

***“Paul’s Second Letter to Timothy —
Why Should We Follow Paul?”***

Review: The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace: The Transition from Pentecost to the Fullness of Grace — Its Completion

- ***The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace: Mid - Late Acts - Paul Saved and Sent Forth Primarily to the Gentiles, But to the Jews First***

To the Jews first: grace through faith in a risen savior and not an earthly kingdom preached was what Paul preached. Spiritual gifts given to some, especially in Corinth, “for the sake of the Jews” primarily, but the purpose in giving “Israel’s promised blessings” to the Gentiles was “to make the Jews jealous”. This continued until Acts 28:28. The revelation of grace continued through Paul until its completion by the prison letters. This preaching was not of the resurrected Christ coming in judgment of the Jews due to their rebellion, as Peter had preached, but rather judgment on the Gentiles and the whole world (even Jews).

- ***The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace: After Acts 28:28 - Paul’s “Prison” Ministry***

Acts 28:23-28

23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into [his] lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and [out of] the prophets, from morning till evening.

24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.

25 And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers,

26 Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive:

27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with [their] eyes, and hear with [their] ears, and understand with [their] heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

28 Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and [that] they will hear it.

After Acts ends (for it contains the record of the transition period from Law to Grace including the Pentecostal Period with its continuation of miraculous gifts with additional missionary journeys (to Spain, etc.) – Spiritual gifts cease or are terminated and grace abounds (2 Cor. 12, etc.) - Israel cut off at this point and full revelation of grace completed with Paul's final letter. Therefore, signs, wonders, and miracles and even apostleship end with all spiritual gifts of that sort, whether for signs or revelatory. After that as Eph. 4 indicates only those with assigned roles (pastor, teacher, evangelist, along with apostles and prophets continue until Paul's last words were written. As Col. 2 indicates (and we will review that again today), such great changes are to be taken note of here. As we Rightly Divide the Word of Truth we see such transforming truths, don't we?

- ***The Glorious Sweep of God's Abundant Grace: The Transition from Pentecost to the Fullness of Grace – Its Completion***

What was left behind? What was gained? The signs, wonders, and miracles that made so much sense before because of the Jews and the incomplete revelation through Paul concerning grace, have passed away, have ceased or have been terminated. along with the "spiritual" gifts to members of Christ's heavenly Body. Praise God for his grace and its abundance!

- ***The gift of apostleship has ended too. There is today no more need for that. The dispensational reason has passed and the revelation of grace has been completed in Paul's last letter, 2 Timothy. Consequently, the full revelation of grace and its work is being manifested. Paul experienced that and is our example in it as he suffered "for Christ" "fulfilling" Christ's sufferings that continue today. He has shown us the way as he learned that the grace of Christ is always sufficient, whatever our circumstances (2 Cor. 12).***

- ***Paul's Final (Recorded) Words***

2 Tim. 4:9-13, 16-18, 22

9 Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me:

10 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

11 Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

12 And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.

13 The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring *with thee*, and the books, *but* especially the parchments.

...

16 At my first answer no man stood with me, but all *men* forsook me: *I pray God* that it may not be laid to their charge.

17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve *me* unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

...

22 The Lord Jesus Christ *be* with thy spirit. Grace *be* with you. Amen.

- *The Final Salutation and Request: These are most important persons and the very ones who in addition to Timothy would be carrying on the ministry of grace after Paul was gone. Consider this well. Who will carry the torch after our departure from this earth?*

Our Outline: "Paul's Second Letter to Timothy — Why Should We Follow Paul?"

- ***Why Should We Follow Paul? Christ Spoke with Him from Heaven***
- ***Why Should We Follow Paul? His Words are the Very Words of Christ***
- ***Why Should We Follow Paul? His Doctrine Must Be Our Guide***
- ***Why Should We Follow Paul? His Life Demonstrated Abundant Grace***
- ***Why Should We Follow Paul? His Sufferings Are Our Example***
- ***Why Should We Follow Paul? Because His Last Will Leaves Us No Choice***
- ***That Settles It!***

I. Why Should We Follow Paul? Christ Spoke with Him from Heaven:

[READ] Acts 9:10-16

10 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I *am here*, Lord.

11 And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for *one* called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,

12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting *his* hand on him, that he might receive his sight.

13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem:

14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name.

15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

- *Key phrases here are “chosen vessel”, “bear my name” and then the closing words here, “I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.” But much is not said here that could have been (and was) written later. Once Paul had fulfilled the first part the latter part could be fulfilled. But to see this we need to look at later letters.*
- *How could it be more clearly implied than this, that the Lord's will and purpose was for all believers today to “follow” or “imitate” Paul.*

II. Why Should We Follow Paul? His Words are the Very Words of Christ:

[READ] 1 Tim. 6:2-5

2 And they that have believing masters, let them not despise *them*, because they are brethren; but rather do *them* service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.

3 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,

5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

- *In some ways this is the boldest and strongest answer the Bible gives to our question here today, namely, “Why Should We Follow Paul?” What is Paul saying here? There are three things at least:*
 - *The false teachers that were being taught by the false teachers were teaching doctrine contrary to Paul's, but Paul's standards were the Lord's as well, in fact, these words themselves given by Paul and others were “even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ”. We must take full note of this and its fundamental importance. How can we not “follow” and “imitate” Paul considering this? Those that don't are on shaky ground indeed, are they not?*

- *The, the false doctrines were and are in no way “good” or “beneficial” for they are corrupt as their proponents are corrupt and have no truth at all in them! Stronger language than this is hard to find in the Word of God.*
- *Therefore, those preaching and teaching the Pauline truth were to be honored and supported. That Paul should be so honored as well goes without saying. So why should we follow Paul? Because his words were the very words of Christ.*

III. Why Should We Follow Paul? His Doctrine Must Be Our Guide

This leads to our main subject again today [review from Col. 2]:

[READ] Col. 2:1-3

1 For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and *for* them at Laodicea, and *for* as many as have not seen my face in the flesh;
2 That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;
3 In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

[READ] Col. 2:4-10

4 And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words.
5 For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ.
6 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:
7 Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.
8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.
9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.
10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

- *There are consequences of believing the Pauline truth — separation is implied, for if we would receive and cleave to this truth must we not also without compromise separate from the world and its teachings along with its “messengers”.*

Col. 2:11-15

11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

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

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

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

- ***Here is the strongest statement in Paul's letters regarding the "legal essence" of the false teacher's dogmas.***
- ***Take note also of the connection drawn here with the heavenly powers that are under satan's dominion; satan loves world religion as he can easily take advantage of it. Religion is not inherently a positive, even when the religion is "christian"!***
- ***How can we not follow Paul considering his words here?***

Col. 2:16-19

16 **Let no man therefore judge you** in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*:

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

18 **Let no man beguile you of your reward** in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

19 And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

- ***If we compromise we surely loose our reward. There are consequences to fellowship with the world. After all, the world is managed by satan and his spiritual counterfeits are designed to be attractive and even compelling.***
- ***Think of Esau and Jacob - Esau sold his birthright and afterwards, he with many tears but could not come to a true repentance according to Hebrews 11.***

IV. Why Should We Follow Paul? His Life Demonstrated Abundant Grace:

- ***What did Paul's life of suffering communicate as God saw it? Knowledge [of Christ and his completed word] , Life [his resurrection life], and Grace, grace, grace!***

- *What is our life communicating?*

2 Cor. 4:5-10 [Central to Paul's ministry of the word was his "dying" and yet still "living" by the power of God — and his abundant grace]

5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. [Christ, face to face as it were, or "in person"]

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

8 *We are* troubled on every side, yet not distressed; *we are* perplexed, but not in despair;

9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

[READ] 2 Cor. 4:11-15 [In Paul Christ's resurrection life was being manifested to all confirming the power of grace to all who saw it — see verse 15]

11 For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

12 So then death worketh in us, but life in you.

13 We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;

14 Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present *us* with you.

15 For all things *are* for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

- *If we went no where today but here it would be profitable indeed... but the apostle continues with this:*

2 Cor. 6:1-11

1 We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

2 (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.)

3 Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:

4 But in all *things* approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

5 In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings;

6 By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost,
by love unfeigned,
7 By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on
the right hand and on the left,
8 By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet
true;
9 As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as
chastened, and not killed;
**10 As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as
having nothing, and yet possessing all things.**
11 O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged.

- ***There is so much here, but today I want to emphasize only this: that Paul, as the original commission made clear, would be “learning” how much he would “suffer for [Christ’s] sake”. What about us? Does the same apply to us?? Let us see ...***

V. Why Should We Follow Paul? His Sufferings Are Our Example:

Col. 1:20-23

20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile
all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in
heaven.
21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked
works, yet now hath he reconciled
22 In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable
and unreprouable in his sight:
**23 If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away
from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached
to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a
minister;**

[READ] Col. 1:24-29 [and this is the pinnacle of the teachings it were]

**24 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:**
**25 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;**
**26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations,
but now is made manifest to his saints:**
**27 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:**
**28 Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all
wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:**

29 Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

- ***Such bold and transparent testimony is found here. For Paul knew his sufferings were the very sufferings of Christ in his body (verse 24) and therefore he proclaimed it with boldness and simplicity.***
- ***This word spoken conveyed the power of God giving his testimony the spiritual means to accomplish Christ's purpose and will under the rule of his working in this dispensation of grace. Isn't this what "for my sake" or "for my benefit" must mean? Paul's sufferings were designed to accomplish the purpose of God under grace. The risen Christ taught Paul those very things and bestowed his power to Paul as he testifies in verse 29. Therefore his living out of grace was truly as he proclaimed here the work of Almighty God: "I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily".***
 - ***Do not miss the other details given here, for example that Paul's ministry of the Word was intended by the Lord to complete that revelation of the Mystery, the "sacred secret".***
 - ***How can we NOT therefore follow this man as he speaks the very words of Christ and suffers TOGETHER with him for the sake of the Lord and his glorious ministry of abundant grace?***

VI. Why Should We Follow Paul? Because His Last Will Leaves Us No Choice:

- ***Earlier he had written these words:***
 - ***1Thess. 1:6*** And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:
 - ***1 Cor. 4:16*** Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.
 - ***1 Cor. 11:1*** Be ye followers of me, even as I also *am* of Christ.
- ***But it was in his prison letters that he was free to write what we should never forget today, for it is such a blessing indeed:***

Phil. 3:17-21

17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ:

19 Whose end *is* destruction, whose God *is their* belly, and whose glory *is* in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:

21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

- *What does imitate mean? Does it not mean to share in? This written to us, beloved, to us! How can we not desire to follow and imitate him, therefore? Are we not drawn by the spirit to do so? I well remember the day in 1970 when these and others of his words drew me.*

VII. That Settles It!

- *No more words of my mouth are needed. You have it all here written and available for your own faith and blessing. Amen.*

Application:

- *Paul is our example in teaching and living under grace. For him every spiritual blessing was in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus and they are ours already as well [Eph. 1]!*
- *We have this treasure now but in earthly vessels, as it were — but will we enjoy it fully? To enjoy this treasure we must embrace it by faith, we must love the Lord and his workings under grace as Paul did, thereby following, imitating him, as he imitated the risen Lord Jesus Christ.*
- *By God's grace and power we shall!*