



The Amish Voice

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The Proof That A Man Is Justified By Faith Alone And Not By Works

Study 5: Galatians 3:23-29

—Teacher's Outline and Study Bible™

1. Faith in Christ frees us from the supervision of the law

- a. The law was a prison for man
- b. The law was a guardian or teacher for man
- c. The power of faith in Christ frees us from the bondage of the law

E. The Proof of What Faith Does for Us, 3:23-29

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

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

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

26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

2. Faith in Christ makes us children of God

- a. By causing us to focus upon Christ Jesus
- b. By clothing us with the righteousness of Christ

3. Faith in Christ makes us one: Eliminates all distinctions & prejudices

4. Faith in Christ makes us heirs of the promise

Section III

THE PROOF THAT A MAN IS JUSTIFIED BY FAITH ALONE AND NOT BY WORKS

Galatians 3:1-4:7

Study 5: THE PROOF OF WHAT FAITH DOES FOR US

Text: Galatians 3:23-29

Aim: To grasp the great benefits of faith.

Memory Verse:

"And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Ga.3:29).

INTRODUCTION:

How many times have you begun a journey, only to realize that you made a wrong turn along the way? You wanted to go south, but you were actually heading west. Sincere as you were about wanting to go south, your destination was westward bound.

Many of us have turned down the wrong road in life, trusting in our works and the law to save us. We have been sincere, but we have been sincerely wrong. How can we make a mid-course correction? By faith, we must begin to trust the Lord to show us the way.

Some people in the churches of Galatia were spreading a false teaching. They were saying that a person is justified by works and law; that is, that a person becomes acceptable to God by subjecting himself to Christ, but he must also subject himself to the law and do

the very best he can. They were saying that, yes, Christ is important; but a commitment to live by the law—a commitment to do the very best one can—is also essential in order to be saved and acceptable to God.

The false teaching sounds good, for a person not only should, but he must, do the best he can. Actually a person should not only do the best he can in seeking God but in everything he undertakes. However, Scripture is very clear: man is not justified by being good and doing good. Man just cannot be good enough nor do enough good to become perfect. God is perfect; therefore, man must become perfect if he is to live with God.

How then can a person become acceptable to God? By faith in Jesus Christ. When a person believes in Jesus Christ, he honors God's Son, and God honors the person who honors His Son. God honors the person by doing the very thing for which the person trusted Christ. For example, if a person believes that Christ died for his sins, God counts it so. If a person believes that God considers him righteous in Christ, God considers it so. And so on. Note, however: belief does not mean *mental assent*, just believing in one's thoughts and mind that Jesus Christ is the Savior. True belief is *spiritual commitment*, the commitment of one's heart and life—all that one is and all that one has--to Christ.

How do we know that we are justified by faith and not by the law and doing the best we can? Because of what faith does for us.

OUTLINE:

1. Faith in Christ frees us from the supervision of the law (vv.23-25).
2. Faith in Christ makes us children of God (vv.26-27).
3. Faith in Christ makes us one: eliminates all distinctions and prejudices (v.28).
4. Faith in Christ makes us heirs of the promise (v.29).

1. FAITH IN CHRIST FREES US FROM THE SUPERVISION OF THE LAW (vv.23-25).

There are two pictures which clearly illustrate the purpose of the law.

1. The law was a prison for man. Before faith came, that is, before Christ died, man was "kept under the law." The word for "kept under" means to be guarded, kept in custody, imprisoned, held in bondage. Very simply, the law shuts man up under sin; it imprisons and holds man in bondage to sin. How?

- a. The law shows man exactly where he fails—exactly where he comes short. There is no question about it: the law said to do this, but the man did that. He failed or disobeyed. The failure is clearly spelled out, just as clearly as a speed limit sign spells out the violation of the speeder.
- b. The law accuses and condemns man. As soon as a person violates the law, the law charges him. The law is in black and white, written down, so there is no question about its having been broken. Therefore, it preys upon his mind, cuts and convicts his heart. Guilt and conviction take over, and the man is troubled and vexed to varying degrees, all dependent on the seriousness of the violation.
- c. The law has no life and no power to deliver man from the punishment due him for his violation. This is the whole point: the law reveals the violation and condemns man; it imprisons him. The law does not deliver man; it condemns man to bondage. It continues and continues to point out man's sins and failures. And the case of the law is endless: its finger of accusation points out the man's failure every time he violates it. The bondage to the law is ongoing.

The only hope for man is for someone to appear on the scene with the power to release him. That someone has appeared: Jesus Christ has come to set us free. But note: as prisoners we have to accept His deliverance. The choice is ours. We can believe and trust His power to deliver us or not.

2. The law was a schoolmaster or guardian for man. The law was man's guardian to lead him to see his need for Christ. He was usually a trusted slave who was in charge of a child's moral welfare, but he had one particular duty to which Paul was referring. Every day the guardian took the child to school and delivered him to the teacher. And then at the end of the day, he returned for the child and brought him safely back home. This was what the law was to do. The law was to lead man to Christ, the true Teacher. The law does this by showing man that he is utterly unable to secure righteousness by himself. He must look to Christ, the real Teacher, for righteousness and acceptance by God, that is, for justification by faith. And once Christ (faith in Him) has come, there is no need for the law nor for any other guardian, for Jesus Christ brings us face to face with God.

QUESTIONS:

1. The law is a prison for man. Can anyone successfully escape from this prison? Why do men think they can

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escape on their own?

2. Does the law have any power to deliver its prisoners? Where does your hope of deliverance come from? Where does your faith come in?
3. In what practical ways does God use the law to bring us to Christ?

2. FAITH IN CHRIST MAKES US CHILDREN OF GOD (vv.26-27).

How do we know that we are justified by faith instead of by the law and by doing the best we can? Because faith makes us children of God. As stated in the previous point, Jesus Christ brings us face to face with God. He stirs God to adopt us as children of God. How? By faith. Note two crucial points.

1. Faith causes us to focus upon God's Son, Jesus Christ. Man can rest upon one thing: God will accept anyone who *focuses* upon His Son Jesus Christ, for God loves His Son to the ultimate degree. God is no less than any normal father who loves his son. In fact, God is much more than man; He is perfect. Therefore, God loves His Son, Jesus Christ, with a perfect love. This simply means that God will honor any person who honors His Son by believing and trusting Him. If a person believes in Jesus Christ for righteousness, then God will honor that man by counting him righteous.

The point is this: the person who tries to become acceptable to God by the law and by doing the best he can—the man who focuses upon the law and good works—keeps his mind upon the law and struggles to be good. God is not the center and focus of his thoughts and life; the law and works are.

But the person who has *faith in Jesus Christ* focuses upon Christ. He honors God's Son; therefore, God accepts his faith, the focus of his life, as righteousness. The person becomes acceptable to God. God actually accepts the person as a child of His. How is this possible? The answer is the subject of the following point.

2. Faith clothes us with Christ, with His righteousness and Sonship. This is a most wonderful truth, for it tells us that we can actually “put on” Christ—a glorious revelation! The phrase “put on” is the picture of putting on clothes, of covering oneself. All that Christ is can cover us. Christ is two things that hold great significance for us.

- a. Christ is the very embodiment of righteousness. He is the Son of God who came to earth to secure righteousness for us. He lived a sinless and perfect life; He always obeyed God, never violating the law or will of God—not even once. Therefore, He was the Perfect, Ideal Man; He was the Pattern of what every man should be. As the Ideal and Perfect pattern, He could represent all men; and this is exactly what happened. Jesus Christ is our righteousness. When we believe in Him, God clothes us with Christ, with His righteousness.

And, because we are clothed with the righteousness of

Jesus Christ, God sees us in His Son and accepts us.

ILLUSTRATION:

Picture this illustration. Let your left hand represent Christ, and your right index finger represent you. Now, wrap your left hand around your index finger. What do you see? You see Christ, not yourself, for Christ is covering you. So it is with faith. When you believe in Jesus Christ, your faith covers you with Jesus Christ and His righteousness.

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Co.5:21).

- b. Christ is the Son of God; therefore, to be clothed with Christ means that we are covered with His Sonship. When God looks at the believer, He sees His Son Jesus Christ covering him; therefore, He counts the believer as a son of His. This is the way we become children of God: by faith in Jesus Christ, God's Son. When we believe that Jesus Christ is God's Son, God takes our faith and places us in Christ, and to be in Christ is to be in the Sonship of Christ. God actually sees us in Jesus Christ, in His Son. Therefore, he accepts us as children of His—all because our faith has covered us with Christ.

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name” (Jn.1:12).

ILLUSTRATION:

How much do you value your relationship as a child of God? Sometimes, we might be tempted to doubt God's love. We fail time and again and come up so short. Some of us even commit terrible sin. We wonder, “How could God forgive me? How could He love me after I've failed so much and so terribly? Jim Adams shares this eye-opening story with us:

Perhaps no composer has captured the musical heart and soul of America as did Irving Berlin. In addition to familiar favorites such as “God Bless America” and “Easter Parade,” he wrote, “I’m Dreaming of a White Christmas,” which still ranks as the all-time best-selling musical score.

In an interview for the San Diego Union, Don Freeman asked Berlin, “Is there any question you’ve never been asked that you would like someone to ask you?”

“Well, yes, there is one,” he replied. “What do you think of the many songs you’ve written that didn’t become hits?” My reply would be that I still think they are wonderful.”

God, too, has an unshakable delight in what—and whom—He has made. He thinks each of His children is wonderful, and whether they’re a “hit” in the eyes of others or not, He will always think they’re wonderful.¹

¹ Selected from *Leadership*, Summer '93, vol.XIV #3, p.60.

QUESTIONS:

1. What is a person's relationship to God before he is saved?
2. Can you be a child of God without having faith in Christ? Why or why not?
3. Why does God accept only our faith when He adopts us?
4. What good works have you done that convinced God to adopt you into His family?

A CLOSER LOOK:

(3:27) **Baptism:** note the reference to *baptism* instead of *belief*:

"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (v.27).

Why did Paul switch from using the word *believe* to the word *baptism*? Why did he not say:

"For as many of you as have believed in Christ have put on Christ"?

Is Paul saying that a person is *saved by baptism*? Any thinking and honest person knows that there are thousands and thousands of people who have been baptized, and yet they live like the devil himself. Therefore, Paul could not mean that it is baptism that causes God to clothe a person with Christ.

Similarly, any honest and thinking person knows that there are thousands and thousands of people who *profess faith* and yet live like the devil himself. Therefore, Paul could not mean what the general public means by faith.

What Paul is saying is what Scripture declares: a true believer fulfills all the righteousness of Christ which includes baptism. The believer lives for Christ, and living for Christ includes the ordinance of being baptized, for baptism pictures his faith. Baptism (and repentance) is the *first and immediate* evidence of faith; therefore, faith and baptism are closely linked, so closely that Paul can speak of baptism as faith.

QUESTIONS:

1. Why is baptism important?
2. Why do some people think that baptism saves them? What does the Scripture say?
3. What is the relationship between faith and baptism? Do you think that it is possible to have a meaningful relationship with God with only one of these? Explain your answer.

3. FAITH IN CHRIST MAKES US ONE: ELIMINATES ALL DISTINCTIONS AND PREJUDICES (v.28).

How do we know that we are justified by faith rather than by the law and by doing the best we can? Because faith in Christ makes us one, eliminating all distinctions and prejudices.

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free,

there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (v.28).

This is a startling truth: Jesus Christ is the answer to all the prejudice, bitterness, hatred, oppression, and inequalities of the world. How can He solve the divisions among men? Note the phenomenal statement: "Ye are all one in Christ Jesus." What is there about Jesus Christ that makes us one?

1. Every believer stands on an equal footing before Jesus Christ: the footing of faith. No person is accepted for any reason other than faith. All persons who come to Jesus Christ come because...

- they are ever so short of Christ
- they are ever so different from Christ
- they are ever so imperfect

Yet, Jesus Christ accepts them. Jesus Christ reaches out to embrace all believers despite their being so much less and so different from Him. Therefore, when we look at another believer who differs from us, we do just what Jesus Christ did for us. We love, accept, and embrace him; differences do not matter. All that matters is love, acceptance, and brotherhood in Christ.

2. Every true believer loves and stands *in Jesus Christ*. Therefore, when we look at another believer, we see him *in Christ*. We are not to see the believer but to see Christ covering the believer. We are to pay no attention to his color, nationality, sex, social status, or any other differences. Differences just do not matter. All that matters is that we all grow into the image of Christ—love, accept, and become more and more the brothers and sisters of God.

"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him" (Ro.10:12).

ILLUSTRATION:

If we walk with Christ, we will notice that petty things that divide us will fade away. How is this possible? By the cross. At the foot of the cross, all the ground is level. Listen to this humorous, yet sad discussion between two brothers.

Comedian Emo Philips tells this story:

In conversation with a person I had recently met, I asked, "Are you Protestant or Catholic?" My new acquaintance replied, "Protestant." I said, "Me too! What franchise?"

"He answered, "Baptist."

"Me too," I said. "Northern Baptist or Southern Baptist?"

"Northern Baptist," he replied.

"Me too!" I shouted.

We continued to go back and forth. Finally I asked, "Northern conservative fundamentalist Baptist, Great Lakes Region, Council of 1879 or Northern conservative fundamentalist Baptist, Great Lakes Region, Council of 1912?"

He replied, "Northern conservative fundamentalist Baptist, Great Lakes Region, Council of 1912."

I said, "Die, heretic!"²

2 From *New Republic*. Selected from Leadership, Fall '92, vol.13 #4, p.47.

Too many churches and too many relationships are split over insignificant matters! In Christ, we are brothers and sisters. We must focus on our oneness in Christ, not on our differences. We have too many things which unite us with other Christian believers to let the petty things divide us from His Body.

QUESTIONS:

1. What are some of the petty things which divide the body of Christ?
2. What part does spiritual pride play in dividing true Christians? What kind of role does God want you to play to bring unity to your church?
3. How hard is it to accept Christians who are of a different race? Why is racism such a problem in some churches? What is God's answer to this sin?

4. FAITH IN CHRIST MAKES US HEIRS OF THE PROMISE (v.29).

How do we know that we are justified by faith instead of by the law and by doing the best we can? Because faith in Christ makes us heirs of the promise.

Remember the promise made to Abraham: the promise of God's blessing, of God's presence and leadership, of being accepted by God and given the privilege of living forever in the land of Canaan (the type and symbol of heaven, of the new heavens and earth).

The point is this: Jesus Christ is the heir of Abraham; therefore, if a person is *in Christ*, then he inherits the promise made to Abraham. He inherits the promise of God's acceptance, of righteousness, and of living forever in the new heavens and earth as a son of God.

"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. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Ro.8:15-17).

QUESTIONS:

1. According to Scripture, who is the heir of Abraham's promise? How does this inheritance apply to the Christian believer?
2. What guarantees has God given to the Christian believer that make His promises available today?

SUMMARY:

As you picture your life on a road map, are you on course, trusting and living for God? Or have you focused your eyes on the things of this world?

God is the supreme, all-knowing Guide who will never lead you astray. Listen to these lyrics from the pen of Christian song writer Michael Card:

*To hear with my heart,
To see with my soul,
To be guided by a hand that I cannot hold,
To trust in a way that I cannot see,
That's what faith must be.³*

Written by Michael Card. *That's What Faith Must Be* (Birdwing Music [a division of The Sparrow Corporation] and BMG Songs, Inc./ Mole End Music [ASCAP], 1988).

How do you lay hold of the benefits of faith in Christ?

Remember that...

1. Faith in Christ frees us from the supervision of the law.
2. Faith in Christ makes us children of God.
3. Faith in Christ makes us one: eliminates all distinctions and prejudices.
4. Faith in Christ makes us heirs of the promise.

PERSONAL JOURNAL NOTES (Reflection & Response)

1. The most important thing that I learned from this lesson was:
2. The area that I need to work on the most is:
3. I can apply this lesson to my life by:
4. Closing Statement of Commitment:

Attention!!!

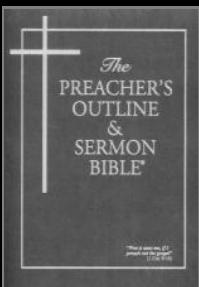
Dear Student of the Bible:

As you have already experienced from these studies in Galatians, the author and teacher is a gifted man of God and has done a tremendous job at teaching us from the Scriptures.

If you have been blessed by these studies and are interested in having all the arti-

cles in book format, you can. Except for a couple Old Testament books of the Bible, you can now order the entire Old and New Testament *Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible* commentary set. Just go to page 6 of the Amish Voice and look at the full page ad that explains how you can order.

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If you are one of those people who is serious about studying and understanding God's Word, but sometimes need just a little bit of help understanding what you read, then I would like to recommend to you one of the Christian's greatest and most trusted tools available in our generation. From the very first time I was introduced to the POSB commentary set, I fell in love with them. What drew me the most is the simple layout, explanations and illustrations (see sample of John 3:16-17 below). I also like the way this commentary brings in other scriptures to go along with what you are studying.

What I would like for you to prayerfully consider is; buy one book and see for yourself how great they are. I promise, you'll have a hard time laying it down. You will learn so much!

Sample Page

(3:16-17) **Introduction:** this is the world's most well known Scripture. Brief and to the point, Jesus revealed God's great love.

1. The fact: God so loved (v.16).
2. The evidence: God gave (v.16).
3. The purpose: to save (v.16).
4. The proof: God sent His Son (the Incarnation) (v.17).
5. The means: through Him (v.17).

1. (3:16) God, Love of: God so loved the world. He loved the whole world. Note several facts.

1. The idea that God loves the whole world is a new idea. The Jews believed God loved the religious (the true Jew) and hated the non-religious (the Gentiles). The same thoughts are held by many in every generation, especially by religionists. The fact that God truly loves is shocking to many. Some wonder and others question how God could possibly love the...

- vile person • murderer
- immoral person • wife beater
- child abuser • prostitute
- thief • alcoholic
- street person • oppressor
- enslaver • bitter, vengeful

Thought 1. God loves every man, not just the religious and the good. He does not love only the people who love Him. He loves everyone, even the unloved and the unloving, the unbelieving and the obstinate, the selfish and the greedy, the spiteful and the vengeful.

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John 10:16).

For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:12-13).

"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4).

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9).

1. The fact: God so loved (v.16).
 2. The evidence: God gave (v.16).
 3. The purpose: to save (v.16).
- a. From perishing

E. Revelation 5: God's Great Love, 3:16-17

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

2. The basis of God's love is His nature. God is love (1 John 4:8, 16); therefore, He loves. He acts, demonstrates, and shows His love.

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love...And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1 John 4:8, 16).

3. Love acts; it expresses itself. Love does not sit still, doing nothing. It is not dormant, complacent, inactive. If love actually exists, it has to act and express itself; it has to do something good. Love is loving; that is, love is always demonstrating love to others. Therefore, God's love acts and reveals Him to be love.

Thought 1. God wants man to know His love. He wants to reach everyone in the world with His love.

Hercy perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us" (1 John 3:16).

In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him" (1 John 4:9).

DEEPER STUDY #1

(3:16) **God Loved:** past tense. A past, proven fact. An outline of the greatness of God's love is seen in this verse. (1) Height: God loved. (2) Depth: so loved (3) Length: God gave (4) Breadth: Whoever. (See note—Jn 21:15-17)

2. (3:16) God, Love, of: there is the evidence of God's love—God gave His only begotten Son. Note several points.

God demonstrated His love in the most perfect way possible: He gave His only begotten Son to the world. As God, He is perfect, which means His love is perfect. Therefore, God not only loves, but He so loves. He loves to perfection, loves to the ultimate degree. Whatever the ultimate degree and the perfect act and expression of love is, God shows it. Without question, the greatest act of love is the sacrifice of a man's own life; therefore, God sacrificed the life of His own Son to save man.

everlasting life.

¹⁷ For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

b. To eternal life

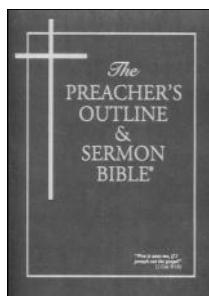
c. By believing

4. The proof: God sent His Son (the Incarnation)

a. Not to condemn
b. But to save

5. The means: Thru Him

DIVISION II
THE REVELATION OF JESUS, THE SON OF GOD, 2:1-3:21
E. Revelation 5: God's Great Love, 3:16-17



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It is November; the leaves are mostly down, and we are busily raking them. The smell of smoke can often be found in the air. The crisp outdoors gives us a sense of foreboding...cold, wintry days are on their way and will soon be upon us. We feel the urgency of preparing so we are not caught unaware.

Winter can be an interesting, fun time, especially for those who love snow and winter skating and sledding. A lot of times, though, winter is seen as a cold time when things lie dead and dormant, and we look forward to warmer times, when life springs new and green and splashes of color can be found on the landscape.

We can find ourselves in the winter of the heart, too, at times, where it feels like we are dying beneath a crushing weight of cold, bitter snow. Winter in our lives can be many things. It can be a time of deep testing, of hurt and pain, or of grieving over the loss of a loved one. These times are cold, dark, and lonely, and it often feels like we have been trudging through thigh-deep snow in heavy winter coats. We wonder, "will spring ever come?"

The thing to remember during these times is that the winter is a time of prepara-

tion...preparation for springtime when new growth and life will come, and for summer when we will become fruitful. It is a time of surrender...surrender to the death of our wishes, wants, dreams, and goals, and surrendering them to God, so He can raise them up brand new. When we have surrendered them, and allowed them to die, God is free to raise them up in His image. Then it is no longer our plan, but His, and He can bless it.



There is a song I love that says, "When the dream has been so lonely, and the road has been too long, and you feel love is just for the lucky and the strong, just remember in the winter, far beneath the bitter snow, lies the seed that with the sun's (Son's) love, in the spring becomes a rose." Those words have been an amazing comfort and encouragement to me.

Winter of this sort is not something we look forward to, but as God's Word tells us,

"Beloved, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations, knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." We can count it all joy when we fall into different trials and temptations. Spring will come eventually, as it always does, even after a long, hard winter, and then we will burst forth with new life, and songs. And in the summer, we will bring forth much fruit.

So when you are going through the hard times, surrender to the process. Allow God to do His work in you. Remember, the sun will shine again, the snow will melt, the birds will sing, and the flowers will bloom. Then you can help someone else going through the process, and give them encouragement and hope.

Song of Solomon 2:10-13 says: "My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land; The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." This is God's infinite love showing. He says, "it's all over, come with me into the warm sunshine."

Jesus is not just a picture on the wall we **point to**. He is not just another person we **read about** in God's Word and say: yea, we believe all those things about Him. No! He is a real person—the Living Savior of the world. And guess what! He wants to live in your heart. You know. Just like He lived in the Tabernacle during the time Israel made their way through the wilderness to the Promised Land—just like He lived in Holy of Holies in Solomon's Temple—so He wants to live in you. The everlasting Word of God says:

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

—1 Corinthians 6:19-20

- ◆ "To whom God would make known *what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles*; which is **Christ in you**, the hope of glory."—Colossians 1:27
- ◆ "Know ye not that ye are the **temple** of God, and *that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*"—1 Corinthians 3:16
- ◆ "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God **dwell in you**. Now if any man **have not** the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."—Romans 8:9
- ◆ "But as many as **received Him**, to them gave He power [the right] to become the sons of God..."—John 1:12
- ◆ "He that **hath** the Son **hath** life; and he that **hath not** the Son of God **hath not** life."—1 John 5:12

Do you have Jesus?

—Joe Keim

Many believers have very little to do with God outside of their time in church on Sunday morning. Very few churchgoers seem to have a good understanding of scripture and, in fact, not many even take their Bible to church. The preacher can tell them almost anything and they will nod their heads in agreement. After the service, it is often hard to find people who are interested in discussing biblical matters as their interests are more in whatever else is going on in the world and in their lives.

They are not being very wise as, firstly, they are putting their eternal salvation in the hands of a preacher who could be misleading them and, secondly, they clearly show that they have put God in second place to the things of the world. James 4:4 speaks harshly against this where it says, *Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*

Are you an adulterous enemy of God or a son of God?

Sons Of God

When we first put our trust in Jesus, we become sons of God; we are born again and adopted into the family of God. But what sort of son limits the time he spends with his Father to two hours a week on Sunday? In Mal. 1:6 the Lord says, *A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?* We greatly dishonour God when we allow the spirit of this world to control us and guide our thoughts to anything and everything other than the things of the Lord. Rom. 8:14 tells us that "those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God." A son of God is led by the Holy Spirit and is focused on godly matters, not himself and affairs of the this life.

Everyday Life

The Holy Spirit never leads us to be friends with the world (everyday life). That is the Devil's job. He is very good at it and never gets tired. We have to be alert at all times. If we are to be the son God wants us to be then we must be led by the Spirit and resist all temptation to follow the world.

Rom 12:1-2 tell us, *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

Rev. 3:16

God's will for us is that we become like Jesus and live holy lives. We can only do that by turning away from our fleshy lusts for the things of the world which are temporary and bring sin and death to those who love them. The things of the world may bring short term pleasure but the result of pursuing them may well be eternal sorrow.

In Ecclesiastes, King Solomon spoke of his search for happiness through worldly activities. Even though he had enormous wealth, absolute power and great wisdom, nothing satisfied him. He tried everything he could think of to find happiness but found that what the world had to offer was meaningless. In Ecc. 12:13 he said, *Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.*

The fact is, our lives and possessions are here today and gone tomorrow. Many

in the church unwisely seek worldly pleasures, wealth, and power but Solomon showed that even his exceedingly great wealth, power and wisdom failed to bring lasting happiness. After all his efforts, he came to understand that contentment can only be found in God.

1 Pet. 1:24-25 tell us how temporary men and their glory are: *For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.* and 1 John 2:17 tells us, *And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

In Rev. 3:16, Jesus warns casual believers, *So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.* 2 Cor. 13:5 urges us, *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?*

If you are in the faith then you will be led by the Holy Spirit. If your focus is on what the world you then you are being led by the spirit of the world. In Hebrew, the word for faith and faithfulness are the same word so when Hab. 2:4 tells us that *the just shall live by his faith* it also means that *the righteous will live by his faithfulness."*

Does your faith have you faithful to the world and its lusts or faithful to the one who died for you?

Are you in the faith or a Sunday Christian?

*I urge you to examine yourself and see if you are in the faith as Jesus said in Matt. 7:21, *Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven"**

— Mike Alexander

Help Us Try Something New!

1

Open Discussion Conference Lines

We have set up a Conference Call Line so you can call in and discuss the articles in **The Amish Voice** and other truths found in the **Bible**. We can discuss topics, you can ask questions, and we can learn together. We will begin with a couple sessions and see how it works. Let us learn, pray, and seek God together!

To start out, we are scheduling two con-

ference call sessions on the following dates and times:

1. Friday, March 22 at 8pm (Eastern Standard Time)
2. Friday, April 5 at 8pm (Eastern Standard Time)

Show up when you can and stay as long as you like. We hope it will last until 9 p.m., but may continue longer if the discussion is going well.

Calling Directions: Dial **1-267-507-0240** and then enter the conference code number: **409703**

2

Chapter of the Week Phone Line

Get involved with Alton Nisley's *Chapter of the Week* discussion by calling in on the following number: 330-232-9194.

Not only will you be able to join others who are reading the same chapter of the week, you will be able to leave a message and/or contact a live person for further discussion.

Rekindle the Fire

—Eli Stutzman

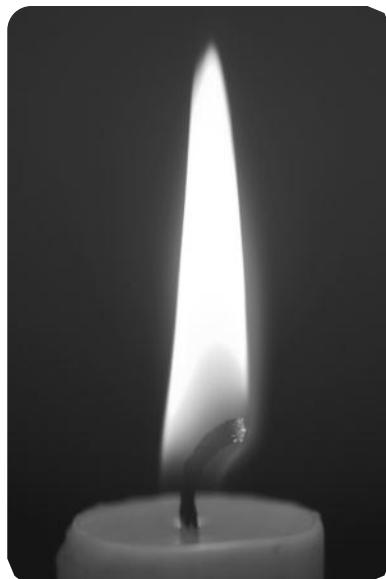
The book of Galatians is one of those books of the Bible that has been of tremendous influence in my life. In the other letters to the churches, specifically 1 and 2 Corinthians and Colossians, Paul wrote concerning immoral practices that needed to be purged from the church. The church at Galatia had a different problem. It was the same thing that so often happens when churches lose their spiritual zeal: they default to legalism. Martin Luther said, "Religion is the default mode of the human heart." Religion enslaves, and the pure gospel of Jesus Christ sets us free. Anyone, regardless of birth or creed, can be set free.

When the Anabaptist movement began, it focused on the baptism of adult believers. The need to make a public confession of faith in Jesus Christ was key to being baptized. It was common to have thousands of converts in a year. So many joined the Anabaptist movement that the established church was losing members in alarming numbers. I am convinced the fire of the Holy Spirit was driving them. Today, Anabaptists are no longer a threat to established churches in the way they were back then. Unfortunately, the fire has mostly gone out.

Paul, contrasting slavery and freedom in his letter to the Galatians, draws upon the Old Testament example of Abraham and his two sons. One was from a slave

woman and one was from the promise made years before.

I sometimes wonder what it was like to be a slave in the South, hoeing and picking cotton. If we were to drive past a plantation, we would not likely know the difference between a free man and a slave



by observing them in the field. They both worked hard all day and got dirty from their work. One was paid for his labor and the other was not. A slave could not be an heir. If we had been slaves working for someone else and then found freedom, we would value freedom very highly.

Slaves and freemen both did in the field what needed to be done to bring a

crop to harvest. The difference was seen in the house. A free man could say no to his boss without fear of severe punishment. He could ask for time off, perhaps to see a distant relative. An adopted son, who had once been a slave, would appreciate his freedom better than anyone else. That is what we are as believers. We work because we are asked to join in the effort Jesus put forth to make his kingdom on earth and heaven a reality.

Galatians 4:6-7 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

This verse takes on special meaning when we realize the word "Abba" was a term a child would use similar to the way "daddy" is used today. A relationship has need of constant nurture, or it will grow weaker. So the primary difference is whether we have a relationship with Jesus Christ or we practice a list of do's and don'ts. That is why believers need to meet together often, and yes, even more as the day of Jesus' return approaches.

Hebrews 10: 25 says, Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

Mary Beachy's Bridgeless River

—Lydia Chorpeling

Mary Beachy primped her heavily starched head covering before pinning it into place. "I always look forward to the Easter Scriptures that are read. Maybe today I will understand more of the Scriptures that have eluded me. I wonder if the message will help me understand Romans 5:1 that I read last night. I would love to have the peace that it promises," she thought.

Her brother, Rudy, was waiting for her in his open buggy as she stepped outside tying her black bonnet. With Mary being deep in thought, the four mile ride was rather quiet. Finally she blurted out one of her questions, "What does 'being justified' mean?"

"Ach! Why do you always have to try and figure things out when you could just be content with the church ordinances, and have fun like the rest of the young people do?"

Not willing to talk of what wasn't clear to her and which might start an argument, she again fell into quietness. They arrived in time for her to meet her friend Katie before church started.

The Scripture Bishop Bieler read was from John 11 with the emphases on verse 25: "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Desire for knowing truth stirred Mary.

Questions pried her mind that afternoon. "Didn't the service just end with the admonition to stay true to the church rules in hopes of obtaining eternal life after this life? Does being justified fit into this picture?"

That night at the singing, Mary told Katie, "I feel there's an open space—a bridgeless river—that keeps me from fully understanding how the historical event of Christ's resurrection connects to me right here. I also read from Romans 5:1

that if we're justified by faith, we have peace."

Katie sided with Mary. "I'd love to have that peace. Sometimes the 'lostness' I feel really scares me. Is believing on Jesus the same thing as keeping our church's traditions?"

Just then Katie poked Mary, "I see Melvin Stoltzfus glancing your way. He may be asking you for a date tonight."

Mary tried not to blush. "I've heard that he's been doing some Bible studies on his own."



"It's funny how news spreads. You can just about tell which of the guys would be decent to go out with," Katie said softly.

As the steady couples started to leave, Mary noticed Melvin whispering to Jakie Bender. Within minutes Jakie was at her side relating Melvin's wishes to drive her home.

"Well, I guess it would be okay for once," Mary tried to hide her delight.

"Now behave yourself," Katie teased as Mary joined Melvin. The two made their way to his waiting buggy among hoots and low whistles.

"It's such a beautiful time of the year," Melvin started the conversation as he headed his open rig into the moon lit night.

"When everything turns green with

new life, I often think of Easter and Christ's resurrection," Mary remarked.

"I've been thinking a lot about the resurrection also."

"I told Katie tonight that I feel there's a missing bridge between where I am today and that ancient historical story of Christ's resurrection. Does Christ's resurrection have something to do with being justified?"

Melvin sighed. "I don't want to say too much because I've been cautioned about reading the Bible on my own, yet it seems the only way to know truth is by studying God's Word. Yesterday I read Ephesians 2:8-9 which plainly says we're saved by grace through faith and not by works."

"If Paul tells the Ephesians they're saved by faith and not by works, then it appears that our church may be emphasizing works too much."

"If we are saved by grace through faith, would that mean we would be justified?" Mary asked in hopes of finding her answer to obtaining peace."

"I heard that being justified is God making me "Just-as-if-I'd" never sinned. Surely that would bring us peace."

As they arrived at Mary's house the subject changed. Melvin helped Mary down from the buggy, and the two headed toward the house where Mary had snacks prepared just in case she got a date.

Inspired by the lovely evening, Mary promised herself to pray and study Ephesians two. "Will this chapter build the bridge of peace I need?" Mary was hopeful as she snuggled under her hand-stitched quilt.

This is a fiction story, and is meant to bring out certain principles. The author is not trying to represent any specific Amish community practices or beliefs.



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—Continued From Back Page: The Fruit of the Spirit—

- ◆ You must also spend time with God through personal prayer and reading His eternal and life-changing Word.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch (you and I) cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing (John 15:4-5).

Just like a tree branch cannot bear fruit on its own, without being attached to the vine, so a man and woman cannot bear fruit without being grafted into Jesus who is the vine in this passage.

- ◆ Man-made religion cannot make you produce fruit!
- ◆ Church ordinances cannot make you produce fruit!
- ◆ Preachers cannot make you produce fruit!
- ◆ Baptism can't!
- ◆ Church membership can't!

Only Jesus can produce fruit, but you must be grafted into Him. When you are in Him, then the *fruit of the Spirit* will automatically appear.

So often we are more concerned about *fruit production* than we are on abiding in Christ. It should be the other way around. We should focus more on abiding in Jesus and then the fruit crop will automatically appear.

The next time someone in your family losses their temper or struggles with peace and longsuffering, you should *not* say: "Hey, why don't you get your act together and start being more loving instead of yelling and getting angry all the time?" Rather, you should say: "Hey, you need to start abiding in Jesus and then everything else in your life will fall into place."

<p align="center">Attitude <i>By Charles Swindoll</i></p> <p>"The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life.</p> <p>Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do.</p> <p>It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company, a church...a home.</p>	<p>The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day.</p> <p>We cannot change our past....we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable.</p> <p>The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude....I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it."</p>
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Someone has an alcohol problem? Rebellious problem? Marriage problem? Sexual problem? Whatever the problem may be, stop putting all your energy into fixing the problem.

- ◆ You can't fix it!
- ◆ The counselor can't fix it!
- ◆ The preacher can't fix it!

The answer is: abide in Jesus and start walking in Him. When you do, all your fleshly desires and habits will disappear, and in their place you will see *fruit of the Spirit*:

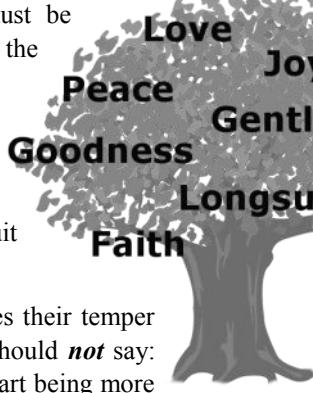
Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

In conclusion, you have probably heard people say, "You are not allowed to judge other people." That is true, because the Bible says so.

This is why it's wrong to judge someone. First, it puts the one doing the judging in God's seat (Romans 14). Second, those who judge will condemn themselves (Romans 2:1-2). Having said that, the Bible does say we are allowed to be *fruit inspectors*.

Consider the words spoken by Jesus Christ:

Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit (Matthew 7:16-18).



Fruit of the Spirit is an outward sign that a person has been born again. You shall know [men and women] by the type of fruit that grows on their branches. However, let's not forget what Bible fruit is and not add our own so-called fruit that is mere culture or men's tradition.

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The Fruit of the Spirit

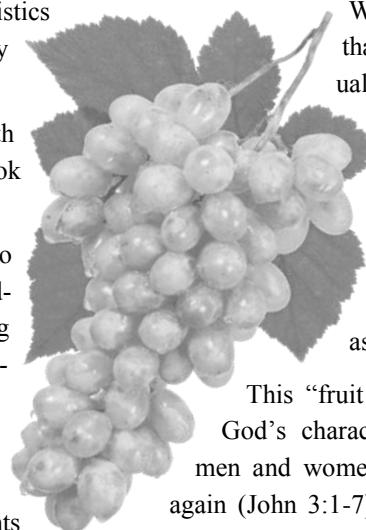
Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

Wouldn't it be great to live a life with all of these wonderful characteristics coming from within you on a daily basis?

What would a life filled with constant and overflowing joy look like?

Do you know someone who walks in complete peace, regardless of the turmoil that is going around them? How about that gentle person in your life?

I have been studying the *fruit of the Spirit* for some time and am excited to share some thoughts with you that I believe the Lord has shown me.



The Fruit of the Spirit

— Joe Keim

Galatians 5:22-23

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

We learn from scripture that these are not individual "fruits" from which we pick and choose. Rather, the ***fruit of the Spirit*** is one (nine-fold) "fruit". If you have one, you have them all. They come as a package deal.

This "fruit list" is a reflection of God's character and flows through men and women who have been born again (John 3:1-7) and are truly walking in the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:1-4).

You cannot produce this fruit on your

own (John 15:5). God is the One that produces the fruit in and through you. Even under the Old Testament Law a believer produced good fruit only by God's power. At times, a person may imitate or produce a product that is similar to God's fruit; however, the truth is: people are not capable of producing real "God" love, joy, and peace on their own. These valuable characteristics are a *gift from God* alone!

In John 15, Jesus says: if you want the ***fruit of the Spirit*** to show up in your daily walk, you must be grafted into Him – just like a branch is grafted into the main vine coming out of the ground. Then you must walk in Him, meaning:

- ◆ You must have the mind of God continually.
- ◆ You must let go of every situation in your life and hand it all over to God.

—continued on page 11—