

HIS SIDE VERSUS OUR SIDE - OVERVIEW OF GALATIANS

Or, What is a TRUE Christian?

by Norman Harrison

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CHAPTER 1

THAT HE MIGHT DELIVER US

"Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world" -- Galatians 1:4.

GOD sees sin as a state of bondage from which man needs to be delivered. It is comparable to the condition of His people in bondage in Egypt. Then it was that He appeared as their Deliverer, saying, **"I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians"** (Exodus 3:8).

Sin is not only abhorrent to a holy GOD -- it is that; but it is also an enslavement. It robs; it ensnares; it places men under the power of GOD's enemy and the evil of this age. In love GOD will deliver.

The Most Thrilling Story Ever Told

Why anyone should deny that JESUS CHRIST, and according to His own statement, **"came down from heaven"** with the purpose and power to free men from their sins, and now, as a part of the human race, is in the position to do it, seems almost inexplicable.

Accepted as one of the facts of history it becomes the most thrilling adventure of all time. A whole race of human beings had been stolen from GOD, placed in the camp of His enemy and, imbued with Satan's spirit, were quite willing to remain subject to him. (Prisoners in a sort of Prisoners Base game.) **"But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us"** (Ephesians 2:4) would not leave us thus. The story of what He did to release us is indeed Good News -- the Gospel -- almost too good to be true.

To think of GOD, Creator and Ruler of heaven and earth, imprisoning Himself in flesh and blood; subjecting Himself to the law designed only for sinful men; sharing man's lot, even to suffering its poverty and privations; incurring the hatreds and suspicions of which sinful nature is alone capable; submitting Himself to being made a prisoner in the court of envy and injustice; in utmost shame giving up His life on the cross, all with the purpose of saving us from eternal loss

and shame. He "gave Himself for our sins." He knew well what He was doing. In seeming defeat He had won the victory for us. All to secure our release! All to set us prisoners free! All to deliver us! Amazing story.

From What He Delivered Us

Deliver! If ever you feel depressed or discouraged and need a thrilling uplift, trace the use of "deliver" through the Bible. In the Hebrew and Greek some forty words are used to get the idea across to us. Sin has created such an "evil world," with so many by-products of suffering, physical, mental, spiritual, circumstantial -- yes, financial, that men are its victims at every turn. How gracious that our Saviour delivers from such **"according to the will of God and our Father."**

Says the Psalmist, **"Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all"** (Psalm 34:19). The Lord invites us, saying, **"Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me"** (Psalm 50:15). Psalm 91 is a prolonged psalm of deliverance.

When the three faithful Israelites were condemned to the fiery furnace they testified, **"Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king"** (Daniel 3:17). The result? The seven times hotter fire, while leaving hair and clothing untouched, burned off their bonds so that they walked free in the flames of their affliction. What a deliverance! And the same Lord is able to deliver you.

Similarly the Apostle Paul, faced with death, testifies to a past, present and future deliverance: **"Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us"** (II Corinthians 1:10)

To What We Are Delivered

Jesus seeing men under the power of death, bereft of life, said, **"I am come that they might have life;" "I give unto them eternal life"** (John 10:10, 28).

Seeing men in darkness He cried, **"I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life"** (John 8:12).

Seeing men hungry and thirsty, He cried, **"I am that bread of life"; "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink"** (John 6:48; 7:37).

Seeing men in bondage -- though they vehemently resented the implication -- He cried, **"If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed"** (John 8:36; see v. 32-34).

How can we adequately thank GOD our great Deliverer for so all-inclusive a deliverance and transference? **"Giving thanks unto the Father ... who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son"** (Colossians 1:12, 13).

SPIRITUAL BIRTH VERSUS PHYSICAL BIRTH - GALATIANS 1:4-5

What is the gospel? What does it mean to be "saved?"

Lord willing, we shall examine this question in this study. Won't you, reader, if you are unsure of your eternal destiny, read this as though GOD Himself were speaking to your heart. Won't you lay aside all of your presuppositions - of which you have honest doubt, and let GOD, Who is not the author of confusion, give you peace that will surpass all of your human understanding?

"Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." -- Galatians 1:4,5

"In Adam all die ... in Christ all are made alive" -- I Corinthians 15:22

Very many people, perhaps the majority, do not understand the Gospel. They cannot see the WHY of salvation. Why do all men, especially "they", need to be "saved"? Why should good-living people listen to the Good News that they CAN be saved, when they have no need of it?

Resultantly, they do not understand the HOW of salvation. This plan of justification by faith, especially if one like Paul insists that it be by "faith alone": they cannot see it; so they decide just to go on and do the best they can, perhaps in a religious way, and GOD must accept of that.

This is a very real difficulty and must be met at the outset. It is met, fully and completely, when we understand GOD's method of dealing with men, when we see His working principle of:

IDENTIFICATION

In Adam
A-L-L Die

In CHRIST
A-L-L Live

This is a twofold division of the entire human race. Everybody is either "**in Adam**" or "**in Christ**." We are all in two groups, two classes, two columns, two camps; and they are in the sharpest contrast.

That is, GOD deals with the whole human race through two federal heads: Adam, the first, and CHRIST, who is called the "last Adam," and who calls Himself the "Son of man" or the representative man.

By birth all are in Adam, inescapably, simply by being born into the human race. But, that there be no injustice, all may by a second birth come to be in CHRIST.

This is a thoroughly representative principle. By way of illustration, here is a man who was in German when World War II broke. We did not have dealings with him personally, but we dealt with him through his accepted head, Hitler. As it went with Hitler, so it went with him. When

Hitler was defeated, he was defeated -- that is his lot today. This is a defeated man.

So by this principle GOD is not dealing with us personally, but positionally, according to the headship we have chosen to live under. It's a question of which side we are on. And you, my friend, will enter into a true appreciation of the Gospel only as you contemplate this face.

All Identified with Adam

Justification by Faith has its doctrinal exposition in Romans, sister Epistle to Galatians. In Romans the doctrine is expounded; in Galatians it is illustrated and enforced.

In Romans the Gospel begins not with CHRIST, but with sons of Adam, picturing the human race as men corrupting their ways -- ways that make them "**worthy of death**" (1:18-32); and proceeding with withering logic to prove GOD's case against all men. Let us quote:

"What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. ... There is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." -- Romans 3:9-12; 18-20

(Note that the "deeds of the law" is an effort to live up to a required standard, and "**there shall no flesh**" -- no child of Adam -- "**be justified in his sight.**"

In all of this, my friend, nothing is said about you personally -- only racially. GOD is condemning, and rightly, the whole human race of which you and I are a part. Degrees of goodness are no answer. Attempts to live a good life avail nothing. Your connections are wrong. You are in the wrong class. You are on the wrong side. It is time you cast about for a different classification. GOD has a way out. Consider it carefully; here it is:

CHRIST Identified with Us

Here again is the story of GOD's great adventure. He would not leave us thus, sinful, guilty, condemned -- the whole race. He will provide a second federal head, sinless, holy, above reproach. Who could it be? No one but -- Himself! No man could do it. Yet it must be a man -- one of the race. He will become that man!

He, GOD, became man, identified with us, sharing our lot. He came over to Our Side, that He might free us and deliver us over to His Side. He took our flesh and blood, put Himself under the law, met its demands as our representative even to its penalty for violating it, even to death.

Having Himself taken the deserts of our bad record in Adam, and having set for us a new, sinless record, He says in effect, "I have taken your record, even to dying your death; now I invite you

to take My record of perfect righteousness, giving up all you had in Adam for all you may have in Me."

These two records, the two sides, and what we have in the "**one man**" on either side, are found in a startling and convincing contrast in Romans 5:12-21:

By the "**one man**" Adam: sin, disobedience, offense, condemnation, death.

By the "**one man**" CHRIST: obedience, righteousness, justification, life.

Is the choice a difficult one? Who would not change sides, gladly giving up a place on Our Side for one on His Side?

We Identified with CHRIST

Now identification passes from the racial to the personal, from being merely positional to becoming gloriously experiential.

He died our death, now we share His death as though it were actually ours.

In Him we have gone through death, a death to sin, and come out into life, a new life unto GOD.

Our new Head died unto sin and lives unto GOD; in these experiences we are one with Him.
"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:11).

We are not only on His Side; the transfer is so complete that the fetters of our former allegiance are severed; we are His by an inward, heart devotion. He has won us to His Side, He has bound us to Himself. Henceforth His life is ours and ours is His.

For such a salvation, heaven-sent, there is no substitute. Why be deceived by a man-made counterfeit, powerless to deliver?

The choice is yours.

~ end of chapter 1 ~

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