplished our *instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity*—a great deal of our being *conformed to the image of God’s Son* has taken place whereby we are well on our way to becoming *godly* (like Father, like “son”) ...

... and in view of all that’s been accomplished edification-wise, our Father now gives Himself a **title** (and confronts us with it) - and the expectation is that we’re supposed to perceive some things about it, and to view it as a CHECKPOINT—that is, if we really are “Like Father, like son” - then this title of our Father’s own attributes and characteristics is to become our attributes as well! (not just the title)

- Our Father is *the God of patience and consolation*—and we are to be ‘sons of patience and consolation’! — and just as *patience and consolation* are hallmark attributes of our Father; godly *patience and consolation* are to be hallmark attributes of us as “sons” ...

... and again, we’re to be dealing with one another on **that** basis—and we’re to be **known** as being ones who are *patient and consoling* to one another.

- And as you get to the point where you begin the process of exiting the book of Romans (which takes place from 15:8-16:27) - [kind of like in the military: ‘processing out’ - there’s a ‘process’ of exiting out of it] ...

... or to use another illustration—it’s like being in a course of study in college or university where you get to the end of a Unit, you have a ‘Unit Test’ (or ‘Unit Summarization’) where everything that you’ve been learning in the Unit is brought to a ‘head’ - and the Unit Test **tests** you for being able to **APPLY** everything that you’ve learned—or the Unit Summarization comes along and gives you the kind of comprehension and the kind of **function your mind should have** *with* all that information you’ve learned now at this particular point in the curriculum.

- and that’s very similar to what’s going on here ...

- As Phase 2 of Level I comes to a conclusion—God is going to have the apostle Paul deal with us now about the individual “forms” of doctrine that we have dealt with up to this point—not only having achieved their **individual** effectual-working, but now they’re designed to have a **collective** effectual-working.

- And the **collective** effectual-working has its greatest manifestation in these attributes of godliness that our Father ascribes to Himself as a ‘godly attribute title’ - and to which we are to be able to point our finger at and say, “Like Father, like son”!

- So the first real CHECK of the CHECKPOINT is for you to have your Father set before you a ‘godly attribute title’ that is particular to the **collective** effectual-working of the curriculum for Phase 2 of Level I Sonship Edification ... and with full assurance and full persuasion of mind, you can honestly say of yourself that you are now a “son” / “daughter” of *patience and consolation*. (Can you do that?)

- Well, if that can be a ‘check’ in the ‘checkpoint’ that can be honestly passed—then we’re ready for the checkpoint to check us out on what we’re expected to understand and appreciate about our being “sons” of *patience and consolation*—and what we’re supposed to do with these godly-acquired, godly attributes of our Father (in :6).

- (read :5-6) - notice that in 3 verses [:5, :6, and :7], you have 2 complete sentences—(:5-6 is 1 sentence; and :7 is 1 sentence) ...

... note the 1st sentence of (:5-6) has 2 major Clauses to it — (divided by that colon :) ... and since this isn’t dealing with presenting a ‘list’ of anything—that tells you that the colon at the end of (:5) expects you to ‘pause’ long enough to make sure of the effectual working of the 1st Clause before moving on to the 2nd Clause of (:6).

5 Now (in view of what the curriculum for sonship edification has accomplished so far) *the God of patience and consolation ... grant you to be likeminded one toward another ...*

- “*likeminded*” here is the issue of being *patient and consoling* just like your Father—in other words, just as your Father’s mind is *patient and consoling* toward others **in the context of the godly edification process—YOU ARE TO BE OF THAT EXACT SAME MIND!**

- (the issue of *likeminded* is NOT just left up to you or anyone else to just interpret it any old way you like—in other words, this is NOT talking about being ‘likeminded’ about sports teams; or music; or décor; or fashion; or cars or anything along those lines) - no—rather, God’s ‘mind’ is one of *patience and consolation* and you’re to have a mind exactly like that! [of **godly sonship patience and consolation**]

- These particular godly attributes of *patience and consolation* have a TREMENDOUS amount of SOUND DOCTRINE that stands behind them! — these 2 words pertain directly to those 4 sonship decision-making skills; to the acquired godly love & charity and the godly hatred, abhorrence, & disdain (the Divine Guidance System / *the spirit which is of God*); and to the Edification Process and the godly fellowship & communion of **BODY THINKING!**

- *likeminded* tells you that a Living-Union-Relationship is not only a reality in the body/assembly, but that it’s getting STRONGER!

- but notice: **“grant”** = (generally) to agree, consent, or to do something—to allow, permit, bestow, or confer something on someone.

- (legally) = in land titles: to issue, to bestow or confer a possession or right by a formal act—to **transfer** (property) **from oneself to another person.**

- SMITH’S

To *grant*, *confer*, and to *bestow* are characteristic modes of giving. To grant is always from one person to one or more others, in accordance with an **expectation**, **prayer**, or **request**.

... all in accordance with ‘godliness’ - with becoming ‘God-like’

5 *Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another ... (BUT NOT IN JUST ANY OLD WAY—rather, in a very specific & particular way) ... according to Christ Jesus:*

- *“Christ Jesus”* or *“Jesus Christ”* - no ‘hard-fast’ rule.

- With *Christ* in 1st position = emphasis upon His ‘Christ-ness’ - (having to do with the Davidic Cov. / Redeemer and His redemption—and the “mystery” aspect of His redemption for us in this present dispen. of grace in which we live.)

- **“according”** = agreeing, corresponding to; **MATCHING**—it’s having the same nature and agreeing in the same action of what is proper, appropriate, and fitting.

- **“to be likeminded one toward another according to** (that is, in a manner answering to, agreeing with, and consistent with) **Christ Jesus”**

“Christ Jesus” = the very **‘image’** that we are being *conformed to* by way of the curriculum for our sonship education & edification. — again, it is a ‘measure’ of your sonship intelligence at this particular checkpoint ...

... **it’s the measure of your ‘likeminded patience and consolation’ with your Father!**

- *'likeminded patience and consolation one toward another according to Christ Jesus'* is context sensitive—and can be easily lifted out of its context (or the context ignored), and can end up meaning anything and everything a person wants it to say according to their own preferences & personal opinion ... which means that the verse ends up meaning NOTHING!

- *'likeminded patience and consolation one toward another according to Christ Jesus'* is RESTRICTED by its CONTEXT to the issue of what the curriculum for Sonship Edification has accomplished in you as a “son” from Rom. 12:3-15:4—to the issue of how THAT information has *conformed you to the image of Christ*—and how YOU as a ‘faithful copy’ of the Father’s Son are now going to be occupied with and functioning in THE GODLY EDIFICATION PROCESS OF THE BODY OF CHRIST!

- At this checkpoint—the Father can take **everything** that the son has learned up to now (4 ss dec-mak skills / godly l&c / godly hatred / etc.) and in this particular context of dealing with the w/b situation in particular, and with any other member of the body in general—and where the Godly Edification Process is concerned, the Father can take all that the son has learned from Him and simply state it to the son as: *'likeminded patience and consolation according to Christ Jesus'*.

- So the first “check” or the first box to check off at this Sonship Checkpoint is really contained in this first clause of all of (:5) —

Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

- You and your Heavenly Father are to engage in some serious/honest communion & fellowship of intelligent sonship prayer—and you are (together) expected to measure and evaluate your intelligent understanding & appreciation for coming to this point in your sonship education & edification whereby the ‘forms’ of doctrine you have dealt with up to this point have achieved their **individual** effectual working—AND that they have achieved their **collective** effectual working ... as that ‘Unit Test’ - for the entire ‘Unit’ of Level I Sonship Edification (Rom. 8:14-15:4) ...

... and you need to be able to evaluate and “see” with the “eyes of your understanding” that emerging out of that entire & overall ‘Unit’ are these **attributes of godliness** that your Father ascribes to Himself as a ‘Godly Attribute Title’ - “*The God of patience and consolation*”

- Then, that phrase in (:5) that says, “*grant you to be likeminded one toward another*” (there’s the BODY thinking/living/labor issue) ...

... and as the saying goes, “Like Father, like son” - you should be able to honestly evaluate the measure of your own being *conformed to the image of Christ*, that those same **attributes of godliness** are just as true of you as they are of your Father—you are a “son” *of patience and consolation* just like your Father, and in the **exact same context** as it is said about your Father (the context dealing with the Edification Process) ...

... then that very important last phrase of (:5) which says, “*according to Christ Jesus*” ...

... and that not only means that the godly attributes of *patience and consolation* are “*likeminded*” with both you and the Father—but with the added emphasis upon it being *according to* (or matching perfectly with) *Christ Jesus* — and because of the nature of this sonship checkpoint being that of a kind of ‘Unit Test’ for the **collective** effectual working of all the ‘forms’ of doctrine that’s been dealt with so far—my understanding is that this issue of the *likeminded patience and consolation one toward another* (as a BODY) *according to* (or matching) *Christ Jesus* is really a matter of you and I having what the apostle Paul will later on call “*the mind of Christ*” (1 Cor. 2:16) ...

... and what I mean by that is that the phrase *according to Christ Jesus* really is a matter of “*the wisdom of God in a **mystery**, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: (1 Cor. 2:7)*” ...

... “*according to Christ Jesus*” in this context is NOT talking about matching up with the “mind” or the “mind-**ing**” of what the Lord Jesus Christ was “minding” (or thinking); or living out; or working out in God’s program with Israel back in the gospel accounts, or in the books of Hebrews through the book of the Revelation!

- “according to Christ Jesus” means that our “likeminded patience and consolation one toward another” that both our our Father possess and we possess—is according to (or matching up with) the MYSTERY of Christ in this present dispensation of grace in which we live!

- “according to Christ Jesus” is having the MIND of Christ Jesus and mind-**ing** what He is currently minding right now — which is NOT anything to do with Israel and God’s program with Israel—but rather God’s secret purpose that He has now made known ...

... that through the crucifixion of **Christ** (the **Redeemer** and His **redemption**) a “*mystery*” aspect of His crucifixion and **redemption** would be revealed to Paul whereby God had secretly planned to provide Himself with the means to bring in this present dispensation of His grace in which He is now forming a NEW CREATURE—and that the thing He and His Son (and “sons”) are now “minding” are the things that concern the *creature* (which is the heavenly places), and NOT Israel and the Earthly places! (and you got that information back in Romans 8:18-25)!

... and that this *new creature* (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15) that we are a part of, (called the church, the body of Christ), is to be utilized by God for the reconciling of the heavenly places unto Himself—and result in the **complete destruction of the entire Satanic plan of evil**—(the masterstroke of God’s wisdom and genius)!

- AND THAT IS WHAT THE EDIFICATION PROCESS IS ULTIMATLY FOR!

- that’s why God so loves it, and cherishes it, and values it, and esteems it, and jealously guards and protects it, and desires it to take place in all of His adopted “sons” and “daughters”!

- (not to mention that we have a joint-inheritance with Christ that’s connected with our sonship edification; and God Himself has an inheritance in US in connection with godly sonship **edification!**)

- Any Questions / Comments on (:5)?

- (:6) *That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

- “That” = (purpose clause) - this 2nd & last clause of the sentence sets forth the **purpose** for the 1st clause of (:5) ...

... that is, the aim, goal, and objective of having acquired the same *likeminded* attributes of godliness as the Father sets forth in His title: *patience and consolation* ...

- the attribute of godly *patience* (in this context) is that (just like our Father) we will be longsuffering with the w/b—**persistently patient** and refusing to give up on him as he undergoes the Edif. Process, knowing the difficulty and the time that it takes for all of the adjustments that must occur in his heart as the *renewing of the mind* takes place—and we, (just like our Father) will do so with calmness and peace, and without distress or complaint.

- the attribute of godly *consolation* (in this context) is that (just like our Father) we will **speak** to others in order to bring relief to their troubled mind as they endure the process of godly edification; we will exhort and encourage others with the truth of God’s word as they labor with curriculum for their sonship edification over the ‘long haul’ of the edification process—we will ever direct others to the “supply” of the Pauline curriculum for the peaceful, joyful success of their functional sonship life unto the glory of God, knowing that there are very real consequences for failure to follow Paul and the very order of his epistles; we will be sensitive to the attacks upon their faith, and we will ever be “helpers of their joy” of godly edification by our communion and fellowship — and the only godly remedy for their troubled mind: HOPE (the package of godly hope doctrine found in our curriculum).

- And now here in (:6) - the aim, goal, and objective of having acquired the *likeminded* attributes of godliness as our Father Himself has—of *patience and consolation* can now be confronted and tested/evaluated by the Father as a matter of this Sonship Checkpoint.

- 6 That ye (2pp. Nom. = all of you [in context] - hence, all of you who are actively engaged in the Edif. Process—both the *strong* ones in the faith [especially], and the w/b, as well as any ‘near-body’ [*neighbor*] - therefore all those in a local assembly where godly edification is going on ...

... but because of the particular context here—and because (:6) is **not** a separate thought all on its own, but rather it is a clause that is attached to the thought of (:5) - the real emphasis here is directly and squarely upon the shoulders of those who are *strong* ones in the faith—those “sons” who have the effectual working of godly *wisdom, justice, judgment and equity* [12:3-15:4].

- 6 That ye may — (a form of “*might*”) - and just like how God often uses the term *might*, here the word *may* is NOT being used in the sense of ‘Maybe you will, or maybe you won’t’ do such & such a thing—but rather **this is a *may* of intent and purpose** ...

... in other words, ‘This **first thing** has been successfully accomplished [in :5] so that this **other thing** may now happen’ [:6]!

- *may* means that something that was not possible before, is now possible—it means that in light of what has now been accomplished, you now have the ability, the power, and the capacity to accomplish this **other thing**.

- It means that you have come to a point in the curriculum for your sonship Edif. where the effectual working of God’s word has brought about such a *conformity to the image of God’s Son* that you can now honestly take upon yourself the attributes of godliness that your Father ascribes to Himself ...

5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

... and WITH those grace-given godly attributes of *patience and consolation according to Christ Jesus*, you now **MAY** (you now have the ability & capacity to produce the **intended purpose** of it all) ... which is ... **with one mind and one mouth glorify God**, ...

- This, then, gets down to the CORE ISSUE of what this Sonship Checkpoint is all about — **with ONE MIND and ONE MOUTH glorify God, ...**

- What's really going on here? What's really being "checked" on?

- This is a **very critical and important moment in your edification as a "son"!**

- My understanding is that the Father is looking for and searching for something of extreme importance in His son at this checkpoint ...

... and it's not directly stated or mentioned—but by **what** is said, it IS **implied** ...

... just by the terminology the Father uses at this checkpoint, what is it that He's actually 'checking' on?

... terminology like *likeminded, one mind, one mouth*

- These last 2 matters of the checkpoint: *one mind and one mouth* are in general the matters of the son's HEART!

- And since you have the issue of *likeminded* in (:5) and then the issue of *one mind* in (:6) - what you have here is a **"spirit CHECK"!**

- And just as the Lord said in His earthly ministry, "*for out of the abundance of the hearth the mouth speaketh*" - the "*mouth*" will follow what is abundantly in the *heart* (of which the *mind* is the fundamental part)!

- **This is YOUR "spirit CHECK"** - it's designed to be an honest evaluation of the measure of the son's "**spirit**" in order to see that it matches up perfectly with the "spirit" of the Father—and it's a right & proper & fitting point in which to measure the "spirit" of the son!

- *Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. (1 Cor. 2:12)*

- As one of the hallmarks of our adoption as **adult** sons—we have had the ‘tutors & governors’ dismissed; the Father has taken on the roll of our personal teacher; and we have been given tremendous LIBERTY (sonship liberty)!

- But we know that our sonship liberty can be either wisely used; or foolishly abused—and the results of its abuse can be devastating!

- So we are going to have to make proper and appropriate sonship decisions about our liberty—and in order to do that, it requires that we have a particular “**spirit**” ...

... we must have the exact same “spirit” operating within us as the “spirit” that operates within our Father’s heart.

- And our Father has so written and composed our curriculum for sonship education & edification to accomplish that very thing by its effectual working within our ‘inner man’.

- That’s why we were “given” our Father’s “Spirit” when we got justified unto eternal life—and that’s why, when we are first confronted with the issue of our sonship status in Romans 8:14-15 that we were told (and watch those “s”s)

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.

- When we’re first confronted with the issue of our being the adopted “sons” of God—God uses very precise and very deliberate terminology—(it’s not until Galatians that Paul uses the expression “*adoption of sons*”) ...

... our first exposure to our being the adopted “sons” of God is stated to us as having *received: **the Spirit of adoption***—therefore indicating to us that the “spirit” is going to be of upmost concern—and God’s own “Spirit” is going to be going about imparting to us God’s own “spirit” - or what you might call the “spirit of sonship adoption.”

- The Holy Spirit of God is designed to so function in our own spirit so that we can function independently of our Father (so to speak) and by the “image” that gets produced within us, we can confidently and “safely” (so to speak) speak and conduct ourselves just like our Father would and just like His Son would.

- If you’re ever going to properly function as an “ambassador of Christ” - especially the issue of being God’s “mouthpiece” (of speaking in God’s stead) - you **MUST** have *the spirit which is of God!*

- And the Holy Spirit does NOT accomplish that by just some kind of miracle or magic by putting in your mouth what you should say!

(such as Luke 12:11-12 [note the context: the so-called “unpardonable” sin] - that tells you that this is something that will occur in the year of Forbearance & Mercy)

(see Keith Email—20090203 C49 DG prayer)

- Now my point in all this is that it is by the ‘leading of the Spirit of God’ through the curriculum for our godly education/edification as “sons” - that all of the ‘forms of doctrine’ within that curriculum end up getting written upon the ‘fleshy tables of our heart.’

- And when that’s done (and there’s a lot to that), that’s when the word of God has done its effectual work—and by it’s effectual working in your inner man, (that is, by the word of God in its ‘sense and sequence’ doing it’s job) - [THAT THE **“BY GRACE”** PART] ... and by your positive & proper response to that doctrine [THAT’S THE **“THROUGH FAITH”** PART] - you end up understanding and appreciating the doctrine just the way God wants you to; you believe what God tells you; and then you DO with the doctrine what God has designed for you to do with it ...

... THAT’S when real, genuine spiritual growth takes place!
 - that’s when *“the renewing of your mind”* takes place!
 - that’s when ‘conformity to the image of Christ’ takes place!
 - that’s when you receive *“the spirit which is of God”!*
 - that’s when the heart and mind of God your Heavenly Father becomes the heart and mind of YOU (the “son”)!

- And my point in saying that—is to underscore the fact that all these issues of godly edification greatly affect your spirit, soul, body, and mind — and while each is a separate thing, they are all very closely related.

- So as we stand here at this sonship checkpoint having come to a very clear and identifiable ‘point of attainment’ (so to speak) ...

... that ‘point of attainment’ being that we have now successfully completed the major objective in Phase 2 of Level I of our sonship education/edification—which is the *receiving of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity* ...

... the Father’s expected result of all that is that we should now have come to the point where a very real (not in theory); very genuine (not pretended or imitation); and very godly (thinking like God thinks; living like God lives; and laboring together with God in all that He is doing) — a very real, genuine, godly **ONE-NESS** is taking place within the body of Christ; within the local body, the local assembly in which you gather together for godly edification! (Triangle Bible Church)

- the body of Christ that exists in this local assembly should now be able (and have the capacity) to function as a UNIT!

- our real (“rubber-meets-the-road”) ‘first steps’ of what the apostle Paul will call later on in Eph. 4:3, “*the unity of the Spirit*” - what began as “*the leading of the Spirit*” ends up being “*the unity of the Spirit*” and it should now be emerging!

... (see Eph. 4:1-3, and note what follows in [4ff])

- This is our first major realization of a major aim, goal, & objective of godly edification—it is our first real measure of coming to (we’re not there yet, but we are getting well on our way to getting there) ... to achieving what the apostle Paul will call “*the unity of the faith*” (Eph. 4:13).

- At this sonship checkpoint we are expected to have a major part of our Father’s *heart* now being our “heart” - which is what sonship education/edification is all about! — the ‘forms of Romans doctrine’ have given us His “heart” (not all of it yet, but a large measure of it) - we can *think* the WAY He thinks (not just **what** He thinks); we can *live* the way He lives

... (as we “walk after the Spirit” and “mind the things of the Spirit” we can put a major part of what God has made us to be “in Christ” into practice in the details of our life at this point of attainment) and we can work together with God in His ‘dispensation-of-grace’ - ‘mystery-of-Christ’ business!

- and we can do all this as ADULT SONS—meaning, we can do all this in details; in circumstances; and in situations that are NOT covered in the curriculum (so to speak) - and we can do all this WITHOUT God having to TELL us what to do!

- And where the godly edifying of the BODY is concerned, a UNITY is taking place;
a godly fellowship & communion is taking place;
a *compacting* of the body is taking place ...

... all of which is designed to do a whole bunch of things ...
... but one of those things that all this is designed to do is one of the most amazing, outstanding, astounding, and marvelous things imaginable ... to “GLORIFY GOD” (to bring actual “glory” to God Himself!) ...

... and NOT bringing “glory” to the adversary,
Satan himself! [satan-li-ness]

... to *shew* (to put on display) that it is Jehovah, the Almighty God, God our Heavenly Father who is the “Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth”!!!

- That’s why God has Paul tell us “*That ye may with ONE mind”...*

- this is the very **first** time we are ever told that we, as a **body** have “*one mind*” ...

... Paul will say this to us 3 more times.

- 2 Cor. 13:11

- Phil. 1:27 (note: *one mind* and *one spirit* are NOT the exact same thing!)

- Phil. 2:2 (note: *one mind* and *likeminded* are NOT the exact same thing!)

- we've been told to *be of the same mind* (Rom. 12:16) and to be *likeminded* (Rom. 15:5) - but that is not the exact same thing as having *ONE MIND!*

- In Rom. 15:5 our being *likeminded* had to do with having the same, "like" mind of our Father regarding His "*patience and consolation*" — that is, where godly *patience & consolation* are concerned in **how** and **why** those 2 things pertain to the edification process; we, too, as God's "sons" are to have godly *patience & consolation* as they pertain to the edification process in our *mind* just *LIKE* in our Father's mind!

- But in Rom. 15:6—when we're told that the purpose and objective of (:5) is in order "That" we may have this "*ONE MIND*" that's NOT the same thing as being "*likeminded*" in (:5)!!!

- (plus, it's obvious that *one mind* and *one spirit* do not necessarily mean the same thing!)

- So what does it mean when God has the apostle Paul say in (:6), *That ye may with one mind ... ??*

- First—notice something about the '**tone**' of what's being said here within the **context** of what's being said here —

- Where the context is concerned; we have arrived at a critical 'point of attainment' — and so our Father is going to check us out—He's going to examine our 'credentials' (so to speak) and see if we have the genuine, effectual working of Romans doctrine up to this point—in order to honestly 'process out' of the book of Romans and become Romans ourselves (as the living "epistle of Christ").

- This is an exciting time—for both us as properly educated/edified "sons" and for our Father as well!

- So just by the context alone, there is cause for zeal, excitement and enthusiasm! "Abba, Father!"

- But also notice the word order—my understanding is that by the word order, it indicates to us that a 'crescendo' or an **increase** in intensity or force of address is happening here ... (this is what I mean by the '**tone**' of what's being said here) ...

... notice how this is worded:

That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God ...

not:

That ye may glorify God with one mind and one mouth ...

- (the first being much more forceful and intense than the second) - the 'tone' is forceful & intense!

- And while the issue of having *one mind* is, indeed, a 'spirit-check' like I said—which is true — and then the issue of us having *one mouth* is what you might call a 'soul-check' — ending up with this sonship checkpoint being a 'heart-check' ... we have to be very careful and precise here to NOT make (or think) that *one mind* is the exact same thing as *one spirit* ...

... they are, indeed, very close to being the same ...

... and relating the *mind* to the issue of the human spirit is a valid issue ...

... and saying that the issue of making a connection with the issue of having *one mind* with the issue of having a large degree of what will later on be called *the spirit which is of God* is a valid issue ...

... even the connection between *one mind* and having *the mind of Christ* is a valid issue ...

... my understanding is that this is *not* the CORE issue of what "*one mind*" means here in Rom. 15:6!

- those are all valid things here—but it's not getting down to the **significance** (the sonship checkpoint **significance**) for why our Father exhorts us here that *we may with one mind ... glorify Him!*

- (I know I'm 'splitting hairs' here—but with terms like *likeminded* and *one mind*, hairs need to be split!)

- So what does God mean when he exhorts and examines us regarding our having *one mind* with which to *glorify Him* ??? what does *one mind* mean here? in this context? ...

- Again—my understanding is that because the word *mind* is used here—the issues surrounding a properly educated/edified “son’s” actual mental faculty of the human mind or human spirit (now being one that has been *transformed by its renewing* of Romans 12:3-15:4 doctrine) is certainly in view here ... it matters greatly ... it is significant ...

... that is, the issues of receiving *the spirit which is of God*, and not receiving *the spirit of the world*; having now a large measure of what will be called *the mind of Christ* now in place in your heart—are all significant issues, indeed ...

... the CORE of the issue here is not so much those critical issues of proper and godly sonship edification—but rather the Fatherly exhortation is to now DO something with those matters of *the spirit which is of God!* (decide on a *path* to take)

- The injunction or exhortation is—the Father says, “Son, now that your heart and My heart are matching up with those godly attributes of *patience and consolation* regarding the Edification Process—that’s so that you can now *with one mind and one mouth glorify God!*”

- It’s not calling attention to the *mind* as the human spirit of your ‘inner man’ per se - but rather to its PURPOSE AND INTENT!

- *mind* (n.)

1. The faculty of memory.
2. The mental being or faculty.
3. **Thought, purpose, intention!**

- to be of “one mind” is to agree in judgment, purpose, or even opinion; to be unanimous, with one accord.

- **Note:** this is NOT the “*one accord*”, or “*one heart and soul*” of Acts 4:24-32—the “*one heart*” of Acts 4:32 was **prophesied**: Jer. 32:39; Ezek. 11:19-21! (this “*one mind*” is according to the **mystery!**)

- And by the context and the word order (which sets the ‘tone’ of the passage) - there is a sense of great excitement, zeal, and enthusiasm!

- Not just thinking the way God thinks—but **DOING THINGS GOD’S WAY!** (which includes His sentiments, feelings, excitement, zeal, and enthusiasm)!

- By your Father telling you (and exhorting you) to: ***with one mind glorify Him***—He’s telling you that you are going to now be in situations & circumstances in your dealings with other members of the body—and because you are now entering into the Operation of God that has to do with the Edification Process—you are going to have to make a whole bunch of judgments and decisions (**all on your own**)—and you are going to have to determine to take a particular *path* or multiple *paths* in your dealing with other members of the body ... and to produce and maintain an environment (culture) of godly peace for edification to take place ...

... and if real, genuine, godly **GLORY** is going to get produced unto God Himself—the sonship judgments and sonship decisions you make (along with all the intents, purposes, aims, goals, objectives, and zealous enthusiasm of your joyful ‘labor of love’) **that will preserve and ensure the continued success of the Edification Process are going to be ONE-AND-THE-SAME as His!**

- You and your Father’s *mind* toward the Edification Process of the body is to be **identical**—and you and your Father’s **WAY** of accomplishing the Edification Process is to be **identical!** [even your ‘opinions’ will be identical!] ...

... (and His WAY includes the joy, the zeal, the enthusiasm, the gravity, the intense desire, etc., etc., for accomplishing godly edification) ...

... It’s not just having acquired the doctrine and the ‘mechanics’ - but also having acquired God’s own **PASSION** (heated passion) for getting the job of edification done!

- By the context and the **tone** of the passage—your “*reasonable service*” at this point in your sonship education/ edification has been developed to the point where your Father can now come along and exhort you to do something that you **CAN DO**; something you’re **EXPECTED** to do with the ability & capacity that the effectual-working of Rom. 12:3-15:4 has given you to do ... ***that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God*** ...

- Simply put—*that ye may with ONE MIND—ONE MIND* is the issue of having all of the intellectual understanding and appreciation of Rom. 12:3-15:4 doctrine PLUS all of the godly sentiment and appropriate zeal and enthusiasm that goes with it!

- “*ONE MIND*” = having the godly thinking along with the godly sentiment! (love, charity, value & esteem, & **desire**!)

- (you should ‘**desire**’ godly edification more than you desire anything the world or the adversary has to offer! - and if not, then that tells you you’re DO NOT have this kind of “*ONE MIND*”!)

- Again, simply put (another way) *one mind* is all that is spiritually involved in getting godly edification accomplished successfully ... [especially getting the edification of the BODY accomplished successfully].

- and since persistent godly *patience, comfort, and consolation* (:4 & :5) are all involved with this *one mind*—then the **manifestation** of our *one mind* [naturally enough] emerges and is displayed by having “*ONE MOUTH*”!

- Simply put (even another way) - *one mind* means that those things that characterize our Father now characterize us! — He’s zealously committed to all things Edificational, and so are we! — His “s”pirit and our “s”pirit are identical (to this point) ...

- (see **2 Kings 2:12-15 [:15]**) - note that Elijah himself wasn’t actually taking over Elisha’s body and dwelling inside of him ... rather, the things that characterized Elijah, characterized Elisha.

- this is why when folks live and/or work closely together over a long period of time they often take on the other’s traits & characteristics (even their quirks & gestures) - and even their accents (southern, upper New England, New York, etc.)

... but they also often times pick up what the other person values and esteems—what they think is ‘funny’ or ‘serious’ — all of which occurs on a spirit level first and then through the soul comes out of the body. (spirit, soul, body)

- This combined issue that we're now dealing with in Rom. 15:6—***That ye may with ONE MIND and ONE MOUTH glorify God*** is a BIG DEAL / BIG ISSUE / HUGE MATTER!

- The edificational ramifications of it going forward are massive and glorious ... and the failure to acquire it is so devastating that there is really no reason for a local church to even exist if it fails in this area ... because without this *one mind and one mouth* it will be impossible for the local assembly to ever participate in the Operations of God that are sitting in the book of Ephesians!

- ***“That ye may with one mind and one mouth”*** is really an advancement upon our **‘Living-Union Relationship’** as the “body of Christ” that we are!

- and that ‘Living-Union Relationship’ involves all 3 matters that make us unique & different from all other things God created (you are a “man” / “woman” *not* an animal):

the *spirit, soul, and body* (1 Thes. 5:23) - but of these 3, it's the *spirit* above all that is the biggest/most important issue of all!

- (Jam. 2:26 ... *the body without the spirit is dead*)

- Animals do have body, soul, & spirit to a degree, but they are not the same as man's—man is unique (you may watch a movie with your cat or dog, but they don't experience it the same way you do [laugh or cry] - try telling your dog a joke!

- The Holy Ghost, being the Spirit of God that He is—has the capacity to function as a ‘permeating and adjoining spirit’ in every member of the body of Christ, just as the spirit of a man does in his own physical body—and He therefore **creates** that ‘Living-Union Relationship’!

- Therefore the ‘checkpoint’ issue of us as a “body” (body=*ye* in [:6]) with *one mind and one mouth glorifying God* is to examine yourself to make sure that your *mind* (which is a component of your human *spirit*) is fully committed to carrying out the Operations of God that have to do with the Edification Process—and you really **can** ‘commit’ your *spirit* to such things! (Psa. 31:1-5 [:5])

- Let's sum up this Checkpoint Issue this way:

- **We, as a “body” (“ye”) having acquired the same fundamental characteristics and “spirit” of God our Father for the Edification Process** (which includes the effectual working of Romans 12:3-15:4 doctrine; as well as the godly sentiments and desire for godly sonship edification); **and with singleness of heart and oneness of affection are fully committed to carrying out that Edification Process God's way.**

- This is a major development in our ‘Living-Union’ Relationship—or the very character of God our Heavenly Father becoming FUSED together with our character, so that the character of our Father is ONE-AND-THE-SAME as ours!

- This is a major feature of sonship godliness—and it will be a major area of **contention** of the adversary to cause strife, contention, and division in order to thwart the success of this Living-Union Relationship and the godly edification that goes with it!

- Questions? Comments?

- Well, that should take care of the “*one mind*” issue—(and though we’ve talked some about the “*one mouth*” issue—let’s just look at that part of the checkpoint some more.

- *6 That ye may with one mind and ONE MOUTH glorify God, ...*

- Just as this was the 1st time we are ever told that we, **as a body** have “*one mind*” - this is the 1st time we are ever told that we, **as a body** are to have “*one mouth*”.

- *ONE MOUTH*—does NOT mean that we are all programmed robots that say the exact same thing all the time.

- Rather, where it comes to the issues of godly sonship edification & education—when a given situation or circumstance arises where we verbally interact with others about their godly edification as ‘sons’ - we will tell them the very same things as to where in God’s word to go and get the effectual-working of it that they need—and so produce by our mouths encouragement and comfort to their troubled mind.—being ‘helpers of their joy of faith’

- This *one mouth* issue is the issue of having a well-developed knowledge, understanding and appreciation for the Edification Process—what it is (and is not); how it works; how to ‘**troubleshoot**’ it (so to speak).

- This is often illustrated in the frustration of some employees who try to go to another one of their fellow employees with a problem about their job (and how to do it) - but they get told one thing from one person, and another thing from another person, and maybe even another thing from a manager, and the manager differs from the owner !!!!!

- (and even the way in which a person says something to you can be a problem!)

- And this is NOT something that gets done by God giving us some supernatural gift, or by taking over our mouth and ‘channeling’ His words through us! (some will cite Luke 12:12, for example)

- (see Keith’s email: C49—C Folder; Vol. 2; pg. 403-404)

- Note that there are a whole bunch of places in God’s word where you can go to look at examples of this issue of a godly *mouth* and the skillful use of our words.

- John 6:22-33—(Jesus skillfully planting seed)

- John 5:32-47 - (:44—what does my word say that I want out of you? - society/culture has set up its own standard for mutual admiration)
(:46—note the skillful use of the word “me” ... every Israelite needs “me” not just a good lineage—Jesus’ skillful use of words—trying to break up the hard soil of their minds so that the seeds will fall on fertile soil and take root)

- John 4:1 ff—the woman at the well (great/skillful use of words)

- John 3:1-4; 5-8; 9-13 (Nicodemus—and example of planting, fertilizing and watering that Nicodemus needs—also an example of a person having to understand some things (& positively respond to some things) before he can move on to new truths)

- 1 Cor. 3:6—(the wise use of *one mind and one mouth!*)
 - Another example of *one mind and one mouth*:
 - The presentation of the gospel of Christ to the unbeliever. (Romans 1:18 - 3:26)
 - see 7 Volitional Testing Points
 - see 3 Parts of the Gospel
-

- So the Checkpoint of (:5-7) is all about your understanding and appreciation of & for the godly Edification Process as a “son” - not just that you know what it is (and what it isn’t), but also how it works (and how it does not work).
- And that requires all of the doctrine you’ve been taught from Rom. 12:3-15:4—it requires the instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity—it requires all of the ‘parallel’ doctrine that was taught ‘in tandem’ with the instruction of w, j, j, & e — (especially, equity as it deals with the weaker brother situation).
- So, to boil it down to one simple thing—the checkpoint is all about your intelligent understanding of and wise use of **godly Edification!**
 - EDIFICATION
 - (what it is & how it works) = PROCESS
- And since the Edification Process (or Sonship Edification) has a lot of component parts to it—that means that all of the parts and even the **order** of the parts (sense & sequence) are all critical to the successful operation of the whole.
- And that means that the quality or condition of the whole of the Edification Process is the BIG and IMPORTANT issue here! (and that’s the issue of the **integrity** of the Edification Process)!
 - And God has words for that—(for the quality and condition of the whole of the Edification Process) - He calls it: **SOUND**
 - *sound doctrine* (1 Tim. 1:10; 2 Tim. 4:3; Titus 2:1)
 - *sound mind* (2 Tim. 1:7)
 - *sound words* (2 Tim. 1:13)
 - *sound in the faith* (Titus 1:13)
 - *sound in faith, in charity, in patience* (Titus 2:2)
 - *sound speech* (Titus 2:8)

- *sound* (in these contexts) = true; free from error or defect; stable; accurate; correct; well-grounded—free from mixture or corruption.

- Now—in view of the wholeness and the integrity or soundness of the godly Sonship Edification Process as a whole (as far as Romans doctrine has taught us) ... the CORE or SEMINAL ISSUE for this ‘Sonship Checkpoint’ (naturally enough) comes down to these 2 culminating things:

6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God,

1) ONE MIND, 2) ONE MOUTH

- These are the 2 most natural ways in which the soundness and the integrity of the whole of the Edification Process is going to be maintained, guarded, and protected!

- **You are now ‘Guardians’ and ‘Protectors’ of the godly Sonship Edification Process!**

1. ONE MIND = you wisely guard it; wisely KEEP it; wisely maintain it.

2. ONE MOUTH = you wisely ‘troubleshoot’ it; wisely work to eliminate and/or settle problems with it.

- Where godly Edification is concerned—the Bishop/Pastor has a roll to play; the deacons have a roll to play; and (**just as important**), every member of the body in the local assembly has a roll to play!

- or to put it another way—the Pastor has a job to do (work/labor with God); the deacons have a job to do (working and laboring with God); and the members of the body in the local assembly have a job to do (working and laboring with God) in order for godly edification to properly take place.

- Questions? Comments? about the issue of *one mind and one mouth*?

- So we can now move on to finish (:6) —

6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- “*glorify God*” - (the issue of “**GLORIFY**”) - what does it mean to “*glorify*” God? - what does “*glorify*” mean?

- First of all—this is not a word or a concept that we haven’t already been confronted with ... because we’ve encountered this issue before in the book of Romans:

- *glory*—(1:23; 2:7; 2:10; 3:7; 3:23; 4:2 4:20; 5:2; 5:3; 6:4; 8:18; 9:4; 9:23; 11:36; / 15:7; 15:17; 16:27)

- *glorified*—(1:21; 8:17; 8:30)

- *glorify*—(15:6; 15:9)

- *glorious*—(8:21)

- *glory* (and all of its 10 or so forms) is a right ‘slippery’ word! - it’s a tough word to ‘pin down’ to a single, simple definition.

- and although we’ve already encountered it a whole bunch of times in the book of Romans—at this point, we’re going to have to get a better and more precise understanding and appreciation for it—because we are ending our Level I Sonship Education/Edification, and Level II Sonship Edification is going to bring the issue of “glory” ‘front-and-center’ (so to speak) and it becomes the BIG thing ...

... remember that our godly edification has us being taught all about who God has made us to be “in Christ” when He saved/justified us unto eternal life (our **identity** “in Christ”) ...

... and we first of all were taught all about our justification and its results—(that in justification we were made the Righteousness of God “in Christ”); ...

... then we were taught all about our sanctification and its results—(that in sanctification we were made the Holiness of God “in Christ”); ...

... but we still have another whole issue that we have yet to be taught about—which is our **exaltation** and its results—(and how that in exaltation we have been made the GLORY of God “in Christ”).

- How is “**glory**” most often or commonly thought of? how is it most generally & most commonly used and defined?

- (most folks often think of *glory* and *glorious* the say way—and because of that, the most common thinking about it is):

= (n.) bright light; lustrous; radiant; (and then), splendid, resplendent, beautiful, supreme, etc. — which really doesn’t define it, but are just a bunch of ways to try and describe it.

- and truth is—there is truth to this:

(Luke 2:9; 1 Cor. 15:41) - **God is “light”** (Jn. 1:9; 1 Tim. 6:16; 1 Jn. 1:5; Rev. 21:23)

- Some talk about the “Shekinah” light/glory of God. (not a biblical word—but talking about the visible light-manifestation of God—such as the pillar of the cloud & the pillar of fire) - and that visible manifestation can be rightly called God’s “glory”.

- And even the ‘pie plate’ effect [halo] = the circle of light surrounding the head of the Lord (or even Mary, or the Saints) - as used in paintings—[NOT biblical!]

- And in its noun form—*glory* gets into the kind of definitions that deal with such things as: something or someone that is exalted—and concepts like praise, **honour**, admiration, even fame & renown ...

... OED #5—In Biblical phraseology: the glory of God = the majesty and splendour attendant upon a manifestation of God.

= (v.) to exult with triumph, to rejoice, to give honour; to adorn—which, when it comes to really defining and describing what “glory” is, is really unsatisfactory! ... and is so wide open to interpretation that most Christian folks just make up and insert a whole bunch of things that try to get to some meaning of the term—but usually end up just being a bunch of religious non-biblical nonsense!)

- and NOTE: the verbal form is what we have here in Rom. 15:6—**glorify** God, ... (we can end up very vague/unclear!)

- And the way the word *glory* or *glorify* often gets used by a large amount of Christians today is that it gets to be just a ‘catch-phrase’ - a mindless, meaningless term that gets used in a lot in Christian ‘praise & worship’ services—which amounts to some kind of magical spell or incantation used to pacify or please God so that He will perform in some way that a person wants Him to ... “We praise you God, we glorify you, **we glorify your name**” ... etc.

- The idea being that even if you don’t have a clue as to what “glory” or “glorify” actually means—if you just **use** the word and say it out loud, then something (who knows what?) is supposed to happen.

- And this is done because you can find such things going on in the Bible! - (Psa. 86:12—*I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore.*)

- There’s even an old hymn: “Glory to His Name”

... *glory/glorify* becomes almost indefinable/ un-describable!

- But as all words, in and of themselves—the actual word *glory* or *glorify* has no magical, spiritual, or mystical power just because you say it; or even say it in a ‘praise & worship’ service [repeatedly].

- My understanding is that the use of the word *glory/glorify* is HIGHLY dependent upon a very real & intelligent understanding and appreciation for some very real sound Bible doctrine effectually working within your inner man!

- Now while I admit that I’ve got a lot to learn about this issue at the present time—we’ve still got to get past the ‘cultural Christian’ use of the term [mindless & meaningless use of it] and get a better and more precise & accurate understanding and appreciation of what exactly is going on when, for example, we are told by God through the apostle Paul: *6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

- Also note: you can go to the Hebrew, Chaldee, Aramaic, and Greek language word studies and it won’t get you anywhere!

- Again—(as always) - what we're after here is what the term *glory/glorify* means to GOD! - how does He use it in His word? - and it's from **the word of God** that we will see that *glory/glorify* **really is** definable and describable!

- (Note: This could become a huge 'categorical' doctrinal study in and of itself—which is NOT my intent—my intent is NOT to do a complete analysis of each and every use of *glory/glorify* in the Bible ... my intent is to gain a better more precise, more accurate understanding of it so that we can intelligently know what we're doing in Rom. 15:6—[and serve us well for upcoming usages of it in Ephesians].)

- Instead of running a bunch of verses—let's look at one passage where it's obvious that the common definition of *glory* being that of 'God's resplendent, beautiful lustrous, radiant bright light' is NOT what's being spoken about ... (rather, something else is being spoken about) ...

- (see **Exo. 33:18**)

- Moses is **not** asking this in order to see the 'Shekinah' glory of God—(or God's brilliant, radiant light) - because he has already seen the pillar of fire and the cloud—in fact, Moses has just been in the 'glory cloud' ...

... rather, Moses is asking to see the very nature of God's **character and essence** in connection with his brother Aaron (who just made the golden calf), and the people of Israel—in connection with just how it is that God is going to now deal with this 'stiffnecked' nation!

- Because there is something in God's character/essence that Moses needs to have an understanding and appreciation for that as of yet, has not been fully taught and declared to him: [which is the issue of God's **mercy, grace, and compassion**] and that = God's *glory*!

- Now instead of thinking about the dictionary definition of *glory/glorify*—when it comes to God's *glory* (character/essence-wise) or *glorifying* God (Rom. 15:6—where God **receives** *glory* from us) - [which is NOT just saying the words "we give you glory, God"] ...
... what is at the CORE, the radical root, of *glory/glorify* ???

- Well, from the Exo. 33:18 passage, we can gather that God's *glory* (in that context) has to do with an intelligent understanding & appreciation for an aspect of God's character/essence **that has been demonstrated (or put on display)!**

- (see Hag. 1:1-8 [:8])

- Here you have the very Bible-definition for what it means when God Himself is *glorified* ...

- God is *glorified* as He takes **PLEASURE** in the accomplishment of something!

- God is demonstrated or ***proven*** to be the Almighty God; the Most High God (possessor of heaven and earth) **when the effectual working of His word, effectually works within His "sons"!**

- God is honored and exulted above all things by the proven ability of His word within His "sons"!

- The "Core" or 'radical root' issue to God **receiving *glory***, (or being *glorified* by His saints/sons) is the issue of **PROVEN ABILITY—the proven ability of the excellency of the power of His word!**

- And in the context of Rom. 15:6—*glorifying God* is the issue of us (an assembly of God's properly educated/edified "sons") **PROVING** that the excellency of the power of His word is effectually working within us by our having ***one mind to wisely guard, protect, and maintain—and one mouth to wisely eliminate and/or settle problems with the Edification Process in our local assembly!***

- When you get to 'show what you're made of' — when you can actually **prove** it; manifest it; make a 'show' of it — God not only takes **great pleasure** in it—**BUT GOD IS ACTUALLY GLORIFIED BY IT!**

- Example of giving *glory* to God: 1 Cor. 3:1-10, 16-23

- *Glorifying* God by His “sons” is closely tied to the son having a proper and intelligent understanding & appreciation of that which only God has the power to do; and that which the certainty of His counsel accomplishes! [**i.e., ‘by grace; through faith’**]

- It’s when: GOD’S WORK IN GOD’S WAY GETS ACCOMPLISHED!

- Mere repetition “We give you glory” as an incantation is a whole bunch of NOTHING!

- **Interesting Note:** From the last verse in Ch. 11 [11:36] to this verse in 15:6—the word “glory” (in any of its forms) has NOT once been used!

- Tells us that it’s only **after** the formal education of Phase 2, Level I Sonship Edification has been fully accomplished that a “son” really has the ability/capacity to *glorify God* !

- (having the effectual working of the godly wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity!)

- Which also tells us that Romans 12:1-2 can now be directly tied into the issue of *glorifying God ...*

- that is, because you have been *transformed by the renewing of your mind* (with Rom. 12:3-15:4 doctrine), *ye may PROVE what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God* (especially in connection with the Edification Process)!

- and you PROVE God’s will by having that *one mind and one mouth!*

- And based upon that **proven ability** of doing God’s work in God’s way—God the Father takes great **pleasure** in it (because it was all accomplished “by grace, through faith”) and therefore God truly is **GLORIFIED!**

- **Also Note:** This is the 1st time God the Father is said to **receive** something in connection with our Sonship Education/Edification! (He receives *glory* from His “sons”!)

- At the end of the ‘formal education’ phase of the son’s fundamental education—the Father begins to **receive a return on His investment!** - (which is a preview of the time in which He will receive **“the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints”** (Eph. 1:18)

- **At the end of the formal education phase—the Father receives GLORY from His son!** (the son being now so *conformed to the image of God’s Son*)

- God now receives all the honor & credit for the successful edification of His “sons”!

- There is a very real and genuine **success**—a successful attainment has been accomplished—it’s no small thing—it’s a **great** success—a successful battlefield victory has been won! ...

... because this successful completion of the formal education and edification phase of Level I Sonship Edification has been accomplished in the face of the adversary and his policy of evil’s attempts to oppose & thwart it from ever taking place!

- The adversary’s attempts to thwart/oppose godly sonship edification has failed! (... so far ...)

- And this successful completion of the formal education phase of Level I Sonship Edification has been accomplished by the only means by which God could ever receive glory: which is by means of the effectual working of His word within His sons— the proven, demonstrated ability of the excellency of the power of His word & His wisdom—rather than the wisdom of this world (the wisdom of the adversary, Satan himself)!

6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, *even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

- The word *even* is being used here as an = that is, *God* (who is equal to) *the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

- It’s important that God didn’t have Paul just end (:6) with a period after the word *God*—but that He had Paul add the phrase, *even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ* ...

... because this phrase, “*even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*” is an expression of SONSHIP—and by now you should have a very good understanding and appreciation for the fact that one of the major ‘hallmark’ issues concerning the entire matter of sonship; of adoption; of the Father-son relationship: is the matter of the FATHER receiving GLORY from His properly educated and properly edified “son”!

- (and as a by-product; it should give you some appreciation for why God created the Divine Institution of marriage and family! - husband, wife, father, mother, children).

- The 2nd Member of the Godhead (the Lord Jesus Christ) voluntarily left His position of Deity with the 1st Member of the Godhead—and, **without ever surrendering His deity**, became a MAN—and in His humanity, He entered into a Father-Son relationship to be trained and reared by His Father—so as to live out the details of His life just as the Father Himself would (and would have Him do), and thereby be able to bring great GLORY to His Father!

- And when it came to God’s program with Israel—the Lord Jesus Christ, with *one mind and one mouth* brought the greatest honour and glory to God the Father in connection with all the Father’s business with Israel in connection with God’s plan to re-possess the Earth from Satan, the adversary and his cohorts ...

- And when it comes to God’s secret/hidden purpose with the “mystery of Christ” in this dispensation of the grace of God—the Lord Jesus Christ (as “*the firstborn among many brethren*”), with *one mind and one mouth* is currently bringing great honour and glory to God the Father in connection with all the Father’s business with the church, the body of Christ in connection with God’s plan & purpose to re-possess the Heavenly Places from the adversary and his cohorts!

- And this firmly establishes a very important “procession” or ascending order & sequence that will later on be pointed out over in 1 Cor. 3:23 - “*ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s!*”

- Principle: God receives glory through His Son and “sons” - why? Because of the Edification Process! Why the EP? because the EP is produced by God’s SPIRIT! (by grace, through faith)! (it’s what man was ever created for in the 1st place)

- It's rare that a commentator ever says anything worthwhile—but John Gill said something worthwhile in his comment on this verse:

- “God is the God of Christ, as Christ is man; who prepared the human nature for him, anointed it with the Holy Spirit, supported it in life, in sufferings and death, and glorified it at his own right hand; and in which nature Christ exercised every grace on him, as faith, hope, and [charity]; discharged every duty to him, worshipped him, prayed unto him, and was in all things obedient to his will: and God is the Father of Christ, as Christ is God; for as man he had no father. Now he is “glorified” when the perfections of his nature are ascribed unto him; when notice is taken of the works of his hands, and the glory of his majesty, which appears in them; when praise is offered up, and thanks given for all mercies, temporal and spiritual, he bestows on his people; when they join together in the solemn worship of him, presenting their bodies, and giving up their hearts unto him; when they unite in praying to him, and singing his praise; and when their lives and conversations are agreeable to their profession of him.”

- 1 Corinthians 3

- This whole passage is taking place in the context of God having the apostle Paul give corrective doctrine to the Corinthians concerning their failure to properly understand and appreciate the godly sonship Edification Process.

- Not only their individual edification process; but especially the Edification Process of the BODY!

- They were NOT being proper ‘care-takers’ of the EP—and they could NOT properly handle any problems or difficulties with the EP in their local assemblies!

- They failed in Romans 14:1-15:4 doctrine—they failed to see that, (to God), Edification is THE BIG THING—and they therefore failed to really appreciate the fact that it's so big of a thing to God, that IT (EDIFICATION as a “son”) is going to be the core issue of judgment & evaluation at the Judgment Seat of Christ—and their “reward” is going to be dependent upon THAT issue!

- (read :1-15)

- They were suppose to know (from Romans doctrine) - [and you're supposed to know from that same doctrine] - what the EP is (and what it is not); how it works (and how it does not work) - and to know that the EP is like the building of an 'edifice' - **it's a godly building project ...**

... and they were supposed to already know how particular God is about the Edification Building Project:

- to know what the proper 'building materials' are ...

- that there are building materials that God has authorized to be used—building materials that honor and glorify Him ...

- and if those God-authorized building materials are NOT used (the *wood, hay, and stubble*) and you try to build things YOUR WAY (i.e., by mishandling the word of truth; by wrongly dividing the word of truth; by erroneous Bible doctrines; or by human viewpoint or philosophies of men, or the wisdom of men, or the wisdom of this world ... then those un-authorized building materials are going to **burn up** and you're going to suffer "*loss*" (= *the absence of the reward*—not the loss of your eternal salvation).

- The desire of God is for you to labor with Him in this most important of all of the Operations of God—to labor together with Him in the godly Edification Process—and to reward you for laboring with Him in it!

16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

- This is something they should already know from Romans doctrine!

- When you got saved (at the exact moment you got saved), the Holy Spirit took up residence in you—and He wants to "dwell" in you (i.e., to live & **operate** in you in the details of your life); to be 'at home' in you. (that's Romans 8 doctrine)

- Why does he say to them at this point (and in this context): *Know ye not that ye are the **temple** of God?* ...

- **OED “temple”** = an **edifice** or place regarded primarily as the dwelling-place or ‘house’ of a deity or deities; hence, an **edifice** devoted to divine worship.

- That **edifice** (that you’re supposed to be ‘laboring’ in) is the *dwelling* place of the Holy Spirit!

- Not only is it inconsistent for you to use *wood, hay, and stubble* (and God’s going to judge that) - but on top of that, that’s where the **Holy Spirit** (3rd Member of the Godhead) dwells!

- The point being—YOU may be satisfied thatching together some ‘straw’ building—but **this ‘house’/building is NOT just your building/edifice!**

- The house/building of doctrine you’re supposed to be constructing isn’t just for *you* to live in & live out of: **it’s for the Holy Spirit to dwell in!**

- Truth is—those un-authorized, inappropriate building materials you may choose to use aren’t just inappropriate to the foundation that’s been laid—but on top of that: **they’re defiling! in God’s sight!**

- NOTE: God knows how to build a building! — (Ex. 25, 26, 27, — **some 90 verses**) = the details of (not the permanent Temple of God), but of the *temporary* ‘tent’ / tabernacle of God!

- Why does God include these details in the book of Exodus? (why include it at all? they needed to know that stuff, but why do we need to know it?)

- (then over in 2 Chronicles Ch. 3-4, you get 2 whole chapters dealing with all the explicit details of the permanent Temple of God that Solomon was to build)

- If nothing else—when you get to a passage like 1 Cor. 3:16, and God likens the Temple with that Edification Process—it tells you that the EP isn’t just some building project to be done any way you want—but that it’s not **befitting** to God to use *wood, hay, & stubble* building materials!

- You learn that when God builds a house for Him to dwell in, that He takes the utmost care & exactitude in doing it!

- (note: you learn from Rom. 8:9-11 that there is a difference between the Holy Spirit being “given” to you at the moment of your salvation; and the Holy Spirit “dwelling” in you)!

- It’s the Holy Spirit that takes what may be only ‘theory’ on the pages of God’s word—and energizes it to become the living REALITY in the details of your life!

- The Holy Spirit can NOT “dwell” in you properly when you’ve put together a ‘house’ for Him to dwell in made out of *wood, hay & stubble* (inappropriate building materials).

- If God takes a physical house that seriously—just how seriously do you think he takes a spiritual house for Him to dwell in?

- The Spirit of God will NOT work outside of the **word** of God in your life—in fact, He will not work outside of the curriculum for sonship edification as found in the order and in the sense & sequence of Romans—Philemon! (pattern/blueprint plan)

- If you choose **not** to erect that ‘house’/temple of God—or you choose inferior building materials in your edification—you’re NOT erecting a house befitting the Holy Spirit—and the POWER to ‘live unto God’ in all the details of your life **will be missing!** (because He can’t “dwell” in some thatched Quonset hut!)

17 If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

- Pretty strong language — it’s *defiling* to use un-authorized materials! (it’s *defiling* because it’s the *temple* / house of the **Holy** Spirit)

- Note: “*destroy*” - what kind of destruction is this talking about?

- (we know that it can’t be talking about the loss of your salvation—or eternal separation from God in the lake of fire! [Romans 5 takes care of that])!

- **Ezekiel 28**—regarding Lucifer and a particular ‘destruction’ he experienced which parallels the *destroy* issue here.

- (see Ezek. 28:11-19)

- (:16) - previous to this, the Lord describes the special and privileged service opportunities that Lucifer had—(see :14)

- (:14) was part of the ministry of *the anointed cherub that covereth*—a special God-appointed ministry that was his, and his alone—something he was privileged to do.

- But (:16) says, *I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee ... from walking in the midst of the stones of fire.*

- So what is the kind (or nature) of the *destruction* God is talking about? what is the *destruction* the Lord says he's going to experience?

- **A:** God took his privileges away! God took the opportunity to have that honored and special ministry and service away!

- I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire — no more opportunity to serve the Lord in a special way!

- The *destruction* of 1 Cor. 3:17 is the destruction of having any God-honoring; God-glorifying service—all that God-honoring; God-glorifying service is taken away—it's *destroyed* !

- Any saint / “son” who incorporates improper building materials into the Edifice that he's supposed to be laboring with God to build (the *wood, hay, stubble*) that *defiles* the temple of God (they're not fit to be used to erect the ‘temple’ for the Holy Spirit to live in) - that saint / “son” is NOT going to have the capacity to serve God to the degree that he could have for a member of the body of Christ to serve God for all eternity! (in the Heavenly Places)

- When you choose to *defile the temple of God* by failing to labor appropriately with God in the erecting of that edifice—you're going to miss out; you're going to be *destroyed*—you're going to miss out on the special privileged position of service God created you for “in Christ”!

- You ARE going to ‘serve the Lord’ - that’s a fact—but NOT to the capacity you would have or could have if He could reward you for proper laboring with Him in the Edification Process!

- that’s *destruction*—*destruction* doesn’t have to mean “annihilation” (and generally doesn’t mean that in God’s word)

- *destruction* generally in the word of God means ‘loss of well-being’ not ‘loss of being’.

- In a sense, the Judgment Seat of Christ is going to show us **the Holy Spirit’s viewpoint** of how the house or edifice we labored with God (or didn’t labor with God) was built for Him to dwell in! (think of that!)

- and it’s possible that your ‘house’ could be condemned and burned!

- You have to use God’s materials in God’s way! - according to the building Plan / pattern / blueprint that God drew up!

- At the JSC, it’s as if the Holy Spirit will say, “That’s not a properly built house—I couldn’t dwell in it; burn it down!” — or — “That house is properly built—I did dwell in it; I did make an impact with it—reward it!”

18 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise.

19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

- The real self-deception is that the *wisdom of this world* is valuable, (it’s worth something) - and that godly Edification **isn’t that big of a deal!**

- If you think God’s way is man’s way, you are deceived—if you think the wisdom of this world is God-honoring, you need to become a FOOL in the eyes of the world in order that you may be wise in the sight of God! — why? ...

... 19 *For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.*

20 And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. — God has NO USE for the “thoughts of the wise” of this world—because their thoughts are empty & worthless!

- And if you’re going to try to incorporate ANY of the thinking or wisdom of this world into the Edification Process - **you really are a fool—you are building with “flammable” building materials!**

- And even if you are building your temple / edifice with the wisdom of this world or even with Bible doctrine—(but that doctrine is NOT according to the blueprint design for the godly edification of a “son” in this dispensation of grace, according to “the mystery of Christ”) — even though you certainly **are** building a building—but all you are doing is building “strongholds” in your inner man and “imagination” and “high things” that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God (2 Cor. 5:1-5) ...

... you’re erecting “strongholds” to the opposition of truth—whether it be from secular institutions; corrupt Bible teaching, radio talk shows, or whatever.

- The wisdom of this world is the ENEMY of God—and it will result in you loosing out at the Jud. Seat of Christ—and you’re **deceived** if you think anything different!

- It’s absolutely impossible to mingle human wisdom and the word of God and make it come out to being God’s wisdom!

- The Edification Process has very specific building materials—and when you use those materials, you’ll become a FOOL in the eyes of men and this world!

- The hard reality is this: **the TRUTH of God is NOT designed to be impressive in the eyes of lost people!**

- The natural man is never going to be impressed with the truth of God’s word—they will never exult you for it—they will never call you “wise” - they’ll call you a “fool” ...
... because after all, **sound** doctrine elevates and exalts (who?) your Lord & Savior—and at the same time lowers and humbles man!

- The basic message of the Bible is: Glory to, and glorifying God; and the humbling worthlessness of man ... man has got **nothing** that God needs! God has to do EVERYTHING for you by His grace! You bring NOTHING to the 'table' (so to speak) - you have nothing He can work with!

- And notice there in (:19) — ***For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.***

- Not only is the wisdom of this world “foolishness with God” - but it will actually end up being their own DOOM!

- This is a quote from Job 5:13 — and it means that the very thing that a man thinks makes him wise, will be the very thing that God will take him in, and ‘trap’ him with!

- And the Bible is full of this:

Example: Satan, himself (Ezek. 28) - in (:3) Satan says, ‘I am wiser than Daniel, there is no secret that they can hide from me.’ (oh, yeah?)

- Exo. 1:8-12 with the Egyptians and Israel

- Esther 7:9-10—who made the “gallows” for who? and who ends up swinging from them?
(Haman / Mordecai)

20 And again, (another quote) The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

- this is another ‘proof’ from the word of God that comes from Psalm 94:11—the thoughts of the “wise” (even the wisest men of this world—(Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, Confucius, Newton, Galileo, Darwin, Einstein, Hawking, Freud, Nietzsche, Kinsey, Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Franklin, King, Kennedy, Sanger, Gandhi, Obama, Newbold)

... the *thoughts of the wise, are vain*—(empty, valueless, worthless)! in God’s sight; and for the godly Ed. Process!

- 21 Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours;**
22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death,
or things present, or things to come; all are yours;
23 And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

- The conclusion is (*Therefore*) - Paul says, In light of everything I've just said—and because *all things are yours*—**don't "glory" in men!**

- (this goes back over the entire chapter) ...

- Glorifying in men is a sure sign of carnality (:4);

- The real glory should go to God for spiritual growth in the Edification Process (:6);

- Paul & Apollos were laboring toward the same goal—they were NOT competing! (:8);

- Every member of the body—every “son” has the privilege of laboring together with God in the Edification Process (:9);

- God desires to reward you for laboring together with Him in the Edification Process (:11-15) ...

... so why would you ever glory in men?

... if you do—it will lead to judgment from God!

... and God is only going to take the wise of this world in their own craftiness ...

... so why would you ever glory in men?

- *Therefore* (in light of all this) *let no man glory in men. For all things are yours* — (then he lists those “things”) ...

... *Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas*, - these are merely “ministers by whom you believed” (:5) - God, by His grace provided ministers so that you could believe the message He is sending ... and they're *yours*—why would you glory in them? they're for your good to edification, **not** for your adoration—

- *the world* is yours—the *world* is the present opportunity for you to carry out the ministry that God has given you in order to glorify Him while you're in it (in the face of the adversary) -

- God left you here on this earth in the course of this world to function as an ambassador for Christ: as His “son”; and with the ability to ‘redeem time’ out of the course of this world—and in that sense, this world is *yours!*

- *life, or death*, they're yours—(Phil. 1:21 *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*) — life is the opportunity for who I am “in Christ” to be lived out in time on this earth; and to “die is gain” - they're both *yours!*

- *things present, or things to come* are yours—those are all of the details of life that are yours in order to put the godliness from your Edification on display; and for godly sonship decision-making to be exercised and honed—everything that's ever going to happen to you is just an opportunity to glorify God with your Edification!

- And how different this is to apostate Christianity today (and how much better this is) — because when it comes to “the will of God”, contrary to apostate Christianity which says, ‘In order to do the will of God, **you've got to find the right circumstance that is God's will for you—when it comes to circumstances, you've got to find the right one!**

... but to a “son” - the “will of God” is going to be **in whatever circumstances you're in—and by the excellency of the power of God's word effectually working within you—you will handle any and all circumstances to the honor and to the glory of God!**

- **The will of God is NOT a circumstance!**

- **The will of God is that in any/all circumstances that you handle any and all things like a “son” of God—and it's THAT what glorifies Him!**

- 23 *And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.*

- Why would you go around glorifying men—when *all things are yours—And ye are Christ's?*

- **You belong to Him!** (so you're going to glory **in men?**)
— and belonging to Him, you should be involved in what is well-pleasing and glorifying to Him!

- And this is the reason of that 'firmly established "process" or ascending order' that I talked about before ...

... you are in a position of belonging to Christ, which means you should be involved in what is pleasing & glorifying to Him ...

... **and Christ is God's** ... and whether in God's program with Israel, or with this present dispensation of grace—Christ voluntarily put Himself in the position of belonging to God the Father—and Christ is strictly involved with what is well-pleasing and glorifying to His Father!

- (see Rom. 16:27)

- what you're interested in, and what Christ is interested in is glorifying God the Father through Jesus Christ **for ever!** - that's your ultimate goal—(not glorying in men).

- **THAT'S HOW BIG OF A DEAL THE EDIFICATION PROCESS IS!** (*That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*)

- ONE FINAL STEP TO THE CHECKPOINT:

7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

- **"Wherefore"** - (an English "word of logic") - *wherefore* and *therefore* DO NOT mean the same thing!

- *"Therefore"* occurs most commonly after a body of information has been given, and a major conclusion; or GRAND conclusion—(like a **grand total** to a grocery bill—with nothing more to be added to the issue or the subject or the body of information) is reached.
(accountant - adding machine)

- *Wherefore* is an English “word of logic” that acts as a kind of Sub-Total to a body of information.

- *Wherefore* is generally used to take a body of information that has just been given—and on the basis of that information, present another essential point to the argument before drawing the final conclusion.

- In other words, whenever you use the word *wherefore*, you’re generally using it because the amount of information you’re dealing with is quite extensive—it has a great deal of information to it, and you’re going to have to gather some of it together—and then you’re going to have to come along and, (in view of what has been gathered together), be able to now logically say something about it, in view of all that information.

- When *wherefore* is being used in its more common way, (which is the way it’s being used here), what you have is a sub-type summarization (which means that there is still more information to come) - but it is being used as a summarization **that gives you a REASON for something!**

- And when *wherefore* is used this way, **you’re dealing with the WHY that something is so!**

- And at this Sonship Checkpoint—the whole issue of receiving *the instruction of equity* and the living out of that godly *equity*, and laboring with the Father in the Edification Process with that skill-set of godly *equity* as you make wise sonship decisions concerning the *weaker* brother and his Edification; as well as the Edification of the assembly in peaceful communion & fellowship has covered 27 verses.

- A large body of information has been gone through—a body of information that has a lot of structure to it—that has built-in steps and sense & sequence to it—and now it needs to be put into a summary conclusion—**BUT**, there is still more to say on the general, overall matter ...

... and the general, overall matter is the issue of the **Edification Process**—(godly Sonship Edification) - which now has put you in the position for the adversary to be qualified to ‘up the ante’ (or ratchet up) the resistance and opposition to your completed Level I Sonship Education.

- And therefore, just as this entire body of doctrine *began*; so will it *end*—and it began all the way back in Rom. 14:1

*Him that is weak in the faith **receive** ye, but not to doubtful disputations.*

... and the issue of **how we receive one another** is directly connected to our Edification as a BODY—it is directly connected to our **communion & fellowship**—which is going to be an incredibly **powerful** issue out in Level II Sonship Edification ...

... and it is therefore a **prime target** of the adversary and his policy of evil!

7 Wherefore *receive ye one another*, ...

- “**ye**” = the body—the entire body of Christ; the local assembly body of Christ—(**this is a matter of BODY edification!**)
- “**receive**” - the exact same word as we had in 14:1.
(see 14:1 for all the details)
- The English word *receive* can be used in a whole bunch of different ways, and in a **range of ways**— that is, it can be used in a more passive sense (or a less intense sense); and it can range all the way to a very **active** (or in a **highly intensified** sense).
 - And by the context dealing with the **highness** of the nature of godly edification (individually AND as an assembly as a whole)—and because the context is dealing with our personal and interpersonal dealings with other members of the body of Christ—the ‘**highness**’ of the context demands that we are dealing with the active, intensified sense of the word *receive*!
- Generally/basically, *receive* = to take; to get; to take in; to take into one’s hand, or into one’s possession.
 - And by means of the context and the choice of words (or vocabulary control) - when you’re talking about a localized group of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ gathering themselves together for the purpose of godly edification, (both individually, and as a **body**)—in other words, when you’re talking about a **local assembly/church** situation ...

... the ‘radical root’ issue to the word *receive* in our phrase, *Wherefore receive ye one another*, ... (just as it was back in 14:1) ... is the issue of **admission** !

- And note: this is NOT talking about merely **welcoming** another member of the body of Christ to the assembly! (It is that—that’s a valid thing to do—but this is FAR MORE and MUCH MORE than that!)

- The major issue with the word *receive* in the context of Rom. 15:7 is the issue of **TO ADMIT INTO FELLOWSHIP** (or membership)!

- And while every member of the body *is* to be ‘welcomed’ into the local church—the much more critical issue is that he be **admitted into the FELLOWSHIP** of the local assembly—and that word “**fellowship**” means a lot more than merely being allowed to sit in a chair/pew with the rest of the assembly!

- And it’s that “**fellowship**” concept that makes the word *receive* take on that more **active**, and **intensified** sense—because you’re NOT supposed to be *receiving another* member of the body in some **passive** way—rather **you are supposed to have fellowship with him**—**you are supposed to interact with him**—and ultimately **BE A HELP to him in his godly sonship edification** (which is what *you* are honestly attending the local assembly for in the first place; and which is what every *other* member of the body is honestly attending the loc. ass. for in the first place)!

- The local church is NOT supposed to be merely a fellowship of believers where being a ‘believer in Christ’ is the *only* thing that makes us ‘fellows’ (like the Moose; Masons; Elks; Odd Fellows; Rotary; or whatever)—[it is that, but it’s **far more** than that]

... the local church is a gathering of believers in Christ for a very particular *KIND* of “fellowship”!!! ...

... and the *kind* of “fellowship” of the local assembly is ***THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE MYSTERY!***
(Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:8-10)

- The idea is that you will admit *one another* into the “fellowship of the mystery” in order to get your godly Sonship Edification along with the rest of the body of Christ!

- **NOTICE**: In 14:1 we had *Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, ...* — but here in 15:7 we have *receive ye **one another** ...*

- This is an **ADVANCEMENT** upon 14:1! - in (14:1) we were strictly dealing with the *weaker* brother—here in (15:7) we’re dealing with MORE than just the WB; we’re dealing with ***one another!***

- This is dealing with the WB and **all other members of the body of Christ who are in our local assembly!**

- And there are at least 4 categories of saints in view here that would come under the phrase “***one another***” :

1) The “Here-All-The-Time’rs” - saints that are ‘long-timers’; steady; here-all-the-time; permanently settled in the assembly. (until death do us part)

2) The “Have-To-Go-But-Want-To-Stay’ers” - saints that have determined to make this assembly **their** assembly for godly Sonship Edification—but who had to be physically away from the assembly for some time; and who then re-join the assembly. (ex. Military duty; job displacement; long-term illness; etc.)

3) The “Internet Listeners” - saints that find it impossible to move to our area, but have determined to make this assembly **their** assembly for godly Sonship Edification—and who may, on occasion, be able to visit once in awhile—or who may only interact via cards, letters, email, etc.

4) The “Set-Out-But-Come-Back’ers” - this issue of *receive ye **one another*** even applies to those saints that for some genuine, Biblical reason had to be “set out” of the fellowship of the assembly due to reasons of legitimate ungodliness—but then come back to the assembly “*after a godly manner*” (2 Cor. 7:9) - they, too, are to be *received as Christ also received us to the glory of God !*

- (Do you see how this is an **ADVANCED** issue of “*receive one another*”?)

7 *Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.*

- Notice that the verse does not end with a period after the word “another” - but God has the apostle Paul add the final phrase: **“as Christ also received us to the glory of God.”**

- What does He mean by “as Christ also received us”? and WHY does He say that? why is it necessary to say that?

- Is this talking about how Christ *received* us at the point of our salvation/justification when we believed “the gospel of Christ” and became justified unto eternal life? (I don’t think so)

... justification is NO where in this context!

- this is a context about the Edification Process!

- My understanding is that this is talking about how the Lord Jesus Christ as God’s Son has *received us* as adopted “sons” into the fellowship of the “mystery” aspect of godly Sonship Edification!

- (see Rom. 8:29)

- “*Firstborn*” is a title that Christ holds in connection with His inheritance in view of His resurrection from the dead. (Psa. 2; 89:27; Heb. 1:1-8; Rev. 1:5)

- Actually, Christ is *only begotten* in connection with His incarnation—He is *firstborn or first begotten* in connection with being made “*heir of all things.*”

- Everything about our sonship life and the *glory* that is associated with it is all strictly in perfect accordance with Christ’s own Sonship!

- And both Christ and the Father have made it so that while the Father will only have ONE Son involved in His business; he will have MANY sons who will also be involved in His business—and as such Christ can be the *first begotten* and the *firstborn among MANY brethren!*

- So how did Christ *receive* YOU? [w/pleasure; godly Love & Char.]

- [w/ patience, consolation, graciously, w/ no strings attached]

- Which tells you that you are NOT (and we as a body and a local assembly are NOT) either the **first** or the ‘end-all’ in the matter of who gets to be a part of (or **received** into) the “fellowship” of the body! (so don’t think like or act like you are the “original son”!) - because **you’re NOT!**

- In essence, He received you exactly as it is stated in the remaining of (:7) ... **to the glory of God.**

- You have been *received* by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself as the “original Son”; the *firstborn* Son of God—you are adopted ‘brothers’ of the Lord Jesus Christ ...

... and Christ has graciously *received* you into the godly Edification Process as “sons” along with Him—so that by the same demonstrated ability & capacity of the excellency of the power of God’s word that effectually worked within Him for the success of His own sonship life—that same ability & capacity of the excellency of the power of God’s word can effectually work within YOU ...

... and by that effectual working power of the excellency of God’s word working within you as it does within Him—God can then receive ALL the credit, merit, honor, and glory because all of your demonstrated ability & power to succeed with your sanctified, sonship life is because God **gave** you that power by GRACE and you received it by FAITH (with no compromise to the essence & character & integrity of God Himself)!

- The godly Edification of a son = the proven and demonstrated testimony of what God’s grace can do!

- And the proven, demonstrated testimony of what God’s grace can do = God’s GLORY!

- Questions? Comments? Can you honestly pass this Sonship Checkpoint?

- POST-DOCTRINAL EXHORTATIONS
to
receiving the instruction of equity

- **Proverbs 6:12-19** (read, if haven't already)

EXHORTATION / EXHORTATIONS

- Designed to “prime” the inner-man for receiving the instruction (or the doctrine) from the Father—they act as a means to make the doctrine/ instruction of the Father “stick” - that is, to make it a permanent & sensitive issue in the son’s inner-man—and **therefore, the exhortations work to make the edifice or building of the son’s doctrinal and spiritual house SOUND**— [sound doctrine = sound building / edifice / edification]!

- The Fatherly Exhortations are like the “mortar” in a brick wall —

- 1 Tim. 4:13—*Till I come, give attendance to **reading**, to exhortation, to doctrine.*

- (which tells you that the Exhortations are **just as important as the doctrine!!!**)

- Just like in building a solid, sound, firmly fixed wall:

- “doctrine” = brick
- “exhortation” = mortar

- Also, the godly Fatherly Exhortations are designed to countermand the affects of the Satanic Policy of Evil’s attempts to neutralize, ‘dislodge’ or stop the progress of the sonship Edification Process!

- The exhortations for *receiving the instruction of equity* are found in Proverbs 5:15-6:19.

- Pre-Doctrinal Exhortations are found in Pro. 5:15-6:5, and deal with 2 major issues:

- 1) Pro. 5:15-23—The sons’ Awareness of his ESTATE.

- 2) Pro. 6:1-5—The issue of the son to never putting himself in a position where he is UNDER THE POWER OF ANOTHER (other than his Father & His plan /purpose/ will).

Pro. 5:15-23 - And the reason why the son (at this time) needs to become acutely aware of his **Estate** is because he is going to enter into a grand & magnificent Operation of his Father's business — an Operation of God that **only** a properly educated and properly trained “son” can enter into—and an Operation of God, (the nature of which) has such an “highness” to it, that it requires the son to realize and recognize that this Operation of his Father's business carries the great ‘weight’ of the Father's own **Reputation** (a **godly reputation** which the son has now gained); and along with that godly **reputation** comes a higher sonship **Responsibility**, and a higher sonship **Accountability**.

- And that high & grand & magnificent Operation of God that the son can now enter into with his Father is the issue of **the Edification Process!**

Pro. 6:1-5 - And the reason why the son needs to be exhorted concerning putting himself **under the Power of Another** is for the very reason Paul gives over in 2 Cor. 1:24—*Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: ...*

- A properly educated “son” knows that the Father's expectation is that you are fully & appropriately ‘gripped’ by the fact that **the success of your godly sonship education so far has been because you have placed yourself under the Power of your Father (the Father's words, and no one else's—and the *leading of His Spirit* through His words) — and NOT by being under the “power” of anyone else!**

- And the reason why that is important to a son receiving his *instruction of equity* in the *weaker* brother situation—is because **when it comes to dealing with the WB in godly *equity* in order for his sonship Edification to take place properly and successfully—you will never, ever attempt to put him under YOUR “power”!**

- Why? Because if you do—you will DESTROY his godly sonship edification (Rom. 14:15) !!

- Now—when it comes to the Post-Doctrinal Exhortations—once we finished the ‘formal education’ phase of our *instruction of equity* in Rom. 15:4—we went over the first of 3 ‘Parts’ to the Post-Doctrinal Exhortations in Proverbs 6:6-11—the issue of the **sluggard** son.

- (and you can go back and get all the details of those verses: and that Part “A” of the Post-Doctrinal Exhortation when we covered it in detail at the end of Rom. 15:4)

- But for now—just note:

SLUGGARD (issue) — different from *inactive*, *lazy*, *indolent*, *slothful*, *idle*, etc., in that it focuses upon the fact that the person is not ‘gripped’ by the proper measure of excitement and zeal for doing something that ought to be done.

- The *sluggard* is mentally wrapped up in the present, and in his present comfort, etc., and as such is not impelled to action by future consequences.

- So now we’re ready of Part “B” of the Post-Doctrinal Exhortation to our *instruction of equity*.

- (Pro. 6:12-15)

- And as we have noted before—one of the major reasons for these Exhortations (especially the Post-Doctrinal Exhortations) is to countermand the attempts of the Satanic Policy of Evil to ‘**dislodge**’ that doctrinal ‘brick’ - to neutralize & stop the progress of your sonship edification.

- And that’s what’s going on here in Part “B” Post-Doc. Exhortation.

- By this time—having successfully received your *instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity*—and to the degree that Romans doctrine has *conformed you to the image of Christ*—your ‘like-ness’ to your Father (“like Father, like son”) **has really taken shape by now.**

- And just as Rom. 15:6 tells us—we have a *one-minded-ness* with our Father—a “**like**”-**mindedness** — and now that godly “**like-mindedness**” is going to be the ‘front-and-center’ issue in connection with facing the attempts to **dislodge & replace** your Father’s doctrinal instruction **with the instruction of another** ...

... in other words—this deals with the attempt of the adversary to **stop the progress of your sonship edification** (individual & body).

- **Note:** and really, this serves not only as the Post-Doctrinal Exhortation to *receiving the instruction of equity*—but it also serves the purpose of a Pre-Doctrinal Exhortation for the remaining doctrine contained in the book of Romans!

- So in essence—Part “B” of the Post-Doctrinal Exhortation is dealing with the issue of the Father exhorting you to be “like-minded” with Him regarding what is called in Pro. 6:12, “*A naughty person*”!

- With the completion of all of the ‘formal’ education of *receiving the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity*—the Father now exhorts you to be “likeminded” with Him regarding “*A naughty person*”.

- And a *naughty person* (as we will see) is a person who attacks the fellowship, communion, and concord of the local assembly.

- (which tells you that the common way in which the word *naughty* is dealt with by most folks is NOT the way your Father thinks about it or deals with it!)

- Notice that in (:12-15) we have 3 sentences in 4 verses.

- (:12) = 1 sentence / (:13-14) = 1 sentence / (:15) = 1 sentence

12 *A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth.*

- “*naughty*” = in our current ‘declining phase’ of the English language, the word *naughty* really isn’t at all a very forceful or powerful word.

- More often than not, the word is used as a kind of ‘light-hearted’ way to describe a child that is misbehaving—a “naughty child” ... even when it’s used to describe an adult, it almost always carries the connotation of childish or child-like behavior—improper and/or indecent behavior—but really, do big deal.

- *naughty* brings to mind such synonyms as *impish*, *mischievous*, *prankish*, even *playful*.

- Rarely (if ever) is the word *naughty* thought of as a forceful, powerful, condemning, or damning term! ... **but it is!**

- Just to underscore how forceful of a word this is, let's just note the Hebrew word from which it is translated: בְּלִיַּאל (Beliyaal) or, BELIAL—which comes from “Bel” = the god of Babylon, and is a type of the Devil, Satan himself!

- Hence, the word “Belial” becomes a title for Satan as the personification of all that is wicked, evil, and bad!
(Paul even uses the term this way!)

- (not all that ‘light-hearted’ or ‘playful’ of a term ...)

- Our English word *naughty* comes from the word *naught* = **no whit**; no thing; nothing.

- “*naughty*”

- OED = given to doing wrong; morally bad; wicked.

- WEBSTER'S 1828 = (*naught*) = bad; worthless; of no account or value—(*naughty*) = **wicked; CORRUPT (quotes Pro. 6:12)**

- SMITH'S—gathers *naughty* together with *Bad, Evil, and Wicked* ... “*Naughty* had of old the same extensive kind of application as bad, and was applicable to anything which was **not what it ought to be.**”

- The truth of the matter is—our very passage in Pro. 6:12 actually gives us the definition that this context is driving at within the very verse itself: *A naughty person, A **WICKED MAN** ...*

... this isn't talking about some “mild” form of reproach—rather, this is talking about a person who is **WICKED!**
(**one disposed to practice EVIL; depraved; the very opposite of righteous!; actively practicing EVIL**)

... this word *naughty* (as God uses it here) is an extremely **serious and severe** term of reproach and disgrace!

- So—to ‘set the stage’ for this Fatherly Exhortation here in Pro. 6:12, the thing that really helps us out on how to properly handle and properly understand & appreciate what the Father is talking about when He begins by saying, “*A naughty person, a wicked man*” is the **CONTEXT** in which this phrase sits!

- And the **context** in which this sits is NOT talking about just any old person who is *naughty and wicked* in any old way!

- *Naughty and wicked* are very BROAD terms—and can be used and applied in a whole bunch of ways ...

... and **without** the help of the **context**, all you are left with is making very wide & broad applications that end up with little-to-no appreciation for what's going on here at all!

... it just becomes a 'devotional' ... where God just tells us to not be *naughty or wicked* (whatever that means) ...

... with no depth of meaning, all you have is the shallow idea that, "God tells us to be good and not to be a bad person" ...

- So the **context** will make all the difference—and what *is* the **context** here? ... (well, if you think that the Proverbs are just a bunch of quaint sayings that Solomon heard over his lifespan and gathered up into a book—with no real sense or sequence to them ... then you HAVE NO CONTEXT for these terms!) ...

... but if you understand and appreciate that the book of Proverbs lays out the Father's curriculum for His "son's" education—then you have something to govern the usage of every word in the book!

- And the **context** here is the issue of Sonship Education / Edification ... and more than that, it's the **context** of a son having *received the instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity* from his Father; and now the Father is going to give the son a Fatherly Exhortation concerning the dangers the son will face from the adversary and his policy of evil, in an attempt to 'dislodge' the son's newly-acquired sonship decision-making skills and put a stop to the Edification Process!

- And since we can further the context by the kind of Sonship Edification *we* are receiving as members of the body of Christ ... this Exhortation is really dealing with the kinds of resistance and opposition and attack we can expect to receive in connection with BODY EDIFICATION—and the **communion & fellowship of the body!**

- (and that is what's going on here!)

- At this point—the son knows that he has been given the gracious & wonderful opportunity to work together with his Father in the Operation of God that has to do with the Edification Process.
- Therefore, the son knows what godly Edification is, and what it is not—and he knows how godly Edification works, and how it doesn't work—the son knows the **God-authorized and God-acceptable building materials**; and the **building materials that are NOT God-authorized or God-honoring or God-pleasing!**
- And the son (by now) has a firm 'grip' on his understanding and appreciation that the Edification Process is NOT simply concerning his own individual spiritual growth—but more than that, it's also at the exact same time concerning the Edification of the BODY as a whole!
- Which means that a son (at this point) has a good and proper understanding of the scope, the value, and the esteem for the **fellowship, communion, and concord** of the BODY.
- And by using the terminology of "*a naughty person, a wicked man*" ... (especially that word "*naughty*") tells the son that the kind of attack he's to expect is one of **CORRUPTION to the integrity of the body as a whole ...**
 - ... why? because the word *naughty* is a severe term used to talk about a person who is bent upon corruption—bent upon **corrupting** the integrity or the **SOUNDNESS** of something!
 - ... and that "something" is the **fellowship & communion** of the BODY and the Edification Process of the BODY!
- (and instead of this being a shallow and broad issue of any old kind of *naughtiness*—this is a serious, severe, and **very precise** issue of being given a 'heads-up' by the Father into the **specific kind** of attack to look out for) ...

... attacks to the doctrinal SOUNDNESS of the Edification of the Body—attacks to the doctrine regarding our fellowship and communion!

... attempts to corrupt it; create strife in it; and cause divisions in it!

- (see 2 Cor. 6 [whole chapter] - [:15])

12 *A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth.*

- The *naughty person* who is also a *wicked man* can easily be talking about an genuine saved, justified, believer in Christ—a fellow saint (and for us today), a member of the church, the body of Christ.

- And interestingly enough—even if this *naughty person* and *wicked man* is an unbeliever—the truth is, whether believer or unbeliever, either one could easily be involved in the same, highly destructive activity of *naughtiness & wickedness* in connection with attacking the **soundness** of the edification process of the local assembly!

- This guy even has a particular “*walk*” or means of attempting to put his static position “in Christ” into effect—and to having an **impact** upon others with what he perceives is “progress” in putting his position “in Christ” into effect.

- However, he is NOT “*walking after the Spirit*”, but rather he’s “*walking after the flesh*”!

- There are many genuine, saved & justified believers in Christ that are zealously determined to stand against and bring down any and all Bible teaching that recognizes the unique apostleship of Paul and the recognition that God has temporarily suspended His program with Israel and brought in a new and distinct dispensation of the grace of God by means of His revelation of the “mystery” given to Paul.

- And these folks can run the gamut of actively teaching against a mid-Acts position for the beginning of the body of Christ (or what they call “the church age”) - that is, the Acts 2 position of this present dispensation ... all the way to those who absolutely insist on teaching that there is **no such thing** as a “dispensation” in the Bible, and you are to never use such a term at all.

- And a great deal of corrupted (albeit enticing) doctrine results from this: (Ex: water baptism; tithing; suffering; the will of God; supernatural healing) — just to name a few ... you know the drill!

- And because the person being talked about here in (:12) ends up as a “*teacher*” (:13) — it comes as no surprise that he’s going to have a problem with his MOUTH!

- He “*walketh with a froward mouth*”

- “*froward*” = ENGLISH: means to be disposed to go COUNTER to what is demanded or what is reasonable; difficult to deal with; hard to please; perverse; ungovernable.

- Simply put—***forward is the opposite of toward*** — that is, instead of going TO the aim, goal, or objective; you are going **FRO** or AWAY from the objective! (Going in the opposite direction you are supposed to be going! - **taking you away from the very thing you are supposed to be going toward!**)

“*Froward*” deals with the disposition of the MIND and is most common in children. A stubborn and rebellious mindset.

ETYMOLOGY: A very serious expression. From OE “*from-weard*” = turned away from = “about to depart,” “departing,” & “doomed to die!!!”

- *Froward* = ungodly thinking

- *Untoward* = ungodly living

- This is a person who is expressing by his *mouth* what is in his heart & mind—and it all has to do (in this context) with corrupting the Edification Process; and creating strife and divisions in it!

13 He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers;

- All of his ‘body language’ is designed to re-enforce the corrupt doctrine that’s coming out of his *mouth*! — these are all gestures of confidence in his corrupted position—and gestures that are intended to cast an air of being the smartest person in the room—of having superior knowledge and wisdom than those he’s talking to!

- “*He winketh with his eyes*” - often times this is done as an indication that the person talking is signifying that he has a secret—signaling to others that he has some secret intentions or desires—some secret design against another by what he chooses to say or **not** to say—(usually indicating **he’s leaving out something big!**)

- **NOTE:**

- Psa. 35:19—*Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: neither let them **wink** with the eye that hate me without a cause.*

- Pro. 10:10—*He that **winketh** with the eye causeth sorrow: but a prating fool (long, foolish, empty talking) shall fall.*

- **“he speaketh with his feet”** - how do you *speak with your feet*?

- He’s fully animated in what he’s teaching—he puts his whole body into it!

- He ‘stamps’ his feet to get his point across! - stamping of the feet often express rage or excitement.

- **“he teacheth with his fingers;”** - he points with his fingers—he makes a fist—he stretches them out—all in an attempt to express scorn, contempt, rage, and fury.

- Some people just can’t talk without using their hands!

- All of these ‘body-language’ gestures indicate how fully this *naughty person* is given over to attacking the **soundness** of the Edification Process—(of the God-authorized and God-honoring ‘building materials’ of godly edification)!

14 Frowardness is in his heart,

- This *naughty person* has a mind and heart that is bent on going AWAY from the Edification Process as given by God in His word...
... and taking YOU away from it with him! (but thinks he’s doing God’s will)

- This is tantamount to the kind of ungodly thinking and behavior of even genuine believers in Christ when, as Paul says, *in the last days perilous times shall come* (2 Tim. 3:1)

5 Having the form of godliness, but *denying the power thereof*: from such turn away. (2 Tim. 3:5)

- He has a way/method of “godliness” - but it’s all made up by his own wisdom—He uses the Bible, but uses it in an un-biblical way—mishandling the word of truth! (wrongly dividing the word of truth)!

- As a good ‘child of Belial’, this person has convinced himself that he is doing “The Lord’s Work”!

14 *Frowardness is in his heart, **he deviseth mischief continually;***

- “**mischief**” (like *naughty*, this is another word that has gone through a lot of decline in its meaning—and is commonly thought of as a mild term).

- Commonly: mild or minor trouble or disturbance; annoying behavior; playing pranks; and like *naughty* often thought of as childish behavior.

- However, this, too, is a very forceful, serious, and severe term! - this is NOT talking about mere ‘childish’ behavior!

- *mischief* = from the L. *mes* = minus + *chef* = a head; hence, ‘minus a head’ — it comes to us from the Old Fr. = the bringing to a bad end.

- SMITH’S (p.492) - “It means harm or damage produced by something (or someone) - blameworthy, as heedlessness, neglect, perversity, and wantonness. *Mischief* conveys the idea of a bad or wantonly injurious intent, as well as the harm in which it results, and so belongs to beings of intelligence and will. It commonly denotes not so much destructive as **detrimental effects** produced by the folly (foolishness), idleness or perversity of men. *Mischief* carries the idea (or shade or meaning) of **impairing the soundness of a thing!**”

- and that’s his point—to “shake” your mind in your confidence of the Edification Process (and in its godly ‘building materials’)!

- (see Eph. 5:6; 1 Thes. 3:3; 2 Thes. 2:1-2)

14 ... *he soweth discord.*

- “**discord**” (musical term) = (OED) the absence of **concord** or harmony between persons; disagreement of opinions and **aims**; variance, dissension, **strife**.—this is the ‘target’ / ‘aim’ of the adversary and this *naughty person* doing his bidding: to cause **division** in the body, thus putting a **stop** to its godly Edification!

... (remember) *And what **concord** hath Christ with **Belial**?*
(2 Cor. 6:15)

15 Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; ...

- “*calamity*” = grievous affliction or adversity; deep trouble and misery arising from some adverse circumstance or event.
- ironically = disaster arising from his own **un-soundness**!
- even more irony = *calamity* comes from the L. *calamus* = **straw** that is easily damaged from wind, hail, mildew, etc.
(**straw = improper, inadequate, unauthorized building material!**)
- Amazing how this judgment closely parallels the God’s judgment of the Anti-Christ—and just as with the Anti-Christ, so, too, is the judgment on the one who is doing the adversary’s bidding ...
- ... his *calamity* comes *suddenly*—without warning and unexpected (and why not? - he thinks he’s doing “the Lord’s work”!) ...
- ... the *naughty person* will have no warning, no inkling of his ultimate ruin—and he won’t have the means of preventing it!
(similar to the Anti-Christ in 1 Thess. 5:3)

... suddenly shall he be broken without remedy.

- Like a clay pot that’s so broken up that it can’t ever be put back together again! — the **ruin** of the *naughty person* that *devises mischief continually and sows discord* is **sudden, inevitable, and irreparable!**
(again, similar to the Anti-Christ—Dan. 11:45 ... “*he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.*”)
- (see 2 Thes. 1:3-10 [one long sentence])
- Again the Point: Godly like-mindedness with God the Father regarding a *naughty person*.

- **Damage done to the fellowship, communion, and concord of the body = damage done to its IMPACT (the “spirit” of it—the culture of Christ which is supposed to be getting underway even NOW in “the creature”!)**

- **Part “C”** of the Fatherly Post-Doctrinal Exhortations for a “son” who has received his *instruction of equity*.

- **Proverbs 6:16-19 (read)**

- This is NOT “The 7 Deadly Sins”! — those are not in the Bible! (they basically come from Roman Catholicism!)

“7 Deadly Sins” = lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy, pride

- (the list in Pro. 6:16-19 is quite different!)

- Here we have a “list” - a list of 7 things that the LORD **hates** ... so what do you make of this list?

- It has **order**—it’s NOT random.

- It has sense & sequence.

- It has some similar expressions & terms to what we encountered in (:12-15) ...

... namely, “*mischief*” and “*discord*”

- My understanding is that you are not to think of this list of 7 things that the LORD hates to be disconnected from what was just said about the *naughty person* in (:12-15) - rather, they go together.

- Therefore, it’s my understanding that this “list” is a further **description** of the *naughty person* ...

... it’s describing a ‘man of Belial’!

- The things described about him in (:12-15) strike at the *naughty* ‘man of Belial’s’ **being**—they strike at his actions as the *teacher* of corrupt doctrine that he is—and describe his ultimate doom and judgment by God.

- The 7 things described in this ‘list’ that God hates strike at the very **character** of the *naughty* ‘man of Belial’ ... and while this *naughty* ‘man of Belial’ passes himself off as being either God himself, or God’s ‘man’ (doing the work of God, doing the Lord’s work) - the truth is, he is **hateful** to God; abhorred by God, and is opposed to God’s character/essence, and opposed to God’s plan, purpose, and will!

- Therefore you have God's description and judgment of all that the *naughty* 'man of Belial' **DOES**: (:12-15) ...
... and then you have God's hatred and abhorrence for all that the *naughty* 'man of Belial' **IS!**

- He's going to present himself as 'God's man' by what he **does** (by his **actions**); and as 'God's man' by who he **is** in his character and essence: a totally counterfeit "son" of God!

- he's going to attempt to ACT like God and BE as God is!

- And while there can be far more things listed beside these 7 things that God **hates**—these are 7 things that specifically are singled out as the characteristic features that 'pulls the mask' off the *naughty* 'man of Belial' and **exposes** him for the "*wicked man*" that he really is!

- Also—as to the order or the sense & sequence to this list of 7 things that the LORD hates—while it may not seem like it, my understanding is that this list DOES go from **mild** to **severe**.

- which is an amazing thing since you have "*hands that shed innocent blood*" in (:17) - [in the 3rd position of the 7] - and then you have "*he that soweth discord among the brethren*" in (:19) in the 7th and last position (the most **severe** of the 7).

... how could God hate anything more than murder??
(well He can; and He does!) - [God's norms are not the norms of "this world"!]

- I will admit that there may be (and most likely are) far more issues to the sense & sequence of this list than just this—but I haven't fully settled my mind on them just yet ...

... but it may very well be that these 7 things are actually 'grouped' together just as the verses indicate:

- (:17) = a group of 3 things that go together;
- (:18) = a group of 2 things that go together;
- (:19) = a group of 2 things that go together.

- I am fully persuaded on one thing though: there is a **shocking surprise** in this list! - something that just **stuns** you is revealed in this list! (we'll get to that later)

16 these six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:

- This is **not** saying that the LORD *hates* the first 6 things, but the 7th thing is only an *abomination* to Him (per se). [i.e., He doesn't *hate* the 7th thing, he only *abominates* it—no—he *hates* it too].

- Rather, this is a way that the excellency of Older English has for making a very **forceful** statement concerning how someone views some thing (or some things) - it's a language technique of Older English (as well as of Hebrew) to state what a person (God Himself in this case) thinks or how He views a number of items or things—all of which can and are considered to be viewed the same way, however, the **last** thing in the list being emphasized this way indicates that IT is the major reason for which the enumerated list is being made.

- Therefore, all 7 are *hated* and an *abomination* to the LORD—but the 7th is the **major issue** that He's driving at—and it is the reason for which this list is being set forth.

- (this is done numerous times in the Scriptures—Pro. 30:15; Pro. 30:18; Amos 1; Job 5:19)

- It's a way of saying that God *hates* these 7 things—**and**, they are all an *abomination* to Him—but the 7th one gets special attention; not only to just how *hateful* & *abominable* it is in God's sight—but because **it's the one** that **caused** God to generate this list in the first place! ... **it's the one He's after!**

16 These six things doth the LORD hate:

- Note: **LORD** (Jehovah—His Jehovah nature—His Jehovah-ness) = He's **bringing** all of His nature, character & essence into contrast with the *naughty* 'man of Belial' — which, when you think about it, is the very heart of the ancient 'contention' with the adversary as to who really is "the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth").

... **yea** - *yea* = an affirmative to make you realize that there is NO other alternative to what is said in that verse!

- in other words—there is NO compromise that the character and essence of God's 'God-ness' can make toward these 7 things than to **hate** them, and to view them as an **abomination**.

16 *These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an **abomination** to him:*

- Note: **hate** and then you have an even stronger, more powerful species of **hate**: **abomination**.
 - (This is a ‘shocker’ to most folks itself—that God could, and even does HATE! - there really are objects of God’s **hatred**, and men would do well to realize and recognize **that** just as much as they recognize and focus upon God’s love!)
 - God is a God of LOVE.
 - God is a God of HATE ... it almost sound offensive in this current worldly Christian culture! ... worldly Christianity has sanitized God’s hatred out of their thinking! ... which tells you a lot about how they view Scripture (low view)!
- And **abomination** **is** an advanced, stronger form or species of **hate**.
 - Along with words like *iniquity* and *abhor*—anything described as an *abomination* is describing sin, evil, wickedness (and the like) for the **personally offensive** thing it is to God—(not just generally offensive, but **personally** offensive to Him).
 - And that is because what is an *abomination* to God is striking at, and violating actual aspects of things He’s personally doing, and the Operations He’s involved in.
- *Abomination* is one of those ‘trigger’ words—it means: a state of mind that is a combination of hatred and disgust; abhorrence, detestation and loathing.
 - More than just *hatred*, to *abominate* means to “**turn away**” from something—to get as far away from it as possible!
 - *Abominate* is an extreme hatred—and, like other terminology used in the context of the Edification Process, it also indicates a “pollution” or corruption of the **soundness** of something!
 - But as a ‘trigger’ word—*abomination* causes you to think about something directly connected with that word—it ‘triggers’ you to think about how God’s word connects *abomination* with this other thing ... what is it?

A: IDOLATRY!

- Over and over again in Scripture, when God describes the idols of the heathen Gentile nations—(any other “god” but Him—[He’s very intolerant, you know]) - He describes the extreme *hatred* He has for them with the word **abomination** ... because He not only *hates* them, but He wants them as far away from Him as possible!

- the issue of being defiled, unclean, corrupt Ex. 32:7

- (and we could spend all day running verses on this—just read Leviticus & Deuteronomy) - it really is a word for God’s program with Israel [it doesn’t occur in Paul’s epistles].

- (see Mat. 24:15—a ref. to Dan. 12:11)

- But while there is direct application to God’s program with Israel—there are parallel applications to us and to the Edification Process we are undergoing as “sons” ...

... to be on guard for the *naughty* ‘man of Belial’ - and how we are to view his corrupt attempts to attack the **soundness** of our ‘building project’ with un-sound building materials!

- It is NOT going ‘too far’ to say that those who attack the **soundness** of “*godly edifying which is in faith*” (1 Tim. 1:4) are to be viewed and thought of as an abomination—as doing the very bidding of the adversary—as a ‘man of Belial’ — an as one who is to be ‘turned away from’ and gotten as far away from as possible!

- Rom. 16:17-18

- 2 Thess. 3:6

- 2 Thess. 3:14

- 1 Tim. 6:3-5

- 2 Tim. 3:5

(do you see why? you have a ‘**reputation**’ as a “son” - and that’s going to be converted into a “**conversation**” in the heavenly places—and that can get **ruined** [not just by some sin], but by associating yourself *with* ones like that—by believing one way, and then being a member of a church that teaches against what you believe!)

[note the progressive development]

- (see also: 1 Tim. 4:7 “refuse”

1 Tim. 6:20 “avoid”

2 Tim. 2:16 “shun”)

- The “Character Sketch” of *a naughty person, a wicked man*—the man of Belial—a person who has been lured by and seduced by *the strange woman*—the person who will oppose and resist the godly Edification Process—the duped pawn of the adversary—the one doing Satan’s bidding in opposing godly Edification ...

- The 7 Characteristics (or major Features) of *a naughty person* —

- This is a fitting look at the major features/characteristics of the Anti-Christ himself in God’s prog. w/ Isr.—(the quintessential ‘pawn’ of the Adversary—the ultimate one who does the bidding of the Adversary—the maximum *naughty person* [*naughtimus maximus*]!)!

- And in a parallel way—any person (believer or not—but more than likely a believer) who, (as the duped pawn of the Adversary) opposes and resists the godly Edification Process in this dispensation of grace in which we live! - and who attempts to corrupt the soundness of the godly Edification Process (either in you as an individual, but in this context, in us as a body or local assembly).

1. *A proud look*

- Notice how *pride* gets 1st place billing!

- One of the 3 Major Categories of “*the works of darkness*” (attacking the word of God) - [taught back in Rom. 13:11-14]

1) Lust of the Flesh; 2) Lust of the Eyes; **3) Pride of Life**

- “Pride of Life” - being the one that directly attacks the soundness of the local assembly by generating **strife** and division! [*pride* = the original sin]

- The *naughty person* operates upon ungodly pride and arrogance—and is manifested in a *proud look*—convinced he is operating upon greater wisdom than your ‘foolishness’ the *naughty person* looks upon you with disdain, the pride of the heart shows itself in the eyes (the looks of a man) - and is pointed out in both God’s prog. w/ Isr. and with us in this disp. of grace.

- Pro. 30:13
- Psa. 73:1-12 (:7)
- *God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble*
(Jam. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5)

- 1 Tim. 6:3-6

2. *a lying tongue*

- a mouth the speaks falsehood; corrupt doctrine; with the intention to deceive others and to bring your new-found sonship reputation to ruin.

- the *strange woman* (the *naughty man*) uses ***flattery*** in the most ungodly way imaginable! [powerful attraction/lure]

- Pro. 12:22
- Pro. 26:28
- John 8:44

- Eph. 4:25
- 1 Tim. 4:1-2
- Titus 1:10-14
- 2 Thess. 2:7-12

3. *hands that shed innocent blood*

- This is murder—and notice ***innocent*** *blood*.

- This is an issue with both the remnant of Israel in God's program with them—and with us, the body of Christ, in this disp. of grace!

- We were warned of this as a possibility in our godly Sonship Edification ...

- Pro. 1:11
- Rom. 8:35

- [God's program with Israel]:
- Isa. 59:3-6
- Mat. 10:34-36
- John 16:2

4. *An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations*

- In the Scriptures that pertain to God's prog. w/Isr.—they are full of passages that deal with the *wicked imaginations of the heart* of Israel's vain religious system.

- Again, my understanding is that this isn't talking about just any old *wicked imaginations* that the heart can *devise*—but this is said in the context of one who is opposing the godly Edification Process.

- Israel's VRS allowed (and even welcomed in) the corrupted doctrines of the pagan Gentile nations (ala the Canaanites) - and when they went out into captivity under the 5th CoP, they corrupted themselves with the gods of Babylon and Assyria.

- (we could spend hours just running passages about this)

- Just note for now that this *naughty* 'man of Belial' who is doing the bidding of the adversary in opposing the godly Edification Process has a *heart that deviseth wicked imaginations* ...

... "*deviseth*" = carefully arranging a plan or design; something thought out; cunning craftiness—something thought out so that it will be offered as a viable alternative and a more attractive 'form of godliness' than 'godly edifying which is in faith' — a COUNTERFEIT form of Edification! [usually in the guise of a "Breakthrough" doct.]

- *wicked "imagination"* = this isn't just conjuring up (or thinking up) any old evil and wicked thing—rather, this is a carefully thought out plan of spiritual life or spirituality attained by something **other** than the God-given curriculum for godly Sonship Edification.

... and note the excellency of that word *imagination* = the act of forming a mental IMAGE—but one that does not correspond to the reality of things (it's *wicked*, false & vain)!

- This is one of the greatest & most powerful assets & tools of the adversary: *imagination*!

- Due to the corruption of sin in our members—what a person *imagines* something to be, is very often a far more powerful means of persuasion to his mind than what he sees written on a page of a Book! (And God knows this; and so does the Adversary!)

... “Well, I just can’t imagine or, I would imagine it should be this way, or that way, but not the way the Bible says it is” ...

- (Lots of verses in the OT could be looked at)

(Pro. 24:8) *He that deviseth to do evil shall be called a mischievous person.*

(Mic. 2:1) *Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practice it, because it is in the power of **their** hand.*

(Zech. 8:17) *And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things **that I hate**, saith the LORD.*

(see 2 Cor. 10:3-5)

5. *feet that be swift in running to mischief*

- This *naughty* ‘man of Belial’ who is opposing the godly Edification Process is all about *mischief* (back in :14) ...

... *mischief* (“minus a head”) conveys the idea of bad or wanton injurious intent and resulting harm - it carries the shade of meaning of **impairing the soundness of a thing!**

- (the intent being to ‘shake’ your mind in your confidence of the godly Edification Process **and its God-authorized ‘building materials’!**)

6. *A false witness that speaketh lies*

- This 6th hateful abomination to the LORD is set apart and distinguished from the 2nd (“*a lying tongue*”).

- This is a violation of the 9th Commandment—and for a properly educated “son” - you would immediately perceive that this is a matter of **having NO godly Love & Charity!**

- (even though they may *think* and may even *say* that what they're doing is "being done in love"! - that's NOT godly love! - that's not according to: *let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind!*)

- Remember: back in Rom. 13:9— bearing false witness was the **exact opposite** of having the 4th Major Feature of Godly Love & Charity: MEEKNESS (= the containment within yourself of your "rights" to redress something because you would rather pursue a course that is more important and meaningful to you.)

- a *false witness that speaketh lies* is going to mis-characterize you and your doctrinal position as a "son" (re: the apostle Paul; the "mystery"; rightly dividing; ... and especially the curriculum for godly sonship edification!) - and more often than not; call you names: "Hyper-dispensational"

- The *naughty* 'man of Belial' will use such things as:

- Misrepresenting Evidence;
- Untrue Testimony;
- Fictitious Accusations

(for example see Gen. 39:1-20 and the case of Joseph and his master's mistress)

- and for all the details of meekness vs. bearing false witness—see the teaching on Rom. 13:9.

7. *he that soweth discord among brethren*

- Again, the context won't allow for this phrase to be applied in a broad and general way—(such as in any natural relationship, or in civil society, or in business, or sports, etc.)

... rather, this *naughty person*, this *wicked man* of Belial is the useful pawn of the adversary to oppose godly edification!

- "*godliness*" = found in both programs (not unique to d/g)

- "*edification*" (or building a *spiritual house*) = found in both programs

- and there are 2 sides of the edification 'coin' in both programs: believing Israelite/Nation; individual believer/body

- And I say that because—*discord among brethren* is devastating & destructive to the Nation Israel (they were not to be a divided nation) — and, of course, *discord among brethren* is devastating & destructive to the body of Christ and its edification.

- Here we have the 2nd and last time the word *discord* is used in Scripture.

- ***discord*** = the absence of **concord** or harmony between persons; disagreement of aims; strife-causing division.

- (remember) 2 *Cor. 6:15* *And what concord hath Christ with **Belial**?*

- ***concord*** = a living-union relationship **that should never be broken under ANY circumstances! (powerful word!)**

- This brings us ‘full-circle’ back to 6:12-14—back to the very reason why God generated this ‘list’ in the first place—and back to something the LORD *hates* and is an ***abomination*** to Him!

- And this makes you realize and recognize that something that you, by nature, would only IMAGINE as a mild problem, (or not really such a big deal) - really IS A BIG DEAL and a SERIOUS problem in God’s sight! (point: use the ‘eyes of your understanding’!)

- This is what the adversary and his *naughty* ‘man of Belial’ is driving at; aiming at; and opposing at all cost! — the issue of our fellowship and communion and concord AS A BODY — in other words: BODY EDIFICATION!

- And of all the things your Father could exhort you about at the end of your ‘formal’ education and training as His “son” - the thing He wisely leaves in your mind exhortation-wise is concerning your fellowship, communion, and concord as a BODY being Edified and conformed into a particular image! (and it WILL be attacked!)

- Oh—one other thing: THE BIG SHOCKER! (in fact, one of the most shocking Scriptures in all of God’s word) — [do you see it?] ... everything that God says He both *hates and abominates* is a THING ... except the 7th ... it says, ***and HE that soweth discord among brethren ... (HE!) - God hates & abominates HIM!***

- One last thing before moving on: **THE POSITIVE & PROPER RESPONSE**

- What constitutes a Positive Response is:

My son, forget not my law;

1) A conscious decision/determination to recognize the ESSENTIAL, VITAL IMPORTANCE of the information you just learned from your Father (it's *transforming you by the renewing of your mind*—and it's providing for all 3 aspects of godliness to take place); and in view of that, you're determined to have it in 'remembrance' so that it can be UTILIZED when it's needed.

but let thine heart keep my commandments:

2) A conscious decision/determination to commune and fellowship with your Father in sonship prayer so as to allow for your human spirit to appreciate the PRECIOUSNESS and VALUE of the information you just learned from your Father—and from that, your human spirit mechanically gives that information a prominent place in your heart where it doesn't get lost. (At which point the information is prepared for the Proper Response to take place).

- What constitutes a PROPER RESPONSE is:

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee:

1) With the newly acquired godly thinking, you will then be given the sonship grace opportunity to put it into practice, (both in basic conduct & behavior, and in laboring together with God in something that He's doing), which is to be recognized as a 'merciful' provision that allows for you to live 'truthfully' and honestly as to who you are "in Christ" and in God's plan and purpose—whereupon you determine NOT to allow such a sonship grace opportunity to pass you by!

bind them about thy neck;

2) This is the issue of taking the *mercy and truth* sonship grace opportunity to live & labor with your Father and make the conscious decision to treat it as 'spiritual money,' kept in a pouch about your neck in order to 'purchase' the opportunity to put your sonship thinking into practice—and thereby "*redeem the time.*"

write them upon the table of thine heart:

3) This is the conscious decision to take the “*mercy and truth*” opportunity to spend your ‘spiritual money’ that comes your way by creating in your heart a ‘list’ of opportunities you want to ‘buy’ or put into practice—whereupon God Himself writes the doctrine upon the fleshy tables of your heart, making it so that the living words of the Living God fully live in you!

THE END OF RECEIVING THE 4 SONSHIP DECISION-MAKING SKILLS.

- At this major point of achievement / attainment as a son successfully completes the ‘formal’ educational phase of Level I Sonship Education—at the very end of the son’s first Level of education (and just before his son can go on to his second Level of education), the Father is going to say some further things to His son in connection with 2 major matters:

1. Matters that have to do with what Level I Sonship Education is designed to accomplish regarding the Father’s *heart* being imparted and installed in the son’s *heart* [as far as Level I is designed to do it ... there’s much more to do in Level II]. And these matters will have to do with the character of the Father becoming fully ‘fused’ with the character of the son.

2. Matters that have to do with preparing and ensuring that the son can GO ON as a “young man” and get Level II of his Sonship Education.

- And there’s going to be a MAJOR issue that the Father now has to confront his son with—an issue that has to do with the opposition & resistance that the son is going to face - a very real and present DANGER—the Father will confront his son with issues that have to do with de-railing the son’s education; thwarting it; stopping it; ruining it; and destroying it!

- And it’s interesting (and fascinating) to see how God and His word (the scriptures) handle all of the issues pertaining to education, training, ... and even edification ... and what I’m after isn’t anything new or ‘mind-blowing’ (breakthrough) ... it’s something that sits right in front of us day after day ... and it’s something that is confirmed over and over again in God’s word ... (let’s set that aside for a moment and let’s look at some things in God’s word) ...

(backwards)

- Gal. 5:7-8

- Gal. 1:6-9

- 2 Cor. 11:13-15

- 1 Cor. 3:21-23

- 1 Cor. 3:1-7

- 1 Cor. 1:10-13

- Pro. 6:20-9:18

(now go forward)

COMPETING: VOICES/ IMAGE/
AUTHORITY

1. Internet (other churches, blogs, chat rooms, face book, twitter)

2. Another Bible teacher, Pastor—writer—conference speaker, friend, family member

3. ME!

(The Strange Woman has a competing assembly in her home! [Pro. 2:16-19])

- (returning to that rather fascinating way in which God describes all of the issues pertaining to education, training, and edification) ...

... and it's not a surprising thing at all—in fact, you already know it, and are very familiar with it ...

... but my point in pointing it out is not so much the fact of it—but that it may be that we don't really appreciate it as we should (or as God Himself does) - and maybe we don't appreciate what it implies.

- And what I'm after is how all things education-wise, and training-wise, and edification-wise are described by God in terms of **family relationships** ...

... “mother” / “father” ... and even back to the more basic and fundamental issue of “man” and “woman” ... “male” and “female” and the rolls God designed and intended and purposed for them to play—and the great benefits that come to them when they do!

- amazing: **Godly Wisdom** is likened to a virtuous woman.

- Pro. 7:4; Pro. 31; SOS

- **Ungodly Wisdom** is likened to a woman as well ... but an unchaste, filthy, whorish, **strange woman**.

- (attempting to 'flip' the roll of the woman around)

- Well, the point is—this is what you are now going to face at the end of the book of Romans:

- the strange woman

- a competing “voice” / competing “wisdom”

- the strange woman even has a competing assembly in her home! (Pro. 2:16-19)

- **ROMANS 15:8-16:27** (read)

- 26 vss. in Ch. 15

- 27 vss. in Ch. 16

- **Total of 53 verses**

- 4 “*amen*”s - (*amen* = 7x in Romans)

- 1:25; 9:5; 11:36

- 15:33; 16: 20, 24, 27

- In Ch. 16 we have a unique ending to the epistles of Paul ... no other epistle ends like Romans—with this listing of all these persons — none are this extensive in the list of persons, or what is said about each person.

- There are 2 major ‘lists’ of persons — 38 in all.

- **1st List (16:1-15)** - 29 persons are mentioned (27 by name; 2 by relationship title)

- 1 other character is mentioned by name: SATAN himself! (:20)

- **2nd List (16:21-23)** - 8 persons are mentioned by name.

- Total of 38 persons (36 by name)

- 3 churches are directly mentioned: 1 @ Cenchrea; 1 @ Priscilla & Aquila’s house; 1 Giaus’ church

- 2 “*households*” are mentioned: 1. Aristobulus’ ; 2. Narcissus’

- Plus 2 groups of “*brethren*” with them (:14) (:15)

- 2 people that are not even members of the “body of Christ”, but members of the remnant of Israel: (:7) Andronicus and Junia ... what’s that all about???

- Of these 38 persons—one (1), the saints are told to “*receive*” and “*assist*” = Phebe.

- five (5), the saints are told to “*greet*” = Priscilla, Aquila, Mary, Amplias, and Narcissus (and his *household*).

- The rest, (23), are to be “*saluted*” by the saints, or are **being** “*saluted*” by the 8 persons in the 2nd List.

- and Satan is to be “*bruised*”.

 - There are 5 quotations from the OT—all in Ch. 15:

- 4 are quoted in connection with (:8-9a)
 - (:9) - quoted from Psalm 18:49
 - (:10) - quoted from Deut. 32:43
 - (:11) - quoted from Psalm 117:1
 - (:12) - quoted from Isaiah 11:10
- 1 is quoted in connection with (:17-20)
 - (:21) - quoted from Isaiah 52:15

- And notice that all 5 OT quotations are “*AS it is written*” - none of them are “*for it is written*” ... (what is that about?)

- We will encounter 2 more ‘**titles**’ that God gives to Himself—and that we are to recognize as being true of Him, *and* as being true of us:

- (15:13) *the God of hope*
 - (15:33) *the God of peace* (repeated in 16:20)
-

- The GENERAL MATTER (or issue) of Romans 15:8-16:27 is very simple: and it parallels exactly what a natural father would say and do with his natural adopted son at the end of his son’s first Level of sonship education.

- The son was adopted by the father in the first place in order for his son to enter into the father’s business and work together with him.

- The son has just completed his basic orientation, establishment, and all of the ‘formal’ training in being able to make wise, just, judgmental, and equitable decisions just like his father—the son has now been properly taught and trained to one day RULE along **with** his father in all his father’s business.

- The son is moving away from being a *simple* son, to becoming a *young man* (with all of its inherent glories and pitfalls).

- Therefore the father is now going to say some things to his son; and check out his son, in order to ensure and fully settle the father’s mind *and* the son’s mind, that the son really is fully and firmly *Established* (and that the son’s *Establishment* is SOUND) - *and* to prepare the son to **go on** and be fully and firmly *Stablished* with the result that the son’s *Stablishment* will one day be as SOUND as his *Establishment*.

- So the GENERAL MATTER of a natural father educating his natural son at the end of his son's first Level of sonship education is simple:

- Ensuring that the son's foundational *Establishment* is **sound** in preparation for the son's **sound** *Stabishment*.

- And the General Matter of a natural father making his son's foundational *Establishment* *sound* and preparing the son for his *sound* *Stabishment* is 2-Fold — and because it perfectly **agrees** with natural sonship education, the GENERAL MATTER of Rom. 15:8-16:27 is also 2-Fold (i.e., it's accomplished in 2 ways):

1) Providing the son with the ability to GO ON and get the rest of his Sonship Education and Edification. (as that burgeoning *young man*).

2) Preparing the son to meet the opposition and resistance to him GOING ON and getting the rest of his Sonship Education and Edification.

- And by the father doing this—the son is going to naturally **see** some further things about the character and nature of his father—that is, the son is going to receive the culmination of the foundational and basic understanding and appreciation of his father's nature (along with his genius, forethought, planning, preparation, and things along those lines) ...

... and (to borrow some terminology from what we learned way back when we dealt with the basic format (or Table of Contents) for sonship education in Proverbs 1 — that's exactly what we will come to ***know***, ***perceive***, and ***receive*** regarding our Heavenly Father's divine nature.

- And the Father's expectation is that His foundational and basic nature (or "heart") will be permanently 'fused' with our nature or "heart" as well.

- And this is an important matter to appreciate—because at this point in a son's education, enough of an identifiable 'conformity' to the 'image' of God's Son has taken place, that, once it's in existence, there are some 'expectations' that come out of it ... *and* there are some **responses** that come out of it from the Adversary!

- So at the end of the formal education / edification of Level I—the simplified way of saying what the Father will do with the son, is to ENSURE that what **has been** accomplished in Level I will be able to **continue on**—and that NOTHING is going to be able to ‘derail’ what’s been accomplished in Level I Sonship Education because the adversary is going to now bring his Policy of Evil to bear against us as “sons”.

- i.e., to attempt to ‘*separate us from the love of Christ*’ that we were warned about back in Romans 8.

- And you see that very thing in Rom. 16:17-19 ...

... but it doesn’t start there—it actually begins in 15:8!

- And in order to avoid those tactics and attacks from the Satanic PoE—there has to be some hard-hitting, [almost] hard-nosed, blunt underscoring of the fact that the issue of sticking with OUR curriculum **is a non-negotiable matter with God!**

- and because you learned back in Rom. 8 that the very first tactics from the PoE that will be coming your way are not physical attacks—rather they are “*tribulation*” and “*distress*” — and that kind of attack is an attack upon your MIND (your godly thinking) — that kind of an attack is a DOCTRINAL ASSAULT!

- And right off the bat—in Rom. 15:8ff—this is what is going on—the issue is not one of making you aware of the **fact** of the great dispensational change God has brought in with the “mystery of Christ” ... but the issue is to say some more things about it in order to ENSURE that you will forever more keep the two aspects of the Lord Jesus Christ’s ministry (in connection with God’s TWO programs) **separate and distinct!**

... and that that’s not just some ‘theological gimmick’ - it’s not just a ‘hermeneutical principle’ that you could hold (and someone else could hold something different) and we’re both hunky-dory ... NO ...

... it’s an exclusive matter of doing God’s work **in God’s way!** (and sonship education can’t take place any other way)!

- (and that's what's going to be attacked first and foremost!)

- That's what Phase 1 of the PoE is all about: to go after the MESSAGE—to go after the doctrine that's being dealt with! ... because that's the most critical thing!

... you mess up the THINKING, then you've messed up the Living and then you've prohibited the Labor ... (you've corrupted all 3 of the Components of Godliness in one fell swoop!)

- So that's the General Overall Matter or "The Big Thing" (topic) of what this final section to the book of Romans is all about.

- And since the General, Overall Matter is for the Father to **ensure** that the son's foundational *Establishment* is **sound** in preparation for the son's **sound** *Stabishment* ...

... that means that every thing you encounter in these remaining 53 verses will have THAT in view ... this isn't just some long (and some would say awkward) way of ending a really long letter! and that the end of Romans really doesn't have much in the way of doctrinal content!

- So how do these 53 verses break down? — My understanding is that this final section of Romans can be broken down into 2 Major Sub-Sections—and each of the 2 sub-sections deal with that Overall Matter of the Father ensuring that His son can and will GO ON from his sound, foundational *Establishment* to his sound *Stabishment*.

1st Sub-Section: Rom. 15:8-16:16 (42 verses)

- Providing the son with the ability to GO ON and get the rest of his Sonship Education & Edification as a *young man*.

2nd Sub-Section: Rom. 16:17-27 (11 verses)

- Preparing the son to meet the opposition and resistance to him GOING ON and getting the rest of his Sonship Education and Edification as a *young man*. (and for the son to not only 'meet' the opposition/resistance to him Going On ... but to face it; meet it; and successfully overcome it by means of the Father's instruction—becoming *more than a conqueror* by it!

- So: Is there a further Breakdown to each of these 2 Sub-sections? yes.

- But since we're no longer dealing with the actual 'formal' education part of our curriculum (which was in Rom. 12:3-15:7) - my understanding is that we're not going to have the 'Component' aspect to this body of information like we did with *the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity ...*

... but we ARE still dealing with "*sound doctrine*" and (as Paul said to Timothy in 2 Tim. 1:13) we're still dealing with "*the **FORM** of sound words*" ...

... not only that—but every epistle (letter) of our apostle Paul; and every WORD in those epistles (that make up our curriculum) has as it's aim, goal, and objective the issue of producing "*godly edifying which is in faith*" (1 Tim. 1:4) ... since godly edification is still in view (and by default, GODLINESS) ... we should expect to find the components or aspects of godliness within these 2-Fold issues to the Overall Matter.

- In other words—instead of having 'Components' to it; it's going to address the 3 aspects of godliness: Godly Thinking; Godly Living (or Conduct & Behavior); and Godly Labor with God in all that He's currently doing.

- And that's exactly what we DO find!

- So let's see the pattern of godliness and let that become our "Outline of Rom. 15:8-16:27.

- Let's see the 1st of the 2-Fold matters that the Father will deal with His son about—that 1st Sub-Section of Rom. 15:8-16:16 (looking for matters that deal with godly Thinking, then godly Living, and then the godly Labor).

- **Godly Thinking: Rom. 15:8-21**

- And my understanding is that there are 3 Parts (so to speak) to the godly Thinking:

Part A: 15:8-13—godly understanding and thinking regarding the great dispensational change that has taken place with emphasis upon the distinction between the Gentiles in Israel's program vs. the Gentiles in Paul's ministry.

Part B: 15:14-16—godly understanding and thinking regarding the apostle Paul’s distinctive ministry and apostleship in this current dispensation of grace in which we now live.

Part C: 15:17-21—godly understanding and thinking of the Holy Ghost having sanctified the reality of the great dispensational change that has taken place and Paul’s ministry as the apostle of the Gentiles.

- Now, at this point I want to call your attention to something very important: (and this is something that really begins all the way up in (:8) and runs through this whole section (down to 16:27) ...

... but at this point it becomes obvious (it sticks out like a sore thumb) ...

... notice all of the **personal pronouns** in this section where Paul refers to **himself** (which is often criticized by theologians) ...

... in just (:22-29) alone [8 verses] Paul uses “I” and “my” a total of 10x!

- In fact—in the entire section of Rom. 15:8-16:27 (53 verses) - Paul will speak about himself with the personal pronouns “I”, “my”, “me”, “myself”, and “mine” a total of **61x!!**

- And in this is being done for a reason!

- The focus is primarily upon Paul’s godly Thinking, Living and Labor—why? — because this reveals Paul’s godly apostolic plans to provide for and give the Level I Romans “sons” **the rest of the curriculum** for the next Level of their further edification and their proper godly Thinking, Living & Laboring together with God in all that God is doing.

- And if Paul really is the apostle of the Gentiles, and if he really is the one through whom God is going to give the curriculum for godly sonship edification for us today: **THERE BETTER BE A LEGAL BASIS FOR IT!** (if his letters are to be considered the inspired word of God!)

- **Godly Living: Rom. 15:22-29**

- And my understanding is that there are 3 Parts to the godly Living:

Part A: Rom. 15:22-24 — godly Living of the apostle Paul and his methodology for the rapid communication of his gospel—a methodology that was different from Israel’s program—giving living proof and testimony of the truth and reality of the godly thinking.

Part B: Rom. 15:25-27—godly Living regarding “*the poor saints which are at Jerusalem*” further validating Paul’s unique apostleship—and giving further living proof and testimony of the truth and reality of the godly thinking.

Part C: Rom. 15:28-29—godly Living regarding the legal matter of “*sealing*” as it pertains to God temporarily stopping His program with Israel until He is finished dealing with the Gentiles—with Paul as the apostle of the Gentiles in “*the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ*” despite the defaming and lies brought against him—giving further and final living proof and testimony of the truth and reality of the godly thinking.

- **Godly Labor: Rom. 15:30-16:16**

- Again, it’s my understanding that we have 3 Parts to the godly Labor, too.

Part A: Rom. 15:30-33—godly Labor of intelligent sonship prayer.

Part B: Rom. 16:1-2—godly Labor of properly *receiving* Phebe as a member of the body in godly love & charity.

Part C: Rom. 16:3-16—godly Labor of *greeting* and *saluting* the saints in godly love & charity.

- And now for the last 11 verses of the book (Rom. 16:17-27) - the 2nd of the 2-Fold matters that the Father will deal with His son about—which will again have that pattern of the 3 Aspects of godliness, just like before.

- **Godly Thinking: Rom. 16:17-18** (no “Parts” to it) — godly understanding and Thinking with regard to Phase 1 of the Satanic Policy of Evil.

- **Godly Living: Rom. 16:19**—godly Living in regard to functioning successfully under the experience of Phase 1 of the Policy of Evil.

- **Godly Labor: Rom 16:20-27**

- And here, my understanding is that we again have 3 Parts to it.

Part A: Rom. 16:20—godly Labor of effectually *brusing Satan* to countermand the continuation of Phase 1 of the Policy of Evil.

Part B: Rom. 16:21-24—godly Labor of properly acknowledging and responding to the “*grace*” of the ones used by God to provide for your *Establishment*.

Part C: Rom. 16:25-27—godly Labor of *Stablishing* any who are affected by Phase 1 of the Policy of Evil.

- So as we begin to deal with the details of Rom. 15:8-16:27—let’s just follow our General Outline as we get down into those details:

- **Overall Issue (of all 53 verses)**: The Father ensuring that the son’s sound foundational *Establishment* of Level I Sonship Edification is prepared for his sound *Stablishment* coming up in Level II Sonship Edification.

- And the Father will accomplish this in a 2-Fold manner—that is, by saying 2 Major Things to His son:

1. Rom. 15:8-16:16—The Father will say something to His son in order to provide him with the ability to GO ON and get the rest of his Sonship Education & Edification as a *young man*.

- And within the body of information that the Father says to His son (there in Rom. 15:8-16:16) - it will contain and address the 3 Aspects of Godliness: (Godly Thinking, Godly Living, and Godly Labor).

- **And the Godly Thinking is found in Rom. 15:8-21**—and it will be presented in 3 Parts—which are the 3 essential godly Thinking matters that will provide for His son to be able to GO ON and get the rest of his education/edification as God’s “son” in view of the demands of Level II Sonship Edification.

- Part A: vs. 8-13 — Godly understanding and thinking regarding the great dispensational change that has taken place; with emphasis upon the distinction between the Gentiles in God’s program with Israel vs. the Gentiles in Paul’s ministry.

- “Part A” contains 6 verses—and 5 sentences.

- And we have a statement made in (:8-9a) - and it sets forth a matter of godly thinking and understanding concerning God’s “Time Past” program with Israel.

- And it has 2 major Clauses to it—(divided by a colon at the end of (:8) ...

8 Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:

9 And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; ...

- And that is then followed by a series of 4 quotations from the OT scriptures in (:9b—12) ...

Quote #1

9 ... as it is written, (quotation from Psalm 18:49) For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.

Quote #2

10 And again he saith, (quotation from Deu. 32:43) Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.

Quote #3

11 And again, (quotation from Psalm 117:1) Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.

Quote #4

12 And again, Esaias saith, (quotation from Isa. 11:10) There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.

- Then that is followed by a ‘Mini Sonship Checkpoint’ in (:13) which is designed to strengthen the 2nd Virtue of Sonship Edification.

- And in (:13) we have our Father giving Himself the 2nd of those ‘Character Titles’ we have talked about—which should not only be something we see as true of our Father; but also something we see as true of us as His “sons/daughters” ...

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

- Now before we begin looking at the details—I just want to return to something we noted a moment ago about what is going on in this first section (or Part A) of the godly Thinking regarding the great dispensational change that has taken place.

- We noted that in (:8-9a) God has the apostle Paul set forth some further godly Thinking regarding God’s “Time Past” dealings with Israel ... but really, there’s more going on in (:8-13) than this ...

... for sure, that IS something that God has the apostle Paul set forth; because the truth of that is firmly stated as a reality in the opening clause of (:8) - *Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: ...*

... but then—by what (:9) goes on to say, and by those 4 quotations from the OT scriptures—the emphasis there is, (granted), still concerning God’s program with Israel (and not us) ... but those 4 verses are intentionally having you **look** at God’s program with Israel at a very particular viewpoint ... (do you see that?)

- And by the opening clause of (:9), and the 4 quotations from the OT scriptures that God intentionally has the apostle Paul quote—God is actually having you **look** at God’s program with Israel **when He fulfills His program with Israel in that time “TO COME”!**

- So what you are going to get set before you here are all 3 of those segments of “rightly dividing the word of truth” that we normally understand and appreciate—and that are common to us; and familiar to us—(i.e., Time Past / But Now / To Come) ... but He’s going to go about it a bit differently—in a different order—in order to put a great and special EMPHASIS upon 1 of those segments: the segment dealing with “But Now” - or the present dispensation of the Grace of God with Paul as our apostle and the *minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles (:16)* ! [which is in ‘Part B’ of the Godly Thinking]

- So—to be more accurate and precise—what you’re going to get in ‘Part A’ of the Godly Thinking (in :8-13) is some godly thinking regarding God’s program with Israel in BOTH:

1) Time Past—when God’s “hand” was with Israel;

and

2) To Come—when God resumes and fulfills His program with Israel—when “all Israel shall be saved” — which is where the **emphasis** upon the distinction between the Gentiles in God’s program with Israel vs. the Gentiles in Paul’s ministry takes place.

- In other words—what you’ve got in (:8-13) is BOTH “Time Past” (when God’s “hand” was with Israel) ***and*** “To Come” (when “all Israel shall be saved) - but with special emphasis upon God’s dealings with the Gentiles at that “To Come” time!

- Instead of God presenting the issue of the great dispensational change in order: (Time Past / But Now / To Come), He instead presents it to us in a different order:

- (Rom. 15:8-13) In His “Time Past” ***and*** “To Come” dealings with Israel and the Gentiles ...

- And then (Rom. 15:14-16) in His “But Now” dealings with the Gentiles in this present dispensation of the grace of God—with Paul as the *minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles* !

... which is an ingenious way of emphasizing the matter of Paul’s unique apostleship and what God is now doing with him; and of the great dispensational program change that has been brought in, and what God is NOW doing in view of it!

- and also, to keep those 2 programs SEPARATE AND DISTINCT! (which is **absolutely necessary and critical** if you, as a “son” are going to be able to Go On and get the rest of your sonship education!)

- Do you see that? and see that clearly? - if not, you will as we go through the details.

- Let's begin looking at the details now in (:8-13) - and as we begin (:8), we're going to see that God is going to have the apostle Paul set forth some issues that are to make up our godly Thinking as properly educated & edified, Level I "sons" (with our Romans doctrine 'foundation' being *Established*), that will provide us with the ability (i.e., the necessary godly Thinking ability) that we **need** to have (and that we **MUST** have) in order to Go On to Level II of our Sonship Education & Edification.

- And what our Father knows is one (i.e., 'Part A') of the things that is absolutely essential and necessary for us to be able to Go On—is some further godly Thinking regarding the great dispensational change that He has brought in when He temporarily halted and suspended His program with Israel and brought in this disp. of grace through the '*revelation of the mystery*' revealed to His unique apostle: the apostle Paul.

- And you need to have a firm understanding & appreciation that God is NOT bringing this up (or saying what He does) in order to teach us the FACT of this great dispensational change ... because you've already been taught the FACTS of it back in Rom. 1, and Rom. 9-11!

- Nor is this body of information designed to be an issue of simply underscoring it; or re-enforcing it; or reviewing it; or re-stating it; or anything along those lines.

- His purpose here is to say something about this great dispensational change that will generate in your thinking His own thinking in regard to Him being **absolutely uncompromising** when it comes to this issue—and how that it is a **non-negotiable matter** with Him when it comes to godly edification in this present time in which you live!

- It is a **real LIFE AND DEATH ISSUE**—(that is, spiritual or 'functional' life, and spiritual or 'functional' death) as far as who God has made you to be sanctification-wise "in Christ"!

- Because if you are to ever Go On and get the rest of your godly Sonship Edification & education, **you're going to have to 'stick' with this great dispensational change; and 'stick' with the apostle Paul; and 'stick' with the rest of the curriculum for your godly edification that is given to (and only to) the apostle Paul!**

- Or to put it another way (that is in keeping with this portion), your only **HOPE** for success as a "son" in God's sight is Paul and his epistles!!! (see Rom. 15:13)

- In other words—you're to understand and appreciate that you **are not**, nor ever will be: Israel (and Israel is not, nor never will be you!); nor 'helpers' of Israel; nor carrying the baton for Israel (because God got fed-up with them); nor spiritual Israelites (ala Messianic Christians) ...

... and so you're NOT going to go from Romans to (say) the book of Hebrews next—or James, or Peter's epistles, or John's epistles—(because that's not YOUR curriculum!).

- You need to recognize that what God has written in Gen—the opening chapters of the book of Acts (including the 4 Gospels), and in Heb-Rev is NOT consistent with what God is now doing in this present disp. of grace (and not consistent with the Lord Jesus Christ as *a minister of the circumcision*).

... the doctrines to, for, and about this present time of this disp. of grace are contained **only** in Paul's 13 epistles.

- And the great need for doing this—the primary reason for God having Paul return to this issue has to do with the ATTACK of the Satanic Policy of Evil when it comes to corruptive doctrine that is designed to bring your godly Sonship Edification to a HALT! (to derail it; thwart it; corrupt it; and stop it from Going On!)

- The first thing you're going to face is that *strange woman* and her corrupt BIBLE doctrine—that will attack God's **message** and replace it with her own message.

- She will attempt to get it so that you will Think, Live, and Labor as if you are in God's program with Israel, rather than Thinking, Living, and Laboring consistent with this new and different disp. of grace that's in effect today.

- This will make it so that (just like Paul said to the Corinthians [2 Cor. 2:11]) ***we are not ignorant of his (Satan's) devices.***

- The major contrary doctrine of the Satanic Policy of Evil to afflict the saints with, is the **denial** of the reality of the dispensational change—and to thereby get the members of the church, the body of Christ to function as if they were functioning in Israel's program!

- Now—as we approach (:8) - pay attention to the punctuation marks — you have **one sentence** that runs from (:8) through (:9) ...

... there are **two major clauses**—the 1st makes up all of (:8) and ends with that colon at the end of (:8) ...

... which means you are supposed to ‘pause’ there long enough to get the full impact and full effectual working of the godly Thinking in that 1st clause (or all of :8).

- Then you move on to the 2nd clause of the sentence in (:9) ... which runs to the semicolon—which adds an additional thought (which is the **main thought** of the sentence) - and that thought is going to be verified as a reality by the quotation of 4 OT scripture passages.

- So let’s begin looking at (:8) and that 1st major clause of the sentence that is designed to give us the godly Thinking of our Father in order for us to be properly equipped and able to Go On and get the rest of our sonship education and edification.

8 Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:

- *Now I say* ...

- The word “*Now*” can be used in a whole bunch of ways. (and we’re not going to go into all of them now [pun])

- Notice: you are going to get the word *Now* used at the beginning of a sentence **6 x** in the remainder of the book of Romans— (15: 8, 13, 30, 33; 16: 17, 25)

- We’ve already dealt with the word *Now* as an introduction to a Sonship Checkpoint back in (:5) - where it was used to say, ‘Now, in view of what the curriculum for sonship edification has accomplished so far’ ... here is something that is going to be a Checkpoint for you ... and that had to do with the fusing of your Father’s character with your own—it had to do with that 1st Character Title (*the God of patience and consolation*) ... and all 3 of His Character Titles will begin with “*Now*” - (so that tells you we’ve got at least 2 more Sonship Checkpoints ahead of us).

- But here in (:8), my understanding is that this “*Now*” is a very simple and general use of the word—it’s simply used here to introduce an important or noteworthy point (in an argument or proof), or in a series of statements (or, as we have here, quotations).
[OED #10a]

- And in a sense, God is having the apostle Paul set forth a “proof” of something—and it’s critically important for our continued sonship education.

- So, while it’s been a long time—we need to put ourselves back in that ‘court-room’ frame of mind—where we encounter another one of Paul’s magnificent ‘proofs’!

8 *Now I say* ...

- Here is the 1st of 61x that Paul refers to himself. (and it’s critical to this ‘proof’ - and it’s critical to getting the godly Thinking)!

- Notice God doesn’t have Paul say: *Now Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision* ... rather, He has Paul say, ***Now I say*** ...

- And the importance /significance of this is that a **MESSAGE is at stake here!** And if this **message** isn’t understood and appreciated properly (or dealt with properly), then **DISASTER** is going to ensue!

- It draws your attention to PAUL—and to his apostleship— [at least, at first] - and to ‘*magnifying his office*’ as we should be doing ...

(*For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I **magnify mine office**: [Rom. 11:13]*)

- It underscores that the message God gave to the apostle Paul **is the message we are to pay attention to—it is the message that will give us our godly sonship edification to the EXCLUSION of any other apostle!**

- It draws our **thinking** to what God has done and is doing with the apostle Paul as OUR apostle (= one sent with a **message** of another!)

- But there’s **MORE** going on here than even that. Because the issue of Paul as the **apostle** of the Gentiles has already been well established.

... and really, Paul's *apostleship* isn't the thing in view here (otherwise the word "apostle" would be used) ...

... rather, there's something else about Paul that *is* in view here ... and it's another way to think about God's word "rightly divided" - it's another way to think about the great dispensational change that God has brought in—and a way **to keep the 2 programs separate and distinct! ...**

... and it *is* a **legal matter** ...

- Now when I say it's a "legal matter" - I'm not talking about 'legal' in the sense of pertaining to the law or belonging to the profession of the law (which is its primary meaning) ...

... but what I mean by 'legal' is in the sense of something or someone who is appointed by a legal, authorized authority.

- Illustration of a legal thing: money / coin—which you can see on any of our paper money —

- a \$20.00 bill is actually just a small piece of paper with some ink on it—(the actual worth of the paper and ink is probably just a few cents—and it would be the same for a \$1.00 bill as for a \$100.00 bill) ...

- but, of course, that's not the value of it—the value of a \$20 bill is 20 dollars—but what makes its value 20 dollars?

- well, if you look on any of our paper money, you'll find the words: "Federal Reserve Note" ... which means that our United States Federal Reserve (which is an authorized authority) guarantees the value of this piece of paper and ink to be 20 US dollars ...

... but more than that, if you look closely, you'll see these words: "**This note is legal tender for all debts, public and private.**"

- Which tells you that this piece of paper & ink carries the value of 20 US dollars—and that a particular Power or Authority has authorized it and stands behind it to guarantee its genuine and authentic value—and that it therefore can be **legally** used in a particular way ("for all debts, public and private").

- Well, in the same way—a **person** can be describe in this same “legal” manner—a **person** can be put into a particular “legal” position, or occupy a “legal” position or a “legal” office—and his ‘legal’ office is backed by a Power or Authority that gives him the legal right to function in that office / position. (That Power or Authority grants to his office / position genuine, authentic power (or value) to function in that ‘legal’ position ... legally).

- And that’s what’s going on here in Rom. 15:8ff with the apostle Paul! (and the Lord Jesus Christ, himself)

- Example: a Lawyer [in the state of North Carolina] is given a ‘legal’ position to prosecute or defend a person by the Power or Authority of the North Carolina Bar Association (which regulates the legal profession in their jurisdictions in the state of NC).

- Example: (as I understand it), even military officers of the grade of General [4-star] are appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate—hence, they have the ‘legal’ right to function in that office/position.

- And what’s going on in Rom. 15:8ff isn’t the issue of Paul’s legal right to function in the office or position of an “apostle” - [that’s already been confirmed] - but there is a legal position that is given to the apostle Paul **that comes out of** his apostleship—and it has a great bearing upon us getting the full and complete curriculum for our godly sonship education & edification!

- And that legal office or position is: **MINISTER!**

- (even the Lord Jesus Christ held a legal position as a **“minister”**!)

- Example: (though a poor one) - legally, in the state of NC, I have been given (by the state) an office or position of *minister*—by which I can legally perform weddings! (yuck) [I don’t particularly like it, but I have to have it to fulfill the “state” side of what a legal marriage is.]

- Notice that God is not going to have Paul deal any more with his *apostleship*, per se — (the word “*apostle*” isn’t used anywhere in Rom. 15 or 16).

- What’s now being brought into the picture is the issue of **MINISTRY!** or what you might call MINISTER-SHIP (a *minister*).

- And being a “*minister*” as it’s being used here—(and as it’s often used of a “minister” today—such as in the case of a person who is authorized to **perform** a wedding) — there are some LEGAL issues in connection with that work of a *minister* - (not just anyone can perform marriages).

- And there are some legal matters in connection with Paul and his minister-ship that we need to understand and appreciate— and to have the legal proof of—due to the matters involved in getting our proper (even legal) godly edification to come.

- This is going to provide proof of something that most folks never think about.

- **The Danger:** There is no separate and distinct dispensation of grace right now—or if there is, it’s just a matter of God dispensing grace instead of the law (whatever that means) - but what really happened is this: God has always spoken about Him being able to deal with the Gentiles (it’s all over the OT) - and what happened is that after the death and resurrection of the Lord, 11 apostles (maybe 1 other, [Matthias]) went to the Jews, and Paul (probably the 12th apostle) went to the Gentiles—and what you’ve got is simply God dealing with both the Jews and the Gentiles (just as He always said He would) - and what Paul did was in keeping with what Peter did—and there is no ‘change in program’ at all—The Bible says God is going to deal with the Gentiles and they’re going to be saved, too, and they’re going to one day ‘glorify’ God, (which they have been doing for over 2000 years now) - so what’s going on today is what God always said would be going on—no so-called ‘program change’ at all—we’re all just waiting for Jesus to come back and kick out the democrats! [this is too complicated anyway!]

- Simply put—God has always said that He would deal with the Gentiles—Paul’s the guy that did it—it’s all in fulfillment of what God said He would do (fulfillment of prophecy) - you are just making a big deal out of nothing—the only ‘right division’ (bad translation) is OT / NT—or Before and After the Cross!

(anyone got anything to add? have you heard something like this?)

- But God IS going to have the apostle Paul set forth the truth, the reality, and the genuine authenticity of his **MINISTRY** as “*the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*” (:16) by first of all setting forth the legal and authorized office / position of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself as “*minister of the circumcision*” - but with the emphasis upon the Lord’s “*minister*” function TO ISRAEL (the *circumcision*) in both God’s **Time Past** dealings with Israel *and* His **To Come** dealings with Israel.

- And the ‘proof’ will be that there really ARE 2 different and distinct programs—Paul really IS a unique apostle and *minister* in a separate and distinct program (or dispensation), and the MESSAGE that was delivered by the Lord Jesus Christ to the *circumcision* (Israel) really IS different than the MESSAGE that is being delivered by the apostle Paul to the Gentiles, and as *the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles!*

- And to set forth this ‘proof’ - God has the apostle Paul begin with the Lord Jesus Christ and His *minister* office / position in BOTH Israel’s “Time Past” program, and in Israel’s “To Come” program.

8 Now I say *that Jesus Christ was a minister* ...

- Notice—(and it can’t be overstated as to the importance of this word): “**WAS**” - THAT MEANS JUST WHAT IT SAYS—HE “**WAS**” - IN TIME PAST—BUT HE’S **NOT** THAT NOW!

- interesting: most modern translations say, ‘has become’! (the modern translators do not like this little word!)

- “*minister*” - if it hasn’t already hit you yet—the way in which the word *minister* is being used here is NOT in the simple, general, and most common way in which folks think about it: “a servant; an attendant; a person who waits upon or ministers to the wants of another” ... how do we know that?

1) we know it from having a good understanding/appreciation for Genesis-Acts.

2) we know it from the rest of the information given in (:8); “*for the truth* [legal matter] *of God, to confirm* [legal matter] *the promises* [legal matter] *made to the fathers:*

(the LJC held a legal office/position with a particular message!)

- “*minister*” = [OED #2a] One who acts under the authority of another; one who carries out executive duties as the agent or representative of a superior. (**quotes Rom. 13:6**)!!![look up]

- [OED 2b] One who is employed by another to carry into effect **or convey** [something; like a message].

- The term *minister*, here in Rom. 15:8 **and** in 15:16, is being used in a LEGAL sense—that is, the one occupying the office of *minister* in these 2 passages (namely, Jesus Christ and the apostle Paul) are acting under the authority of another; carrying out executive duties as the agent or representative of a superior & convey a message:

- Jesus Christ: - Mat. 7:29

- (note: it was an issue w/the VRS)

- Mt. 21:23-27

- Mk. 1:27

- Jn. 5:25-27 (ministry authorized by God the Father!)

- Paul (whose “apostleship” was authorized by God the Father and God the Son—Rom. 1:1; Gal. 1:1):

- but as “*the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*” the ‘official authority’ that gave him the legal right to operate and function as that “*minister*” is the member of the Godhead that is in charge of baptizing you “into Christ”; in charge of sanctification; in charge of godly edification and sonship education...

- Rom. 15:16—*the Holy Ghost!* (who is in charge of all of those NT benefits [spiritual benefits] that make it so godly edification as a “son” can take place!)

- In the context of (:8-13) — Paul is writing from the perspective of being in this disp. of grace—and he’s going to look into the “Past” and then he’s going to look into the Future time “To Come” - and he’s going to come along and say, What was going on in the past; and what’s yet to come in the future; is NOT what’s going on now! And what is going on NOW, Paul will come along and say that it is what is taking place through his ministry as *the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*.

- (and none other than **God the Holy Ghost** has given him the **legal right** to operate/function in the office of *the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles* !)

- And the first thing he does is to look into “Time Past” - but instead of going all the way back to the beginning—he especially focuses upon the time of the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ—when the “Time Past” dealings of God with the nation of Israel were coming to their Climax.

... but also, it’s the very time at which most Christians mistakenly look to when it comes to doctrine and instructions and promises and injunctions that they endeavor to follow.

... and it’s also the exact thing that the Satanic PoE **wants** a Christian to believe—which is to follow in the footsteps of Jesus’ earthly ministry.

- So—all of (:8) is having you look from the perspective of YOU (and Paul) being IN this disp. of grace and looking **back** to “Time Past” - but specifically the Time Past **ministry** of the Lord Jesus Christ during His earthly *ministry*!

- then (:9-12) is having you look from the perspective of YOU (and Paul) being IN this disp. of grace, and looking **into the future** time “To Come” when the Gentiles will be described as they are in those 4 quotations from the OT scriptures.

- with the result being that you are supposed to understand and appreciate that **none of that** is what is going on **NOW!**

8 *Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision ...*

- *Jesus Christ* (Jesus of Nazareth, and His ‘Christ-ness’ as the seed of David and His functioning as per that 1st Mandate [or covenanted purpose] of the Davidic Covenant—the Redeemer and His redemption]) *was a minister* (or authorized agent approved by God to carry out specific duties and convey a specific message) **of the circumcision ...**

- “**the circumcision**” = **Israel**—Jesus Christ was (in Time Past) a minister of ISRAEL (and NOT ‘a minister of the Gentiles’) ... and that’s the point! - in fact, the Law contract of the Old Testament or Old Covenant made it **impossible** for Jesus Christ to be ‘a minister of [or to] the Gentiles! why? because the Gentiles were in a position of being **far off** from God (Eph. 2:13) and **without God in the world** (Eph. 2:12) ...

... the Gentiles had been consigned over to the adversary as **unfit** for God's use and purpose (Rom. 1:24-32).

- In God's "Time Past" program with Israel (before this disp. of grace had been brought in) - the only way in which God would (or could) deal with the Gentiles is by them responding positively, and coming to God (the one, true and living God, Adonai Jehovah) **through the agency of Israel as the Gentiles "light" and "salt"**.

- (see **Deut. 4:5-8**) - (see **Mat. 15:21-28**)

- ***circumcision* = Israel**

- ***uncircumcision* = Gentiles (anyone other than Israel)**

- The main reason why God uses the expression *circumcision* here (and in other passages) and not 'Israel' - is to direct your attention to the issue of **Abraham's seed!**

- It's not just the matter of being the nation Israel—but specifically, Abraham's seed—and no Gentile had a legal claim to Abraham's seed. (at least *directly*)

- And God intentionally set the physical sign of the seed of Abraham in the issue of *circumcision*.

- The issue with *circumcision* is just as God stated to Abraham when God was going to have him *circumcised* and bring the Abrahamic Covenant into force in Gen. 17 ...

*8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, and all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; **and I will be THEIR God.***

... *circumcision* was (as God said) **a token of the covenant betwixt me and you** (not the Gentiles) - (*Gen. 17:11*)

- *Circumcision* is a sign of the covenant that God made with Abraham and his seed, who will later be known and identified as the nation Israel.

- Physical *circumcision* is the procedure of cutting off the foreskin of a man's flesh.

- And by bearing this sign in their flesh, and by being called “*the Circumcision*,” it declared the fact that the people of Israel were God’s *exclusive* people—and that they belonged to God in contrast to all other people of the world—they were in a covenant relationship with God; and were NEAR to Him, and He to them—and His program was WITH them.

- All of the other people of the world, however, were NOT in this covenant relationship with God—they were NOT God’s “people” - and as such, they were called the “*uncircumcision*” - which signified the exact opposite of the “*circumcision*”.

- Now—Romans doctrine has already covered a great deal of the details concerning all this — and this is NOT a re-hash, or restating or even a review of what has already been set forth and established.

- [that’s what was covered back in Rom. 1, 2, 4 and 9-11 — and we’re not going back over that now, either ... if you need that information, you can go back and get it.]

- What’s important here—and what God is having the apostle Paul do in this body of information (and doctrine concerning the godly Thinking you need to have in order to be able to Go On and get the rest of your Sonship Education & Edification) ... is to take the doctrine you should already know regarding God’s great dispensational change that He made when He saved and raised up Paul as a brand new apostle to the Gentiles—and make some **advances** to it—to give you some **advanced doctrine** about it and some **advanced godly Thinking** about it in order to accomplish what needs to be accomplished in your godly Thinking as a Level I “son”.

- And what God the Father needs to accomplish in your thinking now concerns (not the **fact** of the great disp’l. change), but rather, it concerns a particular viewpoint of godly Thinking that has to do with the *ministry* of *Jesus Christ* as an agent, authorized and approved by God the Father to carry out specific duties and convey a specific message to a specific people (the *circumcision*) ... vs. ... the apostle Paul and his *ministry* as an agent, authorized and approved by God the Holy Ghost to carry out specific duties and convey a specific message to a specific people (the *Gentiles*).

... which further develops your godly Thinking that PAUL is your apostle and Paul is your *minister*! [and ‘messenger’]!

- Because if you're ever to be able to Go On and get the rest of your godly Edification as God's "son" - you're going to have to pay attention to THE MESSAGE that contains the rest of your godly Edification—and especially the PERSON who is the God-authorized agent who is approved to function in the legal capacity to GIVE you that MESSAGE (or doctrine). [which is the apostle Paul]

- And the temptation is going to be to **leave Paul's doctrine** and operate upon the doctrine of ANOTHER *minister* with a **God-given, God-authorized message/doctrine ... but with doctrine that is for a different purpose; a different program; for a different people; with different legal particulars; ... but more than that ... that doctrine (wonderful as it is; righteous and holy as it is; powerful as it is) ... DOES NOT CONTAIN THE INFORMATION (OR DOCTRINE) TO ACCOMPLISH THE REPOSSESSION AND RECONCILIATION OF THE HEAVENLY PLACES!**

- Therefore, failure to operating upon the message/ doctrine from the proper "*minister*" will result in your **FAILURE to please God; accomplish God's will; functionally live unto God; accomplish God's plan and purpose ... and in the end, benefit Satan, the Adversary!**

- And by doing what God is doing here in this godly Thinking portion of Rom. 15:8-21 (in general), and in (:8-13) specifically—is to give you the only real **defense** to the attacks of the adversary in Phase 1 of the PoE (attack the **message**) ...

... and the only real **defense** to this kind of an attack is: **HOPE! (the Father knows that He has to increase His son's "hope" - having absolute confidence; unassailable, indomitable, impregnable, invincible, well-fortified HOPE in the message/doctrine he's going to receive for the rest of his godly edification)!**

- And the reason the Father does this now, instead of at the beginning of godly sonship edification—is that the adversary did not have the right to attack (so to speak), or the right to bring Phase 1 of the PoE to bear upon the son ... until now.

- First of all, you needed that “hope” to come into existence; and for it to expand to the degree it has by now (by means of the Romans doctrine you’ve received up until now) ...

... you needed to have godly “hope” to the degree that Romans 1:1-15:7 provides for you to have — in order for your “hope” to now be expanded even further and actually ‘**galvanized**’ (so to speak) against any **corruption** to it by the attacks from the satanic PoE.

- NOTICE: it’s not that you don’t already know that Paul is **your** apostle, and the epistle of Romans is **your** doctrine ...

... it’s just that you’ve never been in a position of having completed Romans doctrine and because of that, then being in a position where the adversary is qualified to bring the full brunt of the attack of Phase 1 of the PoE specifically upon Paul being your *minister* ...

... that is, the one (and **only** one) authorized by God as the agent to carry out the duties **and convey the message** to, for, and about the body of Christ in this disp. of grace ...

... and that Paul’s message (i.e., Paul’s epistles) are the one and only **source** of doctrine for, to and about you and what God is doing right now.

- In other words—it’s **not** the issue of knowing who your apostle or *minister* is — or knowing the *message* and/or doctrine that pertains to you and what God is doing right now in this disp. of grace can only be found in the epistles of Paul ... because that was all gone over in Sonship Establishment (“*to perceive the words of understanding*” [Pro. 1:2b]) ...

... IT’S NOW THE ISSUE OF STICKING WITH IT! ...
NO MATTER WHAT!

- My “hope”, (**our “hope”**) is in Paul (and Paul’s epistles)!

- Israel’s “hope” and the remnant of Israel’s “hope” is in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—and in Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2, 3 John, Jude, and the book of the Revelation!

(that is, when you’re talking about the godly Edification Process!)

- Now, what I just said is going to be soundly **rejected** by most Christians today—(nothing new; it was soundly rejected in Paul’s day; and for the past 2,000+ years).

- And one of the major reasons for what I just said to be soundly rejected is not because of the reality or truth of it—**but because of the way I said it, or the way I put it.**

- in fact, the majority of Christians today would reject what I just said about Israel, too ... why?

... (by the way, their rejection has some legitimate basis to it—or a valid reason for it)

- (And this is where we need to be careful—to be precise—and to make sure that what we say is **exactly** what God Himself says in His word—and not to *think* we’re saying what God Himself says **exactly** in His word, but really we’ve just come up with another Christian slogan that only *closely* matches up with what God says in His word, but really doesn’t say that ... **exactly.**)

- **Example:** “the dispensation of grace” ... no ... God says that it’s “*the dispensation of the grace of God*” (*Eph. 3:2*)—**and there is a difference!**

- Now I know I’m getting ‘picky’ here—but it all depends upon who you’re talking to: if you’re talking to someone as an “ambassador of Christ” who is a believer and who has real honesty of heart; and you’re talking to them about the great dispensational change that has taken place, that’s one thing ...

... but if you’re being **attacked** by a Christian for your belief (and hope) that Paul really is our apostle, our minister, and carries our message and doctrine for us today, that’s another thing ... **and that’s going to require being really precise and exact as to exactly what God says in His word!**

... and that’s because, if you say (and say **exactly**) what God says in His word—then you’re going to **take away anything and everything** that you’re being attacked with! (which doesn’t mean you’ll end up a ‘winner’ ... or that you’ll end up convincing the person ... because they may (and often do) ‘dig in their heels’ and reject it anyway!

- So—when I say: “Our ‘hope’ is in Paul, and in Paul’s epistles.

Israel’s ‘hope’ (and the remnant’s ‘hope’) is in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—and in Hebrews, James, 1&2 Peter, 1,2,3 John, Jude, and the book of the Revelation.

... what makes the average Christian recoil to that? and what makes him reject that? ... what is it (in his mind) that you are leaving out!

A: JESUS CHRIST!

- When the average Christians hears the way in which many saints who really do “rightly divide the word of truth” properly in Mid-Acts (or in Acts 9) describe their position this way—the average Christian thinks that you are so wrapped up with Paul **that you are LEAVING OUT THE LORD JESUS CHRIST and going only by Paul!**

- And given the way I put it—they actually have a legitimate ‘beef’! ... because **that’s not the way God actually said it!**

- And so—coming to the rescue is the EXACT thing that God does say!

- As to Paul’s “apostleship”:

(Rom. 1:1) Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

(1 Cor. 1:1) Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, ...

(2 Cor. 1:1) Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God ...

(Gal. 1:1) Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)

(Eph. 1:1) Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God

(Col. 1:1) Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God

*(1 Tim. 1:1) Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our **hope**;*

(1 Tim. 2:5-7) For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.

(2 Tim. 1:1) *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, (2 Tim. 1:10-11) But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.*

(Titus 1:1-3) *Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;*

- And as to Paul's minister-ship:
(note the careful attention to detail)

(Rom. 15:16) That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, ...

*(Eph. 3:1-7) For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: **Whereof I was made a minister**, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.*

*(Col. 1:23-25) 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**; Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: Whereof I am made a **minister**, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;*

- Note: even when Paul talks about others functioning as “*ministers*” - he is very careful to include the issue of them being ‘ministers’ of Jesus Christ ...

Tychicus—a faithful minister in the Lord (Eph. 6:21)

Epaphras—a faithful minister of Christ (Col. 1:7)

Tychicus (again) - a faithful minister and fellow-servant in the Lord (Col. 4:7)

Timotheus—our brother, and minister of God, and our fellow-labourer in the gospel of Christ (1 Thes. 3:2)

Timothy (again) - thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 4:6)

- Granted—there are times in which Paul talks about himself being a **minister** where he does not refer to the Lord at all ...
... but these are very few.

- Hence, the incredible accuracy of Rom. 15:8 & 15:16! [chart]

- The point is—you are being given some godly Thinking—and some **precise** godly terminology that is carefully designed to ward off any attempt to ‘shake’ your HOPE in the biblical, scriptural, God-given-truth of the fact that what God is doing today (**and what the Lord Jesus Christ is doing today**) is all about the great dispensational change that He has made—and the message you are to pay attention to is the message the Lord Himself has given to and through the *apostle & **minister***: PAUL!

- And you are NOT ‘slighting’ the Lord Jesus Christ one bit in saying that, and in believing that, and in operating upon that, and in your ‘blessed HOPE’ that comes from that!

- You’re NOT ‘degrading’ Christ; or ‘diminishing’ His power or ‘disgracing’ Him in any way—in fact, it’s just the very opposite!

(back to Rom. 15:8)

8 Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision ...

- To really see what’s going on here—it would be good to have the primary statement of ‘Part A’ of the godly Thinking (:8) in view; and the primary statement of ‘Part B’ of the godly Thinking in view (:16).

- And when you do—you can easily see—and appreciate all of the **fine detail** in the **exact wording** that God has provided and has preserved in a Bible in which we can trust **every word to be “pure” - (the Authorized Version).**

- Notice the important details even in the **prepositions**:

- the details in the prepositions preserves the amazing accuracy of exactly what God has said—and makes it so that when you communicate the message of “*the gospel of Christ*” (which includes the matter of the great dispensational change that God has brought in [which may sound funny—but there is information in “*the gospel of Christ*” that pertains *not* only to justification for the unbeliever, but to sanctification and its results for a believer]) ...

... and when you communicate that message, the accuracy of exactly what God says here makes it so that you don’t end up giving a Christian a reason to reject your ambassadorial message to them ... they may (an probably will) reject it, but you don’t have to give them a reason to!

- And therefore, if they do reject your ambassadorial message of “*the gospel of Christ*” - the only reason for doing so is because of their own stubborn refusal to believe what God said in His word! (it will be because of their own hardness of heart!) And if that’s the case—and if that’s the *cause*—there’s nothing you can do. [not even “pray” that God would “soften” their heart!]

- So let’s notice those prepositions and that accuracy I’m talking about.

8 *Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister **OF** the circumcision ...*

- Notice that it doesn’t say that *Jesus Christ was a minister TO the circumcision ...* (even though that is a true thing) ...

- “**Of**” is a preposition of the Genitive Case—which expresses the issue of possession or source.

- (note: making a study out of the word *of* can get very involved—and can be very time consuming ... and my point here isn’t to do an analysis of prepositional phrases—[you can study that out on your own]).

- Noah Webster (1828) does a great job in taking the vast amount of information about the preposition *of*, and boiling it down to be easily understood:

“*Of* then has one primary sense, **from**, departing, issuing, proceeding *from* or *out of*—and a derivative sense denoting possession or property.”

- So what do we get from that?

- Jesus Christ was a minister [generated—proceeding *from* or *out of*] the circumcision ...

- and as an official, authorized “minister” - His roll as a “minister” was the property & possession of **the circumcision**.

- So, was He a “minister” TO the circumcision? Yes—but that’s not the issue here—(and that’s the point of the accurate use of the word *of* here instead of the word *to*) ...

- The issue here is to state a **legal relationship**—just as you would say, “This boy is a son *of* John.”

- What God is having the apostle Paul do here is to emphasize the importance of, **not** just the Lord Jesus Christ’s official office as ‘a minister TO the circumcision’ - but to emphasize & underscore the important matter of the **legal** and **exclusive nature** of His office as “*minister*” being *out from the circumcision*, and the legal property & possession *of the circumcision* ... **and NOT of the uncircumcision!**

- The point here is to give great ‘legal force’ to the way in which the Gentiles were dealt with in God’s program with Israel—(both in “Time Past” and yet “To Come”).

- The point here is to give you some godly understanding and Thinking **in a legal framework** as to how the Gentiles were dealt with in God’s program with Israel—which will set you up properly to make the distinction of that with how the Gentiles are NOW being dealt with under the apostle Paul’s official capacity as a “*minister*”! [it may sound trifling and unnecessary, but you’ll **need** this: this goes to **fortify** and **galvanize** your “**hope**” when it comes under attack!]

- And this ‘legal framework’ - or legal ‘force’ of *Jesus Christ* was a *minister OF the circumcision* also draws its legal basis from the ‘Law and the Prophets’ - from the very Abrahamic Covenant itself!

- It makes it of such ‘legal force’ that you’re supposed to recognize the reality of the fact (**the legal fact**) that the Lord Jesus Christ’s official function as a “*minister of the circumcision*” **could NOT function as such to the Gentiles (the uncircumcision)! ... as things stood, legally, in God’s program with Israel, He could NOT function that way to the Gentiles!**

... WOW—that’s a lot of information coming out of one, little two-letter preposition!

8 *Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, ...*

- “**for the truth of God**” - and this is another ‘legal’ matter—because it identifies what the nature of the Lord’s official capacity as a *minister of the circumcision* (Israel) is all about — He was legally authorized and recognized to carry a **message** to *the circumcision* (Israel) called, **the truth of God**—which encompasses the **truth** of what God was doing and will be doing in His program with Israel—and the **truth of God** as opposed to the UN-truth of the corrupted doctrine of Israel’s vain, religious [Babylonian] system! [which is what the Lord is doing, for example, in The Sermon on the Mount—and all through his earthly *ministry*.]

- If the *circumcision* (Israel) was ever going to get *the truth of God*—they were going to have to get it by and through their official, legally authorized **minister! (the Lord Jesus Christ—Jesus of Nazareth)!** [and you know how well that was received]

- And the *truth of God* that Jesus Christ was presenting in His earthly ministry was *the truth of God* in connection with God’s program **for Israel**—the *truth of God* about God’s will, plan & purpose to repossess THE EARTH from the adversary and his cohorts—the *truth of God* about setting up and establishing His permanent residence upon the earth in what is called, “the kingdom of heaven” ... (and how do we know that is the case?) ... see the very next phrase ...

... *to confirm the promises made unto the fathers*: (which is where God's program with Israel began!)

- "*the fathers*" = Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob

- There were promises made unto them concerning a kingdom being established and Israel being a "great nation" and a "kingdom of priests" and "an holy nation" - and Gentile blessing going out into the world through the agency of the 'kingdom of heaven' being established in Israel. [study it out from Gen. 12 ff]

- And when the Lord Jesus Christ came to this earth—He ministered a message that declared *the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers* (which, by the way Paul **did not do!**) ...

... the ministry of Lord Jesus Christ when He was physically on this earth was as that *minister of the circumcision* (Israel) was *for the truth of God* because the *truth* of what God was doing was *true* back during the time that the *fathers* were alive and operating on this earth—and He was to *confirm the promises made unto the fathers* because just as it was *true* back at the time of the *fathers*, so it was *true* at the very time in which the Lord Jesus Christ was on this earth—after a span of nearly 2000 years had taken place!

- The Lord preached that "the kingdom of heaven" is "***at hand***" - and to *confirm* that fact that God's plan & purpose with Israel was **ready** to be **fulfilled**.

- A 'time schedule' had been given—beginning back in Abraham's day—and that 'time schedule' had been given some details by Moses (Lev 26) ...

... and further details of it—and the final 'installment' of that 'time schedule' was given to a prophet by the name of Daniel

... and since Daniel's day, that 'time schedule' had been 'ticking' off—(even to the point of identifying when the Messiah of Israel would arrive on the scene) - and that's why when the Lord declared "*the kingdom of heaven is at hand*" He said, "***The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.***" (Mark 1:15) - the Lord acknowledged that 'time schedule', and by doing so, confirmed the promises made unto the fathers !!!

- And the point is—that’s what Paul is saying that Jesus Christ **WAS doing**—and when He was here on this earth, that **WAS** the program (or plan & purpose of God).

- That should do it for (:8) - any questions? comments? (do you really understand and appreciate that the matters being presented really are ‘legal’ type matters?)

- And because of the nature of these ‘legal’ type matters—do you further perceive how that they are matters of HOPE ... specifically of Israel’s HOPE!

- Now—we’re at that colon (:) of (:8) - where you should have paused long enough to make sure that the effectual working of (:8) is doing it’s job ... which should be the case by now ... and when that IS the case, we’re ready to move on to the 2nd Clause of the sentence that makes up all of (:8 and :9) - which is: “*And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; ...*”

- Remember—(:8) is God having the apostle Paul tell us of God’s ‘Time Past’ dealings with the nation Israel (the *circumcision*) - and now in (:9) God is going to have Paul tell us of God’s ‘To Come’ dealings with the nation Israel (the *circumcision*) - but specifically, as it pertains to: the Gentiles (the uncircumcision).

- And when God has Paul say in the first part of (:9) *And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; ...*

- that’s **NOT** talking about a change in God’s program;
 - that’s **NOT** talking about the great dispensational change that God made when He saved and raised up the apostle Paul;
 - that’s **NOT** talking about the bringing in of the “Church Age” ... (don’t make the stupid mistake of thinking that every time you see the word “Gentile” that it’s talking about US in this disp. of the grace of God; or US, the body of Christ!)

- What it IS—is that God is now having Paul ‘shift’ to the time in God’s program with Israel that is yet “To Come” ... and as God’s prog. w/ Israel will do in time “To Come” it will fulfill it’s “salt of the earth” and “light of the world” function as it pertains to the Gentiles, thus fulfilling the **promise** to Abraham (father) that “*in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.*” (*Gen. 12:3*)

- so we have (:9a) - ***And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy;***

- When God's program with Israel was in effect—the expectation of the Gentiles was just as Paul will say in (:9a - :12) ...

- The Gentiles (uncircumcision) had all along—since the time back at the Tower of Babel when they were consigned over to the hands of the adversary (as the adversary's **legal** possession) - and at which time they had become *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: (see Eph. 2:12)* — however, God had made it known (**not** a part of “the mystery”) by *the promises made unto the fathers* that there would come a day, when the kingdom of God got established, that they would benefit from those promises; and that they would be “blessed” by God's *mercy*.

[and we don't have to ‘run some verses’ on this issue—because that's what God is going to have Paul do in the 4 quotations coming up from the OT scriptures!]

- But the Gentiles had a legitimate, godly **expectation** when Israel's Messiah appeared on the earth during the ‘Climatic Stage’ of Israel's program—(and consistent with Israel's ‘Time Schedule’).

- And the expectation was that they (the Gentiles) would rejoice with Israel in the establishment of that kingdom! -
and that by doing so, they would **“GLORIFY GOD FOR HIS MERCY”!**

- When that kingdom got established and the Abrahamic Covenant would be fulfilled whereby *all the families of the earth be blessed* - and the Gentiles began to be *blessed* as they respond positively to Israel's “salt & light” - they would **glorify God** ...

... that is, they would give the credit and the merit, recognition, and the honor of them being *blessed* to the One, True, Living God—Adonai Jehovah ... they truly would, **glorify God** at that time! (by the way, they're NOT doing that now!)

- And the reason for doing so is just as God says it through Paul: ***for his mercy*** - (involved in those *promises made unto the fathers* was God's merciful treatment of the Gentiles **out in the kingdom!**)

... and that ‘glorifying of God’ by the Gentiles is going to so fill their hearts (their soul and spirit), that it will manifest itself (or come out) SINGING! [see the rest of :9—quote from Psa. 18:49]

- God has all along determined to be able to bring *blessing* to the Gentiles—**(but only through the agency of the nation Israel)**!

- God blessing the Gentiles is NOT an indicator or a defining element of *the dispensation of the grace of God!*

- And the ‘blessing’ of the Gentiles would be due to (as it says here in :9), *his MERCY* ... the merciful provision of God contained in those *promises made unto the fathers*.

- *mercy* = kindness or good will—*forbearance and compassion shown by one person to another who is in **his** power, and who has NO claim to receive the kindness or the compassion.*

= grace in action.

= kindness in excess of what may be expected.

- Again, the expectation of the Gentiles (in God’s prog. w/ Isr.) was that they will one day “rejoice” with Israel in the establishment of that kingdom.

- And God is going to have Paul quote 4 passages out of Israel’s program that refer to the way in which the Gentiles were going to be dealt with and blessed and benefitted in connection with the **fulfillment** of God’s program with Israel. (and that’s what we’re going to deal with next)

- LET’S RUN SOME VERSES!

- **Romans 15:9b-12** — 4 quotations from the OT scriptures that describes the way in which God will deal with the Gentiles once the “kingdom of heaven” is set up and established upon this earth (when the Lord Jesus Christ is physically here on this earth once again, and is seated upon the throne of David in Jerusalem as the King of kings and Lord of lords) ...

... 4 OT quotations about the Gentiles that ARE NOT TRUE at the present time in this *dispensation of the grace of God*, under the officially authorized ***minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, the apostle Paul!***

... 4 OT scripture quotations that emphasize how God's dealings with the Gentiles in His program with Israel is distinctly **different** than it is right now with Paul as *the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*.

- First of all—we need to put a halt to some erroneous thinking that may attempt to say that, “There is no such thing as any so-called ‘great dispensational change’ that has taken place—because Paul himself tells us in Rom. 15:9-12 that the Gentiles being dealt with by God is no “hidden mystery” - no “secret purpose”. And after all, I'm a Gentile, and there are thousands and millions of Gentiles that God is dealing with right now—so your “dispensational” position just falls apart ... you .. are .. wrong!” [or some variation of that]

- Well, at the outset—right off the bat—we can legally and scripturally, and soundly **dismiss** that entire line of thinking!

- Why? simple. **Every one of these 4 quotations from the OT scriptures are talking about Gentiles, namely, Gentile Nations AT A PARTICULAR TIME ... (AND ONLY AT ONE PARTICULAR TIME) ...**

... each of these 4 quotations are specifically talking about the time in which the “kingdom of heaven” is established on this earth and the Lord is sitting upon His throne in Jerusalem! ... (so, go an check ... is He there? ... if the answer is “No” ... then, CASE DISMISSED!)

... not only is the Lord NOT on His throne in Jerusalem—but you can't point to a single **Gentile nation** (on the **whole**) that's doing what these 4 quotations say! (including the USA)

- Now—there's another issue that I want to look at before we deal with the 4 quotations—and I'm going to go about it differently than I've done before ... (for a reason to be dealt with later on) ...

- As God has the apostle Paul begin the 4 quotations—He has Him say in (:9), **“as it is written”** - and then He runs the verses.

- and it's my understanding that the phrase **“as it is written”** therefore applies to all 4 quotations—all 4 of them are **“as it is written”** and NOT **“for it is written”** ...

... (what's the difference?) ...

- ***For it is written*** = indicates that we are expected to go back to where this quotation sits in God's word and recognize that the EXACT issue that's sitting back there is the SAME issue that's sitting right here!

- And even though it comes from a portion of God's word that deals with God's program with Israel—**this is an issue that is true in BOTH programs!**

... so you may think, 'Boo-Hoo for the attackers of the great dispensational change God made in Acts 9 when He saved & raised up the apostle Paul as *the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles* ... that seems to destroy their 'attack' .. (but you may want to hold off on that) ...

- ***As it is written*** = indicates that what you are after is NOT a direct application of a verse out of God's program w/ Israel — but rather that there are situations and circumstances that the members of the nation Israel **have been** in (or **will be** in) that has a similar or parallel issue to what we, as members of the church the body of Christ will find ourselves in.

... so—doesn't that give the 'attackers' a 'leg to stand on'?

... does that mean that they can come along and say, "Ok, look, it says, "*as it is written*" - and that means that the way God is going to deal with the Gentiles out when the kingdom of heaven gets established is **similar** to, or **parallel** to the way in which He is dealing with the Gentiles today! This "*as it is written*" says that God dealt with the Gentiles [and will deal with the Gentiles]; and right now He is dealing with the Gentiles ... so, My case stands—**your** case is "dismissed"! " ??? (what gives???)

- actually, that's 'jumping to a conclusion' ...

... a **wrong** conclusion! (that's an example of NOT paying attention to the CONTEXT!) ... **and the context will NOT allow for that conclusion!**

- While it's true that there is a similar or parallel issue contained in these quotations to that of our present time right now—the **manner in which God is described dealing with the Gentiles in these 4 quotations ISN'T ONE OF THEM! ... it's something else!** [by "manner" meaning, God dealing mercifully & graciously with them] ... (actually, it all hangs upon that word "*minister*") ... but we'll come back to that later.

- Truth is—if you really understand and appreciate God’s program with Israel properly—and God’s dealings with the Gentiles *and the Gentile nations on the whole* in Israel’s program properly—it’s **impossible** to make that argument that: ‘Well, God dealt graciously & mercifully with the Gentiles back when Christ was here on this earth in His earthly ministry, and God **will** deal with the Gentiles the same way out when the kingdom is established; *and* He’s doing the same thing today ... so that proves that there really is NO so-called ‘great dispensational change’ at all!’

- (but, as I said—we’ll get to the truth of what this **similar and parallel issue** is that this “*as it is written*” focuses upon ... in other words, what **is** the issue that is **similar and/or parallel** to our present dispensation of grace as it was in God’s program with Israel? ... but we’ll do that later.)

- All I will say about it at this time is that it is NOT the issue of God being gracious & merciful to the Gentiles ... it’s something else!

- Now—sticking with the strict **context**—the 4 passages that God has Paul quote from that come out of Israel’s OT scriptures—all 4 of them refer to the way in which the Gentiles were going to be dealt with, and blessed, and benefitted in connection with the **fulfillment** of God’s program with Israel.

- And the expectation is that we will go back and look at those 4 passages—**and the context in which they were written**—and get an appreciation for the fact that when the things that had been *promised to the fathers* (back in the Abrahamic Covenant) get themselves fulfilled out when the kingdom gets established on the earth—that the Gentiles (just as that Abrahamic Covenant said) were going to be blessed.

- And contained in that information is some details about how the Gentiles are going to **respond** in some particular manners (4 of them are cited here) in connection with the **fulfillment** of God’s program with Israel.

... *in thee (Abraham) shall all the families of the earth be blessed.* (Gen. 12:3)

- But what I want you to appreciate now—and to appreciate as we go back and look at those 4 passages (and the context in which they sit) - is that, contained in the Abrahamic Covenant is some information about how the Gentiles **WILL respond** ... information that describes **the expectations of the Gentiles being “blessed” in the kingdom, once it gets established!**

- And the *expectation* of the Gentiles is to *rejoice* over the benefits that comes to them through the fulfillment of God’s program w/ Israel.

- And really that’s what these 4 quotation are—they are the 4 major EXPECTATIONS of the Gentiles as they receive “blessing” in the kingdom, once God fulfills His prog./w Isr.

- The 4 quotations of:
- 1) Psalm 18:49
 - 2) Deuteronomy 32:43
 - 3) Psalm 117:1
 - 4) Isaiah 11:10

are THE FOUR MAJOR ISSUES OF GENTILE EXPECTATION
(when God establishes His kingdom on the earth)

- **And they are NOT random!** (they’re not just randomly selected—they’re not in ‘random order’ - rather, they are in a very specific order—they have a logical sense & sequence to them!)

- If you pay attention to the Gentile’s Expectations when it comes to receiving “blessing” in the kingdom—there are 4 of them—and they occur at 4 ‘stages’ (so to speak) as the kingdom gets established and as its timeframe goes on.

- And these 4 passages are in the very order in which the Gentile’s Expectations (of ‘blessing’ from the Abr. Cov.) will be realized as God’s kingdom gets set up; and as He fulfills His program with Israel.

- That’s why there are 4 of them—and that’s why they are in that order!

- Let's now look at these 4 passages that God has Paul quote—and look at them carefully **in their proper CONTEXT**.

- Again—let's make sure that we have the proper context right here in Rom. 15:8-9—(because this context is the **exact same context** of the 4 passages Paul cites) - and this context **sets the 'time-frame' for everything being spoken about in all of (:8-12)!** [those 4 quotes] (and it might be a good thing to not think about the verse designations but rather think about it **as a whole sentence**.)

Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; ...

- that phrase, **that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy**, sets the 'time-frame' for when this will take place!

- This HAS NOT taken place any time in past history—and it IS NOT taking place right now ... but it WILL take place out when the kingdom gets established ... and how do I know that? ... because of these 4 quotations **in their proper context!**

- actually, because of (:9a) [*that the Gentiles* (think, Gentile **nations**) *might glorify God for his mercy*, you already have the proper time-frame set for you before you even look at the 4 quotations!

- When you take (:8-9a) as it is **in a sentence**: *Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy ...*

... you know by therefore, that Paul is NOT talking about what the Gentiles are doing today in this disp. of grace—he's talking about what the Gentile's Expectations **was** when Christ **was** a minister of the circumcision ...

... and Gentile Expectation with Christ functioning as a minister of the circumcision in God's prog. w/ Isr. was the issue of **rejoicing (along with God's people, Israel), in the coming time of the establishment of that kingdom!**

- **1st GENTILE EXPECTATION**

9 ... *as it is written, For this cause* (what *cause*? if you don't know, go back and look) **I will confess** (= acknowledge something openly, [and in this case, joyfully]; to testify or give a testimony) **to thee** (who is *thee*? ... it's not the Gentiles) **among the Gentiles, and sing (!) unto thy name.**

- That's a quote from the 18th Psalm and verse 49.

- **(come over to Psalm 18)** - [50 vss. long]

- This Psalm sits in Book 1 of the 5 books of the Psalms—and the 1st Book of the Psalms deals with the 1st Mandate of the Davidic Cov., which is the Redeemer and His Redemption. And even though that's the case—there is reason in all 5 Books for God to have the Psalmist look at all of the periods of time covered by all 5 Mandates of the Dav. Cov.—(it's just that the focus in the 1st Book is upon the Redeemer Mandate of the Dav. Cov.).

- And the only way you could ever fully understand what (:49) says in its proper context, is to deal with the previous 48 verses, and then the 50th verse that follows it.

- (we're not going to do that now—but I want to point out just a few things to let you know the context in which David comes along in (:49) and says,

49 Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen (that's the Gentiles), and sing praises unto thy name.

- Notice the “*Therefore*” — that's a conclusion of what has been said already in Psalm 18! (especially the last half)

- But when David talks about giving *thanks* to God **among the heathen**, and testifying to the *heathen* about something - and **singing praises** to God's *name* among the *heathen* — **he's NOT talking about doing that in this disp. of grace!** ... David didn't know anything about the disp. of grace! - it was a “mystery”!

- David is talking about doing this once the kingdom gets set up (just as the 18th Psalm makes evident)!

- and Paul is not ‘misquoting’ this verse, or ‘misapplying’ this verse in Romans 15! ... he's handling this verse accurately and properly -- and he's talking about what Gentile Expectation was when God's prog. w/ Isr. gets fulfilled!

- And because this is the 1st Gentile Expectation (of receiving the benefits of the Abr. Cov. when the kingdom gets established) ...

... the 1st Gentile Expectation is that redeemed Israel, (from their kingdom) **comes to the Gentiles to *sing praises to God's name* — and testifies to the *heathen* about their God ruling and reigning in Jerusalem!** (and that's what the 18th Psa. is all about)

- The 18th Psalm describes the deliverance that the nation of Israel gets from Gentile oppression in the Lord's Day of Wrath.

- In fact, the 18th Psalm sets forth the very 'flight-path' that the Lord Jesus Christ takes when He returns at the end of the Lord's Day of Wrath (the 5th Inst./5th Cop)

- (note the Superscription)

- God uses David as a type of the remnant of Israel—who, (out in the Lord's Day of Wrath), will be suffering at the hands of all their enemies (and their own apostate leaders [Saul was]).

- And just as David was delivered from the hand of all his enemies, and from Israel's apostate religious system—so shall the remnant be delivered in that day.

- And they are going to be delivered by the Lord's personal coming to them at that time ...

(see :6-11)

- point is: this is describing the time-frame that exists at the end of the Lord's Day of Wrath at the time in which the Lord returns to earth in order to establish His kingdom.

- And this Psalm goes on to describe how when the Lord does come back—He's going to lead them into their kingdom and *reward* them (:20)

- And it describes what the remnant will be thinking about in view of the Lord's coming back to them—and how their minds are going to be stabilized when they are persecuted and afflicted ...

... and as you go through the Psalm, the *heathen* (the Gentiles) who were in a 'league' with Israel's apostate

religious system (under the Satanic PoE against Israel) are going to be *beaten into dust* (:42) ...

... and how that Israel will be put in the position of being '*head*' over the *heathen* (:43) - because when the 'times of the Gentiles' comes to an end, Israel will no longer be the "tail", but will be as they should be: the "head" over the *heathen* (when the kingdom is established).

- (**now, see :47-48**) - You've got 2 concepts there: the "Deliverer" and the "Avenger" - again further establishing the 'time-frame'!

- So now it's against the backdrop of all that, that David now comes along and says our verse:

49 Therefore (in view of all that) ***will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name.***

50 Great deliverance giveth he to his king; and sheweth mercy to his anointed, to David, and to his seed for evermore.

- And that's the 1st, initial Expectation that the Gentiles have once the kingdom has been established.

- And that Expectation is that redeemed Israel will come out to them *from* that established kingdom—and start talking about their God and their LORD who established them as that "great nation" in fulfillment of the Abr. Cov.! (after He has just beaten those Gentiles into submission)

- Point is: **Rom. 15:9b and Psalm 18:49 is NOT talking about anything that is going on in this disp. of grace in which we now live!**

- We're talking about Gentile Expectation in God's program with Israel! And the 1st Expectation starts off (logically) with redeemed Israel going out to say something to those *heathen* Gentile nations.

- **2nd Gentile Expectation**

Rom. 15:10

And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.

- (Deuteronomy 32) - (**read :28-43 [:43]**)

- Once the 1st Gentile Expectation has been realized—that is, once the message goes out—and the *singing of praise* is taking place by Israel among the Gentiles for what God has done in delivering Israel; and the benefits of the Abr. Cov. are now going to be enjoyed by the Gentiles ...

... then the Gentiles are exhorted to *rejoice with his people (Israel)*!

- Deu. 32 is the “Song of Moses” - (note to self: briefly set the context)

- The Song of Moses is about the 5th CoP (that would get underway in Daniel’s day) - and it took Israel through the 5th CoP; all the way through the Day of the Lord’s Wrath until the kingdom got itself established.

- It outlined what Israel would experience during the 5th CoP. (emphasizing the Day of the Lord’s Wrath coming first, and then the establishment of the Lord’s kingdom).

- (Deu. 32:43) - (:43) is the last statement in the Song of Moses—which means that the ‘time-frame’ for this verse is after the 5th CoP has run its course and the Day of the Lord’s Wrath has taken place and redeemed Israel is going to go out in fulfillment of Psa. 18:49 ...

... and after the Gentiles *hear* the *rejoicing* of Israel about what their God has done—then the Gentiles are exhorted to *rejoice* !

- And you can easily see in (:41, 42, & 43) some of the very terminology that David used in the 18th Psalm — *mine enemies / avenge-(er)* — and the very time-frame Moses is speaking about is the exact same time-frame David spoke about ... meaning: Deu. 32:43 and Rom. 15:10 is NOT talking about this disp. of grace!

- If all you had was Rom. 15:10—then maybe you could try and say that it’s talking about what’s going on now—but all you have to do is simply go back to Deu. 32:43 **and read the whole verse!** — because the rest of the verse tells you **why** the Gentile nations are going to *rejoice with Israel* - and in the “why” is the “**when**” ... (read it) ... folks, that’s not now; that’s when the kingdom gets established!

- in fact, when God has Paul say in Rom. 15:9a *And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy*—God will be ‘merciful’ to the Gentile Nations **only AFTER He has poured out His wrath upon them!**

- **3rd Gentile Expectation** - the 3rd quote is the 3rd ‘step’ in Gentile Expectation.

- 1st GE—redeemed Israel goes out and brings them the message of *praise*;

- 2nd GE—God will exhort them to *rejoice* after having seen what He does in His wrath.

Rom. 15:11

And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.

- **Psalm 117**

- Now you are in the 5th Book of the Psalms = the Blesser and His blessings—which, again, puts you in the time-frame of the kingdom when it is set up, established, and going on, on this earth.

- And the 3rd Gentile Expectation is that once the kingdom gets established on the earth; and the remnant comes out and praises God for what He has done for them in the hearing of the Gentiles, and they are exhorted to rejoice with God’s people (and then the Gentiles understand what God has done in His wrath); then this 3rd matter is to exhort the Gentile Nations to do what Psalm 117 says ...

**1 O praise the LORD, all ye nations (Gentile nations):
praise him, all ye people.**

- **WHY?**

2 For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD.

- The Gentile nations are going to see the merciful kindness of God to Israel, and the **blessings** (5th Mand. of the Dav. Cov.) bestowed by the Blesser upon God’s nation, Israel.

- And the Gentile nations are going to be exhorted to *Praise the LORD* for receiving those *blessings* that comes to them as a result of God fulfilling the Abr. Cov. : (*Gen. 12:3*) *I will bless them* (Gentile nations) *that bless thee* (Israel)!

- And the Gentile Nations are going to be exhorted to **ble**ss Israel; and the way they will do that is by **praising** Israel's **LORD**.

- And notice that you have some additional information that gets supplied by the Holy Ghost (the One who hold the 'copyright' [so to speak] on the holy scriptures) over in Rom. 15:11 ...

... *Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.*

- What's the difference between *praise* and *laud*?

- *praise* = basically means to tell or proclaim the worth, excellence, or merits of a person or thing.

- *laud* = a species of *praise*—they are very close in meaning; and *laud* often times gets expressed musically (in singing). But the 'shade of meaning' difference is that when someone is *laudable*, they are **entitled** to that encouragement and approbation ...

... therefore, the 'shade of meaning' difference is that when you *laud* someone, (you are definitely *praising* him), but you're praising him for being 'entitled' to that *praise* because of who & what he is (for his character and essence; for his very nature).

- and when the Gentiles *praise* the Lord, they also *laud* Him as being the One worthy of all their worship **because of Who and What He is! (as Adoni Jehovah) ... because of His Jehovah-ness!**

- by the way, this will be the fulfillment of the prophecy that's sitting back in Ezek. 36:25-38.

- So when the Gentile Nations *praise the Lord, and laud him*—that's when the next Gentile Expectation comes into play—which is going to be the issue of the glory of the Lord's rulership over the Gentile Nations at the exact same time and in the same manner in which He will be ruling over Israel out in that kingdom!

- 4th Gentile Expectation

- 1st GE = redeemed Israel goes out and brings the Gentile nations the message of *praise*.
- 2nd GE = God will exhort the Gentile nations to *rejoice* after having seen what He does in His Day of Wrath.
- 3rd GE = the Gentile nations offer up *rejoicing* to the Lord, and *laud* Him for who & what He is in His Jehovah-ness & grace/mercy.

Rom. 15:12

And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse (Jesse was David's father and the line of his direct seed will be the Lord Jesus Christ himself—David's greater son [greater than Solomon]), ***and he*** (the Lord Jesus Christ) ***that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles*** (which has not happened in Time Past; which is not happening now; but which will happen in time yet To Come); ***in him*** (Jesus Christ as King of kings, and Lord of lords seated on His throne in the kingdom) ***shall the Gentiles trust.***

- **Isaiah 11** - Here is a very familiar passage that is once again (Paul's "*again*" "*again*" "*again*") where Isaiah is describing details concerning the time in which the kingdom is set up & established—and here especially, he describes the **kingdom reign** of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- [notice again, the backdrop is all about the Lord's Day of Wrath—(see that back in Ch. 10) - and that is the same in all 4 quotations!]

- **(read :1-9)** - When the Gentiles see and hear all these things going on, and they see all these blessings and marvelous things going on—at this point, they're going to have the offer extended to them to receive the benefits of the Lord's kingdom reign **over** them (just as Israel receives those benefits).

10 And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign (a banner—a sign usually in war/battle around which the troops rally—[some marvelous details here]) ***of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.***

- the Lord is going to offer all of the benefits of His kingdom reign (and His *rest*) to the Gentile Nations.

- and when a Gentile nation submits to the Lord's kingdom reign, it will (in my understanding) end up having a redeemed Israelite (a member of the remnant) ruling over them and bringing them the blessings of that kingdom.

- And that's a legitimate Gentile Expectation (the 4th Major) ...

... ask yourself—is any Gentile nation on the face of the earth today Expecting this? ... is it in their 'charter' or constitution? ... and if our nation was formed as a "godly nation" or a "Christian nation" - then why was it left out of our Declaration of Independence or our Constitution?

- But that's the issue, isn't it? Because God's prog. w/ Isr. is **NOT** in effect today—you would expect to **NOT** find any nation on earth today expecting these things!!!!

- But when God ends this disp. of grace and resumes His prog. w/ Isr.—**it WILL be Gentile Expectation once again!**

- And really what's in effect today is a dispensation of Gentile grace **IN SPITE OF ISRAEL** - but when God resumes and fulfills His prog. w/ Isr., the Gentiles will receive mercy and grace from God **BY MEANS OF ISRAEL** (or by the agency of Israel). [which *is* a good, biblical, sound way of understanding the distinction between God's prog. w/ Isr. and "the dispensation of the grace of God" - and to do so from the viewpoint of how God deals with the Gentiles under Israel's program vs. how He deals with the Gentiles under the ministry of the apostle Paul.] (which is what the whole passage in Rom. 15:8-13 is all about!)

- So—*Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers* — Christ confirmed them in His earthly ministry—Israel's program is now suspended—but in time yet To Come, they will be all fulfilled in their entirety.

- We Gentiles are responding to God in an entirely different manner, and for an entirely different reason today.

- We're responding with rejoicing and thanksgiving and gratitude for a dispensation of Gentile grace **BEFORE** the Lord's Day of Wrath takes place!

- Review of the 4 Gentile Expectations:

- 1st GE = redeemed Israel goes out and brings the Gentile nations the message of *praise*.
- 2nd GE = God will exhort the Gentile nations to *rejoice* after having seen what He does in His Day of Wrath.
- 3rd GE = the Gentile nations offer up *rejoicing* to the Lord, and *laud* Him for who & what He is in His Jehovah-ness & grace/mercy.
- 4th GE = submitting to the kingdom reign of the Lord which brings to that Gentile nation the blessings of the kingdom reign of Christ.

- NOW A MINI SONSHIP CHECKPOINT

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

- “**Now**” - once again we have the word *Now* in the 1st position (or 1st word) of the sentence—and it’s used ‘alone’ (so to speak) ... [the definite article “*the*” goes with “*God*” - “*the God ...*” ...

... my understanding is that when *Now* is used in the 1st position (with no accompanying words like “then”) - it’s being used to indicate that something has now been fully accomplished at this time—and under the present circumstances of the **context** ...

... having accomplished the effectual working of ‘Part A’ of the Godly Thinking = God’s own thinking and understanding of the great dispensational change that has taken place—and that by having you look at the way in which God dealt with the Gentiles under the “Time Past” and “Time yet To Come” **ministry** of the Lord Jesus Christ as the *minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers* ...

... and that Jesus Christ **was** (in Time Past) a *minister* (the qualified, authorized agent [approved by God] to carry out specific duties and convey a specific message) *of the circumcision (Israel) to confirm the promises made unto the fathers (Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob)* - and that, included in that message was information concerning how God was going to

fulfill the 4-fold Expectations of the Gentile, heathen nations (and give them “hope” of coming under the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant) so that the *Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy (:9a)* **after** the Lord’s Day of Wrath has taken place, and **during** the time when God’s kingdom is set up & established upon this earth ...

... and by doing that, give the Gentiles “hope” or absolute, confident expectation of being blessed along with the nation Israel ...

... and after those 4 OT quotations have done their effectual job in giving you full persuasion of mind that **none of that is what is going on now**—**but while that is true, the ‘similar’ issue is that, just as it was (and will be) with the Gentile nations having HOPE, so also should you have HOPE (absolute confidence) in something your Father has taught you (by means of another “minister” who will be spoken about later on in [:14-16]).**

- So ... “**Now**” - with all that fully accomplished—in **view of these things/facts**, the following information is going to be set forth as a way of **checking you out** in order to see that you have fully and properly received the effectual working of all that the Father has just set before you in (:8-12).

- And everything that is said after the word *Now* in (:13) can be looked at and evaluated by you in order to ensure that in your godly sonship Thinking, you really are thinking just like your Father—and the results of that godly sonship Thinking is exactly what (:13) says it is (i.e., it’s REAL and not just some ‘theory’ or just some category of doctrine [compartmentalized thinking], or just some ‘bible data’) ...

... and that you really DO have the **benefits** of this godly Thinking going on in your ‘inner man’, just like it does within your Heavenly Father ... **and for the exact same reason!**

- And now we’re going to get our Father’s 2nd ‘Character-Title’ ... a Title that we should now (because of the effectual working of the doctrine He’s just given us) be able to honestly see Him, and view Him in all truth as: ***the God of hope!***

- That is, where true, genuine, godly **HOPE** is concerned, your Heavenly Father is the **GOD** of it! (No one else can ever give you anything greater to **hope** for; and no one else can generate more powerful **hope** within your inner man than He can!)

- There is no one who offers you *hope* like He does—there is no one who holds out a promise like He does—or who puts His **name** and His **word** on the line like He does ...

... and there is no one who generates absolute confidence in what He promises and tells you (based upon His Love-Based Convincement) like He does ...

... there is no one who has a ‘track record’ like He does for making good on His promises / His word / and His name like He does!

- And this ‘Character-Title’ our Father gives Himself as **“the God of hope”** expects that you look back and consider all of your ‘Hope-Package’ that has been given to you in the book of Romans—and to be **suitably impressed with it all**—and ‘revel’ in it all ... and as we do—it brings this ‘Character-Title’ of our Heavenly Father out: ‘front-and-center’ ...

... and along with that *hope*, we have an intelligent understanding and appreciation for the fact that with each “*hope*” in our Hope-Doctrinal-Package, **there is an associated (or connected) SALVATION!**

- And taken all together (the “*hope*” + the “*salvations*” that go with it) — **godly HOPE has a Power and a Might to it—to sustain you; and to stabilize you; and to calm you; and to encourage you; and to relieve you of stress and trouble in your ‘inner man’ - and it has lasting Power & Might over the ‘long haul’ of your life! ...**
(patient endurance)

... it’s what lies at the ‘core’ of the “*Dew of thy youth*”!

... and without a shadow of a doubt, our Father is **“the God of hope”** now in your sight (and my sight)! **Is He???** ...

- Well, at this point it's **critical** that we recognize and acknowledge godly **hope** (and our Heavenly Father as the **God** of it) to be the **mighty** and **powerful** thing that it is, in order for us to be properly **Established** and for our **Establishment** to **endure** throughout anything and everything that can come your way that tries to **destabilize** it and put a **halt** to your sonship **Establishment**!

- Truth is—godly **hope** is going to be one of your most valuable and powerful weapons of your warfare—godly **hope** is more powerful than any physical weapon that ever has been or ever will be created by man! (And your war is a **spiritual** war—and you need **spiritual** weapons [both offensive and defensive]!)

- We could say much, much more—but really it should be left up to you to *meditate upon these things*, and to spend time in intelligent sonship prayer, communion, and fellowship with your Father—and undergo a real and meaningful **enlarging of your heart** as the full impact of your 'Hope-Doctrine Package' effectually works within your 'inner man'.

- Here is a “check” in this Sonship Checkpoint:
“Now the God of hope ...”

1. Can you say that: “Based upon the effectual working of the ‘Hope-Doctrine Package’ of Romans 3:21-15:12—and in all honesty of heart, I now see my Heavenly Father as *the God of hope*?”
2. Can your Heavenly Father say of **you**, (and in all honesty of heart, can you say of **yourself**) that, based upon that same effectual working of the ‘Hope-Doctrine Package’ of Rom. 3:21-15:12, that: “I am **son of hope**?”

... moving on ...

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,

- Now the way in which this phrase is commonly dealt with is that it is Paul **praying** a prayer to God to “*fill*” the saints at Rome with “*all joy and peace*” ... but my understanding is that this is NOT a prayer at all—but rather, it's a fatherly directive for the saints to

make a sonship assessment upon their own heart (inner man) and to ensure that the benefits of their godly Hope-Doctrine Package is doing its job in view of the Father now being your *God of hope*.

- And if your godly Hope-Doctrine Package *is* doing its effectual job in your inner man, and the Father really *is* seen by you to be *the God of hope*—then the expectation is that, **as a result of all that**, you (as a ‘son of hope’) are going to be **FILLED** with 2 things: *joy and peace*.

- *Now the God of hope fill you ...*

- “*fill*” = as with a container, your inner man is now to be filled up with these 2 things—however, since we’re **not** dealing with a physical container that always stays the same size—but rather, we’re dealing with your **inner-man** (your *heart*) which is a container (so to speak), but a container that is designed to always and ever become bigger and bigger ...

... that is, your heart is designed to *enlarge* (or to become larger and larger) as the Edification Process continues on (the Edification Process is designed to ever increase and enlarge your *heart*) — and since that’s the case, the issue is one of ***filling*** you with these 2 things ‘to the full’ **at the moment**—but **it keeps on increasing!**

- (an enlarged heart in your physical body is a bad thing [a serious medical problem that can cause death] - but your inner-man *heart* needs to always be enlarging as you go through the Edification Process. And if that *enlarging* does not take place, then a very serious & dangerous condition takes place called, being *straitened in your own bowls* [*bowls* = the bowls **of your inner-man**; the emotional response to what you face in life]).

2 Corinthians 6 (read :1-10)

11 O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is **enlarged**.

12 Ye are not straitened by us, but ye are straitened in your own bowls.

13 Now for a recompence in the same, (I speak as unto my children,) be ye also **enlarged**.

(read :14-18)

- The point is—since we’re dealing with being *filled* with these 2 things **in our heart (our inner-man)**, we are to understand and appreciate that while we might be *filled* ‘to the brim’ (so to speak) at the moment—this (like it is often expressed in God’s word), this *filling* is to **increase** throughout the entire Sonship Edification Process!

- Now with that said—the issue of God (as *the God of hope*) *filling you with all joy and peace* is NOT therefore the issue of simply praying a prayer for God to fill you with those 2 things—and by some omnipotent miracle of “Holy Ghost power”, God just miraculously produces them within you! ... nor is this just some ‘automatic’ ministry of the Holy Ghost performed within you! (the Holy Ghost does, indeed do it, **but NOT automatically!**)

- And how do we know that?

- We know that by 2 words in (:13) - **“IN BELIEVING”!**

- Note: It doesn’t say— ‘Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.’

- That expression **“in believing”** is talking about the entire Edification Process in Sonship edification & education! It’s talking about the effectual working of the curriculum for our sonship edification that has been Positively & Properly responded to by us as “sons” : ***believing* God’s word—(by grace through faith) - especially that portion of Romans that has contained our Hope-Doctrine Package (Rom. 3:21-15:12)! [if you don’t have that doctrine, you’re sunk! and this verse is meaningless & powerless to do anything!]**

- (by the way—that’s what the **“*power* of the Holy Ghost”** is talking about, too!)

- Point is: this isn’t a ‘prayer’ - **this is an acknowledgment and an honest assessment of our Positive & Proper response to our godly Sonship Edification & Education!** - that has produced godly **hope** within our inner man to the point of viewing God with the characteristic title of: *the God of hope!* — and of ourselves being made ‘sons of hope’!

- And the honest assessment is: are you *filled with all joy and peace in believing?* ... or not?!

- And just to dwell a bit more on that issue of “*fill*” you with *all joy and peace* — when something *fills* you, the idea is that it goes everywhere—it permeates (it spreads ‘throughly’) — it pervades or is present in every area of your life—from the largest to the smallest areas of your life—to every aspect of your life: **GODLY HOPE IS THERE! and Hope’s 2 inseparable companions are there: JOY & PEACE!**

- **What godly OPTIMISM! (see how this has built upon the attitude of godly optimism that got established within you back in Romans 8:14-39?!?)**

- **PRINCIPLE: Hope and Optimism go hand-in-hand!**

- What an incredible & magnificent thing it is to know that no matter what circumstance you find yourself in—no matter what situation you’re in—no matter how *the sufferings of this present time* assail you—no matter how difficult, discouraging, or troubling, or distressing or isolated your life is—**there is no place and no time in your life that you can find yourself, where godly hope and joy and peace are not right there with you! (even in the blackest, darkest times of despair: hope is there—joy and peace are there!)**

- And not just anyone or everyone can say that! - that’s NOT true of any unbeliever—and that’s NOT true of any saint / believer who does not have the effectual working of Romans 1:1-15:12! (any saint who has not been Edified properly as a “son”)!

- So let’s deal with those 2 things: “*joy and peace*”

- *Joy and peace* are not being used here randomly or haphazardly (as if they are just a couple of ‘nice’ things to throw in with *hope*).

- My understanding is that *joy and peace* are the **results** of *hope*.

- *Joy and peace* are the 2 Major categories of **benefits** as a result of having godly *hope*. [**and what benefits they are!**]

- They are the 2 ‘**inseparable**’ **inner-man companions** of godly *hope*. [they are designed to go together]

- They are the ‘**fruit**’ of *hope*.

- We did see, that in another context, these 2 were mentioned (along with *righteousness*) back up in Rom. 14:17 in the ‘weaker brother situation’ - *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*— (the words *peace* and *joy* being used in a different way/context in that passage)

- truth is—the closest we came to dealing with this kind of *joy* was back in Rom. 5:11.

- But my understanding is that we’ve never really dealt with *joy and peace* in this particular context or in this particular way—and that is because of the **context** ...

... here, *joy and peace* is directly connected with the issue of our Father being *the God of hope*—and then as a direct result of that, we are to be reaping the benefits of who God is to us as *the God of hope* ...

... in other words—the *joy and peace* being talked about here are the ‘fruit’ of the entire ‘Hope-Doctrine Package’ that we have effectually operating within us from Rom. 3:21-15:12. **(godly *hope*, being the object of this *joy and peace* and the cause for this *joy and peace*!) [it has a most powerful source that we’ll talk about later!]**

- This *joy and peace* is actually GOD’S OWN JOY AND PEACE—it is the exact same *joy and peace* that operates within the heart of “*the God of hope*” - and is expected to be operating with us as “sons of hope”! Why? because it’s based upon the exact same doctrine!

- or to put it another way—it’s the same *joy and peace* that operates within the very heart of God’s Son (the Lord Jesus Christ) as He has operated upon godly *hope* in the face of all His *suffering* (for the duration of this disp. of grace [2,000+ yrs.], and as we *suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.* (Rom. 8:17)

- again—*joy and peace* being the inseparable inner-man companions of godly *hope*—the ‘fruit’ of godly *hope* ...
... because where there is *hope*, **there is *joy and peace* in believing!** — (no wonder that they are listed in “*the fruit of the Spirit*” over in Gal. 5)!

- My understanding is that—(especially in this context) - this *joy and peace* is **NOT ‘circumstance-dependent’!**

... “happiness” is often said to be circumstance-dependent, but *joy* is **not** dependent upon any particular circumstance or situation that you find yourself in ... and neither is the *peace* being talked about here.

- **And that’s a BIG DEAL!** — because this kind of *joy and peace* that is the fruit of the godly ‘Hope-Doctrine Package’ of Romans doctrine is designed to work as the **antidote** or the **remedy** to the attacks upon your *hope* by the adversary and his Policy of Evil!

... it’s the antidote/remedy of hopelessness!

- And the truth is—this kind of godly *hope* (with its fruit of accompanying *hope and peace*) really has something else that gets accomplished within your inner-man (heart) - and that ‘something else’ is what God is after here ... [but more on that later]. (verse 13 doesn’t just happen ‘out of the blue’)

- “*joy*” = OED = a vivid emotion of pleasure arising from a sense of well-being or satisfaction; the feeling or state of being highly pleased or delighted; exultation of spirit; gladness, delight.

WEBSTER’S 1828 = the passion or emotion excited by the acquisition or **expectation of good**; that excitement of pleasurable feelings which is caused by success, good fortune, the gratification of desire or some good possessed, or by a rational prospect [*hope*] of possessing what we love or desire; gladness; exultation; exhilaration of spirits.

- Notice: how closely Webster’s definition complies with and draws upon the understanding of ***hope!***

- *Joy* is an **inner** happiness—it’s a process of the mind (the human spirit) - functioning in your inner-man.

- One of the most important distinctions and discriminating differences between *joy* and *happiness* is that unlike *happiness*, ***joy* is awakened in the mind by the MOST IMPORTANT EVENTS IN LIFE!**

- *happiness* can be the result of even the most trivial things in life—but we reserve the word *joy* (more often than not) for those things in life that rise above the ordinary or trivial—if we want to distinguish between the ordinary and the extraordinary; we would use *joy* over *happy*.

- However the most important ‘shade of meaning’ that the word *joy* has (and that other words just do not have) is that **WHAT CREATES *JOY* IN THE HUMAN HEART IS OF A PERMANENT NATURE!**

- (and that, too, is going to factor into this ‘other thing’ that our Father is after here in confronting us with a Sonship Checkpoint of this nature at this point in the curriculum)

- **now notice:** *13 Now the God of hope fill you with ALL joy and peace ...*

- So—in the context of Rom. 15:13) - this *joy* is an inner-man **joyful HOPE—the confident expectation and joyful anticipation of all** that our Romans ‘Hope-Doctrine Package has promised us—which includes our permanent eternal life (our *at-one-ment*); our sanctified, functional life; our victory over sin’s power in our members; our *walking in newness of life*; our inheritance as *heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ*; our not being ill-affected by *the sufferings of this present time*; our working together with our Father to *delver the creature from the bondage of corruption*; our *knowing that all things work together* (together with the curriculum) *for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose*; our being fully *persuaded that in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us*; and that *neither death, or life, nor angels, or principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*; not to mention all of our “hope” in connection with receiving our instruction of wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity contained in Romans 12:3-15:7 ... (just to name a few)!!! - [that’s the “**all**” issue]

- All of which has now come down to this issue—and that **issue is:** that all of our *hope* has to do with this great dispensational change that God has brought in—and that He is NOT dealing with us Gentiles today as He was dealing with the Gentiles in His program with Israel!

- (do you realize how DIFFERENT **our hope** is in this *dispensation of the grace of God* to that of the Gentile's hope, or Israel's hope in God's program with Israel?)

- And in light of that—do you see how that, if the adversary and his PoE can go after that issue of God's great dispensational change that He brought in when He saved and raised up the apostle Paul—and confuse that issue—how that by doing that one thing: he will effectively **destroy your hope!** (and all that goes with it)! [he will de-stabilize your *Established* doctrinal foundation—and will therefore **prevent** your *Stabishment* from ever taking place!]

- As a 'working definition' for us according to Rom. 15:13 —

Joy = the delightful pleasure arising in the heart of a properly educated & edified "son" of God that comes as a direct result of the godly Hope-Doctrine Package of Rom. 3:21-15:4. That is, it is generated from the absolute confident expectation of all that our Heavenly Father has promised us—has told us ***is*** happening presently, and ***will*** happen to & with us in the future; none of which we would know about apart from His word. (a godly sentiment that the Father himself possesses!) [table of 'likes' and 'dislikes' - "like Father, like son"]

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy **and peace** ...

- "***peace***" (the other inseparable companion 'fruit' of godly *hope*) - just as it is with "*joy*", this *peace* in an 'inner-man' *peace*.

- No matter how it's defined, the radical root issue with *peace* is **freedom** ...

... (interesting: if you look at all of the definitions in the OED for "*peace*" - every one of them begins with the word "**freedom**")

... freedom from some thing or from many things that would trouble our heart (our inner man) - or that would be bothersome or disturbing or stressful or causing us anxiety and the like.

OED = #3 Freedom from disturbance or perturbation—a condition in which an individual person is quiet, tranquil, and in an undisturbed state.

#5 Freedom from mental or spiritual disturbance or conflict ... calmness; peace of mind, soul, or conscience.

- WEBSTER'S 1828 = In general, a state of quiet or tranquility; applicable to an individual's temper of mind. Freedom from agitation or disturbance by the passions, as from fear, terror, anger, anxiety or the like; quietness of mind; tranquility; calmness; quiet of conscience.

- This is **not** “the peace WITH God” as we had back in Rom. 5:1—rather, this is talking about “the peace OF God” - (which will get stated just that way over in that very familiar passage: *And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Phil. 4:2*)

- And the truth is - “*the peace of God*” is not some new idea or new doctrine to the Philippian saints ...

... because the foundational development of “*the peace of God*” **occurs by means of Romans doctrine!** ... and if you want to trace it's development, all you have to do is trace back your ‘**Hope-Doctrine Package!**’

- (**see Phil. 4**—and that, if *the peace of God* is mentioned, then you should be able to find its companion-fruit [*joy*] in some form—and you should be able to find the object of *joy and peace* = HOPE!) [after :1-4—see :4-7]

- Something else to notice about *the peace of God*—is that it's going to get a ‘specialized’ job to do in your inner man out in Level II Sonship Edification: it's going to get established as a **ruler** (a governor) in your *heart!*— (**see Col. 3:15**)

- In (:15) you have **peace**—and you have **joy** (*thankful*) [also :23 *heartily* (= *enjoyment*)] — and you have the object of these inner-man qualities: **HOPE** (:24).

- Now once again— *13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace ... ALL PEACE ...*

- Just like it was with “*all joy*” - “*all peace*” (all of the *peace OF God*) - *all inner-man peace* that results as ‘fruit’ of God now being *the God of hope*—inner man *peace* that got generated by the effectual working of that ‘Hope-Doctrine Package’ (Rom. 3:21-15:4).

- And this *joy and peace* is just as **powerful** as the *hope* that produced it! ... and you should be able (all on your own) to go back over that Romans doctrine and recognize it; and be able to acknowledge the reality of this **powerful peace at work in your heart (inner man) as you have had EXPERIENCE with the doctrine; and have WORKED with that doctrine; and EXERCISED it; and as it has done its powerful work within you to conform you to the image of God's Son!**

- Do you realize that the doctrine you have learned, and Positively & Properly responded to, in the book of Romans, has (by God's grace) given you 3 of the most important things to mental health and emotional health???

: **HOPE, JOY, AND PEACE!**
(how valuable is that to you?)

- Being "**free**" from **fear** ...
(there's a old idea that floats around in mental health circles that says something like, 'If you take everything that people do—and look at WHY they do what they do—and if you boil it all down, everything a person does is really based upon **FEAR!**')

... but that's NOT **why** a properly educated "son" does what he does! ... a properly educated "son" of God does what he does because of HOPE!

- But think about this *peace*—a mind, spirit, and soul that is **FREE** from **fear**; troubling distress; anxiety; loneliness; despair; discouragement; despondency; and all other such mental and emotional problems that the human heart can face!

(I've had failures in ALL of these areas!) - but every failure can be traced back to the issue of me NOT having the godly HOPE of my Father properly and effectually operating within my inner-man as it ought! ... and the '**salvation**' that results from it!)

- Even Paul had failures in these areas!
(**2 Tim. 1:7-12 [:12]**) — [:12 = Paul *committed* his own mental and emotional health (his *sanity*) into God's hands (i.e., into the 'hands' of the Curriculum, **God's word!**)

- **WHAT AN INCREDIBLE “SALVATION”!!!** (*hope is*)

- Notice that, while our Father makes it very clear that He is NOT going to put His ‘hand’ between us and our circumstances/situations in order to ‘save’ our outer-man—or manipulate our circumstances by his omnipotent miraculous power ... **look at the extent our Father goes to (by means of an even GREATER POWER) to provide salvation to our inner-man! (by the Excellency of the power of God’s word!)**

- Now for a ‘working definition’ of *peace* according to the context of Rom. 15:13 —

Peace = the state of the human spirit and soul (i.e., a person’s “inner man” / heart) which is one of godly satisfaction, tranquility, and contentment as a result of the excellency of the power of God’s word as found in our godly Hope-Doctrine Package of Rom. 3:21-15:4 effectually working within a properly educated and edified “son” of God.

- Now let’s look at this *joy and peace* in the remainder of the phrase in (:13).

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,

- **“*in believing*”!** — this isn’t talking about the kind of silliness that goes on in most Christian circles today—which is the idea that if you continually use a Christian slogan like, “I’m believing God for all joy and peace!”, then somehow (?) God’s just going to give it to me all because I “believe” He will. (**ungodly Christian ‘Checkbook’: “I’m believing God for _____”**)

- and that’s not good doctrine, good Bible handling, or even good Christianity—truth is, that kind of thing is nothing more than a person evoking an ‘incantation’ ... with some Bible words thrown in for good luck!

- “incantation” = a ritual recitation of a verbal spell in order to produce a ‘magical’ effect!

- This is NOT “believing” that somehow? and some way?, God will just give me *all joy and peace*—nor will God just give me *all joy and peace* if I just ask Him for it in prayer—rather “*in believing*” has a very real object: **God’s word** (which is always the object)!

- **“in believing”** is talking about the Edification Process in godly Sonship education & edification—it’s talking about the effectual working of the Curriculum for our sonship edification that has been covered in the book of Romans so far!

- Especially the portion of Romans that contains our ‘Hope-Doctrine Package’ found in Rom. 3:21-15:12.

- And by having been instructed, educated, and edified by *that* doctrine because you have responded to it Positively & Properly as “sons” of God ...

... in other words, you have received the effectual working of that portion of God’s word in the **ONLY** way in which it can effectually work: which is **by grace, through faith!** ...

- And therefore, on the basis of that! God, as *the God of hope* really is, at this very moment, *filling you with* the beneficial ‘fruit’ of your ‘Hope-Doctrine Package’ ... *all joy and peace in believing* (in *believing* that particular portion of God’s word found in Romans)!

- And (again) if you **don’t** have the effectual working of that doctrine within you—then you are NOT; and can NOT be, *filled with all joy and peace!* **(it is impossible!)**

- Well, let’s look at the 2nd phrase of (:13) ... **“that ye may abound in hope,”**

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, (WHY?) that (purpose Clause = for this purpose; in order that) **ye may** (this is NOT, ‘Maybe you will, maybe you won’t’ ... rather this is being used to indicate **intent & purpose**—the idea being that one (1) thing has been accomplished [*i.e., the God of hope having filled you with all joy and peace in believing*] so that this other thing can now be accomplished; **it also indicates that you now have the power, ability, and capacity to GO ON and do what is about to be stated) abound in hope, ...**

- **“abound in hope” (THAT’S THE OBJECTIVE! in view here!) [this is the **BIG THING** now, going forward!!!]**

- **“abound”** - [what does *abound* mean?] = to overflow; to be plentiful; to possess something in great measure or quantity. **When something abounds, it increases** in both **intensity** and **frequency!** (looking out at Level II)

- HOWEVER! there *is* a particular ‘shade of meaning’ that is sitting here—and one that often gets overlooked if all you’re doing is getting dictionary-type definitions of words.

- But in this case, the ‘shade of meaning’ isn’t found in the word “*abound*” ... it’s actually found in the word that goes **with** the word *abound* ... it’s found in 2 words: “*abound IN*”

(**OED #3**) = To “*abound IN*”: encompasses all that the word *abound* means—but with the additional shade of meaning of: “to possess something to a marked extent, so as to be **characterized by it**” — that is, it’s exists in such a plentiful degree that it becomes a person’s distinguishing characteristic attribute!

- Simply put—godly HOPE is designed to operate to such an extent, and to such a degree **in every detail of your life**—so that now **GOING ON** (going forward in your sonship education), people may not know your name; but they immediately know that you are a man of godly HOPE!

- Godly Hope is to be an identifiable characteristic **attribute** of you as God’s “son” - easily seen and easily identifiable by anyone you come into contact with! (identifiable to the angels /adversary as well!)

- The idea is that this fundamental / foundational *hope* that has been generated from the ‘Hope-Doctrine Package’ of Romans doctrine is designed to get expanded and greatly enlarged in the remainder of the sonship curriculum ... in short, this is what the rest of the curriculum is doing to do to your existing *hope*: it’s going to make so that you ***abound in hope !!!***

- to the extent that one of the major ways that a person (or an angel) would describe you attribute-wise, is that you are: *abounding in hope!* [son of hope]

- Now we’re ready for that last phrase—and the very **source** of godly *hope* and it’s inseparable companion ‘fruit’: *all joy and peace*.

13 ... *through the power of the Holy Ghost.*

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, **through the power of the Holy Ghost.**

- **“through”** indicates the SOURCE of it all—the **source** of the *hope*, the *joy* and the *peace*.

- **“the power of the Holy Ghost”** — first of all (and again), this is NOT talking about ‘Holy Ghost Power’ in the sense that many folks talk and think about it ...

... which is that ‘Holy Ghost Power’ is something to be prayed for—or something that miraculously happens as a result of getting ‘slain in the Holy Ghost’ at some revival or camp-meeting or whatever ... or that it’s just something that happens ‘automatically’ as you “surrender all” at the altar call at the end of a church service! (all that is, is just a way to get out of having to do the **work** of real Bible study—of ‘studying to show thyself approved’ — of being ‘transformed by the renewing of your mind’!)

- In short—**the power of the Holy Ghost** (IN CONTEXT) is referring to the effectual working of God’s word—it’s referring to the body of Romans doctrine doing its job in your inner-man—it’s referring to the excellency of the POWER of the written word of God contained in the book of Romans (especially Rom. 3:21-15:12)!

- And notice that Paul doesn’t explain this phrase—he doesn’t explain what *“the power of the Holy Ghost”* is ... Why? ... **because you should already know what it is—you’ve already been told what it is back in Romans!**

- Rom. 8:6; 11; 13; 14-15; 16-17; ... you were told in no uncertain terms that if you are going to ever *walk in newness of life* under grace and not under the law, it’s going to be accomplished by the 3rd Member of the Godhead taking the words of God and doing something with your MIND and with your BODY—which, arguably **is the most powerful operation that God could ever do!**

- Really, the word *power* hasn’t been used quite this way in the book of Romans—and it’s really the first time that the effectual-working of the Edification Process gets called a **“power”**. (of a Member of the Godhead).

- And *power* is such an excellent way to describe the effectual-working of the Edification Process!
- And sadly, most Christian folks never understand or appreciate the *power* of God like God Himself does! (i.e., the erroneous thinking that the greatest display of God's *power* is in signs, wonders, and miracles.)
- "*power*" can be defined in a whole bunch of ways ... (but let's save some time here) ...
 - Generally, *power* is the ability to do or effect something or anything—or to act upon a person or thing—even the ability to possess or control ... it's a 'telling force' or effect of One with great authority to control or influence ... or to put it simply, '**a mighty work**'! - a mighty work of One who has the authority to produce it!
 - And that's really what *the power of the Holy Ghost* is, in connection with the Edification Process! ... the 3rd Member of the Godhead is in charge of sanctification (which we should already know; and is plainly stated down in :16), as well as everything connected with who God has made you to be "in Christ" sanctification-wise ... (which includes your adoption as "sons" and your **edification** as "sons").
 - The *power of the Holy Ghost* (in this context) is His authorized, 'mighty work' of *transforming you by the renewing of your mind* by means of the written word of God (the curriculum for our godly sonship edification as found in Rom-Phlm) effectually working within your inner man. [**really, you should already know this by now, too!**]
- But WHY say it this way? ... why doesn't God have the apostle Paul end the sentence after the word "*hope*"? (i.e., *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope.*) ... why the additional information: ***through the power of the Holy Ghost?***
- My understanding is that this is a very necessary thing to say—in fact, it may be the MOST necessary thing for the Father to say to His son in order to accomplish the main objective of this First Part (A) of the Godly Thinking that will proved His son with the ability to GO ON and get the rest of his sonship education!

- It's a necessary & needful 'last step' in this Sonship Checkpoint—because the issue at stake here is getting some additional GODLY THINKING that will provide you with a particular ABILITY to **stick with** everything the Father has taught you, and everything the Holy Ghost has accomplished within you by means of the Edification Process!

- As you exit the book of Romans (edification-wise), there's a need to do some 'enlarging of your heart' in the area of a particular godly feature or characteristic that has already been generated—but now it needs a major 'boost' - it needs to gain much more power and might within you in order to successfully deal with (and be *more than a conqueror*) when you face the strong opposition & resistance to you getting the rest of your sonship education & edification. [... not to scare you, but your inner man; your spirit & soul; your mind; your mental & emotional sanity depends upon it!]

- (And this final phrase of :13 is designed focus upon it, and to give it far more might and power than it has so far!)

- And this 'major godly feature or characteristic' you so desperately need as you exit the book of Romans is the 'other thing' I talked about several lessons ago.

- In other words—this final phrase, (*through the power of the Holy Ghost*) isn't being said to you just so that you will recognize the *power* of the *Holy Ghost* to **produce** godly Edification ... (actually, you should already know the fact of that by now) ... but this is said for another reason.

- And really—it's at the **heart** of all 3 Parts of the Godly Thinking contained in all of Romans 15:8-21!

- But before we see that—let's just notice one other thing here—notice the wording here is "*Holy Ghost*" and not "*Holy Spirit*".

- "*Holy Spirit*" = something in the **context** demands that a particular **ministry** of the 3rd Member of the Godhead is being stressed, and looked at, and focused upon.

- "*Holy Ghost*" = (God's Host) — something in the **context** demands that the **person** of the 3rd Member of the Godhead is being stressed, and looked at, and focused upon.

- So—in our passage of (:13), since *Holy **Ghost*** is being used, we know that we're **not** supposed to be thinking about the ministry of the Spirit of God—and His function and roll in producing godly *hope* and it's 'fruit' of *joy and peace* by means of the Edification Process ...

... rather, we're supposed to be focused upon, and thinking about the actual person of the Spirit of God; the 3rd Member of the Godhead; the *Holy **Ghost***.

- And if we are to do that—it means that we are to be focused upon and recognizing the reality of the SOURCE of our godly *hope* and it's beneficial 'fruit' of *joy and peace* ... in other words, we're NOT to be thinking about **HOW** it was generated, but WHO generated it!

... that is, godly *hope with all joy and peace in believing* is understood by us to be an incredibly **POWERFUL** thing ... (with great power and great might!) ... it's the very **power of the Holy **Ghost**** ...

... and the point here is: Whose **power** is it???

- It's the *power* of GOD HIMSELF: the **Holy **GHOST!****

- And because you're very familiar with such things as *hope* and *joy and peace* being things that even lost men have some knowledge of (and attempt to produce and utilize as 'coping' mechanisms) as part of the "*wisdom of this world*" (of ungodly wisdom) - and you are also familiar with the vain, religious system of apostate Christianity to do the same thing ... therefore, you know something about the **weakness / failure** of their *hope, joy, and peace* ...

... that kind of *hope, joy, and peace* will never be sufficient to withstand the attacks of the adversary and his PoE!!! (even if it comes from Christian Bible study that grabs a verse here and a verse there [improper Bible handling])

- You need a more **powerful** *hope, joy & peace* that not only comes from God's written word (the Curriculum) ... but it is also **more powerfully produced**: it's produced by the *Holy **Ghost*** = God Himself—God Himself is the **SOURCE** of it!

- It's been produced **BY God; and in God's way!**

- This means that you are to understand and appreciate that the godly *hope, joy and peace* operating within you by means of the Excellency of the Power of God's written word effectually working within your 'inner man' - **is the genuine article** (it's not a counterfeit; it's not a 'rip-off'; it's not even the product of well-intended Christian Bible teachers' mishandling of God's word) ...

... no: your godly *hope, joy and peace* has been generated by the **proper handling** of God's word ... by the proper sense & sequence of the Curriculum for godly sonship edification: Rom-Phlm [although only Romans, so far] ...

... now ADD to that, this issue of ***through the power of the Holy Ghost***—meaning, your godly *hope, joy and peace* has the power; the might; and the STRENGTH of GOD HIMSELF! (if that doesn't 'enlarge' your heart's understanding and appreciation for godly *hope, joy and peace*, then nothing will!)

- So the question is: What does all this mean to me as a properly educated "son/daughter" as I exit Romans and complete my Level I Sonship Edification?

- It means that your godly *hope, joy & peace* has the **power & strength to ENDURE!** ... **anything & everything that comes your way ... anything & everything that the adversary and his PoE can do to put a STOP to you ever GOING ON to get the rest of your sonship education!**

- And really, that's not even the 'thing' this is after—because what all this is after is to take a particular godly feature or characteristic that exists within your Father (and His Son), (and which already exists within you) ... and to '**enlarge**' it in your heart; and to give it **great power and might** for the 'road ahead' of you ... (for GOING ON and getting the rest of your sonship education/edification ... all the while having to endure the opposition from the Satanic Policy of Evil.

... and this 'thing' I'm talking about is: **CONFIDENCE!** (**powerful, mighty, unshakable, godly confidence!**)

- (which, if you remember, is the 2nd of the 3 Sonship Virtues that got developed within your heart back in Romans 8!)
[2nd Virtue = **confidence in, & confidently trusting in the doctrine your Father teaches you, to effectually work!**]

- **“Dew of Thy Youth” (Psa. 110:3) - 3 Sonship Virtues:**

1. Devotion & dedication to get our sonship education as a top priority.
2. **Confidence: confidently trusting in the curriculum/ doctrine to effectually work within us—and to accomplish all of its aims, goals, and objectives.**
3. Remaining loyal to the curriculum/doctrine for our sonship education.

- The result of all of this—and the ‘**marker**’ that the Father is looking for in His “son” as he exits Romans doctrine, (*with all joy and peace in believing - and abounding in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost*) - the “marker” that the Father is looking for is that His son now has **tremendous confidence and powerful convictions ... with downright BOLDNESS ...**

... not arrogance, or human bravado, etc. ... but **godly boldness** to FACE a situation or circumstance **knowing beyond a ‘shadow of a doubt’** that it can be handled in a certain way, and with an end result, so that a particular objective can be achieved that honors, pleases, and outright glorifies the Father in the process!

- That kind of **boldness & confidence** is the result of everything that Romans 15:13 is talking about!

- Part of the ‘fruit’ of everything that gets accomplished in all of Level I Sonship Education, is the issue of providing a capacity for hope that spawns godly confidence & boldness to be in existence.

- And this is the Father’s provision (this is all provided by the Father) in order for us to be able to adequately & properly function as *ambassadors* of the “*gospel of Christ*” and “*the mystery of Christ*” in a lost and dying, evil world - - that is all ‘enemy territory’ operating under the Satanic Policy of Evil and the *spirit & wisdom of this world!*

- This is the Father’s provision for us to be able to GO ON in the rest of our sonship education & edification!

- This is what this Sonship Checkpoint is all about!

- (read Rom. 15:8-21 [entire Godly Thinking section])

- **Romans 15:14-16**—Now we move to ‘**Part B**’ of the Father’s Godly Thinking that will provide you with the ability to GO ON and get the rest of your sonship education & edification as a “*young man*.”

- There are a great deal of ‘legal’ matters that the Father makes His sons aware of here—and they are matters that both give evidence of the ‘legal right’ for God making the great dispensational change that He did when He saved and raised up the apostle Paul in Acts 9—but also, we’re now going to be given some Godly Thinking concerning the legal ‘credentials’ of Paul’s distinctive ministry and apostleship itself, during the present dispensation of Gentile grace in which we now live.

- And I can’t stress enough how critical these ‘legal’ matter are, in connection with the kind of assaults and opposition that there is, and that there will be concerning our proper handling of God’s word as we “rightly divide” it with Paul.

- So really—what you have going on here—is that even though we have said that the Father is going to say some things to His “sons” at the end of Romans—and says it in a 2-Fold manner ...

... **1)** Providing you with the ability to GO ON and get the rest of your sonship education; [Rom. 15:8-16:16]

... **2)** Preparing you to meet and successfully deal with the opposition to you going on and getting the rest of your sonship education [Rom. 16:17-27] ...

... truth is, **everything** that our Father tells us from Rom. 15:8-16:27 has to do with our meeting and dealing with the assaults, attacks, & opposition to the doctrine our Father has taught us so far ... and it will come from what we’ve come to know as “**the strange woman**.”

- And it’s interesting that in connection with the attacks that come from the adversary himself—they are 2-fold—and they are depicted in a **man-woman** relationship.

- In the past we have defined the *evil man* and the *strange woman*:

- *The evil man* = repents the natural evil and ungodliness of the world and/or the course of this world.

- *The strange woman* = represents an opposing **spiritual** and/or religious **system** generated by the Satanic Pol. of Evil.

- And what you need to realize is that those 2 definitions are **way too OVER SIMPLIFIED!**

- And ‘over simplification’ can have some big problems.

- We were able to gain a better understanding and appreciation for *the evil man / strange woman* as we have gone through Romans.

- But when it comes to *the strange woman*, I want to make sure that you understand that she is NOT just ‘all about religion’ ... because she’s not—granted, that a big part of her workings, but she’s involved in a whole bunch of other matters.

- (what’s critical to me, is the issue that she deals in **all things spiritual**—whether in religion, politics, science, culture, the arts, etc.)

- And she traffics in **WORDS!** (which can be one of the most powerful ways to attract and allure someone who she desires!)

- A good thing to keep in mind: **Pro. 14:15** (*prudent* = careful to follow the most profitable course; wise, discerning)

- We know from Pro. 2:16-19 that she is *inclined to death* (functional death); and that she has a competing assembly in her home.

- **Pro. 7:1-27**—(for Level II, Phase 2: Eph. 4, 5, 6)

- (:10) the SW acts like an adulteress.

- (:13) “*impudent*” = unblushing; w/o shame; immodest; shamelessly forward.

- (:16-20) = **the bait!**

- (:21-21-23) = **the trap!**

- **Gal. 4:16-18** - the Galatians are looking at Paul as the one teaching a false gospel: “*the enemy*”!

- (:17) - “*affect*” (an affection, they want it) = **the bait!**

- “*exclude*” (leave what they’re doing/Paul) - **the trap!**

- NOTE: We did an extensive ‘survey’ of *the evil man* and *the strange woman* at the end of Romans 13:10. And we really shouldn’t have to do an extensive review of it now. You already should be somewhat of an ‘expert’ in these matters by now ... but ...

- Whereas the *evil man* (briefly & simply put) is always associated with what is going on in the world at-large (with all of its going ‘back to Babylon’ issues; and worship of Baal and the Baal system; and the “children of Belial” that are the movers & shakers of it—all of which have numerous & powerful ways of tripping up a saint and his life as a son) ... the *strange woman* is always after the **SOUL and the SPIRIT of the son!**

- The *strange woman*’s aim, goal, & objective is to **de-sanctify** God’s sanctified people! (put them to functional death)

- The *strange woman* has a special destination for a *young man* type “son” — (*Pro. 2:18*) *For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead.* (that’s spiritual death; or **‘functional’** death)! ... her “house” is built with “wood, hay, and stubble” (improper & unsuitable building materials) [not ‘up to code’].

- Her tactics are called “movable” [**see Pro. 5:6**] — she ‘hops’ from a verse here to a verse there—never allowing you to “ponder” on the verses and the truth behind them—(a clever tactic of taking verses OUT of CONTEXT!).

- And by now you should have enough *discernment* to detect her spiritual workings within such things as politics, culture, science, and the arts; **and especially, RELIGION (Christian, or otherwise)** ... you should be able to detect the “spiritual” aspects to those things that would “zealously affect you” (*Gal. 4:16*) [bating the ‘trap’] - and end up with you being ‘excluded’ and ‘cut off’ from Paul and his *ministry / apostleship / message* [springing the ‘trap’].

- And here at the end of Romans—our opposition is going to primarily come from *the strange woman* in the area of **religion**—and especially from what is commonly called “Christianity” itself!

- The opposition is going to focus upon the Bible; God’s written word; and the proper handling of it!

- And it's interesting to me—(at least it's my own observation ... maybe there's something to it; maybe not) ... but at the moment, it seems to me that one of the goals of the *strange woman* is to [in a sense] **generate a counterfeit Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit!**

- it seems to me that she's not so much 'taking on' God the Father or God the Son—but she's really after God the Holy Spirit! — she attempts to produce a counterfeit Holy Spirit, and along with that, a counterfeit leading of the Spirit of God. (and a counterfeit "*spirit which is of God*" that got generated by the Spirit of God)!

- (see 1 Cor. 2:10)

- (see Gal. 6:18)

- How often does opposition come up about "rightly dividing" with Paul and "the mystery of Christ" - and the opposing of that has to do with matters concerning what the Holy Spirit is doing today, or is NOT doing today?

- I really do think I'm on to something here—notice that the "*Holy Ghost*" gets brought into the picture in the last verse of 'Part A' of the Godly Thinking **and** in the last verse of 'Part B' of the Godly Thinking! (see :13 & :16)! ... and on top of that, we're going to get 8 things that the Holy Ghost did to "*sanctify*" the apostle Paul as "*the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*"! (that is, Paul's authorized message; Paul's "gospel" [*"my gospel"* Rom. 2:16; 16:25])

- Romans 15:14-16—Part B of the Godly Thinking.

- These 3 verses deal with godly Thinking regarding Paul's distinctive "*ministry*" and apostleship in this current dispensation of grace in which we now live.

- These 3 verses are made up of 2 sentences:

1st sentence = all of (:14)

2nd sentence = all of (:15 & :16)

- There are (0) colons, and (0) semicolons.

- Notice the English 'words of logic' —

14 "*And*"

15 "*Nevertheless*

16 "*That*"

- That tells me that something is going to be stated first—something that is important & critical & necessary to acknowledge the reality of, and the truth of, first and foremost.

- But then—because the word “*Nevertheless*” begins the 2nd sentence—something else is going to be said and presented that, (based upon the truth & reality of the 1st sentence), is designed to **build** off of that 1st thought, and to be further **evidence** (in that legal sense) that it is perfectly **right** and proper and **allowed** (based upon the ‘lawfulness’ of what God Himself has done) to recognize that the apostle Paul (**and no other apostle**) is the one and only “*minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*. (right now; at this present time you are now living on the earth)

- And the ‘legal’ matter that makes the apostle Paul “*the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*” is the final matter stated in (:16) ... Paul being that “***minister***” (his ‘ministry’ & message) “***being sanctified by the Holy Ghost***” — that phrase ***IS*** the evidence of the ‘lawfulness’ of God in doing what He has done in suspending His prog. w/Isr., and bringing in this disp. of grace in order to reveal “*the mystery of Christ*” with Paul as it’s ***minister!***

- And that’s designed to generate within you the very Thinking of God Himself on this issue—and that He is **unbending** when it comes to it; it is a **non-negotiable** issue with Him—and He will not tolerate any attempt to even so much as ‘**blend**’ the 2 programs together—in God’s thinking they are 2 separate and distinct programs; and they are to be that way in the thinking of the Roman saints, and YOU as a properly educated “son”!

- And to make it a ‘without a shadow of a doubt’ issue in your thinking—our Father doesn’t just make a statement and leave it that way—(like, “Hey, I’m God, I’m the Father, you’re just a child, so I said it, that settles it.”) ... no ...

... because God is going to give us no less than **8 pieces** of ‘evidence’ (if you will), of the PROOF that Paul’s unique position as “*minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*” (that is, Paul’s credentials) really have been validated by none other than the Holy Ghost Himself!

- Let's look at the details of (:14) —

14 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

- First of all—**what a COMMENDATION!** ... and don't just think that Paul is saying this about the Roman saints who have come this far in the curriculum for their sonship education ... because **this is to be taken PERSONALLY!** ... God is not only having Paul say this about them, **but it's supposed to be just a true about YOU!**

... IS IT? (it should be by now)

- Remember that section in Rom. 16:21-24, where those 8 persons come along and **“salute”** the saints at Rome? (that 2nd ‘List’ of persons: Timotheus, Lucius, Jason, Sosipater, Tertius, Gaius, Erastus, and Quartus) ... **Question: Where is Paul’s “salute”?** **Why doesn't Paul “salute” the Roman saints in (:21-24)? ...** **... because he already did! (in 15:14)!**

- This is Paul's great ‘salute’ to the Roman saints—his commending of them in light of them having successfully gone through Romans doctrine (i.e., the Foundation of their godly Sonship Edification)!

- Now, the common way in which this is handled by most of the Bible commentators is that this was the state of the Roman saints **before** they ever received Paul's epistle (letter) to them—in other words, this was their state from the very beginning of the book of Romans ... however, my understanding is that this is the state of the Roman saints right here in the 15th chapter of the book—that is, this is now a **true assessment** of their spiritual condition **once the doctrine of Romans 1:1-15:13 has done its effectual work in their ‘inner man!’**

- And I'm persuaded of that because of the 3 things that are listed (or said) about them in this verse. — those 3 things are not just some general observations! — those 3 things (in this context) could **only** be said of someone who is operating upon Romans doctrine! (as we shall see)

- (but what a ‘salute’! what a phenomenal tribute & testimony to the Excellency of the power of God's word operating within them!)

... (and I don't think it's a breach or an overreach of the context to say that YOU should take it just that same way—as if he is saying this **to you and about you!** ... that is, ***IF*** that same Romans doctrine is doing its effectual work in your 'inner man' [heart] as well!)

... (and you can be HONEST about it, or DISHONEST about it ... but either way, the curriculum will **find you out!**)
[remember, we've still got 46 verses to go ... and they **will** find you out!]

- And another reason why I'm settled in my mind that this is NOT talking about the state of the Romans *before* ever receiving the epistle of Romans is because of the terminology Paul uses: "***And I myself also am persuaded of you***" ...

... if Paul is *persuaded* of these 3 things being true of them, then it must be based upon something substantial—that is, it has to be based upon some **evidence**—and that 'evidence' has to come from something more substantial than the mere 'say-so' of men! ... **it has to be 'evidence' from the word of God itself!** (that is, from ROMANS)

- but what a commendation. But it's not 'just' a commendation for the sake of commending them or 'saluting' them (being "nice" or courteous) ... it's actually for another reason ...

- Remember (:13) — we saw that our Father confronted us with His 2nd of 3 'Character Titles' "*the God of hope*" - and that caused us to think back over our 'Hope Doctrine Package' - and how that we are to now be enjoying the inseparable companion "fruit" of godly hope: being 'filled' with "*all joy and peace in believing*" in order that we "*may abound in hope*" through the remainder of our edification as "sons", "*through the power of the Holy Ghost*", which is the Excellency of the power of the living words of God living in us by grace, through faith as the 3rd Member of the Godhead *leads us* through them ... right? remember?

- and we asked the question: What does all that mean to a properly educated 'son/daughter' as you exit Romans and complete Level I of your sonship edification? ...

... it means that your godly *hope, joy & peace* has the power & strength to **ENDURE** anything & everything that the PoE can do to put a STOP to your **going on** with the rest of your sonship education & edification (per Eph, Phil. Col., etc.).

- But remember—we said that even more than that issue of the **enduring power** of your newly acquired godly *hope* (and it's 'fruit' of *joy and peace*) - that there was something else going on there ...

... and that 'something else' was the issue of **enlarging** a particular godly feature/characteristic within you, and that you already have operating within you (an 'enlarging of your heart', if you will) in order to give even greater power & might to this godly feature/characteristic for the 'road ahead' as you encounter the "sufferings of Christ" under the Satanic PoE

... and that ultimate 'thing' is CONFIDENCE—(powerful, mighty, **unshakable, godly confidence!**)

- It's a **marker** that the Father is looking for now at the end of Romans—tremendous confidence and powerful convictions—with downright BOLDNESS as you function as an *ambassador for Christ*.

- And remember, too, that God is not saying the things He says here in order to teach you the 'fact' of 'rightly dividing' with Paul—you already know that) — rather, He saying the things He says to you here in order for you to **STICK WITH** all that He's taught you when you face the opposition to it from that *strange woman* to depart from it!

- Ok—now, with that in mind again—look at (:14) ... this statement of Paul's 'commendation' of the Roman saints is not only for the purpose of commending them ... rather, it's a statement of **confidence** in the doctrine they've been taught to do it's effectual job—and to bear the 'fruit' of it's effectual work in the form of participating & functioning in the Operations of God.

- And when I say 'the Operations of God' - I'm not just talking about the saints "individually" (which is true enough—[individual edification]) ... but more than that, I'm talking about the Operations of God with them **AS A BODY** [body edification] ... and that's what is in view here ...

... how do I know that? notice the terminology: "*full*" ... "*filled*" ... "*able*" — (they are *full* of something, and *filled* with something, in order to be *able* to do something) ... and what they are *able* to do is a **BODY** issue! ...

... they're able to **admonish one another!** - that's a **body** issue!
 (that's an issue that takes godly *wisdom, justice, judgment and equity!*)

- 14 *And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, ...*

- "*And I myself*" - now we have a 'shifting' of gears—in 'Part A' of the godly Thinking, our Father called our attention to **Jesus Christ** in 'Time Past', during His earthly ministry when He was a *minister of the circumcision* (Israel) - and then to Christ's yet 'To Come' dealings with the Gentile nations—which calls our attention to the godly '**lawfulness**' of our being confident to say, "That is NOT what God is doing now with us in this present dispensation of the grace of God." (our confidence should be now suitably '**enlarged**'!)

- Now we 'shift' to Paul.

- And by shifting to Paul—our Father now calls our attention to what He **IS** doing at the present time, hence, we're going to get a plethora of personal pronouns that draws our attention to Paul—not only as our apostle, but as our *minister of Jesus Christ* right now; today.

- "*And I myself also am persuaded of you,*"

- "**persuaded**" = a very powerful term used for having a matter fully settled in the mind—and one that we've dealt with several times in the book of Romans. (very intense; in the Perfect Tense, "I have become persuaded so that I will remain persuaded in the future.")

- *Persuade* is an expression of coming to **believe** something, but to do so with absolutely **full assurance** [that a thing is real or true without a shadow of a doubt].

- And when you study out the 'shade of meaning' of the word, you find that when you're talking about being *persuaded*, somewhere in the context, there is an indication of a **course of action to be taken** (Crabbs) - we are 'convinced' of truths and facts; but we are persuaded to act & behave!

- So this points up the fact that we should be able to find a course of action coming up somewhere—and **that's** what Paul (and our Father) **is driving at!**

... and that's just what we DO find!

- What's the 'course of action' in (:14)?

... that you are *able also to **admonish one another.***
(that's what God is driving at here!)

- 14 *And I myself also am persuaded of you, **my brethren**, ...*

- "**my brethren**" - *brethren* = the Pl. of "brother" (a family term) - and a term that we have encountered several times in Romans—but it especially got highlighted in our *instruction of wisdom* back in Rom. 12:10.

- We did have it at our first great Sonship Checkpoint in Rom. 12:1.

- "*brethren*" = underscores the brotherhood of **sons**; and points up our association and our alliance as brothers—not just as fellow believers or Christians, but specifically in this context as **fellow sons** of God our Heavenly Father. It's not a word to be used lightly or thrown around as Christian language or Christian jargon.

- (this is beautiful 'sonship' terminology here in Rom. 15:14—Paul's not 'lording' his position of apostle/*minister* over them!)

- (see **Rom. 12:9-10**)

- *brotherly* or "brother-like-love" perfectly describes, and is perfectly fitted to describing the 2nd Major Feature of godly love: *kindness* or *kin* or a *kindred* type of relationship befitting a family type BOND!

- And a brotherhood can be generated even without being actual blood relation! (*brotherly* = to be bonded or banded together as brothers—a band of brothers).

- But the truth is—we ARE "blood brothers" - we ARE related by BLOOD—(it's just not the blood of our natural father or our natural mother) - but it's the BLOOD OF CHRIST!

- And that **bond** or that loving **attachment** of those who can be described as “*brothers*” is greater than the attachment of friends; it’s greater than the attachment of being neighbors; it’s greater than **any other attachment!**

- And the important issue there in Rom. 12:10 is that: it’s from a belief in the reality of the **bond** between each one of us in the local assembly as one of a FAMILY-BOND - and it’s having a clear understanding & appreciation of the “**Living Union**” **relationship of that family bond**—and that, from that belief and understanding comes the Conduct and Behavior toward each member of the body of the saints in our local assembly that would have you now ‘on the lookout’ for, and having the desire to perceive every opportunity you can find for **advancements** and **increases** for **OTHER** members’ edification in the local assembly!

- (for more details on the “*brethren*” issue, see our lessons on Rom. 12:9-10).

- The point here in (:14) is that the use of the word *brethren* isn’t just a term of ‘nicety’ (or a term to be just glossed over) - rather, it’s a very powerful term used to bring to our mind the LIVING UNION RELATIONSHIP of the BODY of Christ that we are part of!

- Interesting: the **Living Union Relationship** is set forth to us in a 2-Fold way: **1) The Body; 2) Family**. [each one has features & characteristics of a ‘living-union’ relationship!]

- Now we come to the ‘list’ of 3 things:

14 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye (body term: all of you body-members at Rome) *also are ...*

1. *full of goodness,*
2. *filled with all knowledge,*
3. *able also to admonish one another.*

- Now before we get into the details of these things—I just want to build on what we talked about several lessons ago.

- There's some terminology used in these verses that indicate (to me, anyway) some things about the issue of the Holy Ghost (3rd Member of the Godhead) being of particular attack by the adversary and his PoE. (under the auspices of the *strange woman*)

- and I think that if we perceive some things here about this issue, then we can be better prepared for *the strange woman* and the kind of opposition we can expect from her.

- It's clear to me that, by what is said here, and what is said about the nature of the attacks and opposition we will face in connection with the activities of the *strange woman*—that she is that part of the Satanic Policy of Evil that particularly focuses upon **spiritual** matters.

- And I believe that when you read about the nature of the opposition we receive from this *strange woman* throughout Paul's epistles, that she is always going after a "son's" **soul and spirit**. (to put him to death [functional death])

- And to be even more specific—she is going after what Paul identifies as being generated by the Holy Ghost and His 'Holy Spirit' ministry—that is, as the Holy Ghost *leads* us as the 'Spirit of God' through God's written word (our curriculum for sonship education & godly edification); one of the major aims/goals & objectives of the Holy Ghost is to produce within us (within our human spirit) what Paul calls "*the spirit which is of God*" in contrast to what our human spirit becomes under the influence of the PoE: "*the spirit of this world*" (1 Cor 2:12).

- With that being the truth of the matter—we should expect to find the *strange woman* attempting to generate a counterfeit to the 'Holy Spirit' ministry of the Holy Ghost—(if not attempting to produce a counterfeit Holy Ghost Himself)—an 'Anti-Holy Ghost' or 'Anti-Holy Spirit.

- At the very lest, this is 1/3 of a 3-Fold attack:
(see 2 Cor. 11:3-4 [4]) - "**another spirit**"

- And I believe that the terminology here in Rom. 15 gives us some indication of expecting the *strange woman* to operate & oppose our sonship life in just this way.

- And as I understand it at the present time—the “bulls-eye” or the main goal of the *strange woman* in this kind of opposition isn’t so much the ruin and functional death of YOU, (individually), ... [she knows there is something even greater at stake here] ... rather, her main goal is **the destruction of the Living Union Relationship of the BODY of Christ—especially in the local assembly!**

- The attack & opposition IS most definitely directed at you, individually ... but that’s just a ‘means to an end’ ... the real attack is upon the BODY! and it’s Living Union Relationship!

- The terminology here in Rom. 15 indicates to me that we should expect the opposition of the *strange woman* to be in this area of the ‘Holy Spirit’ ministry of the Holy Ghost ... (attacking both individual *and* most importantly, **body** edification) ...

- Note the final 2 words of ‘Part A’ & ‘Part B’ of the godly Thinking section: **“the Holy Ghost”**

- Also notice the words such as **“fill” (:13), “filled”, “full” (:14)**

... it seems as if we’re supposed to be “drinking” some things in (so to speak) - “drinking” some things of the Holy Spirit (just like we’ve been “*mind*ing” the things of the Holy Spirit for a long time now) ... and by ‘drinking’ in those things of the Holy Spirit, we are to become “influenced” by them ... especially as it pertains to our Living Union Relationship as a BODY! **(see 1 Cor. 12:12-14ff)**

- And I believe this is the ‘precursor’ (if you will) to what Paul will be able to exhort us to do in a very familiar passage (but one that is most often mishandled and misunderstood): **Eph. 5:18!**

- (Now back to the 3 things) ...

14 And I my self also (in the same degree that you are fully persuaded that God truly is “the God of hope”, and in return, God the Father is fully persuaded that you are a ‘son of hope, I, Paul) **am persuaded of you, by brethren** (a brotherhood of adopted, educated “sons” [Paul included]) **that ye also** (in the same manner that you are “filled with all joy and peace in believing”) **are** (3 things)

1. *full of goodness,*

“full” - My understanding is that the word *full* is being used here in its most common or general meaning = **having within its limits all it will hold.**

- And the important distinction is “having within its limits” ... and remember that we’re *not* dealing with a ‘physical’ container (like a glass or a bowl or a bucket), but rather we’re dealing with a ‘spiritual’ container, which is your ‘inner man’ (your human spirit; your mind and your soul—**your “heart”**)

- And this terminology is such that it recognizes that (1) as an adopted, adult “son” of God, the central issue in godly edification is that your Heavenly Father is going to install His “heart” into your “heart” so that you can become “Like Father, like son” ... but that is going to be done **by means of a process; NOT by a one-time miracle-act or event!**

- point is: it’s a **process**, and **“full”** (meaning, all it will hold within its **present limits**) acknowledges that your heart, but only as far as it’s ‘present limits’ will allow up to this point in the edification process.

- And that’s the (2nd) thing it recognizes—and that is the very **process itself**—which in this context is the Edification Process which is going to provide for the ‘container’ of your “heart” to grow and enlarge ... but by means of being properly educated and edified as a “son” so far in Romans doctrine, (at this point of Rom. 15:14), Paul is fully *persuaded* (and rightly so), that as far as the limits of Romans doctrine has gotten you in the godly Edification Process so far, it can truly be said of you that ... *ye* (all of you that have successfully come this far in Romans doctrine) **are full** ...

[your heart/inner man is **full**]

- **“of goodness”** - *good-ness* (the “ness” suffix meaning, the state or quality of a thing—hence, the state or quality of being “good”)

- **good** is a very broad & general term—it can be contrasted to bad, or contrasted to evil—and being such a broad term, it’s very easy to come along and define & handle it improperly—and define it any way you want—whatever the idea of ‘good’ means to you.

- [hint ... Paul isn't talking about being just a 'good' person]

- And (of course), the thing that saves us from mishandling and/or poorly handling this *goodness* term is the **CONTEXT**.

- The context will 'corral' your thinking so that you don't just understand this *goodness* in a broad & general way—but rather in a very specific and very precise way.

- So we appeal to the context—and the context here in (:14) is all about the Edification Process—and having completed the first major Level or section of that process—the *foundation* for godly Edification, which is the book of Romans.

- And Paul is commending (saluting) the Roman saints (and YOU, by extension) for having completed the effectual working of Romans doctrine—of completing Level I Sonship Education.

- And in a sense, one of the best ways to understand this use of *goodness* here (in view of the context), is to look at a similar context in which a **BUILDING Process** has taken place, and where God declared it to be "*good*" ...

- **Genesis 1**—during the creation week God was heavily involved in a **building process** in which He "created" some things, but then "made" some other things ...

... and as Pro. 8 gives the details of His building project, God talks about "*wisdom*" being the kind of 'blueprint' that He went by—and when he accomplished even a part of the building project, it says, "*I (wisdom) was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; (Pro. 8:30)* ...

... and in the Genesis account, at the accomplishment of those things; (and as the **process** continued on), He would pause and give His assessment of the **building process** so far—hence, you have, "*and God saw that it was **GOOD***" [on Day 1, Day 3 (2x), 4, 5, and at the end of Day 6 He said, "... *and behold, it was very good.*"

- So—with all that **context** in view—our word *good* is the godly assessment of all that the Edification building project (or process) has accomplished (i.e., that the effectual working of God’s word has accomplished) in the foundation of Romans doctrine to install the “heart” of God the Father in our own “heart”.

- And to the extent (or limits) that the foundational doctrine for our godly edification as “sons” of God has done its effectual work in us—our hearts are (at this point in the Edification Process & godly building project) *full of* that *goodness* (i.e., our heart is in the state and quality of being properly educated and edified as “sons”) ... which is declared to be *good*.

- **“full of goodness”** (in this context) means, full of sonship Orientation/Establishment in Rom. 8:14-12:2; full of the *wisdom* of Romans 12:3-16; full of the *justice* of Romans 12:17-13:7; full of the *judgment* of Romans 13:8-14; and full of the *equity* of Romans 14:1-15:7! ... and not only that, but (even more to the context of our verse in Rom. 15:14), this edification *goodness* **includes all of the joy, desire, zeal, and enthusiasm for GOING ON and getting the rest of your godly sonship edification!**

[see how precise you can get with a general term when you pay attention to the context?]

- Next we have: ***filled with all knowledge***,

- **“filled”** = very similar to *“full”* - however, the shade of meaning is different than the word *“full”* - and bearing the **context** in mind; and bearing in mind that what we have here in (:14) is a ‘list’ of 3 things; and those 3 things are not just randomly stated, but rather they are given in a particular order of developmental progress—the issue of *filled* here indicates that this ‘filling’ develops, or comes out of the previous thing. (that is, *“filled with all knowledge”* comes out of being *“full of goodness”*).

- And when you look up the many definitions of *“fill”*, you’ll come across a meaning that has to do with **“To store; to supply with abundance”** (Webster’s 1828, #2) ... there’s a particular ‘supply’ of “knowledge” that you’ve been ‘supplied with’ in your godly edification, and that’s what’s in view here.

- Therefore, the idea is - that coming out of being *filled with the goodness* of all of your sonship edification so far; that godly edification has **'supplied'** you with some particular "*knowledge*".... and that *knowledge* now **fills** your "heart" (inner man).

- This particular "*knowledge*" so *fills* your heart/mind, that it becomes something that you are **constantly aware of** and has **constant application** to your sonship life ... to why you were 'adopted' as a son in the first place; to what your Father's business is all about right now at the present time; to 'knowing' what "time" it is; and 'knowing' how to properly make use of all the doctrine your Father has taught you so far. (and not handle it improperly)

- In fact, "*filled*" in this case of (:14) also indicates that a **perfection** has taken place in connection with that "*knowledge*" — because when it can be said that you are "*filled with ALL knowledge*", then it's to be understood that (as far as the basic, foundation of your godly edification is concerned), you have a perfect *knowledge* of a thing ... it's **ALL** the *knowledge* your Father has taught you so far that is now effectually working within your heart & mind.

- (now we still need to understand and appreciate just what specific, particular *knowledge* this is talking about ... but you should have an idea)

- "**knowledge**" - basically means having a clear & certain perception of the truth or facts of a thing; an intelligent understanding and appreciation of something. (but just having a 'word-study' definition really doesn't do you any good here).

- It should be clear that the word *knowledge* is a little more specific than the word *good*—and it's driving at something more specific ... a **specific kind** of *knowledge* is what's in view here ... and one that you should already know and be able to 'put your finger on'!

- and since *knowledge* can be talking about a whole bunch of different things—you have to do what we did with the word "*good*" and allow the **context** to 'corral' your thinking and let it 'expose' just what specific or particular *knowledge* we're talking about here in (:14) ... any ideas?

- What is the specific **context** here in (:14)? ... Paul's distinct **ministry** & apostleship in this current dispensation of grace in which we live! ... **and there's your answer** (that's what you can 'put your finger on').

- The "*knowledge*" is the *knowledge* regarding the great dispensational change that has taken place when, in Acts 7ff, God suspended His program with Israel (holding back His "wrath" and putting His reconciling of the earth on hold); changed the status of the Gentiles in His sight; and began a new and distinct *dispensation of the grace of God*; and revealing "*the mystery of Christ*" that He had kept 'hid' and a 'secret' - and saved & raised up the apostle Paul to be ***its minister***.

- and that right now—instead of dealing in any way with Israel and His program with them—God is now all about creating 'the one new man'; the 'new creature' of the church the BODY of Christ ... in order to repossess/reconcile the heavenly places from Satan and his cohorts!

- "***filled with all knowledge***" (in this context) means, to be supplied with, and recognize the truth and reality of all the basic & fundamental doctrine concerning the great dispensational change that God has made—and that God is **not** operating with Israel or according to His program with Israel as revealed by 'prophesy' right now - and that we're NOT Israel, and Israel is NOT us—but we are living in God's disp. of grace whereby the 'new creature' of the body of Christ is being formed according to the revelation of the "mystery of Christ."

- and by using the terminology the way He does: "***filled with all knowledge***" **implies** that we not only 'know' it—but because we are "***filled***" with it—the implication is that we are operating upon it; we are trusting fully in it; we are **confident** that the curriculum [God's word] that gave us that *knowledge* will accomplish all of its aims, goals, & objectives! ... even in the face of any opposition!

- Finally, we have: **“able also to admonish one another.”**

- **“able”** tells us that the first 2 things have been accomplished in order to do this 3rd thing — and that this 3rd thing is what our Father is driving at in (:14).

- **“able”** means that because we are **“full of goodness”** [and what that means] and **“filled with all knowledge”** [and what that means] - we now have attained a particular **ability**.

- **“able”** = having the qualifications for, and means of, doing a thing; to have the **power** to do something.

- This really is a fantastic & magnificent thing to have the **power** to *admonish* others! [a wonderful skill-set for a “son”!]

- **“also”** = likewise—that is, because you are *full of goodness* and *filled with all knowledge*, you are **likewise able to admonish one another**.

- **“to admonish one another”**

- **“admonish”** = most often it’s generally and most commonly thought of as **“to reprove”** someone for doing something **wrong**. However I don’t think that’s the case here—because the Roman saints are not doing anything “wrong” here at all in this context ... so it has to mean something else.

- Truth is—the word *admonish* (even in it’s most basic use) can be used in a way where ‘reproving’ or wrongdoing isn’t in view at all.

- *admonish* = to put a person in mind of their duties; to counsel a person(s) against getting into wrong practices in the future; to give authoritative warning-type advice; to exhort. (OED #1) - hence, **to warn someone of upcoming danger!** [and because it can be used as an exhortation, it’s really not a negative thing, but rather a very **positive** expression of encouragement!] {in battle: “Courage, men, courage!” “Use your sights; breathing; shoot low; squeeze the trigger”}

- **“one another”** = each member of the BODY of Christ you are a part of—especially those Body Members of the local assembly in which you gather! (this is to be going on in the local assembly!)

- **“able also to admonish one another”** (in this context) means, to give an exhortation of warning to other members of the body in the local assembly in connection with future activities. To warn other members of the body regarding the attacks, the opposition, and the allurements of the *strange woman* who will attempt to put your sanctified, sonship, functional life TO DEATH!

- **‘admonishing one another’ is a provision of the Father in which He has built into the curriculum for our sonship edification the ability for us as properly educated “sons” TO PRESERVE THE LIVING UNION RELATIONSHIP OF THE BODY!**

- And this is such a wonderful thing—and so ingenious of our Father to have Paul point out our ‘ability’ to do this—because facing that *strange woman* is just what we will face in the future! What genius to bring this up right at this time! to make us aware of this ‘ability’ just prior to dealing with the issue of Paul being the *minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles* by means of his epistles! (and what CONFIDENCE!)

- This is what all your Sonship Orientation/Establishment provides for—this is what *wisdom, justice, judgment, and equity* provides for—and this demands *w/j/j/e!* (without it, you have NO ‘ability to admonish’ others!) - this is a great Operation of God to be involved in!

- That expression *“admonish one another”* directly implies that the saints who have Romans doctrine effectually working in their inner man have a roll to play in encouraging others in the assembly to be **vigilant**; and to remain **loyal** to the curriculum/doctrine for their sonship education/edification regarding all of the future events of the opposition & resistance of the *strange woman*! **thereby preserving the Living-Union Relationship of the body!**

- Now show how that all 3 of these things (in the very order they are given) line up perfectly with the 3 Sonship Virtues of “The Dew of Thy Youth”!

- **Virtue #1**—matches up with *“full of goodness”* = full of the godly edification of Rom. 8:14-15:7 as well as the joy, desire, zeal & enthusiasm for going on and getting the rest of your godly sonship education.

- **Virtue #2**—matches up with “*filled with all knowledge*” = to be supplied with, and recognize the truth & reality of all the fundamental doctrine concerning the great dispensational change God has made; fully trusting & confident in that doctrine to accomplish it’s aims, goals, and objectives.
- **Virtue #3**—matches up with “*able also to admonish one another*” = to give an exhortation of warning to other members of the body in the local assembly in connection with future activities.

Questions? Comments?

- In (:14) = we have Paul’s ‘salute’ / ‘commendation’ of the Roman saints for the successful completion of their godly edification as “sons” so far—and with them being ‘full’ ‘filled’ and ‘able’ to take their sonship education, (and by means of it), **preserve the Living-Union Relationship of the body within their local assembly**—God has Paul now move to the core of this ‘B-Part’ of the godly Thinking concerning Paul’s distinctive *ministry* and apostleship in this present dispensation of grace in which we now live.

- So this first sentence of (:14) acts as a kind of ‘set-up’ statement in order for Paul to ‘make the case’ (so to speak—legally speaking) for what is sitting in the 2nd sentence of (:15 & 16 [ff]).

- (read :15-16)

15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, ...

- “*Nevertheless*” = one of the English ‘words of logic’ that is used to join two sentences together that stand, more or less, in opposition to each other. However that doesn’t necessarily mean that the first sentence or statement isn’t true (often times it is true—and it is true in this case) ...

... so the question is, How is what is said in (:15-16) in ‘opposition’ to (:14)?

- Well, notice that I said *nevertheless* is used to join two sentences (or thoughts) together that sand, “more or **less**”, in opposition to each other ... well, here in the case of (:15), it’s “less” ... it’s not that the 2 are greatly opposed to each other.

- But there is an ‘opposed’ position of the 2 statements—but it falls to the ‘less’ side of opposition, rather than the ‘more’.

- (by the way—the way in which [:14] and [:16-17] stand in opposition to one another isn’t outright stated: **it’s implied!**)

- Now, if all that has confused you—we can clear up the confusion this way ...

- Paul states in (:14) that he is *persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.*—which is a ‘salute’ and a ‘commendation’ for the Romans saints successful completion of their sonship education/edification **SO FAR** (that is, they have successfully completed the ‘formal education’ part of Romans doctrine) **BUT**

... **but that’s NOT all there is to the book of Romans!**
 ... **that’s NOT all there is to Romans doctrine!** (there’s the rest of Ch.15, and all of Ch.16!)

- And even when it comes to Paul, “*a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an **apostle**, separated unto the gospel of God*” (Rom. 1:1) ... and Paul, “*the **apostle** of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: (Rom. 11:13)* ...

... **the truth of the matter is, even though all that is true; and even though you have a perfect, working knowledge, understanding, and appreciation for all of that ...**

... **THAT IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH, OR SUFFICIENT ENOUGH FOR THE OPPOSITION OF THE STRANGE WOMAN!** (coming up in Ch.16:17ff)

- To put it simply—(:14), while true in every way, stands in opposition to (:15-16ff) in the sense that (:14) is NOT good/sufficient enough to ward off the opposition & resistance that will attempt to put a “stop” to; or an “end” to your sonship **Stabishment!**

- And what you are in need of—and what you **MUST** have, is a proper understanding and appreciation for the apostle Paul as “*the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*”!!!

- The point is—there has already been some doctrine covered in the book of Romans that has *identified* Paul as our apostle in this disp. of grace—and that as such, we are to *magnify* Paul’s *office* as our apostle.

- And, to a certain extent, there has been given some information that gives us some confidence of Paul’s credentials as our apostle.

- But something different is going on here—something that deals with Paul’s ‘**credentials**’, but in a much more detailed way; and in a much more ‘weighty’ type manner ... that is, with far greater consequence and with far greater power or influence than how Paul’s ‘credentials’ have been set forth so far. (some specific matters concerning his ‘credential’ are going to be set forth here).

- And one of the things that tells me that this is the case is the **omission** of the word (or title of Paul’s ‘office’) *apostle*—and the **use** of the word “*minister*”.

- And the other thing that tells me that this is the case is all of the great amount of information given to us concerning Paul’s ‘credentials’ *as the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles* found in Rom. 15:15-29—[which takes us all the way through **all** of the godly Living portion].

- And one of the major things that we are going to have to face here; (and get into our **thinking** here); is that when it comes to the great dispensational change that God has made (Part A of the godly Thinking) ... that there is a **new administration** ‘in town’ (so to speak), or at work, right now at this present time we are living on this earth. (**Different** than what was going on before in God’s prog. w/ Israel!)

- and with this ‘new administration’, there is a **new administrator!**

- In fact, there is a new ‘administrator’ to this present disp. of grace in a 2-Fold way:

- 1) Human administrator: Paul (the *minister*)
- 2) Divine administrator: Holy Ghost (the *sanctifier*)

- And the information concerning the new ‘administrator’ in this disp. of grace (and it’s legal-type issues), you have NOT been taught before ... until now!)

- NOTE: If you *do* properly function as an *ambassador for Christ* in all the details of your life—you WILL be attacked on this issue—you WILL undergo a particular “suffering of Christ” for it!

(see 2 Cor. 3:1-18)

- So we have : “***Nevertheless***” = even though it’s true that *ye are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another*—that’s not sufficient enough to ward off the allurements and opposition from the *strange woman*.

- It’s not that you’ve done anything wrong at all—it’s just that you’re going to need some additional information ... which will be supplied in (:15-29).

[godly Thinking & godly Living]

15 *Nevertheless, brethren* (a brotherhood of properly educated and edified “sons”) *I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, ...*

- “*I have written **the more boldly** unto you ...*”

- “*the more **boldly***” — “**boldly**” = (commonly) courage, bravery, fearless, confident [not timid]; **not intimidated**.

- Paul is about to say some things about himself—in fact, he’s going to make some **remarkable claims** about himself ...

... but really, it’s not at all about ‘himself’ as a man, but rather it’s about his **official capacity as “minister”**.

- And not only does this take **boldness** on Paul’s part—but it also is something that needs to be ‘brought out in the open’ (so to speak), and needs to be emphasized and set forth plainly for all to see. [put in ‘bold’ print]

- And just as Paul is going to be “**bold**” about his official capacity as our “**minister**” - so, too, are we ... the expectation is that **we** are to be downright **bold** in our standing firm on this matter, as well as **bold** in our proclaiming this matter to others (i.e., other saints, as we function as able *ambassadors for Christ*) ... and we’re NOT to be ‘intimidated’ about it; or made to be ashamed of it!

15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you ...

- **“in some sort”** = in a particular way or manner—meaning, there is a particular or specific matter or issue that now needs to be set before you ‘front & center’ (so to speak) - and in this case, it’s a matter that has **great importance** to sonship edification, and NOT getting “bewitched” by the *strange woman’s* Policy of Evil tactics!

15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as **putting you in mind**, ...

- **“putting you in mind”** = that is, ‘putting’ or placing this particular matter in their “mind” — this phrase is used in a way that is designed to **call something to your attention** ... in fact, it’s a way to RE-call something to your attention **based upon some information that you already know (and have come to understand and appreciate).**

- Which means that what God is going to have Paul say now about his **official capacity** to them (and to us) in this dispensation of Gentile grace isn’t something that comes ‘out of the blue’ (so to speak) - but rather, what Paul is now turning our attention to, and ‘putting us in mind’ of is something that we have already encountered in the book of Romans ... (a matter that: we’ve already been given the doctrine of it; and it’s supposed to be effectually **at work already** within us).

- and by means of the next phrase, we’ll have our ‘mind’ prompted to go back and ‘pick up the thread’ of that doctrine and **ready our ‘mind’** for the **additional information** that’s about to be given.

15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as **putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,**

- This is going to be information about Paul’s ‘official capacity’ and his qualifications and credentials to function in that ‘official capacity’ for us as members of the body of Christ in this disp. of grace.

- And Paul summarizes all that we currently know about his ‘official capacity’ in two words: **“THE grace”** God gave to him.

- Notice that it doesn't say: 'because of grace given to me of God' ... but it says, "**THE grace**" - and the use of the Definite Article (*the*) points to this *grace* as something specific—or a particular "*grace*" - or a particular **aspect** of "*grace*" that God has given to Paul.

- (this is very similar to the 'Sonship Grace' opportunities we have come to understand as we "*Let not mercy and truth forsake thee*" [Pro. 3:3].)

- In other words—this isn't talking about grace in general; or the dispensation of grace; or saving grace; or the doctrine of grace ... or anything along those lines ...

... this is talking about a 'grace-given' opportunity to labor with God, and work together with Him in the Father's business that concerns this brand- new (and heretofore unknown) "body of Christ" that God is now forming in this present disp. of grace.

- And Paul's 'grace-given' opportunity is to be a brand-new **apostle**, functioning in a brand-new official capacity as the brand-new 'administrator' of the revelation of the *mystery* for all the members of the body of Christ today, right now!

- Simply put—the *grace that is given to me of God* is Paul's **unique** and **high** office of APOSTLE!

- (and notice that expression "***given to me OF GOD***" — which goes to the matter of Paul's authority and credentials to function in his high office of apostle meaning, men didn't 'confirm' it upon him; ... and Paul didn't just take on the high office by his own will (that is, Paul didn't 'shanghai' the office of apostle—he **didn't** get the office by **force** or by **fraud**) ... but by GOD HIMSELF **graciously** putting Paul in the official and high office of Apostle!)

- Which, by the way, was the problem with the Galatians—(being *bewitched* by the tactics of the *strange woman*) - "*Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him (Christ) from the dead;*) [Galatians 1:1]

- The Father is now going to have Paul turn our attention to some matters that are going to ‘come out of’ our previous understanding and appreciation for Paul’s grace-given unique and high office as our apostle.

- And because of the **potential problems** that might arise due to improper Bible handling; and ‘wrongly dividing the word of truth’... and due to the **fact** that Paul, (and the way in which he is supposed to function; and the way in which Paul’s epistles are supposed to be **handled** by saints today) **most certainly WILL** be assaulted and attacked by the *strange woman’s* Policy of Evil tactics ...

... there are some specific matters concerning Paul’s **credentials** and **authority** (not only in connection with his official capacity as “apostle” - but also [and more specifically], in connection with Paul being the unique (& the **only**) person holding the high office as the new “**minister**” or ‘administrator’ [i.e., the new ‘Manager’ of God’s business affairs] as *the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles* that are going to be attacked, and blurred, and just messed up!

... (which goes to the matter of Paul’s **epistles**; i.e., his **MESSAGE** — which is our ‘marching orders’; our curriculum for godly edification today)!

- Now—as I said—and as the text tells us (*I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God*) — you **already know** something about this matter—especially about the matter of Paul being our apostle ... and now, beginning in (:16), we’re going to get some additional information about an official position (or office) that emerges out from Paul’s apostleship.

- So where did we get our previous information that we are now to be “*in mind*” of? ... (and when we look at it, we’ll see that there is something said about it that should ‘prompt’ our thinking to realize that some more has to be said about it).

- Well, going back through Romans, we certainly had some information given to us about Paul’s apostleship back in chapters 9, 10, & 11 in our basic & fundamental orientation to the great dispensational change God has made—but especially in **Rom. 11:13** (read).

- But there's some information we have already covered in Romans that gives us a far greater 'prompting' that the issue of Paul being our apostle is going to be a 'bone of contention' by the adversary and his policy of evil than in Rom. 11:13 ...
... where is that information?

- Romans 1!

- **Rom. 1:1-12—(:11) = “*some spiritual gift*”** - that is **not** the gift of tongues; or the gift of prophesy; or the gift of healing; or the gift of signs, wonders, and miracles; **or ANY of the spiritual gifts listed in ANY of the spiritual gifts lists!**

- It's a “spiritual gift” (**singular**) - i.e., a ‘gift’ for your human ‘spirit’ = [broadly & generally], all that God has made you to be “in Christ” justification-wise **and especially sanctification-wise ...**

... the *spiritual gift (sing.)* that in the “*end*” *Establishes us* is the grace-given gift of **godly Edification!**

- **Rom. 1:13**—really, this is the verse I'm after—because there is something said here that when it comes to the apostle Paul and his credentials; and his authorized ‘office’ of the apostle of the Gentiles—there's something said here that makes you aware of the fact that this matter of Paul being our apostle (and not any of the 12) **is going to come under attack by Satan and his Policy of Evil!**

- And the thing that is said here that makes us aware of that is that phrase, “*Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren*”

- that phrase is only 1 out of 6 times that this phrase (or some version of it) is used to indicate to us that this is an **ESSENTIAL DOCTRINE** for us, the members of the body of Christ today—and that these 6 Essential Doctrines are of particular concern for the Adversary—and they will be the ‘pet’ doctrines of the Adversary to attack and to corrupt in the minds of the members of the body of Christ today!

15 *Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, (there's something about my (Paul's) credentials as the authoritative apostle of the Gentiles [with the authority to produce the curriculum for godly edification for the members of the body of Christ today] that is going to be of particular assault & attack by the adversary via the strange woman Policy of Evil, that, in order to withstand that attack, you are going to need some further and vital information about ... what you know already is not going to be sufficient for the battle ahead!)*

(rest of the sentence)

16 *That I (Paul) should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.*

- (1st phrase) *That I (Paul) should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ...*

- “*minister*” (review of what we saw back in [:8])

- “*minister*” isn't being used here in its most common & general way in which most folks think about it: “a servant; an attendant; a person who waits upon or ministers to the wants of another” ... how do we know that?

1. based upon having a good understanding & appreciation for the way the word has been used in Gen-Acts.

2. because the **context** here (and which began back in :8) is one of the **legal matters** involved in one who holds the official position of “*minister*” ... the **context** is viewing the word “*minister*” as a legally given authoritative office! (whether you're talking about the Lord Jesus Christ in [:8] or the apostle Paul here in [:16])!

- And just as the Lord Jesus Christ held a legally authorized office/position as “*minister of the circumcision (Israel)*” ... so, too, does the apostle Paul hold a legally authorized office/position as “*minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*”.

- “*minister*” = [OED #2a] One who acts under the authority of another; one who carries out executive duties as the agent or representative of a superior.

- [OED 2b] One who is employed by another to carry into effect **or convey** something [like a message].

- The term *minister*, here in (:16 - just as it was in :8), is being used in a LEGAL sense—that is, the one occupying the office of *minister* in those 2 passages (namely, Jesus Christ and the apostle Paul) are acting under the authority of another; carrying out executive duties as the agent or representative of a Superior to convey a message:

- but as ***“the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles”*** the ‘official authority’ that gave Paul the legal right to operate and to function as *“minister”* is the member of the Godhead that is in charge of baptizing you “into Christ”; in charge of sanctification; in charge of godly edification and sonship education... **and is the new ‘Divine Administrator’ or ‘Manager’ of the Father’s business affairs in this new and distinct dispensation of Gentile grace: the Holy Ghost Himself!**

- The ***Holy Ghost*** is in charged with being the Divine Member of the Godhead who **administrates** all of those NT benefits [spiritual benefits] that make it so godly edification as a “son” can take place!

- And none other than **God the Holy Ghost** has given Paul the **legal right** to operate/function in the office of *the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles* !

- To be more accurate—Paul received his ‘credentials’ from all 3 Members of the Godhead:

... When Paul talks about his office of ***“apostle”*** - he cites both God the Father and God the Son as giving him the legal authority & capacity to **be** the apostle of the Gentiles — (and he often states his being an apostle is ***“through the will of God”***) —

- Rom. 1:1-7

- Gal. 1:1

- 1 Tim. 1:1

- 1 Tim. 2:5-7

- 2 Tim. 1:8-11

- Titus 1:1

(the Holy Ghost/Spirit is **never** *directly* mentioned in connection with Paul’s office as *apostle*)

... however, even though the Holy Ghost isn't directly mentioned in connection with Paul having the **legal right** or being **sanctioned** to hold the office of "apostle" - the Holy Ghost's 'sanctioning' *is* implied ...

... see where Paul's apostleship credentials were being challenged by the Corinthians ...
(see **1 Cor. 9:1-2** "seal")

- Now we may be getting into some trouble here if we're not careful ... I don't want you to think that Paul's office of *apostle* and his office of *minister* are 2 entirely different and separate things because my understanding is that's not correct—rather, they are 2 sides of the same coin (so to speak) - and they're not to be thought of as 2 separate things—in fact, they are very closely related ... almost interchangeable. (You can't talk about Paul's *apostleship* without also including his office as "*minister*" ... and you can't talk about Paul's office as "*minister*" without also including his office as "*apostle*".) ... which is why, here in Rom. 15:16, we're going to talk a lot about Paul's 'credentials' as an *apostle* (because in doing so, we're talking about his 'credentials' as "*minister*" as well).

- "**apostle**" - focuses upon Paul being sanctioned by God as "the one sent" to the Gentiles in this disp. of grace;

- "**minister**" - focuses upon the message that "the one sent" (Paul) is sanctioned to convey to the Gentiles in this disp. of grace.

- But when Paul does talk about his office of "**minister**" - he makes an appeal back to this portion of Romans (15:14-16) where Paul's function as "*the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*" is 'sanctioned' or "*sanctified*" by the Holy Ghost; ... and with that doctrine already understood & appreciated, he can say what he does in ...

- Eph. 3:1-7 (:7)

- Col. 1:21-29 (:23 & :25)

... notice how Paul's 'sanctioned' office of *apostle/ minister* is directly tied to the issue of the great dispensational change God has made (Disp. of Grace)

... also notice (along these same lines) how that the pastor/bishop of a local assembly is also one who holds the office of a ‘sanctioned’ “*minister*” —
 [Epaphras Col. 1:7; Tychicus Col. 4:7;
 Timothy 1 Thess. 3:2]

- Since we’re talking about Paul as our *apostle/minister*, I want to pause for a moment and address something about the issue of an *apostle* that comes up in our epistles (letters of Paul) that can cause some confusion if it’s not handled properly.

- And what I’m talking about is that, clearly, Paul is NOT the only person (or persons) called “apostle” in this disp. of grace ... because you DO find others being called “apostles” **even IN Paul’s epistles! and in the book of Acts.**

(also—who are these others called “*prophets*”?)

- What do you do with these passages?

- 1 Cor. 12:28-31
- Eph. 2:20
- Eph. 3:5
- Eph. 4:11-13
- 1 Thes. 2:6

- ANSWER: First of all, this falls under the issue of not standardizing a word to mean the exact same thing every time it’s used. (Like *church*, *condemnation*, *baptism*, *damnation*, *saved*, *justified*, just to name a few).

- So, not every time is the word *apostle* used to indicate the ONE apostle whose ‘office’ is “magnified” above all others; and whose ‘office’ we are to likewise “magnify” = the apostle Paul.

... so who are these other *apostles* Paul mentions in his letters [i.e., apostles that are clearly NOT talking about the 12 apostles in Israel’s program]?

- My understanding is that there are those like Timothy, Silas, and others that are called *apostles*, and the way in which we are to handle them and the way they are to be understood by us is that they are the very thing God said they were in 1 Cor. 12:28—that is, they are the very ones that God ‘**set in the church**’ (along with others that were called *prophets*) at the beginning of this dispensation of grace, and were to function as such for the purpose of dealing with the unique

situation that existed at that time **when the written word of God was not yet complete**—and at the same time, providing for it to **become complete**—and also for all of the churches to have their own copies of the completed written word of God.

- In accordance with 1 Cor. 12:28-31 (in its context), and Eph. 2:20; 3:5; and 4:11-13 (in their contexts) making reference to these “*apostles and prophets*” - and also including times in which you will find throughout Paul’s epistles where Paul will, for example, send Timothy and others to various churches ... and you will find other churches sending certain ones to Paul—in view of this back-and-forth activity among the churches during that time in which the written word of God was not yet complete (an interchange of information) ...

... there were some who were “**ones sent**” with the gospel of Christ as given to Paul = *apostles*, and others who were “**telling forth**” the message of the gospel of Christ as given to Paul = *prophets* ...

... and these *apostles and prophets* were given by God to see to it that as God had Paul write an epistle in order to commit His word to written form, that not only the initial recipient received God’s word in written form, **but other copies were made of that epistle and those faithful copies were then “sent out” to the other churches for their use.**

- Through these early disp. of grace *apostles and prophets* (I’m persuaded) that all of Paul’s epistles, as they were written, were quickly copied - and then they were all distributed among all of the churches [even this copying process could be done by one who could be called a prophet]—and that was done so that the churches had their own copies of them. (and the members of those churches could get their own copies of them)

- Not only that—but I’m also persuaded that this same kind of ‘interchange’ operation was also utilized for the rest of the Scriptures that God was having written by the Circumcision apostles (The Writer of Hebrews; Peter; James; John; and Jude).

- The same kind of interchange was taking place between them—and not only amongst themselves—but also with the churches of the body of Christ.

- And with all this going on—by the time Paul was writing 2 Timothy he could talk about “*rightly dividing the word of truth*” and “*all scripture*” — and by the time Peter wrote 2 Peter to the remnant of Israel, he could also talk about all of Paul’s epistles and the wisdom contained in them—and also “*the other scriptures*” (2Pet. 3:16), and how that the remnant had BOTH of them [i.e., Paul’s epistles and ‘*the other scriptures*’ of Heb-Rev].

- So these other *apostles and prophets* are the ones who were ‘set in the church’ *after* Paul (as “the apostle of the Gentiles” that he is) had been raised up—and the dispensation of grace was underway—and the churches of the Gentiles had come into existence.

- And the ministries of these other *apostles and prophets* were in accordance with the Operation of God of providing for the curriculum for the godly edification of the body of Christ through the completed written word of God—which was accomplished by means of the copying and distributing of Paul’s epistles so that the churches had their own complete copies of the word of God (a complete Bible).

- Simply put: - those called *prophets* were concerned with the copying of Paul’s epistles;
 - those called *apostles* were concerned with the distribution of Paul’s epistles.

16 That I (Paul) should be (Paul ‘should be’ due to “the grace that is given to him of God” [:15] - which is the ‘sonship grace opportunity’ to be “the apostle of the Gentiles” [11:13] (i.e., the “one” authorized by God to “be sent” to the Gentiles, which apostolic office carries with it the office of “minister”) *the minister* (the legally sanctioned officer to convey the ‘message’ of the gospel of Christ and the godly Edification Process of the members of the body of Christ in this dispensation of grace)

16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ ...

- Here again, (just like we had it back in :8), we have that little word “*of*” ... (and in this case, it’s an important little word) ...

- Once again - “*of*” is a preposition of the Genitive Case—which expresses the issue of possession or source.

- Webster's 1828 = *Of* has one primary sense: **from**. Also, departing, issuing, proceeding *from* or *out of*—and a derivative sense denoting possession or property.

- So what do we get from that?

- As an officially sanctioned *apostle*, Paul is also sanctioned to occupy the position of *minister*—and as a sanctioned *minister*, his office as that minister is NOT his own (or of his own making!) ... rather, the **office** of *minister* is actually the possession of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself—and therefore, Christ **gave** Paul the legal right to function in the office of *minister*.

- It tells us that the office of *minister* that Paul holds (the office that goes ‘hand-and-hand’ with his office of *apostle*) is the possession of, and proceeds from the authority and sanction of the Lord Jesus Christ—and on top of that, it’s going to be proven to be sanctioned by the Holy Ghost as well.

- The issue here is to state a **legal relationship**—just as you would say, “This boy is a son *of* John.”

- What God is having the apostle Paul do here is to emphasize the importance of, **not** just his sanctioned office as ‘minister TO the Gentiles’ - but to emphasize and underscore the important matter of the **legal and exclusive nature** of his office as *minister* coming *from* the legal property & possession **OF** Jesus Christ Himself!

- The point here is to give great ‘legal force’ to the way in which God is going to deal with **the Gentiles** in this new and distinct disp. of grace—and with the emphasis being upon Paul’s office as minister rather than apostle, it gives great ‘legal force’ to the message Paul is going to give to the Gentiles in the form of his 13 epistles—which will be the authorized and sanctioned curriculum for godly edification for the members of the body of Christ today!

- By saying it this way—it gives Paul’s office as ‘*minister to the Gentiles*’ such ‘legal force’ that you’re supposed to recognize the reality and **legal fact** that Paul’s official

capacity to function as ‘*minister* to the Gentiles’ is **distinctly different** and **separate** from any office (or any thing, or with any one) that God was dealing with in His prog. with Israel!

... as things stood, legally, in God’s program with Israel, Paul could NOT function this way to the Gentiles ... why? ... because the Gentiles were to be dealt with through the agency of ISRAEL (and Israel’s apostles/ministers)!

- Nowhere in God’s program with Israel does He call for a specialized “*minister*” to the Gentiles!

- Now it may sound trifling and unnecessary to delve into the little word “*of*” to this degree—but you’ll **need** this kind of detail—this ‘legal framework’ where Paul being our unique apostle & *minister* is concerned: because this kind of information provides you with a fully ‘settled mind’ - and goes to **fortify** and **galvanize** your “**hope**” when it comes under attack! (attacks that will try to ‘shake’ your mind, and corrupt your mind)

- And I just want to reiterate—the careful way in which God has Paul state what he does here in (:16) makes it so that **no one** should ever object to your message as an ‘ambassador for Christ’ (making ‘*all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery*’) - that when you **do** tell others about this great dispensational change God has brought in—that **no one** would (or could) ever charge you with lifting up Paul above the Lord Jesus Christ!

... and if someone ever does do that; take them to this verse!

16 *That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ...*

- again, as to the word order of “Jesus Christ” or “Christ Jesus” - I’m still not fully settled on all the details of that—and I think it’s enough to say here that the word order of “*Jesus Christ*” is to be thought of as the Lord’s official title as the unique God-man [God in human flesh] **Jesus** (Jesus of Nazareth, whose name is derived from ‘Joshua’ or “Jehovah is salvation”) **Christ** (meaning, the “anointed” or the Messiah—which is connected to the Davidic Covenant; and through which would come all of our New Testament benefits that makes our godly edification possible). [**which is a significant matter!**]

16 *That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ...*

- “*to the Gentiles*”

- “*to*” (Webster’s 1828) = [basic] “noting motion”

4. Noting address or compellation [addressing or designating someone by name], or the direction of a discourse.

17. Noting obligation; as a duty *to* God.

- Hence, Paul is *the minister of Jesus Christ “to”* a very particular group of people, and to whom he will directly address (in his letters) - that is, he will ‘direct his discourse’ ***to the Gentiles*** in both his speech [preaching and teaching] and his epistles [in writing] ... and Paul will do so as an obligation and duty to God [especially to Jesus Christ who personally appeared to Paul and gave Paul his sanctioned ‘commission’].

- “*the Gentiles*” = [ethnos]; any and all nations other than the Jewish nation Israel; aka heathen, pagan.

- And even though this may seem ‘old-hat’ to you—you should not let this go by without appreciating the enormity of what is said here—that there should be such a thing on this earth as “*the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*” is **unheard of** in **all** of God’s word (Gen-opening chs. Acts)! it’s **unprecedented!** it’s **unique!** it’s **brand new!** it was NEVER once even ‘hinted at’ according to prophesy!

- It’s different and distinct from Israel and God’s program with Israel! ... and it’s different and distinct from the 12 apostles Jesus called out during His earthly ministry!

- And at this point I believe it would be wise, and necessary, and beneficial to ‘pause’ for a while and look at God raising up Paul and commissioning / sanctioning him to be a brand new apostle and *minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles* before we finish off (:16).

- **PAUL: THE UNIQUE AND DISTINCT APOSTLE.**

- Remember that this doctrine surrounding Paul and his unique apostleship is one of the major doctrines that will be ‘ear-marked’ for special attack by the adversary. (Essential Doctrine Rom. 1:13)

- What do we do with Paul?

- Most Bible teachers; commentators; theologians; scholars; and most of the Christian world simply do not know what to do with Paul—and because of poor, sloppy, and downright dishonest Bible handling, **plus** the failure to “rightly divide the word of truth” **with Paul**, a great deal of erroneous teaching is (sadly) being done in connection with Paul.

- The most common erroneous teaching about Paul is to either:

1. Make Paul the proper replacement of Judas Iscariot. —or—
2. Make Paul the 13th apostle (along with the other 11 apostles in the gospel accounts + Matthias) - [again, making Paul on par with Israel’s apostles].

- the 2nd is much less common—the 1st is the majority of all of the erroneous teaching about Paul as an apostle.

- The frustration with Paul is so great among Bible teachers today that they pretty much just ignore the whole thing and BLUR what Paul is as an apostle (and what Paul writes in his epistles) with God’s program with Israel.

- (and if truth be told, the vast majority of Christians today simply don’t care about any of this at all!)

- And so the question of ‘What to do with Paul?’ is relegated to the dark recess of theologians and biblical scholars where the issue never gets to ‘see the light of day’.

- It just becomes nothing more than a ‘theological position’ or a ‘denominational position.’

- But, (as Keith Blades said) “It doesn’t take a degree in theology, or any such thing, to read what Acts 1:15-26 says, and from what it says, to clearly realize that Paul never could have replaced Judas; even if he wanted to—and God had no intention whatsoever that he be Judas’ replacement.”

- And this isn’t a “new” thing at all—because the same issue of ‘What to do with Paul?’ existed when Paul was still alive on this earth—in all the synagogues, and in the schools of the Pharisees and scribes and doctors of the law 2000 years ago!

- And this is a **serious** matter—and the erroneous teaching that says that Paul is Judas’ replacement is a serious corrupt and false doctrine!

- In fact the false doctrine that Paul is the replacement for Judas was concocted (from the very beginning) for the very purpose of denying the truth of Paul’s unique and distinctive apostleship and message ...

... and by doing that—it makes it so that the distinctive nature of this present dispensation of grace is **not** recognized—and that makes it so that Christians will never “rightly divide the word of truth” as they need to do!

- And THAT is the very purpose of Satan’s Policy of Evil! it’s aim, goal, & objective is to make sure that Christians DO NOT “rightly divide the word of truth” with Paul!

- The corrupted false doctrine that teaches that Paul is the replacement for Judas is **the doctrine of the adversary, Satan himself!** (that’s what *he* wants taught)

- And the bottom line is that this false doctrine is designed by the adversary to see to it that godly Edification never takes place ... that “*godly edifying which is in faith*” (1 Tim. 1:4) **never takes place!**

- Now as we will clearly see—Paul is **not** the replacement of Judas, nor is he one of the 12 apostles to Israel.

- And since we’re talking about Israel’s 12 apostles—let’s just look at them as they are listed in God’s word.

- **Matt. 10:1-4** where we have a concise list of them.
(3 sets of brothers)

- These were the original 12 apostles TO ISRAEL!

- But the problem arises with Judas and his suicide.
(see **Mat. 27:3-5; Acts 1:10-18**)

- Now you have a vacancy in the 12 apostles—and that vacancy has to be filled ... and so the confusion begins ...

- (read Acts 1:15-26)

- It's commonly taught that Peter and the others made a mistake here by replacing Judas with Matthias.

- This concocted, corrupt, false doctrine was invented in order to obscure the truth of what God has actually done with Paul!

- Not only that—but saying this was a mistake falsely accuses Peter and the other apostles, when they made no mistake at all.

- However, when you pay attention to what is going on here, the truth of the matter is that Peter and the others knew exactly what was going on—and they acknowledged that God Himself had already chosen Judas' replacement.

- The choice came down to 2 men (Justus and Matthias) and Matthias was God's choice: **NOT Peter's choice or the choice of other "men"!**

- Also, (as is commonly alleged), the 11 apostles were NOT GAMBLING! or doing anything foolish or 'presumptuous'!

- Truth is—anyone who alleges that Peter and the others were presumptuous and foolish are themselves ignorant of God's own dealings with Israel, and generally have a very shallow and ignorant understanding of God's program w/ Israel.

- Because the 'casting of lots' was a God-given and God-honored method and procedure for determining God's will in His prog. w/ Isr. all the way back to the ministrations of the High Priest back when the nation Israel began.

- So, far from being foolish and presumptuous—Peter and the other 11 apostles were acting in full accordance with God's own methodology.

- Now—in order to get started 'on the right foot', we need to look at an issue that is recorded in the opening verses of Acts 1—and we'll see there that Peter and the other 11 apostles **were not** just 'flying by the seat of their pants' (so to speak), or just trying to figure things out on their own, and not really knowing what they were doing.

- In fact—the Lord Himself had already prepared Peter and the other 11 for this very time and for this very thing ... and what they do in Acts 1:15-26 is in full and strict accordance with the specific instructions and commandments that the Lord gave them just before He returned to heaven after His resurrection.
- The 12 apostles of Israel (along with all of the remnant of Israel) had been deeply affected by Israel’s vain, religious system and its corrupted doctrine.
 - Israel’s VRS and the corrupted doctrine they taught and pressed into the minds of the people of Israel had produced a great ‘blind spot’ ... or great **ignorance** of the testimony that the Lord Jesus Christ gave and provided as to the reality of Him being Israel’s Christ/Messiah—as well as ignorance of much of the Lord’s ministry to them.
- During the earthly ministry of the Lord, there came a point in which He would graciously conclude the people of Israel in ‘**ignorance**’ - beginning with the Lord intentionally hiding his ministry to them in ‘parables’ - and ultimately allowing the Lord to pray what He does in Luke 23:34 ... *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*
(said from the cross)
- God graciously concluded the people of Israel in ‘ignorance’ and by so doing that, He gave the people of Israel an honest opportunity to respond positively to the ministry of the Holy Ghost (concerning who Jesus of Nazareth was) during a 1-year period where God would display His ‘forbearance & mercy’ by giving “**repentance to Israel**” which would occur from the Day of Pentecost to the stoning of Stephen (Acts 1-7). [the only time in which the “unpardonable sin” could ever be committed]
- (this is a massive doctrine, and one that we don’t have time to go into at the moment) ... but it’s important to realize that the 12 apostles of Israel were also deeply affected by the corrupt doctrine of Israel’s VRS, as well as the ‘ignorance factor’ that was going on at the end of the Lord’s earthly ministry.

... and it’s with the 12 apostles of Israel and **their** being affected by this ‘ignorance factor’ that we pick up the thread of our dealing with how they were to deal with the death of Judas Iscariot and fill his position as the 12th apostle of Israel.

- (see **John 21:1-3**) - Even in the Lord's post-resurrection ministry, there still remained a particular 'attitude' among the apostles—which was a natural 'by-product' or some lingering affects of that 'ignorance factor' [or 'judicial blindness' over the nation as a whole] - (not really sinful or ungodly) - but which has to now get fully 'cleaned out' in order for the various aspects of their ministry to the remnant of Israel can take place.
- (**Mat. 16**) - This is the first time you encounter the effects of this 'judicial blindness' or 'ignorance factor' among the apostles.
 - (:1-12)
 - [then you have Peter's confession of his finally coming to understand just who Jesus of Nazareth really is]
 - (:21-23)
 - And the affects of that 'ignorance' factor that existed among the apostles lingers on—even **after** the Lord's resurrection from the dead. [it lasts about 1 year (from Mt.16-Acts 1)]
- And as we will see—the Lord did **2 things** that removed all 'ignorance' from the remaining 11 apostles of Israel.
 1. One of them took place during the Lord's post-resurrection ministry that is recorded near the end of John's gospel—which we will focus the bulk of our attention on).
 2. The other one will take place during the 40 days that the Lord was with the 11 apostles—until He ascended to be with the Father in Acts 1—(**read Acts 1:1-3**)
 - the 1st thing the Lord did was the necessary 'first step' (so to speak) that would provide for the remaining 11 apostles to get their 'ignorance' cleared away — which occurs shortly after His resurrection.
 - the 2nd thing the Lord did was the issue of His specialized ministry to the 11 during the remainder of His 40 days on earth, prior to His ascension — which cleared up any and all remaining confusion, 'fuzzyness', ignorance, and the like.

... after these 2 things were accomplished, the 11 were perfectly ‘up to speed’ and **perfectly clear** on what HAD happened, and what was going TO happen next.

- These 2 matters would give the remaining 11 apostles a clear, accurate, intelligent understanding of how to go about fulfilling the Lord’s “*commandments*” (Acts 1:2) in perfect accordance with what the Lord had taught them in His 40-day ministry to them.

- (notice that you see a big difference in the 11 apostles after the end of John [and the end of all 4 gospel accounts] *and* Acts chapter 1:1-11 ... that is, by the time you get to **Acts 1:12** ... [especially with Peter, but even though it’s not recorded, you can be sure it’s the case with all 11 apostles]—you see that they no longer were ‘unclear’ at all as to what **has** been, or what **is** ... going on!)

- and that’s a **critical** thing to understand in connection with the choice of who will fill the vacancy left by Judas’ death!!!

- And Peter, especially, (as the one of the 12 apostles that was charged with making sure that all of the remaining apostles, as well as the members of the remnant of Israel had a clear and accurate understanding of what was going on), Peter could then fulfill his roll as the ‘leader’ and chief communicator for/to the members of the remnant of Israel.

- And Peter was told about his charge to the remnant as the ‘leader’ of teaching & instructing them over in Luke’s gospel—(which also points up the effects of this ‘ignorance factor’ with Peter and the others).

- (read **Luke 22:31-32**) - **PAY ATTENTION to the Personal Pronouns!**

- “*Satan hath desired to have **YOU (2nd Per. Pl.)**, that he may sift **YOU (2nd Per. Pl.)** as wheat:*

- The Lord is **only** talking to Simon (Peter) - but He’s talking about Satan’s desire to **sift ALL OF THEM (all 12 apostles) as wheat!**

- and this is really the issue that comes into play **following** the Lord's resurrection.

- And following the Lord's resurrection—Satan will attempt to '*sift*' out the ones that he could make 'in-roads' with (so to speak) ... the ones who still had a 'weakness' in their faith. [and notice that Satan *desired* that ... he actually requested it! ... and the Lord didn't deny it! He granted it!]

- and there is a legal precedent for this—because the 12 apostles have been vested with the legal right to operate in the Lord's absence when He departs! (they're being put in a position of legal authority!)

- All of the apostles are going to be severely 'shaken' by the events of the Lord's rejection (especially after His resurrection from the dead) in a very trying manner.

- The point is—all that we've looked at should make it so you have some (little) appreciation for the actions of the 11 apostles after the Lord's resurrection from the dead; and after Judas kills himself.

- It's a combination of that 'ignorance factor' and judicial blindness imposed by God on the nation Israel PLUS the apostle's own individual foibles and weaknesses in connection with the power of the working of that 'ignorance factor' within them ... PLUS this issue of the adversary being allowed to *sift them all as wheat* where he will deal with them individually as to the impact of that 'ignorance factor' in order to see if that could be something that would "break" them (so to speak) and ultimately make a case for disqualifying them.

- But the Lord makes provision for this in (:33) - [for this temptation and the testing that the apostles are going to go through].

33 *But I have prayed for **THEE** (2nd Per. **Sing.**—for YOU, Peter) that thy faith fail not: and when thou art **CONVERTED** (Peter's faith is not going to "fail" completely—but he is going to suffer some effects from that 'sifting' — and when he does get confronted with the things that the Lord will do to deal with the 'ignorance factor' and to deal with the 'sifting'*

... Peter's faith will 'grab hold of it' and he will respond positively to it—and it will allow for what the Lord does to effectually work within him) ...

... and he will be **converted** = (nothing to do with justification unto eternal life or regeneration—because Peter already has that!) ... **this is being converted in a sanctification sense, or in an edification sense!** (i.e., 'converted' from ignorance to intelligence).

- And then once that takes place with Peter by these 2 things the Lord does—then Peter has the responsibility to do what the end of (:33) says ...

... and when thou art converted, **strengthen thy brethren.**

- (which will be accomplished by Peter's teaching, preaching, and writing ministry as the 'head/leader' of the 12 apostles.)

- And this information really gives you some appreciation and awareness of the total package (so to speak) for what the apostles are 'up against' and what's going to need to be done once the Lord's resurrection is completed — and the provision for reversing the 'ignorance factor' and its effects goes into play.

- by the way—Luke 24:13-27—the account of the 2 individuals (Cleopas [not an apostle], and one other [maybe an apostle]) - [note :16] and [note :21] = 'ignorance factor' ... that's the kind of mental 'blockage' that was occurring within them—and the general impact of the rejection that had taken place.
(that 'ignorance factor' was a **very strong/powerful** thing!)

- Well—this is the kind of 'background' or 'backdrop' information you need to have in order to really understand and appreciate that when Peter and the other 11 apostles go about filling the vacancy left by Judas—that what they do is NOT in any way done in **ignorance! (or done badly; or done poorly; or done presumptuously; or done improperly; or stupidly; or foolishly ... or anything along those lines!) ...**

... but rather, it was done in full accordance with the will of God!

- Saying that the choice of Matthias to be Judas' replacement was wrong only exposes the fact that you do NOT have a proper understanding & appreciation for the gospel accounts (and God's program w/ Isr.) to even deal with this issue!

- THE 1ST THING THE LORD DOES TO REMEDY THE EFFECTS OF
THE 'IGNORANCE FACTOR' OF THE 11 APOSTLES.

1. **The giving of the Holy Ghost to the remaining 11 apostles and His special ministry to them.**

- You need to first of all recognize that the Lord Jesus Christ's post-resurrection ministry to the remaining 11 apostles largely had to do with removing and 'clearing out' all of the powerful influence of the 'ignorance factor' that remained in the minds and hearts of the 11.

- And the reason for this is because they are going to have to operate and function **in the Lord's absence as the Climactic Stage to Israel's program continued on!**

- They are going to have to make a lot of 'wise' decisions, and take a lot of actions that are going to require great godly wisdom without the Lord being physically with them ... in other words, **they are going to have to think and act in the Lord's stead! (while He is absent from them)**

- This is especially so in the 'Middle Portion' of the climactic stage of Israel's program—during the time in which “repentance” would be given to Israel during that 1-year period of God's 'forbearance & mercy.

- And the 'Middle Portion' of the climactic stage would then be followed by the 'Concluding Portion' when the Lord's Day of Wrath would take place along with the “great tribulation” ... all of which would mean that the apostles of Israel would have to exhibit great wisdom that could not be under the influence of any of that 'ignorance factor.'

(see John 20:19-23)

- So now let's go to that time in which the 12 apostles of Israel find themselves in the context of John 20 ...

... the Lord Jesus Christ has been crucified; He has been buried for 3 days & 3 nights; and He has risen from the dead ...

... Judas had killed himself leaving a vacancy in the 12 apostles of Israel ...

... the ‘ignorance factor’ was still an enormous problem for the nation Israel as a whole, and for the 11 remaining apostles (as well as the disciples and the members of the remnant, individually) ...

... following the Lord’s resurrection from the dead, He shows Himself alive to the remaining 11 apostles as well as other chosen members of the remnant of Israel ...

... as to the ‘time-line’ or ‘order of events’ about to take place—the Lord has 40 days to prepare His apostles to be able to function in His absence as the Climactic Stage to Israel’s program continued on ...

... the Lord returns to His Father; and the Middle Portion of the Climactic Stage will commence with a 1-year period of God’s forbearance & mercy during the time of “repentance to Israel” ...

... and that will be followed by the Concluding Portion of the Climactic Stage which will be the Lord’s Day of Wrath and which will include the “great tribulation” ...

... during this entire time, the apostles will have to function in the Lord’s absence ...

... finally, at the end of the Lord’s Day of Wrath, the Lord Himself will come back to them—and meet them on the Mount of Olives.

- Now while the Lord made some preparations for this time with His disciples and apostles throughout His earthly ministry among them, there were still some preparations for this time that could only take place **following** His sufferings and resurrection from the dead.

- And in the case of the remaining 11 apostles—the 1st post-resurrection provision that needed to be done in order to remove that ‘ignorance factor’ was to give to the 11 apostles the Holy Ghost.

John 20:22—*And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:*

- If you have a good appreciation for the prophesied schedule of events pertaining to the Climactic Stage in Israel’s prog., this may seem to be totally out of order—it doesn’t match up with the anticipated time for the giving of the Holy Ghost (as in Acts 2).

- The giving of the Holy Ghost to the remnant of Israel (which included the apostles themselves) was supposed to take place only **after** the Lord had returned to His Father and the Middle Portion of the Climactic Stage had arrived.

- (see **John 7:27-39**)

- the Holy Ghost would not be given until Jesus was *glorified*—which would not take place until the Lord had returned to heaven.

- (see **John 16:7-11**)

- After the Lord was resurrected, He made it clear to the apostles that they were **not** beneficiaries of being “baptized” with the Holy Ghost **yet**—even though He had “*breathed on them*” in order for them to **receive** the Holy Ghost.

- (see **Luke 24:49**)

- (also see **Acts 1:4-5**)

- So what was this ‘*breathing on them the Holy Ghost*’ all about? what was the purpose & significance of it?

- And (as usual) it’s the specific **context** of John 20 that gives us the key to understanding what all this means.

- It’s clear that the Lord ‘*breathing on them*’ to ‘*Receive the Holy Ghost*’ is NOT done in the context of the Holy Ghost’s **general** role and ministry that would occur once the Lord had returned to the Father. (which is the issue in Acts 2)

- This issue in John 20:22 is dealing with the giving of the Holy Ghost **only** to the remaining 11 apostles for their **specific role and ministry** *after* the Lord departed and ascended ... and more to the point—it was for the apostles specific roll and ministry in connection with the **final preparations** that had to be made in order for them to fulfill their role & ministry after the Lord departed.

- So what we’ve got here is—the remaining 11 apostles were going to have a roll in, and a ministry regarding the **final preparations** that needed to be made (one of which was filling Judas’ apostleship) ... and because of that, (since the Lord is going to be absent when that takes place), the Holy Ghost Himself also had a special ministry to and with the 11 remaining apostles **before** the general role & ministry of the Holy Ghost would begin taking place in Acts ch.2.

- And this ‘special’ ministry of the Holy Ghost that the Lord provided in John 20:22 had features and functions to it that was uniquely designed for the 11 apostles.

- Note what the Lord said to the 11 just before He ‘breathed on them’ and they ‘received the Holy Ghost’ —He lets them know that they are about to embark upon a special roll & ministry.

- **(John 20:21)**

- the 40-day ministry of the Lord will soon be over—and the time was ‘at hand’ for the apostles to be sent out and function in the Lord’s stead during His absence.

- they would soon have to fulfill their specific roll & ministry during the Middle and Concluding Portions of the climactic stage to Israel’s program.

- And it’s with the time for the apostles to be sent out and function during the Lord’s absence ‘on the doorstep’ that the Lord gives the apostles the Holy Ghost in John 20:22.

- And by saying what He does there in (:22-23) - the 11 apostles knew that they were being given the Holy Ghost in accordance with their special roll & ministry that was now at hand.

- (and just as we have been looking at with Paul functioning in an authorized capacity to the Gentiles in Rom. 15 — so too is this a matter of the 11 functioning in an authorized capacity [as ‘sanctioned’ ministers] to and for Israel ... **which makes their actions and the decisions they make to be in full accordance with God’s will!**) [including replacing Judas!]

- It’s really amazing how the Lord makes it so that there are no ‘gaps’ in Israel’s program where things could go haywire! ... **because even the small amount of time between the Lord’s ascension and the ‘pouring out of the Holy Ghost’ in Acts 2 is provided for!!**

- So—now they have been given the Holy Ghost ... the only thing left to do is to give them the godly edification they need in order to do their job ... and that takes us to the 2nd Thing the Lord does for the remaining 11 apostles.

- Just as a 'side-bar' type thing—just notice that even though the 11 had been given the Holy Ghost, that didn't *automatically* mean that they had the doctrine they needed to operate upon ... and their actions showed it ...

- (see John 21:3—[Peter and some others go fishing] ... but remember that it's the same way with us: being *given* the Holy Ghost is one thing; having the Spirit of God *dwell* in you is something else.)

- THE 2ND THING THE LORD DOES TO REMEDY THE EFFECTS OF THE 'IGNORANCE FACTOR' OF THE 11 APOSTLES.

2. The Lord's personal doctrinal instruction of the 11 remaining apostles.

(see Acts 1:1-3)

- Note: (:2) the Lord gave "*commandments unto the apostles he had chosen*" = that's the personal, doctrinal instruction they needed!

- During the final few days that the Lord would be with them, He gives the apostles their final instructions and commandments regarding what they need to do, both at the beginning of their ministry once the Lord departed—and during the remaining portions of the climactic state to Israel's program.

- And in those final few days they not only needed to be taught a lot of things—but now they had the capacity to receive the Lord's teaching — clearing away all their 'ignorance' of that 'ignorance factor' ...

... and by the possession of the Holy Ghost, they could receive their instruction quickly and readily—they would get all of the insight, understanding, and intelligence they needed!

- One other thing to note about these 2 Things the Lord did for His apostles just before His ascension—by giving the 11 apostles the Holy Ghost and then giving them the doctrine they need to operate upon ... they have now been vested with the authority and capacity to function authoritatively for God in the remaining portions to the climactic stage in Israel's program ... and there is something very significant about that ... because what you now have is **the transfer**

of God’s authoritative WITNESS to His nation being turned over by God the Son to God the Holy Ghost—who, in accordance with God the Father’s plan, would execute His testimony to Israel through the apostles!

- So in dealing with Paul as our apostle, and as our *minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles* (as he claims to be in Rom. 15:16) — when it comes to understanding and appreciating that Paul’s credentials as our apostle/minister are going to be the first line of attack, challenge and opposition and by the *strange woman’s* use of the Satanic Policy of Evil ...

... in view of that—the wise thing to do would be to get a good understanding of Paul’s credentials by going back and reviewing the time and manner in which he became our apostle/minister—and we’ve dealt with the first and most common false & corrupt doctrine surrounding “What to do with Paul?”

...

... and that false & corrupt doctrine being that Paul was the replacement for Judas—and what Peter and the other apostles did in Acts 1 with Matthias was foolish and against God’s will ... (even sinful [gambling]) ...

... NOTE: the subtly (and danger) of this false doctrine doesn’t deny that Paul *is* an apostle ... it just denies Paul’s apostleship being unique and distinct from the 12 apostles of Israel! ... (thus ‘blurring’ the distinction between God’s prog. w/ Isr. and God’s program with the new creature of the church, the “body of Christ” and by doing that, either confuse or outright deny the great dispensational change God made with Paul!)
[The Objective being: corrupt Paul = corrupt godly Edification!]

... and to ‘get started on the right foot’ - it was necessary to first of all deal with the charge that Peter and the other apostles of Israel were fools and acting against God’s will in their choice of Matthias ... and we’ve done that by looking at the remaining 11 apostles **after** the Lord’s resurrection from the dead, and **during** the 40 days He was with them before He ascended to the Father and was seated at the Father’s right hand — and we wanted to see if the charge of them being ‘foolish’ and acting against God’s will in Acts 1 stands up to what the Scripture says ...

... and that required that we deal with the ‘ignorance factor’ that affected the 11 apostles and all that they were ‘up against’ (like Satan’s *sifting* of them)—and the gracious provisions the Lord made for them with those 2 Things He did for them in order to fully remedy their situation & give them clear intelligence of what was going on ...

1. Breathing on them the Holy Ghost (John 20:22);
2. Giving them *commandments* and *speaking* to them *of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God*—i.e., the Lord's specialized ministry to them — teaching and instructing them in the doctrine they are to operate upon in His absence. (Acts 1:1-3)

- Any Questions? Comments?

- You're sure that the 'ignorance' of Peter and the remaining 11 apostles has been completely removed and 'cleaned out'??? ...

... we've read Acts 1:1 down through (:5) ...
 ... but what about (:6 and 7)???

- Are they still 'ignorant'??? ... (most, if not all, of the Bible teachers and commentaries say they ARE ignorant and foolish! [because the baptism of the Holy Ghost (or Spirit) hadn't taken place yet!])

- So what's Acts 1:6-7 all about?

- (:6) - that question alone speaks of some real understanding and keen perception that the 11 apostles had for what was going on at that time in their program! - especially for their understanding of the 'time-schedule' of events in God's prog. w/ Isr.!

- Remember, the 11 had now been given the Holy Ghost—plus they had been personally instructed by the Lord Jesus Christ about their ministry to the remnant of Israel in His absence for the remaining portions to the climactic stage to Israel's program.

- (they haven't misunderstood anything here!) - in fact, back in John 14 the Lord makes it clear to the apostles that if they had misunderstood anything, He would tell them so; and He would correct their understanding; and if things weren't as they thought they were, He would tell them so).

- And one of the big, glaring (can't be missed) things about (:6-7) is that the Lord does NOT come along and respond to their question by telling them that they've misunderstood some things; or misunderstood the program ... He doesn't say, "Why are you asking such a dumb, stupid question???" - He doesn't reprove them; or reprimand them; or anything along those lines!

- In fact—(notice their question: *Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*) ... “restoring again the kingdom to Israel” **IS THE PROGRAM!!!** (and they know that — they’ve been preaching that gospel of the kingdom for 3 years!)

- (and they’ve just been told that they are going to **still** preach that **same** gospel that they’ve been preaching all along!)

- They’re actually picking up with what is going on with Israel’s program just beautifully in Acts 1:6-7!

- They had the future of Israel’s program outlined for them by the Lord back in Matthew 24.

- The apostles know what their “commission” is and what it’s all about (as given in Mat. 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; & John 21).

- And the issue ‘at hand’ IS the *‘restoration of the kingdom to Israel’* ! (and they know it)

- In fact, the “hope” of the apostles is the *‘restoration of the kingdom to Israel’* ... (**Mat. 19:27-28** = that’s their HOPE!)

- note: it’s called the **regeneration** because sitting back in such passages as Isaiah 11 you have described there the *regeneration* of the earth as it gets stripped of the dominion of the adversary, Satan himself. God will ‘regenerate’ the earth according to how He originally designed it to be when He comes to reside on the earth.

- And the ‘hope’ that the apostles had back in Mat. 19 is still their ‘hope’ in Acts 1:6-7!

- In Acts 1:6 the apostles ask a question that they don’t exactly know the answer to—and the reason for that is because it hadn’t been given to them yet to know exactly—and it won’t be giving to them yet (just as the Lord says to them in :7 and in :8).

- So they know the program very well—but the point of their question is, “wilt thou at **THIS TIME** restore again the kingdom to Israel?”

- Their concern is the **TIME SCHEDULE** issue—and you know that by the Lord’s response: 7 ... *It is not for you to know the **TIMES OR THE SEASONS**, which the Father hath put in his own power.*

- The “*times*” and “*seasons*” issue is the time-schedule matter.

- The time-schedule of Israel’s program was given in increments:

- 5 Courses of Punishment (Lev. 26)

- Daniel was given more details of the time-schedule. (especially in connection with Israel’s captivity and going under the “times of the Gentiles” in the 5th CoP).

- Daniel gives a 490-year time-schedule. (Dan. 9:24ff)

- By the time of the Lord’s earthly ministry and His death, burial, and resurrection—483 years of that time-schedule had run its course. [or 69 of the 70 weeks of years] - the 70th week of the Lord’s Day of Wrath, still to go.

- The apostles also understood that an extension of mercy & forbearance was going to be given to the nation Israel (which was NOT on Daniel’s time-schedule)

- see Luke 13:6-10

- Note (:8) - note the exact wording—the Lord says, “*let it alone this year also*” - He doesn’t say that the extension of mercy & forbearance will last exactly 1-year ... He just said to let the fig tree “*alone this year also*” - **which means that the apostles really don’t have an exact time for the extension of forbearance & mercy to go by.**

- all they know is that the Lord is going add an additional period of time for repentance to be giving to Israel before the Lord’s Day of Wrath.

- Then add to all that—the Mat. 24 passage we just mentioned where the Lord outlined Israel’s program, building upon what’s sitting back in Daniel.

- So the apostles question in Acts 1:6 has to do with the **duration** of the extended period of forbearance & mercy given to Israel!

- and one of the ways we know that for sure is the exact wording of their question: *wilt thou at this time **RESTOR** again the kingdom to Israel?* — it's the last installment of the 5th CoP on the time-schedule that begins the "restoration" process! (when the Deliverer & Avenger mandates of the Davidic Cov. come into play—that's what starts off that 'restoration' process [i.e., 'restoring' the kingdom to Israel]).

- So the apostle's question has to do with the time from which the Holy Ghost would be poured out not many days from the time in which they were speaking with the Lord (which would take place on the Day of Pentecost) ... "Would that be the time when the 'restoration' of the kingdom would get underway?"

- AND THAT IS A LOGICAL AND REASONABLE QUESTION TO ASK!!

- (maybe the 40-days of the Lord's post-resurrection ministry was the end of the 'fig tree's' year! [or the end of the extension of forbearance & mercy]!)

- The question they asked in (:6) is NOT being asked due to the effects of the 'ignorance factor' ... rather, it's an honest and insightful question being asked because they have not yet been given the 'time-schedule' details for the remaining portions of the climactic stage!

- (**Acts 1:7-8** — the Lord's answer)

- Again, the Lord's answer isn't, "Don't you guys get it yet?" ... "Are you guys still foolish, ignorant, and lacking faith?"

- The Lord's answer is that there is something that God the Father hasn't given them to know fully. (which as to do with the full duration of the extension of forbearance & mercy to Israel).

- The truth is—as the prophesy for Israel's time-schedule that was given to Daniel transpired (and 2/3rds of it has run its course at this time with the Messiah being 'cut off') ...

... and before the final section of Daniel's prophesy [the 70th week] starts an extension of forbearance & mercy has been granted to Israel—and God the Father has put it in His own power as to when He will begin that 70th week!

- And that very thing was told **by** God the Father **to** His Son (and will be told to Him again) when the Son ascends to His Father ... *Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool (Psa 110:1)*

- It's in the Father's power to tell His Son — 'Ok, go ahead and make your enemies your footstool.' (go ahead and start your Day of Wrath).

- We only know that the extension of forbearance & mercy lasted the one year between the day of Pentecost and the stoning of Stephen as we **look back** on it **historically** ... simply put, we know it's time parameters **only AFTER the fact! ... the 11 apostles didn't know that at the time of Acts 1:6!**

- And what the 11 apostles need to know in Acts 1:6ff was that they were to get going and operate & function in the business that they had been given to do (according to their commission) ... and they'll know **by the SIGNS that take place, when the Lord's Day of Wrath is ready to begin.**

... until then—just keep on with their job of offering repentance to Israel in the Lord's absence.

- Acts 1:6-8, therefore, is NOT an example of the 11 apostle's ignorance at all ... rather, it's an example of the tremendous insight and perception they had due to the 2 Things the Lord provided for them to have their 'ignorance' removed and cleared away!

- So—by the end of Acts 1:8, the remaining 11 apostles to Israel were operating and functioning with all of the effects of that 'ignorance factor' [and everything else they were 'up against'] being removed, cleared out—and were thinking and acting with a clear, intelligent understanding of what was going on—which makes the actions they take in replacing Judas to be wise, biblical, godly, and in full accordance with the will of God!

- Now let's look at the details of replacing Judas with Matthias and **not** with Paul.

- (read **Acts 1:9-14**) [do this along with # 65]

- Now we arrive at (:15) — and the first thing to recognize is that what Peter and the other apostles are about to do is directly based upon (and is directly fulfilling) one of the Lord’s “*commandments*” from Acts 1:2 that He gave to them *through the Holy Ghost*.

- by the way—a ‘*commandment*’ is a *command*—it’s a directive—it tells you to do something or not to do something, as the case may be—the point is: **it’s NOT optional!**

- when someone gives you a *commandment* the person giving the *commandment* has the **authority** to give it to you—and he’s **not** just giving you a ‘suggestion’ ... he’s outright telling you to do it; and if you don’t do it, then you are in violation of his will! ... you’re disobeying him!

- Truth is—the Lord gave the 11 *commandments* (Plural) - replacing Judas was one of those *commandments*.

- And because Peter was operating upon one of the *commandments* that the Lord gave him—you’ll notice in what Peter says, he uses the term “**MUST**” as a proper expression of executing one of the *commandments* of the Lord.

- **Acts 1:15-22** — “*must*” (:16) — “*must*” (:22)

- Peter and the others are carrying out one of the *commandments* of the Lord intelligently, thoughtfully, and properly.

- Next—we need to appreciate 2 major things about the actions of Peter and the other apostles that also indicate the proper intelligence of their actions.

1) They acted with complete intelligence regarding what had been prophesied about Judas and his replacement.

2) They acted in complete accordance with the qualifications that the Lord had previously given regarding who they are as “the twelve apostles.” (which, by the way, **excludes Paul** from consideration!)

- Let's note the 1st issue: the 11 acted with complete intelligence regarding what had been **prophesied** about Judas and his replacement.

- Acts 1:16-20

- In (:20) there are actually 2 prophetic passages that Peter refers to—both in the book of Psalms.

1. “*Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein:*” comes from Psalm 69:25 [2nd Book]

Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents. (Psa. 69:25)

- This prophesy has already been fulfilled by the time Peter was speaking—and Peter made that known by what he just previously said in (:18 & :19) *Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst (of the field), and all his bowels gushed out. And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood.*

- Peter knew from this passage in Psalms that *this scripture **must** needs have been fulfilled*—(and that it **must** needs have been fulfilled **before** the Middle Portion of the climactic stage to Israel's program began! (and it was!)

2. “*and his bishoprick let another take.*” comes from Psalm 109:8 [5th Book]

Let his days be few; and let another take his office. (Psa. 109:8)

- (by the way) *bishoprick* = [Webster's 1828] is made up of ‘*bishop*’ (overseer) + ‘*rick*’ (jurisdiction) - hence, one in an office of a bishop with a particular jurisdiction; a charge or office of instructing and governing in spiritual matters.

- Peter recognized that this prophetic passage in Psa. 109:8 is also *scripture* that **must** needs have been fulfilled **before** the Middle Portion of the climactic stage began, too!

- **Interesting:** because Peter makes **no attempt** to fulfill the Psa. 69:25 part (the 1st part of his quotations), but then **takes action** to fulfill the Psa. 109:8 part (the 2nd part of his quotations) — Peter knows that others ... (**not** the 11 remaining apostles) were to fulfill the 1st part (Psa. 69:25) - [which ‘others’ already had fulfilled it—the “*chief priests*” saw to that back in Mat. 27:6-8] ... but Peter recognized that some ‘others’ **apart** from the first ‘others’ would fulfill the 2nd part (Psa. 109:8) - which would be Peter and the remaining apostles. ... fascinating, Peter’s perception!

- So what remained to be done is the last part of Acts 1:20 (... *and his [Judas’] bishoprick let another take.*) - and this would be done by the very ones who also had a “*bishoprick*” along with Judas—the ones who understood just exactly what the **qualifications** are in order to occupy that ‘office’!

- Peter sets forth the qualifications for replacing Judas’ *bishoprick* (or office) for being 1 of the 12 apostles to Israel.

- Acts 1:21-22

- **Note:** as an ‘aside’ — from what we’ve seen, Paul has already been eliminated as a possible replacement for Judas—at this point he’s not even been saved/justified—plus, whoever does replace Judas has to be in place **before** the Middle Portion of the climactic stage to Israel’s program gets underway when God would be offering “*repentance to Israel.*” ... Paul will be further eliminated by the qualifications for being one of the 12 apostles of Israel!

- **Qualifications:** The person had to have “*companied with us* (the remaining 11 apostles) *all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us*” — and when Peter says “***all the time***”, he means, ‘all-the-time’! (and he even goes on to set the parameters of the “*time*” he’s talking about) ...

... “*Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he (Jesus) was taken up from us*” (which runs the span of Mat. 3:1-Acts 1:11) — and there were a couple of persons who fit that qualification — **but NOT Paul!**

- Now—we need to recognize something at this point: Peter did NOT just ‘make up’ these qualifications on his own!

- In fact—these qualifications given here in Acts 1:21-22 are the LORD’S qualifications! — Jesus Christ Himself gave these qualifications during His earthly ministry!

- (Mat. 19:27-28) - This is why the Lord chose exactly 12 apostles (and not 9 or 10—and not 13 or 14) - He chose 12 because there were 12 judge-positions over the 12 tribes of Israel in the kingdom—and these 12 apostles would be the ones filling those 12 judgeship positions.
- Israel is composed of 12 tribes—and connected with each tribe is a ‘prince’ over that tribe in the government set-up of the nation Israel.
- When the kingdom is set up on the earth (in fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant), the Lord’s 12 apostles are going to be Israel’s 12 ‘princes’.
- You need to realize that this ‘bishoprick’ of the 12 apostles does NOT stop (or end) once the kingdom is established.
- Their ‘bishoprick’ continues on—and they begin to take on the oversight (or ‘bishopsing’) of the 12 tribes nationally as they sit upon these 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel in the Lord’s government of His eternal kingdom.
- And this applies to the one that will replace Judas.
- And the Lord Himself puts a stipulation (or qualification) upon the ones that are His 12 apostles ...

... *ye which have followed me*” (Mat. 19:28)

... and He means what He says! ... this isn’t just an identifying expression ... it’s a **qualifying** expression!

- (Luke 22:28-30) - Note especially, the Lord says, ***“Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. (:28)*** ... this is a further description of what He said in Mat. 19:28, *“ye which have followed me”* ... they have followed Him and continued on with Him in His temptations.

- The qualification Peter sets forth in Acts 1:21-22 are perfectly compatible—and perfectly fit and match up with what the Lord had already set forth as the qualifications to be one of His 12 apostles!

- Peter wasn't making up these qualification 'out of the blue' ... Peter's setting forth the Lord's own qualifications for being one of the 12 apostles.

- (and again) - PAUL DID NOT QUALIFY!

- (John 15:26-27) - Notice: ***“because ye have been with me from the BEGINNING”*** — and notice that this passage is viewing the very time in which Peter is talking and taking action in Acts 1:15-22 !!!

- On the day of Pentecost (in Acts 2) there are to be **12** apostles (not 11) that are going to ***“bear witness”*** of the Lord & His ministry—and the reason the Lord gives as to why it is that they have this privilege is because: ***“ye have been with me from the beginning”***! (which would be from [as Peter says] *“the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us”*.)

- [One more time] - Peter was NOT making up his own qualifications—rather, he was stating the qualifications to be one of the 12 apostles as they were giving by the Lord Himself!

- Now let's go back to Acts and see how the remaining 11 apostles chose Judas' replacement.

- (Acts 1:23-26)

- There were only 2 men who fit the Lord's qualifications: Justus, and Matthias.

- And since there were 2—Peter and the other 10 apostles are going to use a method (or means) of determining the Lord's choice between these 2 men.

... and they didn't 'hem-haw' around about it like they had no idea of what to do next ... no, they knew full well what to do!

- Notice—when they prayed, they said to the Lord, (:24) ... “*shew whether of these two men **THOU HAS CHOSEN**”* — Peter and the other 10 knew that the Lord had already ‘chosen’ Judas’ replacement!

- (they knew the Lord has already chosen between Justus and Matthias).

- That means that they also knew that **they were NOT going to be the ones making the choice!**

- They knew that the thing they were about to do in ‘casting lots’ was going to be utilized by God to make the Lord’s choice **known to them!**

- Peter and the other 10 also knew that there was **a way** of making God’s choice known to them—a way that God Himself had already instituted in Israel from the very beginning when God first established the nation = the casting of lots!

- **(Pro. 16:33)** - This goes right along with the edificational design of the book of Proverbs for the members of the remnant’s own sonship edification during the climactic stage to Israel’s program.

- Peter and the other 10 were **not** gambling, or acting foolishly, or employing “Ouija Board” methods!

- Rather, they were doing exactly what God intended and provided for them to do!

- Therefore, (just as [:26] says), “*the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.*”

- Matthias (**not Paul**) was the Lord’s own choice (**not Peter’s choice**) to take Judas’ *bishoprick*. It was done biblically, scripturally, and in full accordance with the will of God.

- God never intended Paul to be one of the 12 apostles of Israel—rather, God intended Paul to be a completely different, distinct, and unique apostle—with a completely different, distinct, and unique roll to play in God’s *dispensation of the grace of God* to the Gentiles.

- So the question is: Did Paul know about all this, too? ... was Paul aware that he was NOT one of the 12 apostles of Israel ... let’s see.

- The answer is: Yes—Paul was very much aware that he was NOT one of the 12—and that God never intended him to be one of the 12 ...

- (1 Cor. 15:3-8)

- Paul is referring to certain ones who saw the Lord Jesus Christ **after** He had risen from the dead.

- Notice the order (:5ff):

~ “*Cephas*” (Peter)

~ “*the twelve*” - (**that’s the 12 apostles!**) ...
... and note; by saying “*the twelve*” [and they weren’t a full complement of “12” until Judas had been replaced—so this would include Matthias] ... Paul intentionally, and intelligently EXCLUDES himself from “*the twelve*” ... **Paul knows (and states clearly) that he is NOT one of the 12 apostles of Israel!**

~ “*above five hundred brethren*”

~ “*James; then all of the apostles*”

~ And then **finally** and “*last*”-ly ...

“*he was seen of me (Paul) also, as one born out of due time.*”

- For more proof of Paul’s unique and distinctive apostleship (and that he is NOT one of the 12) ...

- Further proof can be found in passages that deal with the account of God sending Paul to Jerusalem in order to graciously provide for the remnant of Israel that still existed to be ‘clued-in’ on the fact that God had suspended His prog. w/ Isr. (just after the Middle Portion of the climactic stage had run its course—[from the Day of Pentecost to the Stoning of Stephen]).

- (Gal. 2:1-10)

- God has Paul inform the remnant of Israel about the great dispensational change God had made—which also validated Paul’s unique/distinctive apostleship **and** his different and distinct **message** (or Paul’s “*gospel*”).

- Briefly put—the 12 had the *gospel of the **circumcision*** committed unto them to proclaim the good news of Israel's covenanted kingdom and blessings—but Paul had the *gospel of the **uncircumcision*** committed unto him, which is the good news of God now being longsuffering and having turned to us Gentiles in order to accomplish a **secret** purpose with us.

- [For more ‘differences’ between Paul’s apostleship and the 12’s apostleship—see Keith Blades’ pamphlet called, “The Apostle Paul and the 12 Apostles” — Keith give you 18 ‘differences’ between them!]

- Any Questions? Comments?

- BACK TO ROMANS 15:16

- When you read (:16) - you could easily get the idea that Paul is being smug and arrogant and self-righteous ... right? ... your eye goes right to that personal pronoun “**I**” ... in fact, no other word gets more emphasis (by the natural wording and the natural reading of the wording) than that personal pronoun “**I**” ...

*16 That **I** should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.*

- That’s a total of 33 words to that one sentence ...
... and the one word of those 33 that gets more emphasis than any other is that personal pronoun “**I**”.

- And without a proper understanding and appreciation for the context and for what’s going on ... it *would* be taken as smug, arrogant, and self-righteous! ... but it’s NOT!
[“God forbid!”]

- Again—Paul is making some amazing, bold, and shocking claims about his ‘credentials’! ... (and if **not** true: his claims are outrageous, absurd, and downright heretical & blasphemous!) ... why?

... because Paul is claiming that **he** (and **he, alone**) is the *minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God ... he's claiming that ONLY through his 'mouth' and his 'pen' will come THE ONLY "GOSPEL" THAT CAN SAVE/JUSTIFY A PERSON! (think about that!) ... and if that isn't bad enough, he's claiming that **ONLY though his 'mouth' and his 'pen' will come the doctrine for godly edification for the members of the 'body of Christ'!***

16 That I (Paul singular—not 'we' plural) **should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles** (i.e., I, Paul, am the only one holding this sanctioned office: authorized by God Himself as the sanctioned officer to convey the 'message' of the *gospel of God* and the godly Edification Process for the members of the body of Christ in this dispensation of grace) ... **[that is one 'wild' claim!]**

- Is Paul nuts? is he mad? is he arrogant & self-righteous? ... NO! (and we've just spent several lessons looking at what God says in His word about Paul and his unique, different, and distinct apostleship ... and far from being nuts, or mad, or arrogant, or self-righteous—Paul is being **truthful! and godly!** ... and any honest handling of God's word with any honesty of heart tells you that what Paul says here is the very TRUTH of the matter ... with NO arrogance or self-righteousness whatsoever!)

- **And beware:** many Christians themselves will challenge and REJECT Paul's 'claims'! ... and they'll do it, not so much by rejecting Paul and his epistles [they won't rip Rom-Phlm out of their Bibles] - but they will reject Paul's 'claims' by lumping him in with the other apostles (especially Matthew, Mark [not an apostle], Luke [not an apostle], John, the writer of Hebrews, Peter, James, and Jude! ... and 'blur' (or 'conflate'; combine together) Paul's epistles with all the rest of the New Testament ... by not 'rightly dividing' with Paul, but by 'dividing' by OT and NT.

- The result is not only a **mess**—the result is the body of Christ operating upon corrupt doctrine—**the result is that real, godly edifying which is in faith no longer exists ... the result is the extinction and the extermination of Godly Edification in the world today!** [which is horrifying!]

- Now there is one ‘shift’ in your thinking that can immediately clear away any thoughts of Paul being arrogant, self-righteous, or self-promoting (or having inordinate ambition and ‘power-grabbing’) ... but it’s **not** the kind of thinking that most Bible teachers have—because the kind of thinking I’m talking about is almost NEVER taught in Bible colleges; Bible institutes; or seminaries today ...

... and that is: ***Paul*** isn’t stating and setting forth his ‘credentials’ as the ONE AND ONLY *minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles* ... **GOD HIMSELF IS HAVING PAUL set forth his ‘credentials’ as the ONE AND ONLY minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles! (God wants Paul to ‘magnify’ his office—and wants us to ‘magnify’ it as well!)**

- the vast majority of Bible teachers do NOT teach or handle the Bible this way!!!

- It’s **God our Heavenly Father** who is having Paul set forth this information concerning his God-given credentials for being our apostle and *minister* today in this disp. of grace in which we now live! ... and He’s having Paul do this for a very particular and important reason: and that’s because of the kind of Satanic attack and ridicule and opposition we, (as God’s properly educated “sons”) are going to endure.

- (an attack that, at it’s ‘heart’, will attempt to corrupt and exterminate godly edification for saints today!)

- Again: **mess up Paul = a messed up edification = NO EDIFICATION AT ALL!**

16 That I (Paul, and Paul alone) should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, ...

- “**ministering**” - the former word “*minister*” (Noun) had to do with Paul’s God-ordained; God-authorized **office** of executing his duties as God’s agent to convey God’s message to the Gentiles in this new and distinct disp. of grace that’s in effect today ... this word “*ministering*” (Verb) has to do with that 1st and most common definition of the word = a servant who waits upon or ‘ministers’ to the wants of another.

- Or (as the OED says) - to furnish, supply, impart, to dispense, **to communicate, to make known!**

- In Paul's official roll as *minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*, his function (in that capacity) is to **communicate and make known** something to us Gentiles today.

- (and note that not a single one of the 12 apostles to Israel ever talk about their function this way—or functioning in this capacity!)

- In fact, it's just the opposite!

*But of these (Peter, James and the apostles of Israel) who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me: But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the **uncircumcision (the Gentiles)** was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision (Israel) was unto Peter ... (Gal. 2:6-7)*

- The “*gospel of the uncircumcision*” and the “*gospel of the circumcision*” **ARE NOT THE SAME THING!**

16 ... ministering **the gospel of God**, ...

- “**the gospel of God**”

- “**gospel**” - it's usually pointed out that the word *gospel* comes from the Greek word εὐαγγέλιον (euaggelion) = ‘good news’ (and there are even some Bibles called “The Good News” Bible).

- However, “good news” is NOT the best, most accurate, or easiest-to-understand translation of the Greek word euaggelion!

- A lot of things can be called ‘good news’ that have nothing to do with God's word ...

... fortunately, we have an English word that is far more precise and accurate than ‘good news’ ... and that's the word **gospel!** (that is, if you understand the English language like you ought to) ...

- Our English word *gospel* is made up of 2 English words: GOD + SPELL - “God-spell” - hence, **God’s spelled-out message!**

- This isn’t any old ‘good news’ - this is God’s very carefully ‘spelled-out’ message—a message that has to do with **many things**—and many things that particularly and specifically has to do with us Gentiles in this particular & specific dispensation of grace in which we are living in today!

- Paul’s “*gospel of God*” that he is *ministering* to us Gentiles today consists of a lot of things—(the word *gospel* being a very **broad** term that can mean a lot more than merely God’s message of salvation or justification unto eternal life) ...

- but at the ‘top of the list’ **is** God’s message for us Gentiles today for how to be saved/justified—which is by grace, through faith, alone, in Christ, alone, without any works of any kind, at any time—(that Jesus Christ died on the cross for your sins; and was buried; and arose from the dead—and by **believing that**: you are justified, saved from your sins, and have eternal life ... permanently!)

- this is a *gospel* different than “*the gospel of the kingdom*” that Israel’s 12 apostles preached—Paul’s *gospel* has NO earthly kingdom in view; NO information about any of Israel’s covenants; and is NOT connected in any way with Israel’s national blessings contained in the Abrahamic Cov.

- Paul’s *gospel* of salvation/justification is totally APART from Israel and/or the agency of Israel!

- But as a ‘broad’ term, the word *gospel* (the *gospel of God* that Paul *ministers* to us in this disp. of grace) also includes such things as:

- God’s message to us Gentiles in this disp. of grace concerning **sanctification** (apart from anything to do with Israel or her covenants or the Law of Moses);

- God’s message about godly Edification and the Edification Process—Sonship Edification—and how it works; and how it doesn’t work (again, apart from Israel and Israel’s covenants) - [see **Col. 1:21-29** — **there’s a lot more going on there** (with that *gospel*) **than just justification!**]

- God's "*gospel*" message to us Gentiles in this new and distinct dispensation of grace—(with Israel's program being temporarily suspended and set aside)—is a *gospel* message that has its own "*blessings*" and 'Blessed Hope' to and for us Gentiles today; **apart** from Israel, Israel's agency, and Israel's covenants.

(BLESSINGS)

- Unlike Israel's 'blessings' [and *cursings*, by the way] that were contained in God's covenants with them (such as you find back in Deut. 28 & 29) ...

... our 'blessings' are **not** based upon our obedience to God's covenants with Israel—nor are they of the same kind or nature of Israel's blessings ... ours are *spiritual* by nature—(see **Eph. 1:3**).

(BLESSED HOPE)

- Israel's 'blessed hope' was in regard to the kingdom of God being set up and established upon the earth (**after** going through the Lord's Day of Wrath) - and was in connection with God fulfilling His covenants with Israel and with Israel being the means by which He would reconcile & repossess the earth back from the adversary (Satan) and his cohorts ...

... the 'blessed hope' for us, as the members of the new creature of the church the body of Christ today has **nothing** to do with God's earthly kingdom; rather, it has to do with the realm of the heavenly places—it has to do with the *creature* itself (and our being utilized by God to '*deliver it from the bondage of corruption*') ...

... God's *gospel* message of our 'blessed hope' today consists of us being 'raptured' or being *caught up* to be with the Lord **BEFORE** the Lord's Day of Wrath takes place (i.e., being *saved from wrath*) — (see Rom. 5:9; 1 Thes. 1:10; 5:9; **Titus 2:11-14 [13]**)!

- God's *gospel* message to us (the body of Christ) today is God's message that was previously hidden and kept secret in His program with Israel—it's a mystery gospel—(as seen in that Col. 1:21-29 passage) ... but now **God has made that mystery gospel message KNOWN!** — [see **Rom. 16:25; Eph. 6:19**]

- the “*mystery*” being, (among other things), how that God would create a *new man*; a *new creature*; called “*the church, the body of Christ*” for the purpose of reconciling the heavenly places back to Himself from the adversary and his cohorts—totally destroying, therefore, Satan’s Plan & Policy of Evil; and proving Almighty God, Adonai Jehovah, to be ‘the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth’!

- And this is just a partial list of the things contained in “*the gospel of God*” (or, God’s spelled-out message) that He uniquely gave to the apostle Paul as our *minister of Jesus Christ*!

also (God has given to us [through Paul alone] a *gospel* message that has to do with our adoption as sons; with suffering; with godliness; with our peculiar ‘impact’ upon the angels; with communion and fellowship; with godly love & charity; with the workings of the Satanic Policy of Evil; with power, strength and might; with godly works; with joy and peace ... an on, and on we could go.)

- Do you get the idea that the “*gospel of God*” that God gave the apostle Paul to “*minister*” to us Gentiles today is a **massive** thing to be in charge of? ... (do you get some idea of the kind of ‘**weight**’ that Paul’s office as *minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles* carries?)

- **Good**. You should be suitably impressed with it (just as God is; and just as Paul is) and it’s because of the ‘weight’ of his office, that Paul’s **credential** become so important, and so critical ... and so attacked (and **confused**)!

16 *That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles (not “to Israel” — something **unheard** of in the entire Bible; in all of human history—and would be totally ‘out of line’ for God’s program with Israel), *ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable,**

.....

- The next phrase of the sentence sets forth a Purpose Clause and begins with the word “**that**” = for the purpose of; in order that—that is, what gets stated following the word “**that**” is the **reason** why God has made Paul *the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles* and why Paul *ministers the gospel of God* to the Gentiles.

- And the ‘why’ of this ‘reason’ eventually gets to the issue of validating Paul’s credentials AS “the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles”!

- Notice that the reason gets stated in this phrase (that is, in the phrase, “*that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable,*”) ... well, that **is** the reason ... but that’s not the end of the sentence—and that’s not the **only** reason ... there’s still one more phrase—which tells you that what’s being set forth to you is this:

1. A general reason: “*that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable*” ... and then you’ve got ...

2. A specific reason (or a very specific thing that God is after here within the information He’s setting forth in this long sentence of (:15-16): “*being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.*” ... **THAT’S the Big Thing** that God is after here—because that last phrase contains the matter of **Paul’s God-given credentials** to hold that office of *minister*, and to function in it!

- And the reason it’s the Big Thing is because it’s Paul’s God-given credentials that the adversary is going to go after and attack and **confuse**—which could be a **potential big problem** for you as a “son” when you face the *strange woman’s* policy of evil tactics.

- (it’s the potential problem that, [if successful], will **wreck** your godly sonship edification, [bring it to a **halt**], and make it so that you **WON’T** Go On and get the rest of your sonship education and edification!)

- Let’s look at the 1st reason (or the general reason) for God giving Paul this office as *minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles* ...

- “*that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable,*”

- Notice the wording: “*the offering up of the Gentiles*” - that’s a peculiar way of putting it, don’t you think?

- My understanding is that this is NOT connecting what Paul is doing (or saying) with anything about the Gentiles in God's program with Israel at all ... nor is He talking about some kind of "offering" or sacrifice being offered up **BY** the Gentiles (like their prayers, or their praises, or their good works).

- Rather, He's talking about **the Gentiles themselves** being '*offered up*' ... the Gentiles being '*offered up*' as being saved, justified, and members of this new creature of the church, the body of Christ—as a result of Paul's roll and function as *the minister of Jesus Christ* ...

... and (something unique to this disp. of grace in which we live), the Gentiles being '*offered up*' being **totally apart from the agency of Israel and Israel's program (such as her covenants; or via "the gospel of the circumcision" or "the gospel of the kingdom")**.

- The '*offering up of the Gentiles*' = the legitimacy, the 'lawfulness', the validity, the just-ness and right-ness of them being saved from the debt & penalty of their sins; justified unto eternal life—and all that **comes out of** their justification (i.e., their sanctified, functional, sonship life) **BY** *the gospel of God* that Paul preached & ministered.

- '*offering up of the Gentiles*' = their justification; their godly sanctification; and their godly sonship edification in order to be **PLEASING IN GOD'S SIGHT!**

- And THAT'S the issue in this peculiar/odd expression: that the Gentiles (of all people) are now in a position of being **PLEASING in God's sight**—totally apart from Israel's agency and Israel's program (and Israel's "gospel")

- And if the Gentiles are **pleasing in God's sight** apart from the agency of Israel and apart from Israel's program—that **demands** that a new and different program (or dispensation) be in effect—with a new and different **administration!**

- And the new administration (or management) in this new and different dispensation is none other than the apostle Paul (as its *minister*) and the Holy Ghost as its *sanctifier* (or Divine sanctioning authority!

- And by using that expression “*the offering up*” — God has in mind that you will make a ‘connection’ here—it’s a ‘trigger’ term (or expression) that conjures up (in a godly way) something about how God has **already** expressed in His word the manner in which He expresses His **pleasure** to that which conforms to His righteous and holy norms and standards! (thus becoming **pleasing** in His sight)

- Actually it can connect up with the word “**respect**” all the way back in Genesis 4:4 in connection with an *offering* (or sacrifice being *offered up* to God)—(**see Gen. 4:4**) ...

... “**respect**” (in this context) = to have an eye to (or look upon) or regard with **favor** and good will—and as George Crabb says, “*favor* marks an agreeable or **pleasant** state of feeling” — hence, “*respect*” carries the sense of **pleasure** or being **pleased**.

(... and there are a lot of fascinating details to understand and appreciate right here in this word *respect*, but I’m after something else God said later on that gives us some further detailed terminology concerning something that is pleasing in His sight ... and it too, is in connection with an *offering* or sacrifice being *offered up* to God ...)

- (see Gen. 8:20-21)

- What I’m after is in (:21) - “*And the LORD smelled a **sweet savour***” — a “*savour*” is a scent, fragrance, or aroma; something that ‘SMELLS SWEET’ to the one smelling it.

- And the OT scriptures are full of this expression: (**see Lev. 1:9, 13, 17** ... and many, many more times throughout the Law of Moses, especially).

- Now we know that we are **not** ‘*under the law, but under grace*’ - and we know that we are not living under God’s program with Israel and not under the ‘sacrifice-system’ of Israel ... and yet, we **do** find such a passage as Rom. 15:16 where the *Gentiles* are said to be *offered up* ... and (interestingly enough), we **do** find in Paul’s epistles the **concept** of ‘*offering up*’ a sacrifice to God ... and when that context is in view, God has Paul express the great **pleasure** that it is in God’s sight with some very similar terminology ...

- (see 2 Cor. 2:12-17) - [the context being the restoring to the assembly the one they ‘set out’ back in 1 Cor. 5]

- Notice the ‘offering up’ (or sacrifice) issue: Paul’s faithfulness in preaching “*Christ’s gospel*” and the ministry of his ‘team’ (his fellow ministers like Silvanus, Timothy, and Titus and their faithful preaching of “*Christ’s gospel*”).

- (see Phil. 4:15-18)

- Notice the ‘offering up’ (or sacrifice) issue: “*the things which were sent from you*” (i.e., the “*things*” that the Philippian saints gave to Paul; and **sacrificed** and sent to assist and provide for Paul’s “*necessity*” [i.e., physical & material supplies and support for Paul’s ministry].

- Now—back to our passage in Rom. 15:16 - “*that the offering up of the Gentiles*” ...

- By connecting the phrase “*the offering up*” with the passages we’ve looked at—we can come to an understanding and appreciation for what God is having Paul say to us, and emphasize to us, and focus upon, by the terminology He uses ...

... and that is that this unique (peculiar) expression that is so perfectly in keeping with God’s prog. w/ Isr. - but seems somewhat ‘out of place’ in our disp. of grace—**really isn’t ‘out of place’ at all** ...

... rather, it’s an expression that God uses **regardless** of what program is in effect (**regardless** of what dispensation you’re talking about) ... it’s an expression that God uses in order to express His **GREAT PLEASURE** for whatever it is that he’s talking about ...

... and where God’s expresses His **great pleasure** in this manner (and with this kind of terminology), **there’s always a ‘sacrifice’ issue connected with it**—(such as the Lord Jesus Christ Himself being the ‘sacrifice’ in **Eph. 5:2** (*And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.*) ...

... and the **'sacrifice' issue** in Rom. 15:16 (with the *Gentiles being offered up*) — the **'sacrifice' issue** is: the **function** of Paul's unique apostleship, where, as Christ's *minister*, he has *ministered the gospel of God* **TO THE GENTILES!**

- (do you see that? ... does that make sense?)

- And the point of all this is that Paul's legitimate, 'lawful,' authorized, ordained, and 'accredited' **ministry** of *the gospel of God* to the *Gentiles* has resulted in the *Gentiles'* justification, sanctification & godly sonship edification in this distinct & different disp. of *Gentile* grace ...

... in other words, God takes Paul's authorized *ministry-office* and Paul's **function** in that office by *ministering the gospel of God* to the *Gentiles*; (and the **results** of Paul's *ministry*) — [which results in the justification, sanctification, and godly sonship edification of the *Gentiles*]—and God looks at that thing as one big **'sacrifice package'** and sees it as **PLEASING in His sight!**

- And because it is **pleasing** in God's sight, that means that: **it's totally and absolutely compatible with God's Righteousness & Holiness!**

- That expression: "*that the offering up of the Gentiles*" tells you that what God has done in saving and raising up Paul as the 'apostle of the *Gentiles*' and Paul's function and roll as *the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God* **is compatible with God's righteous & holy norms and standards!** ... it's **PLEASING in His sight!**

*** - Or ... another way of saying it—(and here's the 'kicker'): **IT'S "ACCEPTABLE" IN HIS SIGHT!** (that's what "*the offering up of the Gentiles*" expression is telling you!) ***

- And the point I'm trying to make here is this: my understanding is that the expression "*the offering up of the Gentiles*" expresses **God's own acceptance** of what Paul has accomplished in his apostleship & ministry to the *Gentiles*, *ministering the gospel of God* to them ... and what I'm driving at is that the issue of *the offering up of the Gentiles* being "**acceptable**" is **NOT** talking about it being **acceptable** to God—(because it already IS) ... and that begs a question ...

... the question that remains is: **Is it ‘pleasing’ to YOU; Is it ‘pleasing’ in YOUR sight, too?** (Is it “*acceptable*” to YOU?)

16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles, might be acceptable, ...

- “*acceptable*” = **pleasing**; agreeable; worthy to be received **gladly!**

- To “*accept*” = to take or receive what is **offered** with a consenting mind; to receive it with favor and pleasure.

... in other words, you can come along and say, “No Problem!” - “I’ve got **no problem** with that at all!”

- And that’s the point—that’s what God our **Father** is driving at in telling us all of this stuff about Paul and his special and unique *ministry* to the Gentiles that results in them being justified/sanctified/and edified in this new & distinct disp. of grace—**APART** from God’s prog. w/ Isr. and Israel’s agency—and **apart** from the function of the 12 apostles to Israel ... what God’s driving at is that, ‘Look, son, that’s perfectly acceptable & pleasing in My sight ... now, son, do YOU *accept* it? ... Is it *acceptable* to YOU?’

- That is, ‘Do you understand and appreciate it as God Himself does? ... Do you *accept* it as **being what God is doing today, (right now), in this great dispensational change that God has brought in? ...**

... and therefore, you’re NOT going to try and operate in God’s “Time Past” dealings in His prog. w/ Isr.—(back when *Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision*) ...

... or operate in God’s time “To Come” resuming & fulfilling of His prog. with Israel—(when the Gentiles receive their expected ‘Hope’ of being blessed through the agency of Israel and Israel’s kingdom blessings) ...

... and you’re NOT going to take Israel’s ‘blessed hope’ as YOUR ‘blessed hope’! (or any of the **many** other things that only pertain to God’s prog. w/ Isr.) — (but rather, you’re going to continue *abounding in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost* [abounding in your ‘Hope-Doctrine’ Package]!

- This is why God (your Father) is doing this—this is why He’s giving you this information! ...

... the Father is giving His son this information, ultimately, because from this point on, **you are supposed to “abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost” (:13) ...**

... that is, you’re going to NEED this information in order to GO ON and get Level II of your Sonship Education & Edification ...

... and **“the power of the Holy Ghost”** is the means by which your godly Edification in Level II Sonship Education is going to take place! (just as it did in Level I Sonship Education)!

... the **“power of the Holy Ghost”** is the power to produce godly Edification ... and to produce it with the strength and might to it so that it has the *power* to **endure** anything and everything that the adversary and his PoE can do to put a **stop** to your sonship edification! - which results in a powerful, mighty, and unshakable **confidence** in the Father’s edification instruction and in the curriculum for your sonship edification sitting out in Eph. — II Thess.!

- Therefore, you should be able to say—(with absolute **confidence**), and with the anticipation of your *hope abounding through the power of the Holy Ghost*) - “Father, Paul being my *minister of Jesus Christ, ministering the gospel of God* to us Gentiles today, in this new and distinct disp. of grace, **is perfectly ACCEPTABLE in my sight!**”

- “Everything you’ve done, Father, is perfectly consistent with your righteous & holy norms & standards ... it’s pleasing & **acceptable** to You, Father, ... and therefore, it’s perfectly pleasing & **acceptable** to me, too!”

- In other words—It’s **acceptable** to the Father, (and I know **why** it is that); and it’s **acceptable** to me for the very same reasons!

- The result: **I will NOT be moved away from Paul and his epistles; I will NOT be swayed to abandon Paul and his epistles for my godly edification as a “son”!**

- (and the **convincing evidence** God sets forth for this is right here in [:15-16], and in [:17-29] = 8 pieces of evidence/proof for sticking with Paul and his *ministry of the gospel of God* to us Gentiles today!)

- The Satanic PoE is **not** going to attempt to get you to be ‘un-biblical’ or even ‘un-scriptural’ ... no, the attempt will be to get you to be ‘**un-dispensational!**’

- This is how the PoE was ‘troubling’ the Corinthians (**2 Cor. 11:4**).

- (and this is what you will be doing in Level II Sonship Education—[**Eph. 5:10** - *Proving what is **acceptable** unto the Lord*]).

16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

- (Notice that the sentence does **not** end with the word “*acceptable*”) ... but God puts this final phrase to the sentence ...

... *being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.*

- The apostle Paul, as the one & only *minister of Jesus Christ* to us Gentiles today in this new/distinct disp. of grace; and *the gospel of God* that Paul *ministers* to us today (which is contained in his epistles) has been ‘lawfully’ ‘sanctioned’ by none other than the member of the Godhead who has been given the task of making God’s ‘testimony’ known to God’s “sons” today for their godly edification: **the Holy Ghost Himself!**

- (and since we’ve just gone over the importance of God using the term “*Holy Ghost*” rather than “*Holy Spirit*” back in [13] - I don’t think you need to go over it again—you should have a proper understanding & appreciation for it by now).

- “**sanctified**” - Paul, as our apostle & *minister*, and *the gospel of God* that Paul preaches & teaches (contained in his epistles) for our godly edification has been **sanctified by the Holy Ghost**.

- “**sanctified**” — We’ve talked about Paul and his gospel being ‘sanctioned’ ... which is a good term to use—but it’s not the most excellent term to use ...

- Actually, ‘sanctioned’ is a weaker term than “*sanctified*” (*sanctified* is a much more **powerful** term!)

- Because—when you're talking about someone or something being 'sanctioned' - granted, you're talking about him being 'authorized' or vested with legal authority; something that's lawful or permissible; something valid, and so forth ...

... but someone can be 'sanctioned' by **human agency**, like a group (the Cub Scouts, or a city council, or a government) - and the 'sanctioned' person is therefore acceptable to that group or government or human agency ...

- But when you're talking about someone or something being "**sanctified**" - now you're dealing with the very HOLINESS OF GOD! ... **you're talking about someone or something being perfectly acceptable to the holiness of God! (i.e., to God's righteousness and justice!)**

- "**sanctified**" = something or someone specifically set apart as uncommon, extraordinary, and dedicated for God's HOLY purpose.

- "*holy*" = the aspect of God's being that recognizes and expresses the inability to tolerate and/or have fellowship with things that are not **pure** in His sight—things that are not **clean** in His sight ... something that is *holy* in God's sight is something that does not compromise His righteousness and justice!

- Remember: something that God considers "*holy*" is **something God wants around Him all the time!**
(like our *fruit unto holiness [Rom. 6:22]*)

- So by our Father telling us that our apostle Paul (and not one of Israel's 12 apostles) is our *minister of Jesus Christ*, and *the gospel of God* that Paul *ministers* to us today in his 13 epistles for our godly edification is not only *acceptable* to God, but furthermore, it is **sanctified by the Holy Ghost** ...

... what you have here is the most powerful statement concerning the validation of Paul's (or any person's) 'credentials' that human language (or our English language) can make!

*** **And this IS the 1st of : 8 Sanctifying Works of the Holy Ghost** in order **to validate the great dispensational change** that God has made! ***

REVIEW AFTER FALL BREAK:

1. What are the “bookends” to the book of Romans?
2. What’s the difference between Establish and Stablish?
3. Rom. 15:8-16:27 are the Father’s Final Instructions to His “sons” ... what is the purpose of the Father’s Final Instruction? what is it for? what is it designed to accomplish?
4. How does the Father go about doing this? how many ways does the Father speak to His “son”?
5. Rom. 15:8-16:26 is the first of the Father’s 2-Fold Instruction ... what is it designed to accomplish?
6. Rom. 16:17-27 is the final matter of the Father’s 2-Fold Instruction ... what is it designed to accomplish?
7. The Edification Process will follow 3 major bodies of information that contains some Godly Thinking; some Godly Living; and some Godly Labor.
 - The Godly Thinking is contained in Rom. 15:8-21 and will have 3 Parts to it.
 - Rom. 15:8-13 is ‘Part A’ of the Godly Thinking ... what does this godly thinking consist of?
 - the great dispensational change that has taken place; & God does so by emphasizing that the Lord Jesus Christ *“was” a minister of the circumcision* (Israel) in God’s ‘Time Past’ dealings with the nation Israel; and then by viewing the time ‘To Come’ portion of God’s prog. w/ Isr. and the expectation and hope of the Gentiles under God’s program with Israel—and how that this is NOT what is going on right now, today!
 - Rom. 15:14-16 is ‘Part B’ of the Godly Thinking (which is where we are currently) ... what does this godly thinking consist of?
 - Paul’s distinct & different apostleship and ministry in this current disp. of grace in which we now live.

8. There is a ‘parallel’ doctrine being taught along with the Godly Thinking and Godly Living—and it has to do with the Holy Ghost Himself and what He has done to ‘certify’ or ‘verify’ or ‘validate’ to us the lawfulness of the great dispensational change God has brought in and of Paul (and only Paul) being our apostle and minister today in this disp. of grace.

- The Father is going to present to us 8 Sanctifying Works of the Holy Ghost in order to validate the great dispensational change and the new administration of it.

*****BONUS QUESTION:** Why is the emphasis upon the 3rd Member of the Godhead, the Holy Ghost? ... why not God the Father, or God the Son?

A: The answer has to do with what is the major, overall context and purpose of Romans doctrine—the answer has to do with the issue of godly Edifying; of Edification; of the Edification Process; of godly Sonship Edification ...

... because when you’re talking about godly edification, the issue is **creating a totally new heart in a man (creating the heart of the Father in the heart of the son)!**

... as Paul says in Rom. 8:29, God has predestined us (by the Edification Process) “*to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*” ...

... and as David Harrowar has said in his book on the Trinity: “Creating the heart of man *anew*, is the work of the Spirit, and it is as great a work as the creating of the world, requiring no less power.” !!!

... and in Eph. 2:10, God has Paul tell us: “*For we are his workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus unto good works,** ...*”

9. The 1st of the 8 Sanctifying Works of the Holy Ghost is presented in Rom. 15:15-16 ... what is that 1st sanctifying work of the Holy Ghost?

- Paul is a unique and distinct apostle & minister to the Gentiles, **and NOT to be included with the 12 apostles of/to Israel!**

- **One other matter**: When we get to this point in Romans where we are discussing matters of “*rightly dividing the word of truth*” and of dealing with the great dispensational change God has brought in ... as well as Paul being our apostle & minister ... and such things as Paul’s “gospel” vs. the “gospel of the kingdom” ... and all the things that goes with these matters (things that are vastly different in this present dips. of Gentile grace vs. God’s program with Israel) ... it’s extremely easy to slip into making a major mistake!

- and that mistake is to fall into what I call ‘Bible study, for study’s sake’ - or getting a bunch of Bible facts, or Bible truths, or Bible data and mistakenly think that gaining these facts, or truths, or data means the same thing as being spiritually mature or being properly edified ... because that is NOT true!

- And let’s be honest — studying things like this is FUN.

- So I WARN YOU! It’s easy to come into Bible class at this point in Romans and get all this information about Paul being our apostle, and the great dispensational change God has made ... and go away thinking you’ve really got some great spiritual growth ... but if all you’ve got is the FACT of it, or even the TRUTH of it ... I’m telling you that on the basis of God’s own written word: YOU ARE NOT SPIRITUALLY MATURE, OR PROPERLY EDIFIED AT ALL! (and that’s according to Romans 6:1-15:7!)

- All these facts/truths MUST be understood in light of how they all ‘**fit in**’ to godly Edification—how they all ‘**fit in**’ to the Edification Process that we are to get from our Father as His adopted, adult, “sons”! (that is, how they all ‘**fit in**’ and **connect to sonship**!)

- Knowing “Time Past”, “But Now”, and “To Come” ... and that Paul’s our apostle **IS NOT the same thing as “godly edifying which is in faith” (1 Tim. 1:4) !!!**

- In fact—just ‘knowing’ these facts and truths as a matter of ‘Bible study, for study’s sake’ - or as a matter of acquiring Bible data, but **apart** from the godly, **God-ordered** Edification Process as a “son” actually makes you very easy prey for both the *evil man* and the *strange woman* ... in fact, it can make it so that you could, at some time, actually come along and end up doing something that is horrendous and abhorrent in God’s sight: you could end up **MOCKING GOD!** (see Gal. 6:7-8)!

- **ROMANS 15:17-21**

- **PART 'C' of the GODLY THINKING.**

- (see #58)

- **Part C (:17-21)** = godly Thinking regarding the Holy Ghost having **sanctified** the reality of the great dispensational change that has taken place and Paul's ministry as the apostle of the Gentiles during it.

- Deals with the 7 remaining Sanctifying Works of the Holy Ghost to validate the great dispensational change **and the new administration of it.** (The "new administration" being the Holy Spirit ministry of the Holy Ghost through the apostle Paul and his epistles as *the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles.*)

- The 1st Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost is set forth in (:15-16) = Paul is a unique and distinct apostle & minister to the Gentiles, and NOT to be included with the 12 apostles to/for Israel. [**the Holy Ghost Himself sanctified that! it's NOT the doctrine of a man; it's the doctrine of God!**]

- **Things to note grammatically:**

- Part C of the godly Thinking contains 5 verses.

- The 5 verses are composed of 3 sentences:

- (:17) = 1 sentence

- (:18-19) = 1 sentence

- (:20-21) = 1 sentence

- (:17) acts as a kind of 'stage-setting' statement (or sentence) for the remaining 4 verses (or 2 sentences).

- So when Paul says, *I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God*—the rest of the verses and statements are going to give the further details & further **proof** of that statement.

- The 2nd sentence (made up of :18-19) has one semicolon (after the word "God" in [:19] - which means that the sentence is made up of 2 major clauses—and a short 'pause' is to be made at that semicolon.

- The 3rd sentence (made up of :20-21) is made up of 2 major clauses as well—it has a colon at the end of (:20) after the word “*foundation*” and since the colon is the 2nd most powerful pause in the English language, it tells you that you need to pause there and make sure that you’ve got all of the effectual working of the 1st clause in (:20) before moving on to the 2nd clause in (:21).

- And that may give us some clues into the number of Sanctifying Works of the HG being dealt with in these 5 verses ... (as we shall see as we go through them).

- [Spoiler Alert] - we’re going to get 3 more of these Sanctifying Works of the HG in these 5 verses.

- Also note that in (:21) we have another quotation from the OT scriptures = (Isa. 52:15) - and it is an “*as it is written*” quotation (not a “*for it is written*”).

- So—all of this tells me that we need to be very careful to get a clear understanding and appreciation for all of the details in (:17) - we need to get a firm grip on it—we need to be deeply and suitably **impressed** with what it says—because as a ‘stage-setting’ verse (or sentence), everything in the following 4 verses are going to **go back** to this verse in order to give further details *and* detailed **proof** of this statement in (:17) ...

... God our Father is deeply **impressed** with it (with what He has done in bringing in this new dispensation of His grace; and with the new administration of it [i.e., Paul]), and we need to be **equally impressed** with it, and with the Sanctifying Works of the HG in connection with it! ...

... (that’s what all of the following information is going to be about!)

... in fact, we’re supposed to be so effectually **impressed** with it that **we will NEVER be shaken in our minds as to the truth and reality of it—and we will STICK WITH IT no matter what or how it gets opposed!**

- (:17) is a verse that, even by the English grammar, makes you aware that something of GREAT IMPORTANCE (a Major Issue) is being stated and set forth—a critical, vital, Huge-Big-Deal issue is being stated ... one that is to grab your attention and make a strong, powerful, **and lasting impact** upon your godly Thinking! (an eternal impact!)

- Now—how do I know that? - well, for one thing I know that just by what it says (and exactly what God says) here ... but I'm also alerted that something **Big** is being said that is supposed to have a huge and lasting impact upon my godly Thinking by an issue of what you might call, the 'style' of the English grammar here in (:17) ...

... and what I'm after here is that we have one of those instances where the word "*therefore*" is used—but it's NOT used as the 1st word of the sentence—rather, it's inserted into the sentence as the 3rd word of the sentence.

- "*therefore*" tells you that Paul is now going to make a **conclusion**—a concluding statement to a body of information that has just been set forth—and that body of information is what is contained in (:8-16). [that's what the "*therefore*" of :17 is there...for!]

- Part 'C' is the conclusion to Parts 'A' & 'B' ... that is, (:17-21) is the conclusion to the Godly Thinking our Father wants us to have in order to be able to GO ON and get the rest of our sonship education & edification.

- Which means that if you **don't** have that information doing it's job (and effectually working within your inner-man), then what Paul is about to say **is going to make NO sense at all to you!** (the effectual working of :17ff will be impossible!) [it will end up as just more 'Bible Data']

- And by inserting the word "*therefore*" into the sentence in the 3rd position—it's kind of like for every word that *therefore* gets inserted into the sentence, it's just that many more times as important to your attention—and it's to make that many more times of an impact upon you.

- It's like saying "*therefore*" x 3 - (or *therefore* to the 3rd Power).

- And a powerful conclusion it is—because these 5 verses are going to provide the powerful proof that God has, indeed, sanctified the great dispensational change (and the new administration of it) by the 3 additional Sanctifying Works of the Holy Ghost. **[and it doesn't end there—it goes on down through :29]**

17 I have **therefore** whereof I may **glory** ...

- This is an incredible statement—and one which (I think) no other Bible writer ever says about himself. [even if it's not true, I am sure that no other Bible writer does this as much as Paul does—Paul does it a whole bunch of times!]

- When Paul says things like this, it oftentimes makes many Bible teachers and commentators a bit uncomfortable (even embarrassed) — and if you have a shallow understanding of what's going on in the context (and in the book of Romans itself) - the conclusion is that Paul oftentimes promotes himself too much ... and the “*glory*” is often looked at as ‘**vainglory**’.

- But that is NOT the case at all!

- For one thing—we already know from Romans doctrine that Paul *is* a distinct, different, and unique apostle to & for us Gentiles in this present disp. of grace in which we live ... and Romans has already set that forth ... and more than that, Romans doctrine has taught us to ‘magnify’ Paul’s ‘office’ along with Paul, himself, ‘magnifying’ his ‘office’ (Rom. 11:13) ... **God EXPECTS Paul to do that; and God EXPECTS us to do that as well!**

- Far from Paul being self-aggrandizing—God **WANTS** Paul to “*glory*” in his unique & distinct apostleship and ministry!

- The truth is—due to the ‘nature’ of this disp. of grace being part of “*the revelation of the mystery*” that it is; and due to Paul’s distinct and unique roll in it—there is a **need** for God having Paul to “*glory in those things which pertain to God*” in connection with it ... why?

... because Paul and his epistles are going to become the ‘marching orders’ for Christians today; the ‘manual’ for living the Christian way of life today; **the curriculum for godly Edification for saints today**—(and NOT the teachings of Jesus in the 4 gospel accounts)! ...

... and it’s THAT very issue that is going to be challenged, attacked, opposed, and resisted by the *strange woman* tactics of the Satanic Policy of Evil!

- That’s why God **wants/needs** for Paul to “*glory*” in these things!

- So God has Paul begin this conclusion to the godly Thinking portion by saying, “*I have therefore whereof I may glory ...*”

- “**glory**” is an interesting and very precise wording—it’s an example of tremendous vocabulary control—and it’s the most excellent word to use in view of what God is having Paul do here.

- In many (not all) cases of the other (more modern) English Bible Translations—they change the word *glory* for some other word or wording ... [by the way, many of the modern English translations put the word “*therefore*” as the 1st word of the verse] ...

... such as ‘I have found reason for boasting’; ‘I have reason to be proud’; ‘it is right for me to be enthusiastic’, etc.

- “*boast*” is a terrible way to translate this; and “*proud*” [ESV] is perhaps the WORST way to translate this!

- So what does God mean by having Paul say, “*I have therefore whereof I may glory*”? what does He mean by the word “**glory**”?

- “**glory**” = more often than not, the word *glory* is commonly thought of as meaning, ‘to claim honour for oneself’; to exalt; to praise; to claim honor, special distinction, adoration—or a state of exaltation and splendour in one’s high state of magnificence or prosperity; a state of unbounded gratification or enjoyment.

- And the truth is—God **is** having Paul *glory*, or claim honour and special distinction—and to exalt and magnify his exalted and high state (or office) as the apostle and *minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*—and to do so with unbounded gratification and enjoyment. [but that’s **not** the main point here]

- But we can gain a far greater understanding and appreciation for the Excellency of the use of the word *glory* here by something that is at the most basic & fundamental (or ‘radical root’) issue that the word *glory* carries ...

... and the ‘radical root’ of the word *glory* is found in the most common way in which the word is usually thought about ... which is the issue of something ‘**bright**’ or ‘**shining**’ — which comes down to us through the Latin, ‘*gloria*’.

- And when something is “bright” and “shining” (but especially “bright”) it’s also ... **CLEAR!**

- And when something is “clear”, what else is it ? ...
... it’s **OPEN**—it’s ‘open’ to view; ‘open’ to clear view!

- Therefore, the ‘radical-root’ of the word *glory* (in this sense) is: **to be clear; to be OPEN; to expand; to enlarge!**
[source: Webster’s 1828]

- So what do we get out of all this?

- When God has Paul say, “*I have therefore whereof I may glory*” (not ‘boast’), God is having Paul claim honor and special distinction; and exult and magnify his exalted and high state (office) as the distinct & unique apostle and *minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*, and to do so with unbounded gratification and joy ... but even more than that ...

... God is having Paul make his high office (because it is unique to this present disp. of grace in which we live) - God is having Paul make his high office **CLEAR to all; OPEN to all;** and God’s purpose is to have Paul’s high office & ministry **to expand and enlarge** over the entire world!

- It’s **clear** and **open** to all—and it’s to **expand** and **enlarge** over any and all other apostles and ministers! ... and it’s to take precedence over all others; it’s to be ‘center-stage’ in this present disp. of grace in which we live!
(Paul—and not Matthew, Mark, Luke, the writer of Hebrews, James, Peter, John, or Jude!)

- And there’s one other thing about the word *glory*—it carries a ‘shade of meaning’ that no other word carries—one that is critical as to why God wanted the word *glory* used here ...

... (Smith’s Synonyms Discriminated, p.177)

“To *glory* in a thing commonly denotes **an antagonistic view of the admirable on oneself, as if one were determined to vaunt it, whatever estimate others might set upon it, by reason of the high value we set upon it ourselves.**”

- This means that what we have here is a context in which “glory” (and specifically, Paul **glorifying** in “those things which pertain to God”) - [as often is the case], the particular thing that’s being gloried in is (or is very likely to be) a point of antagonism in the sight of others.

- And that *is* the truth of the matter here—(see Rom. 16:17ff) [all that’s being set forth here in Rom. 15:8ff builds to the climax in 16:17ff].

- Unlike Israel’s 12 apostles (Peter, James, John, et al), Paul’s apostleship and ministry is going to be met with suspicion and antagonism—it’s going to be opposed and resisted—and in many cases it’s going to be met with **hostility**!

- And naturally so—(again, due to the nature of this new & distinct disp. of grace being part of “*the mystery*”); and as Paul himself says about his own apostleship—that after the Lord was risen from the dead, He was “*seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, AS ONE BORN OUT OF DUE TIME.*

(1 Cor. 15:5-8) [Paul was looked at as a ‘bastard’/ abortion] [abortion = fig., an empty worthless thing]

- Paul was really in a very difficult place (he was really ‘up against it’) — there was a ‘natural’ reason for his credentials to be questioned (as an apostle “*born out of due time*”) ... but there is also an ‘unnatural’ reason for his credentials to be questioned—and for his apostleship & ministry to be opposed & resisted (that is, for the ‘unique-ness’ and distinctiveness of it to be opposed and rejected) [and lumped in with Israel’s 12 apostles] ...

... and that ‘unnatural’ opposition is that of the *strange woman* tactics of the Satanic PoE—which attempts to keep Christians ‘blind’ to “rightly dividing the word of truth” with Paul—and keep the “*mystery*” a mystery! ...

... and ultimately, to exterminate godly Edification (to make godly Edification **impossible**)!

- So the genius of God's vocabulary control in (:17), where He has Paul say, "*I have therefore whereof I may **glory***" — that use of the word "*glory*" tells you an awful lot—but one of the main things it tells you is that **this very issue** of Paul's apostleship & gospel ministry **is going to be a major 'bone of contention'** ...

... and it's going to be a major area of opposition and contention to YOU in your sonship life!

- And it WON'T stop; and it WON'T go away ... (the evidence being that this issue runs all the way through Paul's epistles—[for example, going by what Paul, and *only* Paul says is still being challenged out in 2 Thess. 2:2 {the forged letter}; not to mention in the Pastoral Epistles] ...

... so you NEED this information in Rom. 15:8-16:27 in order to not be taken-in and *subverted* by the adversary's PoE—and be moved away from Paul and his epistles!

- For the rest of your life on this earth, you will be looked at as odd; unorthodox; heretical; crazy; a nut; scorned; laughed at; scoffed at; in a cult; just following the teachings of a man instead of the teaching of God—and so forth, and so on — **and it WILL take a toll on you!**

- You **need** your Father's preparation here in order to NOT be 'shaken' in your mind—and to NOT be moved away from the doctrine He's taught you — and to **STICK WITH IT NO MATTER WHAT!**

- and these 8 Sanctifying Works of the Holy Ghost to validate Paul's credentials are designed to give you the **confidence** and **boldness** you need to have over the 'long haul' of the rest of your life on earth!

17 I have therefore whereof I may (indicating that it's as if he's been given permission to do so; and isn't doing so just because he wants to—in fact, it's God Himself that wants Paul to do this) *glory through Jesus Christ* ...

- Notice Paul's 'glorying' is precisely stated & qualified:
"*through Jesus Christ*" [watch those prepositions, *through* and *in*]

- "**through**" = by means of; through the agency of [Web. 1828 #4]

- By God's permission, Paul is *glorying* in his apostleship and gospel ministry to the Gentiles ... but he is doing so **through** the agency of, or under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself!

- And just as Paul stated back in (:16 *That I should be the minister of **Jesus Christ** to the Gentiles*) - Paul is NOT 'putting Jesus in the back seat' - Paul is NOT taking authority over, or taking precedence over, or taking preeminence over Jesus Christ and what Jesus is doing!

- By saying it this way, God is making sure that no one will ever think such a thing!

- And this is a great thing to get straight right from the out-set ... and that is that "*rightly dividing the word of truth*" with Paul (in Acts 9) and saying (and rightly so) that God has suspended His prog. w/ Isr. and brought in a new and distinct disp. of His grace for us Gentiles DOES NOT MEAN that God has suspended Jesus doing anything! [which is how many Christians often take it!]

- Jesus Christ has NOT been 'suspended' and temporarily replaced by Paul!

- The moment God suspended His prog. w/ Isr., Jesus didn't just go on a 2,000 yr. sabbatical! [as if, well, since Paul is our apostle, Jesus isn't doing anything right now!] WRONG!

- Jesus Christ is just as active, and is still doing stuff (a bunch of stuff) right now!

- And just because Paul's "gospel" does not have the same features or elements going on today as were going on back in God's prog. w/ Isr. does NOT mean that we are saying that Jesus has nothing to do today! [or is doing nothing today!]

- And that's a good question: What IS Jesus Christ doing today?

- well, He isn't creating a kingdom of heaven on this earth! ...

... rather, He's creating a **BODY** for His **HEAD!** (and doing it for the reconciling & repossession of the **heavenly places!**) [among many other things!]

- (again, look how precise God has Paul state his *glorying*)

17 *I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.* [it's qualified in 2 powerful & important ways]

- That's very precise; very specific (so as to not allow any thought whatsoever that Paul is promoting himself; or is arrogant, proud, boastful; or self-aggrandizing; or being 'vainglorious')!

he says, - "**in**" (and ONLY **in**—or you might say, strictly confined to these narrow limits!)

- **Be clear:** "*those things which pertain to God*" is set in a particular **context** - "*those things*" are NOT the *things* that God **was** doing in His "Time Past" portion of His word that deals with the *things* He was doing in Israel's program ... and they're NOT the *things* that God **will** be doing in His time "To Come" portion of His word that deals with His resuming and fulfilling His program with Israel! [**as per :8-12**]

- "*those things which pertain* (= belong to; are connected to; have reference or relation to) **to God**" = the things that God is currently doing in this new, distinct, and different dispensation of grace [in this great dispensational change that He has made] that is going on right now, **today** [with Paul as *the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*]. [**as per :14-16**]

- And for us, at this point in our Foundational Sonship Edification of Romans doctrine—even at this point, that phrase covers a LOT of *things* that God **is** doing—*things which pertain to God* !

- It covers Rom. 1:1-15:7 — [and we could enumerate all the "*things*" that *pertain to God* that we have covered so far, but you should be able to do that all on your own!] (in fact, you really should think that over in your mind and let your mind run though Romans doctrine for awhile ... that's a good exercise! ... you can check them off).

- So—we have covered the details of (:17) ... but there is one other thing I want to address here before we move on ... and it has to do with Paul *glorying* in the things God has him *glory* in here, as opposed to the often laid charge that Paul talks about himself too much; and that Paul often engages in 'vainglory'; or Paul gets high-minded and proud, and self-promoting.

- And the issue I'm after here is to understand and appreciate the difference between what Paul understands and says about *himself* as **Paul, the man vs. Paul, the apostle!**

- (or maybe a better way to say it:

Paul in his flesh vs. Paul, in Christ (and one of those things that Paul is, "in Christ", is the apostle & minister to the Gentiles).

- When Paul talks about himself 'according to his flesh' - i.e., Paul, the man—he NEVER brags, boasts, or 'glories' ... just the opposite—he always gives the divine viewpoint of the 'flesh' (including his) - and he esteems NOTHING about himself ... he has a complete, and godly LACK of human self-esteem!

- In respect to 'Paul The Flesh', he operates upon Rom. 8:12-13 ... *we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 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.* — and 1 Cor. 1:29 *That **no flesh** should **glory** in his presence.*

- And there is a very real and dangerous aspect of the PoE whereby it's very easy for saints to 'glory in men' ... even in men who are godly men and who preach and teach God's word 'rightly divided' and properly handled—(and Paul deals with this issue over in such passages as 1 Cor. 3).

- And there's a whole bunch of doctrine contained in both 1 and 2 Cor. concerning this very issue—which tells you just how important this issue is ...

... in fact, there's some very needful and very powerful (**and very helpful**) doctrine we're going to need to get from those Corinthian passages.

- in fact, there's a particular 'salvation' you can get from being victimized by the Satanic PoE when you can properly handle what things are 'praiseworthy' [or things that are proper to 'glory' in], and what things are NOT to be 'gloried' in!

- (we can't deal with every passage on this subject, but a couple of samples will be sufficient to get the point across)

- **2 Corinthians 11**—(where the final “suffering of Christ” is set forth and dealt with)

- This final “suffering of Christ” deals with being accused of ‘walking according to the flesh’ — and the doctrine here teaches you about the things of “praise” (or glory), and that when they are properly recognized, understood and appreciated, they produce a powerful godly endurance and ‘salvation’ from being victimized by this ‘suffering of Christ’ brought on by the PoE.

- **11:16-12:12 (skip to :19)**

- Note: This isn't just a ‘Corinthian’ problem—it's a ‘Galatian’ problem, too (see **Gal. 5:26**)

- **Philippians 3:1-9**

- (:2) “*circumcision*” = men of the circumcision; teachers who would bring you under The Law.

- (:3) “*For we are the circumcision*” - used by those who try to teach that we are ‘spiritual Israelites’ - What in the world does Paul mean here?

- (This is a great example of: ‘not every time you see the word *circumcision* that it means Israel or Israelites!)

- see **Col. 2:8-12**

- This isn't the first time you're taught this! (The Colossian saints were supposed to ***already know this!*** ... so where were they taught it? ... they were taught it in Romans doctrine!

... **Rom. 6:1ff!** (while the word *circumcision* is not used here—that IS what you're taught—Rom. 6:1ff IS the doctrine of your **spiritual circumcision!**)

- (note to self: Remember to read ALL of Phil. 3:1-9)

- (back to Rom. 15:17) - *I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.*
- We need to have a firm grip on what's going on here (and be **deeply** and **eternally impressed** with it)—and what's going on here is that God is intentionally having Paul *glory* in his apostleship and ministry as *the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*.
- God wants and needs for Paul to state it; and to *glory* in it—to revel in it—to joy in it—to take great pleasure in it ... but most of all, **TO MANIFEST IT, OR MAKE IT KNOWN TO ALL!**
 - (remember Paul's apostleship was given to him for the "**obedience to the faith among ALL NATIONS**" [Rom. 1:5])
 - Consider all of the many times Paul tells the saints to '**be followers of ME**' ...
 - 1 Cor. 4:8-16 [:16]
 - 1 Cor. 11:1
 - Phil. 3:17-19 [:17] — (these are true justified/saved folks who are "*walking*" - i.e., attempting to put their sanctified life "in Christ" into effect in some way OTHER than through the doctrine contained in Paul's epistles! [i.e., Paul's gospel])
 - 1 Thes. 1:6-7
 - **1 Tim. 1:12-16**
 - Paul is to *glory* in his apostleship ... almost to the point of bragging about it—and that's what is supposed to make the deep & lasting impact upon you as well!
 - YOU need to *glory* in it and about it, too! (and *glory* you should—because without Paul and his apostleship and it's accompanying ministry, you would not have the doctrine or the curriculum for your godly sonship edification!)
- Why *glory* in it? because it's going to be a major 'bone of contention' of the adversary and his PoE! ... he does NOT want Paul's special and unique apostleship manifest (or made known to all) ... he wants it kept a secret (or better yet, he wants Paul to be lumped in with Israel's 12 apostles)!

- Now, it's one thing to say it (it's one thing for Paul to *glory* in his apostleship) ... it's another thing to **prove** it; and to have the genuine and **authorized credentials** to make such a claim ... and that's what the 8 Sanctifying Works of the Holy Ghost are all about!

- [We get the 2nd Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost in :18-19a.]

- In Part 'C' of the godly Thinking that deals with the Sanctifying Works of the Holy Ghost to validate the great dispensational change God has made, and to validate the new administration of it (Paul, being the new human administrator of it) — we have 'set the stage' in (:17) with a statement that sets forth the **major issue** this is now going to get proven and validated.

17 I (Paul) have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.

- This is the **major issue** in this great dispensational change: the Holy Ghost is going to operate through this new administrator, (the apostle Paul), for the purpose of providing believers in Christ today, (that is, the BODY of Christ), with the information and the curriculum for their godly Edification as "sons" of God.

- And that IS something to "**glory**" about, and indeed, God has Paul do just that.

- And we should *glory* in that too—especially when you understand & appreciate that the body of Christ—the 'new creature' of the church, the body of Christ; the 'one new man' **which we are, and which Israel is NOT**) - when you recognize that God has an entirely different and distinct design, plan, and purpose for this new entity of the body of Christ than He has for Israel!

- Which, of course, is that while Israel is designed and purposed to be the means by which God will reconcile and repossess the earth from Satan and his cohorts—the body of Christ is designed and purposed by God to be the means by which He will reconcile and repossess the heavenly places from Satan and his cohorts.

- And since the heavenly places are now in view (and not the earth) - that demands and requires **new information/doctrine!**

- In all of Genesis through the opening chapters of Acts; and in Hebrews through Revelation, there is NO information (no doctrine) concerning the “new creature of the church the body of Christ” - and there is NO information or doctrine for the godly Edification of the body of Christ, either.

- The information and doctrine **for you**, as a member of the church the body of Christ—the doctrine that **edifies you** to be able to have the capacity to be properly prepared and equipped to function in the roll you will have in the “creature” (the heavenly places) is **ONLY** found in Paul’s epistles.

- Therefore, Paul’s epistles are the ‘marching orders’ for believers today ... they are the ‘manual’ for living the Christian way of life today ...

... **and that one, single issue** is going to be challenged, scoffed at, ridiculed, and vehemently opposed (sadly) by the majority of Christians you will be in contact with.

- In other words—it will be challenged and opposed as being **VALID**—a valid doctrine ... and that’s why God is going to present 7 more Sanctifying Works of the Holy Ghost in order to prove and validate the reality and truth of this very thing that He has done.

- And that’s the significance of (:17) - that’s the significance of this ‘major statement’!

- So now we move on to the next validating Work of the Holy Ghost that verifies Paul’s credentials and Paul’s ministry (his epistles) to be who & what we ‘follow’ and ‘go by’ for the godly sonship edification of saints today.

- Remember: We have 5 verses in this section—but we have only 3 sentences.

- (:17) is the 1st verse of the section, and the first sentence.

- The next full sentence is contained in all of (:18) and (:19).

18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,

19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

- Now this is where the grammatical punctuation marks contained in the King James Bible comes in very handy ...

... when you look at (:18-19) as one complete sentence, you notice that there is one single semicolon (in :19, after the word “*God;*” ...

... that’s helpful for us to be able to determine that all of (:18) and the first part of (:19) is supposed to be grouped together.

- (or what you might call :18-19a)

- And then everything **after** the semicolon in (:19) to the end of the sentence (which is the end of the verse) is supposed to be grouped together [:19b].

- And what that tells you is that (:18-19a) presents a Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost (the **2nd** Sanctifying Work) - and then (:19b) presents another Sanctifying Work of the HG (the **3rd** Sanctifying Work).

- And that means that we’re going to be interested in (:18-19a), which will set forth the **2nd** Sanctifying Work of the HG that validates the great dispensational change God has made and the new administration of it.

(:18-19a) *For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; ...*

- And just to ‘put it on the table’ (so to speak), or just to state what this 2nd Sanctifying Work of the HG is—it’s actually stated in (:19a):

19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the Spirit of God;

- The 2nd Sanctifying Work of the HG is: the **Specialized mighty signs and wonders** God performed by the Holy Spirit through Paul, in order **to convince the Gentiles** (and make them aware) **that God is now dealing with them.**

- and there are a number of them ...

- Paul's conversion itself in Acts 9:1-9—Jesus Christ unexpectedly shows back up on the earth, which was NOT according to prophecy! (along with Paul being struck blind and the details surrounding it)
- Acts 9:17-18—Paul's eyesight was miraculously restored by Ananias.
- Acts 13:8-11—Paul blinded Elymus the sorcerer.
- Acts 14:1-3—Paul performed “signs and wonders” in Iconium.
- Acts 14:8-10—Paul healed a crippled man.
- Acts 14:19-20—Paul stoned to death and arose unharmed at Lystra.
- Acts 16:16-18—Paul cast out a “spirit of divination” from a woman.
- Acts 16:25-26—Paul and Silas were miraculously released from prison in Philippi.
- Acts 19:1-7—In Ephesus, Paul baptizes some and “about twelve” of them received the Holy Ghost by Paul laying his hands on them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.
- Acts 19:11-12—Paul performed “special miracles”.
- Acts 20:8-10—Paul raised Eutychus from the dead in Troas.
- Acts 28:3-5—Paul was not affected by the viper bite at Melita.
- Acts 28:8-9—Paul heals the father of Publius and others on the island of Melita.

- It needs to be remembered that these things all took place while Israel had *stumbled, fallen*, and were in a state of *diminishing*—and for a time, you had both Israel (the remnant of Israel) **and** the beginning of the formation of the church the body of Christ co-existing on the earth.

- Which means that God had to be able to show to **both Israel and the Gentiles** that He had, indeed, suspended His program with Israel, had ushered in a new dispensation of His grace, had changed the status of the Gentiles in His sight, and had turned away from Israel and turned to the Gentiles—(which fundamental doctrine on this matter was given to you in Romans 9, 10, and 11).

- The time in which these specialized mighty signs and wonders were being done by the apostle Paul would be during Paul's 'provoking' ministry, or what you might call the time of Paul the 'Provoker' - this would be the time in which Paul would be 'provoking' Israel [**before** Paul was cast into prison]—(Rom. 11:11 *I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to **provoke** them to jealousy.*)

- Paul the Provoker (Rom-Gal)
- Paul the Prisoner (Ephff)

- (:18 Details)

- "*For*" = further explanation & amplification of the 'stage-setting' major statement of declaration made in :17.

- "*I will not **dare** to speak* ('dare' = to be so bold—it's a very powerful and intense word that indicates an audacity [almost an arrogance] to venture into an area where you don't really belong) *of any of those things which Christ hath not **wrought** by me, ...*

- "**wrought**" is the older English past tense of the word 'work' - (and it's NOT an archaic word!).

- The most common way in which the newer translations handle this word is to use the term "accomplished" - but the problem with this is (just as in most cases where the newer translations differ from the Authorized KJ) is that 'accomplished' is a much more vague term, whereas *wrought* has a more specific shade of meaning in view.

- In other words, *wrought* is after something more specific and more precise than merely the 'accomplishment' of a thing.

- In fact, the KJ translators had the word 'accomplished' at their disposal—and used it (or a variation of it) some 41x!

- My understanding is that when you are saying that something was *wrought*, it doesn't just mean that something was merely 'accomplished' or 'done'—it means more than that — it is driving at something that should grab your attention.

- And when you talk about something being ‘accomplished’, you just mean that you have succeeded in doing something; or in bringing something to pass.

- But when you speak of something having been *wrought*, you have something a little more specific in mind—something (shall we say) more graphic to describe.

- Because, when you have *wrought* something you have formed it, you have fashioned it, you have worked it into something ... and you’ve done it in a very **special** way!

- For example, even to this day you still hear the expression, “wrought-iron” or something that is “hand-wrought” - and that has a special meaning to you—especially, for instance, if you are buying something of a higher quality—for example, something that is “hand-wrought” is more expensive because it has been molded or sculpted or crafted by the hand of the master artist—whether his work is in bronze or iron or clay or whatever.

- It’s the difference between something that has been **machine or factory produced vs. Hand-wrought\$\$\$**

- And the ‘shade of meaning’ that we get out of something that has been *wrought* vs. something that has merely been ‘accomplished’ is that whatever has been *wrought* has a sense of having gone through a process of **specialized**, full attention-to-detail, ‘hands-on’ fashioning, forming, and effort ...

... “*wrought*” grabs your attention to the **specialness** of whatever has been done or accomplished!

- And what that tells you is: the *mighty signs and wonders* that God performed by the apostle Paul held very **special** or **SPECIALIZED SIGNIFICANCE!**

- The *mighty signs and wonders* God performed by and through Paul were of **special** importance and **special** significance as to what God did when He suspended His prog. w/ Isr. and brought in this new/distinct disp. of grace!

- Due to the ‘**specialness**’ of the great dispensational change, God had Paul perform some *mighty signs and wonders* that were of **special significance**—that is, some special *mighty signs and wonders* that accompanied and complemented the specialness *of* the great dispensational change! (see Acts 15:12)

- And special they were—because they were completely ‘out of order’ or ‘out of bounds’ ***IF*** God were still moving along and operating according to His program with Israel!

- (In fact, they could NOT have been done while God’s prog. w/ Isr. was still in effect ... because the Gentiles could NOT be dealt with this way **by Law** ... by their very doing, they demand a change in programs, a change in dispensations!)

- see Exo. 34:10

- 1 Cor. 1:22 - “**For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom.**” (that’s not a bad thing, or a reproof or a criticism)

*** (see Psa. 74:1-10 [9]) ***

- Now, in this context, you need to understand and appreciate that these things (these *mighty signs and wonders*) also go toward the validating of Paul’s credentials as a Sanctifying Work of the HG— **but to do so with extreme precision**—because God is having Paul be **vary careful** (and very precise) to **NOT** venture into the credential of Israel’s 12 apostles or into anything that has to do with God’s program with Israel! ... *I will not **dare** to speak of any of those things which Christ **hath not wrought** by me, ...*

- Paul is ‘towing the line’ with respect to the 2 programs—he’s being **extremely careful** (due to the legal matters involved) **NOT** to venture ‘out of bounds’ into what God was doing in Israel’s program, but rather sticking strictly within the bounds of what God was (and is) doing with him as the apostle and minister to the Gentiles, and keeping strictly in this present dispensation of grace!

- Paul is **restricting himself** to the **jurisdiction** that was given to him (i.e., the Gentiles; the uncircumcision) ... and **NOT** treading upon the jurisdiction that was giving to Peter and the rest of Israel’s apostles (i.e., Israel; the circumcision).

... as he goes on to say ...

18 *For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,*

- "**to make the Gentiles obedient**" = simply put, to bring the Gentiles into obedience to the "*gospel of God*" or Paul's gospel message in all of its 'broad' sense—to bring the Gentiles into obedience to **Christ** ... to what the Lord Jesus Christ is now doing in this disp. of grace.

- "**by word and deed**" - sometimes this phrase is linked up and joined to the Gentile's obedience (i.e., 'the Gentiles being 'obedient' by the Gentile's words and deeds) ... but my understanding is that this phrase is supposed to be linked up and joined with Paul and what Christ *wrought* by and through him.

- So: "**by word**" = by the preaching and teaching of the curriculum for godly sonship edification contained in Paul's letters/epistles ...

"**by deed**" = by that very doctrine effectually working in (and working out) of Paul's life along with the *mighty signs and wonders* that validated/sanctified the truth and reality of Paul's credentials as the apostle and minister of the Gentiles.

- And that takes us to (:19a) - and the remaining information contained in the 2nd Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost to confirm and validate the 'lawfulness' and the truth & reality of God making the great dispensational change that He has made, **and** the new administration of it (being the apostle Paul and his ministry).

18 *For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,*

19 *Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; ...*

- The issue in this 2nd Sanctifying Work of the HG is this:
 - In Acts chapter 9, God temporarily suspended His program and dealings with Israel, and began a "*secret*" plan and purpose that He "*kept hid*" in Himself as a "*mystery*."

- And that “*mystery*” plan & purpose was to make a great dispensational change—and to bring in an entirely new and distinct “*dispensation of the grace of God*” ... a dispensation of Gentile grace ... for an entire **different** purpose than He was working out in His program with Israel.

- And this dispensation of grace would be under a new administration: the 3rd Member of the Godhead (the Holy Ghost) and the new and different, and distinct apostle: Paul.

- As this new disp. of grace got underway, God would make known this “*mystery*” of God turning **away** from Israel and **to** the Gentiles by ingenuously having Paul utilize the *mighty signs and wonders* that were the strict, **legal** possession of Israel and Israel’s 12 apostles upon the Gentiles without the agency of Israel or Israel’s 12 apostles.

- This action would accomplish 2 major and necessary things:
1) It would indicate to Israel that God is no longer working with them; and no longer working according to His program with them ... God has turned away from dealing with them ... Israel and their program are temporarily suspended and set aside.

2) It would “*make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed*” ... that is, by Paul’s *word* (by Paul’s preaching and writing ministry), and by Paul’s *deed* of utilizing Israel’s *mighty signs and wonders* during the opening portion of the disp. of grace, would make the Gentiles aware of, and *obedient to* “*the gospel of God*” that God committed to Paul, and to be ministered by Paul, as the new ‘administrator’ of the disp. of grace.

- The end result of having Paul utilize Israel’s *mighty signs and wonders* to the Gentiles is the act of the Holy Ghost “*sanctifying*” the truth and reality of the great dispensational change; and at the exact same time, validate the lawful credentials of Paul being the new administrator of it.

- Now—the problem with all of this is that **if you do NOT pay attention** to what God has done—and if you have a shallow or improper or inadequate understanding and appreciation for God’s program with Israel (meaning, the Bible itself), then you are going

to have a whole bunch of problems ... you're going to end up making a mess out of God's word ... and you're going to end up operating upon nothing but **corrupt Bible doctrine!**

- And this is going to be made all the more worse due to the adversary (Satan) and his Policy of Evil that is now determined to vehemently attack and oppose God's plan and purpose for the great dispensational change He has made!

- And that has to do with the fact that these *mighty signs and wonders* that God did through the apostle Paul to and for the Gentiles **are only temporary in nature** ... that is, they only existed for a short time—the time in which Paul and his ministry was in its 'provoking' phase (Rom. 11:11) which coincided with the time in which "*a more excellent way*" would arrive with the completion of God's word (1 Cor. 13:10).

- After the *more excellent way* came into effect with the completion of God's word, **all** of these *mighty signs and wonders* would cease.

- Therefore, one of the main, major goals, aims, and objectives of the Satanic PoE is to **counterfeit** these *mighty signs and wonders* and to make Christian folks think that they are still going on today!

- And what all this means is: we **MUST** have a more-than-shallow understanding for Paul utilizing *mighty signs and wonders* ... we have to have a deep and firm understanding & appreciation for these 'miracle' matters ... **or else we're going to be duped into Satan's corrupt doctrine ourselves!**

- The result being: **NO godly edification taking place!**

- And this is a 'doubly' tough issue for us as "*ambassadors for Christ*" because of what I call, "The Experience Factor" ... that is, most Christians will reject Paul's gospel message because they will say (and vehemently **insist**) that they have **experienced** a miracle, or a sign, or a wonder—and in most Christian's minds, **an 'experience' TUMPS the word of God every time!**

- The truth is—what you were taught in Romans 6, 7, & 8 (along with what that body of information is designed to do), **strips away *any* confidence in “EXPERIENCE”!**

- In fact, you are taught back there that having some kind of an “experience” in connection with what goes on in your flesh (or your body, such as being miraculously healed; or *feeling* something like ‘the movement of God’), and in connection with your “flesh” and your appraisal of it, and your assessment of it, and your estimation of it, (and things along those lines), your ‘flesh’ **is going to DECEIVE you every time!**

- Good or bad; godly or ungodly; evil or holy ... you can NOT trust your ‘flesh’ to indicate to you that any of those things are real or are happening to you! (If you go by your ‘flesh’ [your body, your emotions, your feelings] - you will be deceived every time!

- **You NEVER go by your ‘flesh’ to tell you what is true and what is real! ... you go by the word of God! ... you go by what your Father tells you is real and true!** (but that’s NOT what most Christians ever do!)

- And folks, that’s why we have to spend some time on this subject!

- We **MUST** remember to keep the context in view!

- We're **NOT** going to do a categorical study of the doctrine of signs, miracles, and wonders! (Rom. 15:19 is one of the Sanctifying Works of the HG in order to validate/prove the truth & reality of the great disp. change and Paul's credentials as its new administrator!)

- Truth is—by the time you get to Rom. 15:19 **you already know** (and you've already been taught) that God is **NOT** going to intervene into the circumstances of your life by signs, miracles, and wonders!

- you've already been taught that God's omnipotent 'hand' is **NOT** going to manipulate the circumstances and the situations of your life! (where were you taught that? Rom. 8:14-39!)

- And you've also been taught that **THAT IS NOT DISAPPOINTING!** (*"in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."* (Rom. 8:37)

- and it's not disappointing because you know that God is doing something **FAR GREATER THAN THAT; AND FAR MORE POWERFUL THAN THAT!**

- And you've been taught the **reason** for it: Why is God not performing signs, miracles and wonders today?

- Because the paltriness of those things; and the utter weakness of those things have been replaced by the excellency of God's power vested in His complete, written word (the complete word of God)!

- And because of your adoption as "sons" - an adult "son" has no need of those things! ... in fact, a properly educated "son" doesn't **WANT** those things—why? because those things get him **OUT** of his suffering—and he knows that the real power and glory of God is going to be manifest as he **ENDURES** suffering by the excellency of the power of God's word effectually working within him!

- A "son" knows the issue is **NOT** the power of God that works outside him; but rather the power of God that works **WITHIN HIM**—(Eph. 3:20 *Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh IN us,*) = Rom. 8:14-39

- Rom. 15:19 takes you back to the time in which God the Holy Ghost was Sanctifying the great disp. change with Paul as its administrator.

- And the time in which the HG was sanctifying that was the time where Israel was in the phase of her “diminishing” (which was in the opening portion of this disp. of grace)!

- And at that time, God produced a big ‘package’ of things while Israel was ‘diminishing’ in order to prove to both Jews and Gentiles alike, that He had indeed suspended His program with Israel and brought in a new and secret plan and purpose that He had kept as a “mystery” = the dispensation of the grace of God!

- And once the period of Israel’s “diminishing” was over and the word of God was completed—God no longer performed any *mighty signs and wonders* (including any miracles)!

- (the following is from Keith’s email E56 [p.273])

- First, let’s get an understanding of the overall issue of signs, wonders, and miracles.

- And the first thing we should understand is that ALL signs, wonders, and miracles **happened for a reason**—and that reason for them has to do with what is going on in God’s program at the time they are occurring.

- In other words, God did NOT perform any ‘sign, wonder, or miracle,’ just for the ‘fun of it’ (so to speak). Nor did He do so simply for the sake of doing something “supernatural.” ... No ‘sign, wonder, or miracle’ **ever occurred randomly, or as a matter of happenstance, etc.** Instead, they all occurred for a **specific purpose** within the confines of the program in effect—and they all occurred in accordance with the dictates, aims, goals, and objectives of the program in effect.

- Now as simplistic as it may sound to say that we need to understand and appreciate the fact that all ‘signs, wonder, and miracles’ **have a distinct program-oriented reason** behind them—many saints do not understand & appreciate this—(including many grace folks). But it is **vital** that this be understood and appreciated.

- First and foremost, we need to recognize that the reason why ‘signs, wonders, and miracles’ occur (or do NOT occur), is directly tied to the program that is in effect—and they are also directly tied to **specific** objectives that exist within that program that’s in effect.
- Secondly—it means that they therefore do NOT occur for the simple pleasure of; or for the benefit of, the one (or ones) receiving them! Rather, they occur, (or do NOT occur), for both definite and identifiable reasons within the outworking of God’s program.
- The evidence that this is, indeed, true is by the very **words** that God has chosen to use to refer to the different forms that there are to the supernatural acts that He can perform.
- **“SIGN” or “SIGNS”** — when God performs a supernatural act that He calls a **“sign”** - then this, or course, means that He did it to **‘signify’** something.
 - A “sign” by definition is a **‘signifier’** - it indicates something that is ‘significant.’
 - Therefore a “sign” is performed, NOT for the simple sake of performing it—but for the sake of ‘signifying’ something meaningful by it—something that is meaningful within the outworking of the program at the time that it occurred.
 - Wherefore someone who is the recipient of a supernatural act that God calls a “sign,” **did NOT receive it merely for his own personal benefit**—but rather to allow it to function as the “sign” that it is.
 - And because of this, the person would NOT have been the recipient of it **if the program at the time he received it did not call for a “sign” to be performed!**
- **“WONDER” OR “WONDERS”** — The same also applies to “wonders” and “miracles.”

- When God performs a supernatural act that He calls a “wonder,” the purpose behind it is similar to that of a “sign.”

- However, where a “sign” is more obvious in its significance, (seeing that it is directly and openly tied to what is going on in the program at the time that it occurs), a “wonder is more subtle in a particular sense.

- A “wonder” is designed to **make one marvel**, and it is designed to **make one THINK about its occurrence and what it means.**

- That is, to ‘wonder’ about it—**thinking about WHY it occurred!**

- In addition to this a “wonder” is often performed more **for the purpose of making a connection with what is going on inside (in the mind or inner-man) rather than what is going on outside.** — [although this is by no means exclusively so.]

- Nevertheless—a “wonder,” like a “sign,” is also performed for a specific reason—and as it is with a “sign,” **it is the specific reason related to the outworking of the program that determines why the “wonder” occurred.**

- If there is NO program-oriented reason for a “wonder” to be performed, then God will NOT perform a “wonder”!

- “MIRACLE” or “MIRACLES” — what we have seen is true of “signs” and “wonders” is also true of “miracles.”

- The term “miracle” is the most generic term of the three.

- God does NOT use the word “miracle” in an off-handed manner, (such as the media does; and such as most of humanity does [saved or lost]) - nor does God use the term “miracle” in a way that fails to indicate that when He performs one, He has performed it for a particular reason! (related to the outworking of the program in effect)

- A “miracle” is a supernatural act of God by which He directly intervenes in some way, and by so doing produces an effect that could NOT be produced otherwise.

- And, once again—in accordance with the dictates and outworking of the program in which they occur, God performs “miracles” for reasons specified by the program! ... NOT for the sake of simply performing a “miracle,” or simply for the sake of the one being the recipient of the “miracle!”

- In other words—God ‘intervenes’ to produce a specific effect—because producing that effect is called for either by the program on the whole, or it is called for by what is going on in a particular *stage* of the program.

- Therefore when it comes to dealing with any, or all, of the places in the Bible where God either talks about and/or performs ANY ‘signs, wonders, or miracles,’ (or does NOT perform them), it is essential for folks to understand the particular program that is in view—and to understand all of the various reasons that God has within the **outworking** of His program—either to be performing ‘signs, wonders, or miracles,’ or NOT to be performing them.

- Again—unfortunately, this understanding generally does NOT exist in most Christians—and therefore they end up in corrupted doctrine, mishandling God’s word, and under the influence of the Satanic PoE.

- Now what we have talked about so far does not specifically cite or address any of the particular reasons that God has for performing or showing ‘signs, wonder, or miracles,’ (or for not doing so)—but we needed to underscore the fact that ‘signs, wonders, and miracles’ occur, or do not occur, for definite and identifiable **program-oriented reasons**.

- (and this is what folks must honestly acknowledge and must honestly deal with when they are dealing with ANY passages in God’s word concerning ‘signs, wonders, and miracles.’)

- The truth of the matter is—that if God performs miracles simply for the sake of performing them; or simply on the basis of His compassion; or even on the basis of a person’s need, or desire, or request, or otherwise—then God would not only have reason to be performing miracles **ALL** of the time, but He also would be obligated to perform them **ALL** of the time!

- And this would be the case, not only in His program with Israel, but also in this present dispensation of His grace—however, it’s evident that God does NOT do this!

- In fact—God did NOT do this even in His program with Israel (where He had made a covenant with them to do ‘wonders’ and signs and miracles [Exodus 34:10 compared with Psalm 74:9]!

- So even under Israel’s program and covenant, God did NOT perform miracles simply for the sake of performing miracles—nor did He do so simply on the basis of His compassion—or even on the basis of His people’s needs!

- (granted, the Bible says things like, “*And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.*” (Mat. 14:14) - but while the Lord did, indeed, have “*compassion toward them*”, “compassion” was NOT the only reason for performing the miracle of healing (not even the *main* reason) ... because you would know before you ever got to Matthew’s gospel that the Lord performing ‘healings’ in His earthly ministry was one of the 2 great ‘hallmark’ signs of the kingdom being “at hand” as well as the Messiah’s [the Christ’s] presence on the earth!)

- [Mat., Mk., and Lk. repeatedly talk about the Lord having “compassion” and then performing a miracle—interestingly, John’s gospel never uses the word “compassion” ... hummm]

- It is clear, however, that God performs ‘signs, wonders, and miracles’ for definite and identifiable reasons that are strictly tied into the **outworking** of His program—and anyone who is the recipient of a miracle from God, is a recipient of that miracle because the outworking of God’s program **called** for the miracle to be performed—NOT because the person himself called for it; or merited it.

- Let’s look at a few examples:

- First, let’s look at a couple of passages where it is commonly said that if someone has **enough faith** either to be healed, or to be the recipient of a miracle—**only then** will God perform it ... and (as they say) if God does **not** give them a miracle, then that means that it’s because that Christian did not have **enough faith**.

- **Mat. 13:53-58 (and the parallel passage) Mark 6:1-6**

- The issue here (and the context here) is part of the Climactic Stage in God’s prog. with Israel—and as such, it is an event, or an occurrence, that fits into the overall issue of how God was dealing with His people during that time.

- And therefore, in order to properly understand & appreciate it, it’s essential not only to understand that ‘signs, wonders, and miracles’ were expected at this time in Israel’s program—but we need to also understand something else.

- We need to understand that it also meant that **something was seriously wrong with the people.**

- And it meant this in accordance with the covenant that God had made with Israel for the performing of such things.

- Simply & generally speaking—(look at a passage that describes the beginning or **opening phase** of the Lord’s earthly ministry—see **Mat. 9:35**) ..

... [notice that word “**EVERY**”] ... the Lord healed “**every**” sickness and “**every**” disease among the people ... and as the Lord did this during the **opening phase** of His ministry, He was manifesting the ‘hallmark signs’ of the kingdom—which, (being the “signs” that they were), they validated that the “kingdom of God” really was “at hand,” just like the gospel of the kingdom was saying.

- And there really wasn’t any discrimination when it came to who received healings and miracles at the Lord’s hands during the opening phase of His ministry—(as Matthew says, the Lord was “*healing every sickness and every disease **among the people***” [i.e., **all** the “people”]) ...

... which means that **both justified and unjustified were healed, and were recipients of miracles during the opening phase of the Lord’s ministry!**

- And this was done in keeping with the Lord giving Israel these ‘signs, wonders, and miracles’ in order for the people of Israel to believe both the truth of “the gospel of the kingdom” being “at hand,” and the truth of who He is as The Christ.

- However, as the Climactic Stage in Israel’s program moved on—the Gospel accounts record that a **change** started to take place in the Lord’s ministry—and this ‘change’ had a number of features to it, but one of them was **that the Lord no longer performed miracles freely and indiscriminately!**

- And this change took place because the time had come for the Lord to begin to **hold the people of Israel accountable** for what had been going on since John the Baptist began preaching “the gospel of the kingdom” to them—and since the Lord Himself had begun preaching that same gospel to them, (and also began freely and profusely manifesting the signs of the kingdom to them).

- So, as the Lord began to hold the people of Israel **accountable** for what they had been hearing and seeing—He then began to no longer be indiscriminately doing ‘signs, wonders, and miracles’ — instead, He began to purposefully discriminate—and the Lord did this as the **second phase** of His ministry involved Him **enforcing** the people’s **accountability** to what was going on in their program.

- Simply stated—since the people were not responding to the Lord as they ought to, but were choosing rather to believe what Israel’s vain religious system said—the Lord then began to deny them ‘their signs’ accordingly.

- So it’s in view of the arrival of this **second phase** of the Lord’s ministry that Matthew 13:53-58 says what it does, and Mark 6:1-6 says what it does, about the Lord coming into “*his own country*” and the people NOT believing Him to be who He has testified that He is—and in view of this, the Lord was not able to do “*many mighty works*” there “*because of their unbelief.*”

- And the reason that the Lord could not, and would not, do “*many mighty works*” in “*his own country*” was NOT because the people did not have enough faith in either God’s willingness, or in His ability, to give them a miracle—rather, instead, it was because they had refused to believe the meaning of all the ‘signs, wonders, and miracles’ that He had been performing throughout the first phase of His ministry that they had heard about and been fully confronted with!

- In fact, as the context testifies—the people in the Lord’s “*own country*” fully acknowledge that they are aware of the Lord’s teachings, and of His “*mighty works*” (and so forth) — but the issue is: **they did NOT believe what they mean!**

- Unlike others in Israel, they refused to believe that all of the ‘signs wonders, and miracles’ that they have been hearing about mean that the kingdom of God really is “at hand,” and that Jesus of Nazareth really is the Christ! ... in fact, (as the passages say), “*they were offended at him.*”

- So Mat. 13:53-58 & Mark 6:1-6 isn’t the issue of the people not having enough faith in either God’s ability, or in His willingness to give them miracles—rather, it’s the issue of them being ones who **rejected the meaning** of all of the ‘signs, wonders, and miracles’ that had taken place in the first phase of the Lord’s ministry—and by doing that, they remained unbelievers in “the gospel of the kingdom” and unbelievers of who Jesus is.

.....

- Let’s look at another passage—one that directly deals with the issue in our passage of Rom. 15:19 (*of the things which Christ hath wrought by Paul, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders*)

- **Acts 14:1-10 (:8-10)**

- Again—recognizing that **all** of the ‘signs and wonders’ performed by and through the apostle Paul (just like it was with the Lord Jesus and the 12 apostles of Israel when God’s program with Israel was in effect) - it’s critical to properly recognize that the reason for the occurrence (or non-occurrence) of **all** ‘signs, wonders, and miracles’ is always **program-oriented**.

- and that’s essential to understand here in Acts 14.

- And I say that again here because of the tendency that folks have to focus almost exclusively upon what (:9) says about Paul ‘*perceiving that the man had faith to be healed,*’ while at the same time seeming to **forget** the fact that this miracle still occurred for a specific program-based reason!

- And since it occurred for a specific program-based reason—this means that the issue of the man ‘*having faith to be healed*’ **fits in with God’s program-based reason** for performing the miracle at that time.

- which means that this is NOT a verse that shows that if someone only has enough faith to believe that God will work a miracle for him, (or upon him), that God will then do it ... it doesn’t show that any more than what we looked at in Matthew 13 and Mark 6!

- Now when it comes to us understanding & appreciating how the issue of the man’s ‘*faith to be healed*’ **fits in** with God’s program-based reasons for performing this miracle at this time—we first off need to realize that there are certain occasions (both in God’s prog. w/ Isr., and ***at the beginning*** of this present disp. of grace) when God performed some **special-type** miracles on certain individuals.

- And they were **special** miracles—in fact, they were more specifically, “***mighty signs and wonders***” because God’s purpose for them was that they would **specialy STAND OUT** for some reason, apart from all the other miracles that He was performing at the time.

- Not only that—but God often performed these **special** miracles in direct connection with the individual’s positive response to the MESSAGE that God was proclaiming at that time!

- and more than that—these **special-type** miracles were done in direct connection with the person’s **belief in the reality of the demonstrations of God’s power that He was giving at that time by which He was CONFIRMING the truth of His message!**

- Therefore this means that when God performed one of these **special-type** miracles on such an individual, (or individuals), He did it not only in accordance with His general program-based reason for performing miracles at that time—but He also did it for some other **particular** reasons that He had.

- And in accordance with these other particular reasons—these special miracles that God performed were designed to be ones that would be **highly “notable”** ... or would be **undeniably impressive** to others, causing them to **‘sit up’ and ‘take notice’!**

- Or, in other words—these special miracles were designed to cause people to **“wonder”** - which is why the word **“wonders”** is frequently used in referring to them (along with other terms such as **“signs”**) that clearly set them apart for their **special nature.**

- Plus—God also performed these special miracles upon ones who were **readily believing His message** as it was being preached, so as to make it abundantly manifest to others that the **message** they were hearing was **from Him**—and that **faith/belief** in what He was **saying** was what He was looking for from them—and it was also what he would honour.

- And that’s the POINT—that’s the reason WHY one of the ways in which the Holy Ghost (God, Himself) **sanctified** the truth and reality of the great dispensational change He made, and **sanctified** the credentials of the apostle Paul as the new administrator of it—was to perform these **“might signs and wonders”** ...

... and the reason WHY was to make it abundantly manifest (clear) to others that the **message** they were hearing WAS FROM HIM!
[AND NOT FROM MERELY A MAN]!

- Now we also need to realize that there were **two particular times** during which God performed these **special-type** miracles:

1. During Acts 1-7 when God was giving **“repentance to Israel.”**

And these special-type miracles that He performed at that time were in fulfillment of what the Lord had already said to His disciples, for example in John 14:12—*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.*

2. At the beginning of this present dispensation of God's grace to us Gentiles.

This is the time in which God was giving **evidence** (proof) that He truly had suspended His program with Israel and had turned to the Gentiles—just as He was having Paul preach and teach.

- And these special-type miracles that God performed at the beginning of the disp. of grace were in full accordance with what God is having Paul teach us in our passage of Romans 15:18-19a—*For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God;*

- Now— in connection with these 2 times when God performed these **special-type** miracles, we find in the book of Acts two times where God actually emphasizes, or draws our attention to it these highly notable; undeniably impressive; 'sit-up-and-take-notice' miracles **that signify that the message that was being heard was from HIM**. (interestingly, they both deal with a lame or crippled man)

- And one of the ways God did this was by recording the details of 2 such **special-type** miracles:

1. One which was performed by God through Peter at the outset of the time when He was giving "*repentance to Israel*". (set forth in **Acts 3:1-16 [read]**)

2. The other was performed by God through Paul in the opening portion of this disp. of grace when Israel was "*diminishing*". (set forth in **Acts 14:8-10** [the passage we just looked at])

- God performed this miracle through Paul at the beginning of the time in which He was '*opening the door of faith*' unto the Gentiles, after He had suspended His program with Israel and ushered in this present dispensation—(as recorded later on in Acts 14). [**see Acts 14:27**]

- In these 2 special-type miracles, there are **3 major details of note**:

1) God performs 2 'healing' miracles that are in accordance with His general program-based reason for performing a miracle during that time—but both of these miracles are of a very **special nature!**

- The ‘special nature’ of them both is in that they are being performed on men who were *‘lame or crippled from their mother’s womb’* ...

... and in view of this, these miracles are described as secondly, being ...

2) Miracles that are specially **‘notable’** and **extremely impressive to others**—and making a great **impact** upon them.

3) And the 3rd notable detail about these 2 special-type miracles is that they are both miracles that are also performed upon men who were **believing the MESSAGE** that God was having preached to them at the time!

- Now, once again—all 3 of these ‘notable’ details surrounding these 2 special-type miracles in Acts, (including the issue of both men being described as ones *‘having faith to be healed’*), are specifically in accordance with the program-based reasons that God had for performing these special kinds of miracles during these 2 particular times. (i.e., God didn’t do these miracles just for the fun of it; or randomly; or on a ‘whim;’ or simply because the person asked for it or prayed for it; or merited it; or whatever).

- And with respect to the specific issue of both men having *‘faith to be healed,’* - the program-based reason that God had for performing the special miracle upon them as such—had to do with making it **clearly manifest to others** at the time that the message they were hearing from both Peter and Paul **was definitely FROM GOD HIMSELF**, and that **faith/belief** in what HE was saying to them was what He was looking for out of them!

- And God clearly **did** make this manifest by honoring the men’s faith with the impressive miracle He performed on them.

- Therefore—in both cases God had His respective apostles (Peter and Paul), clearly testify to the people that the reason God performed the impressive miracles was to make an issue out of the faith (or belief) that each man had in the MESSAGE he just heard; — and that in view of this they, too, needed to believe the message ... NOT to simply get healed, but to receive the salvation that God speaks about in the **message!!!**

- Which is why Peter says what he says in **Acts 3:12-26**, in light of the special miracles that God had just performed ... and why Paul says what he says in **Acts 14:11-18**, in light of the special miracle that God had just performed!

- And just to underscore what I've said before—unfortunately most Christians don't understand much of anything about God's **program-based** reasons for either performing 'signs, wonders, and miracles' (or NOT performing them).

- And therefore, they are easily victimized by erroneous ideas, thinking, teachings, and the like—as the Satanic Policy of Evil preys upon their ignorance and exploits it.

- And as grievous as that is—the most grievous thing of all is that they are ignorant of God's glorious program-based reasons for NOT performing any 'signs, wonders, or miracles' in this present time of the dispensation of grace.

- And, indeed, God's program-based reasons for NOT now performing any 'signs, wonders, or miracles' with us are both **glorious and grand**—and they are far and away **more excellent** than any reason we could ever come up with for ever wanting God to give us a miracle!

- My purpose here is not to do an exhaustive categorical study on the excellency of God's power today being performed in and upon our 'inner-man' by the effectual working of His word within us—rather than by any kind of 'sign, wonder, or miracle' ... in fact, we have covered and taught a great deal about this back in Romans 8 in connection with our sonship status and our sonship edification.

- But in order to be fully settled and fully persuaded in your own mind that God is **not** performing miracles today—but is, instead, manifesting **far greater power** than any miracle He could perform for our physical, temporal or material circumstances in life (such as physical healings, financial prosperity, alleviating pain & suffering, or anything else in our physical, material, and temporal lives): at the very least, you need to have a basic and firm grasp upon the 'excellency' of God's power being **vested today in the effectual working of God's word** in your 'inner man' ... which is, (in God's sight), a far greater power; and a far more powerful and mighty power than any 'sign, wonder, or miracle' that God ever **did** perform, or ever **could** perform, or ever **will** perform.

- And the reason I want to address this issue is because when we recognize and acknowledge the truth and the reality that God is NOT performing any 'signs, wonders, and miracles' today—the tendency is to think (**or for other that we witness to, to think**) that the power of God is **lacking** in this disp. of grace ...

... and that those who hold to; and believe; and teach God's word "rightly divided" with Paul in Acts 9 (or 'those misguided dispensationalists' ["dispensation" being a dirty word]) teach that Gods' power is **lacking** today—or that we make the outright assertion that the power of God is **non-existent** today—and that it only existed in God's program with Israel ... which is a complete **LIE**—that is **NOT true** at all!

- God is actually expending and manifesting far greater power right now, today, in this present disp. of grace than He ever did at any other time in history—or will at any time in the future, when He resumes & fulfills His prog. w/ Israel ... even greater power than He will expend and exhibit during the "great tribulation"!

- We are taught by our apostle Paul, in numerous passages in his epistles, that this is, indeed, the case!

- And the evidence of this is easily seen in God's program with Israel when He performed a whole bunch of 'signs, wonders, and miracles' that did little to nothing to actually **change** the human heart, soul, and spirit of those who were the recipients of them!

- Parting the Red Sea didn't even change the hearts of the Israelites who were alive at the time and **witnessed** that miracle of God ... because almost immediately after that miracle occurred, they turned from God to worship the gods of Babylon, instead! They turned from the *true and living God* to worship Baal! [hello "*molten calf*" in Exo. 32!] (study it out)

- We need to have a great appreciation for how God Himself views such things—and how God views the power to change the "heart" (the inner-man) as the greatest power He has!

- And the power of God that produces the change of our "heart" or our 'inner-man' — the power that can take your **ungodly** "heart" and make it "**godly**" is the '**excellency** of the power of God' operating **within** the believer through "***the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe***" (1 Thes. 2:13).

- (read 1 Thes. 2:13)

- “*Effectual*” or “*effectually*” is a term that describes God’s **power** ... in fact, as a species of the term “power,” it’s a more specific and intense term than “power.”

- (see “*effectual*” charts)

- And today, in this disp. of grace, the “*excellency of the power of God*” operates **WITHIN** the believer and NOT upon the ‘outer-man!’

- And the effectual power of God’s word, indeed, has the power to produce such an effect, and bring about such a change in and to our heart that results in our heart changing from its **ungodly** condition to a **godly** condition—in fact, being able to have our Heavenly Father’s “heart” installed in our own heart! (**that’s divine, supernatural POWER!**)

- (see Heb. 4:12)

- In this present disp. of grace God is treating us NOT as ‘children’, but as adopted, **adult “sons”** - therefore God’s dominate sphere of operation and expenditure of His power with us today is NOT outwardly and in our circumstances—but rather it’s in our inner man.

- And by providing **inner fortification** for us which enables us to **endure** what ever comes out way—the excellency of the power of God’s word to **stabilize** our **inner man** in “this present evil world” is not only manifested and made clear to us—but it is also put on display to some others upon whom God desires to make an impact: Satan and his angels!

- Let’s run some verses and note some examples of God having Paul repeatedly refer to this effectual and most excellent working of Gods’ power within us—and that power being the power of His WORD! ...

- 2 Cor. 1:6

- 2 Cor. 4:5-16

- 2 Cor. 12:7-9

- Eph. 3:13-21—(notice the inner-man issue is that you “*faint not*”)

- Phil. 2:13

- Col. 1:11

- 2 Tim. 1:8

- The excellency of the power of God's word effectually working within us to stabilize us; to enable us to "*faint not*"; and to give us the capacity to endure our sufferings and circumstances is just that: — it IS most **excellent!**

- Deliverance from adversity, sufferings, & problems by the miracle-working power of God is NOT what God's program with us calls for..

... rather, the capacity to **endure** whatever befalls us through the excellency of the power of God's word working within us is what God's program with us calls for!

- And in this present disp. of grace, the effectual working power of God's word in his "son's" inner man **is what God VALUES !!!** ... and NOT being delivered from our physical, temporal circumstances!

- God views it as far better for us—and the very thing which glorifies Him the most today!

- And THAT'S the major problem with Christians today: the major problem is that most Christians never come to an understanding of, nor ever come to properly appreciate what God Himself says about His word; and God's own viewpoint of the power He has vested in His word!

- Sadly, most Christians today cannot even conceive that anything could be better than having God perform some sign, wonder, or miracle for them—or for God to supernaturally intervene in the circumstances of their lives!

- But this is simply because they fail to look at things as God Himself looks at them — and that leads to the biggest and worse problem of all: **they fail and/or refuse to believe what God Himself says about His word! ... and the operation of it in the lives of His people in this disp. of grace!**

- They would **prefer** to have God deal with them as **they see fit** ... rather than as God sees fit ... and they would **prefer** to have themselves be benefited in the physical & temporal circumstances of their lives, rather than have God **eternally glorified** by the very means HE has chosen to be so glorified in this dispensation of His grace!

- Now before we move on in our passage of Rom. 15:19—I just want to address a couple of ‘**sign**’-type issues that are commonly thought of by the vast majority of Christians today as being still in effect (though they’re not still in effect) - that is, that God is still performing certain ‘**signs**’ today that are said by most Christians to either indicate you are either IN or NOT IN **God’s WILL**.

1. The issue of an ‘**open door**’ - that is, that God gives you a ‘sign’ that tells you what His will is for you in a certain circumstance by ‘closing a door’ and by ‘opening a door’ ... which, most commonly, goes something like this ...

... (for example) - The business where my current job is, is going to close down—or I’m moving from where my present job is to another state (or location)—so I’m going to lose my job—which means that God is ‘closing a door’ —so I began to ‘pray about it’ (whatever that means) - and suddenly (out of the blue), I heard about a job opening up—and I went and applied for the job—and lo, and behold, I got the job! ... (which means that God ‘opened a door’) ... and that’s the ‘sign’ from God that His will for me is to take that job!

- And there are many variations of this example—from jobs, to who you should date or get married to; or what doctors to see; or what house to buy; or which school or college to attend; or which car to buy ... and on it goes ...

... and they run from the biggest decisions in life, to the very smallest decisions in life ... but the “closed door / open door” sign from God is often the most common way most Christians think that God is indicating to them what His will is in any given matter.

- BUT THIS IS **NOT** THE CASE right now; today; in this present dispensation of grace.

- And the biggest reason for why this is NOT the case, you very well know ... which is that it is NOT in any way compatible with **sonship**; (it’s **not** compatible with God dealing with you as an **adult, adopted “son”** - it’s **not** compatible with **godly sonship decision-making!**)

- But! ... many Christians will then point out: “Well, you say that Paul is your apostle—and you follow Paul—but Paul himself had God ‘open a door’ for him on several occasions! ... so what do you say about that?!? Hummm? **So, shouldn’t we pray for an ‘open door,’ too, just like Paul did????**”

- And they will take you to such places in God's word such as:

- 1 Cor. 16:5-9 (:9)

- 2 Cor. 2:12-13 (:12)

- Col 4:2-4 (:3)

- So—how would you answer that?

- (taken from Keith's email correspondence—20080630 C93 DG open doors)

- And, again, should we pray for an 'open door' like Paul did? ... **NO**. God is not operating that way at the present time ... and here's why ...

- When Paul speaks about a "door" in these verses and the 'opening' of it—it's my understanding that he is talking about a **special operation and activity of God in connection with his apostleship, and NOT something that pertains to God's normal way of dealing with us in the details of our lives.**

- These instances that Paul is talking about is the specialized way that God worked **directly in conjunction with his apostleship** for the express purpose of accomplishing the means by which the **testimony of His word** would be progressively spread throughout the world.

- Providing for the effectual spreading of God's word throughout the world was a specialized part of Paul's apostleship **at the beginning** of this present dispensation of grace, and this was something that God was directly and manifestly involved in carrying out.

- God intelligently directed the apostle Paul's ministry with respect to **where** he went and **when** he went there—and He did this in accordance with the plan that He had for the specific way that the word of His grace would effectually spread throughout the world.

- So then—as God actively directed Paul's ministry, Paul himself (and rightly so) perceived the issue of 'doors' being 'opened' unto him **in certain geographical areas.**

- Likewise Paul also perceived that there were certain areas to which God did **NOT** want him to go—or there were certain areas that God did **not** want him to go until later on.

- So in these verses where Paul speaks about God ‘opening doors’ - or where Paul makes request (by prayer) for a ‘door’ to be ‘opened’ - it’s my understanding that he is speaking about this **special operation** which involved God’s **direct ‘hands-on activity’** (so to speak), in the affairs of Paul’s apostleship.

- Now regarding this special operation—God gives us quite a bit of information about it—and there’s a lot that can be said about it—but for now, we can make a very simple survey or overview of it that should suffice to settle our minds about it.

- (this should be enough to give us a basic understanding of God’s ‘door-opening’ activities as he carried out this particular operation during the **opening portion** of this disp. of grace).

- Very simply & briefly put—what we need to understand is this:

- After God suspended His program with Israel and had brought in this present dispensation of His grace to the world—and also after He had set up the **primary base for His operations** in this new dispensation in **Antioch** (of Syria) as described in Acts 11—and had established Paul in it ...

... God then enacted his operation for producing the progressive and developmental spreading of the testimony of His word throughout the world.

- As the opening of Acts 13 relates—God enacted the progressive & developmental spreading of the testimony of His word by the Holy Ghost sending Paul & Barnabas out from Antioch (Syria) into Asia—and then directing their ministry therein as is described in Acts 13 & 14.

- Then, as the closing portion of Acts 14 relates—when Paul and Barnabas had ministered unto the particular cities to which they had been sent—they returned to Antioch (Syria) *“from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled”* (Acts 14:26).

- **(read Acts 14:19-28) — notice (:27)** - when they returned to Antioch and had gathered the church together, *“they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.”*

- With this, therefore, God began His operation of providing for the **effectual spreading the word of His grace to the Gentiles in the world** by fulfilling the first aspect of that provision by what He established in the Galatia area of Asia.

- And in connection with doing this, Paul explained to the saints in Antioch how that God had *“opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.”*

- Now in accordance with this being the beginning or the first aspect of this operation—it’s my understanding that Paul knew that God would continue to ‘open’ similar ‘doors’ as God continued to direct (by His ‘hands-on’ activity) Paul’s apostleship and ministry for the fulfillment of this specialized operation.

... and this is exactly what we find Paul saying that God did! (for instance, in 2 Tim. 4)

- So then—when Paul speaks in his epistles about a *“door”* being *“opened”* unto him—or when he specifically speaks about fulfilling his ministry in certain geographic locales and the like, that:

1) Paul is describing this very issue of God actively directing his apostleship; and actively working in certain prescribed geographic areas in connection with this particular operation of spreading His word throughout the world as to the great dispensational change He has made (*the revelation of the mystery*);

2) Paul is also describing and reporting on the progressive and developmental fulfilling of that operation as God moved closer and closer to the point when He would have it so that ALL the ‘doors’ were ‘open’ (so to speak) - and thereby making it so that *“all the Gentiles might hear”*

- (see 2 Tim. 4:16-17 [:17])

- And so—as Paul states in 1 Cor. 16:9, and also in 2 Cor. 2:12, another one of the major areas where God had Paul go, (where He likewise ‘opened a door’ for the area to function like a **‘staging area’** for the effectual progressive spreading of His word throughout the world) was Ephesus and its locales.

- And then as per what Paul says in his epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians—it's evident that he also knew that Rome was such a place, too.

- So the 'upshot' of all this is—in 1 Cor. 16, and in 2 Cor. 2, and in Col. 4 - where it talks about God 'opening' unto Paul a 'door' - Paul is speaking about God's direct involvement in God's specialized Operation to get His word about His newly-begun dispensation of Gentile grace communicated to the world.

- And since this was a special operation and activity of God that naturally necessitated Him working in a manifest and direct manner in conjunction with Paul's apostleship—it does **not** run contrary to the normal issue of us living our sonship lives and making sonship decisions exclusively on the basis of the effectual working of God's word within us—and **without** having God 'opening doors' for us, or praying that God 'opens a door' for us!

2. The other '**sign**-type' issue that is commonly thought of by most Christians as being still in effect today is, of course, the issue of water baptism—which, as we have learned, is NOT something that is to be done today ... in fact, water baptism is a part of God's program with Israel, and is **not** something God would have us doing as members of the church, the body of Christ today.

- The ONLY baptism that has any relevance for the body of Christ today—and the only baptism that is necessary for us today is the baptism you received at the exact same moment when you believed in Christ as your only and all-sufficient Savior ... which is explained in Romans 6:1ff ... which is when God the Holy Spirit baptized you "*into Jesus Christ*" — a baptism that had NO WATER to it at all!

- Now, we're not going to re-teach everything about baptism—(i.e., what a "baptism" is; and what being baptized "*into Jesus Christ*" is all about, etc.) — if you need to get that information, you can go back and get it in our teaching on Romans 6.

- Nor are we going to do a detailed analysis (or a categorical study) about the doctrine of baptism in the Bible (and there are a bunch of them).

- And, while the issue of water baptism is a controversial and "hot-button" issue with most Christians—any honest handling of God's word, along with "rightly dividing" it, makes it clear that water baptism is NOT to be done in this dispensation of Gentile grace.

- All I will say on the subject of whether God would have us be water baptized or **not** water baptized is this ...

... God's word does make it clear that we, the members of the new creature of the church the body of Christ are, indeed, baptized ... not with water ... but by the Holy Spirit baptizing us "*into Jesus Christ*" just as Rom. 6:3 says ...

... and **any honest handling** of that passage tells you that the baptism being spoken about there has **NO WATER** connected to it in any way, shape, or form! ...

... even most Christians in general will have to admit that! [**if they're honest**] - (but then they will say, that we should be water baptized to go along with that baptism!)

- So—ask yourself: How many baptisms are accounted for in Romans 6:3? ... How many? ... **ONE!** (good!)

- That's 1 baptism we know of **for sure!**

- Now—if you **add** another baptism (like water baptism) ... How many baptisms do you have, at the very least? ... **TWO!** (or more than ONE!) ...

... but God has Paul tell us *exactly* **how many** baptisms there are that He (God Himself) recognizes as being legitimate and "biblical" and in effect for us today in this disp. of grace as members of the body of Christ ...

... (see Eph. 4:4-6 [:5]!) **ONE!** (not TWO!)

- Also—God has Paul tell us that the ONE baptism we do have, was **NOT** performed by **men** (or by the **operation** of the 'hands' of a man [such as a Pastor]) ... but our ONE baptism was performed by the "**operation**" of God Himself (without **any** participation of a 'man' [Pastor] and without **any** water) ...

... (see Col. 2:10-12 [:12]!) - that accounts for our ONE baptism ... **and there are NO more** for us today in the disp. of grace in which we live!

- By the way—this also means that the idea that we are to be baptized with the Holy Ghost at some time *after* we get saved or justified unto eternal life (as per Acts 2) is also completely Un-Biblical; and is a totally corrupt doctrine!

- In Acts 2, the members of the remnant of Israel were baptized **by** the 2nd Member of the Godhead (the Lord Jesus Christ) **with** the 3rd Member of the Godhead (God the Holy Ghost) ...

... we are baptized **by** the 3rd Member of the Godhead (the Holy Ghost) **into** the 2nd Member of the Godhead (the Lord Jesus Christ)!

- And water baptism **does** fall into the category of a ‘**sign**’ (not for us, but for most of Christianity today, that’s how they view it) ...

... however, some church denominations, such as “The Church of Christ” believe that water baptism is **required** for salvation or justification) ... but most of Christianity today (such as the Baptist denomination) do not believe water baptism is a requirement for salvation—but they do **insist** that water baptism is a ‘**sign**’ - an outward ‘sign’ for what has happened to you, spiritually ... (the old ‘wedding ring’ analogy), and that every Christian should be water baptized ... and if not, then you are living in outward disobedience to God.

- But, again—we know that is **not true** according to God’s word.

- BUT! ... most Christians will then point out: “Well, you say that Paul is your apostle—and you follow Paul—but Paul was water baptized in Acts 9:18, and Paul himself water baptized—in fact, Paul water baptized on several occasions! ... So, what do you say about that??? **So shouldn’t we be water baptized, too????**”

- And they will take you to such passages in God’s word such as:

- Acts 16:14-15 (Lydia and her household)
- Acts 16:27-33 (the Philippian jailor)
- Acts 18:7-8 (Crispus and many of the Corinthians)
- Acts 19:1-5 (certain disciples at Corinth)

- So—how would you answer that?

- Before I answer that I want to remind you of one **major issue** concerning baptism as it occurred in God's program with Israel—and especially during the Climactic Stage in Israel's program when the gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John get underway.

- Setting aside the many other baptisms found in the OT scriptures—Israel was taught that when they went under the 5th Course of Punishment, God would 'cleans' the nation of all their iniquities by 3 specific 'baptisms' ... which means that God would perform a 3-fold **prescription for cleansing** the nation Israel.

- Israel's 3-fold **prescription for cleansing** is performed by 3 major baptisms ...

- (see Mat. 3:7-12) - **Note: Jesus Christ Himself (the 2nd Member of the Godhead) would perform the last 2 baptisms!**

- Israel's Prescription for Cleansing entails:

1) Water baptism (along with confessing their sins and the sins of their fathers as per Lev. 26 [study it out])

2) The baptism with the Holy Ghost (which occurred in Acts 2—and tells you that what happened there was the 2nd part of Israel's prescription for cleansing ... and **NOT** for us, as the Pentecostals & Charismatics [et al] say it is!)

3) The baptism with fire (which will occur out in the Lord's Day of Wrath as recorded in the book of the Revelation during the Great Tribulation.)

- So—contrary to most Christian teaching today—water baptism is one part of Israel's prescription for cleansing—water baptism is a part of God's program with Israel ... it's **NOT** a part of God's dispensation of Gentile grace for us, the members of the body of Christ!

- And this is a fundamental issue we **have** to keep in mind as we talk about why God had the apostle Paul water baptize on a very few and particular occasions at the **beginning** of this dispensation of grace—[**the opening portion of it**].

- So, in order to answer the question of ‘Why did Paul water baptize?’ - you need to have in mind that water baptism is one of Israel’s “things” - it’s **one part** of Israel’s prescription for cleansing (and it’s the **only** part of Israel’s prescription for cleansing **performed by a man** other than the Lord Himself)—secondly, you need to have in mind that Paul only water baptized during the time of Israel’s “*diminishing*” and only during the **opening portion or beginning** of this disp. of grace! [just as the book of Acts records]

- Now let’s get a very simple, brief, and basic understanding for why Paul water baptized during the time of Israel’s *diminishing*. (not very detailed, but enough information so that you can have some godly satisfaction & contentment about the issue—and so that you can have sufficient information to answer such a question, if it ever comes up).

- First of all—we need to appreciate the ‘**big deal**’ it is for Paul to make what seems to be (for those who insist upon water baptism being done today) an outlandish statement—a shocking, almost blasphemous, heretical statement:

- [this is also a passage that some who believe that we should be water baptized today will take you to] (**see 1 Cor. 1:12-17 [17]**)

- 17 For Christ sent me *NOT* to baptize—don’t let the **enormity** of that statement get by you ... that’s a **BIG DEAL!** (How could anyone say that? least of which is an **apostle**? ... let alone a Pastor or Minister!)

- That statement alone should be sufficient to settle the matter!

- But more than that—notice something that is commonly missed by most folks about what Paul says here—Paul says, “*Christ sent me not to baptize*” — that means that Paul NEVER water baptized anyone because Christ told him to do so! In fact, Christ NEVER told Paul to baptize anyone!

- That means that the few Paul did water baptize at the beginning of this disp. of grace was something Paul did on his own and for his own reasons! and **not** because the Lord told him to do it!

- So what’s going on with Paul water baptizing the few that he did?

- Paul water baptized the ones that he did, (and on the occasions that he did), as a purposeful part of the testimony that God was giving to the people of Israel **that were outside the land during the time that Israel was “*diminishing*,”** as Paul speaks about in Romans 11.

- In other words—Paul made use of Israel’s water baptism in a very specific way during the time of Israel’s “*diminishing*” - and in doing so he water baptized some **as a matter of what might be called ‘sympathetic expediency’ in view of what water baptism meant to an Israelite—and as such, it worked together with the testimony that God was giving to those of His nation during that time.**

- Water baptism served for more than one purpose in God’s program with Israel—and as such it was capable of meaning more than one thing to the people of Israel.

- Indeed, it was recognized as the first ‘baptism’ of the 3 ‘baptisms’ that made up God’s prophesied prescription for cleansing and sanctifying His nation ... and that’s important, because that makes water baptism one of **Israel’s ‘things’** (and not one of the Gentile’s ‘things’).

- But also—when the Climactic Stage in God’s prog. w/ Isr. arrived, and John the Baptist was used by God to announce its arrival to the people—John’s water baptism not only functioned as the first ‘baptism’ in the administration of God’s prophesied prescription for the cleansing & sanctifying of His nation—**but it also functioned as one of the designed means by which Christ was made manifest to Israel—(just as John the Baptist stated in John 1:31).**

*31 And I knew him not: **but that he should be made manifest to Israel**, therefore am I come baptizing with water.*

- As a means of **manifesting Christ to Israel**—water baptism did this both in a **general** and in a **specific** manner.

- It did it **specifically** when Christ Himself was baptized by John, and God at that time testified to who Jesus of Nazareth was.

- But it also manifested Christ to Israel in a much more **general** way every time an Israelite believed “the gospel of the kingdom” and in being baptized, was baptized **in the name** of the One who was coming after John: i.e., Christ.

- So, in these two respects, water baptism served as a **“sign”** to the people of Israel regarding the reality of Christ’s coming—and in accordance with the way that a **“sign”** was designed to operate - upon receiving this **“sign”** the people of Israel were expected to respond to it as such.

- Which meant that they were expected to honestly respond to it by specifically making investigation into it to see what it ‘signified’ was really so—and then to **learn from what it meant!**

- So when the apostle Paul water baptized those that are mentioned in the Book of Acts and in 1 Corinthians—he **made use of this “sign” function belonging to the issue of water baptism in Christ’s name**.

- Hence, Paul water baptized those that he did for the express purpose of having their water baptism serve as a **‘provoking sign’** to the people of Israel that were in the area (**outside the land**) - and in doing so, it was designed to ‘provoke’ those among them who possessed any honesty of heart to honestly investigate what was being preached regarding the Christ having come—and that Jesus of Nazareth was Him!

- This is in full accordance with 1 Cor. 1:22 — *“For the Jews require a SIGN”*

- Simply put—Paul utilized Israel’s water baptism as part of that ‘one big package of significant things’ being done at the time of Israel’s *“diminishing”* (along with all the other *“mighty signs and wonders”* performed by Paul) in order to make those Jews **outside** the land of Israel **aware that the Christ had come** and give them an opportunity to respond positively to the gospel message Paul was preaching.

- There were a number of “things” in that big ‘package of significant things’ - and water baptism was one of them.

- Paul declares in 1 Cor. 1, while dealing with the misunderstanding surrounding why he baptized the few that he did—that *“the Jews require a sign”* - and Paul water baptized the ones that he did in connection with that ...

... it served as a **“sign”** to the Jews (outside their land) concerning the reality that the Christ had come—which was the force of Paul’s message to them (for example, in Acts 18:5) - because no one should have been baptizing in ‘the name of Christ’ if Christ had not come! (Even the Pharisees knew this as per **John 1:19-28!**)

- Therefore it would be just rank ‘hardness of heart’ and unbelief among the Jew of Corinth and elsewhere that would reject this **“sign”** of Christ’s arrival.

- And for this reason—Paul used it.

- The Jews required a **“sign,”** and Paul gave it ... it forced their hand as to showing what was in their hearts!

- During Paul’s early ministry (when Israel was **“diminishing”**), he saw and made us of the **“sign”** that water baptism was to the Jews, and Paul saw the advantage that it was for the Jews concerning his role of impacting Israel outside the land.

- And that impact had for its foundation, the reality of the fact that Christ had come into the world—so Paul saw that he could first and foremost advantageously use water baptism as a **verifying “sign”** of that fact!

- And that’s why Paul water baptized!

- BACK FROM WINTER BREAK—REVIEW:

- In Rom. 15:17-21—We have the final matter of the Fatherly godly Thinking for a “son” who has completed his sonship education and edification from Rom. 1:1 through Rom. 15:7.

- (see **Outline—pg. 1**)

- In (:17-21) we have 5 verses composed of 3 sentences.

- In (:17) [the 1st sentence] - God intentionally has the apostle Paul **“glory” through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.**”

- **“glory”** is not only the issue of exalting, or praising, or claiming honor for oneself (which is, indeed, true in Paul’s case) - but that’s not the only issue here—in fact, that’s not the major issue here.

- The major issue in God having Paul *glory* in the *things which pertain* to what God is now doing in this present dispensation of Gentile grace that is now in effect (in general), and in the doctrine contained in Rom. 1:1-15:7 (specifically) ... the major issue in God having Paul **“glory”**

in **those things** is the issue of making manifest; making **clear**; and making it **openly known** to ALL that God has made a great dispensational change—and that there is a new administrator of this new dispensation of the grace of God: the apostle Paul!

- And this is a matter of something **God Himself** has done—and something that **God Himself** has validated, sanctioned, (or to put it more powerfully, and put it as God Himself puts it) - it is something that God Himself has **sanctified!** (:16 - *sanctified by the Holy Ghost*).

- And with that—our Heavenly Father begins setting forth a series of 8 Sanctifying Works of the Holy Ghost that validates the truth and the reality of the great dispensational change He has made—and that the apostle Paul is the **one and only** administrator of it!

- Paul is NOT to be included with the 12 apostles to Israel (Peter, James, John, and the rest).

- Paul is a new and different and distinct apostle for us Gentiles in this disp. of grace in which we live ... and we are to 'magnify' Paul's 'office'; and we are to 'follow' him as he follows Christ!

- **AND** ... this is NOT some concocted doctrine of a man; it's NOT some 'late-coming' doctrine that was 'dreamed up' in recent times ... rather, it's GOD'S doing; it's GOD'S plan, purpose, and design; it's GOD'S doctrine ... and it's ***sanctified*** by GOD HIMSELF (God the Holy Ghost)!

- (:18-19a) gives us the 2nd Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost in connection with all this—which is the issue of the Holy Ghost performing specialized "*mighty signs and wonders*" in order to convince the Gentiles that God is now dealing with them (and NOT dealing with Israel, at the present time).

- The Holy Ghost *wrought* some things by and through the apostle Paul that were of very **special significance**—and that **special significance** had to do with God suspending His prog. w/ Isr. and bringing in this new & distinct disp. of grace to the Gentiles (with Paul as it's new administrator)!

- And for the last several Lessons—we have been dealing with the “*mighty signs and wonders*” that God performed by and through the apostle Paul in the opening portion of this dispensation of grace ... (during the time of Israel’s “*diminishing*”).

- And the critically important thing to understand and appreciate at this point is that **all** of the “*mighty signs and wonders*” (and miracles) God performed by/through Paul **were only temporary! and that NONE of those things are still going on today!**

- All of those things ceased to exist (and they ceased to exist because they were no longer needed) when “*a more excellent way*” (1 Cor. 12:31) came into effect ... **which was when the written word of God was completed!**

- So we briefly looked at the “*mighty signs and wonders*” performed by Paul during the time of Israel’s *diminishing* and **why** they took place.

- And in our more recent Lessons—we have looked at a couple of the ‘*sign*’-type issues that are commonly thought of by most Christians today as still being in effect (though they’re NOT) - which was the issue of 1. The ‘**open door**’ sign that is thought to indicate God’s Will in a certain circumstance; 2. The issue of Paul water baptizing the few that he did.

- And in connection with the **temporary nature** of these “*mighty signs and wonders*” - I just want to put a final ‘period’ to it (or an ‘amen’ to it) by pointing you to one final passage ... a passage that occurs at the very end of Paul’s life (and what may be the final epistle Paul wrote) ...

- (2 Tim. 4:6-8, **:20**)

- Any Questions? Comments? on this matter?

- (See Keith’s email—20010724 F22 W a 1Cor—pgs. 7-10)

- If God is *not* performing signs, wonders, and miracles today, is Satan doing so? is Satan performing them?

- This is Keith’s answer—but I concur with him.

- Now back to Rom. 15:19—(the 2nd sentence runs from :18 through :19— however, it's divided into 2 Parts [or major clauses] by the semicolon in :19) - the 1st Part (:18-19a) is the 2nd Sanctifying Work of the HG; and the 2nd Part (:19b) is the 3rd Sanctifying Work of the HG.

*18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which
Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient,
by word and deed,
19 Through mighty signs and wonders ...*

- And we have one final phrase to the 1st Part of the sentence—(or one final phrase to :18-19a) ...

... by the power of the Spirit of God;

- This is another one of those places in God's word where it would seem to be a fully finished statement or thought by the time you get to the word "*wonders*" - (and you could put the semicolon right after the word "*wonders*") ... but God doesn't do that ...

... God has Paul add this additional phrase, "*by the power of the Spirit of God;*" ...

- And this is added for a very important reason—(a reason that goes to God verifying, sanctioning, and *sanctifying* the credentials of the apostle Paul as the new administrator of this great dispensational change He has made)!

- For one thing—by putting this phrase into the sentence/thought, the obvious thing is that the production of the *mighty signs and wonders* that were intended to convince the Gentiles that God had suspended His prog. w/ Isr., and was now dealing with them (just as :18 says, "*to make the Gentiles obedient*") — the obvious thing is that those *mighty signs and wonders* were produced by God Himself—that is, by the very "**power**" [the supernatural power] **of the Spirit of God.**

- that is, by the 3rd Member of the Godhead, God the Holy Spirit.

- And we have a 'switch' in the terminology: from *Ghost* to "**Spirit**" - which tells you that the context isn't wanting you to see something about the **Person** of the 3rd Member of the Godhead, but rather the context is emphasizing something about the **MINISTRY** of the 3rd Member of the Godhead.

- (By now you should be able to understand and appreciate why the KJ translators would sometimes use the word *Ghost* and sometimes use the word *Spirit*.)

- And it's this use of the word "*Spirit*" [and actually the entire phrase, "*the Spirit of God*"] that tells us that something more is going on here than merely stating that the "*power*" that produced the *mighty signs and wonders* was 'Supernatural Power'. [true as that is]

- but if that's all that God is after here, He could have just as easily said, '... by the power of God' [and left it at that] ... but that's NOT what He says—He says, "*by the power of the Spirit of God*" ...

- This is a statement about the Holy Spirit **ministry** of the Holy Ghost's *mighty signs and wonders* performed by and through the *minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*—the apostle Paul.

- And the significance of these *mighty signs and wonders* all had to do with the Holy Ghost *sanctifying Paul's apostleship* (that is, validating Paul's credentials) as the new administrator of the great dispensational change that God has made.

- (and validating Paul's credentials as the one [and only one] through which God would give the **new curriculum** for the godly **edification** of the members of the 'new man', the new creature of the church the body of Christ!)

- So—far more than merely stating the obvious—(that the *mighty signs and wonders* were produced by supernatural power) — the reason for saying it like God says it, is to ward off any attacks that would try to deny Paul's apostleship [and the great disp. change] ... and to close any 'loophole' (so to speak) where someone could come along and try to ascribe what Paul was doing (with these *mighty signs and wonders*) to a 'power' OTHER than God Himself!

- Either by Paul's own trickery and deception ... or ...
... by attributing what Paul did to the working of Satan!
(as 'lying wonders' produced by an antichrist through the power of Satan!)

- This very thing happened to the Lord in His earthly ministry: Mat. 12:24; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15

- For Paul, see: **Acts 14:1-18** (the Gentiles at Lystra ascribed Paul's 'power' to Mercurius [Mercury] - a Greek deity [Mercury = herald of the gods])

Acts 19:8-20 (the sons of Sceva tried to imitate & counterfeit God's power given to Paul)

Acts 28:6 (the viper bite)

- (see also Paul's warning: **Acts 20:17-32 [:28-29]**)

- Summing up—Romans 15:18-19a is an extremely powerful proof of Paul's credentials as an apostle and *minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*—and that God performed many *mighty signs and wonders* through Paul at the time of Israel's *diminishing* in order to make the Gentiles recognize that God is no longer dealing with Israel, but in this dispensation of grace, God has now turned to the Gentiles and is now dealing with them.

- And this is the 2nd Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost that validates the great dispensational change that God has made, and the new administration of it by means of the apostle Paul.

- Now we're ready to finish out (:19) with **(:19b)** which is the 2nd Clause of the entire sentence of (:18 & :19) - and which sets forth the **3rd Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost** that validates the great dispensational change God has made and the new administration of it by means of the apostle Paul.

18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,

19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

- This final clause of the whole sentence is pretty straight forward and simply stated—and it really doesn't need any special focus upon any 'word studies' within it—the words are simple, easily understood, and stated in such a way so as to set forth the next major Work that the Holy Ghost *sanctified* in order to give full proof that God is no longer operating in accordance to His prog. w/ Isr., but is instead operating according to a new & distinct dispensation of His grace with Paul as the apostle and minister to the Gentiles.

- One thing to clear up: “*from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum*” ...

- The two places mentioned: (one, a city) *Jerusalem*, and the other one (*Illyricum*) was a province northwest of Macedonia.

- Notice that Paul does not say that he had actually gone **into** Illyricum—rather, he had gone “*round about unto Illyricum*”.

- Therefore, at the time of the writing of the book of Romans, Paul’s ‘journeys’ had taken him from Jerusalem (on the one extreme) to the **boarder** of Illyricum (on the other extreme).

- So what you get in this phrase is a sweeping statement as to the **scope** (which is what “*round about*” means) of the territory that Paul had journeyed to so far in his ministry work.

- It’s not that Jerusalem was Paul’s ‘base of operations’ (which were in Antioch Syria) - but again, this gives the **scope** of the territory Paul had covered so far.

- And as you know—the territory Paul would end up covering would extend all the way to Rome itself.

- And both the **scope** and the **particular direction** of this territory is of HUGE SIGNIFICANCE! ... and it’s of huge significance because the direction Paul went, and the people Paul went to, and the territory Paul covered was NOT in keeping at all with the way in which the “gospel” that was committed to Peter and the other 11 apostles of Israel was supposed to take place! (as directed by the very dictates of God Himself [i.e., by the direction of the Lord Jesus Christ!])

- The direction Paul went, and the people to whom Paul went, and the territory Paul covered was **NOT** according to the “great commission” given to the remnant of Israel as per Matthew 28:19-20 or Mark 16:15 or Acts 1:8!

- Paul’s journeys did **NOT** follow the pattern prescribed by the Lord: *Jerusalem* first, then *Judaea*, then *Samaria*, and finally *unto the uttermost part of the earth!* [**that’s Israel’s program!**]

... we'll come back to this issue later on ...

- But for now—we need to recognize that the 3rd Sanctifying Work of the HG is stated as: *so that from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.*

- This final clause of (:19) - and especially the first 2 phrases of the clause (*so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum*) focuses our attention upon **Paul**—and the **movements** of Paul as he takes the particular **message** that God wants to now make known to ALL the world, **out TO** the world as Paul functions as *the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*. [the full details can be studied out in the book of Acts.]

- And the message God committed to Paul (and the message God wants to now make known, is the *gospel of the UNcircumcision* (Gal. 2:7) = *the gospel of God* (:16) = *the gospel of Christ* (:19) = and later on, *the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery* (Rom. 16:25)!

- Simply put—Peter and Israel's other 11 apostle's "gospel" and Paul's "gospel" **are NOT the same thing!**

(for one thing: Peter's and the 11's gospel is the gospel of the kingdom [and has God's establishment of his earthly kingdom in view and as a part of it) ... and Paul's gospel does NOT have God's earthly kingdom in view, but rather it has the heavenly places [and God's kingdom being extended to the heavenly places] in view!)

- Now—by recognizing and acknowledge these very basic and fundamental issues—and by keeping what God has Paul say in (:19b) in its proper **context** ... we can then come along and intelligently identify and define what this 3rd Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost is (that validates the great dispensational change, and the new administration of it [Paul]) ...

- **3rd Sanctifying Work of the HG**: Paul operated upon God's methodology for the rapid spreading and communication of *the gospel of Christ* committed unto him—(which was a totally **different** methodology than that of Israel's 12 apostles).

- Now in connection with all this—I want to go over a couple of very basic and fundamental issues that should be a help to your understanding and appreciation for this 3rd Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost ... (which has in view the very important and critical issue of God having brought in a great dispensational change, and a new administration of it). [so that your godly edification won't be **ruined** by attempting to **blend** or **blur** God's prog. w/ Isr. and God's program with us, the body of Christ together!]

- The first issue I want to look at actually has 2 Parts to it ... or 2 basic & general issues to it ...

1. The issue put before you here in (:19b) is the issue of **God spreading the gospel of Christ** (or the gospel of the *uncircumcision*—or the '*revelation of the mystery*') throughout the entire world. (and making it so that **all** of the Gentiles “might hear” this *gospel of Christ* given to Paul).

2. That this spreading of *the gospel of Christ* God delivered to Paul was NOT due to Paul, himself—that is, is was NOT because Paul made the decisions on **where [and on when]** to go and take that message of *the gospel of Christ* to various portions of the world — and just as importantly, where [**and when**] **NOT** to go ... [**timing** was everything!]

... rather, the spreading of *the gospel of Christ* **was God's own doing**—it was God's own methodology—a methodology far different than His methodology for Israel's 12 apostles and their “*gospel of the kingdom*” ...

... and the spreading of *the gospel of Christ* by Paul was accomplished by the genius of God in how He specially orchestrated the placement and boundaries of the Gentile nations (and the ‘hubs’ of commerce and trade activities and various trade routes [or highways] being concentrated in certain major areas and cities throughout Asia Minor).

- (pay attention to those times when God sets certain ‘boundaries’ - there's far more going on there than is commonly thought! - God is up to something!

... God is setting some things up for rapidly communicating His message!)

(ISRAEL)

- God set the bounds or boundaries of Israel—Israel's boundaries were not just an accident or happenstance—rather God set those bounds for a very particular purpose—one of which was the communication of His word to the world.

- **Exo. 23:26-31** [:31] (why does God do this?);
cp. Deu. 4:1-8

- (also, note the way God communicated His word [the Law] to the world by those trade routes by setting the Law in plaster on the great stones set up on Mt. Ebal) - **Deu. 11:29; 27:2-8**

- *** **Rom. 10:17-18!** ***

(GENTILE NATIONS) - their bounds are not just an accident or happenstance either—God set the bounds of the Gentile nations for a very particular purpose as well ... in order for them to receive the testimony of His word, too!

- (after Noah's flood, God set the 'bounds' of the Gentile nations) - **Deu. 32:1-8**

- (this is affirmed by Paul)

- **Acts 17:24-27** [:26]

- **Rom. 1:5** (ALL nations get the message!)

- **Rom. 1:18-20** (ALL men are "*without excuse*" in connection with the 'message' of God-consciousness!)

- **Rom. 16:25-26**

- (And the spreading of *the gospel of Christ* committed to the apostle Paul goes out by God's own methodology in a progressive & developmental way [in increments and installments] so that by the time of the end of Paul's ministry, ALL the Gentiles have heard it!)

- **2 Cor. 10:13-16**

- **Phil. 1:12-14**

- **Col. 1:3-6**

- **Col. 1:23-26**

- **2 Tim. 4:16-17** (note: "*that ALL the Gentiles might hear*" !)

- All I'm after here is to underscore the reality of the fact that when it comes to God determining to spread & communicate a 'message' (such as *the gospel of Christ* by Paul) - that God Himself has His own **methodology** for doing so—and for getting the job fully accomplished! [I'm not saying *people* have no part in it: they **do**!]

- And the real genius of God's methodology is seen in how He was able to rapidly communicate *the gospel of Christ* to the world **without** any kind of 'high-tech' forms of communication that we know of today—(such as telegraph, telephone, radio, television; or computer technology such as the internet, email, facebook, twitter, instagram, etc.)

- And those 2 issues need to be understood and appreciated—(and I mean **REALLY** understood & appreciated) — that: **1.** God did, indeed, get *the gospel of Christ* committed to Paul spread to the degree that ALL of the Gentiles throughout the entire world would hear it; and **2.** That God spread *the gospel of Christ* due to His own methodology ... you really need to have a firm grasp on that ... and it needs to make a **deep impression** on you! (as the Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost that it is!)

- But the sad truth is—most Christians today **don't** understand and appreciate these issues as they ought to—in fact, they (wittingly or unwittingly) call the very Justice of God into account as being inadequate when it comes to getting the 'gospel' out to the world—thinking that God just can't do it without their coming along to take up the slack in God's justice! ["But what about those who never heard?"]

- But scripture clearly states the truth and the reality that God did, indeed, do this very thing! (albeit, God did it in a progressive and developmental way ... that is, He did it in increments or in installments throughout Paul's ministry) - so that as Paul's ministry (i.e., his "*minister*" work) comes to a close, *the gospel of Christ* committed unto him really was spread throughout the whole world—and ALL the Gentiles heard that message just as 2 Tim. 4:17 declares!

- Now this issue of God being able to rapidly spread & communicate a message by means of His own methodology shouldn't come as a 'shock' or a 'surprise' to you ... in fact, it's something God has done repeatedly—even thousands of years before Paul ever came on the scene!

- Let's take a moment and examine this issue of how God can get a message out to the world by His own methodology ...

- With respect to the particular issue of appreciating the role of God's Justice and Fairness in connection with ones who (supposedly) have not had a fair opportunity to hear and respond to the gospel of salvation—(which is often the way many Christian folks think) - you need to consider what God Himself says about it in His word (and throughout His word) ...

***FROM ADAM TO THE TIME OF THE FLOOD:**

- Notice, for example, the issues in Genesis 4-6 regarding "*the presence of the LORD*" (*Gen. 4:16*) still being on the earth even in light of the sealed-off Garden of Eden—[and of Abel's testimony both before Cain killed him and after—Cain was afraid because of how **all** the people would **know** what he had done to Abel] ...

... notice the impact of Seth's birth to Adam and Eve that made it so that "*then began men to call upon the name of the LORD*" (*Gen. 4:26*) ...

... notice the issue of Enoch, the seventh from Adam who "*walked with God*" (*Gen. 5:22, 24*) ...

... and notice the issue of Noah's preaching as the "*preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the WORLD of the ungodly*" (*2 Peter 2:5*) ...

... In view of these few things, *the world of the ungodly* that God destroyed by the flood was **not** destroyed by Him unfairly! ... rather, as Peter says, God was "*longsuffering*" (*1 Pet. 3:20*) and got His message out to the world ...

... And as Job relates, (**see Job 22:15-18**) - the men of the time of the flood rejected God's testimony to them! (the Point being: THEY KNEW IT!)

- Therefore they ALL had a fair opportunity to respond to what God said to them—but they chose not to do so!

- Those are some examples of God's methodology for the spread and communication of His message at work and doing its job **thousands** of years before Paul!

*** FROM THE TIME FOLLOWING THE FLOOD TO THE TIME OF ISRAEL'S ESTABLISHMENT IN THEIR LAND:**

- Study out and pay attention to the testimony of Noah's son Shem and his line, in view of what God said about him in Gen. 9:26-27 ...

... and notice that when God has the apostle Paul look back at this very period of time just following the flood, that God has Paul declare the fact that all men "*knew God*" (Rom. 1:21), but even so they rebelled against God ...

... and take note of the functioning of the light of God Consciousness referred to in Rom. 1:19-20 being in operation at that time with **all** men—just as it is now in operation during this present dispensation of grace!

- Therefore, they **all** had the opportunity to respond to the light of God Consciousness—and if they did so, to receive further light to which they could also respond!

*** FROM THE TIME OF ISRAEL'S ESTABLISHMENT IN THEIR LAND TO THE BRINGING IN OF THE DISPENSATION OF GRACE:**

- Again, we have the functioning of the light of God Consciousness still going on as we just noted in Rom. 1:19-20 ...

... but also notice Paul's further amplification upon that issue:

- **(see Acts 14:15-17; Acts 17:22-30)**

- Therefore, just as Acts 17:27 says, men could "*seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us.*" — They were all given the opportunity to respond to the light of God Consciousness as well.

*** DURING THE DISPENSATION OF GRACE:**

- Here again, Rom. 1:19-20 is still in operation to bring the light of God Consciousness so that all men are *without excuse* ...

... And as we are currently seeing, God's methodology utilized Paul and his associates (his 'team' so to speak); plus, as the body of Christ began to get increased, the very members of the body function together, and as the "*ambassadors for Christ*" (2 Cor. 5:20) that we

are, we have a major 2-Fold ‘Great Commission’ to 1) present the gospel of Christ unto salvation/justification to the lost; and 2) present the gospel of Christ in connection with the revelation of the mystery to other saved saints.

- I refer you back to the passages we looked at (2 Cor. 10:13-16; Phil. 1:12-14; Col. 1:3-6, 23-26; 2 Tim. 4:17 “*that ALL the Gentiles might hear*”) ...

... therefore, even today, every man has a just and fair opportunity to respond to God, and by the means God Himself has put in place in connection with the Operations of God for the body of Christ to carry out, men will also have the opportunity receive further ‘light’ to which they can also respond.

*** WHEN THIS PRESENT DISPENSATION OF GRACE IS OVER AND GOD RESUMES HIS PROGRAM WITH ISRAEL:**

- Notice, for example, the preaching of “*the gospel of the kingdom*” in all the world (as per Israel’s ‘great commission’ during Israel’s “*last days*” [which is what Mat. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; John 20:19-29; & Acts 1:8 are all about] ...

... and notice at that time you also have Rev. 14:6 - “*And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto **them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.**”*

- And therefore, according to God Himself, every man has a fair and just opportunity to respond to Him! ... God never has been and never will be unjust or unfair to anyone ... and God’s methodology doesn’t need man to come up with his own methodology to try to ‘take up the slack’ in God’s Justice! [there is no ‘slack’ in God’s Justice!]

- Conclusion: God is GREAT at getting His gospel message out!

- Now—coming back to the issue that we first started out with when we were first discussing Rom. 15:19b—*so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ* — the **direction** Paul went (West); the **people** Paul went to (the Gentiles in Asia Minor); and the **territory** Paul covered are totally **different** than the commonly called “Great Commission(s)” under God’s program with Israel!

- Now we could stop and go over the entire doctrine of Israel's Great Commissions and Our Great Commissions—but that's not our objective here (that would take a lot of time) ...

... but I do want to look at one thing that should be sufficient to point out the difference between Israel's Great Commissions and Our Great Commissions—(that is, that we are NOT supposed to be fulfilling the "Great Commission" that was given to Israel in the gospel accounts and in Acts 1).

- [Which does NOT mean that we are not to be "spreading the gospel" today ... because WE ARE!!!!]

- If you pay attention—the Great Commission that was given to Israel's apostles (and the members of the remnant) at the END of the gospel accounts and in Acts 1 are really the 5th in a series of 5 commissions the Lord gave to his apostles and disciples (which can be studied out in the gospel accounts) ... [in fact, the very 1st commission the Lord gave to them started off with them going to the JEWS (Israelites) ONLY] ...

... so let's look at the development of Israel's Great Commissions at the end of the Lord's earthly ministry—because there came a time when the apostles of Israel asked the Lord about what the particular 'sign' would be that would signal His return to earth after the Lord's Day of Wrath had taken place ... and that 'sign' would be the very final aspect of their Great Commissions taking place ...

... (see Mat. 24:3-14 [:14])!

- This means that if we are supposed to carry out the 'Great Commission' at the end of the gospel accounts and Acts 1—then the Lord's Day of Wrath would have to have already taken place! ... and that alone makes that 'Great Commission' IMPOSSIBLE to be fulfilled at the present time!

- Now—with all that being said—you should be able to recognize the truth & reality that when Paul says, "*so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ*" - that this really is the 3rd Sanctifying Work of the HG that validates the great dispensational change God has made, and the new administration of it ...

... and that Paul is that new administrator; and that the actions God had Paul take as given in Rom. 15:19b is NOT in keeping with anything that has to do with Israel's program; but rather it is in keeping with this completely new and distinct *dispensation of the grace of God* to the Gentiles!

- Now—just one more thing to notice about (:19b) — notice that Paul says, ... ***I have FULLY preached the gospel of Christ.***

- Paul **really had** *fully* preached the gospel of Christ up to this point in his ministry—and want I want to point out is that there was still more to go...

... and it should also be recognized that in the historical account of the book of Acts—(that is, at the time Paul was writing the book of Romans) - God had NOT yet had the apostle Paul put the remainder of the curriculum for our sonship edification and education into written form ...

... the books of Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians (and even more than that [the Pastoral Epistles) would not be given to Paul until he was under arrest in Rome itself.

- But up to this point—the message God wanted communicated as contained in “*the gospel of Christ*” was FULLY preached! (without any help from any organization outside the body of Christ itself; and the members of the body of Christ functioning as “*ambassadors for Christ*”) !

- One other thing—notice that Paul again says, ... ***I have fully preached the gospel of Christ*** ... notice he does NOT say, ‘the gospel of Christ has been fully believed and accepted’ (!) ... as if the number of converts was the **indicator** of success (or a “fulfilled” preaching tour)!

- In fact, the gospel Paul, and the gospel he preached was mostly **rejected!** [and you will be, too!]

- The issue isn't if our proclaiming *the gospel of Christ* committed to Paul (the gospel of the **UNcircumcision**) is or is not accepted ... the issue is for it to be **fully** preached and proclaimed! **THE ISSUE IS TO BE FAITHFUL AMBASSADORS!**

- Now let's look at the last 2 verses of this 'Part C' (or 3rd Part of the Godly Thinking) that our Father wants us to have in connection with our Father's providing us with the ability to Go On and get the rest of our sonship education and edification ...

- Part C of the Godly thinking = (:17-21)

- We have 5 verses made up of 3 sentences.

- (:20-21) is all one sentence [the 3rd sentence in this section].

- And as expected: these 2 verses set forth the 4th Sanctifying Work of the HG that validates the great dispensational change God has made and the new administration of it (Paul).

***20 Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation:
21 But as it is written, (Quotation from Isa. 52:15) To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.***

- Let's take the information in these 2 verses one phrase at a time ...

- "**Yea,**" = *yea* is often regarded as an old and archaic (and no longer used) term that simply expresses a true statement with greater force than you would normally state it—(which **is** the case here—Paul **is** doing that very thing) ... or that the term is used when you want to state something or affirm something with great force (which is also the case here).

- But although it is 'old' and 'archaic' - the word *yea* in your Bible plays an important roll as one of those 'markers' or 'signals' to you that something of great importance is being brought up—it functions as a grammatical indicator that something of great importance is beings set before you.

- And *yea* actually has a particular 'shade of meaning' that is often missed and overlooked—(and of course, if it's changed to another word [as in most of the modern English translations] it will be completely missed) ... and that 'shade of meaning' is this: ***yea is a powerful & forceful affirmative to make you realize that there is no other alternative to what that verse says.***

- And this is in perfect keeping with the **context**—because the context is dealing with the Sanctifying Works of the HG that validate the disp. change God has made and Paul being the new administrator of it.

- It's in perfect keeping with what God did with Paul as the *minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles* ... [God's 'hands-on' approach with Paul] ...

... and it's in perfect keeping with the truth that directing, and Sanctifying the **direction** Paul went; the **people** Paul preached to; and the **territory** Paul covered was God's doing!

- Simply put—*yea* tells you that what Paul is about to say and recount is NOT Paul's own doing ... rather it's GOD'S doing!

- Paul didn't just choose on his own to do things this way ... rather GOD chose for Paul to do things this way! (**Paul had NO other alternative than to do it this way!** ... and Paul perfectly complied!)

- *“so have I strived to preach the gospel,”*

- *“strived”* - this is **not** the bad and negative use of the word (like the word *strife*) - rather this is something good and positive.

- *strive* = (has its roots in the word ***drive*** or ***driven***—which is exactly what Paul was ... he was *driven* by God Himself) ...

= to exert great energy; to earnestly and zealously labor hard; (and as Webster says) “A workman *strives* to perform his task before another”

- and as a ‘shade of meaning,’ the word *strive* is used when a person earnestly labors hard in a work **in the face of opposition and resistance to his work!** (Hence, to **contend** or **struggle** in the midst of **opposition!**) ... [the **opposition** coming from the Satanic Policy of Evil direct toward Paul].

- *“to preach the gospel,”*

- The *“gospel”* (God's spelled-out message) - not just the part of the *gospel* that deals with salvation by grace through faith alone in Christ alone ... but the **entirety** of *“the gospel of Christ”* committed to Paul.

- And so far in verse 20: “*Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel*” you really don’t have Paul doing anything different than the 12 apostles of Israel (Peter, James, John, etc.) ... but it’s what is said **next** that sets Paul apart from Israel’s 12 apostles and their ministry under God’s program with Israel ... it’s what’s said **next** that tells you that this is **NOT** at all in keeping with God’s prog. w/ Isr., but rather this is something entirely new and different and distinct ... and this is something that is entirely in keeping with God having brought in a new & distinct dispensation of Gentile grace!

- What is said **next** could **NOT** be said if God’s prog. w/ Isr. was still in effect!

- “*not where Christ was named,*” ...

- Now we need to note something here ... (and this is a great exercise in **keeping what the Bible says in its CONTEXT!**)

... this information is being set forth **in the context of one of the eight Sanctifying Works of the HG validating the disp’al change God made and Paul being its new administrator** ... right? ... in other words, **the context** is all about what God was doing by His ‘hands-on’ approach (so to speak) in directing the ministry of the apostle Paul in order to get *the gospel of Christ* committed to Paul spread and communicated throughout Asia Minor ... **that’s the context!**

- Now I say all that just to say that we’re **not** supposed to take Rom. 15:20 and make the **mistake** (as most Missionary organizations do) of thinking that Rom. 15:20 is God’s command for how we (or how missionaries) are supposed to evangelize and spread the gospel! Because that is NOT the case at all!

- Rather, this is something that is **strictly limited (by the context) to Paul himself**; and God’s ‘hands-on’ approach in directing Paul’s ministry in the opening portion of this disp. of grace!

- So when Paul says that he has *strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named* (and so forth), what he’s talking about is in such places as in Jerusalem or Judea or Samaria, or anywhere where the 12 apostles of Israel were ministering *the gospel of the kingdom* (the gospel of the *circumcision*) according to Israel’s ‘Great Commissions’!

- And we know that Paul is not fulfilling that final aspect of the Lord's 'prescription' for how *the gospel of the kingdom* was to be spread as per Acts 1:8 in Israel's program (i.e., "*unto the uttermost part of the earth*") as it's often alleged :

[for example: 'Well, Peter, James, and John and the other apostles went to Jerusalem, Judaea, and Samaria, but then Paul went to *the uttermost part of the earth*.']

... no, that can't be what's going on here ...

... why? because that will only take place **AFTER** the Lord's Day of Wrath has taken place [as per Mat. 24:14]! (this has to be something else!)

- So this is something entirely different than anything that has to do with Israel's "Great Commission" - this is something that could only take place if God is **no longer working** according to Israel's program, but is working according to a **new program or new dispensation of the grace of God!**

- And now—in the remainder of (:20) we can really 'nail down' what this 4th Sanctifying Work of the HG is ... and notice God could have had Paul stop and put the colon at the end of the word "*named*" ... but He wants to add one further detail that makes the 'air-tight' case (that proves beyond a 'shadow of a doubt') that God has suspended His prog. w/ Isr. and brought in a new disp. of Gentile grace ...

- "***lest I should build upon another man's foundation:***"

- This is the phrase that rocks you back and makes you recognize that, 'Wow—there's no way this can be according to God's prog. w/ Isr. ... this has to be in accordance to a new program or dispensation!'

- So what is the defining and distinguishing feature of this phrase that you can 'put your finger on' and say, This really is a Sanctifying Work of the HG validating the great disp'al change? ... what is the 4th Sanctifying Work of the HG? ... [don't answer just yet]

... how is preaching the gospel *not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation* **different** than the preaching of the gospel in Israel's program?

- Again—Paul can (and rightly so) say, “***I*** have strived” to preach “*not where Christ was named*” ... and “*lest I should build upon another man’s foundation*” ... Paul could use those personal pronouns (“***I***”) [again, rightly so] - but Paul knew (and we know) that this was NOT by Paul’s own choice in the matter ... rather, it was by God Himself directing the affairs of Paul’s ministry ...

... how do we know that? (:16) *That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.*”

[not to mention the ‘open door’ ‘hands-on’ approach God took in directing Paul’s ministry as detailed in the book of Acts.]

- So... what is the 4th Sanctifying Work of the HG?

- Well—when you pay attention to God’s methodology in spreading and communicating *the gospel of the kingdom (the gospel of the circumcision)* - God utilized a method of ‘**forerunners**’ as the gospel was preached that **paved the way** for the *gospel of the circumcision* to receive continued developmental details.

- such as the issue of the Lord ‘commissioning’ his disciples to go out and preach the gospel of the kingdom—but to NOT say a word about the Lord’s death, burial, and resurrection (as in Mat. 10—study it out in the gospel accounts) ... but ...

... the Lord’s death, burial & resurrection gets included in the *gospel of the circumcision* by Peter in Acts 2 & 1 Pet. 1ff.

- And the most notable example of God’s method of utilizing ‘**forerunners**’ in the preaching of *the gospel of the kingdom/circumcision* is John the Baptist.

- If John the Baptist is anything, he’s most definitely a **forerunner** to the Christ!

- **Isa. 40:3; Malachi 3:1; Matthew 3:1-3**

- Point being: the 12 apostles of Israel had **forerunners**, Paul had no **forerunners**!

- God's methodology for the spread & communication of *the gospel of the kingdom* by the 12 apostles of Israel called for the utilization of 'forerunners' which was designed by God to 'build upon another man's foundation' ...

... but God's methodology for the spread & communication of *the gospel of Christ* committed to Paul called for NO 'forerunners' to be utilized. Why? Because the Christ already HAD come and completed His redemptive cross-work (His death, burial, and resurrection) ... and since the *revelation of the mystery* was all about a 'mystery-aspect' of the very cross-work of the Lord, as well as the very nature of what a *mystery* is all about—there would naturally be **no need** for a 'forerunner' to *the gospel of Christ* given to Paul!

- So now we can adequately define & describe ('put our finger on') what this 4th Sanctifying Work of the HG is:

- 4th Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost that validates the great dispensational change God has made, and the new administration of it is;

Israel's 12 apostles had forerunners, Paul did not—Paul went to whom “*Christ was not named, lest he should build upon another man's foundation:*”

- by the way, that's one reason why Barnabas joined up with Paul—(because Paul [and the gospel he preached of *the revelation of the mystery*] had no 'forerunners' - so Barnabas acted as a 'liaison' who vouched for Paul's credentials.

- The point is: Romans 15:20 **is a clear BREAK from God's program with Israel!**

- **21 But as it is written**, (Quotation from Isa. 52:15) ***To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.***

- 2 obvious issues:
 - 1) ***“as it is written”*** not “for it is written”
 - 2) The wording here is different than in Isaiah 52:15.

- **As** *it is written* = indicates that what you are after is **NOT** a **direct application** of a verse out of God's program w/ Israel — but rather that there are situations and circumstances that have a **similar** or **parallel issue** to what we, as members of the church the body of Christ will find ourselves in ...

... or as it is in our case in (:21), a parallel issue to the circumstances Paul found himself in.

- (and that's what's going on here)

- **For** *it is written* = indicates that we are expected to go back to where this quotation sits in God's word and recognize that the EXACT issue that's sitting back there is the SAME issue that's sitting right here!

- And even though it comes from a portion of God's word that deals with God's program with Israel— **its** is an issue **that is true in BOTH programs!**

- As to the wording difference ...

- First of all—God carefully has Paul only quote from the last half of Isaiah 52:15 ... (**see Isa. 52:15**)

Isa. 52:15

... for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.

Rom. 15:21

... To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.

- By now we've covered a number of times when Paul quotes from the OT scriptures—and you should already have a good understanding for why the wording is different.

- The Holy Spirit, as the One who 'holds the copyright' (so to speak) of the holy scriptures—as all the rights of copyright—that is, He has the right to make **alterations** to the text any time He sees fit—and that's what's going on here.

- The wording is very close—and I'm going to let you study out the differences on your own (which you're able to do).

- As to the Isa. 52:15 passage—in this portion of Isaiah, God is looking out to when the kingdom is going to be set up upon the earth and *the gospel of the kingdom* (and it's accompanying doctrine) is going out to the Gentile nations of the earth ...

... the Gentile nations will no longer be contending with the Lord—they won't be blaspheming His name as they once did.

... and the Gentile kings will be silent before the Lord and they will be humble and reverent before Him (and admire His wisdom) ... and they will be eager to hear and receive the 'oracles' of God (the word of God) from His mouth.

... and when it comes to the Lord's doctrine—which they had not been told about), they shall *see* = a term for recognizing the truth or reality of a thing (Illust.: phone) ...

... and those Gentile kings and nations will *consider* with the 'eyes' of their understanding—and they will examine and look into the Lord's doctrine and contemplate what it all means in relation to their existence under the Lord's authority and His kingdom reign.

- Now—all that Paul is after here ("*as it is written*") is to pick up on that issue of Gentiles who have not yet heard God's doctrine concerning what God is doing.

- And my understanding is that all Paul is after is pointing to a passage in God's word that has a **parallel issue**—an issue that parallels Paul's **actions** as he *preaches the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest he should build upon another man's foundation* ...

... all Paul is doing is utilizing Isa. 52:15 to illustrate the issue of how his *preaching the gospel* is going to be received.

- Simply put—the issues contained in Rom. 15:20 are **NOT** in keeping with Israel's program (i.e., having **no forerunners**) ... but the issues contained in (:21) **ARE** parallel issues to Israel's program where the receiving of the gospel of Christ information (all it's doctrine) by the Gentiles is concerned.

(the receiving of the Gentiles receiving doctrine contained in *the gospel of Christ* is similar to Isa. 52:15b). [simple.]

- Now we move from the Godly Thinking portion of our very large portion of Ch. 15 and 16 dealing with our Father providing us with the needed information for us to be able to Go On and get the rest of our Sonship Education & Edification in Level II of the curriculum ... we now move on to the **Godly Living** portion.

- The Godly Living portion is covered in **Rom. 15:22-29**.

- This body of information focuses upon the ‘living’ or the Conduct and Behavior (and admittedly, even the Godly Labor) of the apostle Paul ...

... the actual Godly Labor portion contained in Rom. 15:30-16:16 is directed at **US** (i.e., at **OUR** godly Labor) as we labor together with God in what He’s doing regarding the final matters we are to laboring in at the end of our Level 1 Sonship edification in the book of Romans (in Romans doctrine).

- Paul’s godly Conduct & Behavior (and godly Labor) becomes the focus of attention now because ALL of Paul’s actions as described in Rom. 15:22-29 provides us with the ‘living testimony’ and proof that everything set forth in the godly Thinking portion of Rom. 15:8-21 is indeed absolutely TRUE.

- in other words—all of Paul’s actions (as directed by God Himself) are totally consistent with (and in keeping with) the **truth** and **reality** that God has, indeed, **brought in a great dispensational change, and that Paul is the new administrator of it!**

- And just as the Godly Thinking portion had 3 Parts to it—the Godly Living portion of Rom. 15:22-29 has 3 Parts to it.

- Part A—vs. 22-24

- Part B—vs. 25-27

- Part C—vs. 28-29

- **Part A (:22-24) is in regards to:** The Godly Living of the apostle Paul and his methodology for the rapid communication of his gospel (“*the gospel of Christ*” committed to him) — a methodology that was completely different from Israel’s program, giving living proof and testimony of the truth and reality of the Godly Thinking.

- **Rom. 15:22-24** (read)

- We have 3 verses made up of 2 sentences.

- (:22) = 1 sentence; (:23-24) 1 sentence.

- And as we will see—(:22-24) set forth the **5th Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost** that verifies & validates the great disp'al change God has made and the new administration of it by the apostle Paul.

- Again—**remember the Context-Setting**—or the 'time-frame' in which Paul actions described here is taking place!

- (that is—the opening portion of the *dispensation of the grace of God*—when Israel was in her “*diminishing*” stage!)

(:22) **“For which cause”** - the “*cause*” is the number of years that it had taken for Paul to cover the territory that ran the scope of “*Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum*” where Paul *strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest he should build upon another man’s foundation.*” (the cause was getting the gospel spread throughout **that** territory and all that came with it!)

“also I have been much hindered from coming to you.” (that is, to the saints at Rome [the churches in Rome]).

- Notice that Paul didn’t start up the churches at Rome **directly**, but rather, **indirectly**. — they were already in existence when Paul wrote the book of Romans to them; and they were already justified unto eternal life by means of hearing *the gospel of Christ (uncircumcision)* committed to Paul by the ‘word-of-mouth’ communicating of it.

- But Paul knew very well that God was directing his ministry to go to the places he went—and he knew very well that God was directing him to go to areas that God had ‘primed’ to receive and to rapidly spread the message of *the gospel of Christ* ...

... and Paul also knew very well that when it came to the various ‘hubs’ of communication activity (like Corinth and Ephesus) ... Paul knew that **ROME** was the **principle** ‘hub’ for God’s word and the gospel concerning the *revelation of the mystery* to get rapidly spread to the whole world!

- And by God having Paul write the book of Romans—and having it sent on to Rome ahead of Paul—God ‘takes up the slack’ for Paul visiting them in person by making the provision for the Romans saints to get their godly edification!

- But, as Paul says, “*I have been much hindered from coming to you*” — and my understanding is that this issue of Paul being *hindered* (or impeded) from going to Rome is a 2-Fold issue ...

... and I say that it’s a 2-Fold issue (or that at the very least, **more than one issue is in view here**) because of that word “***much***” ... “***much hindered***” — [notice he doesn’t say just “*hindered*”, but he adds the word “***much***” *hindered* ...

- Granted, the word *much* can be understood to mean: **great** in **size**; great in power, rank, importance, or eminence) ...

... but the grammatical way in which the word *much* is being used here before the word *hindered* indicates *much* of a **numerical degree**—(that is, ‘many times’ and in ‘**many ways**’) ... or as Webster’s says, “great in quantity or amount”.

... and one of the things the word *much* tells you is that Paul wasn’t *hindered* in just one way (or by just one thing) ... rather, “*much*” tells you that Paul was *hindered* in a **variety of ways** ... or in more than one way ... ‘many ways’ ...

... and my understanding is that you can boil all of the *much* ways Paul was *hindered* into at least **2 Major ways** ...

1. the issue of Paul being *much hindered* in going to Rome was because of the time and the rigors in connection with covering the territory that ranged from *Jerusalem* unto *Illyricum*.

- Paul lets the Roman saints know that he hasn’t visited them yet, (not because he didn’t want to—in fact, he zealously wanted to), but his current **work** had *hindered* his coming to them.

- **But notice Rom. 1:13** This is one of (and the 1st of) 6x God uses an expression like “I would not have you ignorant, brethren” that makes up 6 **Essential Doctrines** that are special/marked targets of the adversary. [special targets of Satanic attack by his Policy of Evil].

- (also notice **1 Thes. 2:18**) *Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; **but Satan hindered us.***

- That's the character who "let" Paul "hitherto" ... Satan *hindered* Paul ... he's the one who saw the value in those Thessalonian saints **not** getting themselves *established!*
(see **1 Thes. 3:1-3**)

- So—along with the time & rigors connected with the **work** of covering the territory ranging from *Jerusalem unto Illyricum*—we can at least say that the 2nd Major Issue of Paul being *much hindered from coming* to the saints at Rome is ...

2. the issue of the adversary and his Policy of Evil opposing and resisting Paul and his ministry work.

- So the 1st sentence (:22) says ...

22 For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you.

- Now the 2nd sentence (:23 & 24) ...

23 But now having no more place in these parts,

- that is, because the **work** God gave Paul to do in this phase of his journeys was accomplished—because he had *fully preached the gospel of Christ where, when, and to* the Gentiles from *Jerusalem unto Illyricum* ... (and a lot of work went into all this—from establishing churches; to ordaining the bishops & deacons; to teaching the doctrine; etc.) ...

and having a great desire these many years to come unto you;

- notice: **great desire** (zealous, vehement desire; he longed to see them ...

... notice: **these many years**—which tells you that *the gospel of Christ* that Paul was given to preach **had** been preached **early** on at Rome—that is, at least the basics of *the gospel of Christ* was known to them so that they had gotten justified unto eternal life and had formed into local assemblies ...

... in fact, so successful was their understanding of the basics of *the gospel of Christ* that Paul could say that their *faith was spoken of throughout the whole world* (*Rom. 1:8*).

23 *But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you;*

24 *Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company.*

- Did Paul ever go to Spain?

- While there is no scriptural record that he did so—it's clear from this verse that Paul intended to go to Spain.

- But we need to keep the **context** of this passage in mind—because the **context** is describing one of the Sanctifying Works of the HG in connection with Paul being the sanctified administrator (or 'minister') of God's new dispensational program for the Gentiles (the church, the body of Christ).

- And as we have noted before—the **places** Paul went; and the **people** Paul went to; and the **territory** Paul covered; and the **timing** of it all WAS NOT PAUL'S DOING, rather it was done in connection with Paul's unique apostleship **and the way God Himself was providing for evangelizing the Gentile nations!**

- Therefore, it's apparent (to me, anyway) that even though Scripture does not specifically record or make mention of Paul making the journey into Spain—it seems apparent to me by what Paul says later on in 2 Timothy about 'finishing his course' and that the Lord was 'standing with him' — it's my understanding that Paul **did** actually go to Spain at some time.

- (see 2 Tim. 4:7; 2 Tim. 4:17)

- Hence, the preaching of *the gospel of Christ* committed to Paul did go so far as Spain.

- So Paul presents his intention is to go to Spain—and on the way to Spain, he says that he will "**come to you**" (the saints at Rome) - and notice that phrase, "**and to be brought on my way thitherward BY YOU**" ...

- "**thitherward**" = toward or to that place (i.e., Rome).

- Notice **“to be brought on my way thitherward BY YOU”** - that’s one of the Operations of God connected with the proper function of an intelligent local assembly! [and it’s a GREAT one!]

- This is talking about the saints in the local assemblies at Rome assisting Paul, and accompanying Paul on his journey!

- And this is an Operation of God that local assemblies have the privilege of functioning in for the spread and communication of *the gospel of Christ*.

- It’s an Operation of God for the saints of the local assemblies to provide Paul with **aid**, **support**, and any kind of **assistance** he needed in order to get the job of spreading *the gospel of Christ* done!

- And this Operation of God (of bringing Paul **on his way BY THEM** [by the saints working along side of Paul in his **ministry & journeys**] is something God makes mention of on several occasions.

- Acts 15:1-3 [:3]

- Acts 17:10-15 [:10, :14, & :15]

- In Acts 20:38 they even accompany Paul to the ship.

- Acts 21:1-5 [:5]

- 1 Cor. 16:5-6

- (in connection with Timothy and his work)
1 Cor. 16:10-11

- Notice something else here in 1 Cor. 16 ...
(see 1 Cor. 16:15-19) ...

... here you have some information similar to the ending of the book of Romans (Ch. 16) — and notice the mutual working of the saints to aid, assist, and support Paul and his work; and the work of those closely associated with Paul (his ‘team’) ... all working together in order to spread and communicate *the gospel of Christ* given to Paul ... and to aid, assist, and support the work of godly edification going on in the local assemblies throughout Asia Minor.

- Notice the ‘interaction’ or the ‘interface’ or the personal-type relationship that existed (not just between the members of the body *within* the local assemblies), but that existed among the members of the body of Christ in its entirety—i.e., the relationship that existed between the local churches themselves!

- This tells you that the Living-Union Relationship that you once only thought of as existing between you and the Lord Jesus Christ (and God the Father) ... [a Living-Union Relationship that got **expanded** and **extended** to include every member of the body of Christ **within** the local assembly in which you gather for godly edification (as per Rom. 12:3-16 in the Godly Wisdom portion of sonship edification)] ...

... that same Living-Union Relationship is supposed to get **expanded** and **extended** to other local assemblies that are, (like you), being ‘edified unto godliness which is in faith’!

- And this tells you that God has so composed and so designed the curriculum for your godly sonship edification to include an aspect of godly edification that **extends** from one local church to **other** local churches who are engaged in the same godly edificational work! [i.e., **godly** so-called ‘conferences’]

- Hence, the Living-Union Relationship issue goes from the individual saint; to the local assembly as a whole; and then extends on to other local assemblies as well!

- And folks—**that’s** how we are taught and trained to function in the “creature”! out in the heavenly places!

- THIS IS REAL, BIBLICAL SO-CALLED MISSIONARY WORK!

*24 Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, **if first I be somewhat filled with your company.***

- “*if first I be somewhat filled with your company*” - meaning, before Paul set out for Spain, he would enjoy the fellowship, communion, and concord among the saints in Rome—this is the ‘fruit’ of Paul’s work that he could immediately enjoy with godly satisfaction and contentment. (the ‘fellowship’ of the saints is a BIG deal!)

- And one important thing to note here is that this period of time in Paul's journeys would end with him being put into **prison** in Rome ...

... and it's at the time Paul became "*the prisoner*" (*Eph. 3:1*) [the '*provoking*' phase of his ministry having come to an end] whereby he would put into writing the remaining portion of God's word—the rest of his epistles (such as Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and the Pastoral Epistles) - which would form the remainder of the curriculum for godly sonship education and edification.

- So—when you read (:22-24) what do you see there that would indicate what this 5th Sanctifying Work of the HG is?

- 5th Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost that validates the great dispensational change God has made, and the new administration of it is:

- (and it really deals with 2 matters):

- 1. God directed Paul to head deeper into Gentile territory so that the preaching of the gospel of Christ (the gospel of the *Uncircumcision; the revelation of the mystery*) **“might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear”** — **2. during which time God would give the remainder of Paul's epistles, thus sanctifying the remainder of the curriculum for godly sonship education and edification.** (which is a CRITICAL issue! ... you can have absolute confidence in those epistles being the remaining curriculum for our godly sonship edification!) ... ALL 13 of Paul's epistles are sanctified by the HG for our edification!

- Any Questions? Comments?

- Let's move on to Part B of the godly living & labor of the apostle Paul where we will get the **6th** and **7th** Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost ...

(read :25-27)

- This portion of the Godly Living (and labor) of Paul's ministry work deals with "*the poor saints which are at Jerusalem*" and our being made "*partakers of their spiritual things*" - which further validates Paul's unique apostleship and ministry to the Gentiles—giving further living proof and testimony of the truth and reality of the Godly Thinking. [i.e., the disp'al change & Paul being its new administrator.]

- We have 3 verses—and 4 sentences—(:25=1; :26=1; :27=2).

- And the 6th Sanctifying Work of the HG is in (:25-26); and the 7th Sanctifying Work of the HG is in (:27).

- So now let's deal with that 6th Sanctifying Work of the HG (that validates the great disp'al change & Paul as it's new administrator).

25 But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints.

- If my understanding is correct—this occurred in **Acts 19:21 (see) ...**

... and this event also was mentioned by Paul in his defense before Felix (Antonius Felix—a deplorable man and a moral degenerate—who was the Roman Procurator [kind of like a Governor] of Judea) - (see **Acts 24:17**)

- And the “*saints*” Paul is talking about focuses upon **the remnant of Israel**—that is, those “*saints*” or saved & justified believers who had responded positively to *the gospel of the kingdom* that was preached to them by John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus Christ, and by Israel's 12 apostles.

- And in the next verse, we'll get the reason **why** Paul goes to Jerusalem to *minister* to them ...

26 For (further explanation & amplification of :25) ***it hath pleased them*** (the saints or believing members of the church, the body of Christ) ***of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution FOR THE POOR SAINTS*** (members of the Remnant of Israel) ***which are at Jerusalem.***

- “*Macedonia*” = the far north-west portion of Paul's journey ... including such churches at Neapolis, Philippi, Apollonia, Thessalonica, and Berea.

- “*Achaia*” = the territory sitting just south of Macedonia ... including such churches at Athens, Corinth, and Cenchrea.

- Now what really ‘rocks you back’ and ‘grabs your attention is that phrase, ***“the poor saints which are at Jerusalem”*** ... and one thing you need to be aware of is that this is NOT just some kind of a “food drive” or some kind of a ‘collection’ being made for those who just happen to be “poor” folks living in the great city of Jerusalem!

- In other words—this is NOT an issue of **random** poor people that happen to be living in Jerusalem ...

... this is NOT a random act of charity where churches get together and make contributions of money or food or clothing or school supplies ... **this is NOT God’s instruction on how to relieve poverty!**

... which is what you will end up thinking if you don’t pay attention to what’s going on here ... and if you haven’t paid attention to what HAS been going on in God’s word!

- CAREFUL: I’m NOT saying that there is no godly work or labor for us as members of the body of Christ to help out those who are poor or in need—because we certainly **do** have instructions in God’s word about that issue - in fact, we’ve already encountered that issue back in Rom. 12:13 (*“Distributing to the necessity of saints”*)!

- But the truth is—you’re going to end up making a mess out of this passage if you don’t have a good understanding for what was going on in the gospel accounts and the opening chapters of the book of Acts!

- Furthermore—there were a lot of poor people all over the place—(all over Asia Minor) - so what makes **this** matter of **special significance**? ... because it **IS** of **special significance!!!**

- In fact, the **context** tells you that this is something of special significance ...

... the context here is NOT “How to Care for the Poor”! or “How to Relieve Poverty”!

... the context here is The Sanctifying Works of the HG that validate the great disp’al change & new administration of it!

- So instead of looking to this passage as God’s instructions on how to relieve poverty—we need to appreciate how this act of helping out *the poor saints at Jerusalem* is of special significance when it comes to the Holy Ghost **sanctifying** the disp’al change God has made and Paul being its *apostle* and *minister* (and not Peter or the other 11).

- The truth is—these “poor” are members of the remnant of Israel! ... and if you’re paying attention: **THERE ARE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE ANY MEMBERS OF THE REMNANT OF ISRAEL THAT NEED CARE OR ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER CHURCHES WHEN IT COMES TO THEIR NEEDS BEING MET!!!**

- In other words—according to God’s program with Israel, and during the Climactic Stage of their program ... God has made provision for their want; their needs; their *poverty* by means OTHER than by the assistance of local churches!

- Simply put—**there isn’t supposed to be any poor saints at Jerusalem IF things are going according to God’s program with Israel!**

... and that’s why the *poor saints at Jerusalem* are ‘singled out’ (so to speak), or set apart from any others who are “*poor saints*” anywhere else - that’s why the *poor saints at Jerusalem* is of **special significance** ...

... WHY? ... because (as we will see) *poor saints at Jerusalem* tells you that God **MUST** have made a change to Israel’s program! because God had promised and made provision to take care of the *saints at Jerusalem* - if there’s *poor saints at Jerusalem* then that tells you God is no longer operating according to Israel’s program ... God is operating according to a new dispensation altogether!

- Now—before we deal with that issue—I just want to point out that this is not the only place (or the only time) in Paul’s epistles where he mentions this issue of the saints who are members of the body of Christ providing assistance for *the poor saints* (of the remnant of Israel) *at Jerusalem*.

- Apparently, there were even more saints of the body of Christ providing for the *poor saints* of the remnant of Israel than those of Macedonia and Achaia ...

- **1 Cor. 16:1-4**—(here you have the churches in Galatia involved and participating—[i.e., Lystry and Iconium].

- And Paul has a lot to say about giving to the poor and needy in 2 Cor. chapters 8 & 9.

- Now what we need to do is to make sure that we understand and appreciate the **special significance** of there being *poor saints at Jerusalem*—(NOT by me saying so)—but by the assurance of the matter from the testimony of God’s word! ...

... let’s briefly look in God’s word at how God would deal with the members of the remnant of Israel (the *poor saints at Jerusalem*) **according to the way in which God would provide for them according to His prog. w/ Israel being in effect.**

... here’s a ‘hint’ ... it would NOT be done by **Gentiles** helping them out!!!

- First—notice that when the Lord Jesus Christ was here on this earth during His earthly ministry—that was the time of the **Climactic Stage** of Israel’s program.

- And since it was the Climactic Stage—we know that the 5th Course of Punishment was underway—and that the first 3 installments of the 5th CoP had already been concluded ...

... therefore when the gospel accounts begin—according to Israel’s ‘Time-Schedule’ you are now in the 4th Installment of the 5th CoP; ... and the Lord is getting His ‘little flock’ of the remnant of Israel ready to go through the 5th Installment of the 5th CoP ...

... and the 5th Inst./5th CoP will include the tribulation period—and the ‘great tribulation’ — which will be the time of the Lord’s Day of Wrath—and especially the time of the Lord’s ‘great wrath’ which will bring destruction upon the earth such as has not occurred before.

- And God’s wrath will be poured out upon Israel itself—Jerusalem and all the cities and towns around it—and all of the houses and buildings and lands are going to be destroyed.

- Now—with that kind of context in mind come over to:

- **Mat. 6** (Sermon on the Mt.):**24-34**

(sounds like there shouldn’t be any *poor saints at Jerusalem*!)

- **Luke 12:22-34**

- Should we do this? NO! (**2 Thes. 3:10**)!

- **We should NOT DO what Jesus said in Luke 12:22-34!**

(blasphemous? NO!) - Why? Because we are **NOT** going to go through the Lord's Day of Wrath—we are "*saved*" from the wrath to come! (Rom. 5:9; 1 Thes. 1:10)

- **(Mat. 24:15-21)**

- The remnant will have all of their homes destroyed by the Lord's Day of Wrath ... they will have to *flee* their houses and homes and run to the 'safe houses' the Lord prepares for them ... they really will have 'only the clothes on their backs' and nothing else! ... not even food or water!

- So their houses and lands and possessions became a 'liability' (so to speak) ... and the right & proper (and godly) thing to do was to kind of 'pool' their resources and help out the needs of the other members of the remnant saints—and to **SELL** their "stuff" and give the money made off the selling of them to the 12 apostles of Israel and help their ministries out.

... which is exactly what you see happening in the opening chapters of the book of Acts ...

- **(Acts 4:31-37) - Note: Again, this is NOT for us!!!**

- Now it would seem that by selling off everything they possessed, that they would end up *poor*—and that there would be *poor saints in Jerusalem* ... BUT the Lord was going to (and will) make provision for them—**miraculous** provision for them **so that there would NOT be any "poor" among the remnant saints!!!**

- That's what **Mark 16:15-18** is for! (see)

... see also the Lord miraculously providing for the remnant saints in the Book of the Revelation—which describes the readiness for the 'Mid-Point' of the tribulation period (which is what the Lord was talking to the disciples about back in Mat. 24) ...

... **Rev. 12:6, 14**

- The point in all this is this: while the members (the *saints*) of the remnant of Israel would, indeed, lose everything they owned to the Lord's Day of Wrath—and potentially put them in the position of

poverty (or being *poor saints*) - **God Himself** will **provide** for them so that they will NOT be *poor* (or in a state of poverty)!!!

- That is, if things were going along according to God's program with Israel—**there would not be a time when there would be “poor saints which are at Jerusalem” !!!**

- And that takes us back to our passage in Rom. 15:25-26.

- And it's the easiest thing in the world to recognize that if there ARE “*poor saints which are at Jerusalem*” ... and if Paul is taking up a collection for them ... (a collection made up of money given by **GENTILE saints**) ... money collected by Paul from the members of the body of Christ in Macedonia and Achaia (and even Galatia) ... **then God's program with Israel is NO LONGER in effect!**

- The reason why there were these *poor saints at Jerusalem* was due to their actions in Acts. 4:31-37—which was the right thing for them to do according to God's program with Israel that was still in effect in Acts 4!

- **BUT ...** instead of God's prog. w/ Isr. continuing on—God suspended His program with Israel and brought in a new and distinct dispensation of Gentile grace in Acts chapter 9!

... the Lord's Day of Wrath was suspended and held in abeyance ...

... which means that God's miraculous provision for them was also suspended and held in abeyance ...

... and as Israel was now *diminishing* ... and because they had sold everything they owned; and because God suspended their program—the *saints at Jerusalem* found themselves in a state of great poverty!

- Therefore, God had Paul determine to “*make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem*” in order to provide for them and not leave them ‘in a lurch’!

- This alone is **POWERFUL PROOF** of God's great disp'al change, and the new administration of it!!!

- And this issue can be a very powerful way to prove to saints today the truth & reality of what is going on today—of “*rightly diving the word of truth*” with Paul—of the fact that God is NOT working according to His program with Israel; but having suspended Israel’s program, God is now operating according to *the dispensation of the grace of God* which was begun when He saved and raised up Paul as a brand new apostle in Acts chapter 9. (Therefore, Romans through Philemon are our ‘marching order’ for today!)

... So—in view of all that ...

- The 6th Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost that validates the great dispensational change God has made, and the apostle Paul being the new administrator of it is:

6. The saints of the remnant of Israel are getting poorer; God is not taking care of them like He was under Israel’s program, hence the members of the body of Christ made provision for them instead.

- Any Question? Comments?

- Let’s move on to (:27) and the 7th Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost.

27 It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.

[Let’s look at the 1st of the 2 sentences in this verse.]

- “***It*** (the *contribution* of money to assist, aid, and provide for *the poor saints at Jerusalem* taken up by the Gentile saints of the body of Christ in the churches of Macedonia and Achaia) ***hath pleased them verily;***”

- This is a repeating of the beginning of (:26).

- “***verily***” - now we have noted this word before—and most often the word *verily* is associated with the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ in the gospel accounts—where He often doubles the word (“*verily, verily*”) - and where the Lord is most often correcting the corrupted doctrine as taught by the Pharisees and Israel’s vain, religious leaders.

- And as we noted before—very often the use of the word *verily* indicates that there are some fundamental errors in the

thinking of the hearers—and what is about to be set forth is the corrective doctrine—and therefore the hearers now have an honest opportunity to change their thinking.

- But that's not the only way in which the word *verily* is used in God's word—(and this is one of those times here in (:27) — *verily* is a context sensitive word, and correcting corrupt doctrine isn't the context here in (:27).

- However, even here in (:27) - the issue of having correct doctrine—and making **proper USE** of that correct doctrine **IS** in view here and **is** what this context is dealing with.

- The word *verily* comes from the word *verity* = truth—and it is properly used when you want to set forth something as a matter of truth, reality, and fact ... **and to do it in a most powerful and forceful way.**

- So, the first clause of (:27) is setting forth a statement in a very powerful and forceful way—(not only by the use of the word *verily*, but also by repeating the opening part of (:26) again).

- Notice it again— **“It** (the contribution given by the Gentile saints of the body of Christ in the churches of Macedonia & Achaia) ***hath pleased them*** (the “*them*” are those Gentile saints that are members of the body of Christ) ***verily*** (as a truth, reality, and fact);”

- And notice that word **“pleased”** - in other words, it was their **pleasure**—and when you add the word **“verily”** it indicates that it was their **GREAT PLEASURE!**

- And the reason why I'm taking the time to point all this out to you, is that this little clause is supposed to really grab your attention.

- And it really IS an ‘attention-grabbing’ clause ... **TO A PROPERLY EDUCATED “SON”!**

- Because that word ***pleased*** (or ‘pleasure’) is a sonship term!

- And when you put it all together: **“It hath pleased them verily;”** is actually an expression of the Gentile members of the body of Christ's own sonship edification! ... it's an expression of a properly educated and properly edified “son”!

- In other words, making this *contribution* to the *poor saints at Jerusalem* came from (and was the **outworking**—or the **deploying**) of the doctrine they had learned—the effectual ‘outworking’ or ‘deploying’ of God’s word (of the curriculum for sonship edification) in both their godly Living *and* godly Labor.

- It tells us that these Gentile saints were not only operating upon the doctrine of their godly edification—but they were also operating upon the ‘parallel’ doctrine of **godly love and charity!**

- They were NOT ‘high-minded’ ...
- they were thinking ‘soberly’ ...
- they were ‘giving with simplicity’ ...
- they were ‘distributing to the necessity of saints’ ...
- they were selfless, kind, tenderhearted, meek, good, and gladly willing to sacrifice what they had for others.

- **“It hath please them verily;”** — my understanding is that it was a **large gift**—and it was given with great and intense JOY and DELIGHT— and without one bit of reservation!

- What a great thing it is to see God’s word doing its effectual work—what a great thing to put on display the fact that the doctrine they received from Paul wasn’t just some ‘academic exercise’ - but actually **worked out** from their ‘inner-man’ (their spirit and soul) into godly & gracious “*good works*” [*Eph. 2:10*, and many other passages] - that not only brought great pleasure to them, personally, but that also brought great pleasure to the Heavenly Father as well!

27 *It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are.*

- First, make sure and identify who the **“their”** and **“they”** are:

- **“their”** are “the poor saints which are at Jerusalem” — the **members of the Remnant of Israel!** ... **ISRAEL!**

- **“they”** are the Gentile saints; the saints who are the members of the body of Christ in the local churches in Macedonia and Achaia. — **Amazing!** The ‘new creature’ of the church, the body of Christ are **indebted** to **Israel!** to **the members of the Remnant of Israel!** ... and **NEVER** forget it!

- And that ‘indebtedness’ is a **‘forever’ indebtedness!** ... at this very moment, **WE still stand in debt to Israel**—to the remnant of Israel—and, (it’s proper to say), **to God’s program with Israel!** ... which is, sadly, something very often NOT recognized by many grace folks who *do* “*rightly divide the word of truth*” with Paul, and who do understand the great dispensational change God has made!

- All too often, a lot of ‘grace teaching’ today that rightly recognizes that ‘We are NOT Israel, and Israel is NOT us’ often makes such a distinction—and divides & separates the two entities of Israel and the church, the body of Christ **to an extent that God’s word (the Bible) does NOT do!**

- For instance—many ‘grace folks’ have become so rigid in separating the church, the body of Christ from Israel that if you point to a passage in the OT or in the gospel accounts that has a legitimate application for BOTH Israel and us ... they will automatically cry ‘foul’ and say, ‘No, you can’t do that—you can’t go back to the OT for **anything or for any reason** ... period!

- (this is the problem most folks have who take a stand against sonship edification—and for going back to the book of Proverbs in order to simply note the ‘formant’ for how God has designed to educate a “son” - and recognize that the same ‘pattern’ or ‘format’ given there matches up perfectly with the ‘format’ or ‘structure’ [the sense & sequence] of the information contained in Paul’s epistles.)

- And this is one reason why “*godly edifying which is in faith*” is NOT getting done in a lot of ‘grace churches’ today!!!

- Truth is—we are far more ‘connected’ to matters in God’s program with Israel than is commonly thought!

- “*And their (Israel’s) debtors they (the body of Christ) are ...*

- “**debtors**” = one who owes another; one held by some obligation, and bound by some duty.

- And in this **context**—(as it will be seen when, in the next sentence, Paul will further describe exactly in what way the body of Christ saints were indebted to *the poor saints* of the remnant of Israel *at Jerusalem*) - in this context the indebtedness has to do with why they should relieve their poverty.

- So, because the saints of the body of Christ had received the benefits of Israel's *spiritual things*, then those saints of the body of Christ are 'indebted' to them ... to the point of *ministering* to them their *carnal things* (such as their money, aid, and support that will relieve their poverty).

- CAREFUL/NOTE: the giving of money to help *the poor saints at Jerusalem* only **existed for a short time!** It only existed during the opening portion of this disp. of grace while Israel was in her *diminishing* stage! Meaning, this circumstance DOES NOT exist today!

- Meaning, this is NOT something we are supposed to be doing today—we're not supposed to be sending money over to Israel today in order to relieve the poor of that country!

- But while that's true—it DOES NOT mean that even we today are not **beneficiaries** of Israel (or God's program with Israel) ... **because nothing could be further from the truth!**

- We **ARE** **beneficiaries** of Israel's program—the Redeemer mandate of the Davidic Cov., and all of Redeemer's Redemption took place in God's program with Israel—and as a direct result of it, WE are beneficiaries of it, too!

- And Redemption isn't just the matter of justification unto eternal life—but it's also the matter of **sanctification unto functional life!** (the sanctification benefits of Redemption are the very means for us to be able to *live unto God* as "*sons*" in this present disp. of grace)! ... [and as we will see], the New Testament benefits we now have are ours due to what happened **in God's prog. w/ Isr.!!!**

- and without those *spiritual things* of the NT, we **have NO functional life at all!**

- (:27 so far) **27 It hath please them** (the members of the body of Christ in Macedonia & Achaia) **verily** (sending a large contribution to the poor remnant of Israel saints at Jerusalem with great joy and delight); **and their** (the remnant saints) **debtors** (owing them the duty of relieving their poverty) **they** (the members of the body of Christ) **are**.

- (2nd sentence) **For** (of further explanation & amplification of that first sentence) **if** (introduces a 1st Class Condition—meaning, “if” and it’s true) **the Gentiles have been made partakers of their** (Israel’s) **spiritual things** (and they have), **their** (the members of the body of Christ’s) **duty is to minister unto them** (the poor remnant of Israel saints in Jerusalem) **in carnal things**.

- “**spiritual things**” - that is, ISRAEL’S *spiritual things* ...
... and notice the small case (“s”) - these are things that pertain to the function of your human spirit according to godliness. (we’ll deal with this a lot more) ...

- “**carnal things**” - the use of the word *carnal* here isn’t talking about or being used in the bad sense of say, Rom. 8:6 (“*For to be carnally minded is death ...*”) or 1 Cor. 3:3 (“*For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?*”) ...

... this isn’t “*carnal*” in the sense of the evil desires of your flesh, or sensual pleasures, or your sin nature, or sinful lust, or anything along those lines ...

... However, the word *carnal* does have to do with your **flesh** — and the majority of the times you encounter the word *carnal* in your Bible, it will most often refer to the bad, evil, ungodly nature of your “flesh” - but that’s not how its being used here in (:27) - [and this is a great exercise in how that words like *carnal* (here) do not always mean the same thing].

- While the word *carnal* in (:27) does, indeed, have to do with the ‘flesh’ - (and in this case the *poor saint’s* flesh at *Jerusalem*) ... in this context, *carnal* is talking about their **physical flesh** or the “things” pertaining to their physical flesh—that is, outward, temporal things; things pertaining to their outer-man: **money for food, clothing, housing, and anything that would sustain their physical being.** [babies?]

- So—due to **us GENTILES** - (members of the church, the body of Christ) being “*partakers*” of Israel’s “*spiritual things*” — at the time of the opening portion of this disp. of grace, when Israel was in the stage of their *diminishing* when God had suspended His program with Israel and had brought in a new dispensation of Gentile grace—the members of the remnant of Israel at Jerusalem were getting **poorer** because God was no longer treating them as He was when their program was in effect—the remnant of Israel saints had sold all they had in preparation of going through the Lord’s Day of Wrath, which was now put on ‘hold’ - so the Gentile members of the body of Christ in the churches of Macedonia and Achaia took up a collection (of money) to provide temporal assistance of food, housing, clothing, and whatever was needed in order to relieve the poverty of those *poor remnant of Israel saints at Jerusalem*.

- But, (my understanding is), that even when the time of Israel’s *diminishing* had passed—which means even to this day—WE, (that is, ALL of us as members of the body of Christ), we are STILL (and always will be) “*partakers of their (Israel’s) spiritual things*”!

- You and I—right now—are *partakers of Israel’s spiritual things*!

- So—what are Israel’s *spiritual things*? what are those *spiritual things*?

- Well, they are the *things* that have to do with our human spirit being able to ‘live unto God’ - the *things* that enable us to be *spiritual-ly PLEASING IN GOD’S SIGHT*—they are the *things* that enable us to have the capacity to be *spiritually* alive and *spiritually* function in God’s sight—they are the *spiritual things* that allow for us to be **godly!** - they are the *spiritual things* that pertain to **godliness** and give us the capacity to THINK like God does; LIVE like God does; and LABOR together with God in what God is now doing!

- And when that is understood properly, there is only **ONE thing** that **does that**—in other words, **all** of those *spiritual things* can be wrapped up in **one** major issue—because there is only one major issue that contains all of those *spiritual things* that pertain to **godliness** (to Thinking like God; Living like God does; and Laboring together with God in all that He is doing) ...

... and that one major issue that contains many of Israel’s *spiritual things* that we are all *partakers* of is: **THE NEW TESTAMENT!** (in fact, Israel’s *spiritual things* are the *things* that provide for, and make possible for **godly sonship edification to take place!**)

- It's the New Testament that provides for the adoption of sons—and for us to be educated and edified as sons!

- It's the New Testament benefits that provide for us to have **the full benefits of REDEMPTION**—that is, for us to have perfect Justification and perfect Sanctification ... it's the benefits of the NT that provides for us to be SPIRITUALLY FIT in God's sight! (and therefore, for us to be specially fitted to be able to **serve** God and **glorify** God in all of the details of our daily lives!) [*fruit unto holiness*]

- Actually—there are 2 major Issues (or things) that you **must** have in order for spiritual fitness and godly sonship edifying to take place:

1. The Word of God. - (which, by the way, is 1 Thing all by itself that we are indebted to Israel for) ... Rom. 3:2 ... *unto them* (the Jews) *were committed the oracles of God*. [Every book of the Bible was written by a Jew!]

2. The New Testament benefits.

- And with those 2 things—you have the capacity to become *spiritually* pleasing in God's sight! and to do the “*good works*” you were “*created in Christ Jesus*” to produce (Eph.2:10).

- With those 2 things—your human spirit of your ‘inner man’ has the capacity to be **functionally alive**; and by that functional life, live a **godly** [God-like] life!

- With those 2 things you can take your Position that God has made you to be “in Christ” and put your **Position** “in Christ” into **Practice!** (without them, you are ‘*spiritually*’ SUNK!)

- And they ARE *spiritual THINGS*—(even the word of God, while a physical, tangible thing, is the production of the Spirit of God—as the Lord said, “*the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.*” (John 6:63) ...

... and there are more than one ‘thing’ contained in the New Testament — in fact, as they are given in the New Covenant in Jeremiah 31, there are 3 *things* especially, that we are *partakers* of ... and we find ALL 3 of them in Paul's epistles as **applying directly** to US as members of the body of Christ today!

- (see Jer. 31:31-34)

1. Heart writing.

(2 Cor. 3:2-3)

2. God will be their God, and they shall be God's people.

(2 Cor. 6:11-18; and you could add to that **Tit. 2:11-14 [14]**)

3. Being taught by God, and having intimacy of fellowship

with God. (which is the sonship issue of being personally taught by God the Father and the real Father-son relationship).

(Rom. 8:14-15; 1 Cor. 2:10-12, 16; and you can add to that 2 Cor. 6:18)

- Questions? Comments?

- Now—before going on—let's not lose sight of the context in Rom. 15:27 — and by that context, let's identify what the 7th Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost is ...

- Remember the context here ...

27 It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.

... the context here is looking specifically at the time of the opening portion of this disp. of grace during which time Israel was in her ***diminishing*** stage ...

... and because of the great disp'al change God had made, He had suspended all of His dealings with Israel (and with the remnant of Israel) ... and because the remnant saints of Israel had (rightly) sold off all of their temporal, earthly possessions in preparation for going through the Lord's Day of Wrath they found themselves in a state of poverty.

- Therefore, God had Paul take up a collection from the Gentile saints of the new creature of the church the body of Christ who resided in Macedonia and Achaia in order to relieve the *poor saints at Jerusalem*.

- And the motivation for those Gentile saints of the body of Christ to make such a contribution was due to them being *debtors* to Israel

- So—in view of that context—what would you say is the identifying feature of this 7th Sanctifying Work of the HG?

- The **7th Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost that validates the great dispensational change God has made; and Paul as the new administrator of it is:**

7. Gentile saints of the body of Christ relieving the poverty of *the poor* remnant of Israel saints at Jerusalem indicates that God's favored treatment has changed from Israel to the Gentiles.

(that issue alone **demand**s a change in programs—it tells you that God has suspended His prog. w/ Isr. and brought in an entirely new dispensation of Gentile grace!)

- Now at this point—I want to take just a little bit of time to look further into this matter of Israel's *spiritual things* being the matter of the New Testament benefits that we Gentiles (and members of the body of Christ) are *partakers* of throughout the **entirety** of this disp. of grace in which we live.

- Notice that I'm more careful to say "New Testament" and not the "New Covenant".

- My understanding is that we are **not** partakers of ANY of Israel's **covenants** at all—God never made a covenant with the body of Christ—God only made covenants with Israel.

- And what I'm driving at is that there is a difference between the word "*covenant*" and "*testament*" ... and I want to make sure that we all understand that difference.

- (and when you do—you'll see that it is perfectly right to call Gen.-Mal. the Old Testament and Mat.-Rev. the New Testament and **not** call them the Old Covenant and the New Covenant!)

- And to kick things off—I want to first of all start off with the apostle Paul—because of what we're dealing with here in [:27] with the issue that we, Gentile members of the body of Christ, are *partakers* of Israel's *spiritual things*—and those *spiritual things* being the 'things' of the New Testament (not the New Covenant).

- Being Gentile members of this new entity of ‘the one new man’ of the church, the body of Christ who have been made *partakers* of Israel’s *spiritual things* (among which are the NT benefits) - really shouldn’t be shocking; it doesn’t come ‘out of the blue’ ... because you were actually made aware of it from the very beginning of the book of Romans.

- In fact—by this time—you should be aware that the apostle Paul’s apostleship has a unique designation—a unique designation that is **not** said of any of Israel’s 12 apostles—and this designation was given to you at the very beginning of the book of Romans.

- You were actually alerted to the fact that even though Paul is a unique apostle for us Gentile members of the body of Christ, God makes us aware that even though He is no longer dealing with Israel, we (members of the body of Christ) ARE *partakers* of True Israel’s *spiritual things* ...

- (see Rom. 1:1-7)

- Notice (:1) - Paul is given 3 ‘designators’ (so to speak) —

1. “*a servant of Jesus Christ*”

(Paul shares this designator with the 12 apostles of Israel—Jam. 1:1; 2 Pet. 1:1; Jude 1:1 and John in Rev. 1:1)

2. “*an apostle*” - (also shared with Israel’s 12 apostles)

3. “*separated unto the gospel of God*” - (this designator is **NOT** shared with Israel’s 12 apostles—it is a unique designator given only to Paul) - it is a distinct and unique ‘separation designator’ in connection with the gospel of God that Paul was proclaiming!

- And while the *gospel* that God gave to Paul to proclaim has a great deal of information that concerns *the revelation of the mystery* (which information is NOT found any where else in all of scripture) - notice that immediately after (:1), you have Paul telling you that some of the information he is given IS, indeed, **connected** with what God “*had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures*” (:2) ...

... and then Paul sets forth what you may call some of Israel’s *spiritual things* in (:3-4)!

- And there in (:3-4), you are made aware that the *spiritual things* of Israel that ‘concern’ us, the Gentile members of the body of Christ, are things *Concerning God’s Son Jesus Christ our Lord ...*

... and that we need to understand & appreciate the significance of Jesus Christ our Lord being *made of the seed of David according to the flesh ...*

... and by bringing David into the picture (and Christ being *the seed of David* in the flesh) - that should alert you to the significance of the 5 Mandates of the Davidic Covenant—and especially the **1st Mandate** which is of **critical importance** to us! ... the 1st Mandate of the Dav. Cov. being: **the Redeemer and His redemption!**

- (and Redemption is all about our perfect **Justification** and our perfect **Sanctification!**) ...
i.e., **SPIRITUAL FITNESS!**

- And even more than that—you have (:4) - which tells you that Jesus Christ, as the “*seed of David*” (the Redeemer) is now “*declared (to us) to be the Son of God with power, according to the **spirit of holiness**, by the resurrection from the dead:*” ...

... and notice that phrase “*the spirit* (small case “s”) of *holiness*” — which tells you that the *gospel* that God has given Paul to proclaim and teach is going to have matters in it that deals with the issue of our human *spirit* and how it is going to become **holy**—that is, **spiritually fit; or godly!**

- The “*power*” of the resurrected Son of God is the power to produce in us a human *spirit of holiness* (of godliness; of spiritual fitness) in Gods’ sight!

- And when you take all these things together you should recognize that our godliness (**or spiritual fitness**) is going to get accomplished by
1. the word of God given to Paul in the form of Paul’s 13 epistles; and
2. by the Son of God being enfleshed into the line of the seed of David—and by His death, burial and resurrection from the dead—the Son of God will have done so by performing that 1st Mandate of the Davidic Covenant, which will include (among many things) the inauguration of the New Covenant and/or New Testament

... and those NT benefits will provide for our “adoption” as “sons” - and provide for the very means for godliness or spiritual fitness to take place! (it will take place by us being made *partakers of True Israel’s spiritual things!*) [the word of God, and the New Testament benefits]

- Now all I’m after here is something very simple—but even though it’s ‘very simple’ - it needs to be properly understood and properly appreciated! (we need to be suitably impressed with it).

- Very simply, we need to recognize:

- When it comes to Paul and the special, distinct, and unique ‘designator’ as being *separated unto the gospel of God ...*

... Paul’s apostleship focuses upon or is centered upon **2 major things** in regards to his “*separation*” (or to the *gospel of God* that Paul was *separated unto*) ...

1. Some things that deal with **prophecy** - (or things which God had *promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures [Rom. 1:1]*).

- These are things regarding the Redeemer and His redemption— regarding the adoption of sons; sonship; and the New Testament benefits.

- Paul was “*separated unto*” some particular sonship matters that were “*promised afore*”.

- (and the truth of that is borne out by what is said in Rom. 1:1-4 as well as Rom. 8:14-16:27 and Gal. 4:1-7 and really all of Paul’s 13 epistles!)

2. **Everything** that deals with “*the mystery*” - (which deals with a body of information concerning the new entity of the church, the body of Christ and God’s design, plan, and purpose for it to be the means by which He will reconcile the heavenly places back to Himself from the adversary and his cohorts). [see **Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:1-7; Col. 1:24-29**]

- Paul was “*separated*” according to “*the mystery*” that was **NOT** made known before.

- This body of information was kept secret and was **not** made known before in God's word which was according to prophecy. [Gen. — opening ch's. Acts]
- Simple, right? but profound—and sadly, it's lost on many 'grace folks' today.
 - So again—it should come as no shock or surprise to find out later on (in Romans 15:27) that we Gentile members of the body of Christ ***“have been made partakers of (Israel's) spiritual things”***.
- **And here's the point:** A new dispensational change has taken place in biblical history whereby the Gentiles *“have been made partakers”* of Israel's *“spiritual things”* (Rom. 15:27) that were *“promised afore”* (Rom. 1:2) in connection with Israel's **sonship adoption relationship** according to Israel's New Covenant (Jer. 31:33-34) in general; and with Israel's New Testament, specifically.
 - Which is why Paul was made by God *“an able minister of the new testament”* (2 Cor. 3:6). (not 'the new covenant')
 - Just like True Israel (the remnant) - we, too, need to have the **spiritual, inner-man MEANS** for **godliness** (and **spiritual fitness**) to take place—we, too, need the **spiritual, inner-man MEANS** for adoption and for the real Father-to-son **sonship relationship** to take place! - **which is what the New Covenant/Testament provides for!**
 - And because Paul was also *separated* according to *the mystery* (that was **not** made known before) - [and lest you get confused by the Gentile involvement in the issue] ...
 - ... the work of **sonship godliness** that the New Testament provides for with the Gentiles today is **different** than what **prophecy** calls for the Gentiles to be involved with in accordance with Israel's covenantal program when God resumes and fulfills Israel's program when the 'kingdom of heaven' gets set up and established after the Lord's Day of Wrath (during the 1,000 years of the millennial kingdom).
 - And that's borne out by those 4 quotations about the Gentiles' anticipated 'hope' back up in (:9-12) of Rom. ch. 15. [as well as all that God says about the Gentiles according to **prophecy**]! (if you study it out)

- (“Seen of Angels” by David Winston Busch, p.313)
 “We then are beneficiaries by testament, not by covenant.
 By contrast, Gentiles in the coming kingdom of heaven will also be beneficiaries of the testament, but through the fulfilling of Israel’s inheritance covenantally. Per the law and prophets, they are **prophetic** beneficiaries with Israel in connection with the **earth**, not mystery beneficiaries with the one new man in connection with “the heavenly places” (Eph. 1; Col. 1:27).”

- Now we, Gentile members of the ‘one new man’ of the church, the body of Christ in this present dispensation of grace—being *partakers of (Israel’s) spiritual things* comes as no surprise here in (:27), and is further backed up by what God had Paul deal with in Romans 9-11 where we were given our fundamental ‘establishment’ of the dispensation of Gentile grace that is now in effect ...

... and where we were given to understand and appreciate what God has done with Israel, and that His program with them is temporarily held in abeyance, but that God will one day resume and fulfill His program with Israel once this present disp. of grace has come to an end.

- And what I’m after is that our being made *partakers of Israel’s spiritual things*—(which is, [among many things], our being the beneficiaries of the New Testament—which provides for us the *spiritual* (or inner-man) **means** for our functional, sanctified sonship life—for us to be godly and spiritually fit in God’s sight) ...

... what I’m after is that we were also made aware of the fact and reality of us Gentile members of the body of Christ being made *partakers of Israel’s spiritual things* (of the NT) in that illustration God had Paul utilize of the OLIVE TREE and our being *grafted in* to that Olive Tree.

- Rom. 11:15-21

- In this illustration you have 2 trees:

- “Olive Tree” = being specially treated by God [in general] - but we can come to understand it better than that as we will see.

- “Wild Olive Tree” = Gentiles: who were ‘far off’ - wild and left alone.

- Now—there are some grace folks who say that we are in **no way** connected with the New Covenant or New Testament at all ... and so some make the claim that we (members of the body of Christ) are NOT “*grafted in*” to this Olive Tree ... but any honest dealing with the text (and context) of Rom. 11 says that we are. (you have to stick with the **context** that’s set forth for the Olive Tree Illustration back in Rom. 11:15!)

- And there IS a lot of confusion and controversy over this passage for the simple reason of not paying attention to the context!

- And because of that—I want to say some things about the context of this passage so that I can then say what I want to about us being *partakers of Israel’s spiritual things*. [beneficiaries of the NT!]

- My understanding is that by what Paul describes in Rom. 11:15ff, I definitely **do** think that it involves the issue of me understanding that since I am a Gentile believer in “*the gospel of Christ*” in this disp. of grace—that I have been made a *partaker of Israel’s spiritual things* contained in “*the gospel of God*” that God had *promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.*” (Rom. 1:2-4)

- I’m also to understand that as it says in Rom. 11:24, that as I am one who is “*cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature*” and “*grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree*” - that I am, therefore, partaking “*of the root and fatness of the olive tree*” (:17) - which means that I **really am** a *partaker of Israel’s spiritual things*, just as Rom. 15:27 tells me ...

... (and which is described in detail in Rom. 1-8—being the “*spiritual things*” of Justification unto eternal life, and Sanctification unto functional life).

- Now, that said—I want to be cautious here: because while I understand the truth of that—I also understand that that is **not** the **main purpose** of what Rom. 11:15ff is teaching us!

- Rather, the **strict context** of Rom. 11:15ff is to teach both the naturalness and the reality of God resuming and fulfilling His program with Israel, which He unexpectedly suspended when Israel fell!

- And I'm saying all that in order to say this—the issue of us Gentiles in this disp. of grace being *partakers of Israel's spiritual things* (and what we can glean out of the illustrative analogy of the Olive Tree in Rom. 11:15ff—in connection with us Gentile members of the body of Christ partaking of “*the root and fatness of the olive tree*” and how that all connects with being beneficiaries of the New Covenant/Testament) **it really is only a passing reference** (or secondary reference), and not the **main** or **primary** thing that the Olive Tree analogy is referring to.

- Now if that's understood—we should be ‘safe’ to go on and look at the ‘passing reference’ contained here to our being beneficiaries of the New Covenant/Testament.

- So in this Olive Tree illustrative analogy, you have 3 component ‘Parts’ given to you in Rom. 11:17.

- The Olive Tree is one that is specially treated by God—it's been specially taken care of—it's been cultivated and kept by God ...

... and when the component parts are taken all together as a single tree—we'll see that it provides for everything that a person needs to have in order to be ‘spiritually fit’ in God's sight—but **NOT** by man's own works/energy/effort ... but by God's Jehovah-ness and grace—by God doing all of the work, and then giving these *spiritual things* to you by His grace!

- The 3 Component Parts in Rom. 11:17 - [and I'm going to give them to you, not in the order they are given, but from ‘the ground up’]:

(understanding what comes from the Davidic Covenant)

- **The Root** = God's Jehovah-ness & Life — Justification unto eternal life—if you're going to live and labor with God forever, you have to have God's eternal life.

- **The Fatness** = Functional Life — with all of it's ministry and privileges and blessings through the Spirit of God, God the Holy Ghost—the very Tree that God planted in Israel through Christ and His work of **Redemption**—including all of the spiritual (inner-man) benefits for godliness and spiritual fitness to take place in a person Sanctification-wise.

- **The Natural Branches** = The Privilege of Spiritual Service to God — which was True Israel's privilege of spiritual service to God—and who naturally had the covenant right and opportunity to either be partakers of the “*root and fatness*”, or not.

- (both, the “*fatness*” and the “*natural branches*” is where sonship comes in—that is, where sonship functional life comes in. [living & labor])

- And notice that as (:17) says, that “*some of the branches*” (the natural branches) were “*broken off*” — these ‘*broken off*’ branches of Israel are those who did **not** believe in their Christ.

- And those that were not ‘*broken off*’ are the believing remnant of Israel—True Israel.

- Israel is spoken of as an Olive Tree in scripture — (**Psa. 52:8; Jer. 11:16; Hos. 14:6**)

- Now when God suspended His prog. w/ Isr.—we, Gentiles, (*the wild Olive Tree*), when we heard “*the gospel of Christ*” (Who is the seed of David) - and believed the gospel when it was preached to us—we were “*cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature*” and were “*grafted in among*” the branches (kind of grafted to the ‘stump’ left by the broken off branches) ... and became partakers of “*the root and fatness of the olive tree*”.

- In other words—we Gentiles also partake of the “*root*” of God’s Jehovah-ness unto Eternal Life (perfect justification); and the “*fatness*” of the ministry of the Spirit of God unto Functional Life (perfect sanctification), i.e., **spiritual fitness**.

- (‘spiritual fitness’ includes all matters pertaining to godliness and sonship).

- **The Olive Tree** itself (as a whole) can be viewed or thought about as: **Spiritual Benefits**—(based upon **Redemption!**)—based upon the “*seed of David*” (the Lord Jesus Christ, the Redeemer and His redemption)!

- So you can see how the illustrative analogy of the Olive Tree matches up beautifully with the issues or components of the **New Covenant** (and/or **New Testament**)!

- And therefore, this entire illustrative analogy of the Olive Tree can be truly said to be a **Testamental Tree!**

... because it's all based upon the Son of God enfleshing himself into the line of the seed of David in order to fulfill the mandates of the Davidic Cov. ... the **1st Mandate** being the Redeemer and His redemption.

- And my reason for going over all this—is so that when you are told that you (a Gentile member of the body of Christ) are *partakers of* Israel's *spiritual things*—that immediately, you should have in your mind the issue of:

- Paul, being *separated unto the gospel of God (which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures), concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. (Rom. 1:2-4) ... (the Redeemer and His redemption) ...*

- The **Olive Tree** illustrative analogy (Rom. 11:15ff) ...

- And the **New Covenant/Testament** benefits (Jer. 31:33-34), and the 3 issues sitting there & confirmed in Paul's epistles ...

- And all of those "*things*" (Israel's *things*) you are now *partakers of!* WOW! when you think about it—we are *partakers of A LOT of Israel's spiritual things!!!*

- And we are *partakers of* Israel's *spiritual things* **without** violating 'right division'; without damaging the unique and distinctive nature of the great dispensational change God has made; and without 'blurring' or 'blending' the 2 programs together! ...

... it's all been accomplished by God all the while keeping the disp. of grace separate and apart from God's program with Israel!

- Now one more thing about the Good Olive Tree and the Wild Olive Tree illustrative analogy ...

- Remember—just as you were told in Rom. 11:20-21 ...

20 ... *Be not highminded, but fear:*

21 *For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.*

- Just as easy as it was for God to graft us Gentile Wild Olive Tree branches into the good Olive Tree—one day, when God **ends** this disp. of grace in which we live—God will un-graft the Gentiles from the good Olive Tree and put them back in their ‘Wild Olive Tree’ status—just like it was before the disp. of grace was brought in—just like it was in God’s prog. w/ Israel!

- (everything will be put back just like it was at the end of Acts 7—and God will resume and fulfill His program with Israel—and the Lord’s Day of Wrath will commence!)

- But we (Gentile members of the church, the body of Christ today), are most definitely beneficiaries of the New Covenant ... and more precisely, the New Testament! (and you should now know **how** we are; and **why** we have to be!)

- And that’s what it means to be *partakers of Israel’s spiritual things* !

- What is the difference between the word Covenant and Testament?

- The word *testament* never occurs in the Old Testament.

- In the New Testament, both words (*covenant* and *testament*) are translated from the same Greek word: διαθήκη [diatheke] ...

... which means that the **context** will dictate which word is the proper word to use.

- Perhaps the best place in the Bible to see the difference between *covenant* and *testament* is in the book of Hebrews.

- Especially **Hebrews ch. 7-10** where the context is pretty much all about the New Covenant and the New Testament.

(let's run some verses)

- (Read—Heb. 9:1-28; 10:4-9; 10:12-18)

[*testament*] - (Also—Mat. 26:26-28 [same in Mar 14:24; Luk 22:20])

[*testament*] - (Also— 1 Cor. 11:23-26 [25];

2 Cor. 3:1-6 [6];

2 Cor. 3:12-14 [14—the only time the words “*old testament*” are used together in the Bible])

- The words *covenant* and *testament* are very similar, and very close in meaning ... they both share a lot of the same meaning ... and once again, (as is the case with many words that are very close in meaning), what you have here is really ‘2 sides of the same coin’, so to speak.

- So—what is the basic, ‘bottom line’ concept that both *covenant* and *testament* share? ... what is the ‘bottom line’ issue that both terms have in common? ...

... (by the way—it’s probably better and more precise to think of these terms as **testament and covenant**—in that order—because a *covenant* actually comes from a *testament*.)

- Both, a *testament* and a *covenant* is a **CONTRACT**.

... a ‘**contract**’ is a binding agreement between individuals, formally written and executed.

- **A testament** is a contract—but a contract usually in the form of a will—(and as George Crabb notes: “A *testament* is a formal instrument regularly drawn up, and duly attested, **according to the forms of law**.”) ... and it’s that issue of “**according to the forms of law**” that is the discriminating difference between *covenant* and *testament* as we will see! (God uses a different expression)

- And a *testament* typically has an **inheritance** in view! (being closely associated with a ‘will’).

- **A covenant** is also a contract — a *covenant* is a mutual agreement between two or more parties that something shall be done ... it’s a ‘contract’ or an **item of a ‘contract,’** signed, sealed, and delivered.

- But for now—we should be able to recognize that testament and covenant are ‘2 sides’ of the same ‘**contract**’ **coin**!

- And there is a need to sometimes talk about a *testament* as a contract because of the nature of it—and there are times to talk about a *covenant* as a contract because of the nature of it.

- Now—as it always is the case—we’re not so much concerned with what these words all mean in a simple dictionary definition way ... or what they mean to men (in men’s dictionaries) ... but rather, what do these words mean TO GOD? (As God uses them in God’s word)!

- (see **Heb. 9:17**) - see that expression “**OF FORCE**”

- My understanding is—**that’s** the critical, distinguishing, discriminating difference ... [that’s what George Crabb was talking about when he said that a *testament* is “a formal instrument [*read “will”*] drawn up, and duly attested, according to the forms of law.” — i.e., it’s “of force”]

... of the two terms (*testament* and *covenant*) - one of those terms is the term God uses when He wants to talk about the **contract** He has made - but wants to particularly focus upon **the technicalities of how He has made the contract “OF FORCE”** ... and that term is “testament” !

- And my understanding is that (simply put) - the major discriminating difference between the word *testament* and *covenant* is the issue of the technicalities of how it gets made; and how it becomes “of force” just as it’s stated in Heb. 9:17.

- There are times in God’s word where God wants to talk about the *covenant* that He made simply for the “*covenant*” that it is ... without any real focus upon the technicalities of **how** it gets made, or **how** it becomes “*of force*”, and things along those lines.

- The word “*covenant*” is more suited for when you’re simply dealing with the **generalities** about the **contract**.

- Which is why you have Hebrews 8 talking so much about a *covenant*—and Heb. 9:1-10 is talking about a *covenant* ... but then a ‘shift’ takes place in Heb. 9:11ff to the **technicalities** of the contract being made “*of force*” ... and the word testament is used.

- But then there are times within the particular context in which God needs to make a ‘shift’ and get away from the simple generalities about the contract—and He needs to talk about the **technicalities** of how the contract was made ... and what brings the contract “*of force*” ... and what, therefore, actually initiates the contract, and what’s required in connection with it ...

... and when that’s the case—that’s when the word *testament* comes in.

- Because, just as Heb. 9:16 says, “*For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.*”

- Any time *testament* is being spoken about, the focus in the New Covenant or the Old Covenant is upon the “testator” aspect of what’s been taking place — (i.e., the “*testator*” aspect of the contract).

... sometimes it will have the direct individual involved—or his “death” (such as the Lord Jesus Christ in Heb. 9:16) - or the circumstances of His death—or whatever.

- But as a general rule—word-wise, (as far as the 2 words are concerned), *covenant* focuses upon the **generalities** regarding the contract aspect of the agreement that the parties involved have entered in to, and the obligations involved on either parties’ part, (or both, as the case may be), depending upon what the **context** wants to deal with.

- And as a general rule—when *testament* is the word that is used—because the “testament” comes from “testator” - and because testator comes from the work of the individual who actually performs the operation by which the “covenant” (or contract) becomes “of force” and therefore come into effect—and by which the covenant/contract derives its strength and derives its life (and everything like that) ...

... when the word *testament* is used—it’s used within the context in which those kind of things are being focused upon.

- When the word *testament* is used—those are the **thoughts** that it’s designed to generate.

- And, depending upon whether the immediate information that's being given is very **specific** or very **loose**, (it doesn't make any difference), the use of the word *testament* still has something to do with the **mechanical means** of making the contract "*of force*" ...

... just like in Heb. 9:17 - "*For where a **testament** is, there must also of necessity be **the death of the testator.***"

- Those 2 verses (of Heb. 9:16-17) are the 2 verses that come along and tells you the kind of information, and the kind of focus that's involved when the word "*testament*" is being utilized. ("*testament*" coming from the word "*testator*")

- A *testament* is made by a *testator*—and, therefore, it focuses upon the **person** making the agreement; (making the contract); and having it "*of force*" based upon whatever has been determined as being the **means** by which the *testator* will make it "*of force.*"

- And in the case of the New Testament—it has to do with the **DEATH** of the *testator*, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

- Now that doesn't mean that the word "**blood**" can never be put together with the word *covenant* (or that the word *covenant* can never be put together with the word *blood*), because it most definitely can!

- In fact—when you think about **both** words—(the word *testament* and the word *covenant*) - you should be thinking about both "**blood**" AND "**redemption**" !

- **Redemption** (and the **blood of redemption**) is at the heart of BOTH the word *testament* and the word *covenant*! (as used in God's word)

- But what we're simply after here is that when the words *testament* and *covenant* are being utilized—and when they're going back and forth in the context—or, in a particular context in which the word is simply used once or twice (and the word is strictly "*testament*" or the word "*covenant*") - it's telling you, therefore, that when those words are used ... with "*covenant*" you've got the **generalities** of the contract or the agreement involved and the things that the agreement (or contract) is all about ...

... and with the word “*testament*” you’ve got more focus upon the **technicalities** or the **mechanical means** by which the contract becomes “*of force*” and the event or circumstances or the situation that has either made it “*of force*” or keeps it “*of force*” or whatever.

- And the **context** is going to provide you with all the information that’s going to determine those kind of details.

- But as far as the general discriminating difference between the 2 terms—that’s what’s going on ... and that ‘holds water’ in every occurrence of those 2 words.

... sometimes you have to appreciate the context a little ‘broader’ - especially if you’re dealing with a context or a portion of a context that’s dealing with something of a conclusionary nature—or if you’re dealing with things near the end of the overall context.

- For example: see Heb. 10:28-29—notice in (:29) you have that phrase, “*the blood of the covenant*” - and there’s nothing wrong with that at all—there’s nothing that ‘goes against the grain’ by linking “*the blood*” with “*the covenant*” (*the New Covenant*) instead of the *New testament* ...

... because when you realize that the writer of Hebrews is coming to the **end** of a body of information—and by now you’re expected to appreciate **both** aspects of that New Covenant and New Testament (the *Covenant* being, as Crabb noted: “**an item of a contract**”) - hence, the *covenant* is an “item” coming out of the *testament-contract*) ...

... and therefore, “*the blood*” is the *testamental means* by which the *covenant* is now “*of force*” - and now, therefore, True Israel is going to operate upon IT’S stipulations and the operations and features and characteristics of the New Covenant, and NOT the Old Covenant.

- Therefore, those members of the remnant of True Israel have got the sanctification of that New Covenant, **not** the Old Covenant, because “*the blood*” has been shed; it’s “*of force*”; the “Old” one IS now “old” ... so get going now with the NEW one!

- So in certain places, the simple discriminating factor involved in the meaning of the 2 words *testament* & *covenant* will be enough ...

... but in other places, it will be because the **context** has been focusing upon the **mechanical** or **technical means** by which the contract came into place (or was made “*of force*”) [i.e., “*the testator*”] - and so, “*testament*” would be the consistent word to use ...

... and in some other places, the **context** has been focusing upon the **nature** of the agreement or contract and the kind of things that were agreed upon—and therefore the focus isn’t upon “*the testator*” - but it’s upon the fact that the two parties have entered into an agreement ... and therefore the word “*covenant*” is the more appropriate word to use.

- Questions? Comments?

- Now, as a ‘side bar’ type issue—you should be able to appreciate the truth and accuracy in calling the books of Genesis—Malachi The Old Testament, and **not** The Old Covenant books of the scripture; and calling the books of Matthew—Revelation the New Testament, and **not** the New Covenant books of the scripture.

- Why? because, in the case of the Old Testament, the Old Testament **preceded** the Old Covenant.

- and it could do that because the Old *Covenant* is an issue or an item that stems from, or comes out of the Old *Testament*.

- The Old *Covenant* begins in Exodus 19.

- But the Old *Testament* began all the way back in Genesis!

- see **Gen. 3:6-7; 15; 21**

- In Gen. 3:6-7, man (Adam & Eve) had ‘fallen’ into sin—which was a predicament that they could not get themselves out of ... even though they tried to do so by their own ‘good works’ or energy of their own flesh (i.e., ‘Operation Fig Leaf’) ... which was totally unacceptable to God because it was totally inconsistent with God’s Righteousness & Justice for fallen man to redeem himself ... (it violates the qualifications of what a Redeemer is).

- Man had now put himself in a situation where he needed **redemption** (and a **Redeemer** to perform the redemption) ...

... and one of the qualifications of a Redeemer is: a Redeemer has to be a 'near kinsman' - that is, he has to be a **MAN** who, while completely sympathetic to the one needing to be redeemed; **he cannot be in the same position or situation of the one needing redemption, himself!**

- For example: a slave cannot redeem another slave! (which would mean that the slave needing redemption would end up **still in slavery!**)

- Only a 'free man' can redeem a slave!

- Hence, Adam and Even could NOT redeem themselves by 'Operation Fig Leaf'!

- So, what does God do? He makes a **contract** (so to speak) - He enters into an **agreement** for a Redeemer to come into the world and provide for the redemption ... and that's what's going on in **Gen. 3:15**.

- And my understanding is that Gen. 3:15 sets forth the technicalities or the mechanical means in order for a contract to take place—and in order for a *testament* to be made.

- In Gen. 3:15 (God is speaking to the *serpent*, Satan) - and God lets it be known that **A MAN** is going to come from the woman ... "*her seed*" (the seed of the woman) ...

... **and BLOOD is going to be shed** ... "*thou shalt bruise his heel*" - (note: "*bruise*" = doesn't just mean an injury by a blow to the flesh which discolors the skin—but it also means **to crush or mangle** whereby open bleeding takes place)

- There's your 'technical' or 'mechanical' means for the contract: BLOOD is going to be shed by the seed of the woman ... and that "*seed*" of the woman, is, as we all know, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

... but He's not going to come into the world for 4,000 years! (so what is going to be done in the mean time?) ...

... well, in the mean time the blood of animals will suffice to represent the blood of the coming Redeemer ...

... hence, **Gen. 3:21** “*Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.*” [that’s **blood!** an animal had to shed its blood! - animal death and plant death (fig leaves) are **not** the same thing!]

- And *blood* is used by God to indicate that redemption is going to require the DEATH of the Redeemer **in place** of (or as a **substitute** for) the one being redeemed—a Substitute Redeemer will be necessary in order to give His life for the ones to be redeemed!

- By the time of Gen. 3:21, you’ve now got a **testament**—(the Old *Testament*) based upon the blood of animals that looks forward to the time in which the blood of the New *Testament* takes place ... the time in which the Redeemer will perform His redemption at the Cross of Christ.

- The blood of animals is used until the time that the *seed* of the woman arrives.

- And God makes man (and later on, Israel) aware of the special nature and special significance of redemption blood

.....

... **Gen. 9:4** (God to Noah) “*But flesh with the life therefore, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.*”

- **Deu. 12:23** “*Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood is the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh.*”

- The significance is clear: the Redeemer is going to give His “life” for the ‘death’ of the ones to be redeemed!

- My point is: all these things are the **technical** and **mechanical** means of the contract—all these things are the things of a TESTAMENT!
(albeit, the **Old** Testament)

- Then—only **after** the Old Testament is made (and made ‘of force’), then (based upon that *testament*) God makes a *covenant* with Israel—the Old Covenant—over in Exodus 19ff.

- And the point is—ALL of the books from Genesis-Malachi are rightly called, and rightly to be understood as The Old Testament! (not the ‘Old Covenant’)

- And you know the rest of the story—beginning in Matthew, the “*seed*” of the woman arrives on the scene—the 2nd Member of the Godhead, God the Son enfleshes Himself into the line of the seed of David (which goes back to the “*seed*” of the woman [Eve] according to the Lord’s genealogy as given in Luke 4) ...

... the Lord Jesus Christ is the qualified Redeemer—and He executes our redemption at the Cross of Calvary.

- And just as Heb. 9 points out (especially Heb. 9:12—*Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.*” — the blood of the Redeemer, being ‘better’ blood provides the redemption.

- And this means that a New *Testament* has been made—a *testament* that provides for ALL of the ‘inner-man’ features that allow for spiritual fitness to take place; for godliness to take place; and for sonship to take place! once and for all!

- (I’m skipping a whole bunch of details)

- And then—once the New *Testament* has been inaugurated by the blood of Christ [the death of the *testator*]—then God can institute the New *Covenant* that He said he would make with Israel back in Jer. 31 based upon, and as an ‘item’ or issue coming out of the New *Testament*.

- (by the way—if you’ve noticed, there is no such thing as the New Testament being one thing, and the New Covenant being another thing—or the issue of there being 2 New Covenants or 2 New Testaments ... they are ‘two sides of the same, single contractual coin’!)

- So what do we make of all of this?

- We Gentile members of the “one new man”, the “new creature”; “the body of Christ” - we are all **“partakers of (Israel’s) spiritual things”**.

- **Redemption** and the one and only Redeemer who provided the redemption—(the Lord Jesus Christ and His cross-work).

- Israel needed a Redeemer and His redemption—and so do we.

- Israel ... **Psa. 130:7-8** *Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.*

- Body of Christ ... **Titus 2:13-14** *Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour 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.*

- **Ransoming** from being the lawful captives of the adversary, Satan himself—and the Redeemer performs the ransoming.

- For Israel (who had become the lawful captive of the adversary) ... **Jer. 31:11** *For the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he.*

- But (very important) under God’s program with Israel, it was understood that the ransom that the Redeemer would produce would only be for Israel, and NOT for the Gentiles ... **Mat. 20:28** (the Lord speaking) *Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.* (“many” but not “all”!!!)

- Not until Paul and the “revelation of the mystery” do we learn that we, Gentiles, were ransomed by the Redeemer, too ... **1 Tim. 2:5-6** *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for ALL, to be testified in due time.*

- And from the Redeemer doing His redemption comes our:

- Justification

- Sanctification

- Adoption as “sons”

- The New Testament benefits that gives you the inner-man capacity for the real Father–son/daughter relationship to exist.

- Furthermore, we are *partakers* of:

- The written word of God (“*oracles of God*” Rom. 3:2)

- The Holy Ghost and His Holy Spirit ministry (John 14-16; Rom. 5:5; 8:9-11)

- (which are other *spiritual things* that we are *partakers* of)

- And when it comes to those New Testament benefits (1. Heart writing; 2. God being our God, and we being God’s people; 3 The sonship relationship and the intimacy of fellowship with God our Heavenly Father) ... those New Testament benefits MUST be, and must ALWAYS be viewed by us (as members of the church, the body of Christ) in 2 particular ways:

1. Redemptively

2. Dispensationally!

- In fact—that issue back in Rom. 1:1 where we saw that Paul was “*separated*” unto the particular *gospel of God* that he was given had those 2 components to it:

1. Some particular sonship matters that were “*promised afore by the prophets in the holy scriptures*”

2. According to “*the mystery*” that was not made known before.

- Even there—Paul’s “*separation unto the gospel of God*” must be understood both Redemptively and Dispensationally!

- So—when a person gets justified unto eternal life by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ as their only all-sufficient Savior—you immediately get redeemed, ransomed, (and all that comes with it) ... you are immediately given the Holy Ghost ... you are taken out of being “in Adam” and fully identified with all that God has made you to be “in Christ”.

- And so when it comes to all that God has made us to be “in Christ” (positionally) - and putting our Position “in Christ” into Practice in all of the details of our lives ... it calls upon us to utilize the very *spiritual things* of Israel that we are *partakers of* ... and particularly it takes:

1. The written word of God (especially Paul’s 13 epistles which form the curriculum for our sonship edification)
2. The New Testament benefits (**understood redemptively and dispensationally**).

- In other words—God is utilizing us *and* those New Testament benefits for an entirely different and distinct plan, program, design, and purpose than what He was doing and accomplishing with His program with Israel!

- Before we leave this issue—a few quotes from David Winston Busch in his book, “Biblical Briefs Vol. 1” - “Seen of Angels” ...

- (On dealing with the difference between *covenant* and *testament* ...) (p.290) - “The new **covenant** is inherently national as a covenant. It covenants for Israel’s kingdom and promised blessing to be “restored” under sonship adoption on better contractual terms than those offered in the Mosaic covenant (Mt. 21:43; Acts 1:6; 1Pet. 2:9). Regardless of its benefits, it cannot be covenantally divorced from its national context and program. Being Israel’s grace covenant, it is therefore synonymous with the kingdom. It is a kingdom covenant based on the redemption of the cross, not synonymous with it. **Redemption does not require the new covenant. The kingdom does.** The new covenant does not covenant **for** redemption. It covenants to replace the curses of the Mosaic covenant and forever change Israel’s relationship to them in accordance with the program set forth by the law and prophets.”

(p.291) - “Contrary to what virtually every theologian says, there is a difference between the new testament and the new covenant. While related, they are not the same. They are also not two different covenants. They are two separate issues involving the nature and mechanics of Israel’s new covenant. The testament is “the book of the covenant (Exo. 24:7-8; Heb. 9:19-20). **The covenant is contained in, and based on, the testament. Both are connected with blood.**”

“The new testament is more than an amorphous (lacking form or structure) legal concept in connection with Christ’s work as Redeemer. It is made up of particular terms and goes into effect (*of force*) in connection with the death of the testator (Heb. 9:16-17). Paul was “made a minister” of this new testament in connection with his separation (Rom. 1:1; 2Cor. 3:6). **As such, his epistles are contained in it as part of its mystery testimony.** We are to be the living epistles of this new testament mystery. We, however, are only a part of this testamental record.”

(p.301) - “**The new testament is synonymous with redemption. The new covenant is synonymous with Israel’s kingdom.**”

(p.309) - [speaking about the new testament] - “While these spiritual things were spoken of before, they were not foreseen to be ministered in the way they are today.”

(p.311) - “Being “in Christ” is one thing. What we are in Christ *for* is another matter.”

(p.313) - “We then are beneficiaries by testament, not by covenant. By contrast, Gentiles in the coming kingdom of heaven will also be beneficiaries of the testament, but through the fulfilling of Israel’s inheritance covenantally. Per the law and prophets, they are prophetic beneficiaries with Israel in connection with the earth, not mystery beneficiaries with the one new man in connection with the “heavenly places” (Eph. 1; Col. 1:27). We are both beneficiaries of God’s new testament gospel work in Christ.

(p.338) - [paraphrase] ‘We have been dispensationally, not covenantally, made partakers of Israel’s spiritual things.’

- Questions? Comments?

- (Again) - read Rom. 15:25-27—(:25-26 = 6th Sanctifying Work of the HG)
(:27 = 7th Sanctifying Work of the HG)

- END of ‘Part B’ of the Godly Living section of Rom. 15:22-29.

- PART C of the Godly Living Section: (:28-29 read).

- Part C (of especially Paul's godly Living & Labor):

Regarding the legal matter of “*sealing*” as it pertains to God having temporarily suspended and stopped His program with Israel until He is finished dealing with the Gentiles—and the matter of Paul as the apostle of the Gentiles intending to come to the Roman saints “*in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ*” despite intense opposition - (despite the defaming and the lies brought against him) which gives the final living proof and testimony of the truth and reality of the Godly Thinking of Rom. 15:8-21.

- And, as we will see, we are going to get the 8th and final Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost that validates the truth and reality that God has, indeed, made a great dispensational change—and He has instituted a new administration of it with the apostle Paul instead of Israel's 12 apostles.

- Here in (:28-29) we have 2 verses and 2 sentences—1 sentence to each verse.

28 When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.

- “*When therefore I have performed this*”

- What Paul is talking about here is the issue back up in (:25-26) — and what he's going to ‘*perform*’ is taking the *contribution* (the money) that he collected from the Gentile (body of Christ) saints in Macedonia and Achaia for the *poor saints at Jerusalem* and going to Jerusalem and delivering it to the remnant saints.

- But it's the next phrase that is of great importance to us—because it's the next phrase of (:28) that sets forth the 8th (and final) Sanctifying Work of the HG ...

... “*and have sealed to them this fruit,*”

- That's a very interesting phrase—and notice that if all that God is after here is to give us a ‘*narrative*’ of Paul actually making the trip to Jerusalem and delivering the collection to the remnant saints there...
... or if all that God is after here is to give an historical account proving that Paul actually did it—then this phrase seems to be a bit out of place (or unnecessary).

- Because if that's all God is after here—why add this phrase at all? — why not simply say, “*When therefore I have performed this, I will come by you into Spain.*” ???

- Well, my understanding is that what God is after here is NOT simply giving a ‘narrative’ or an ‘historical account’ of Paul actually delivering the contribution of the saints in Macedonia & Achaia to the poor saints at Jerusalem—(true as that is ... and it is the truth of the matter) ... but there's **more** to it than that ... God is after something **more** than that.

- My understanding is that, even by the natural reading of the verse, that 2nd phrase is purposefully given by God to Paul in order for it to **stand out** — it's designed to ‘grab’ your attention! — and it's designed to grab your attention because it is something of **great importance** to God (and in the overall matter that God is having Paul present to us here as the 8th Sanctifying Work of the HG) ...

... the truth is—this phrase, “*and have sealed to them this fruit*”, is a matter of **great significance** when it comes to the HG validating the great dispensational change that God has made!

- And the great and significant thing is found in one word of this phrase ... the word “*sealed*”.

- When God has Paul say, “*and have sealed to them this fruit*” —

- “*them*” = the poor remnant of Israel saints that are at Jerusalem.

- “*this fruit*” = the generous and joyful contribution of money that was collected for them.

- and the choice of the word “*fruit*” should not be overlooked or simply passed by as a colorful choice of word used to describe the contribution.

- But rather the word *fruit* is significant, too—because it aptly describes the fulness of the work and labor and **ministry** of the apostle Paul (*the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*), as well as the work and labor of the body of Christ saints in Macedonia & Achaia!

- In other words—this isn't just any old contribution—this isn't just worldly altruism or philanthropy or the humanitarian relief of the poor that even lost persons can do or be involved with (vis., politicians) ... NO!

- This word “*fruit*” is the appropriate word to use as one of those ‘trigger’ words — it matches up with something significant to **saints**; to **godliness**; and to **godly edification**!

- By using the word “*fruit*” God intends for that word to ‘trigger’ your thinking back to the beginning of your instruction about your Sanctification (your sanctified position “in Christ”) back in Romans 6!

*(Rom. 6:22) But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your **fruit** unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.*

- This is a combination of Paul and his **ministry** (as *the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*), and Paul's ministry of *the gospel of God* — **plus** the Gentile, body of Christ saints in Macedonia & Achaia who received *the gospel of God*— and their combined use of that doctrine—**deploying** that doctrine in all godliness (godly Love & Charity) in order to meet the needs of the remnant saints at Jerusalem.

- And unlike lost men (and politicians) acting for ‘humanitarian’ reasons (at best), and for self-promotion (at worst) — this is a matter of godly **selflessness and kindness** working out from the effectual working of God's word within them!

- And unlike lost men—this is “*fruit unto holiness*” that contains that issue of “*everlasting life*” — (and that's the ‘kicker’) - it's the **product** of true godliness—it's the *fruit* of godly sonship edification that gives God great delight and great pleasure (**not** for just ‘the time being’), but **that will last as long as your everlasting life lasts!**

- (contrary to the thinking and opinions of lost men, the philanthropy and altruism of lost ungodly men **NEVER** produces “*fruit*” that is acceptable, delightful, or pleasing to God [in God's sight]!!!)

- Now for that word that is most significant - the word that makes this phrase to **stand out** and points to the great importance and the great significance of this being the 8th Sanctifying Work of the HG ...
... that word, "*sealed*".

- 28 *When therefore I have performed this* (taking the contribution of money gathered by Paul from the body of Christ Gentile saints in Macedonia & Achaia [and even Galatia] to the "poor saints at Jerusalem" of the remnant of Israel) ...

- [Addendum] - remember we talked about the backdrop of those remnant of Israel *saints* = God had sent John the Baptist to testify and proclaim that the kingdom of heaven was "at hand" and that Jesus of Nazareth was "the Christ" [the Messiah] of Israel ... and the apostate element of Israel stood by and allowed John the Baptist to be killed; then they refused and rejected both the ministry and the person of Jesus of Nazareth being the Son of God and their "Christ", and they demanded the death of their "Christ" whom God had sent to them ... and then they refused and rejected the testimony of God the Holy Ghost (sent to them) in the early chapters of Acts—and finally, in Acts 7 they actually killed Stephen who was 'filled with the Holy Ghost' and told them the truth (testimony) of what God wanted them to hear ...

... and at that point, the Day of the Lord's great Wrath was set to begin ... but it didn't.

- In preparation of the day of God's wrath—the Lord Jesus Christ taught the 'little flock' [remnant] to 'take no thought' for their food, clothing, shelter, etc. ... and they 'sold all they had' and gave it to the apostles to distribute (just as they were taught to do) ...

... and there was a reason for this—(you know that God was going to miraculously provide for them out in the great tribulation period) ... but I want you to understand why they were taught by the Lord to sell everything they owned and for God to provide for them instead ...

... and, as we noted before, God's wrath would consume all their possession back there in Jerusalem—but there's more to it than that ...

... during the Day of the Lord's Wrath (during the tribulation period), they would be living under the government and the economy of the Antichrist! And because they would not take 'the mark of the beast', they could not buy or sell anything!

- And basically, by the time you get to Acts 2:44-45; 4:31-37, the entire amount of money, possessions, and provisions that was given up by the ‘little flock’ (remnant) and dispersed by the 12 apostles would (most likely) have lasted for about 3 1/2 years (or the mid-point of the Trib. period). [or 4 1/2 years if you include the 1 year of ‘repentance to Israel’]

- and at the mid-point of the Trib., they were to ‘flee’ Jerusalem into the desert where God Himself would miraculously provide for them.

- But when God unexpectedly stopped and suspended His program with Israel and brought in this disp. of grace, those *poor saints in Jerusalem* were really in a bind ... because, not only had they sold all their possession—but because they were despised and rejected by the vain religious leaders of Israel (as well as all of apostate Israel); and because Israel was a ‘theocracy’ (government-wise) ... those poor saints of the ‘little flock’ couldn’t even get a job! (they were outcast)

- And this issue of the Gentile members of the ‘new man’ of the church, the body of Christ providing for the *poor saints at Jerusalem* is what’s being dealt with over in Gal. 2 ...

- (**Gal. 2:9-10**) - and it seems by that phrase “*the same which I also was forward to do*” matches up with 1 Cor. 16:1 ... which would mean that Paul had gotten a collection going for the *poor saints at Jerusalem* among the Galatian saints even before the collection was taken up in Macedonia & Achaia.

- And I only point this out (again) to say that this is a very powerful means of proving that God is **not** doing things according to the teachings of Jesus Christ in the gospel accounts (or according to the teachings of Israel’s 12 apostles)—but rather He’s doing things according to the teaching of Jesus Christ through the apostle Paul ...

... not according to the goings on of the ‘little flock’ (or the remnant of Israel) [prophecy] ... but according to the goings on of the ‘new man’ God is now creating from a new entity called the “body of Christ” [mystery]!

- And the question can be honestly asked: If you’re truly following the teachings of Jesus in the gospel accounts—then why haven’t you ‘sold all that you have’? (**Luk. 12:27-33**)

- (back to :28) ... *When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.*

- And as we noted—the 2nd phrase is the ‘attention-grabber’ - and something of great importance & great significance is being set forth in the expression: ... *and have sealed to them this fruit.*

- And the issue that is so important and so significant is that issue of: when Paul does go to Jerusalem and when he gives the poor saints of the remnant the contribution made by the Gentile, body-of-Christ saints in Macedonia & Achaia ... by the terminology God has Paul use—Paul calls it a “*sealing*” of the contribution to them ...

... and it’s that “*sealing*” that is so significant—and that indicates to us that this is the 8th Sanctifying Work of the HG.

- “*sealed*” or *seal*—

- First of all—I do not believe that this word has anything to do with the issue of ‘sealing’ something in the sense of making it safe, or putting it in a safe place in order that it might not be lost—like putting it in a safe, or sealing it in a 1st century ‘zip-lock’ bag.

- Notice the way God uses the term —

- **Deu. 32:34** (1st use in the Bible)

- The 1st use in the NT (historically) is in **John 3:33**

- The actual 1st use in the NT is **Mat. 27:66**

- And the only other time the word shows up (in the gospels) is **John 6:27**

- And the next time the word shows up in the NT is in Romans—which is the 1 and only time it’s used in Romans previous to here in 15:28 — **Rom. 4:11**

- Note the other times the word is used by Paul —

1 Cor. 9:2; 2Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30; 2Tim. 2:19

- And, of course, the word *seal* is used a whole bunch of times in the book of the Revelation (with the 7 seals) ... (a whole lot of *sealing* issues are going on there).

- My understanding is that the majority of the times that God uses this term in scripture, it's used in the sense of the passages we just looked at—however, there may be a few other contexts that utilize the word in a slightly different way—such as to *seal* in the sense of ‘making an end of an affair’ (such as in Dan. 9:24—but even there, you still have the sense of the way God uses it in the scriptures we just looked at, and a similar way to how it's used in Rom. 15:28).

- But my understanding is that God is having Paul use the word *seal* in the sense of the majority of the ways God has utilized the word throughout in His word.

- “*seal*” = (in the majority of contexts in God's word—and in the context of Rom. 15:28) you're talking about a LEGAL MATTER!

= (OED) - most commonly, a device (or stamp) impressed in wax and attached to a parchment or paper as evidence of its authenticity. Hence, a guarantee of the lawful authority and official nature of the contents of the document. The impression of a person's ‘signet’ placed upon an article or document giving evidence or a mark of ownership.

= (OED) - To place a *seal* upon a document gives evidence of its genuineness, or as a mark of **authoritative approval**.

- (see **The Great Seal of the United States**)

= it can also focus upon the conclusion or completion of something—*sealing* it as an officially completed matter to the satisfaction of all parties involved, **placing the matter beyond dispute or reversal**.

- A *seal* does not have to be an actual physical thing—it doesn't have to be a physical wax seal, or a seal impressed into a piece of paper.

= a *seal* can be talking about a verbal or written means to authenticate a matter— to legally go on record as believing in the validity of someone or something, to give legal witness or testimony that something is true, to validate a matter.
[Yeager]

= hence, a *seal* can be the giving of a legal witness or testimony that something is true and valid—**(a verbal or written testimony that something is true & valid)**.

... in view of a *seal* being a ‘verbal or written testimony that a thing is true and valid ...

- (Webster 1828)

5. That which confirms, ratifies or makes stable; [or gives] assurance. (2Tim. 2:19—*Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. ...*)

(verbal form)

3. To confirm; to ratify; to establish. (**Rom. 15:28!**)

- (back to [:28]) — When God has Paul say, *When therefore I have performed this* (giving the contribution to the poor saints at Jerusalem), **and have sealed to them this fruit ...**

... the *sealing* does, indeed, have to do with the conclusion or completion of the matter - ‘**mission accomplished**’ ... but, it’s much more than that ...

... as the word *seal* indicates—this action taken by Paul and the Gentile, body of Christ saints in Macedonia, Achaia, and even in Galatia is a **lawful act** that **carries the authoritative approval** of none other than God Himself—(it’s sanctified by the Holy Ghost [:16]!)

- Now **why** does God have this recorded this way?

- It could be because of the simple fact that a money transaction was to take place—so God wanted it to be carried out under His own authority and approval ... which is true.

- It could be because there might be some apprehension or wariness on the part of the Jewish remnant saints in Jerusalem accepting the contribution from Gentiles (or from Paul) ... which also may be true. (hence, need God’s approval)

- And I am sure that this issue of *sealing to them this fruit* wasn’t just done in silence—(or, Boom! here’s your money, I’m outta here) ... no, I’m sure that this *sealing* contained a lot of talking on Paul’s part—because as a *sealing* issue, in a case such as this, there would be an accompanying verbal testimony that this is a proper & valid thing to do **in GOD’s sight**!

- Those are valid reasons ... and right reasons ... but you have to ask the question—Are they satisfactory reasons for this being a Sanctifying Work of the HG that validates the great dispensational change? (and Paul)? ... is there something more going on here?

- Most often—when this passage is dealt with, the issue of God having Paul *seal to them this fruit* — the word *seal* is usually thought of in terms of the way that the remnant of Israel saints and Paul made the transaction—that is, it's often merely thought of as an authoritative expression that has to do with the assurance that the contribution would be properly received (and that the Jewish remnant saints wouldn't just flat-out reject it—but because it came with the authorized seal of God Himself, they could [and should] receive it).

- In other words—the word *seal* is God's way of making sure that the transfer of the contribution would be a success.

... and that's all true—but how is that a Sanctifying Work of the HG?

- (some even suggest that the word *seal* means that Paul was supposed to receive a 'receipt' for the money!)

- Outside of every reason for God to have Paul *seal to them this fruit* that has to do with the assurance that the contribution would be received properly by the poor Jewish remnant saints at Jerusalem (and that the transaction would be a successful one)—there **is** a matter that **DOES** have to do with a Sanctifying Work of the HG ... and it's also found in that word "*seal*".

- And what I'm after here is the old 'elephant in the room' kind of thing ...

... because, (setting aside all the issues of the word *seal* that go to making this a successful transaction) - **this entire thing (as a whole) is completely out of line with God's program with Israel!** (as we have noted in previous lessons) ...

... this entire action is **outside** of God's prog. w/ Isr.—it's **inconsistent** with it ... and, to put it bluntly, it's actually **unlawful** (in a sense) **if** what God was (and is) still doing was operating according to His program with Israel!

[do you see that? or do we need to review?]

- So—beyond all the other reasons (valid reasons) we have already noted—there is the matter of this whole action taken by God to have Paul take up a collection for the poor remnant of Israel saints at Jerusalem, being a matter that signifies and calls attention to the valid reality and truth that God has, indeed, made a great dispensational change! and Paul is the new administrator of it as *the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles!* ... and that word “*seal*” is at the heart of it!

- That word *seal* ‘signifies’ or gives divinely authorized ‘testimony’ of 2 particular (and remarkable) things in connection with this action being a Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost:

1. It signifies and gives divinely authorized testimony that Paul himself is a brand new apostle & minister to the Gentiles;

- Paul is the “*chief*” **member** of the ‘new man’ of the church, the body of Christ—(Paul is NOT a part of anything to do with God’s program w/ **Israel!**)

*****[see 1Tim. 1:15] “*chief*” = 1st in rank!

(Paul is NOT the *chief* of all sinners! ... Paul is the *chief* [ranking member] of *saved sinners!* - that is, of sinners who are saved members of the body of Christ!)

- Therefore, Paul (and no other person) is uniquely qualified (and in a unique position) to carry out this matter!

- And regarding this matter, we have the word “*seal*” — God is giving His *seal* on Paul and his ministry as the brand new apostle of the Gentiles ... why? and how? ...

- Answer: Paul has God’s authoritative approval to *seal* something—Paul has God’s authority and approval to *seal* this transaction; to make this transaction in the first place — Paul has the legal right to *seal* as the divinely given, lawful authority to carry out this function!

- Therefore, this really IS a Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost in this matter! ... the *sealing to them this fruit* gives **testimony** that Paul’s unique apostleship is valid & approved of by God Himself!

2. It signifies and gives divinely authorized testimony that God's program with Israel is lawfully stopped and suspended until God is finished dealing with the Gentiles.

How do we know this? - This is to be understood as the natural outcome of what has just been set forth in (:25, 26, & 27) - [the 6th and 7th Sanctifying Work of the HG].

- Once (:25-27) are understood properly, God now 'seals' the matter ...

... the remnant of Israel saints at Jerusalem are getting poorer ...

... God is not taking care of them as He said He would ...

... Gentiles are taking care of them ...

... but these Gentiles are believers—saints that are members of the one new man of the church the body of Christ ...

- All of which forms a powerful testimony that God has changed the program with Israel—He really has brought in a great dispensational change!

- And now in (:28), God sets a legal 'seal' to the matter that a great dispensational change has taken place ... **and He does it by means of the new administrator of it: the apostle Paul!**

- And when Paul says, *When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit,* the "seal" issue is telling you that **God has given His authoritative approval of the matter—and this matter is concluded and completed to the satisfaction of all parties involved—and places the matter beyond dispute or reversal!!!**

- Therefore, God's prog. w/Isr is legally (lawfully) stopped and suspended until God is finished dealing with the Gentiles ... and only then will He resume and fulfill His program with Israel!

- So—in view of this (knowing that the remainder of :28 and all of :29 still has to do with it) - we can now identify and describe the 8th and final Sanctifying Work of the HG.

- The 8th Sanctifying Work of the Holy Ghost that validates the great dispensational change God has made, and Paul as the new administrator of it is:

8. God has sealed Paul's ministry as "*the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles*" - Israel's program is legally stopped and suspended until God is finished dealing with the Gentiles.

- (there's quite a lot of information you can get out of that one word "*seal*")

28 When therefore I have performed this,

(taking the collection made by the Gentle body-of-Christ saints in Macedonia & Achaia to the poor remnant-of-Israel saints at Jerusalem)

and have sealed to them this fruit,

(Paul carries the divinely authorized credentials as the apostle of the Gentiles to "seal" such an action—and the "sealing" of this act is, itself, the divinely authorized testimony that God's program with Israel is stopped until God is finished dealing with the Gentiles)

(also—to the Gentile saints in Macedonia and Achaia that have given this contribution by means of the effectual working of God's word in their inner-man—that is, by means of their positive & proper response to God's word, plus the effectual working of godly Love & Charity, it becomes to them: FRUIT) ...

... and that's what it will be to us—when we function and operate likewise—and for the same reasons—it will be "*fruit unto holiness*" — and it will have eternal benefits!

(see Phil. 4:14-17 [:17])

I will come by you into Spain.

(Paul reiterates his intention from :24 to go to Spain [which, to me, it seems that he did go to Spain] - and his intent was to stop at Rome on his way and visit with the saints there)

- And again—rather than this merely being a matter of a ‘friendly visit’ type thing—underlying this matter is the expectation of the Living Union Relationship exists between you and God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ and the Spirit of God—to expand and extend to include the other members of the body of Christ in the local assembly and then to expand and extend on to include **other** local assemblies and to the body of Christ as a whole!

- Godly edification is to take place on an individual, personal level; then godly edification is to take place as a body within the local assembly; but then godly edification is designed to take place even with other local assemblies who are engaged in the same godly edificational work. (all in preparation for our function in “the creature” - heavenly places) - hence, the entire or whole “body of Christ” is to be edified unto godliness which is in faith (*1Tim. 1:4*).

Romans 15:29—*And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.*

- “*And I am sure that, when I come unto you,*”

- Who is the “you”? - the Roman saints—the believers (members of the body of Christ) at Rome.

- “*And I am sure*” - “*sure*” - meaning, positive; absolute certainty—Paul knows beyond any doubt (he’s **positive!**) that he is going to go to Rome, and when he does, he’s going to see the Roman saints—he’s going to have godly fellowship and communion with them.

- And that word “*sure*” (Paul’s absolute confidence and full persuasion of mind) extends to the remainder of sentence—that is, just as much as Paul is “*sure*” that he’s going to go to Rome and see the saints there ... he’s just as **positively sure** that when he does, he will come to them “*in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ*”.

- This harkens back to the beginning of the book of Romans.
(see **Rom. 1:7-9**)

- Romans was probably written in Acts 20—before that (in Acts 19), Paul was down in Corinth (in Achaia) and went up and around Macedonia and then down to Ephesus ... (**now see Acts 19:21**).

- Also—notice what the Lord says to Paul after the ordeal at Jerusalem took place—(see **Acts 23:11**).

- So Paul is ‘positive’ that he’s going to go to Rome and have communion & fellowship with the saints there.

- And Paul DOES go to Rome ... the destination is correct ... the **means** of getting there, however, may not have been exactly how he had thought would take place.

- Paul is going to go as a “*prisoner*” ... and that signals a great change in Paul’s ministry—(from Paul the ‘*provoker*’ [Rom. 11:11-14] to Paul the ‘*prisoner*’ [Eph. 3:1; 4:1; 2Tim. 1:8; Phm. 1, 9]....

... and all of the advanced doctrine for our sonship edification is now going to get written as ‘*Paul the prisoner*’!

- So (:29) foreshadows a great deal of things for the successful edification of the members of the body of Christ. [‘*prison Epistles*’]

29 And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

- The expectation of Paul is that when he does finally get to Rome and have the fellowship & communion with the saints there—Paul’s expectation is described in that phrase:

“in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.”

- That’s a powerful phrase—and a powerful and magnificent way to describe what SHOULD take place when saints (properly educated and edified “sons” as members of the body of Christ in this present disp. of grace) gather together!

- ***“fulness”*** - *“Fulness”* is not the same thing as “fulness” - (the word “fulness” does not appear in the AKJ Bible). [also, it will always come up as ‘misspelled’ in spell-checkers!]

- In today’s modern English grammar, “*ful*” is normally thought of as an English **suffix**, not an English prefix. And the spelling of *fulness* with only 1 “l” is thought of as just an archaic, out of date spelling of the word ‘fulness’. But that’s not the case at all.

- In the accuracy of Older (Modern) English—*fulness* and ‘fullness’ do NOT mean the same thing.

- The word ‘**fullness**’ (2 l’s) = a state (*ness*) of being full as a measurement of **quantity**—the ‘state’ of being “*full*” ... meaning that something (like a container) is ‘full’ to the point that there is no room for more.

- The word ‘full’ (in contrast to ‘ful’) carries that meaning of there being no room for more.

... that’s NOT what “*fulness*” means!

- “*fulness*” = is also a state (*ness*) of being—but rather than talking about a state of being full as a measurement of the quantity of something (like a full container) - *fulness* has the shade of meaning of **the state of being ‘full of’ some particular feature or characteristic**—it means a state of being ‘full’ as a measurement of quality!

- The idea behind *fulness* is one of **abundance** in connection with whatever the word is tied to.

- (see **Psa. 24:1; 96:11**) - [note that the sea isn’t filled to the point that there is no room for more—but there is a ‘*fulness*’ to it in a sense of some **quality** or characteristic].

- Ex. Andy Griffith (Opie the Birdman) ...

Opie: “The cage seems mighty empty.”

Andy: “But don’t the trees seem **full**?” (not that the trees have no more room for any more birds (quantity), but rather, the trees are **full** of a particular **quality**—they are abundant with that particular quality (of song birds).

- And therefore what the word *fulness* can indicate to you is that you can have an abundance of something **that keeps on increasing, but never reaches the ‘full’ mark!**

- (this will have enormous benefits for us when we get to Ephesians doctrine! [Eph. 1:10; 1:23; 3:19 and more passages than that]).

- So—with that in mind—here in (:29) Paul is talking about looking forward to the time in which he comes to Rome and meets the saints there in person ... and when they gather together in godly fellowship and communion—the expectation is that their time spent together will be *in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ*.

- That is, the measure of the **quality** of their fellowship together will be one of being ‘full of’ (and abounding with) “*the blessing of the gospel of Christ*”.

- And as we will see—the *gospel of Christ* is talking about some particular doctrine they’ve been given—and I say that because by using the word **fulness** of *the gospel of Christ*, the issue is **NOT** that there’s no room for more—because there **IS** room for more ... much more!

- The issue is that for the amount of doctrine they have been given of *the gospel of Christ*—that doctrine should **abound** in all of their fellowship & communion together.

- and that’s made all the more apparent by the adding of that expression, “**of the blessing**” of *the gospel of Christ*.

29 And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

- Notice it doesn’t say, ‘I shall come in the fulness of the gospel of Christ’ - but rather, “*I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.*”

- And that additional expression “*of the blessing*” gives you some detail concerning what exactly Paul is talking about—and what exactly is the expectation for the kind of fellowship and communion that is supposed to be taking place when those of “*mutual faith*” (*Rom. 1:12*) gather together!

- (“*mutual faith*” being more precise than ‘like-minded’)

- So—what does Paul mean by “*the blessing*” of *the gospel of Christ*? what is that *blessing* thing all about? ... and what does it **imply**? ... is it some mysterious goodness? ... is some kind of physical healing going to take place? ... am I going to get more prosperity\$\$\$?

- " **blessing** " = (What is the fundamental, root element of *blessing*?)

= [f noun: εὐλογία = good + word/speech = to speak well]

= the fundamental, root element of *blessing* is SPEAKING!

- First and foremost a *blessing* is something that is 'well-spoken' of.

... and because it is 'well-spoken' of—that means that it's something that is worthy of 'praise' (of being talked about) ...

... and because it's worthy of 'praise' - that means that it's something that brings contentment, satisfaction, and happiness.

- And when something is praiseworthy and brings contentment, satisfaction, happiness, and joy and the like—what would you say those kind of things are? ... they're **BENEFITS!**

- And in the context of (:29) - [and because it's connected with *the gospel of Christ*] - what we have here is a *blessing*—that is, a God-given, godly **spiritual benefit** that is 'well-spoken' about—and which is the means of godly joy/happiness, contentment, and satisfaction.

- Interesting: that a feature of the word *blessing* is that when it's used by **anyone** (lost, saved, carnal, spiritual) - any time the word *blessing* is used, the implication is that **it comes from God!**

- Even in that old saying, 'Well, it's just a *blessing* in disguise' ... meaning, It Came From God!

- And that's the issue here in (:29) —

- notice that *fulness* and *blessing* naturally go together—(that is, Paul expects when he arrives at Rome and gathers together with the saint in godly communion & fellowship—it will be *in the fullness* (the full quality) *of the blessing* (the God-given and praise-worthy benefits) *of the gospel of Christ*.

- Truth is: *fulness* / *blessing* / *gospel*—are all '**linked**' together—they're '**linked**' by those 3 def. articles (*the*) and those 3 *of*'s.

- In fact—that entire phrase:

“I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ” - is a great example of English Prosody (the metrical structure or ‘cadence’ of a phrase) ... in fact, this phrase could easily be set to music!

- So, what would you expect to be going on? — when Paul says, *I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ*—what would you expect will be going on?

- In fact, if all you had was the phrase, *I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of* _____ (whatever) _____ ... what would you expect to be going on?

- A: **speaking!** Talking—**communion & fellowship!**
(the **interaction of the body of Christ**)

- Which is a powerful thing—because by means of it, it allows for the body of Christ to put on a ‘shew’ - to ‘shew’ to the principalities and powers of Satan and his cohorts how the Lord Jesus Christ’s death on the cross ‘spoiled’ them (by *the revelation of the mystery*) and ‘openly triumphed over them in it!’ (Col. 2:15)

- *The fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ* is the action of local assembly communion & fellowship that creates and generates a godly **environment**; a ‘**culture** [powerful influence] of Christ’ both here on earth, but more importantly, in the heavenly places!

- And *the fulness of the blessing* is surrounding (or directly tied to, or connected to) ***the gospel of Christ!***

- And this is **not just** the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ ... (it is that), but it’s **much more than that!**

- (see **Rom. 1:7-12**)

- [:15] - “*gospel*” = NOT the d, b, res. — why? because they were **already justified [:7]** — Paul is going to preach the “*gospel*” to people who were **already justified**.

- So—when Paul says that he is *sure* that when he comes to the saints in Rome, that he will come “*in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ*” - what does he mean by “*the gospel of Christ*”???

- “*gospel of Christ*” = ROMANS DOCTRINE!
(all 12 Parts of it)

- THIS IS WHAT SHOULD BE GOING ON IN EVERY CHURCH (LOCAL ASSEMBLY) ALL OF THE TIME!

** And this is NOT just ‘lip-service’! or mindless incantations of religious rites!

- Look at the order: *fulness / blessing / gospel of Christ*

- It’s **not** the *gospel* only [an academic exercise in doctrine; or bible study for study’s sake];

- It’s **not** the *blessing of the gospel* [just ‘speaking well’ or talking about the doctrine];

- Rather, it’s *the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ!*

- Go back to that word *fulness* —when *fulness* is connected with *blessing*; and the *fulness* and *blessing* is connected with the *gospel of Christ* — NOW you’ve got the whole picture; **now** you’ve got what is to be expected to be going on when a local assembly (or assemblies) of properly educated and properly edified “sons” gather together!

- *fulness* = full of the quality of all of the features and characteristics of all that God has designed that body of information contained in the gospel of Christ to produce in the details of the lives of the saints in the local churches in Rome!

- That *gospel of Christ* [Romans doctrine, in this context] is designed to permeate, to invade, to saturate **every detail of your life!**

- (and if it hasn’t, [if it’s **not** affecting every detail of your life], then you know that it’s NOT working properly! ... you may be able to fake it to others—but **you know** that it’s not effectually working within **you!**)

VIRTUAL BIBLE CLASSES DURING THE NORTH CAROLINA “STAY AT HOME” ORDER FOR THE CORONA VIRUS

- As we have seen—the main objective of Rom. 15:8-16:27 is for the Father to prepare you as His “son/daughter” to take the full and sound Establishment of your godly edification and to be able to Go On and get the full and sound Stablishment of your godly sonship edification in the remainder of Paul’s epistles.

- But there’s something else going on here—something we’ve only alluded to, but something we should pointedly face up to; realize; and recognize.

- And that is, by the time you get to Rom. 15:8 (if ... [and it’s a big “if”) if everything has gone as it should—and if all the doctrine of Rom. 1:1-15:7 is effectually working within you—you really are now qualified, prepared, and equipped (and expected) to undergo the first round of the very “*sufferings of Christ.*” [which is a grand privilege of God’s grace]

- (which will be directly dealt with in 16:17-20—but we should begin thinking about it right now)

- And as we have come to the end of Rom. 15:29, our Father has given us those 8 Sanctifying Works of the Holy Ghost that validates the great dispensational change that God has made, and Paul being the new administrator of this great *dispensation of the grace of God.*

- But before we go on to (:30-32) which is the godly Labor issue of laboring with God in intelligent sonship prayer—I want to spend a little time giving you some background—(or maybe it would be better to say, a ‘look ahead’) to this issue of living the rest of your sonship life in the midst of *the sufferings of Christ.*

- Now remember that the 6th, 7th, and 8th Sanctifying Works of the HG (beginning in [:25] and down through [:29]) all had to do with the issue of the apostle Paul going to Jerusalem to “*minister to the saints*” (the believing members of the remnant of Israel) who, because of the dispensational change that God had made, were in a state of poverty.

... and Paul took up a collection of money (a *contribution*) from Gentile members of the body of Christ in Macedonia and Achaia, and was going to take it to Jerusalem and give it to those *poor* remnant of Israel *saints.*

- In (:28 & :29) Paul describes how that after he had gone to Jerusalem and delivered the *contribution* to the *poor* remnant of Israel *saints*—that he planned on visiting the saints in Rome on his way to Spain.

- And in our last lesson we dealt with (:29) and the kind of godly fellowship and communion Paul would be able to have with the Roman saints. [which should be true of our local assembly]

29 And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

- that is: their fellowship and communion when they gather together will be marked by being **full** of the **quality** of all of the features and characteristics of all that God has designed for the information contained in *the gospel of Christ* [i.e., Romans doctrine] to produce in the details of the lives of the saints in the local churches in Rome.

- They may talk about the weather, their health (the virus), their business/job, the government, sports, their families, their friends, their hardships and sufferings, their joy and happiness, and any/every detail of their life ... but all of those things being viewed from the viewpoint of the gospel of Christ (Romans doctrine) effectually working within them, and being deployed in every detail of their life.

- But what I want to focus upon right now is that, if you have paid attention to the historical account of Paul's visit to Jerusalem in order to give the *contribution* taken up by the body of Christ saints for the *poor* remnant of Israel saints (in the book of Acts) - you would realize that what is described by such 'happy' and 'joyful' overtones as in (:29) [*"I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ"*] is really done with a 'cloud' surrounding the apostle Paul ...

... a 'cloud' of **lies** and **defaming** and **seduction** ...

... this happy & joyful fellowship and communion would be done in the very midst of *the sufferings of Christ!*

- see Acts 21—(**remember: Romans, 1 Corinthians, and 2 Corinthians were written in this time period!**)

- read Acts 21:15-21; 27-34; 22:22; 23:10; 24:5

- Now, it's often debated by Bible teachers if the apostle Paul was wrong in what he did here in Jerusalem—if he failed God—if he sinned—if he was out of God's will, and so forth and so on.

- But you have to remember that by this time (historically) in Acts 21, God had Paul write the books of Romans, 1 Corinthians, and 2 Corinthians (among other epistles).

- So what that means is—Paul has already written Romans—Paul had Romans doctrine effectually working and operating properly within his inner man!

- Also—Paul had 2 Corinthians doctrine (the doctrine of “*the sufferings of Christ*”) effectually working within him as well!

- (by the way—the answer to the debated issue of if Paul was out of God's will or not by his actions in Jerusalem is actually a sonship answer—Paul's actions are to be viewed from a sonship perspective ... and a sonship perspective of a “son” who is operating upon Level I Sonship doctrine—[Romans doctrine!]).

- But my point here is just to say that one of the ‘side’ benefits of the doctrine contained in Rom. 15:8-16:27 is the Father's final preparations for His sons to undergo *the sufferings of Christ*.

- And since that's the case (and since what Paul experienced in his trip to Jerusalem in Acts 21ff was undergoing *the sufferings of Christ*) we need to pause for a moment and get a ‘check-up’ in order to make sure that we are also prepared to undergo *the sufferings of Christ* as well.

- And the best place to make that ‘check-up’ is in the very place in Romans where our Father gave us the information that we must operate upon so that we will be *more than conquerors* IN all these things ... and what I'm specifically after is what our Father tells us and teaches us in those 5 Probing Questions in Romans 8 ... and especially the 5th Probing Question (and it's remedy) found in Rom. 8:35-36.

(Note to self)

- At this point we did a review of Rom. 8:35-37 and the 5th probing question; with an emphasis upon the REMEDY of (:36-37).

(Note to self)

- At this point we did an exercise (or example) of how the godly remedy for the 7 Separation Tactics in Rom. 8:36-37 fit in with the godly remedies for *the sufferings of Christ*. And we used the example of the 2nd Category of *the sufferings of Christ* in 2Cor. 2:1-17—and we especially noted the godly remedy of 2Cor. 2:14-17. (see notes in PUBLISH \ 2Cor 2-vs.14-17)

END VIRTUAL BIBLE CLASSES DURING THE NORTH CAROLINA
“STAY AT HOME” ORDER FOR THE CORONA VIRUS.

- (back to Romans 15:30)

- We are now ready to begin the **Godly Labor** section of the 1st of the 2-Fold ways in which our Heavenly Father processes us out of Level I of our sonship education/edification and prepares us for Level II.

- The 1st of the 2-Fold matters our Father deals with us about, is the matter of Providing us with the ability to GO ON and get the rest of our sonship education/edification and acquire that “*young man*” status. (And that runs from Rom. 15:8-16:16)

- Godly Thinking: Rom. 15:8-21 (3 Parts)

- Godly Living: Rom. 15:22-29 (3 Parts)

- **Godly Labor: Rom. 15:30-16:16 [READ]**

- Part A: Rom. 15:30-32

- Sonship Checkpoint: Rom. 15:33

- Part B: Rom. 16:1-2

- Part C: Rom. 16:3-16

- **Part A: Rom. 15:30-32**

The Godly Labor of Intelligent Sonship Prayer.

- Notice that these 3 verses (:30-32) form one single sentence. (and you need to pay attention to the **phrases** [the commas] and the **clauses** [the semicolons] that provide for you to be able to group things together in the proper order [sense & seq]).

- And looking at this long sentence—if we pay attention to the semicolons, it helps us gather together the information within the clauses, and by doing that, we get the general order of the sense & sequence of Paul’s prayer request.

- The 1st Semicolon occurs at the end of (:30), and forms what we might call: Paul’s request for the Roman saints to pray for him ...

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;

- The 2nd Clause begins in (:31) - and by beginning with the word “*That*” (which sets forth a purpose clause—in fact, we have a 3-Fold purpose clause because we will have a total of 3 ‘*that*’s’ in the remainder of the sentence of [:31 and :32]) ...

... so in (:30) we have Paul’s call to request that the Roman saints **work** together (“*strive together*”) or **Labor** together with God and with Paul by engaging in some intelligent sonship prayer ...

... then in (:31 and :32) we are going to get a series of 3 “*that*’s” — meaning, we are going to get the reasons or purposes for their intelligent sonship prayers ...

... and those semicolons come along and give us an actual ‘list’ - a ‘Prayer List’ of items that that are requested to be praying about.

- And I point this out because of the exactness of Paul’s prayer request—it’s specific—it’s **not** just random, nor is it just the idea of, ‘Well, pray for me’ ... and so we just throw Paul’s name in the air in our prayers and leave it at that ... (‘Dear God, I pray for Paul ... amen!’) [that’s **unintelligent** prayer that accomplishes nothing more than giving a person the feeling that he did something to **feel good** about].

- So after that 1st Semicolon at the end of (:30) - when it comes to the actual ‘Prayer List’ — if you pay attention, you have 2 more Semicolons:

- one after the word *Judaea* in (:31)
- and one after the word *saints* at the end of (:31)
- Which form a total of at least 3 major items in Paul’s ‘Prayer List’ (to pray about).

- Paul's Prayer List: (1) 31 *That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea;*

(2) *and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints;*

(3) 32 *That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.*

- Note that #3 has **2 phrases** to it—so you could say there are **4 items** in Paul's Prayer List ... or that there is **3a and 3b** (which is how I prefer to think about it because of the punctuation marks).

- Romans 15:30

Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;

- What's going on here in (:30)? ... why doesn't Paul simply say, "Please pray for me" - or - 'Now I beseech you, brethren, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me' ...

... why does he include those 2 phrases, "*for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake,*" and "*and for the love of the Spirit*" ???

- Paul is making a 'sonship appeal' (**beseech**) - he's **not ordering** them or **commanding** them to pray for him.

- Well—what is going on in (:30) is that every word and every phrase is carefully chosen and carefully put together the way it is in your Bible because everything God has Paul say in (:30) is NOT simply an appeal for prayer from the saints ... rather it's an appeal for **INTELLIGENT Sonship Prayer** from the saints at Rome!

- Every word and every phrase of (:30) is designed to appeal to the **intelligence** (the doctrinal intelligence; the edificational intelligence; the sonship intelligence) that the saints at Rome have acquired and possess by this point in Romans doctrine to be utilized in proper and intelligent sonship prayer to God for Paul!

- Paul appeals to their **intelligent** sonship understanding and appreciation—an intelligence that has been generated from the Romans doctrine they have just received and responded positively and properly to ...

... it's an intelligent awareness of what is going on around them and what is going on within them (as their inner man has become *conformed to the image of God's Son*)! [it's a dispensational intelligence; and a doctrinal intelligence]!

- Paul can now appeal to the intelligent 'eyes of their understanding' being open and 'enlightened' [as Paul will talk about in the 1st chapter of Ephesians].

- And the intelligence Paul appeals to has 2 Parts or 2 Issues to it:

- Intelligence #1 = "*for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake*"
- Intelligence #2 = "*for the love of the Spirit*"

- And that's what those 2 phrases are doing in (:30) - those are **appeals to the saints sonship intelligence!**

- And so really, the saying, 'Prayer works' isn't always a true saying ... but a better saying would be, 'Intelligent Prayer works!' [which is always true]!

- So God has Paul begin (:30) by saying ...

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, ...

- "**Now**" - the word *now* can be used in a whole bunch of ways (and it's used many times in Rom. 15 & 16 as we have noted before).

- Here, the word *now* is used much like it was back up in (:8) (*Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:*)

- Here in (:30), this "*now*" is being used in the most simple and general use of the word—it's simply used here to introduce an important or noteworthy point or issue in a series of statements.

- Here, God is having the apostle Paul move from the godly Thinking and the godly Living into the godly Labor portion of the information.

- Having now acquired the godly Thinking of (:8-21) concerning the great dispensational change God has made and the new administration of it vested in the apostle Paul (all being “*sanctified*” by the Holy Ghost) ...

... and with that godly Thinking, having now exercised the godly Living (conduct & behavior) in (:22-29) which gets down to the specifics of how God used Paul to rapidly spread *the gospel of Christ* committed to Paul—and even more specifically, Paul’s ministry of relieving the poverty of the *poor saints* (of the remnant of Israel) *which are at Jerusalem* by the contribution of the Gentile, body-of-Christ saints in Macedonia and Achaia ...

... taking that godly Thinking (which naturally leads to the godly Living) - the next natural step is to go on and Labor together with God in this specific business of Paul’s ministry (as *the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God* [:16]) ...

... the next natural step (now that the contribution has been collected and readied for distribution to those *poor saints at Jerusalem*) - the next step is to actually do the work! labor with God to get the job done!

- And that’s what this “*Now*” sets forth—the actual godly labor of getting this aspect of Paul’s ministry accomplished.

- And this godly labor isn’t just exclusively for the apostle Paul ... but it’s also some godly labor that the Romans saints themselves are privileged to labor together with God (and with Paul) in as well. (It’s an example of godly **BODY LABOR!**)

- (which is one of the things that godly **sonship prayer** is for! - godly labor; and sometimes godly **BODY labor!**)

- “*Now I beseech you, brethren, ...*”

- “**I**” - when Paul personally “*beseeches*” (just as back in 12:1), he is stepping out of his role as God’s ‘mouthpiece’ (so to speak) and communicator of the sonship doctrine—and he takes on a neutral or independent role of a 3rd party that steps out of his ordinary role and does the *beseeching* or the exhorting for us to engage in some action; or to take a course of action that he’s about to set forth.

- And in this context—the particular ‘course of action’ is for us to engage in some intelligent sonship prayer along with Paul.

- “Now I **beseech** you, brethren, ...”

- “**beseech**” - we’ve dealt with this term back in 12:1—it occurs only 3x in the book of Romans—(12:1; here in 15:30; and one more time in 16:17 in the exact same wording as it is here in 15:30).

- “**beseech**” = Prefix *be* = to make—and it’s used as an intensifier to the word it’s attached to, making it a powerful and intense matter that goes beyond the ordinary force of the word it’s attached to—(like *love* and *beloved*) ...

... plus the word *seech* (or *seek*), which we most commonly think of (and almost exclusively think of) as meaning, ‘to go in search of something; to try to find; to look for something or someone whose whereabouts are unknown—but *seek* has far more meanings than that—in fact, *seek* can mean, “to bring about an action” — which has the sense of, ‘to ask for,’ or ‘to request’ (like in the phrase, “to seek help”); also, “to entreat a person to do something” [which is the sense of *seek* in the word *beseech*].

- Therefore, *beseech* has the meaning of: intensely asking or requesting a person to do something; to earnestly entreat or implore someone to do something.

- Granted, the word *beseech* is not commonly used today—though it hasn’t entirely fallen out of use—and, as usual, it’s treated by Bible scholars and translators as a word that needs to be ‘updated’ and so it gets re-translated to words like ‘urge’ or ‘appeal’ (the idea being that those are ‘better’ and ‘easier to understand’ words) ... however, *beseech* carries a shade of meaning that makes it the most excellent choice of English words in this context.

(Crabb’s) - *Beseech* is an intensive verb meaning to seek strongly—it’s a species of intensive ‘asking’ when the context indicates an urgent necessity for some action being at hand—*beseeching*, in particular, is done either by friends or by ones who are seen to be equals—therefore *beseeching* is done as an equal party; kindly but forcefully’ and not as one ‘pulling rank’ or authority over another.

- And what I'm going after here is to put this issue of Paul *beseeking* us in the proper context—and, of course, that proper context is that of **sonship edification**.

- And I say that, because it's often pointed out by Bible teachers who do *rightly divide the word of truth* that Paul is *beseeking* you here and not 'commanding' you—because a command would be like we were back under the Law in God's program with Israel, but now that we're no longer 'under the law, but under grace,' we're not "commanded" to do anything any more. (Making the word *beseech* out to be a dispensational issue.)

- But Paul "commands" you a dozen or so time throughout his epistles!

- So this *beseeking* isn't some kind of a dispensational issue—it's a **sonship** issue!

- The truth is—the word *beseech* is the apostle Paul's **cue** or **signal** that you are being deal with as **adult sons**—and as an adult, you are now being exhorted or intensely asked to do what is **necessary** in view of Level I Sonship Edification (Romans doctrine) effectually working within you ...

... which, in this case, is the necessary godly Labor of working together with God (and with Paul) in some intelligent sonship prayer.

- "*Now I beseech you, brethren* ...

- "**you**" = you, **as a son** who has accomplished Level I of sonship edification. (Not just any old Christian! but a properly educated "son/daughter" who now knows what sonship prayer is, and how it works!)

- "**brethren**" = underscores the brotherhood of sons; and points up our association and our alliance as brothers—not just as fellow believers or Christians, but specifically in this context as **fellow sons** of God our Heavenly Father. It's not a word to be used lightly or thrown around as Christian language or Christian jargon.

- Also, as indicated with the use of the word *beseech*, it's the appropriate term to describe the equality or bond that exists between Paul (now as that neutral/independent party) and us as the sons who are making this adult decision.

- And so the apostle Paul steps out of his authoritative ‘mouthpiece’ role and into a neutral, independent roll (as a son, himself) and *beseches* you (or strongly entreats you to act upon the promptings of the Father that you’re now being held accountable for) ... and those ‘promptings’ are going to be brought to your attention in the next 2 phrases: *for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, and for the love of the Spirit, ...*

- So what we have so far in (:30) is ...

Now (in view of the godly Thinking and godly Living you have just been given—and especially in view of my intention to go to Jerusalem and present the *poor* remnant *saints* with the *contribution* given by the Gentile, body of Christ saints; which no doubt will include “*the sufferings of Christ*”) **I** (Paul as an equal son myself) **beseech** (strongly entreat) **you** (as an adult, adopted son), **brethren** (those who, along with me [Paul] are in the brotherhood of sons), ...

... and what follows is WHY they are being *beseched* in the first place.

“ ... for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, and for the love of the Spirit, *that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;*”

- The answer to ‘Why is Paul ‘*beseeching*’ them?’ is **for the saints at Rome to pray to God for Paul.** (a ‘prayer request’)

- Paul is strongly and urgently entreating these other members of the body of Christ to engage in some intelligent sonship prayer to God for Paul—(specifically, for Paul’s trip to Jerusalem to *minister to the* remnant of Israel *saints* there).

- And the way in which the sentence is constructed—the answer for why Paul *beseches* them is found in that last phrase of (:30) ...

... *that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;* ...

- But we have 2 phrases before the last phrase of the verse that give us some additional information—(some **critical** information)!

... *for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake,*
and for the love of the Spirit, ...

- So now the question is: Why does God have Paul supply this additional information? What are these 2 phrases doing here? What are they there for?

- And the answer is just as we noted when we began looking at this passage ...

... God is **not** having Paul simply make an appeal (or call for) a bunch of folks to pray for him! (just any old way)

- Asking unbelievers to pray for you does NO GOOD!

- Asking believers who have no real understanding or appreciation for what prayer is; or what prayer is for; or how to pray properly does you NO GOOD, either!

- The truth is—the only prayer that “works” is **intelligent** prayer—intelligent sonship prayer!

- “**Intelligent**” = (not ‘smart’ / high IQ), rather:

1. Aware of what is going on around you;
2. Aware of what is going on within you.

- And by adding the additional information of the 2 phrases:

1. *for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake*
2. *for the love of the Spirit*

those 2 phrases describe the **Measure of Intelligence** that is called for and that is necessary, and that is required for the ones laboring together with God and with Paul in prayer, **for their prayers to “work” (or to be effectual in getting the ‘list’ of things accomplished)!**

- And there are 2 Parts to this because it will require both Parts in order for the prayers of the saints in Rome to be intelligent and to therefore “work” out effectually.

- And what is being called upon by God having Paul appeal to “*the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake*” and “*the love of the Spirit*” is to appeal to the godly intelligence that the saints at Rome have acquired and now possess; and are accountable for by means of the doctrine they have received in the book of Romans so far—which can now be utilized and put to good use in some intelligent sonship prayer.

- And this means that intelligent sonship prayer requires:
 - doctrinal intelligence;
 - dispensational intelligence;
 - edificational intelligence.

- Part 1 Intelligence: ***“for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake”***

- That is a very broad and general statement—and because it is, that means that it represents a great deal of detailed information—detailed information that can be ‘wrapped up’ or ‘boiled down’ or condensed into this one phrase or statement.

- So — what kind of ‘intelligence’ would be covered in this broad & general phrase?

- What is the Measure of Intelligence that *“for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake”* is talking about?

- You have 2 ‘clues’ in the very wording of the phrase that helps you out:

1. It’s concerning *“the Lord Jesus Christ”* (using His full-blown title and name)
2. It’s for *the Lord Jesus Christ’s SAKE*. (the word “sake”)

- ***“the Lord Jesus Christ”*** - that is, I am required to have an intelligent, ‘Book of Romans’ understanding and appreciation for everything that is now going on upon which the full title and name of *the Lord Jesus Christ* hangs.

- which can be boiled down to: and intelligent understanding Justification-wise; Sanctification-wise; and Sonship-wise for who and what the Lord Jesus Christ IS, and IS DOING at the present time in this dispensation of grace, according to the ‘revelation of the mystery of Christ,’ and with US as members of the body of Christ! (not Israel or Jesus in the gospel accnts.)

- (And that includes a **bunch of stuff!**)

- And, just as His name suggests—it includes ‘The Gospel of Christ’ committed to the apostle Paul—(all 12 Parts as found in the book of Romans) - **all of which has a bearing on how you pray; and what you pray for!!!**

- “sake” = a final **cause**; an end; to attain a purpose, aim or goal;
business.

(New Information):

- Originally, the word *sake* was used as a legal term to denote some kind of legal action—as in a law suit or ‘legal **case**’ - hence, a **cause** in a court of law. And I point this out simply to underscore the seriousness of the term *sake* ... it’s **never** something to be taken lightly!
- Putting it all together (definition-wise), *sake* [though not exclusively] is often used in a context when you’re dealing with some kind of **serious, lawful business**.
- Moreover, drawing from the idea of a legal cause in a court of law—the word *sake* furthermore indicates that this ‘serious lawful business’ is going to involve having to **contend against opposition**; and to **strive** [which is a word that actually comes up in (:30)].
- *Sake* is one of those ‘two sides of the coin’ type things ...
... Webster (1828) - “*Sake* then signifies primarily *effort* to obtain, and secondarily *purpose* of obtaining.” [“*purpose* of obtaining” = that’s intelligence!]

- Shade of Meaning:

- *Sake* denotes an ulterior purpose which is contemplated.
- *Sake* is a cause in which one is directly & personally concerned.
- *Sake* points up that there are two person’s interests and benefits at stake:
 1. The Lord Jesus Christ’s;
 2. Paul’s (and by extension, all of the members of the body of Christ)!
- The ‘ulterior’ purpose of the saints a Rome to labor together with God and with Paul in prayer is the purpose of the Lord Jesus Christ’s **business** in this dispensation of grace!
- **(which demands an intelligent understanding of the Lord’s business in this disp. of grace!)**

- So how would you describe the 1st Part of the Measure of Intelligence you are to have (and the Roman saints are to have) at this point in order to labor together with God in sonship prayer? “*for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake*” ???

- Now this 1st Part of Intelligent Understanding is great—but it's not sufficient enough all on its own to engage in sonship prayer and to get the most out of the result of prayer ... because in order to get the most out of prayer, (i.e., for prayer to actually “work”) it takes the 2nd Measure of Intelligence along with the 1st ...

... and it takes more than just knowing what the Lord's business is in this disp. of grace—but since the result of sonship prayer is going to be YOU taking some kind of action; or YOU taking some kind of ‘path’ - that means that you're going to need the additional **guidance** which comes from the 2nd Measure of prayer Intelligence ...

- *“the love of the Spirit”* - (and since it's a Capital “S” *Spirit*, we know that we're talking about the 3rd Member of the Godhead, God the Holy Spirit).

- First of all—my understanding is that this is not strictly talking about your love for the 3rd Member of the Godhead (the Holy Spirit).

- And the thing that causes me to think that is the terminology itself ... *“the love of the **Spirit**”* rather than saying ‘the love of the Holy Ghost’.

- So by the use of the Capital “S” *Spirit*, I know that God is having Paul focus upon the **ministry** aspect of the Holy Ghost, (or what I like to call, The Holy Spirit ministry of the Holy Ghost).

- Now—since the context is dealing with the Measure of Intelligence that is being called upon by Paul for the Roman saints to have in order to labor together with God and with Paul in prayer—and since the 1st Part of the Measure of Intelligence was *“for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake”* ... I know that this 2nd Measure of Intelligence necessarily complements and goes naturally together with the 1st Measure of Intelligence ... in fact, so necessary are each of the 2 Parts, they NEED go together in order to form the necessary Intelligence that the Romans saints MUST have in order for their sonship prayer to effectually “work”!

- (note) I don't think this is talking about the Godly Love & Charity that the Holy Spirit has produced within you, **per se**, (although I believe that is **“an”** issue, but I don't think it's **“the”** issue) - because if that's the case, the wording would be something like, “for the Spirit's love”.

- So—if keeping things in that strict context is **sound**—then the question is: (in a ‘nutshell’) What is “*the love of the Spirit*” ?

- What is “*the love of the Spirit*” as a Measure of Intelligent understanding for how you would **pray?** ... (or for how the Roman saints would) labor together with God and with (and for) Paul in prayer in connection with his ministry to the *poor saints at Jerusalem?*

- The ‘key’ is that word “*love*” - which is the God-like value and esteem (**God’s own** love; **God’s own** value and esteem that exists in **God’s own** heart, and that has been generated within **your** heart by the word of God effectually working within you in your sonship education) ...

... it’s godly love—a godly value and esteem (generated within your inner-man by God Himself) for the Spirit of God’s MINISTRY of edification—it’s love of the Edification Process produced by the Spirit of God—the Holy Spirit’s **ministry** of Romans doctrine (of Level I Sonship Edification).

- So, “*the love of the Spirit*” is having a proper and godly value and esteem of the doctrinal and dispensational edification ministry that the Spirit of God has produced within them through the curriculum for Level I Sonship Edification. (which includes the 7 Major Features of Godly Love & Charity; 4 Decision-making skills [W,J,J,E] - which make up your godly **divine guidance system!**)

- Much like the expression “*the love of Christ*” back in Rom. 8:35 (“*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ*”) — where we recognized that’s not talking about Christ’s love for us, or our love for Him—but rather, ‘The thing that’s the love of Christ’s life = His love for His own sonship life and the successful living out of it) ...

... here, too, we have an expression that, rather than describing the H. Spirit’s love for us, or our love for the Spirit — this expression is describing our godly love (value & esteem) for all that the Holy Spirit has accomplished within our hearts by means of His **ministry** to us of the godly Edification Process.

- And this is a **powerful** expression—because if you truly and genuinely **LOVE** what the ministry of the Spirit of God has done within you edification-wise, then that means that you have an

intelligent understanding & appreciation for godly Edification in Level I Sonship Education; but you also have a genuine and **effectual working of all** of Level I Sonship Education doing its job in your inner man!

- You LOVE the godly Edification you've been given ... you therefore will put it to USE in **how** you pray and **what** you pray for! (Your godly edification in Romans doctrine will **guide** and **govern** everything you pray about!)

- You're **not** going to stray from that godly edification in prayer—you're **not** going to compromise that godly edification in prayer—you're going to pray **according to that godly edification!!!** (You know what you OUGHT to pray for!)

- And that naturally goes together with (and **must necessarily** go together with) "*the Lord Jesus Christ's sake*" (the business of the Lord Jesus Christ with the members of the body of Christ in this present dispensation of Gentile grace).

- Why do these 2 things have to go together in order to form a real, **godly Intelligence** in order for sonship prayer to effectually "work"?

- Answer: Because there are 2 Parts to any kind of "Intelligence", and especially, godly Intelligence ...

- "Intelligent" = 1. An awareness for what is going on **around** you;
2. An awareness for what is going on **within** you!

- And those 'measures of intelligence' act as a '**safeguard**' against ungodly, unintelligent, ineffectual, and down-right unproductive (stupid) praying that seems to be going on by far too many Christians today! [**Intelligent** sons/daughters: **That's who I want praying for me!**]

- Now—as this is the first time in Romans where Paul presents an actual 'prayer list', this issue of requiring a Measure of Intelligence for real sonship prayer to "work" - this sets a precedent for all calls for intelligent sonship prayer in the future—where, even though it may not be stated, the expectation for godly sonship prayer from this time forward is for it to be INTELLIGENT.

- (that is, in order to know what you "**OUGHT**" to pray for!)

- So—to put it in a ‘nutshell’ or summary statement:

- The 1st Measure of Intelligence for intelligent sonship prayer is “*for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake*” ...

... and in the context of measurable intelligence of sonship prayer described as “*the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake*” = for the business of the Lord Jesus Christ with the members of the body of Christ in this dispensation of Gentile grace.

- The 2nd Measure of Intelligence for intelligent sonship prayer is “*for the love of the Spirit*” ...

... and in the context of measurable intelligence of sonship prayer — “*the love of the Spirit*” = godly value and esteem for the doctrinal and dispensational edification ministry produced by the ‘leading’ of the Spirit of God through the curriculum for Level I Sonship Edification (i.e., Romans).

- So now you should understand and appreciate why there are these 2 phrases of additional information in (:30) ... why there are only 2 things (and not 1 or 3) ... and why they’re in that order!

- And the reason why, is because there are 2 Parts to any kind of “intelligence”:

- Part 1—(What’s going on **around** you)
“*for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake*”

- Part 2—(What’s going on **within** you)
“*for the love of the Spirit*”

- Those 2 things make you qualified to engage in the privilege of laboring together with God in prayer ...

- Those 2 things act as a ‘safeguard’ keeping everything you pray for and pray about **within** all that the Lord’s business is about today, and the doctrinal and edificational guidance to make your prayer effectual to “work” (and to do its job successfully)!

- Questions? Comments?

- Rom. 15:30 (so far) - “*Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake, and for the love of the Spirit, ...*”

- Next we have: “... *that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;*”

- “**strive**” - *strive* has 2 major connotations—the most common meaning is a negative (or **bad**) meaning, such as to be in a state of hostility; to quarrel; to dispute; to contend; to be opposed to one another; etc.

- But *strive* has another connotation or meaning that is a positive (or **good**) thing—[and that’s the way it’s used here].

- “*strive*” (in this context)

= (OED) To endeavour vigorously; strenuous effort.

= (Webster’s 1828) To make efforts; to use exertions; to endeavor with earnestness; **to labor hard**; (applies to exertions of body or mind). [then Webster quotes: Rom. 15:30!]

- (George Crabb)

Striving is a consequence of **ardent desire** (you could say ‘love’ [added by me]). The thing *striven* for is **always** conceived to be of importance.

- In the context of Rom. 15:30—by putting the word *strive* together with *prayers to God for me*—we clearly get the impression that effectual and intelligent sonship prayer is far more involved than what is often done by many Christians today (and far more **important**).

- It’s more than a mere 30 sec. ‘mention’ ... and it’s NOT just tossing a name in the air and hoping (or **guessing**) that God will grab it and do something (whatever He can do) ... which is nothing more than THOUGHTLESS prayer! (ineffectual)

- *Strive* tells you this kind of prayer takes WORK—it’s **labor intensive! It takes TIME! (to figure out a ‘path’)**

- Along with the word “*sake*”, “*strive*” tells you that this godly prayer-labor is going to take place in the face of opposition—and since it will effect you in both mind and body, there are some matters (such as your sinful nature, and sin in your members) that will naturally fight against it.

- (not to mention the implementation of your prayer within the Satanic Policy of Evil in this present evil world!)
- *Strive* stresses the **great importance** there is (and that God Himself places upon) intelligent sonship prayer.
 - Prayer is intended to be a useful too (or better ‘**weapon**’) in the spiritual warfare of putting your Position In Christ into Practice in the details/affairs of your life!
 - Prayer navigates the battlefields of the Satanic Policy of Evil.
 - Prayer settles out the ‘paths’ you take in the spiritual combat of your life as your Father’s “son” in this evil world — with the many enemies and dangers you’ll face as you put your Position In Christ into Practice!
 - (see Eph. 6:10-20 [:18ff])
 - (see Col. 1:7 [Epaphras]-9ff; 4:12-13)

... *that ye strive **together with me** in your prayers to God for me;*

- “*strive **together with me***” tells you that there **IS** godly value, profit, and benefit in having numbers of saints intelligently praying **together** WITH you and FOR you! It IS biblically legitimate and biblically right for having numerous saints praying together, and praying for the same thing (or for a ‘list’ of things together).

- However, contrary to popular Christian (and even non-Christian) opinion—having numbers of saints praying *for* you and *with* you **DOES NOT MEAN:**

- your prayer has a better chance of being answered by God because He is impressed with the sheer numbers of people praying;
- lots of people praying stands a better chance of getting an answer from God than one person praying;
- or the idea that if you get a lot of people praying, maybe there will be 1 or 2 of those people who have a better **“in”** with God (on that particular day) than the others—so your odds of getting an answer from God improves by sheer numbers!

- That kind of praying is NOT biblical; it's NOT godly; it's NOT right; it's not even "Christian" ... in fact, it's heathen; it's religious (in the worst sense); it's evil, ungodly, ineffectual, and devilish ...
... simply put, it's Baal-ish! [back to Babylon!]

- (see **1Kings 18:17-40**)

- The biblical and godly reason why having numbers of saints praying together with & for you is profitable, beneficial, and making it so that godly prayer effectually "works" hinges upon that prayer being INTELLIGENT PRAYER!

- And the reason intelligent sonship prayer "works" better with a number of saints praying, rather than just one saint praying, is because the more intelligent sons/daughters that are praying, the more of the God-given SUPPLY is being tapped into (or accessed) and put to USE by the other members of the body of Christ!

- Their "supply" will be put to USE in the 'path' or course of action they will take to meet the necessity of the prayer request—(becoming God's mouth, arms, legs, hands, etc.)

- Simply put, the more intelligent members of the BODY of Christ access their godly **supply** through prayer, the more members of the BODY go into action!

- Praying in numbers allows for every "joint" to supply for every necessity! (It puts the Body to "work" - it puts the 'labor pool' of the Body into action!)

- There really is a good, godly, and biblical reason and advantage for having a number of intelligent saints praying with you and for you!

- End of (:30) - Questions? Comments?

- Paul's Prayer List [:31-32] — read **Acts 20:17-21:24**

- Item #1

31 *That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea;*

- The issue here is: what is the sense of the word “*delivered*”?
- “*Deliver*” can be used in a whole bunch of ways.
- My understanding is that the word *delivered* in this context is being used in its most common & general way of all.
- *deliver* = to set free; liberate; release; rescue; save.
- And more specifically, *deliver* = **to set free from** restraint, **imminent danger**, annoyance, **trouble**, or **evil generally**.
- And what makes me think this is primarily the context itself; but also in the Greek, several Greek words are used for this one English word *deliver* ... and this particular use of *deliver* here in Rom. 15:31 is the Greek word ῥύμαι [hrumai], which is the same Greek word translated “*deliver*” over in Mat. 6:13 (“*deliver us from evil*”). [the so-called ‘Lord’s Prayer’]
- In addition to this—given the very doctrine of Romans itself—and given the fact that Paul knew very well that he most likely was going to be persecuted by the Jews at Jerusalem (Acts 20:23) - I’m led to believe that Paul was **not** asking the Roman saints to pray that he would escape all physical harm, imprisonment, or even death.
- Rather, the *deliverance* Paul is after here is to be *delivered* from the ill-effects of the Satanic Policy of Evil that would work to thwart and stop Paul from boldly and plainly communicating “*the gospel of Christ*” according to the *mystery* that was committed to him. (and to **not** be intimidated into compromising or altering his message!)
- Far more important to Paul wasn’t his own physical well-being, but his **message** and his functioning as “*the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God*” (Rom. 15:16).
- This would be Paul’s ‘prayer request’ throughout his ministry: (see **2Thes. 3:1**)

- So if we take the '*deliverance from them that do not believe in Judaea*' to mean being *delivered* from those unbelievers being utilized by the PoE to intimidate Paul into compromising/altering his message—and for the word of God to rather have *free course*—then this 1st Item on the Prayer List can be concluded to have been answered in the affirmative!

- (see Acts 22:1-21)

- Paul certainly was persecuted—he was physically beaten; he was arrested, indicted, and tried, but he was not convicted (only because he appealed to Caesar [*Acts 25:11*]).

- Now, the details of just how the Roman saints 'activated their edification' to help and assist Paul in this endeavor isn't really known—but I'm sure action was, indeed, taken on their part. (What do you think?) - some kind of *supply* came Paul's way.

- Item #2

... and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints;

- My understanding is: Paul's "*service*" is the matter of delivering the "*contribution*" (the money/collection taken up by Paul from the Gentile, Body of Christ saints in Macedonia and Achaia) *for the poor Remnant of Israel saints which are at Jerusalem*.

- and when Paul says, "*which I have for Jerusalem*" - he doesn't mean 'for the city of Jerusalem,' but rather, 'for going to Jerusalem'.

- And the request is that the *contribution* may be delivered to those *poor Remnant saints*—and that it would be **accepted** of them ...

... "**accepted**" being the appropriate word—that is, that it would not be REJECTED ... (and why would it risk being **rejected**?)

... because it was given to Jews by GENTILES! - and not only that, but Gentiles that were members of the church the body of Christ (knowing full well that God had changed the program and was no longer dealing with Israel!)

- Remember that under the law, the Gentiles were considered unclean, uncircumcised “dogs” - (albeit, there was a great deal of hypocrisy among the Jews on this point—the leadership of Israel had already declared “*We have no king but Caesar.*” (*John 19:15*) by this point—and the vain, religious, apostate system of Israel was totally ‘in bed’ with the Gentiles as long as they could profit from it while keeping the *poor* folks in Israel poor and exploited ... [nothing much has changed ...]).

- And—on top of this contribution being made by *Gentiles*; and Gentile members of the body of Christ (and not by the Remnant of Israel) ... you also have the contribution being taken up and delivered to them by this fellow Paul (formerly known to them as Saul of Tarsus) ...

... and as we just noted in Acts 22—Paul said, “*I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women*” (that’s what Paul did to the Remnant saints!)

- And on top of that—you have all the distortion, lies, defaming, misinformation, and false accusations about Paul’s **message & doctrine!**

- No wonder that there was a high risk that this contribution would be soundly REJECTED—(in fact, that they not only would reject the contribution, but **kill** Paul in the process)!

- So—was this Item answered in the affirmative or not? ... let’s see.

- (see **Acts 21:17-20**)

- At first (anyway), the remnant saints “*received us gladly*”. (notice that the idea of the contribution being “*accepted of the saints*” - it’s commonly thought of that “*accepted*” means that it was accepted with ‘joy and gladness’) ...

... and, indeed, Scripture indicates that the contribution was accepted with joy and gladness ... **at least at first!** ... and even then it could have been phony—because they immediately shift attention **away** from the contribution and **to** the false charges and defaming misinformation against Paul!

- but there's no doubt that this 2nd Item on the Prayer List was answered in the affirmative—the contribution was given and *accepted of the saints*.

- And, again, there's no details given about how the Romans saints 'activated their edification' through intelligent sonship prayer to help and assist Paul in this—but, again, I'm sure that some action was taken on their part ...

... (interesting) ... notice:

- Acts 21:1 — “*we*” - and you have those “*we's*” all over the place down through the whole chapter! (note: Acts 21:17-18 [“*we*” and “*us*”])

- Point is—Paul wasn't alone! At least Luke was with him—and there must have been a 'company' of folks that went with him ... so maybe it was through those folks that accompanied Paul that the Roman saints were able to 'activate their edification' in connection with their intelligent sonship prayer!

- Item #3a 32 *That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God,*

- Now Paul turns his attention to personally visiting the saints in the churches at Rome.

- Paul has a great desire to finally visit these saints and these assemblies in Rome (saints & assemblies he has never met)—and he's been wanting to do this from the very beginning of the book of Romans—(**Rom. 1:9-12**).

- We know from (15:22) that up to this point, Paul has been “*much hindered*” from getting to go to meet them.

(“*hindered*” because of the time & rigors connected with covering the territory that ranged from *Jerusalem unto Illyricum*; and “*hindered*” from the Adversary and his PoE opposing & resisting his ministry work).

- Now Paul makes it a matter of intelligent sonship prayer to personally visit them; so—(both Paul and the saints at Rome are going to activate their edification and make this happen).

- But Paul's prayer request isn't merely to come and visit with them in person, but it's with the additional information ...

... ***with joy by the will of God***" (describes the manner of the visit)

- "***joy***" = *joy* begins as inner happiness (in the face of all the suffering both Paul and the Roman saints are experiencing). As Geo. Crabb puts it, "*joy* is the happy condition of the soul."

- *Joy* has 2 major distinctions (or shades of meaning):

1. *Joy* is awakened in the mind by the MOST IMPORTANT EVENTS IN LIFE!

2. Whatever creates *joy* in the soul IS OF A PERMANENT NATURE!

- This is a godly, inner-man happiness or contentment and satisfaction that is NOT dependent upon the external and physical circumstances of life—but rather is due to the excellency of the power of God's word effectually working within you (and Paul). [while enduring suffering]

- *Joy* is the expression of Paul's godly understanding and appreciation for the pleasure and delight of the godly communion & fellowship he anticipates having with the saints at Rome.

- *Joy* tells you that this great desire of Paul to meet fact-to-face with the saints at Rome and experience godly fellowship & communion with them is one of the major and **important events in Paul's life!**

- *Joy* also tells you that this godly fellowship & communion with the saints at Rome (these members of the body) will so deeply affect Paul as to be a **permanent** source of inner-man happiness and pleasure—to be recalled, revisited, and memorialized in his heart again and again throughout the remainder of Paul's life! [in prison and trouble and distress]

- It's amazing how both these phrases (a & b) in Paul's 3rd Item on his 'prayer list' has to do with the BODY and the importance of its proper function according to godliness! [a **great** thing to pray for!]

- So Paul anticipates that by being *delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea*; and that his *service* for the saints at *Jerusalem* will be *accepted* by them—(all of that) compounded with his first-time, face-to-face meeting with the saints at Rome will be one of the highest and joy-filled moments of his life! (and it should be!)

- Granted, it doesn't rank high at all in the eyes of this world ... and sadly, it doesn't rank high in the eyes of most Christians in this world ...

... but it is a HIGH point for an educated “son” who understands/appreciates BODY THINKING and the function of the Body of Christ in this disp. of grace in which we live!

... *that I may come unto you with joy by the will of God,*

- “*by the will of God*” - does NOT mean ‘if God wills’ in the old Calvinism sense of, ‘If it happens, then it’s God’s will; but if it does not happen, then it wasn’t God’s will.’

- This is a simple matter—we don’t have to do a categorical study of ‘The Diving Decrees’ and lapsarianism, post-lapsarianism, supralapsarianism ...

- Paul, requesting prayer for him to come to the saints at Rome *with joy by the will of God* simply means through the process of Rom. 12:2—that by both Paul and the saints at Rome using the doctrine and godly edification that has *transformed them by the renewing of their minds*—that this event takes place as PROOF of *that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

- In other words—if all these matters on his Prayer List took place properly, then that’s **proof** that the whole business has been conducted according to the ***will of God.***

... and the same can be said for ...

- Item #3b

... *and may with you be refreshed.*

- Notice—this isn’t just Paul, himself being *refreshed*, but it’s both Paul and all the saints (members of the body) at Rome! **[reciprocal refreshment!]**

- Being “*refreshed*” by godly fellowship & communion (no doubt there will be a “*table*” involved) is A BIG DEAL!

- This will give Paul and the saints at Rome a chance to put on display a “*shew*” (especially to the adversary and his cohorts) and to those *principalities and powers* “*openly*” of the *triumph* of the cross-work of the Lord Jesus Christ!

- And the accompanying effect will be one of *refreshment* of the inner-man [both with Paul, and within all of the saints in the assemblies at Rome]! (and that’s a BIG DEAL!)

- “*refreshed*” - συναναπαύσωμαι [sunanapausomai] (hapax.) =
[sun] = together; [ana] = up; [pauo] = to rest; hence, ‘to rest up together’

- It’s a rest for the spirit, soul, and body—and it’s a **mutual** rest and refreshment as an **Operation of God** for the body of Christ!

- It’s a **rest**-oration of the spirit that results in a **rest**-oration of the soul, that results in a **rest**-oration of the body as well.

- This is REAL, GODLY spiritual, mental, and physical HEALTH!

- The makeup of the human body demands times occur for its recuperation—even the Lord Himself did so in His earthly ministry—and how much more so in our human ‘bodies of corruption’!

- “*refreshed*” (only time in Romans) from *re* = anew + fresh = to strengthen, to increase, to repair, to energize—hence, to freshen, strengthen, and energize **anew**.

- (And notice that this is done as a **mutual** activity by all the members of the body in that locale—[all the assemblies of Rome getting together with Paul] - hence, the expression, “*and may with you be refreshed.*”)

- The point is—BODY COMMUNION is real, genuine, and godly REVIVAL! (note some examples: Acts. 27:3; 1Cor. 16:18; 2Cor. 7:13; 2Tim. 1:16-17; Phlm. 1:4-7, 20)

- So—for Item #3a,b—was this item on Paul’s ‘Prayer List’ answered in the affirmative, or not?

- (Part a) - Did Paul get to go to Rome and visit with the saints at Rome “*with joy by the will of God*”?

- And (Part b) - Did Paul enjoy being *refreshed with* the saints (the body of Christ saints) at Rome?

- Acts records that Paul did, indeed, go to Rome ... granted, it was a Nero’s prisoner—and the trip was full of hazards and shipwreck (and a snake bite) ...

... and, granted, the Jews certainly rejected Paul and his message and ministry ... (which you can read about in Acts 27-28 on your own).

- But the answer may be found in Acts 28:30-31 (read).

- We know for sure that Paul was only under ‘house arrest’ (so to speak) - but he got to stay in “*his own hired house*” for “*two whole years*” with “*no man forbidding him*” ...

... so I would say, YES—Paul got to go to Rome, he got to visit and have fellowship and communion with the body of Christ saints there—(no doubt it was “*with joy*”) - and in those 2 years it seems to me that Paul, indeed, had time to recuperate and be *refreshed*.

- So my understanding is—all 3 Items on Paul’s Prayer List were answered in the affirmative ... albeit, it may not have been exactly *how* Paul may have intended it or imagined it—but the effectual intelligent sonship prayers most definitely “worked”! And worked to the GLORY and PLEASURE of God!

END (:30-32) — Questions? Comments?

- That brings us to the final verse of Ch.15—and another Sonship Checkpoint.

Romans 15:33

Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

- Here we get the 4th and final description of Fatherly Features and Characteristics expressed in the form of 3 ‘Fatherly Titles’ by which we (as our Father’s adult, adopted “sons” and “daughters”) are to pause and honestly assess and measure our growth and development in our sonship education and edification.

- Wherefore, this verse acts as a Sonship Checkpoint—whereby we are going to get ‘checked out’ with an honest assessment to ensure that the doctrine and the godly edification we’ve been getting really is effectually working within us—and if so, then we can confidently ‘move on’ to the next thing in our sonship education.

- These ‘Fatherly Titles’ of God’s own Essence and Character and Nature are given by our Heavenly Father to us in our curriculum (Paul’s epistles) for our sonship education—and they do a couple of things:

1. They point up additional resources of our Spirit-given “supply” for us to be able to ‘activate’ our edification—and that’s of vital importance for us as we move from *simple sons*’ (Level I) to the *young man* status (Level II) ... as we move from simply enduring “*the sufferings of this present time*” to having to endure “*the sufferings of Christ*”!

- These 4 godly features/characteristics that exist within God Himself (and which **should** now exist in us as God’s properly educated “sons”) are primarily to be utilized by us in the face of suffering—of the *sufferings of Christ*! (i.e., the attacks of the Satanic Policy of Evil)

- All 4 are God’s powerful provisions for your **mental/spiritual wellbeing [health]!**

2. They act in a way similar to God’s Jehovah-compound names in God’s program with Israel—(they’re kind of like that, but with a Twist! ... a “sonship” Twist!)

- Under God's program w/ Isr., when it came to God's Jehovah-name, as recorded back in Exodus 3, God told Moses what His name was in 2 forms: 1) "*I AM THAT I AM*" - the long form; 2) "*I AM _____*" - the short form, which is a 'fill-in-the-blank'.

- The 'blank' represented everything that the nation Israel needed God to be for them, but that they could never be themselves.

- And basically, God 'filled in the blank' with 7 different Jehovah-compound names.

- The 'sonship Twist' I'm talking about is that, where the nation Israel was concerned, God would be these things for them that they could never be themselves ...

... and in a sense, the 'Fatherly Titles' God gives us in our curriculum for sonship education most certainly are features and characteristics of God our Heavenly Father that we need for Him to be for us ... but in a real Father-son relationship, it's **NOT** that we could never be these things ourselves—but by means of godly edification, (and here's the "twist"), **God expects us to be and to have these same features and characteristics that He has—and to come to possess them by means of the edification process!**

- In short—these really are features and characteristics of God Himself [of His Jehovah-ness] - (features & characteristics we desperately need to possess ourselves) ... and we come to possess them by the excellency of the power of God's word effectually working within us!

- God has so designed the curriculum for our sonship education/edification (Rom.-Phlm.) to generate these godly features and characteristics within our hearts, exactly as they are existing in God's own heart—and existing upon the exact same doctrine that causes them to effectually work within God's own heart!

- And these godly features & characteristics are produced by the curriculum for our sonship education **when** they are needed, **and in the order** they are needed.

- Where this analogy breaks down is that even we Gentiles in this disp. of grace need God, in His Jehovah-ness, to be for us things that we could never be for ourselves, too ... so maybe this illustration or analogy isn't all that good of a one!

- (**but it's the concept that I'm after!**)

- And what I'm after here is that you are **suitably impressed** with the fact that these 4 features & characteristics of God our Heavenly Father Himself (contained in these 3 'Fatherly Titles') given to us at the end of the book of Romans are NOT:

- merely a few nice, affectionate (warm, fuzzy) attributes of God that are nothing more than 'terms of endearment' that elicit nothing more from us than an, "Aw, isn't that special!"
- neither are they randomly chosen ...
- neither are they disordered or irregular or disarranged!
- (which, if that's all they are, makes them pretty much **pointless**—and in the end, at least for you and me, **useless!**)

- Far from any of that—these 4 feat/char of God are precise, carefully chosen out of all of the feat/char of God's essence that God could have chosen, chosen for a very specific, defined, and identifiable reason and purpose—they all have something in common, and are for a common use—and they all are in a particular order for our benefit and salvation when it comes to executing and living out our sonship lives as we activate our godly sonship edification in the details of our lives in this present evil world of satanic darkness.

- So critical; so vital; so important to our *sanctification* **salvation** (that is, to **save** us from having our sanctified, functional life wrecked, destroyed, and put to death) **that you and I should have these 4 things burned into our hearts; written on the fleshy tables of our hearts**—to the point that they will never be forgotten—to the point that they will now and forever (as long as we live on this earth) be used and utilized by us **every day of our lives!**

- They should be as easily recalled as your Social Security Number (or phone number; or email address; or password) - and they should be as vital and important to you as the necessary food you eat and the water you drink, and the air that you breathe!

- You're looking at a major part of your 'salvation package deal' (in this disp. of grace) ! - they will **save** you from the greatest and most powerful attempts Satan has at his disposal to thwart and put to death your sonship life! [and *separate you from the love of Christ*] ... (what price can you put on these?) [are they being used by the world today? {hello, black lives matters?}]

- If you're a Christian—if you bear the name of Christ—and are involved in the protesting and the rioting and all this stuff ... SHAME ON YOU! You are an embarrassment to the name of Christ! You are NOT any of these 4 things ... you are NOT 'like Father, like son'!!! You ARE like your 'father' the devil! You have NO patience, NO consolation, NO hope, NO peace ... you're nothing more than a selfish, proud, arrogant, self-righteous, whining, complaining, discontented baby! (when a baby becomes an adult-baby, he's dangerous!)

- And due to these 4 features contained in these 3 Fatherly Titles being put to us in the nature of a Sonship Checkpoint—be advised: if these 4 features & characteristics of your Heavenly Father are **NOT** generated, produced, and living and functioning and existing within you (just as they exist and function in God Himself) ... you will be **doomed to failure** if you proceed on!

- You CANNOT proceed on in your edification without them! (you'll be easy prey for the adversary!)

- A Sonship Checkpoint is one of those volitional testing points that you should be very familiar with by now—because we have had to pass a bunch of them by this point in Romans.

- And really, what a checkpoint does is—it stands in your way, and has to be passed before you are allowed to get to the place where you want to be.

- And more often than not—as you stand at a checkpoint—the place you want to be is right in front of you—you can see it; smell it; hear it, etc.—but you can't get to it until you pass the checkpoint. (And that's the case right here).

- General Definition of a CHECKPOINT = a stop where someone is inspected for certain qualities and/or authenticity in order to verify their clearance to move on.

- And that's in essence, what's going on here.

- But it's actually much more than that—because there are several features to this Sonship-type of Checkpoint that are essential to both the Father and to the son that are designed to indicate that the next part (or the next body of information) in the curriculum for the son's education can get underway **honestly**—with no pretense on the son's part [not faking it], and with full assurance on the Father's part that His son is responding positively and properly to all he has been told and taught up to this point.

- This means that before going on to Romans Ch.16, you're going to need to spend some time in fellowship and communion with your Father to ensure everything is 'running well' (no fakery) - that your response to the doctrine you've been taught has been **positive and proper**—and that both you and your Father have the assurance of your genuine 'credentials' (so to speak) or the 'clearance' to go on and get the next thing in the curriculum for your sonship education.

- Now while the central thing at this Sonship Checkpoint is the issue of the 3rd Fatherly Title: "*the God of peace*" - since this is the **last** Fatherly feature & characteristic (in a series of 4) that you are to have effectually working within you—my understanding is that you need to not only be checked out on this single feature; but you are to make sure that it's properly connected with the previous features as well!

- In other words—the 4 Fatherly features contained in the 3 Fatherly Titles now need to be viewed as a 'Package' of 'Like Father-like son' features and characteristics—with all 4 'up and running' well as a 'package' - and with an understanding and appreciation for what all 4 features are (to God, and to you); and what all 4 are designed to do.

- So—at this point, let's do a mini-review:
(and we'll keep it simple and brief)

- You have to know what all 4 features have in common—
What are all 4 of these designed to do? Why are they given to you and produced within you at this point? ... and the best way to go about answering that, is to ask: What is your Father getting you ready for in Romans 15:8-16:27?

- **A:** to GO ON and get the rest of your sonship education; and to do so as you will undergo "the sufferings of Christ."

- So these 4 godly features are going to provide a powerful means of **salvation** for you to endure *the sufferings of Christ* without those sufferings ending up causing you to ‘quit’ and ‘throw in the towel’ - and abandon your sonship education—and become *separated from the love of Christ*.

- In order for you to **begin** Level II Sonship Edification out in the book of Ephesians—you’re going to **need** all 4 of these godly, Fatherly features & characteristics! ... (you’ll need more than just these 4, but in order to get going in Level II, these 4 are vital).

- So—What do all 4 have in common? They are all necessary to endure ‘**Round 1**’ of the Satanic Policy of Evil sufferings of Christ.
[attack the message]

... they all have in common the issue of **suffering**—(specifically, *the sufferings of Christ*) ...

... they all have in common that they are God’s own grace-given provisions for **enduring** those sufferings without collapsing under the pressure ... and being ‘*more than conquerors*’ **in** them ...

... and in that way, they all work to **save** you from any and all of the ill-effects of Round 1 of the Policy of Evil.

- (much like the effectual working of those 8 Sanctifying Works of the Holy Ghost we covered in Rom. 15:15-29) ...

- giving you boldness/confidence
- **not** ‘fainting’ in your mind
- **not** acquiring *the spirit of fear*
- **not** becoming intimidated/deceived or subverted
- standing firm (not blown w/ every wind of doctrine)
- **not** losing ‘*the dew of thy youth*’
- **not** becoming *separated from the love of Christ*
- enduring suffering in godly wisdom and faithfulness.

- Let’s review the 3 features in the 2 Fatherly Titles we have been given so far—(and don’t let that word “**God**” just blow by you—in fact, you’ll get “*the God of _____*” at times, and “*the Father of _____*” at other times) ... why do you think that is?

- [more on that later]

- (again, if your going to successfully deal with suffering and *the sufferings of Christ* successfully and in a godly way in which a properly educated “son” would deal with it—you’re going to need all 4 of these) ...

- **PATIENCE** = enduring suffering or trouble without discontent or complaint.

- This is one of the first marks of a mature adult—and one of the first signs that you are no longer a child/childish.

- Whining, complaining, and discontentment IS CHILDISH!
(Exo. 15:24; 16:2; 16:7-9; 17:3; Num. 14:2, 27)

- **CONSOLATION** = relieving and strengthening a troubled mind (or human spirit) while laboring and **enduring** suffering *with* the **supply**.

- These 2 go together—(much like in the case of Godly Love & Charity where “Selflessness” and “Kindness” go together)

...

- **HOPE** = absolute confidence (**not** ‘wishing’) in a promised good and beneficial outcome and/or salvation—(a **salvation** is always in view with godly hope!)

- This involves a proper and effectual working of our ‘Hope-Doctrine Package’ contained in Romans!

- And that leaves the last one: PEACE—which we will deal with coming up.

- By the way—notice how that **ALL OF THESE** are only a reality in your life **IF** you have the **doctrine** and the **godly edification** by means of the *leading* of the Spirit of God through the curriculum for your sonship edification!

- In other words—these 4 things mean **NOTHING** if all you can do is say, “Well, God (being the God He is) is the God of Patience, Consolation, Hope, and Peace ... so, I guess He’ll just give me some of them when I’m hurting and suffering.”

- **WRONG!** these demand an understanding of the doctrine in the curriculum and the effectual working of it within you—and if you don’t have that, then these are nothing more than words without meaning!

- All of these Fatherly Titles (which are designed to end up with you becoming a “*son*” or “*daughter*” of these same “like” features & characteristics) - all of these features of these Fatherly Titles are only going to operate within your inner-man **because of the excellency of the power of God’s word effectually working within you!**

- *Patience, consolation, hope, and peace* (just like godly *love & charity*) do **not** just mystically or magically materialize in your heart automatically! (which is sad news for most Christians!)

- They are **not** some mysterious and unexplainable experience that suddenly happens to you when (and if) you get to be ‘spiritual’ enough for God to ‘zap’ you with them!

- They are **not** some kind of miracle working of God that just ‘comes over you’ when you ‘praise and worship’ God—or even when you pray to God for them when you’re in a ‘pinch’ (or hurting or suffering or whatever)!

- They are **not** experiences where you just let the Spirit of God ‘fill’ you, or ‘flood’ you, or ‘infuse’ you with them by intoning His holy name; “letting go, and letting God”; and feeling the Spirit “take control.”

- They are **not** some kind of ‘ethereal’ thing, or something beyond your comprehension—or something that just takes place unconsciously or spontaneously—or something that takes place passively (meaning, by you doing **nothing**)!

- And even though it’s a very important issue in all of them [especially with the issue of *peace*] - even prayer; and praying for them (without any intelligence of the effectual working of the doctrine that’s designed to produce them) will not spontaneously generate them within you, either!

- (because, as you know by now—prayer is only effectual when it’s intelligent ... that is, when it operates upon the doctrine your Father has taught you)

- The upshot of all of this is this—these 4 features will **only** operate properly, effectually, and to your benefit *because* and *when* they are **based upon some specific knowledge/information that God has given to you in His word!**

- So—in review: when we review these Fatherly features—you should be able to ‘put your finger on’ some information in the book of Romans that, by its effectual working, has produced these features in your heart, just as they exist in your Father’s heart ... let’s see if you can do it ...

- “*the God of **patience** ...*”

- What does **patience** mean? = Enduring suffering or trouble without discontent or complaint.

[a lot of these portions do double & triple-duty]

- Where is some of the specific knowledge/information that God has given you in His word (in Romans) that has effectually worked to produce godly **patience** within you?

- **Rom. 5:3-4; 8:20-25; 12:12; 14:5; 15:3-4 (:4)**

- “*the God of **patience** and **consolation**”*

- What does **consolation** mean? = Relieving and strengthening a troubled, distressed mind (your human spirit) while **laboring** and **enduring** suffering with the **supply**.

- In other words—You’ve got the supply, now you’re going to get the encouragement to endure suffering with that supply—which includes you encouraging other members of the body—supporting them to bolster their confidence—reassure them; etc.

- How does **consolation** differ from **comfort**?

- **Comforting** a brother is taking them **to** the **supply** itself—being a helper in their own godly edification—reviewing the doctrine with them—reminding them of the doctrine — edifying one another [especially the weaker brother] (14:19), etc.

- Where is some specific knowledge/information that God has given to you in His word (Romans doctrine) that has effectually worked to produce godly **consolation** within you?

- **Rom. 8:16-18, 26-39; 12:2 (mercies), 16; 14:1-15:7**

- “*the God of hope*”

- What does *hope* mean (biblically ... to God)? = **Absolute** confidence in a promised good & beneficial outcome and/or salvation. (*not* ‘wishful thinking’!)

- And by now you should know how godly *hope* gets produced within you—you should know how it gets generated within you ... the mechanics of producing godly *hope* ... right? [a Love-Based Convincement = an Intellectual Appeal + Emotional Appeal based upon God’s love]

- Where is some specific knowledge/information that God has given to you in His word (Romans doctrine) that has effectually worked to produce godly *hope* within you?

- (**Rom. 5:2, 4-5; 8:24-25, 38-39; 12:12**)

- “*the God of peace*”

- What does *peace* mean?

- Like the previous terms—Paul doesn’t define *peace*—he doesn’t analyze it ... which means that you’re expected to already know what it is before your ever get to Romans.

- And, indeed, you should already know. (it’s not a dispensational issue—it’s an issue in **both** programs!)

- *Peace* can be used in a whole bunch of different contexts and therefore can have several different meanings.

- *Peace* is a wonderful word in any language—and it’s one of the most sought after and welcomed guests that could ever exist in the human heart ... and it’s one of the most upsetting and troublesome things to the human heart when it takes its leave!

- So vital and needful to you as a believer in Jesus Christ and to your sanctified, functional, sonship life—that God has Paul include it in every salutation at the beginning of every one of Paul’s epistles! (all 13)

- Paul has used the word *peace* many times just in the book of Romans—(1:7; 2:10; 3:17; 5:1; 8:6 10:15; 14:17; 14:19; 15:13, here in 15:33; and one more time in 16:20)

- In any context, and in any way in which the word *peace* is used—it has one major, common denominator: FREEDOM.

- That is, in a negative aspect, *peace* is freedom (or the absence) of something. [something troubling and bothersome]

- And my understanding is that *peace* (as it's used by God, in God's word) falls into 5 basic categories:

1) *Peace* **with** God = freedom from being at war or more specifically, “at-odds” with God [**Rom. 5:1**] — being “at-one” (*atonement*) with God—free from God's wrath—a state of reconciliation between you and God—the result of justification—a **permanent** condition, status, and relationship of peace.

2) *Peace* through victory over the *wretched man* status of a Christian trying to sanctify himself under the law—**Rom. 8:6**. This is a sanctification-type of *peace*—a peace of mind that comes from the cessation of **war**—a freedom from hostilities that rage in your inner man **under the law**—it's a peace of mind/spirit that comes from a complete victory over an enemy that otherwise would be holding you in captivity to sin and functional death (as a POW).

3) *Peace* with your *neighbor*—with those near you (Civic Peace, Civility) - with those who, oftentimes are lost persons [see **Rom. 12:18; 13:10; 1Tim. 2:2**] ... *peace* with your *neighbor* can also be an issue with saved persons (other members of the body of Christ)—[see **1Cor. 6:1ff**] = freedom from private quarrels, agitation and disturbance—a state of quiet order and security. And in connection with other members of the body of Christ, = freedom from strife, divisions, hatred, envy, vanity, railings, evil surmisings, schism [**and you can look up the many passages where Paul admonishes the saints against all these things throughout his epistles.**]

4) *Peace* with the *weaker brother* (*peace* with other members of the body of Christ who are positively and actively engaged in getting their godly sonship edification) = freedom from doubtful disputations, improper judging, division, stumblingblocks, occasions to fall, grief, offence—[**see Rom. 14:16-19**]

5) *Peace of God* = inner-man *peace*—*peace* in your human spirit, mind, and soul—*peace* in your heart. = freedom from stress, turmoil, internal commotion, fear, distress, terror, anger, anxiety, disturbance, inner trouble, discouragement, depression, and the like. [**see Rom. 15:13 (where we dealt with this very kind of *peace* back there in great detail.)**]

(All 5 of these forms of *peace* are dealt with in the book of Romans!)

- We've actually dealt with this kind of *peace* (i.e., the **Peace of God**) a lot recently in our Romans studies (back in **15:13**)—but just to put a general, working definition to it (and a definition that is more of a 'positive'-type definition) ...

- *Peace* = a tranquil, stable, and **godly** mental and spiritual health and wellbeing regardless of suffering or circumstances. [Note: "godly" = God-Like ... hence, produced strictly by the Living Words of the Living God living in you!]

- Now, we've already noted a couple of passages in Romans where God has given some specific knowledge and information that's designed to effectually work to produce/generate godly *peace* (the *peace of God*) within you ... but can you think of any other places in Romans?

- how about **Rom. 8:16-39**? (it overlaps with *hope*) ... and really it's a 'parallel' doctrine that runs throughout the book of Romans [the curriculum for Level I Sonship Edification & Education].

- Ok—the point of this review (or exercise) is to check you out so that you can honestly say (and that your mind is honestly settled) that:

1) You really do perceive God your Heavenly Father as: *the God of patience and consolation*; *the God of hope*; and *the God of peace*; ...

... and 2) That your Father can honestly look at **you** as His “son” or “daughter” and say that YOU are a “son” of *patience and consolation, hope, and peace* as well!

- THAT’S YOUR CHECKPOINT ISSUE! (that’s the valid credentials you must have in order to properly pass this sonship checkpoint!)

- And now it’s up to you to settle this matter out with your Father in some godly sonship prayer, fellowship and communion with Him!

- Can you pass the checkpoint? or not?

- Details of (:33) *Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.*

- “**Now**” - once again we have the word *Now* in the 1st position (or 1st word) of the sentence—and it’s used ‘alone’ (so to speak) ... [the definite article “*the*” goes with “*God*” - “***the God ...*” ...**

... my understanding is that when *Now* is used in the 1st position (with no accompanying words like “*then*”) - it’s being used to indicate that something has ‘now’ been fully accomplished at this time—and under the present circumstances of the **context** ...

... having accomplished the effectual working of ‘Part A’ of the Godly Labor = laboring together with Paul and with God in intelligent sonship prayer—and by doing so, the Roman saints are putting themselves in a position of being so closely associated with the apostle Paul and “*the gospel of Christ*” and the *revelation of the mystery* given to him, (and that Paul was proclaiming) - that they, (along with Paul), are now in a position of undergoing “*the sufferings of Christ*” ...

... they, too will undergo all of the defaming, lying accusations, and intense opposition that Paul faced—which will take a heavy toll upon their ‘inner man’ (their human spirit) and soul (their whole heart) ...

... and therefore, their great need is for God to be “*the God of peace*” - they will have a great need for godly *peace* (for *the peace OF God*) in their inner-man! And not only will they need that *peace*, but YOU will need it, too, as you prepare for undergoing *the sufferings of Christ* as well!

- At this point in your sonship edification—you MUST have the effectual working of God’s word that pertains to Him being *the God of peace* within you (along with the *patience, consolation, and hope*) in order to NOT become victimized by the Satanic Policy of Evil in connection with suffering *the sufferings of Christ!*

- (i.e., the excellence of the power of God’s word effectually producing within your heart a godly tranquil and stable mental and spiritual health and wellbeing, regardless of the suffering!) [and thereby NOT becoming ‘fainthearted’!]

- So ... **“Now”** - with all that fully accomplished—and **in view of these things**—the following information is going to be set forth as a way of **checking you out** in order to see that you have fully and properly received the effectual working of what the Father has just taught you.

- And everything that is said after the word *Now* in (:33) can be looked at and evaluated by you in order to ensure that your godly Thinking, Living, and Labor really is just like your Father’s—in other words, that it’s REAL, and not just some ‘theory’ or just some category of doctrine that is nothing more than ‘bible data’ and compartmentalized thinking!

- In other words—that you really DO have the **benefits** of this godly feature/characteristic of the *peace of God* operating in your inner-man, just like it operates within your Heavenly Father ... and for the exact same reason!

- *“Now the God of peace ...”*

- I just want to touch on this issue of the accuracy of God’s word in that, in all of these Fatherly Titles—they all begin with those 2 words **“the God ... of ____”**

- And when you study out the other Fatherly Titles throughout Paul’s epistles, you find out that the Fatherly Titles don’t all say, *“the God” of (whatever) ...* sometimes they say, *“The Father of ____”* or *“The Lord of ____”* ... so the question is, what’s the difference? and why do you have *“God”* one place, *“Father”* another place, and *“Lord”* used in another place?

- 2Cor. 1:3 - “*the God of all comfort*”
- 2Cor. 13:11 - “*the God of love and peace*”
- Phil. 4:9 - “*the God of peace*”
- 1Thess. 5:23 - “*the God of peace*”

- 2Cor. 1:3 - “*the Father of mercies*”
- Eph. 1:17 - “*the Father of glory*”

- Rom. 9:29 - “*the Lord of Sabaoth*” (Israel’s program)
- 1Cor. 2:8 - “*the Lord of glory*” (speaking of Christ, Himself)
- 2Thess. 3:16 - “*the Lord of peace*”
- 1Tim. 6:15 - “*the Lord of lords*” (speaking of Christ Himself)

- (and that’s just in our epistles—there’s **more** in the scriptures pertaining to God’s prog. w/Isr.)

- The short answer is that, apparently, there is a slight shift—(not so much in meaning, but) a shift in **viewpoint**—a shift in the way in which God expects you to **view** Him in connection with the various features, characteristics, or attributes that are expressed in each phrase. (**sensitive to the context**)!

- In other words—at one time, something is to be viewed and appreciated about God’s ‘God-ness’ ... and another time something is to be viewed and appreciated about God’s ‘Fatherly-ness’ ... and then other times something is to be viewed and appreciated about God’s ‘Lord-ness’ (so to speak).

- (*God, Lord, Father*) - all 3 have in common the issue of one in supreme and final authority; sovereignty—even the title *Father* carries the idea of one who institutes, originates, and calls into being (as in the title “God the Father”).

- But one of these 3 stands out (or stands apart) from the other 2 ... [and we could take a whole lot of time here to critically analyze these terms and do a big ‘word-study’ on them ... and maybe that would be profitable—but I don’t think that would be the wisest thing at this time] ... but again, one of these terms stands apart from the other 2 ... which one?

[and this is very basic, elementary, fundamental]

- **A:** God.

- Why? ... because a human being cannot be Capital “G” God! — a human being *can*, however, be a “lord” and a “father”.

- “*God*” carries the issue of **deity**—of one who is **not** human, but **divine**—with sovereignty, power, and authority that is above and beyond anything human—One who is worthy to be worshipped by human beings. (and we could go on)

- Therefore, being called, “*the God of peace*” is much like (and has much the same **view** in mind) as when we looked at the word “*gospel*”.

- Usually pointed out that εὐαγγέλιον = ‘good news’ - but the KJ translators didn’t translate it that way—in fact, that’s NOT a good way to deal with the term (even in the Greek) - because there can be a whole lot of kinds of ‘good news’ (such as hitting the lottery; stocks going up; getting married; having a baby; the Yankees winning their 28th World Series)

...

... but this *gospel* ‘good news’ isn’t just any old kind of ‘good news’ - the English word “*gospel*” is made up of 2 words: GOD + SPELL = God’s own spelled-out message [set apart from any of man’s messages!]

- And in much the same way, by saying “*the God of peace*” - while much can be said for God being sovereign and having absolute authority—if a **viewpoint** is being stressed—my understanding is that the expression “*the God of peace*” is designed to indicate and impress upon you that this *peace* is **nothing** like the peace that is offered by, or comes from men!

- Rather, this is **God’s own brand** of *peace*—offered only and exclusively by God Himself—generated & manufactured only and exclusively by God Himself—and found only and exclusively in God’s word itself!

- (it’s an issue very much like “*water*” see **John [behold: “*my fellow*” - Jesus is God!] 4:3-26; 14:27)**

- The *peace* that God provides for us to have in this present dispensation of grace is also “*not as the world giveth*” - it, too, is God’s own *peace*.

- Also, note that just as the *peace* that the Lord gave to the Remnant of Israel comes from specific information and knowledge about God’s counsel and purpose with them in the Climactic Stage of their program—so, too, does our *peace* come from specific knowledge and information regarding God’s counsel and purpose with us as His “sons” in this present disp. of grace.

- Through both general and specific information—God provides us with the ability to possess the very thinking and understanding that He operates upon regarding us.

- This makes it so that when we, likewise, think what He thinks, and understand what He understands, it effectually produces within us the same *peace* and contentment that it produces in Him!

- And when this is the case with us— we not only have *peace* from “***the God of peace,***” but we truly have *Godly peace*—the very same peace that God Himself possesses!

- So my understanding is—that when I see that expression, “*the God of peace*” - I’m to understand immediately that I’m to view this brand of peace (or this form of peace) as exclusively offered by God Himself and exclusively produced by God Himself—and there are NO substitutes; and NO improvements to it! (in other words, men in this world have NOTHING close to the ‘brand’ of *peace* to offer others as the ‘brand’ of *peace* offered by God Himself!)

- and that gives me tremendous confidence and assurance in this brand of *peace*’s efficacy (**power**) and capacity to produce the desired effect = to give godly tranquility and stability to my human spirit, resulting in the highest form of spiritual and mental health & wellbeing, regardless of my suffering or circumstances.

- And folks, THAT’S **EFFECTUAL PEACE!**

- Now—while God’s ‘God-ness’ is in view—(i.e., this *peace* coming from God as the Deity and man having nothing close to offer as a substitute) — it’s also very clear that God is both the “true” God and the “living” God—and as such, He is living and involved in a true, unpretended and interactive relationship with us. He is neither a casual, nor detached, nor unaffected observer of us, or of what occurs with us.

- My point being—even though we’re dealing with “*the God of peace*” - with special emphasis upon viewing the divine ‘God-ness’ of this *peace* ... it’s neither unobtainable by us, nor is it something God possesses with the impossibility of us ever possessing ourselves ... because God has provided for us to be *godly* (God-like) and along with Him, to fully enjoy and benefit from the saving work of godly *peace* when it has properly been generated within our heart by the living words of the Living God, living in us!

(from EBM Quarterly—2nd Quarter 2004, Keith Blades)

- It may seem almost silly to put it this way, but the truth of the matter is that neither God our Father, nor the Lord Jesus Christ, nor the Spirit of God within us, become distressed when we encounter and experience disturbing situations. With God there is no onset of anxiety or worry; no racing of the mind; no ‘fight or flight’ response; no wringing of the hands, pacing of the floor, sleepless nights, or any other product of distress and uneasiness of mind. Instead our Father, our Lord, and the Spirit within us, are at peace within themselves regarding us.

- Yet this is not simply because God is God—and anything but contentment is impossible for Him. For though God is God, He is **not** detached, impersonal, or unaffected God, as He clearly testifies. Rather He has a direct, interactive and personal relationship with His creation as a whole, and more specifically with His people. Because of this God is personally affected by what occurs, having not only purposed and designed for this to be so, but also having enabled it to be so. And this is true both in His program with Israel and with us in this present dispensation of His grace. With this being so God acts and reacts with real actions and reactions; not merely with sentiments that are anthropopathisms in description, but not true sentiments in nature. For God is not only the “true” God, He is also the “living God.” As such God lives and has a living, involved relationship both to us and with us.

- So it is, therefore, that God is genuinely touched by any and all of the disturbing and distressing things that we may encounter in our lives.

- Now though God is genuinely affected by them, He is NOT disturbed and distressed by them. For operating within Him is some particular peace-producing and peace-maintaining knowledge, which is the product of His own counsel and purpose regarding us as His “sons.” And on the basis of this particular knowledge God thinks differently about our situations and circumstances than we do. Hence His mind generates responses to our situations that differ from those that are typically generated by our natural minds. Consequently with this particular knowledge operating within Him, God is NOT distressed regarding us. Instead, He is at PEACE and content.

———(end of quote)

- I can’t imagine how much joy, delight, and pleasure it gives God when we can share His *peace* IN all our suffering and circumstances in the details of our life!

- At this point I want to point up a very important matter where godly *peace* and “*the peace of God*” that comes from “*the God of peace*” is concerned ... and that is the important matter of:

- ok, I’ve been taught and given a lot of knowledge and information (doctrine) that is designed to generate godly *peace*, and to maintain godly *peace*—and it’s effectually working in my inner man ...

... but then comes the ‘acid test’ (so to speak) - then comes the mind-numbing; mind-shattering; heart-fainting trouble and distress that weighs so heavily on my mind & spirit that I feel I’m going to crack up ... fear, worry, anxiety, even paranoia seem to build and well up within me ...

... desperation, discouragement, even depression begins to root up the godly *peace* I have ...

... and now a ‘confrontation’ takes place in me—I arrive at a ‘tipping point’ where, if things don’t change (and change quick), I think I’ll ‘lose it’ - I’ll lose my godly, inner-man *peace* and I’ll come unglued ... I’ll have a total breakdown in my mind ...

... at that point—at that ‘tipping point’ (so to speak) - how do I UTILIZE / or PUT TO USE that doctrine; that knowledge my Father gave me in order to dismiss and cast off those mind-crippling things that seek to rob me of my *peace*, and replace the fear, anxiety, depression (and the like) with godly *peace*?

... or, simply put—if and when the time comes that I no longer have *the peace of God* operating in my mind & spirit—**how do I re-acquire it?** or better yet, how do I **maintain** *the peace of God* and **not** have it take its leave from my heart?

- In other words—what is (or is there) a ‘mechanism’ for how I am to take my Father’s knowledge and be able to operate upon it, and have it’s power do the job of dispelling the things that are troubling my mind, and replace those things with godly *peace*? ... and **yes**, there is a ‘mechanism’ for doing that — there is something that, as a **MUST**, hast to (and is designed to) accompany the knowledge your Father gave you in His word in order to **MAINTAIN** the godly *peace* in your heart!

- My understanding is that there really is a particular ‘mechanism’ by which God has proposed and designed for us to not only **acquire** godly *peace*, but to enjoy it, and for it to be **maintained** in the face of the evil, ungodly course of this world’s attempt; and the adversary’s policy of evil’s attempt to dislodge it and to break our heart and mind!

- And this ‘mechanism’ I’m after here is designed to accompany our Father’s *peace*-producing knowledge and to go along with it, ‘hand-in-hand’ ... and it is to always be understood by us to be an inseparable issue that always goes with the doctrine and the living word of God that now has been written on the fleshy tables of our heart ...

... and the ‘mechanism’ I’m after here is: the direct communion and fellowship we are to have (and should have) with our Father through intelligent sonship PRAYER!

- Sound, *peace*-producing doctrine from the word of God **demand**s the use of intelligent sonship prayer ... godly *peace* and intelligent sonship prayer **GO TOGETHER!**

- And the reason they go together is because in what ever form it takes—the thing (or things) that threaten our godly *peace* are in the most general sense: **tribulations!**

- Godly *peace* and the attacks upon that *peace* that threaten it to leave us (*tribulations* / trouble) and intelligent sonship prayer **ALL GO TOGETHER!**

... or maybe a better way to say it: when *tribulations*, trouble, *distress* and the like from the PoE threaten our godly *peace* ...

... the threat to our inner-man *peace* is ‘guarded’ and ‘kept’ and maintained from being ‘shattered’ and taking its leave from us by the combined forces of the sound, *peace*-producing doctrine from the word of God PLUS the communion and fellowship with our Father through intelligent sonship prayer.

... Or, what you might call, ‘The Tranquilizing Ministry of Prayer’!
(see **EBM Quarterly, Second Quarter, 2004, Keith Blades—p.2-3**)

(:33) *Now the God of peace be **with** you all.*

- I just want to look at this one last detail—why does God have Paul say “**with**” instead of “in” ?

- “*the God of peace*” be **WITH** us? ... wouldn’t it be better that *the God of peace*” be **IN** us? (prepositions are important)

- So—why “**with**” and not ‘in’?

- First of all—notice that it’s not saying, ‘Now the peace of God be with you all.’ but it says, “*Now **the God of peace** be with you all.*”

- However, the “*peace*” we’re talking about here is (in my understanding) the inner-man type *peace*—the godly tranquility and stability that causes mental and spiritual health & wellbeing.

- (and if the text did say, ‘Now **the peace of God** be with you all.’ - then I would expect the preposition to be “**in** you” rather than “*with you*”).

- But with the context being one of the Heavenly Father making preparation for His “sons” and “daughters” who have now achieved Level I of their Sonship Edification to undergo *the sufferings of Christ*, that, then, helps me understand why the preposition is *with* instead of *in*.

- And (again), the difference in the prepositions **isn’t** the issue of ‘importance’ (i.e., “*the God of peace*” being “*with*” you is more or less important than “*the God of peace*” being “*in*” you) - that is, one being more important than the other ...

- Of the many ways in which the prep. *with* can be used—and simply put to save time) ... my understanding is that here in (:33), the prep. *with* indicates the simple meaning of ‘being on the side of’ noting a closeness of relationship and favor. (Webster’s 1828—#2)

- And it’s GOD, as “*the God of peace*” Who is “***with***” you.

- That’s a little bit different than “*the peace of God*” being “*with*” you.

- (and, again, the “difference” being one of emphasis—or what is being specially focused upon or given special attention).

- Notice that ‘*the peace of God*’ by this time (when you get to :33) is actually a ‘given’ matter ...

... why? notice back up in (:13) *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and **peace** in believing* ... (that’s “the peace **OF** God” - that’s the godly tranquility and stable mental & spiritual health and wellbeing—that’s inner-man peace)!

- (:13) tells you that the “*peace OF God*” is something that has already been generated and is expected to be operating within your inner man at this time.

- (:13) tells you that the “*peace OF God*” is already **IN** you!

- That’s why I say that here in (:33), the “*peace OF God*” being IN you is a ‘given’.

- So that tells me that the issue of “*the God of peace*” being **WITH** me is **not** emphasizing the indwelling “*peace OF God*” (as important as that is—and not to minimize it at all) ...

... but the emphasis here in (:33) is upon the assistance, guidance, and **supply** of the godly “*peace OF God*” that **does** dwell **in** you—here in (:33) the issue is **not** one of, ‘Do you have “the peace of God” or not?’ ... rather, the issue is one of **maintaining** “the peace of God” that you have now come to possess!

- And the supply of that godly “*peace OF God*” that will assist you and guide you and save you in time of suffering is vested in “***the God of peace***” — and not only that, but that “*the God of peace*” will always be “**WITH**” you in every suffering situation & circumstance !!! ...

... you already ***have*** the peace of God dwelling IN you—what you need now is the confidence and assurance that the Supply of that godly peace **will never fail you!** (in those times of suffering the *sufferings of Christ*)!

- Your Heavenly Father as “*the God of peace*” is going to be “***with***” you in every suffering situation you’ll ever face ...

... and “***with***” tells you that He’s always on your side; He’s always in that close-knit relationship; always regarding you with favor and **supply** of that godly *peace* that will **maintain** your mental & spiritual health and wellbeing with godly tranquility and stability! (“*with*” tells you you’re never in the fight/battle alone—God Himself is your **Quartermaster** [in charge of & responsible for your SUPPLY of godly *peace* by means of the effectual working word of God within you!])

- “***with***” emphasizes that godly inner-man *peace of God* in USE; in ACTION within your suffering circumstances!

- Hence, ***Now the God of peace be WITH you all.***

- Questions? Comments?

- That leaves the last word of Ch.15 — ***Amen.***

- So important of a matter is the information contained in Rom. 15:5-33 ... and so important is the matter of these 3 Fatherly Titles (and their 4 features) ... and so important is the matter of not only understanding and appreciating your Father as “*the God of*” all of them; but also so important is the matter that to God the Father, you are a “son” / “daughter” of all of them ...

... so important of a matter is all that, that God has the apostle Paul end it all with, “*Amen.*” !!!

- ***Amen*** is one of those words that has been so overused and abused over time that it has almost lost all significance to most Christians today ... in fact, it’s almost only understood as the proper and only way to end a prayer. (Most folks don’t know what *amen* means!)

- The word *amen* is used 7x in the book of Romans:

1:25; 9:5; 11:36; 15:33; 16:20; 16:24; 16:27.

- Truth is—*amen* can be used at not only the **end** of a discourse (or prayer), but it can be used at the **beginning** of a discourse, too! (except, when it's used at the beginning of a discourse, it's usually said in the English as '*verily*' ... but not always)

- 1Kings 1:36; Jer. 28:6 (*Amen*)
- Mat. 5:18 (*verily*) - [many other places]

- *Amen* is not a translated word—rather it's a transliterated word.

- It's the taking of the actual Hebrew letters and bringing them over into both the Greek and the English.

- Hebrew: אָמֵן - Greek: ἀμὲν

= so it is; so be it; let it be so (and the like).

- (Buck's Theological Dictionary, 1830)

AMEN, a Hebrew word, which, when prefixed to an assertion, signifies *assuredly, certainly*, or emphatically *so it is*; but when it concludes a prayer, *so be it*, or *so let it be*, is its manifest import. In the former case it is *assertive*, or assures of a truth or a fact; and is an asseveration and is properly translated, *verily*, John 3:3. In the latter case it is *petitionary*, and as it were, epitomizes all the requests with which it stands connected. Num. 5:25; Rev. 22:20. This emphatical term was not used among the Hebrews by detached individuals only, but on certain occasions, by an assembly at large. Deut. 22:14, 20. It was adopted also in the public worship of the primitive churches, as appears by that passage 1Cor. 14:16, and was continued among the Christians in following times; yea, such was the extreme into which many ran, that Jerome informs us, that, in his time, at the conclusion of every public prayer, the united *amen* of the people sounded like the *fall of water*, or the *noise of thunder*. Nor is the practice of some professors in our own time to be commended, who, with a low, though audible voice, add their *amen* to almost every sentence as it proceeds from the lips of him who is praying. As this has a tendency to interrupt the devotion of those that are near them, and may disconcert the thoughts of him who leads the worship, it would be better omitted, and a *mental amen* is sufficient. The term, as used at the end of our prayers, suggests that we should pray with understanding, faith, fervour and expectation.

- Hence: *Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.* (Questions? Comments?)

- END OF ROMANS CHAPTER 15.