

## GOOD NEWS FOR THE HUMAN RACE

“Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered.” (Romans 4:7).

“Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.” (Romans 4:8).

“He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities” . . . For He knoweth our frame: He remembereth that we are dust.” (Psalm 103:10 to 14).

### WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE HUMAN RACE?

It would require one or more lengthy volumes to record all that is wrong with this world; that is, with the people on this earth. There are more than two billion human beings on this earth. Every person on this earth, who is rational and honest, old enough to consider the question, “what is wrong with the human race,” whether saint or sinner, will readily confess, “Lord, I have done the things which I should not have done: and I have left undone the things that I should have done.”

Now of course some of the people on this earth have done more of the things that they should not have done, and left undone more of the things that they should have done, than others. About 3450 years ago God gave to the human race ‘TEN COMMANDMENTS’, called ‘THE LAW’. In those ten commandments God has told the people on this earth the things that they should not do and the things that they should not left undone. So God, in His Bible, defines ‘SIN’ . . . “Sin is the transgression of the LAW.” (I John 3:4).

When we read in Romans 3:23, that “all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,” we learn that “the glory of God” is the high and holy standard by which a word, thought or deed is or is not defined as ‘SIN’. In case we do not have a clear understanding of the meaning of “the glory of God,” let us consider the statement in Romans 3:20; “by the law is the knowledge of sin,” and plead guilty, or not guilty, after reading the preceding verse, “by the law let every mouth be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God.” (Romans 3:19).

“GUILTY BEFORE GOD.” God says ‘ALL’ are.

GOD LOOKED DOWN FROM HEAVEN.

Centuries before the Lord directed His servant to declare that by Adam sin entered the world and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for all have sinned (Romans 5:12), centuries before that servant was directed to write Romans 3:9, “Jews and Gentiles are all under sin,” Romans 3:10 and 12, “there is none righteous, not one” . . . “there is none that doeth good, no, not one,” the Old Testament servant of God gave us this important truth in both Psalm 14 and Psalm 53: “The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside; they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no not one.”

Note how this verdict concerning the universality of sin is confirmed in Ecclesiastes 7:20: “there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.” So again we learn that all of the inhabitants on this planet are sinners and are unjust.

We all should know of one exception. He, in Acts 7:52, is called “THE JUST ONE.” We learn in Hebrews 4:15, that this ONE was tempted in all points like we are, and yet He was without sin. But it was prophesied that He was to be numbered with the transgressors and bare their sin. (Isaiah 53:12). So we have this wonderful ‘good news’ in I Corinthians 15:3 and in I Peter 3:18: “Christ died for our sins.” “Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the JUST for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.” Note what happened to some sinners, who had been wicked sinners, “atheists” (Ephesians 2:5 and 12) “but now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.” “God, for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” (Ephesians 4:32).

### TWO WICKED WOMEN AND TWO GUILTY MEN CONDEMNED BY THE LAW . . . PARDONED BY CHRIST

Let us think of two very sinful women and two very sinful men, whose sins were forgiven by the Lord Jesus. The first woman is mentioned in the seventh chapter of Luke. The second woman is mentioned in the eighth chapter of John. In Luke 7:37 the woman is thus described: “a woman in the city which was a sinner.” Note then the Lord’s words of forgiveness: “her sins which are many are forgiven.” (Luke 7:47). And He (the Lord Jesus) said unto her, “thy sins are forgiven.” (7:48). As we think of this sinning woman and this sinless Saviour, let us note Ephesians 4:32, that when God forgives a sinner his sins, He does it for Christ’s sake. Let us also note Colossians 2:13, that when God forgives the sinner, He forgives all of his sins. So we read in I John 1:7, “the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanses us from all sin.”

The other sinful woman was caught in the very act of a sin that was not only condemned by the law, but which called for the death penalty. This woman is mentioned in John 8:1 to 11. In John 3:17 we learn that God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. So Christ said to the penitent, sinful woman, “neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more.” (John 8:11). If you want to call her a scarlet woman, think of Isaiah 1:18; “though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.”

When the believing sinner receives Christ as Saviour and trusts in His shed blood, that believer has God’s Divine guarantee of redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of God’s grace. (Ephesians 1:6 and 7). Has any one ever been able to comprehend, measure or compute or estimate “the riches of God’s grace?” This will be fully revealed in the ages to come. (Ephesians 2:7).

Now concerning the two very wicked men who were forgiven all their sins by the Lord Jesus Christ. One was Zacchaeus, the publican, who was up in a tree (Luke 19:1 to 10); and the other was the penitent thief on the tree, nailed fast to the cross which stood beside the cross on which the Prince of Life was killed (Acts 3:14 and 15), on which the Lord of Glory was crucified. (I Corinthians 2:8).

To the publican up in the tree the Lord of Glory said, “make haste, and come down; for today I must abide in thy house.” (Luke 19:5). Zacchaeus received the Saviour joyfully. (Luke 19:6). The Saviour said to the convicted sinner; “this day is salvation

come to this house.” (Luke 19:9). After reading Luke 19:1 to 10 we would conclude that Zacchaeus was a business-man who had been dishonest in his business transactions, “a man that is a sinner.” (Luke 19:7). He learned that where sin abounded grace did much more abound. (Romans 5:20). This forgiven publican learned the meaning of I John 2:12, “because your sins are forgiven you for His Name’s sake.” Zacchaeus became the happy man of Romans 4:7 and 8: “blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered” . . . “Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.”

The other very sinful man, the thief on the cross, confessed that his sin or crime had been of such a serious nature that he deserved capital punishment. (Luke 23:40 and 41). It was at the time that both the sinner and the Saviour were dying that the sinner confessed his sin and called on the Saviour for mercy. The Saviour immediately responded, saying; “I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.” (Luke 23:43). Saving faith and pardoning grace worked together for the salvation of a guilty sinner and for his guarantee of eternal glory in heaven with his Saviour.

The best that man’s law or God’s law could do for that guilty thief was to condemn him to death, and after death judgment. (Hebrews 9:27 and II Corinthians 3:7 and 9). This we are told in Romans 3:19: “to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all of the world may become guilty before God.” “The law worketh wrath.” (Romans 4:15). Christ made peace through the blood of His cross. (Colossians 1:20). Christ died to deliver from the curse of the law those who were struggling to attain righteousness by that law, which law demanded a sinless and righteous life. (Galatians 3:13 and Romans 8:3 . . . Colossians 2:14 to 16). Note God’s truth, in Galatians 3:21 and 22: “if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law; but the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.” “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.” (Romans 10:10).

## ABOUNDING SIN—ABOUNDING GRACE

Remember that God is called “THE GOD OF ALL GRACE”; and that He is rich in mercy, and even before the wicked sinners of Ephesians 2:1 to 10 were saved by His grace God loved them with a great love. (Ephesians 2:3 to 6). God wants every sinner on this earth to believe the truth of Romans 5:20, “where sin abounded grace did much more abound.”

Some centuries after God looked down from heaven and saw a filthy human race He looked down again. Note in Titus 3:3 the people God saw on earth . . . “foolish . . . disobedient . . . deceived . . . serving divers lusts and pleasures . . . living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.” Note in the very next verse, the attitude of the sinless God toward such awful sinners . . . “The kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared.” (Titus 3:4). “The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.” (Titus 2:11).

Surely by now we know God’s answer to the question “what is wrong with the human race?” Moreover it would seem then that we can answer, with one word, the question, “what is wrong with the human race.” The one word is, ‘SIN’. Of course nice people prefer the quotation from the writer who said, “to err is human: to forgive, Divine.” They prefer the words ‘mistake’ and ‘blunder’ to the word ‘SIN’. ‘SIN’ causes

them to think of God and the Bible, and occasionally, the next world. They prefer to acknowledge human weakness instead of confessing with the apostle Paul, “the good that I would I do not; the evil that I would not that do I . . . it is no more I that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in me.” (Romans 7:19 and 20).

The great majority of nice, religious people absolutely reject, repudiate and oppose the statements in the Bible, “there is none good; no not one” . . . “I know that in me, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing” (Romans 7:18) . . . “I acknowledge my transgressions . . . behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me” . . . (Psalm 51:3 to 5) . . . “were by nature the children of wrath.” (Ephesians 2:3).

It is a known fact that many, many so-called Christian preachers are so cultured, so refined, so deceived by the one who is called ‘the god of this age’, that they do not even think of offending their hearers by preaching Revelation 21:8: “the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” Of course they do not believe that Jesus Christ was God in human form, that He died on the cross to deliver us from the wrath of God, that He rose from the dead and was seen by a great number of believers in the resurrection, glorified body in which He ascended up to heaven, where He is now the glorified Man at God’s right hand. They seem to be ignorant of the fact that a Christian-infidel is an impossible paradox. They are described as deluded messengers in II Corinthians 11:13 to 15, proving the truth of Christ’s words in Luke 16:15 and Paul’s words (by the Holy Spirit) in I Corinthians 1:18: “that which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God” . . . “the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God.” “THEM THAT PERISH” . . . “US WHO ARE SAVED.” What a contrast! Where do you stand?

#### THE WORLD AND THE LUST THEREOF PASSETH AWAY.

Note the testimony of one of the outstanding Christians of all times, that disciple whom Jesus loved in a very special way, the apostle John; “we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness (in the evil one).” (I John 5:19). We are told in Revelation 12:9 that Satan has deceived the whole world. We are told in II Corinthians 4:4 to 6 that Satan, as the god of this age, does everything within his power to keep the sinner from believing the gospel and thereby, by grace through faith, from becoming a saint. Every sinner, who is transformed by believing God’s saving gospel and receiving Christ as Saviour, is a new creation in Christ Jesus. (II Corinthians 5 :17 . . . Ephesians 2:10). There is a great difference between religious reformation and a Divine transformation, regeneration by the work of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

So again answering the question, “what’s wrong with the human race,” we quote I John 2:16 and 17: “all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. The world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.” In this connection we must know the difference in doing the will of God to be changed from a ‘dead sinner’ into a ‘living saint’, and doing the will of God after we have experienced the Divine transformation, regeneration, or being “God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus,

‘UNTO’ good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10).

### TRANSFORMED THIEVES, ADULTERERS AND DRUNKARDS

We read in Revelation 21:8 where murderers, idolaters, adulterers and liars go. But in I Corinthians 6:9 to 11 we learn that they need not go there. First we read in verses 9 and 10, that fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, drunkards and others shall not inherit the kingdom of God. We read in Revelation 21:8 that all of these will reach the lake of fire. Why? For two reasons: because they are such sinners and second because they refuse to let the forgiving God forgive them and transform them from ‘dead sinners’ into ‘living saints’. If they let God forgive them and change them, note in I Corinthians 6:11 what happens to believing sinners: “such were some of you; but ye are washed, ye are sanctified (made saints), ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” So in the final analysis wicked people reach the lake of fire because they refuse God’s remedy for sin.

### THE SUM TOTAL OF MAN’S SPIRITUAL DUTY

The sum total of man’s spiritual duty and responsibility is “to know God,” and “to make God known.” This means to believe the words of Christ in Matthew 11:27 and John 17:3: “neither knoweth any man the Father, except the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him” . . . “And this is life eternal, that they may know Thee the only True God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent.”

Every person on this earth when asked to answer the question, “what is wrong with the human race,” should believe that the question can be adequately answered in a few words, important words, namely: First, because the very great majority of sinners refuse or fail to let God save them in God’s way. Second, because the very great majority of saved people will not avail themselves of God’s all-sufficient grace and power, and yield to the indwelling omnipotent Holy Spirit, in a determined effort every hour to walk worthy of the calling wherewith they are called. In giving this answer we are not forgetting the mighty power of Satan and the weakness of the flesh.

### GOD LOVED THE WORLD GOD GAVE HIS SON

We read in the Bible, “GOD IS LOVE.” (I John 4:8). In I Peter 5:10 God is called “THE GOD OF ALL GRACE.” In Colossians 1:13 the Lord Jesus is called, “THE SON OF GOD’S LOVE.” In Romans 5:20 we read, “Where sin abounded grace did much more abound.” We read in II Peter 3:9, “The Lord is longsuffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” We read in I Timothy 2:4 to 6, that God will have all men to be saved; and that Christ Jesus gave Himself a ransom for all. We read in I Timothy 1:15, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” We read in Hebrews 9:26, that Christ appeared once to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. In I Peter 3:18 we read, that Christ suffered for sins once, the JUST for the

unjust, that He might bring us to God. We read in I Peter 2:24, that Christ bare our sins in His own body on the tree.

Now let us be assured that God cannot lie (Hebrews 6:18 and Titus 1:1 and 2), as we read I John 4:10 and John 3:16: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" . . . "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." The truth in these two verses is confirmed in Romans 5:8; "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." As we read these words, "Christ died for us," let us read with them I Corinthians 15:3: "Christ died for our sins."

What Christ did in the matter of suffering and dying for all the sins of all the sinners that have ever lived on this earth was all in harmony with God's will and in fulfillment of prophecies which the Holy Spirit directed holy men of old to foretell. Several centuries before Jesus was introduced as the Lamb of God Who beareth away the sin of the world (John 1:29) , it was prophesied that God would make His soul an offering of sin; that the Son of God would be wounded for the transgressions of sinners. (Isaiah 53:10 and 53:5).

The sacrifices that God's appointed servants offered for sins, for centuries before Christ appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, had "a shadow of good things to come." (Hebrews 10:1 to 3). "It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." (Hebrews 10:4). But now read Hebrews 10:12 concerning the once-for-all sacrifice of God's sinless Son, the Saviour of the world: "THIS MAN, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down at the right hand of God." (Hebrews 10:12). "When He had by Himself purged sins sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High." (Hebrews 1:3).

Has any human being ever heard more wonderful news than is recorded in Acts 13:38 and 39 concerning the sinning sinner and the sinless Christ, "be it known unto you, that through 'THIS MAN' is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by HIM all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses?"

Again hear and believe Hebrews 10:18 and 17: "where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin" . . . "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

#### A MORAL, PRAYING PHILANTHROPIST NEEDED SALVATION

Perhaps, we are all agreed that the two very wicked women and the two wicked men, whom we have mentioned, certainly needed forgiveness and transforming power to change their lives. But now by way of contrast, we read in Acts 11:14 that the Lord sent His gospel messenger to preach to Cornelius, "words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved." Cornelius was a sinner quite different from those we have mentioned. Hear the Bible Record of Cornelius: "a devout man, and one that feared God with all His house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always" . . . (Acts 10:2) . . . "a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews." (Acts 10:22).

Cornelius, like the thief on the cross, had to be saved by the grace of God and the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Like religious Nicodemus, Cornelius had to be born

anew to enter the kingdom of God. Nicodemus was not only a very religious church-member, but he was a very important religious leader, a ruler of the Jews, which of course meant that he was supposed to be a Bible-teacher. His name means “ruler of the people.” Nicodemus needed to hear words whereby he should be saved, should be born anew, born from above. He heard these words from the heart and lips of the Son of God, “ye must be born anew” . . . “as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:14 and 15). Hear this good news, recorded in Romans 6:23: “the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Hear the ‘good news’ in Christ’s words in John 10:28, “I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.”

As we think of Nicodemus, the Jew, and Cornelius, the Gentile, we are again reminded of the truth of Romans 3:9 and 10: “we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are under sin . . . there is none righteous, no, not one.” But hear the ‘good news’ in this same Epistle to the Romans (10:12 and 13): “There is no difference between the Jew and the Gentile: 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.”

#### MORE GOOD NEWS FOR THE HUMAN RACE

We have quoted the ‘good news’ in Romans 4:7 and 8, the truth that a believing sinner can become happy by having God forgive him and his sins. The related truth is in Romans 4:6, in which verse is described the happiness of the man unto whom the sinless, righteous God will impute His own perfect, Divine righteousness, not requiring any religious doings or good works of the believer or any worthiness on his part.

The truth of Romans 3:24 to 28 should prepare any interested person for the wonderful, ‘good news’ of Romans 4:6. In Romans 3:24 to 28 we learn that a believer is justified (forgiven and declared righteous) by God’s grace ‘freely’ (without a cause) through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

When the Lord revealed the ‘good news’ of I Timothy 1:15, the truth that “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,” we read in the same verse concerning this ‘good news’, “this is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.” Surely this ‘good news’ is worthy of the prayerful, thoughtful, serious consideration of every rational human being on this earth. It is not only worthy of all acceptance, but is worthy of the acceptance of all. This statement should be accepted as Divine, infallible truth at full face value. Every person on this earth should do more than give mental assent to this glorious message of salvation, the truth that the Lord Jesus Christ came down from heaven and died on Calvary’s cross for the sins of the whole world, and in a resurrection body went back to heaven where He now sits on His Father’s throne.

To believe this great truth and to receive Christ as Saviour is by far the most important decision any human being can make. When one convicted sinner cried out, “what must I do to be saved,” God’s answer was, “believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. (Acts 16:31) .

According to the Word of God, every person who is not saved before that person leaves this world will be eternally, irrevocably lost. No person need be a profound

student of the Holy Scriptures to know that the Bible plainly teaches, “no unrighteous man shall inherit the kingdom of God” (I Corinthians 6:9) ; that except a man be born anew, from above, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. (John 3:3 to 7).

## THE ONE AND ONLY WAY TO BECOME RIGHTEOUS

So far as it is humanly possible every person on this earth should lay aside every plan and task and duty until he or she learns from God’s Book how to be changed from an unrighteous man or woman to a righteous man or woman. According to Romans 4:6, this means how an unrighteous person can become truly happy, a happiness that will never, never cease, although faithful, spiritual, aggressive saved people may be in heaviness through manifold temptations, satanic attacks and suffering for righteousness sake. But they know “that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.” (Romans 8:18).

Every month many are added to the ranks of those who are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God (II Timothy 3:4) and fewer added to those who are like Moses, who chose “rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.” (Hebrews 11:25). He “had respect unto the recompense of the reward.” (Hebrews 11:26). Moses, like Paul and millions of God’s people, looked not “at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen,” things not temporal but eternal. (II Corinthians 4:18).

Now hear prayerfully the good news of Romans 4:6, believe it with your whole heart, and become the happy man or woman described in this verse: “THE ‘BLESSEDNESS’ (HAPPINESS) OF THE MAN UNTO WHOM GOD IMPUTETH RIGHTEOUSNESS WITHOUT WORKS.”

This surely is the best news that any person on this earth ever heard. When the apostle Peter seemed to have become somewhat confused Paul gave to Peter the straight ‘grace’ message of Galatians 2:16: “knowing that a man is not justified (declared righteous) by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ . . . for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” Note again how the Holy Spirit directed the Lord’s ‘grace’ messenger (Paul) to state this great truth, this fundamental Christian doctrine, in Titus 3:5 to 8: “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved, us.” Immediately preceding the ‘good news’ of Romans 4:6, quoted above, we read in Romans 4:4 and 5: “to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt . . . but to him that worketh not, but believeth in Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”

“HIM THAT JUSTIFIETH THE UNGODLY.” The ungodly can be justified. God is ever ready and willing to justify the ungodly. The ungodly cannot justify themselves or become righteous before God by good works or religious deeds. They can become righteous by grace through faith in the perfect redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit; and this without good works or religious deeds. God’s Word states clearly and definitely in Romans 11:6: “if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace.”

“TO HIM THAT WORKETH NOT.” Read this again in Romans 4:5, in II Timothy 1:9, in Ephesians 2:8 and 9, in Titus 3:5, in Romans 3:28; and receive and believe the truth of Galatians 2:21, that if any man can become righteous before God by



“LAW” works or religious doings, Christ died in vain. This is confirmed in Galatia is 3:21: “if there had been a ‘LAW’ given which could have given life, verily ‘RIGHTEOUSNESS’ should have been by the law.” . . . Then let God, by the Holy Spirit, open your heart to receive with meekness and faith the truth in the verse that follows Galatians 3:21: “but the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.”

Woe unto the religious leaders who use James 2:24 to frustrate the grace of God and bewitch and beguile and bewilder those who follow these confused leaders! Where may we find the expert religious judge on this earth who is competent to instruct any person the exact number of religious deeds and good works that person must do every hour of every day of every year in order to be justified? The judge by his own rule, with those whom he judges, may fail by just two or three good deeds to attain unto the righteousness that will qualify him and them for heaven.

### GOD’S ALL-SUFFICIENT GRACE FOR GOOD WORKS

Inasmuch as the Lord directed the apostle Paul to use the word ‘GRACE’ more than 100 times in Paul’s ministry and messages recorded in the Bible, and inasmuch as Paul testified that “the dispensation of the grace of God” was given to him by the ascended, glorified Christ, by special revelation (Ephesians 3:1 to 3 . . . Galatians 1:11 and 12 and II Corinthians 12:1 to 12), we have the ‘BIBLE’ right to call the apostle Paul, “the Lord’s ‘GRACE’ messenger.”

In Ephesians 2:5 this ‘grace’ messenger was directed to write, “by grace ye were saved.” Note what he wrote in the three verses; Ephesians 2:4 to 6, “but God, Who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us . . . even when we were dead in sins hath made us alive . . . and hath raised us up together, and made us sit (down) together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus.” Then after repeating that salvation was by grace through faith, without man’s work or interference, the apostle Paul was directed to tell the human race that saved people are to do ‘good works’ and not unsaved people, however religious. Note Ephesians 2:8 to 10 . . . “by grace through faith, without works” . . . “God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus ‘UNTO GOOD WORKS’, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

It would seem that almost every person, who is rational and of average intelligence, would know the very great difference between, not being saved, regenerated or being created in Christ Jesus by ‘good works’, and being “created in Christ Jesus ‘UNTO GOOD WORKS’.” In God’s Gospel of Grace God’s one requirement of the sinner is ‘FAITH’, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and in His perfect work. The believing sinner must be God’s workmanship before God will accept that believer, or new creation (II Corinthians 5:17), as a workman. The sinner need not work for salvation or regeneration, to pass out of death into life. An unbeliever is dead in sins. The believer is said to be ‘alive from the dead’. (Romans 6:13 . . . Colossians 2:13 . . . John 5:24 and 25 . . . John 11:25 and 26). God will not reward or even accept the ‘good works’ of a dead man. Concerning those who have passed out of death into life, we read in Romans 6:13: “YIELD YOURSELVES UNTO GOD, AS THOSE WHO ARE ‘ALIVE FROM THE DEAD’, AND YOUR MEMBERS AS INSTRUMENTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS UNTO GOD.”

Bible Christians are men and women who have been made alive (Colossians 2:13 . . . Ephesians 2:5 and 6) , who have passed out of death into life (John 5:24 and 27 and 11:25 and 26). Thus we see that the adults of this world are divided into just two groups with respect to salvation, “dead sinners” and “living saints.”

To the “living saints,” saved people, new creatures in Christ, who have received from God, as a free gift, His own perfect, Divine righteousness, God’s instructions are to behave as becometh saints (Ephesians 5:2 to 4) to “walk worthy of the calling wherewith ye are called.” (Ephesians 4:1). In Titus 3:8 Christians are instructed to be careful to maintain ‘good works’.

## GOD IS ABLE TO MAKE ALL GRACE ABOUND

Keep in mind that God is called, in the Bible, “THE GOD OF ALL GRACE.” (I Peter 5:10). Keep in mind, that, according to God’s message of salvation in this age and dispensation of grace, which message and dispensation differ in many respects from the message and program of God while Christ was on earth and in the first chapters of Acts under the direction and supervision of Peter and the other eleven apostles, any and every kind of sinner can be saved “by grace through faith” (Ephesians 2:8 and 9), can be justified freely by God’s grace and faith in Christ and His shed blood. (Romans 3:24 and 25). In God’s ‘GRACE’ program good works have no place until after the sinner, by faith receives Christ and becomes a new creation in Christ Jesus. (II Corinthians 5:17 and Ephesians 2:10). Only the good works of a God-made saint are recognized or rewarded by God.

Remember no person is a saint because he behaves. He is a saint because he believes. But every saint should behave as becometh saints. Saints are those who were sinners but were turned to God, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for God’s Son from heaven. (I Thessalonians 1:9 and 10). Saints are expected to be labourers together with God. (I Corinthians 3:9). Saints are specifically instructed not to continue in sin, that grace may abound. (Romans 6:1 and 2 and 6:15). Saints are instructed to speak and work in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks unto the Father, through His Son. (Colossians 3:17 . . . John 5:23). God assures all saints that His mighty Divine power that He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him to the highest heavens is at their disposal. (Ephesians 1:18 to 23 . . . Ephesians 3:20).

## BY THE GRACE OF GOD

Great statement is this one made by the Apostle Paul about 58 A.D.

“By the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” (I Corinthians 15:10).

Can you say, “I am?” Not one of us can say, “I labored more abundantly than they all.”

I am. Are you? I am saved by the grace of God. I didn’t labor abundantly or even for one moment to be saved by grace.

“If by grace then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace.” (Romans 11:6) .

Perhaps you desire to “amen” this testimony: “I am not what I ought to be. I am not what I hope to be. But, by the grace of God, I am not what I once was.”

When Christ was here on earth He said to those who would get a place in the kingdom of heaven, “Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.” (Luke 13:24). “Agonize” or “labour” to get in. That certainly is not our message for today. It is in direct contrast with Romans 3:24: “Declared righteous without a cause by God’s grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” For us the great preacher of Grace had “the dispensation of the grace of God.” This differs from “the dispensation of law” and “the dispensation of the kingdom of heaven.”

Eternal life is the free gift of God. (Romans 6:23). It cost God more than can ever be computed or measured or even estimated. God spared not His Own Son. With Him He shall also freely give us all things. (Romans 8:34). “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.” “It is the Gift of God.”

“We are His workmanship created in CHRIST JESUS, unto good works that God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10) .

Rather a unique statement: “Walk in good works.” This is the will of God concerning His children, believers who are in Christ. God demands that we must be IN CHRIST before we can “WALK IN GOOD WORKS.

In Christ we are the righteousness of God, accepted, perfect (in standing), complete and blessed with all spiritual blessings, free from condemnation. (II Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:6; Hebrews 10:14; Colossians 2:10; Ephesians 1:3; Romans 8:1).

We are a redeemed people zealous of good works, saved to maintain good works, labourers together with God, fishers of men, shining lights, soldiers of Jesus Christ, witnesses, ambassadors, sowers and workmen that needeth not to be ashamed.

“Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” (I Corinthians 15:58).

Our labour is not in vain, if it is in the Lord. Neither was Paul vain or boastful when he uttered that great truth, “I laboured more abundantly than they all”; for there he gave credit to the grace of God. God is “the God of all grace.” (I Peter 5 :10).

Paul needed all the grace of the God of all grace. That all-sufficient grace was available. “And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.” (II Corinthians 9:8).

Paul set himself up as a pattern; and while the same illimitable grace of God is available for every member of the Body of Christ, we can never measure up to Paul’s standard. But let us do our very best to abound, by the grace of God, in good works.

“Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.” (Philippians 2:14 and 15).

“Say not ye, There are four months and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.” (John 4:35 and 36).

“So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now. they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible. (I Corinthians 9:24 and 28).

## INGERSOLL . . . THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

By many people Colonel Robert Ingersoll was rated as a very brilliant agnostic. He was often referred to as "Ingersoll, the infidel." He was an uncompromising opponent of the doctrines of Christians who accept the teachings of the Bible concerning the statements in Romans 3:24 to 28 and Acts 13:38 and 39. In these Scriptures we read that any kind of believing sinners can be declared righteous by God, by grace, without a 'good-behavior' record, without good works and religious deeds; but by faith alone in the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ. In these verses we learn that all of the sins of a believing sinner, whose faith is in Christ, are freely and fully forgiven; that then and there that forgiven sinner is so completely justified by God that he stands in God's holy presence as though he had never sinned in word, thought or deed. (Acts 13:38 and 39). The explanation of the good news in Romans 3:24 to 27 is that God can be just and be the believer's justifier, or be both just and merciful to the vilest reprobate in society, because of the propitiatory work of Christ in His death and resurrection.

I heard Colonel Ingersoll speak on this subject. He said that he could not believe in this Bible doctrine or believe that it would be just on the part of the Christian's God to send to eternal torment an unbelieving, law-abiding moral person, who had been an influence for good in a community for many years, while on the other hand a person, who had been an indecent law-breaker, an immoral, vile and wicked sinner, can be completely pardoned and exonerated by God after years of a life worse than wasted; and will because of faith in Jesus Christ and His death and resurrection, spend eternity in heaven.

We would say to Mr. Ingersoll and others, that God's ways are as high above the ways of man, as the heavens are high above the earth. Way back before Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, to be the friend of publicans and sinners, God said, "Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." (Isaiah 1:18).

God does not enter into any bargain with any sinner, telling that sinner that he may sin against Him for years, and then have the guarantee of death-bed repentance and eternal life. Hear God's Word: "he, that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." (Proverbs 29:1).

The Pharisees, who heard Christ on earth, were sorely displeased because He assured them that their good works and religious activities would not save them. They hated the sinless Christ without a cause. (John 15:25). After they had derided Christ (Luke 16:14), Christ said unto them; "that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." (Luke 16:15).

Colonel Ingersoll repudiated the unique claims of the eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, sinless Christ, Who said, "I came down from heaven" (John 6:38), and scoffed at the truth of Romans 3:24 to 28, that a believing sinner is justified (without a cause) by God's grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. He did not believe Romans 8:8 and Hebrews 11:6, that they that are in the flesh cannot please God, and without faith in the Lord Jesus Christ it is impossible to please God. Of course he did not for one moment accept the Divine truth recorded in Ezekiel 33:13 and Romans 4:4, that God will not recognize or reward the good behaviour of the most benevolent,

philanthropic, religious person, who trusts to his own righteousness. In Romans 9:29 to 10:4 God describes the tragedy of some very religious people who erred so seriously that they fell under God's awful wrath: "going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." "BEING IGNORANT OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS." (Romans 10:3).

Divine righteousness is available for every human being. It cannot be attained by man's best works or religious deeds. It is the free gift of God to every believing sinner who will meet God at Calvary and receive Christ as Saviour. (Galatians 3:14 . . . Romans 10:9 and 10 . . . II Corinthians 5:21 and Romans 4:5). (Romans 10:4) .

Like the unbelieving self-righteous Pharisees of Christ's years on earth, Colonel Ingersoll objected to Christ being the friend of publicans and sinners. See Christ's explanation in Luke 18:9 to 14.