

## Just A Minute! With Scripture

The King James Bible is used for all references. Verses may be made bold or numbered for emphasis.

### When Fear Leads

Theme: Sharing the glorious gospel

Sometimes fear inhibits us from doing what the Bible teaches. For example, we are all instructed to speak about the gospel. Yet, if we are honest, we all have fears. Sometimes we are afraid of the response or ramifications of boldly taking a stand. The excuses are endless: "I'm shy." "I have anxiety." or "I don't want to make people uncomfortable or mad." Resistance continues even after we start sharing the Truth: "He has long hair and tattoos, he won't respond." "The line at the checkout is too long, the cashier won't have time to listen." or "I'm tired." Why does this happen? Our flesh is exalted and we just need to trust God.

To rationalize not living this Truth, we must reframe it in some way to feel O.K.: "We're under grace, I don't have to do it." "This is only for Paul and leaders." or "God will still love me if I don't do it." The honest truth is that what we value most is what we do. Will we believe the Word or walk by feelings/excuses? Each steer us down a thinking path.

Fear leads us to overly focus on/exalt the potential persecution; this will stop our mouths. We all have the same flesh and struggle with being an ambassador, especially in the midst of life challenges or sufferings. The flesh will never want to do this; it will be fearful and resist discomfort.

What does God want? He desires our heart and to humbly walk by faith, even when fear tries to unsettle us. *"And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak."* (Eph. 6:19-20) We're to follow Paul who spoke boldly, trusting Christ within us. *"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."* (I Cor. 11:1)

**Think on this:** God's grace (unmerited favor) will lead you to be thankful, resulting in a zeal to serve. *"But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he love us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."* (Eph. 2:4-7) God can use the Word to reframe your thinking to be grateful and prepare ahead to walk by faith to open your mouth boldly. Scripture encourages and empowers you to hold forth the Truth to others, setting aside the struggles of the flesh, which include our emotions that cause fear. Start today, hand out a gospel tract.

## Thankfulness Motivates



Reading the Scriptures can help us realize God's great love. Since the beginning, He showed loving kindness, giving man dominion over all His creation: *"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."* (Gen. 1:26) As our faith matures, we appreciate the magnitude and depth of His immeasurable love.



Knowing what was accomplished at the cross develops a closer, trusting relationship with God, which produces an attitude of charity in us: *"Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God."* (II Cor. 9:11) We realize He is worthy of our worship & service!

**Think on this:** His love for you can be your motivation to live as who you are in Christ, even in the midst of suffering or fear: *"For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."* (II Cor. 5:14-15) **Rest in Him. Walk by faith!**

## Are You Going to Heaven?

God offered His Son to be a fully satisfying sacrifice for all your sin, once and for all. He died, was buried and rose again (I Cor. 15: 3-4) All you need to do is believe this to go to heaven! *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."* (Rom. 3:23-24) **It is faith alone!**



## Study-Devotional on Galatians Using Study Tools



This series of articles will progress students through *Galatians* to assist in their study and meditation of this epistle. Questions below can help saints think it out to apply what God says:

**Verses to read/study this Month:** *Galatians 1: 6-8:*

*<sup>6</sup>“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: <sup>7</sup>Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. <sup>8</sup>But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.”*

1. Why was it such a “*marvel*” to Paul that the Galatians had been “*removed*?” What were they “*removed*” from, according to the verses?
2. Who is “*him that called you*” referring to: Christ, God, Paul, or someone else?
3. *Verses 6-7* Describe the gospel: “the grace of

*Christ.*” Is this the gospel you follow? Are there others?

4. Some individuals had “*troubled*” this Church. Describe what the verses teach.

5. Define the word, “*pervert*” for yourself. These individuals distorted/changed the gospel. What was Paul’s judgment in vs. 8 toward these trouble-makers?

6. What does the phrase, “*let him be accursed*” mean? Use a dictionary to look up the various meanings of “*accursed.*” (An Expository dictionary, such as the Vine’s, can be used to locate the specific usage of the word in this verse.) What have you learned?

7. Read *Galatians 4:13-19*. Who originally taught the Galatians about the gospel? What kind of relationship did Paul have with these saints? (*verses 14-15*) How were the Galatians negatively affected by others, according to *verses 17-19*?

8. How can *Galatians 1:6-8* functionally help you to confidently standfast and enable you to wisely teach the gospel of Christ to others? Think on these things.

## What Does it Mean to be an Ambassador?

*Ephesians 6:20* gives us a definition of an ambassador: “*For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.*” A dictionary provides additional clarity: a servant or diplomat to a foreign country representing another. Therefore as ambassadors, God left us in a foreign land (earth is not our eternal home) on Christ’s behalf, to boldly speak the gospel as we are instructed.

This great privilege is not just for those with ambassador-like qualities. It’s an instruction for all saints. God teaches and helps us grow into this role: “*But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.*” (*Eph. 4:15*) Focus on the goal to mature and press forward to apply what you learn in your faith journey: “*Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*” (*Phil. 3:13-14*)

Unbelievers need to be justified by hearing/believing the gospel, otherwise their ungodly soul will be judged: “*And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?*” (*Rom. 2:3*) This is the Great White Throne Judgment. (*Rev. 20:11-15*) Yet, knowing this, it is still not easy to live as an ambassador to speak the Truth in love. We will fear and not feel qualified, yet this humbleness is exactly what God desires. Christ does the work within us, enabling and empowering us to love others more and more. This ambassador role is a great opportunity to live what we know, producing trust in God. It’s a choice to let the Spirit lead and not allow our flesh to rule. Actually, we’re to push through these challenges with fear and trembling, to live what God teaches, allowing Christ to be manifest: “*Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation in fear and trembling.*” (*Phil. 2:12*) Expect to make mistakes and to have fear, God uses them to our glory!

# Sinfulness and Grace

By Erin Young

As members of the Body of Christ, we may wonder if there is any sin which removes us from the grace of God. Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is always the first sin that usually comes to peoples' minds. *"Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." (I Timothy 1:13)* Paul himself was a blasphemer; he lists in this chapter about the sins he commits in his earthly flesh: *"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." (I Timothy 1:15)* He called himself the chief of sinners. *"For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." (Rom. 7:14)*



Paul referred to himself as least of the apostles. And he was responsible for persecuting the church. If someone like him can have salvation, then it is safe to say that there is no sin that can separate us from God, once we are in Christ. *"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (I Corinthians 6:11)*

*"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." (Rev. 21:8)* Read this verse carefully. It states ALL liars will have their place in the lake of fire. Have you ever once told a lie? I'm willing to bet most of us have. Thankfully we are now justified by Christ. We are no longer in sin.

On A Personal Side

## Question & Answers

by Deborah Johnson

**Question 1: My friend has different beliefs than I do in some areas, but wants me to lead a study with her. Any suggestions?**

Realize that we all have views that differ from one another, this is to be expected if we are studying and thinking for ourselves. To help you in this Bible study, read *Romans 14* to find application for your situation. This chapter will help you to deal with weaker brethren in grace. *"Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him." (Vs. 1-3)*

We are to allow/encourage the weak to walk in what he is 'fully persuaded' in, by the Word, until convicted otherwise. One of your roles is to instruct the weak saint to continue to read and think about Scripture to grow. Point out verses that will help him understand. *Verses 4-13* teach us not to judge, but know that God is able to make this weak brother stand. He is to live unto God, according to the Word, not according to what 'you' say/believe. Otherwise, you'll become his god and authority, rather than God.

Purpose NOT to engage in "doubtful disputations" (debates). If asked a question, answer concisely, then redirect to study in the Word to build on what will establish him. *Romans* is the foundational book and the best place to begin. Go through the basic issues of justification in the first five chapters. This builds trust and is designed to teach him how to read and study the Word. Encourage discussions on verses, not opinion or things they're not ready to discuss. Keep the Word as the standard. Enjoy studying.

**Question 2: How do I handle an argument with another saint?**

Arguing is rarely, if ever, profitable. Often it is hurtful. (II Cor. 12:20) You're each members one of another, most cherished unto God, and to be dealt with in kindness and love. It is simply not grace, nor who you are in Christ to argue, judge, or insist on your viewpoint, even if you're right. Therefore, it is unwise to pull someone in or be pulled into ungodly, injurious, or disrespectful disputing. Step out from under strife to do all things to edify. (Rom. 14:19).

Remember, you are not called to 'convince' anyone to believe something. Rather, hold forth the Truth; then know it is *"...God that giveth the increase." (I Cor. 3:7)* The Spirit by the Word convicts someone to believe. Until then, a saint is to walk according to what he is fully persuaded by in the Word (Rom. 14:5) and do it unto the Lord. *"For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord..." (Rom. 14:8)* Therefore, state your conviction from the Word in love and encourage him to study it for himself. Use a grace approach, with good timing. Sometimes, it helps to make a statement to refocus the conversation: *"We clearly have differences on this issue, let's give each other grace and move on."* Choose to be wise; prefer your brother. *"That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour." (I Thess. 4:4)*



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To:

**“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...” (Romans 3:24)**

## A Personal Testimony (Continued) By Gene

I wrote previously about my Generalized Anxiety Disorder with panic attacks, OCD, and depression. I have learned some things as a recipient of much great, long-term, Christian life coaching. I've begun to not only recognize, but also practically apply, the awareness of 'choice' that is involved in so much of everyday life. It's truly astonishing to me to **(FINALLY)** comprehend that most of what I experience, both mentally and physically, depends on decisions I make. This may seem too basic, but it's more difficult than you think. The concept of available 'choice' must first be acknowledged, properly nurtured, and then correctly applied in the 'real world' to achieve the desired positive result(s). In my case, this means less worry about the future, especially what I cannot control.

This is where my Christian faith comes into the picture. Paul, in *Philippians 4:11-13*, states, *“Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have **LEARNED**, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I **KNOW** both how to be abased, and I **KNOW** how to abound: every where and in all things I am **INSTRUCTED** both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”*

I am confronted by my real worry about a future without sufficient resources, that seems so real to me in this moment. I'm presented with a 'choice' to make now, either to worry about it, or to take it in faith that I will be able to accept and cope with whatever level of resources I have at the time. The 'choice' I make now will, ultimately, results in my mood, demeanor, and, potentially, adverse physical symptoms. I now know that I do have real 'choices' to make.

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### Periodical

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