

Second Corinthians 4:1–6:10

[Prepared for the Milwaukee City Pastoral Conference of the Wisconsin Synod]

I. Chapter 4:1–6

A. Verses 1 and 2

“This ministry”—which is the administration of the New Testament of God, a testament of justification; a testament of the life-and-liberty-granting Spirit procured for us by Christ’s redemptive work; a testament the administrators of which employ complete frankness because it is not a passing, temporary thing like the testament of the *gramma*, which has only a preparatory function to perform in God’s economy of salvation, as a testament to be superseded by the new testament which is God’s final word; a testament which with its glory does not blind and kill but permeates the hearts and transforms them into the same image of glory. What effect will it have on us to have received this ministry?

This is the question that Paul now takes up, thus linking chapter 4 to chapter 3. He uses for a connective the phrase διὰ τοῦτο, because of this, therefore.

Before Paul proceeds to illustrate the effect which so exalted a commission must have on the administrators of this new testament he inserts the remark that he and his associates received the high office out of the pure mercy of God, which they did not merit and of which they were not worthy, yes, in order to receive which they must first be rescued out of their miserable condition. He says καθὼς ἤλεήθημεν, as we have been granted mercy. He uses the term *mercy*, not *grace*. Think of the blind people who prayed Jesus for help, the Syrophenecian woman, the father of the lunatic, the rich man in hell: they all called: ἐλέησον. It was the compassion of God that made Paul (and his associates) what they were. Unfit though Paul was by nature and more so by his early training in Pharisaism, God had pity on him and made him what he now is. —We note also that Paul uses a passive form of the verb. Our KJ version loses some of the force of this voice by translating: “we have received mercy,” the RSV still more by reducing the clause to a phrase: “by the mercy.” Luther is far better, saying: *nachdem mir Barmherzigkeit widerfahren ist*, i.e., we were granted mercy. The clause contains a terse summary of what Paul had stated more fully in the previous chapter: “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think (i.e., claim) anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God” (v. 5).

Paul now sums up the effect which this fact that he, the absolutely unworthy one, was entrusted with so exalted an office had on him and on his colleagues, in the brief statement: οὐκ ἐγκακοῦμεν, we do not faint, we do not lose courage, do not grow tired. No defeatism in Paul. Take the double negative as a reinforced positive: we are confident, with a firm unshaken and unshakable confidence; we do our work with cheerful determination and unquenchable, invincible hope. No matter what discouraging situations may confront Paul, no matter what indifference or opposition he may encounter, he will continue to do his work with zeal unabated.

Paul was human like us, success cheered him and apparent failure grieved him; but he did not permit these human reactions to influence his endeavors.

To set forth more vividly the full force of ἐγκακεῖν, Paul contrasts the spirit and the methods that might suggest themselves to one less confident. In a summary statement he declares that “we have renounced (once and for all) the hidden things of shame (or disgrace)” —introducing this statement with a very strong ἀλλὰ: no ἐγκακεῖν, rather on the contrary.

We note the aorist of ἀπειπάμεθα, stressing the action, the definiteness and decisiveness of the action, without hesitation or possibility of reconsideration. We have renounced, and that’s that.

More important is the question of what he has thus definitely and with finality ruled out. He says the secret things of shame. —Here the KJ translates the Greek word αἰσχύνη with “dishonesty,” the RSV turns the genitive into an adjective, “disgraceful” (which is permissible), while Luther renders τὰ κρυπτὰ τῆς αἰσχύνης with *heimliche Schande*. The KJ stands in need of correction. —Paul is not speaking about a scandalous life, of

indulging in shameful vices secretly; he is speaking about methods of preaching the Gospel. He means to say that you can introduce methods into your Gospel work which on the surface do not appear as shameful, but which in reality disgrace the Gospel. He is harking back to ch. 2:17, where he spoke about *καπηλεύειν*, about “selling” the Gospel. To use a coarse illustration, some ministers in their eagerness to bring the Gospel to the people resort to entertainment to attract the crowds, in order to get an opportunity to preach to them. If you would tell such ministers that they are ashamed of the Gospel and that by their methods they disgrace it, because they manifest a lack of trust in its efficacy, they would resent the charge. Are they not doing all in order to promote the Gospel? The disgrace they are doing to it does not appear on the surface; that is why Paul speaks of secret things of shame. The disgrace is, nevertheless, very real, as will become evident from Paul’s further remarks.

In the following Paul elucidates by using more specific terms. A method that he conscientiously avoids he describes as *περιπατοῦντες ἐν πανουργίᾳ*, he and his associates are not walking about in craftiness. *περιπατεῖν* is here used figuratively, referring to conduct or method of procedure. *πανουργία*, compounded of *πᾶν* plus *ἔργον*, corresponds very closely, both in etymology and meaning, to our German expression *zu allem faehig*. A *πανουργός* will not shrink from any means that to him seems to hold out the promise of success; he will stoop to apply it. Words like trickiness, craftiness express the idea.

The type of minister to which we referred above as using entertainment in order to lure the people is employing *πανουργία*, and is therefore guilty of committing secret things of disgrace. The Gospel is the word of *Truth*. To resort to ruses in proclaiming it, even though with the best of intentions, is heaping shame on the Truth. Not only are truth and lures incompatible in their nature, but also to use lures in connection with the Gospel ministry treats the Truth, the eternal Truth of God, as though it were inefficient, not attractive enough in itself.

For a second specific manner of disgracing the Gospel ministry, while apparently promoting it, Paul refers to people: *δολοῦντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ*, (he is not) adulterating the Word of God. *δολοί* occurs as a variant reading to *ζυμοῖ* in 1 Cor. 5:6: “A little leaven leaveneth (adulterates) the whole lump.” In extra-Biblical Greek it is used with *τὸν οἶνον* as object.—In Paul’s day the chief danger of such *δολωσις* stemmed from the Judaizers, although also the morbid fancies of *Gnosticism* already began to rear their ugly head. The Judaizers were not satisfied with the plain Gospel of justification and salvation through Jesus Christ’s vicarious work alone; they insisted on adding to it the observance of the ceremonial ordinances, particularly circumcision, of the Mosaic Law. —Not only additions to the Word of God, also omissions would constitute a *δολωσις*.

It is difficult to determine just where the gravest danger lurks today. It is present both in the field of practice and of doctrine. Masonry has its appeal. There is ever present with us the temptation to tone down our testimony against the Christ-less lodge. The same applies to our testimony against Scoutism. —Government is invading the realm of the Church by appointing chaplains in various of its agencies, naturally defining also their functions and duties. The temptation is that in order to get the “advantages” which the system offers we condone its infringements on Christ’s prerogatives. In the interest of the Gospel we tone down the Gospel—craftily—: *α κρύπτον τῆς αἰσχύνης*. —Remaining still in the field of practice, we refer to the slogans of the day: about a united front against the corruption rampant in the world, about the strength that lies in unity, etc. In the interest of outward unity of organization we are subtly tempted to sacrifice, or at least compromise, the unity of faith and confession.

This leads directly to the field of doctrine. Here we register a twofold danger. There is, on the one hand, the danger of confessing the truth in ambiguous terms, which may readily be understood as stating the truth correctly, while at the same time also the opposing error may conveniently find cover under the same words. When a doctrine is not in controversy there may be no offense involved in using the words which are actually used; but when a document so drawn up is presented as a settlement of past controversies, then the use of words which do not definitely exclude the known error constitutes a *δολωσις*, for though not expressly proclaiming an error it grants the opponent license to hold his erroneous views as before.

The other danger is that of legalistic rigorism. After with cold logic, in “doubtful disputations,” an error has been irrefutably pointed out, the erring brother is demanded to sign on the dotted line. Love, which

“believeth all things, hopeth all things,” demands that weakness on the part of a brother be taken into consideration, and, when he pleads for further instruction, that a reasonable opportunity be granted. To determine when the limit has been reached is a matter of Christian judgment, which may differ considerably among devout Christians due to differences in temperament, in experience, in closeness to or remoteness from actual participation in the controversies. Just as it would be a δολοῦν of the Word of God if we agreed to disagree in doctrine and granted an allowable and wholesome area where it is neither possible nor necessary to agree, or conducted our doctrinal discussions on such basis: just so it would be a δολοῦν of the Word of God to insist on absolute uniformity of judgment, and to leave a body if the majority is not yet ready to accept our judgment.

Having from the mercy of God received the glorious ministry of the life-and-liberty-giving Gospel Paul is extremely careful to avoid everything that conflicts with its nature.

So far Paul has been speaking in negative terms, with a strong ἀλλὰ. He now turns to the positive side of the action and attitude that conforms to the nature of the Gospel. He says τῇ φανερώσει τῆς ἀληθείας συνιστάνοντες ἑστυοὺς πρὸς πᾶσαν συνείδησιν ἀνθρώπων ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ, by the revealing of the truth commending ourselves to every conscience of men before God.

The important term in this sentence is συνείδησις, conscience. Paul makes some specific statements about conscience in Rom. 2:15. The Gentiles, who do not possess the written Law of Moses and yet do the things contained in the Law, thereby show that the work of the Law is inscribed in their hearts. It is inscribed in such a fashion that their conscience gives them strong testimony; the result being that a storm of conflicting thoughts rages within them, accusing and excusing. Conscience operates on the basis of the inscribed law and stirs up the accusing and excusing thoughts. —The main function of conscience is to testify. Testify what? In the following verse of Romans 2 Paul places the whole matter into relation and connection with God’s judgment on the last day. Conscience testifies to the divine origin of the inscribed law and to the fact that God, who is the author of the inscribed law, will also be the judge, and His judgment will be final. Conscience, thus, is not a merely intellectual function, evaluating the comparative merits of men’s actions; it is not a merely ethical function, establishing the moral right or wrong of men’s behavior: it is a religious function, weighing men’s lives in their relation to God.

Paul speaks of accusing thoughts which conscience stirs up and of feverish attempts to find excuses. The history of nations bears out this statement. Everywhere we find an uneasy fear of the gods, and restless attempts to appease their wrath and to buy their favor. Dread and despair is in evidence among the peoples.

To the troubled consciences, Paul says, he commends himself: “to every conscience of men,” he says, or as we would turn it, to the conscience of all men. He addresses himself to the conscience, he makes his appeal to the conscience, he has something to offer for the conscience. What he has to announce is not designed to lead men to a deeper understanding of nature, it is not science; nor to train them in the rules of hygiene, to produce a more healthy population; nor to teach them to procure greater wealth, or to get more satisfaction and enjoyment out of life; it is not even to elevate them to more idealistic views and to morally cleaner habits: no, he addresses himself strictly to the troubled consciences, promising them relief and peace.

He has a real remedy to offer, he has the Truth, God’s Truth, the Truth that came by Jesus Christ. This Truth is something which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, and which has not entered into man’s heart; it is a deep and hidden mystery. Paul will make his appeal to the troubled consciences by revealing the Truth, a Truth which not merely lets them forget their despair momentarily, but which gives them rest in the presence of God.

Because such is Paul’s ministry, he cannot, on the one hand, stoop to trickery or an adulteration of the Word, to practice the hidden things of shame; nor can he, on the other hand, ever grow weary of administering so wholesome and glorious an office.

B. Verses 3 and 4

Since Paul has so glorious a life-and-liberty-conveying office, and since he is untiring in devoting his best efforts to the administration of that office, might it not be expected that all troubled consciences will receive

him with joy? The evidence shows the opposite. He meets not only with wide spread indifference, he often faces violent opposition. Will this not have a depressing effect on him? Paul takes up that question and shows that this negative result not only does not detract from the glory of his office but serves on the contrary to spur him on to more determined service.

When he begins the next statement with a conditional clause *εἰ δὲ καὶ ἔστιν*, but even if it *is* the case, he thereby plainly admits that it actually is so, thus making the meaning of the clause concessive: although even this happens. What? *κεκαλυμμένον τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἡμῶν*, that our Gospel is hidden. By saying our Gospel he does not make a distinction between various forms of the Gospel, among which his particular one meets with especially vehement opposition: he speaks about the Gospel which has been committed to the Church and which he has in common with the Corinthians.

He says that the Gospel often is *κεκαλυμμένον*. In the previous chapter he had spoken about a special *καλυμμα*, one hanging before the hearts of the Jews in the reading of Moses. Here he is speaking more generally, although he uses a verb of the same stem. We note, however, that he uses the perfect tense in its periphrastic form, thus setting forth the meaning of the perfect more emphatically, viz., the state or condition resulting from the completed action: the Gospel is (to some) a veiled thing.

Why does such an unfavorable result not dampen his zeal? He answers: *ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις ἔστιν κεκαλυμμένον*, in the case of those on the way to perdition is it a veiled thing. He places *ἀπολλυμένοι* in the emphatic position at the head of the clause, thereby indicating that by their own fault they deliberately, and hence inexcusably, remain on their lost course. It is no fault of the Gospel that they are not saved - they refuse to accept the proffered salvation. They yield themselves to the very enemy from whose clutches the Gospel would set them free.

Paul says about this: *ἐν οἷς ὁ θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ἐτύφλωσεν τὰ νοήματα τῶν ἀπίστων*, in whose case the god of this world did blind the minds of the unbelievers. These words are clear in themselves and require no detailed discussion. *Ἐτύφλωσεν* is an aorist, thus stressing the action as such. —As ch. 2:11, shows, where *νοήματα* indicates the wicked designs of Satan, *νοήματα* does not refer to a purely intellectual activity of the heart, but to one that is tinged with ethical quality and includes a kind of striving.—The metaphorical use of “blinding” is easily understood: Satan has deceived and led astray the minds and plans of the unbelievers regarding their salvation and the course of action which they should follow. The figure is retained by Paul when he now continues to discuss the extent and the degree to which Satan has succeeded in his attack on the “unbelievers,” a word here used proleptically, since unbelief really is the result of Satan’s work.

A word that arrests our attention is the name “god” for the devil. Jesus once called the devil the “prince of this world” (Jh. 14:30). The appellation “prince” suggests power and control, such as may be wielded by a tyrant ruthlessly. While the appellation “god” apparently implies even greater power and control, it also connotes a certain willingness on the part of the people. Compare Luther’s words in the Large Catechism: “A god means that from which we are to expect all good and to which we are to take refuge in all distress, so that to have a god is nothing else than to trust and believe him from the heart... that ... upon which you set your heart and put your trust is properly your god” (Trgl. p. 581). This is the position that the world accords to Satan, a position that he obtained when our first parents succumbed to his temptation in Paradise. The world is blinded by Satan not against its will. Yes, from Satan’s lies it even expects salvation.

To what extent does Satan blind the minds of the unbelievers? Here Paul becomes very profuse, piling term upon term in his explanation: *εἰς τὸ μὴ ἀγάσαι τὸν φωτισμὸν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς δόξης τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ*. Before we attempt any reproduction of Paul’s thoughts in English two of his terms demand a little closer inspection. They are *εἰκὼν* and *ἀγάσαι*.

Εἰκὼν means an image. Hebrews 10:1, draws a comparison between two synonyms which both refer to some representation of an original. The two words are *εἰκὼν* and *σκια*. “The Law having a *σκια* of good things to come, and not the very *εἰκὼν*.” *Σκια* is a shadow picture. Christ is called by Paul in our text the *εἰκὼν* of God, similarly in Col. 1:15, the *εἰκὼν* of the invisible God, expressing about the same thought as the one for which the Epistle to the Hebrews uses the word *χαρακτήρ* (ch. 1:3). Latin, *figura*. As opposed to a shadow picture it indicates something substantial, about like a copy or a duplicate.

There is considerable controversy about the proper rendering of ἀυγάσαι. The verb occurs only in our present passage. A noun from the same root, ἀυγη, also occurs only once, in Acts 20:11. The meaning of the noun is clear. It refers to daybreak, to dawn. Besides there is the compound ἀπαυγασμα. In extra-Biblical Greek other words from the same root occur, as, ἀυγασμα and ἀυγασμος, ἀυγεο, ἀυγησεις, ἀυγητειρα, αυγοειδης. They all contain the idea of glowing, or radiating light. Accordingly the common meaning of our verb ἀυγάζω is to shine. The form in our text, being aorist, would then convey the idea of a beginning of light, of dawning. Several poets used the verb in the sense of “to see.” Now some translators and commentators, among them the RSV, insist that that is the meaning of the verb in our passage. But there seems to be no compelling reason for departing from the regular prose meaning of the word.

Now we note the piling up of terms that Paul employs. He begins with φωτισμός, illumination. It is the light τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, which is connected with δόξα. This is the glorious Gospel τοῦ χριστοῦ, who is none less than the εἰκὼν of God. What a glorious, what a powerful light! Yet the blinding of the minds of the unbelievers by Satan is so thorough that not even this glorious light gets a chance to dawn on them, let alone that it should illumine them.

Such being the case, does Paul grow weary of performing his ministry? If anything, it would stimulate him to redouble his efforts.

Paul began this short section with the remark: though really his Gospel was veiled in certain people—implying that thereby his ardor would not be dampened. Why not? He answers this question in the next short section.

C. Verses 5 and 6

Such lack of success would be discouraging if Paul were seeking personal advantages by his work. But that is not the case. It is not even his own work that he is doing. He is merely the tool in the hand of God: οὐ γὰρ ἑαυτοὺς κηρύσσομεν ἀλλὰ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν κύριον, for we are not proclaiming ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord.

The title “Lord” was claimed by the Roman emperors of Paul’s day as rulers and benefactors of the empire. It implied both ideas, that of ruling and that of providing for. Tertullus in flattering Felix the governor in Judea (Acts 24:1ff.) does not call him directly by that title (that would have been an insult to the emperor) but in hinting that he really is worthy to hold a higher position than that of a governor he speaks about the πολλή εἰρήνη which the province is enjoying under his governorship (*pacator provinciae*), about the many διορθωματα (reforms) which he instituted, and about his προνοια (*providentia Caesaris*). From this overdone *captatio* we can gather what is meant when the Roman Emperor was addressed as Κύριος.

In our sentence the word κύριος is found in the predicative position. Paul is proclaiming Christ Jesus *as* Lord (not as the KJ has it: Christ Jesus *the* Lord. —RSV is correct in this case.) Christ Jesus is Lord, not in the political application of the word. In v. 2 Paul had said that he is addressing himself and is making his appeal to the *consciences* of men. Jesus it is who brings peace and hope to the hearts of men, so that, being assured of their proper standing before God and of His favorable disposition toward them, they are in a position to undergo the tribulations and injustices of this curse-laden earth in the proper spirit. Thus Christ Jesus it is whom Paul proclaims as Κύριος.

The word κύριος should be applied as predicative also to the negative part of Paul’s statement: we are not proclaiming ourselves, namely as κύριοι. Philosophers in advertising their systems claimed that they had found a solution, and they were ready to introduce their pupils to a remedy for the evils of this world. They, thus, announced themselves as κύριοι. Paul is not proclaiming his own wisdom. He is not a κύριος. If he were proclaiming his own inventions, then any lack of success might have a depressing effect on him. But since he is not proclaiming himself but Christ Jesus as Lord, the cause that he represents is not his own but that of his Lord. And he is sure that the Lord will know how best to deal with any unfavorable response of the people to His offer.

Paul throws a still stronger light on the situation: ἑαυτοὺς δὲ δούλους ὑμῶν διὰ Ἰησοῦν, but (we announce) ourselves as slaves to you for Jesus' sake.—The word δούλος has not the unpleasant connotation which our English word has, both as noun and particularly as a verb. It merely indicates that Paul has no own choice in the matter; as δούλος he is one taking orders and carrying them out to the best of his ability. It does not imply that he has no interest in the work, no, he is doing that “heartily” just as he admonished all slaves to be doing their work. See his epistle to the Colossians (ch. 3:23). He is doing his work “because of Jesus.” This is saying more than just “by the command of Jesus.” Paul feels himself under obligation to Jesus because of what Jesus did for him; he has also imbibed the spirit of Jesus, His love for sinners; and thus he does his work for Jesus because of what Jesus means to him.

These remarks will help us to understand the genitive ὑμῶν. It is not strictly possessive. The Corinthians do not own Paul as a master owns his slaves. It is in a sense objective. Paul is working in the interest of the Corinthians, he is a slave to them.

These truths Paul now illustrates and deepens by a reference to God's work on the first day of creation: ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ὁ εἰπὼν, ἐκ σκότους φῶς λάμπει, because the God who (once) said, Out of darkness light shall shine, etc. The future λάμπει is the future of command, very common in the wording of laws. This was a creative command. There was as yet no light, all was impenetrable darkness. But when God's order was issued, the light, so far non-existent, began to shine—out of the midst of darkness.

Paul is speaking about this God who in the beginning by a mere word of His mouth brought forth light out of darkness. What he now wishes to set forth is a glorious parallel to the creation of light. And it is the same God who is performing this second wonder. Paul continues, ὃς ἔλαμπεν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν, (is He) who started light in our hearts. The spiritual darkness in our hearts was no less intense than was the cosmic darkness in the beginning of creation. And the God who replaced darkness with light in the beginning has again done so in our case. He is the God of light, and has taken it upon Himself to spread light and its blessings.

He created light in our hearts for this very purpose, not merely that we ourselves might enjoy its blessings, but that we as children of light might also be instrumental in spreading it. Paul says, πρὸς φωτισμὸν τῆς γνώσεως τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν προσώπῳ Χριστοῦ, for the illumination (which consists in) the knowledge of the glory of God in the person of Christ. The genitive τῆς γνώσεως is exegetical, explaining the meaning of the metaphorical term “illumination.” Paul is not speaking about a physical light. If anyone has the γνώσις of the glory of God in the person of Christ, then he is enjoying the illumination of which Paul is speaking. We bear in mind that γνώσις is not a knowledge obtained through information, it is a knowledge based on experience. It is a tasting. In this case: tasting what? The glory-of-God-in-the-person-of-Christ is one compound concept. It is the same as the one expressed above in v. 4 with the words: the glory of Christ who is the image of God. Christ is God's glory. When we see Christ, see His condescending love for sinners, when we see Him suffering and dying in order to redeem sinners, when we see Him rejoicing over a lost soul which He found: then we see the glory of God. When Christ comes to our conscience with His saving love, then we get a taste of the glory of God. God's glory appears in the πρόσωπον, in the person of Christ. Christ in His glory is an εἰκὼν, a duplicate, of God. When we begin to taste this glory of God, then the φωτισμός has produced its intended result, in fact, that is the φωτισμός.

God's one great interest is this φωτισμός. Paul is instrumental in conveying this φωτισμός, in fact, he is a δούλος, taking his orders exclusively from the God who manifests His glory in this φωτισμός. Can Paul grow weary of administering this office? Can any apparent failure discourage him? Can he stoop to trickery of any sort in bringing this φωτισμός to despairing consciences? Having this ministry, he said in v. 1, we do not grow weary.

II. Chapter 4:7–15

A. Verses 7–9

Paul in this section intensifies the thoughts that he presented in the foregoing. So far he spoke about cases that might be construed as failures in his office. In the present section he proceeds to cases of open opposition and hostility. He speaks of tribulations that he reaps from administering his office, and of the meaning that they have for his ministry.

The truth that he is going to unfold he presents in summary form in v. 7: ἔχομεν δὲ τὸν θησαυρὸν τοῦτου ἐν ὄστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν, but we hold this treasure in vessels of clay. Bringing peace and hope to despairing consciences is certainly a great treasure; none greater than that. Would it not be proper that so great a treasure be deposited in exceptionally strong containers in order to add security? God did the very opposite: He chose vessels of the most fragile material.

There is a purpose in God's action. If this treasure were applied through implements which are firm in themselves some of the credit for success might be attributed to the vessels. But if the vessels are weak, needing protection rather than adding strength, then it will become apparent that the treasure itself is the all-powerful agent. Paul had to learn this truth the hard way. When he was buffeted by a messenger of Satan he implored God to relieve him. When God did not answer at once he repeated his petition. He evidently was of the opinion that when relieved of his suffering he could proclaim the Gospel more efficiently. But what was the answer that God gave him? "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (12:9).

Paul was comforted by this instruction and became bold in his weakness. He conveyed the instruction which he had received to his readers by adding the explanation in the passage under discussion: ἵνα ἡ ὑπερβολὴ τῆς δυνάμεως ἦ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ μὴ ἐξ ἡμῶν, that the superabundance of power may be (plainly) God's and not (as springing) from us. Paul is here changing the modifiers of δύναμις in a significant way. First he uses the genitive: it is simply God's power. Then he continues with a prepositional phrase, ἐξ ἡμῶν, thereby referring to the source of the power. The genitive is all-inclusive: God possesses, God generates, God applies, God directs and controls that power, in fact, God is that power in person. Then this power is not simply omnipotence; it is the power of love, of grace and mercy, the power of the Truth. The preposition *ex* presents the power as springing from some fountain. If the power which is manifest in our work were in any sense springing from us, in whole or in part, then some credit would be due us for the results, and a lack of success would reflect on us and tend to make us weary. But since it pleased God to apply His most excellent power by means of implements which, if not preserved by His special protection, would long ago have crumbled to pieces, we can rest assured that God has matters well in hand. The very fact that we, being such cheap and fragile implements, continue in our service unbroken is proof of the excellency of God's power, and is an incentive to renewed cheerful efforts on our part.

Paul now graphically presents the preserving power of God as it gloriously shows itself in the protection of His "earthen vessels." He does so in four pointed contrasts. ἐν παντὶ θλιβόμενοι ἀλλ' οὐ στενοχωρούμενοι, afflicted in every way but not cornered. "Afflictions" is a very general term, embracing sufferings of every description, as Paul indicates by adding ἐν παντὶ, in every respect. Such afflictions have a tendency to hamper him in the fulfillment of his ministry, but they never did stop him. He was never στενοχωρούμενος, squeezed into a corner. Στενος means narrow, or close and tight. The Greeks used the expression εἰς στενον καθιστασθαι, German, *in die Enge getrieben werden, in die Klemme kommen*. The same idea is expressed by στενοχωρεῖσθαι. All afflictions which Paul endured never stopped him from preaching the Gospel, rather, God turned every affliction into a golden opportunity for reaching some conscience which otherwise would not have been contacted. —Paul continues, ἀπορούμενοι ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐξαπορούμενοι, being at a loss but not in despair. The Greek play on words cannot well be reproduced in English, though Lenski makes a noteworthy attempt: "being at a loss, but not having lost out." Again the second part may well be taken in the sense of a litotes: every perplexity turned into a golden opportunity. —The third contrast is, διωκόμενοι ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγκαταλειπόμενοι, being pursued but not forsaken. How often did not God turn the tables on the pursuers of Paul, so that they became uneasy and worried, being pricked in their conscience by Paul's words! The last of the four pointed contrasts is, καταβαλλόμενοι ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀπολλύμενοι, thrown down but not perishing. Down, but not down and out. Stoned and dragged away for dead—but returning to strengthen the brethren.

Earthen vessels indeed, but filled with insuperable power. “When I am weak, then am I strong” (ch. 12:10).

B. Verses 10–12

In v. 5 Paul had assured his readers that his ministry is to proclaim Christ Jesus as Lord. In v. 6 he stated that the illumination, the creation of peace, hope, and joy in troubled consciences, is connected with the person of Christ. Naturally then the weakness of the vessels holding the rich treasure is not a weakness of any kind, it is a weakness in connection with Christ, and the support and preservation which God shows in His weak vessels again stands in relation to Christ. Πάντοτε τὴν νέκρωσιν τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι περιφέροντες, ἵνα καὶ ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι ἡμῶν φανερωθῇ, always carrying about in our body the putting to death of Jesus, in order that also the life of Jesus might become evident in our body.

In this statement some terms require a special study. There is the word νέκρωσιν. Greek nouns in *sis* denote action. Hence the translation of the RSV (death) is too indefinite. νέκρωσιν is a killing. Unlike this English word the Greek νέκρωσιν may be used either in the intransitive or in the transitive sense. In our passage it is the putting to death, while e.g. in Rom. 4:19, the νέκρωσιν of Sarah’s womb indicates a ceasing in the functioning of the organ. In the sufferings which Paul underwent (v. 8 and 9) he recognizes an echo, a reflection of the sufferings and death to which Jesus submitted at the hands of His enemies. —The word ζωὴ means more than either βίος or ψυχὴ. βίος is never used in the New Testament in reference to Jesus. In fact, it usually occurs in combinations like the following: the poor widow threw her whole βίος into the temple treasury; the father of the prodigal son divided his *bios* to his sons, and the Prodigal, squandered his βίος (used interchangeably with οὐσία, v. 13 and 30); there are the pleasures of *bios*, the affairs of βίος, the pride of βίος; and we may lead a quiet and peaceable βίος. —According to the commandment of His Father Jesus laid down and gave His ψυχὴ for the sheep; instead of Peter; as a ransom for many. His ψυχὴ was not left unto hell. —Jesus never laid down His ζωὴ. As the Father has ζωὴ in Himself, so has He given to the Son to have ζωὴ in Himself. He is the resurrection and ζωὴ. Although they killed the Prince of ζωὴ, they could not touch that ζωὴ rather in His very death His ζωὴ won the complete victory over death, so that every one who believes in Him has eternal ζωὴ. And anyone who refuses to eat His flesh and to drink His blood thereby excludes himself from ζωὴ. In fine, think of Jn 1:4: “In Him was ζωὴ; and the ζωὴ was the light of men.” That is the connotation of ζωὴ when predicated of Jesus.

Twice the prepositional phrase occurs ἐν τῷ σώματι (ἡμῶν). There is no indication that σῶμα is here used with special emphasis on the contrast to psychic life; rather in the four pointed contrasts of v. 8 and 9 the psychic life of Paul was included in the afflictions to which he was exposed and in which the Lord preserved him. Nor was the νέκρωσις of our Lord limited to the physical part of His being. There is thus no reason why σῶμα here should not be taken in a way in which it occurs quite frequently, namely emphatically pointing to the very being of something that is mentioned: thus here, our very being. Our very being was summed up by Paul in the word “earthen vessel.” Now while he might say “in us” (the life of Jesus becomes evident) he uses a more emphatic formula, “in our being,” such fragile vessels as we are. That we should be able to carry the putting to death of Christ about in our weak being is indeed wonderful enough, though this point easily escapes our notice, but that we weak and fragile vessels should manifest the ζωὴ, the salvation-bringing life of our Savior, is beyond conception. That power certainly does not spring from us - it is God’s.

This thought bears repetition, to impress it indelibly on our heart: ἀεὶ γὰρ ἡμεῖς οἱ ζῶντες εἰς θάνατον παραδιδόμεθα διὰ Ἰησοῦν, ἵνα καὶ ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ φανερωθῇ ἐν τῇ θνητῇ σαρκὶ ἡμῶν, for all the time we the living ones are being delivered into death because of Jesus, in order that also the life of Jesus might appear in our mortal flesh. We the living ones, we in whom the life of Jesus is being manifested, we are in reality undergoing a constant death, our entire career is one of continuous death—on account of Jesus, on account of our connection with Him, because we proclaim Him as the Κύριος. Thus what appears before men’s eyes is not the victorious life of Jesus, what appears makes the impression of being nothing but θνητὴ σαρξ, weakness and death. Σαρξ itself underscores the idea of weakness; this is brought out with double strength by the addition of

the modifier θνητῆ our flesh, weak in itself, is subject to death. In spite of all this there radiates from us in all our weakness a hope-and-cheer-producing, an invigorating light.

Briefly Paul says, ὥστε ὁ θάνατος ἐν ἡμῖν ἐνεργεῖται, ἡ δὲ ζωὴ ἐν ὑμῖν thus death is operative in us, but life in you. —It is Paul’s purpose and mission to bring life to the Corinthians. Even if they shamefully misunderstood and falsely accused him, he does not grow weary in performing his ministry, although for him it means a constant tasting of death. —How is this possible?

The thought that St. Paul has been carrying out, beginning with v. 1 of chapter 4, is that in performing the wonderful Gospel ministry there is nothing that can weary him, although this ministry means for him a constant tasting of death. Death is operative in him and life in his hearers. How is such cheerful perseverance possible?

C. Verses 13–15

Paul answers the above question by pointing to Ps. 116. He quotes v. 10: ἐπίστευσα, διὸ ἐλάλησα, I have believed, accordingly I have spoken.

When Paul quotes from the Old Testament he does not do so exactly in the same manner as we quote proof passages. He, rather, chooses statements that briefly summarize the content of a whole section. In the present case the Psalmist is speaking about great afflictions which he is undergoing: “The sorrows of death compassed me, the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow” (v. 3). He mentions his “tears,” his “falling” feet, his being “greatly afflicted.” At the same time he speaks about the grace and mercy of the Lord who helped and preserved him: “For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling” (v. 8). Then the Psalmist speaks about his gratitude to the Lord and the thanks that he will offer Him: “I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people” (v. 17.18). All of these experiences the Psalmist sums up in the verse which Paul quotes: “I believed, therefore have I spoken: I was greatly afflicted” (v. 10).

This verse causes some difficulty in the Hebrew original. Paul adopts the translation of the Septuagint. Since Paul thus puts his stamp of approval on this rendering of the original as expressing a God-intended truth, we need not at this time investigate any further what exactly may be the meaning that the words have in their original setting. Paul uses them in the form: “I have believed, therefore have I spoken.”

Paul stresses the fact that the same Spirit is present in him and is activating him, which manifested itself in the Psalmist. It is the Spirit of faith and trust: ἔχοντες δὲ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα τῆς πίστεως, but having the same spirit of faith. Since that is the case, naturally, also the manifestation of the Spirit will be the same in both instances, in the case of Paul and that of the Psalmist. The manifestation in the case of the Psalmist is recorded in the Scriptures, Κατὰ τὸ γεγραμμένον, according to that recorded statement. Now Καὶ ἡμεῖς πιστεύομεν, διὸ καὶ λαλοῦμεν, also we believe, accordingly we also speak.

Thus Paul marks a parallel between himself and the Psalmist. Both had to suffer deep afflictions, both called for help upon the Lord, both experienced the salvation of the Lord, both were confirmed in their faith. And as a result, just as the Psalmist spoke for the glory of God, so does Paul, and he does not grow weary of proclaiming the Gospel.

While the Psalmist sings of help in temporal troubles, Paul carries the thought through to the final end. He speaks of the hope of resurrection: εἰδότες ὅτι ὁ ἐγείρας τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν καὶ ἡμᾶς σὺν Ἰησοῦ ἐγερεῖ, knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise also us jointly with Him.—We note that Paul uses the preposition σὺν, which denotes intimate union, a union which is much closer than a mere grouping together as expressed, for example, by μετὰ. We are joined with Christ in His death, His death is our death, when Christ died, we all died. The same holds true of the resurrection. Christ’s resurrection is our resurrection; He is the “firstfruits of them that slept” (1 Cor. 15:20), the “firstborn from the dead” (Col. 1:18). With reference to time our resurrection may be separated by centuries from the resurrection of Christ, yet in reality it is contained in it.

We note how Paul’s eyes are fixed on his resurrection, and how he directs the attention of his readers to the resurrection. It is instructive to see how Paul, whenever comfort is needed to bear the cross, turns to the

hope of resurrection. When the Thessalonians worried about their loved ones who had fallen asleep, he pointed them to the resurrection, in which neither the living nor the dead will have any advantage over each other. In our present passage, where he is coping with his own afflictions, we again see him lifting up his eyes toward the day of resurrection. It is important for an understanding of Paul's words in the following verses to bear in mind that his heart is lingering in a contemplation of that last day with the events that will transpire in it and with the glory which it will usher in. Let us look ahead a little to the 10th verse of the next chapter: "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." His eyes are there still glued on the importance of that great day, and all the arguments which he elaborates from ch. 4:14 to 5:10 can be understood correctly only if we bear this fact in mind. The assurance of his resurrection gives him the courage and the strength to bear up under his heavy load of afflictions and to carry out his ministry without fainting.

Paul, who in his afflictions for the Gospel is facing death every day, bases his hope for his own resurrection on the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: God raised up Jesus. When Paul speaks about the supreme significance of Jesus' resurrection, he bears in mind the nature of Jesus' death. Jesus is He who was in the form of God, who might have lived on an equal footing with God, who, instead, emptied Himself and bore our curse being made a curse for us. The Son, of God succumbed to death because He was laden with the sins of the whole world. The great question is, will even the death of God's Son be sufficient to wipe out so enormous an amount of guilt? The resurrection of Jesus is the answer. It establishes the righteousness of every sinner in the sight of God. In it God proclaims peace to the world. Warfare is at an end, hostilities have ceased, a status of peace has been declared. "The wages of sin is death" still remains as true as ever, but it no longer applies to us. Though we still suffer affliction and ultimately die, that is no real death, it is an empty form. It belongs to the *πρόσκαιρα*, as Paul calls them in v. 18. It is not final, it is transitory, a passing condition. In the resurrection of Jesus our own resurrection is assured.

It will be a glorious resurrection, Paul continues, *καὶ παραστήρει σὺν ὑμῖν*, and will present (us) jointly with you. Jesus will present us to the Father who sent Him, present us as redeemed through His blood; and the Father will acknowledge and welcome us as His own, receiving us into His heavenly mansions.

This, however, is not something special for Paul and his co-laborers; no, it is something that he will receive only in conjunction with his readers. His resurrection unto glory is closely knitted together with that of the Corinthians.

This close union between Paul and his readers he now proceeds to unfold a little in the following verse. He says, *τὰ γὰρ πάντα δι' ὑμᾶς*, for all these things on your account. Throughout this entire section of the epistle, beginning in ch. 1:3, Paul has stressed the intimate ties that unite him with the Corinthians. Whatever he does, he has the welfare of the Corinthians in mind, and whatever he must suffer he endeavors to turn to their advantage, their spiritual advancement and edification. So also here: All things because of you.

Our theologians are accustomed to distinguish the *finis ultimus* as one *absolute talis* and one *ultimus secundum quid*. The salvation of the Corinthians, which St. Paul so far has set forth as the final purpose of all his actions and all his sufferings is such really only *secundum quid*, the *finis absolute ultimus* is the glory of God. Paul finishes this part by saying, *ἵνα ἡ χάρις πλεονάσασα διὰ τῶν πλειόνων τὴν εὐχαριστίαν περισσεύσῃ εἰς τὴν δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ*: in order that grace, growing by the increasing number, may increase the thanksgiving to the glory of God.

The comparative *πλειων* may be used in different ways. Two groups of things may be compared, with the result that one is found to be greater in number than the other. With the definite article, *οἱ πλειονες*, it may indicate the majority within a group. In our verse the idea of a majority does not seem to fit the situation. It would be a rather peculiar thought that the thanksgiving is increased by a majority. The idea of growth is mentioned twice in the verse, in the participle *πλεονάσασα* and in the finite verb *περισσεύσῃ*. The comparative, *διὰ τῶν πλειόνων*, readily lends itself to the same idea: the people enjoying the grace of God are ever becoming more and more in number.

It is easy to understand that by an increase in number the thanksgiving will be increased, but it is a bold stroke to say that grace itself grows by an increase in the number of recipients. But that is what Paul says. The

grace of God is inexhaustible, and the more people get a share in its enjoyment, the greater the amount of grace in the Church may be said to become.

The verb περισσεύειν in by far the majority of cases occurs as an intransitive verb: to abound; in our text it is transitive: by an increase in number grace *increases* the thanksgiving, for the glory of God.

III. Chapter 4:16–5:10

A. Verses 16–18

Paul connects this section to the foregoing with διό, accordingly. He had carried out the thought that his faith impels him to speak even under the most adverse circumstances in order that an increasing number of believers might increase the praise and thanksgiving rising to the throne of God, proclaiming His glory. How then can he faint and grow weary of performing his ministry? Rather the opposite is the case. He continues with a strong ἀλλ', on the contrary. Εἰ καὶ ἔξω ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος διαφθείρεται, ἀλλ' ὁ ἔσω ἡμῶν ἀνακαινοῦται ἡμέρα καὶ ἡμέρα, even though our outward man be destroyed, yet our inner (one) is being renewed day and (i.e. after) day.

His life as he had outlined it in v. 8 and 9 above, and his experiences which he had summarized in v. 10 as a constant being put to death, may well be called a process of destruction; διαφθείρεται is a present tense expressing an action in progress, which may some day lead to complete destruction. Paul says Εἰ καὶ, though this is going on, what of it? It is only his outer man who is perishing. They are only outer conveniences, outer pleasures that he is losing, only outer pains and hardships that he is enduring. They cannot touch his real, his inner life, his πνεῦμα τῆς πίστεως, and his vigorous ζωὴ from Jesus. Rather, in spite of all hardships and, as the next verse will present it, by means of the hardships, the inner man of Paul experiences a daily rejuvenation. The outward hardships are an efficient means in the hand of God for preparing Paul for eternal glory.

A few expressions in the following verse call for some preliminary remarks before we study the meaning of the sentence as a whole.

There is first the word τὸ ἐλαφρόν. This is an adjective, neuter singular. In the New Testament this form is often used to express an abstract idea. So here. The word here does not mean something light in weight, but lightness itself. In our verse this is clear from the contrast: the ἐλαφρόν produces a weight, βάρος. βάρος is an abstract noun, such then must also its counterpart be, τὸ ἐλαφρόν, lightness.

Then there is the repetition of ὑπερβολή with the prepositions κατά and εἰς. They together form one concept, excess in excess, “beyond all measure,” as Lenski translates.

With an explanatory γὰρ Paul joins v. 17 to v. 16. Τὸ γὰρ παραντύκα ἐλαφρόν τῆς θλίψεως καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν αἰώνιον βάρος δόξης κατεργάζεται, the momentary lightness of the affliction produces beyond all measure an eternal weight of glory.

In v. 14 Paul had pointed to our resurrection as marking the day on which God will present both Paul and his readers, in fact all believers, before Himself and will receive us into His heavenly mansions. The θλίψις, including the hardships of this life plus our death, precedes that glorious event. We easily yield to the thought that this θλίψις is a heavy burden and of long duration, but Paul calls it a momentary lightness, as compared with the endless weight of the heavenly δόξα.

Though it is of such short duration and of such slight significance in itself, yet in the hand of God it becomes an instrument for working out that grand eternal glory. Κατεργάζεται, Paul says. He certainly does not mean that by our afflictions we *merit* the glory of heaven: that was accomplished by our Savior in His suffering and death. The glory of heaven is a ready blessing which, in addition, has already been awarded to us in God's judgment, so that Paul in ch. 5:1, can say that we *have* it. It is ours. But they who are to inherit the glories of heaven must for a time pass through tribulation. That is God's way of preparing them. “We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22).

God prepares the eternal glory ἡμῖν, for us, Paul says. Then he continues with a participle describing us for whom all this is done. But he does not simply join the participle to the dative ἡμῖν, as he might easily have done, he makes the participle more prominent by changing to a genitive absolute, μὴ σκοποῦντων ἡμῶν, we not

looking at. In this way the fact that we do not look for and pay no attention nor attach great importance to certain things is made to stand out more prominently.

Which are the things to which we give only slight attention? Paul says τὰ βλεπόμενα, and adds emphatically that contrariwise, ἀλλὰ, we devote all our attention to τὰ μὴ βλεπόμενα. The βλεπόμενα are the things that appear on the surface, that lie open before men's eyes. In Paul's case they were the hardships that constantly beset him, and his daily exposure to a violent death. These are the things which appear, but to which Paul attaches no importance. These he called the momentary lightness of affliction. The μὴ βλεπόμενα are: that beyond all measure eternal weight of glory. He keeps his eyes glued on these things.

As a motivation for his conduct he now mentions summarily: τὰ γὰρ βλεπόμενα πρόσκαιρα, τὰ δὲ μὴ βλεπόμενα αἰώνια, for those visible things are transient, but the invisible permanent. With the word πρόσκαιρος he repeats the idea previously expressed with παραυτικά, while in the other member of the comparison he uses αἰώνιος both times. —Yes, all our sufferings, including temporal death, are transient; with our resurrection from death the permanent and unchangeable things will begin.

The permanence and unchangeableness is a thought worthy of further consideration. Paul takes up the matter in the next chapter under the figure of a residence.

B. Chapter 5:1–5

Paul continues with an explanatory γὰρ, for further elucidation of the two ideas last mentioned, namely, πρόσκαιρος and αἰώνιος.

He begins by saying emphatically οἶδαμεν, we know. He does not use the verb γινώσκειν because as yet we have no experience in this matter. We know because God has given us some information. Yet though we lack experience our knowledge is for that reason not less certain. God has told us, and that makes us sure, so sure that we may base our entire conduct on this knowledge. On the strength of God's assurance we are ready to dismiss as unimportant the entire θλίψις, and to concentrate on the unseen δόξα.

Now for the new figure under which Paul presents the matter. Our present life he calls the ἐπιγειος ἡμῶν οἰκία τοῦ σκίηνου, while he describes our life in heaven with the following words: οικοδομὴν ἐκ θεοῦ, οἰκίαν ἀχειροποίητον αἰώνιον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, a building from God, an un-handmade eternal house in the heavens. It is apparent at a glance that Paul with these words stresses the permanence and the spiritual character of our life in heaven. He says *eternal* and *not handmade*. By way of contrast, then, the description of our life on earth must presuppose, at least, something material and transitory. This should dispose of the question whether σκίηνος is a figurative expression for our body. It is not, it refers to our restless mode of living, which resembles a tenting rather than living in a permanent residence. Just by the way, if σκίηνος referred to our body, what then about the resurrection? The permanent house in heaven is certainly not presented in a way to suggest our resurrected body.

Our life on earth may be compared to the unsettled tent life of a wandering nomad. "We have here no continuing city" (Heb. 13:14). Therefore Paul speaks in our text about the prospect that our present unsteady life καταλυθῆ, will be dissolved. But that does not worry us, for we have, ἔχομεν, that permanent non-handmade residence from God in heaven. We *have*, Paul says, it is ours, it has been adjudged to us. We hold a clear title.

With a second γὰρ Paul continues the explanation. And we groan in this respect, desiring to put on our dwelling from heaven. At first glance it might appear as a badly mixed metaphor to speak about "putting on" a "habitation." But if we remember that Paul under the figure of a dwelling is presenting a mode of living, then "putting on" the heavenly mode of living will not seem so awkward. —Yes, our looking at the unseen glow means an eager longing for it. Paul now states the motivation with the words, εἴ γε καὶ ἐνδυσάμενοι οὐ γυμνοὶ ἐυρεθῆσόμεθα. Εἴ with the emphatic γε introduces a condition about which there is no doubt. We translate with *since*: since we shall not be found naked on putting it on. *Not-naked* is a litotes, meaning fully and permanently dressed. Yes, when the great changeover will be made on resurrection day from this unstable tent-like form of

living to a form becoming the heavenly surroundings; then we shall be found provided for completely and forever.

But, does not such anxious longing for our life in heaven make us unfit for our work on earth? It would under certain circumstances. It would if under the present hardships we became impatient, unwilling to leave matters to God and to follow cheerfully His guiding. Such is not the case. True, we are burdened, and we feel it. We moan and groan under our load; but we do not impatiently look for an exit. On what we fix our attention is the glory of heaven that awaits us; and that braces us in our tribulations.

Paul adds the following explanation on our present attitude, καὶ γὰρ οἱ ὄντες ἐν τῷ σκίηνει στενάζομεν βαρούμενοι, yes, we who are in this present tent-life, we groan (as people who are) burdened. In Phil. 1:23, 24, Paul gives expression to a similar feeling: “For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ; which is far better; nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.” He says, “What I shall choose I wot not” (v. 22). In our text he expresses his motivation (ἐφ’ ᾧ, meaning ἐπὶ τούτῳ ὅτι, because or since) in the following: οὐ θέλομεν ἐκδύσασθαι ἀλλ’ ἐπενδύσασθαι, we do not desire to put off, but to put on. To put off, to get rid of this present θλίψις, that is not the thing on which we have set our mind. To determine the time and the manner of our departure, we leave entirely to God. The grand thought which Paul has been unfolding since ch. 4:1, namely that we do not grow weary, applies also here to the fullest extent. We are not maneuvering for a departure from this life. But we do have our eye set on the putting-on of the heavenly life, a hope which, according to ch. 4:18, is what really sustains us under our present afflictions.

What does that putting-on mean for us? The answer is given in a ἵνα clause: ἵνα καταποθῇ τὸ θνητὸν ὑπὸ τῆς ζωῆς, namely that mortality be swallowed up by life. This is only another way of describing the events on resurrection day. In 1 Cor. 15:54, Paul said, “Death is swallowed up in victory.” Both expressions mean about the same, and both refer to the time when death will be finally overcome, when it will be forced to disgorge its victims which it had swallowed. Death thus is the last enemy that shall be destroyed. In view of this, Paul says in 1 Cor. 15, that death shall be swallowed up *in victory*, while in our passage, where the thought of a combat, of victory and defeat, is absent, Paul says that mortality shall be swallowed up *by life*.

This certainly is a μὴ βλεπόμενον, all appearance being completely to the contrary, namely, that our outward man must perish, that everything ultimately will be swallowed up by death. How then can we make that remote eventuality the guiding principle of our life, which upholds us so that we do not grow weary? That is not of ourselves, it is a gift from God. Paul continues, ὁ δὲ κατεργασάμενος ἡμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο θεός, He who prepares (or has prepared) us for this very thing is God. Κατεργασάμενος is the *aorist* participle, thus stressing the action as such without any further reference to time or effect. The work of preparation is God’s. The source of our disposition to make the future glory, though unseen, the guiding principle of our present unstable life is not found in us. All credit belongs to God alone.

How does God perform this miracle? Paul explains, ὁ δούς ἡμῖν τὸν ἀρραβῶνα τοῦ πνεύματος, who is the giver (the one giving, or having given) to us the earnest, namely the Spirit. In δούς again we are dealing with an *aorist* participle. The fact that we have God’s Spirit is plainly due to a gift pure and simple. But the Spirit now serves as a pledge, as an earnest. It is a first installment of our life eternal. It is this Spirit of God through whom God makes us what we are.

Thus in this section, by using the figure of an unsteady tent life for our present state, and of a permanent residence for our future state, Paul has elucidated in various ways his previous declaration about the temporary lightness of affliction and the future eternal weight of glory.

C. Verses 6–10

With this section Paul concludes that portion of the first chief part of the epistle in which the leading thought is that he does not grow weary in his ministry of the glorious Gospel of Christ. In this short final section his cheerful confidence holds the prominent place: θαρροῦντες οὖν he says, and again θαρροῦμεν.

Our confident hope is unlimited; πάντοτε Paul adds. Nor is our cheerfulness dimmed by the knowledge that ἐνδημοῦντες ἐν τῷ σώματι ἐκδημοῦμεν ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου, while present in the body we are absent from the

Lord. With the phrase ἐν τῷ σώματι Paul repeats the idea which above he had presented as a perishing of our outer man, as a short time of affliction, as leading a tent life. —This form of our existence is burdened with the fact that in it we are absent from the Lord. This latter expression, of course, refers merely to the outer form of our existence, as Paul hurries to explain διὰ πίστεως γὰρ περιπατοῦμεν, οὐ διὰ εἶδους, for we live by faith, not by sight. Εἶδος, from the same stem as εἶδον, the second aorist with ὁράω, occurs only five times in the New Testament, but in at least three different applications. In Lk. 3:22, the Holy Spirit is reported to have descended on Christ in the εἶδος of a dove; in the transfiguration the εἶδος of Jesus' countenance was altered, Lk. 9:29; Jh. 5:37, speaks of both the voice and the εἶδος of the Father; then we have the passage in 1 Th. 5:22, where Paul cautions us to abstain from every εἶδος of evil. In each one of these four cases the English word "form" may serve as a translation, however, with a slightly different connotation: while in the first three "shape" might serve as an alternate expression, in the fourth passage εἶδος seems to point to a sub-division, a class of evil, a species.

In our passage, εἶδος being compared with πίστις, and placed in contrast to it, the original meaning of the root is in evidence; εἶδος here means "sight." In our present state of tenting we are joined to our Lord by faith, but as far as any visible contact is concerned, we are still absent from Him. Yet we are cheerfully confident.

Paul repeats the verb, now in the indicative, θαρροῦμεν. Yes, we are really cheerful in our present mode of living, and are not at all continually brooding about some way of escape—οὐ θέλομεν ἐκδύσασθαι, Paul had said in v. 4—we are not wasting our time in self-pity, although it is true that we εὐδοκοῦμεν μᾶλλον ἐκημῆσαι ἐκ τοῦ σώματος καὶ ἐνδημῆσαι πρὸς τὸν κύριον, we much prefer to be absent from the body and present with the Lord. We do not forget that in v. 6 Paul introduced the expression "to be in the body" as an alternate for our present tent life with all that this implies, and that "to be present with the Lord" refers to our state after mortality has been swallowed up by life.

Paul continues with a διο, accordingly. Far from making us impatient and despondent, our longing for heaven has among others also (*kai*) this wholesome affect that we φιλοτιμούμεθα... εὐάρεστοι αὐτῷ εἶναι, that we strive earnestly to be pleasing to Him. Φιλοτιμῆσθαι is a very strong expression, meaning to be actuated by a love of honor, to be ambitious. Paul uses it here to bring out how devoted we are to our Lord and His cause and how earnestly we strive to please Him.

Into this sentence Paul inserts the phrase εἴτε ἐνδημοῦντες εἴτε ἐκδημοῦντες, whether present or absent. We might paraphrase, whether present or absent is neither here nor there. That is a matter that we leave entirely to the Lord; we have something else to consider, namely, to please the Lord. If the Lord is for us, who can be against us? But if the Lord is dissatisfied with us, then even the whole world could not offset our loss. The Lord's attitude toward us, our status before the Lord, that is the all-important thing, that is the only matter of concern for us.

This leads quite naturally to the thought of the final judgment, with which Paul now brings the present point and the entire section on his irrepressible cheerfulness in the execution of his office to a close.

He speaks about various aspects of this final judgment, which we will consider separately.

One of the first things he mentions is the inescapableness of this judgment. He uses the word *dei*. Try as you may you cannot obviate it. God has appointed a day in which He will judge the world, and that appointment stands. The exact time may be unknown, unknown to men so that some begin to fear as though God were slack, and others openly scoff at the idea of a judgment, it may be unknown to the angels, even to the Son of Man Himself in His state of exinanition. Yet the day will come inescapably. There stands that rugged and stern, forbidding *dei*. Paul does not fear any contradiction from any side when he pronounces that *dei*, for even the conscience of natural man testifies to its truth.

Another phase that Paul mentions is that this judgment is universal; he says τοὺς πάντας ἡμᾶς, we all must appear. That includes the just and the unjust, both the living and the dead. An appeal to the mountains to fall on us and to the hills to cover us will be to no avail. All, every individual, must appear.

The most important thing about that final judgment is the question of who is to be the judge, and according to what standards will the verdict be rendered. Paul answers this question by saying that we must appear ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ βήματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, before the tribunal of Christ.

That is the same person who laid down His life as a ransom for us; the same person who, though He knew no sin, permitted Himself to be made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him, who by His act of intercession procured for the whole world, for every individual sinner, the verdict of “not guilty” from His Father. He is the same one who sent His apostles into all the world with instructions to proclaim the message of a reestablished peace between God and man.

By what standards will He conduct the final judgment? Will He who devoted His entire life and work to the redemption of sinners and to the establishment of the Gospel reverse Himself on the last day and apply the Law to every case? The same law that in His person was nailed to the cross, blotted out and taken out of the way? No, the judgment has been committed to Him for this reason that He is the Son of Man. The judgment is the final phase in His act of mediation. He announced His verdict in advance when He declared: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” If any one’s name is found written in the book of life, that will obviate all further investigation; only in case a name was not entered in the book of life will the record books of his deeds be consulted.

The way in which Paul describes the judgment itself may seem a little involved for us who do not use Greek as our mother tongue. We begin with the simpler problem. Paul clothes the outcome of the judgment in the form of a purpose clause, which reads in its simplified form, ἵνα κομίσηται ἕκαστος...εἴτε ἀγαθὸν εἴτε φαῦλον, that each one may receive (carry off for himself) ... either good or evil. —The relative clause has several difficulties. The phrase τὰ διὰ τοῦ σώματος, is placed ahead for emphasis. The σωμα, our present tent life, is the decisive thing. It is the time of grace; it is also the time of testing and of either approval or failure. The fact that this important phrase is thus taken out of its ordinary position within the relative clause caused another alteration, the use of the definite article instead of the demonstrative pronoun. If we write out the relative clause in full we must replace the τα with ταῦτα, πρὸς ταῦτα ἃ ἔπραξεν διὰ τοῦ σώματος, in proportion to those things which he practiced through his body (throughout his tent life).

Paul is here not proclaiming work-righteousness. He does not mean to say that the good deeds and the evil deeds of a man will be counted and checked off one against the other. He has in mind the practice and attitude of a man, whether he was motivated by faith, or the *opinio legis*. Paul is well aware that a Christian’s life of sanctification is never perfect. Paul who admits that he has not yet attained and is far from perfect, who bitterly complains that he is unable to do the good which he wants to do, and who sighs, “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death,” finds consolation in the redemptive work of his Savior: “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Ἄ ἔπραξεν does not refer to the individual good or bad deeds, but to the spirit in which a man’s life is conducted.

The question may be raised whether εἴτε ἀγαθὸν εἴτε φαῦλον refers to the life of the defendant in Christ’s final court, or to the verdict. I take it in the latter sense. Both adjectives are in the singular, while all words that refer to our life are in the plural, τὰ δία etc. and πρὸς ἃ. It offers some difficulty to combine those singulars with these plurals; ἀγαθά and φαῦλα would come more naturally. This difficulty is removed if ἀγαθὸν and φαῦλον are understood as referring to the verdict.

The thought that Paul conducts his whole life with a view to the coming resurrection and judgment was voiced by him also in his trial before the governor Felix: “I have hope toward God ... that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. And herein do I exercise myself to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men” (Acts 24:15, 16).

The reference to the final judgment and the new life in glory which it will usher in not only concludes Paul’s presentation of his cheer in conducting his office, but also forms a transition to the next part in which he presents the basic facts of his Gospel preaching and pleads for a wholehearted acceptance.

As Paul prefaced the lengthy section of his epistle, in which he presented, from various angles, the fact that he does not grow faint in proclaiming the Gospel, with a brief section in which he extols the glory of the New Testament ministry, so now again, before presenting in a final chapter the attitude becoming both a preacher and the hearers of the Gospel message, he summarizes the great facts of our salvation. Since a correct

understanding of these basic truths is of vital importance, we shall do well to devote a little more extended attention to them.

IV. Chapter 5:11–17

A. Verse 11

Εἰδότες οὖν τὸν φόβον τοῦ κυρίου: knowing then the fear of the Lord.—With οὖν Paul connects the new section to the previous one, immediately to his last remark on the coming final judgment of the world, and indirectly to the truth as he had presented it in the entire preceding part of the epistle. Such being the case, as outlined above, what effect does it have on our work, and furthermore, in what spirit ought you to receive our work?

For a summary expression Paul uses this concept τὸν φόβον τοῦ κυρίου. The fear of the Lord does not merely mean a due regard in thought and conduct for the coming judgment, it embraces all that Paul had said, e.g., about the glory of the New Testament in contradistinction from the old condemning and killing letter of the Law; about God's manner of handling the wonderful treasure by means of frail earthen vessels; about the certainty of the Gospel which is not affected by Paul's inability always to carry out his own plans as he had conceived them; about the complete rescue from danger, which he had experienced when he carried the death-sentence in himself. All these and other experiences that Paul had he sums up in that one concept: the fear of the Lord. It is the attitude of the heart for which the German language has the word *Gottesfurcht*, a childlike, confident, loving awe and reverence for God.

Paul takes the concept from the Old Testament, where e.g. the 111th Psalm sings the praises of the Lord, His works and His redemption, concluding with the statement that “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”

Applying this term to his own case Paul uses the word εἰδότες, a perfect participle from the verb οἶδα. He does not use a form of γινώσκω, which word always implies some experience as the source. Paul certainly had a rich experience on which he could draw, but that is not the point he wishes to stress in this case, in fact, to mention his experience might weaken the idea which he wants to put across. He uses the verb οἶδα, which concentrates the attention on the knowing itself, its certainty, and the bearing it may have on the case in hand. What Paul here wants to say is that he is ever aware of the fear of the Lord, that in all his work he has the fear of the Lord constantly before his eyes, he performs the task assigned to him with a constant view to the fear of the Lord.

He underscores this idea by placing the word εἰδότες into the most emphatic position at the head of the whole sentence. Misled by the disparaging suspicions and sneers of false apostles on the basis of Paul's changes in his announced plan of travel, the Corinthians had begun to waver in their attitude toward Paul. Now they should consider that Paul does all his work with the fear of God ever before his eyes; also those misunderstood changes were made in no other spirit.

What is the nature of Paul's work that he is thus performing in the fear of the Lord? He does not need to make lengthy explanations, the Corinthians had observed him in their midst for 18 months. But Paul does want to impress upon them the spirit, the true nature of his work. He says, ἀνθρώπους πείθομεν, we are engaged in winning (persuading) men. —The present indicative must not be stressed as expressing a conative idea, we are aiming to win men; the conative idea is contained in the verb itself. To counsel, to advise, to persuade, always implies an effort to gain a point. The present tense serves to point out in what work Paul is regularly engaged; it is the persuading, the winning of men. He does not have to say for whom or for what he is trying to win men, but it was important to stress that the spirit of his work is an attempt to win—not money, not personal recognition, but men for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Just why does Paul say that? He answers this question in the rest of the verse: Θεῷ δὲ πεφανερῶμεθα, ἐλπίζω δὲ καὶ ἐν ταῖς συνειδήσεσιν ὑμῶν πεφανερῶσθαι: Now to God we are manifest, but I hope that also in your consciences (we are) manifest.

Commentators here spend much labor in trying to find an acceptable contrast between the persuading of men and the being manifest to God; but no matter what solution they offer, it never really satisfies. The clause Θεῷ πεφανερῶμεθα does not seem to belong to the first part of the verse at all, but to begin a second thought. The statement, that with the fear of the Lord constantly before their eyes the apostles are engaged in winning men, is complete in itself, calling for no “but.” Moreover, the idea of being manifest applies to two interested parties, whence these two statements about πεφανερῶσθαι should not be separated. The first δε apparently is not adversative; it leads over to a special thought, something like our English *now*.

When Paul says that he and his assistants are manifest to God, he naturally has reference to the work that they are doing and the spirit in which they are doing it. They are manifest as engaged in winning men, and doing it with the fear of the Lord constantly before their eyes.

Why does he make this statement? Not merely as a confirmation of his claims, in order to convince the Corinthians as with an oath. He rather uses it as an introduction to an appeal that he is about to address to their consciences. About his manner of winning men he had said before (ch. 4:2) that he is directing his efforts to the consciences of men. Consciences of all men are by nature troubled about theft status before God. They have the inscribed law. They know that it is divine in its origin. They know that God will hold them to strict accountability. And they realize that they have transgressed God’s commandments and must plead guilty before His court with nothing to make atonement for themselves. They are without excuse.

To the despairing consciences in Corinth Paul had addressed his Gospel of salvation. His Gospel proved its power on them. The message of Christ’s vicarious suffering and death kindled a spark of faith and hope in them. They found peace to banish their fears.

Thus the Corinthians knew from experience in what the *πειθειν* of the Apostle consisted. They knew from experience how serious Paul had been in his work. His was more than human faithfulness. His faithfulness gave evidence of springing from the fear of God. If they only stop to think for a moment what Paul’s work among them meant for their spiritual health, they cannot but agree: Don’t we know that Paul is winning men for Christ in the fear of the Lord? That is what Paul means to say when he declares: Now, to God we are manifest, but I hope that we are manifest also in your consciences. “I hope,” he says; for if such were not the case, what was there left of Paul’s work? Must he then not register an egregious failure? But such cannot be the case. Did not God Himself encourage him to continue his work in Corinth, assuring him: “I have much people in this city” (Acts 18:10)? Paul can confidently say: “I hope that we are manifest also in your consciences.”

B. Verse 12

Why is he so insistent that his work be properly evaluated in Corinth? Certainly not as though he were jealous of his personal glory. In doing his work he was ready to pass through honor and dishonor, through evil report and good report (ch. 6:8). He was concerned about the Corinthians. Their faith was in danger of wavering, of faltering, because false apostles were at work trying to undermine their confidence in Paul’s integrity and in the reliability of his message. And they, the Corinthians, did not know how to ward off these attacks. To strengthen and fortify their faith Paul directs their attention to their own consciences and to the blessed change they experienced as a result of his work in their midst. His message proved itself as a power of God unto salvation. In this sense Paul can say: Οὐ πάλιν ἑαυτοὺς συνιστάνομεν ὑμῖν: We are not again commending ourselves to you.

The purpose of his seeming self-recommendation he states in these words: ἀλλά ἀφορμὴν διδόντες ὑμῖν καυχήματος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν: but giving you an incentive for a boast on our behalf.

Ἀφορμή literally means a starting point, a basis of operation, a springboard, then an occasion, an inducement. It was really up to the Corinthians to do some boasting about Paul, seeing how much he had done to bring peace, a peace which passes all understanding, to their restless hearts. They had enough material at their disposal to formulate an impressive boast, but they were bluffed by the glib arguments of the false apostles, so that they no longer could clearly see what great things Paul had done for them, and though many had the feeling that the false apostles were doing Paul an injustice, they did not exactly know how to go about it in exonerating

him. Therefore Paul gives them an ἀφορμή. His statement about the character of his work thus is not meant as a self-recommendation; it is merely setting the sights right for the Corinthians.

Paul uses the participle, διδόντες, because this statement is not coordinate, as on the same level, with the statement συνιστάνομεν; the thought is subordinate, somewhat like this: We are not saying this in the sense of self-recommendation, but rather in the sense of providing you with an ἀφορμή.

What, then, must be the chief point in the boast of the Corinthians about Paul, in order to be an effective defense against the scurrilous maligning by the false apostles and a telling counter attack against their raids on Paul's character? Paul states it in these words: ἵνα ἔχητε πρὸς τοὺς ἐν προώπῳ καυχομένους καὶ μὴ ἐν καρδίᾳ: that you may have (it) over against those who boast in connection with appearance, and not in connection with the heart (of the matter).

The false apostles are boasters. But if you analyze their boasting just a little you will soon find that it concerns the προσωπον of things only, and does not touch the καρδιά. Προσωπον is the face, the surface. And there their boasting stops. It is superficial. What some of these externals were, about which the false apostles boasted, we may learn from chapter 11:22, 23; and 11:6. But they carefully avoided the question, What dangers did the fear of God impel you to face? What hardships to endure? How much were you concerned about the consciences of men? What comfort did you bring them in their terrors?

Paul has provided the Corinthians with the material for confronting the false apostles with some very uncomfortable questions, and for completely unmasking them.

C. Verse 13–15

How will a man proceed who in the fear of the Lord is engaged in winning people? What would be a superficial view of the matter? What would it mean to go to the heart? In v. 13 Paul gives an illustration. He connects the verse to the foregoing with an explanatory γαρ. In the explanation he mentions two methods of procedure that according to the προσωπον seem to be miles apart.

Εἴτε ἐξέστημεν...εἴτε σωφρονοῦμεν: If, on the one hand, we went to excess ... if, on the other, we are moderate. On the use of the middle and intransitive forms of ἐξίστημι cf. Mk. 3:21; —also Mt. 12:23; Mk. 5:42; 6:51; Lk. 2:47; Acts 10:45; —also Acts 8:11. —By saying εἴτε ἐξέστημεν, Paul admits that, superficially considered, he and his assistants did go beyond bounds. He had, e.g., written the Corinthians a very sharp epistle, about which he himself worried for a time that he might have been too severe (ch. 7:8). He had used some very cutting words regarding their attitude in the incest case (I, ch. 5:1, 2, 6). This gave the false apostles, who judged only according to the outward appearance, an opportunity to make some caustic remarks about Paul's "weighty and powerful" letters (ch. 10:10).

But such criticism did not go to the heart of the matter. Was it not a very grievous offense that had been committed against a holy order of God? Was not the attitude that the Corinthian Church took in the case bordering on blasphemy? Even if you considered it as only a little leaven, would not the results be most far-reaching and disastrous? Would they be harming only themselves by their flippant attitude? Would not the Church of God suffer most severely from their action—the Church of God for which Christ shed His holy blood? Should Paul tread softly when thus by the Corinthians the honor of God was ruthlessly trodden under foot? He had to speak sharply; the honor of God was at stake. Εἴ ἐξέστημεν, θεῶ.

In the present letter he has been very moderate so far; he will become vehement when he will take up the case of the false apostles and their adherents. The Corinthians are far from perfect, and the matters that were awry in Corinth are far from having been adjusted completely. But the attitude of the Corinthians has undergone a change. They regret their former carelessness and negligence. The fact that Paul had grieved them severely had led them to repentance. They were still weak. All the more a mild and moderate treatment was indicated. The superficial detractors of Paul could not understand; but if anyone went to the heart of the matter he could readily grasp Paul's statement: Εἴ σωφρονοῦμεν, ὑμῖν.

Such a one would, moreover, be impressed by the fact that Paul in all these seemingly so contradictory actions is motivated by a peculiar type of love. He formulates it in these words: Ἡ γὰρ ἀγάπη τοῦ Χριστοῦ

συνέχει ἡμᾶς: For the love of Christ constrains us. The connecting γὰρ marks this statement as explanatory of the foregoing.

What is the love of Christ? In other words, what is the function of the genitive τοῦ Χριστοῦ? The first possibility that suggests itself will likely be that it is either the subjective or the objective genitive, meaning either the love that Christ has toward us, or the love that we have toward Him. Now certainly it is the love that we entertain towards Christ that motivates us in our entire behavior, all our thoughts, words, and deeds should be expressions of our love toward Christ. And again, our love toward Christ is only the response to His love for us. We love Him, because He first loved us.

True as it is that our love for Christ provides the motivation for our whole Christian conduct, yet, since Paul is here speaking about some very specific actions of his, which, superficially at least, appear as contradictory and incapable of coordination, the remark that he is motivated by his general love for Christ seems too banal for so serious a discussion. Something pithier, more directly to the point in hand, seems to be required.

There is an understanding of the genitive which meets these requirements: τοῦ Χριστοῦ may be understood as a qualifying genitive: a Christ-like love. The same love, or at least the same kind of love, which was evident in Christ's conduct toward sinners is permeating Paul's heart and dictating his mode of procedure in the individual cases. When Christ called the Pharisees hypocrites, it was His Savior love that prompted Him to use that ugly word. With that word He hoped to rouse them out of their smugness, since they seemed to be unsusceptible to any other approach. On the other hand, that same Savior love led Him to eat with publicans and sinners, to say to the grief-stricken mother at Nain, "Weep not," and to the adulteress, "Thy sins are forgiven." Paul had learned that same love from his Savior, and now it constrained him in all his dealings with sinners, as in the fear of the Lord he engaged in the work of winning men.

Of course, this is not a special kind of love, it is not generically different from the common love of Christians both toward their Savior and toward their brethren; rather it is only a special manifestation, which, however, has its root in our common faith, which Paul now proceeds to set forth.

He forcefully pronounces the basic truth of the Gospel, God's principle of substitution, of vicariousness, and of imputation. This principle may seem utterly unfair to our natural reason—it is unfair to charge Adam's transgression against his unborn children; it is the height of unfairness to punish the holy Jesus so mercilessly for sins which He never committed—yet this unfairness of God is the principle which made our redemption possible.

Paul says: κρίναντας τοῦτο, ὅτι εἷς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν, ἄρα οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον: judging this, that one died for all; well then they all died.

We begin our study of these words with a brief look at ὑπὲρ. This preposition originally had a local meaning, referring to a place over or above some other place. In this sense it does not occur in the New Testament, where it is found only in the metaphorical sense: for the benefit of. This general sense, as the papyri indicate, developed into the very particular meaning of substitution. To substitute for someone is in the highest sense benefiting him. In many cases both the general and the particular meaning would make good sense. Then it will be impossible to determine with certainty, whether substitution was in the mind of the writer; yet since, as the evidence indicates, the development was strong in the direction of the particular meaning of substitution, we dare not be too hesitant about reading the word in that sense. There is one passage in the New Testament where the meaning *instead* is beyond any question, Phlm. 13, where Paul says to Philemon he would like to retain Onesimus that ὑπὲρ σοῦ he might serve. Onesimus would serve Paul in his Gospel work, not for the benefit of, but instead of Philemon, who was living in distant Colosse. —When Paul says in Gal. 3:13, that Christ purchased us free from the curse of the law by becoming a curse *for* us, the situation (buying, redeeming) turns about a substitution, the price in place of the purchased object; vice versa. —In our present passage also the idea of substitution is dominating the situation.

When Paul says that we *judge* in this matter, he does not have an opinion of our natural reason in mind. This is a judgment of faith. The judgment of faith stands firm: One did die in the place of all men, for the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all. The second also stands: Then they all did die. We note that Paul here uses the

aorist, thus stressing the action as such. Our K. J. translation is not exact when it renders the aorist with: “then *were all dead.*” The RSV is better: “therefore *all have died.*” The process of dying and its agony is credited to all men when the One suffered it in their stead

This is only the beginning. If we went through the process of dying, what is there left of us? But the One who died in our stead did not remain dead. The Lord did not deliver His soul to hell, nor did His flesh see corruption. Just as He had died in our stead, so also He rose again from death as our champion, becoming the firstfruits of them that slept. —Since through Him we have paid the penalty of death, and through Him have again received life, it is evident that we now belong to Him. As far as we are concerned we were doomed sinners; but since His death is counted as ours, we through it were freed from our guilt. And since He as our representative rose again from death, we also have life in Him. We are not the former people any more - we are a new creation. Paul expresses this thought in v. 15: *καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν, ἵνα οἱ ζῶντες μηκέτι ἑαυτοῖς ζῶσιν ἀλλὰ τῷ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἀποθανόντι καὶ ἐγερθέντι.* And He died for all that the living ones no longer live unto themselves but to Him who died for them and was raised again. Paul uses the passive voice *ἐγερθέντι*, to direct our attention to the agent. The One who raised our Savior from death was the Father. The death of Jesus was sacrificial, a ransom price for our sins. Was the price sufficient? Did the death of Jesus remove our guilt? The Father Himself raised Him from the dead. Thereby He declared Him free from all our sins, which had been imputed to Him. And as Paul pointed out before, in His life we also have life. Our guilt was declared liquidated by the death of Jesus. The acquittal of Jesus in His resurrection is our acquittal. The Father raised up Jesus.

The main thought in this section is that although according to appearance we, the living ones, are the same people that we always were, yet according to God’s principle of imputation we are counted as having died, and as living a borrowed life, sharing the life of Him who died for us and was raised again.

This thought Paul will develop more fully in the following verses, first in a transitional way.

D. Verses 16 and 17

This section is linked to the foregoing by *ὥστε*: and so, therefore. The effects will be shown in some detail, the real meaning of the transaction will be pointed out more fully.

The first result that Paul points out is that in sizing up people, and in dealing with them, we must use an altogether new approach. The idea is not that on the whole we retain the old approach, but modify it a little, reinforce it a little here and there; the idea is that the approach must be new in the sense of being the direct opposite of the former. *Ὡστε ἡμεῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν οὐδένα οἶδαμεν κατὰ σάρκα:* Therefore we (I Paul and my assistants) from now on recognize no man according to. (The) flesh. When evaluating the importance of a man *κατὰ σάρκα*, you take into consideration his social, political, financial standing, his education, his age, his health, his nationality, his sex, and many other things. These things, important though they may be *κατὰ σάρκα*, regarding the affairs of the present life, do not come into consideration for Paul in his work. True, he will adapt his work to their special needs. In true sympathy he will place himself into their position and fight their special battles in his own heart. He will adjust his Gospel message to their particular difficulties (see I Cor. 9:19–23), but the heart of his work will always be that in them he recognizes people who according to God’s judgment have died with Jesus, and to whom belongs the life of Jesus.

This meant for Paul, first of all, a re-evaluation of Christ Himself: *εἰ καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν κατὰ σάρκα Χριστόν, ἀλλὰ νῦν οὐκέτι γινώσκομεν:* If also we have known Christ according to (the) flesh, but now we know Him (thus) no more.

The question whether Paul ever met Jesus personally is beside the point here. It is possible that Paul was in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus’ death, pursuing his studies under Gamaliel. And if he was there, then it is more than probable that he saw Jesus (cf. Cleopas’ remark in Lk. 24:18). Paul is here not speaking about meeting Jesus; he is speaking about his former evaluation of the Christ. It was a false evaluation; for that reason alone already the verb *οἶδα* would have been out of place, a verb which always stresses the element of certainty. Paul is recording the false impression that he formerly held of the Messiah. It was the conception of a temporal

savior, then current among the Jews. This misconception had induced him to persecute Christ as a blasphemer. Now he has learned to view Christ, His work and His message in an altogether different light.

With a second ὥστε Paul further unfolds the result of God's principle of imputation and substitution, which he had tersely stated in v. 14. It is this: εἴ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις: If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. To *be* in Christ means the subjective appropriation of the grand deed of God performed in Christ's death. That means a new creation, a being that is new from the bottom up. It does not mean a being that has been overhauled, that has been improved, that has been developed a little more fully. To be sure, the old material is still there, the same body with its physical properties, the same soul with its mental faculties, but the attitude, to be specific, the attitude regarding the person's relation to his God, has been completely transformed.

Objective and Subjective

In the foregoing Paul has spoken about God's judgment based on substitution and imputation objectively without any reference to any man's faith: One man died for all, that means that all died; and then he spoke about the subjective appropriation of this judgment by the faith of any individual: If any man be in Christ. Before we proceed to study Paul's further elucidation of the matter, we may do well to look a little more closely at the two terms *objective* and *subjective* specifically, *objective* and *subjective justification*.

The *Brief Statement* offers the following very clear presentation of the matter, stating both the objective and subjective justification and their mutual relation in a single sentence: "Scripture teaches that God has already declared the whole world to be righteous in Christ; that therefore not for the sake of their good works, but without the works of the Law, by grace, for Christ's sake, He *justifies*, that is, *accounts* as righteous, all those who believe in Christ, that is, believe, accept, and rely on, the fact that for Christ's sake their sins are forgiven." Here we have three clear definitions, first, concerning a declaratory act of God in respect to the whole world performed on Good Friday; secondly, concerning a daily declaratory act pertaining to individual believers; and thirdly, concerning the relation of the latter act to the former, being its personal application in specific cases

What did the *Common Confession* do about this? "By His redemptive work Christ is the Propitiation for the sins of the whole world; hence *forgiveness* of sin has been *secured* and *provided* for all men. (*This* is often spoken of as objective justification.) ... God *offers* this propitiation and reconciliation freely to all men through His means of grace... God justifies the sinner solely on the basis of Christ's righteousness, which He imputes to the sinner through the Gospel *and* which the sinner accepts by faith." (Emphasis mine. M.)—The three points so clearly set forth in the B. S. have become vague and hazy. By a wide stretch of the imagination, and by putting a rather loose construction on the words, a correct view of objective justification may be read into them; but in their natural sense the words confuse objective justification and redemption (a fact which the Index to the CC underscores by referring to a statement in the paragraph on Redemption: "God by raising Christ from the dead proclaimed to the world that He has accepted the atonement for man's sin as completed and that Christ, the risen and exalted God-Man, shall reign as Lord forever."—God proclaimed two things: the completeness of *redemption* and the eternal rule of our exalted Savior—nothing about a declaration of forgiveness.)

A confusion already crept into the English translation of F. Pieper's *Christliche Dogmatik*. "When the sinner comes to faith in Christ or in the Gospel, he is at once justified before God by his faith. Since the Gospel offers him the forgiveness of sins gained by Christ for the whole world (objective justification), the acceptance of this offer, by faith, is all that is needed to accomplish his subjective justification... Subjective justification is meant when Paul says: 'Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith.'" (Vol. II, 503.)—Note: To what does "objective justification" stand in opposition, to "forgiveness gained by Christ" or to the whole statement about the Gospel's offer?

Compare the German text: *In demselben Augenblick, in welchem ein Mensch an Christum oder an das Evangelium, das heisst, an die von Christo erworbene und im Evangelium dargebotene Vergebung der Sünden, gläubig wird, wird er durch diesen Glauben vor Gott gerechtfertigt. Dies ist die sogenannte subjektive Rechtfertigung im Unterschiede von der sogenannten objektiven Rechtfertigung, die vor dem Glauben*

vorhanden ist. (Band II, S. 606. —Underscorings in the original.) The conciseness and perspicuity of this statement is lost in the English translation, not to mention the greater vagueness of the Common Confession.

An unmistakable statement on objective justification was imperative in view of the position voiced eg. by the former Ohio Synod: *Wir glauben und bekennen: Durch die durch Christum geschehene Versöhnung ist der heilige und gnädige Gott uns entgegengekommen, so dass er uns nun die Sünde vergeben und rechtfertigen kann; die Rechtfertigung selbst geschieht aber nicht eher, als bis durch Gottes Gnade der Glaubensfunke im Herzen des armen Sünders angezündet worden ist; dann vergibt Gott dem Sünder die Sünden.* (Quoted by Grosse from *Kirchenzeitung*, for June 17, 1905. —Emphasis mine. M.)

Can a decided return of Missouri to the clear statement of the BS be expected if in its midst a man can publicly dare to ridicule the distinction between objective and subjective justification (without being reprimanded, as far as the disturbed public is concerned) and can deplore that as far as the CC and the Houston convention are concerned “a clean break has not yet been made with Objective Justification. But it must be made,” and then declare that a dangerous situation prevails “as long as we do not frankly disavow Objective Justification, as *Sola Scriptura* requires of us.”

Our theologians clearly taught objective justification without using the term, as quotations from Gerhard and Calov will show: *Excitando eum (Christum) a mortuis absolvit eum a peccatis nostris ipsi imputatis, ac proinde etiam nos in ipso absolvit.* (Annotationes in Epist. ad Romanos.) ... *In Christi resurrectione a peccatis nostris sumus absoluti, ut non amplius coram Dei iudicio nos condemnare possint.* (*Disputationes theol.*—Quoted in Hoenecke III, p. 354.)—*Ut punivit Deus peccata nostro in Christo, quae ipsi ut sponsori nostro erant imposita atque imputata, ita quoque excitando eum a mortuis ipso facto absolvit eum a nostris peccatis ipsi imputatis, ac proinde etiam nos in ipso absolvit* (*Biblia Ill. ad Rom. 4:25*).

Enumerating among the blessings of the Gospel this in the first place—*dass ein armer sündiger Mensch vor Gott gerechtfertigt, das ist, absolviert, los und ledig gesprochen werde von allen seinen Sünden und von dem Urteil der wohlverdienten Verdammnis*—the FC continues, *Welche Güter uns in der Verheissung des heiligen Evangelii durch den Heiligen Geist vorgetragen werden, und ist allein der Glaube das einige Mittel, dadurch wir sie ergreifen, annehmen und uns applizieren und zueignen*” (Trgl., p. 918).

In the Apology we read the terse remark: *Evangelium arguit omnes homines, quod sint sub peccato, quod omnes sint rei aeternae irae ac morris, et offert propter Christum remissionem peccatorum et iustificationem, quae fide accipitur* (Trgl., p. 138).

We conclude this brief survey by bringing two quotations from Luther.

First, one from a sermon on Mt. 9:1–8. *Die Summa dieses Evangelii ist der grosse, hohe Artikel des Glaubens, der da heisst: Vergebung der Sünden.* After speaking about civic righteousness (*menschliche Frömmigkeit*), Luther develops three thoughts.

1. *Unsere Frömmigkeit vor Gott. Das ist nun die, so man heisset Gottes Gnade, oder Vergebung der Sünden.* 2. *Daher kommt sie, dass Jesus Christus Gottes Sohn, vom Himmel kommen und Mensch worden, für unsere Sünde gelitten hat und gestorben ist.*—3. *Wie oder wodurch wird uns nun solche Gerechtigkeit heim gebracht, dass wir den Schatz, durch Christum erworben, empfangen?* After developing these thoughts very vividly in detail, Luther summarizes: *Siehe, da hast du alles, so zu diesem Artikel gehört, von der christlichen Gerechtigkeit, die da stehet in der Vergebung der Sünden, durch Christum uns geschenkt und mit dem Glauben durch und in dem Wort empfangen.* (EA 14, 175–189.) Our righteousness before God, the forgiveness of our sins, is conveyed to us as a ready blessing through the means of grace.

Our second quotation is taken from Luther’s lectures on Genesis (1536–1545), ch. 15:6, anent the verb *chaschabh*. *De verbo chaschabh non valde repugno, sive id pro reputare sive cogitare accipias; nam res eodem redit. Cum enim divina maiestas de me cogitet me esse iustum, mihi esse remissa peccata, me liberum esse a morte aeterna, et ego cure gratiarum actione in fide hanc cogitationem Dei de me apprehendo, vere sum iustus, non meis operibus, sed fide, qua apprehendo cogitationem divinam* (EA III, p. 300).

V. Chapter 5:18–21

In v. 14 Paul stated the basic fact of the Gospel message in the following words: *If one died for all, then they all have died.* The idea that underlies this fact is that of substitution. The One Holy Son of God volunteered to take the place of all sinners. He suffered death and experienced its agony. By virtue of the substitution His death with all its excruciating pain and terror is credited to all sinners. God considers them all such as have now paid the penalty for their sins in full—not, indeed, in their own person, but by proxy.

Paul then, in v. 17, turns to the individual sinners, saying: If any one is in Christ he is a new creation. Objectively speaking, without any reference to an individual sinner's attitude toward Christ's sacrifice, purely on the basis of God's verdict, every sinner, whether he knows about it or not, whether he believes it or not, has received the status of a saint. What will be his reaction when he is informed about this turn of events? Will he accept, or will he decline? Paul for the present disregards the possibility of rejection; he takes up the case of one who accepted the good news. He describes him as one "in Christ," and sums up the situation by calling him a "new creation."

We digressed a little in our study to consider the concepts *objective* and *subjective*, specifically, objective and subjective justification.

In the section of Paul's epistle which is up for consideration now the word *καταλλάσσω* occupies a very prominent place, making it imperative that we devote some special attention to it. Furthermore, the study of the matter itself that Paul here presents will make it necessary that we study it in the light of Rom. 5:1–11, particularly v. 8–11, where Paul discusses the same truth.

Κατ-αλλάσσω is a composite verb, compounded of the following two elements: the preposition *κατά* with its perfective idea, and the verb *ἀλλάσσω*, from *ἄλλος*, meaning to change, to alter.

The simple verb *ἀλλάσσω* occurs six times in the New Testament, in five different passages.

One, being a quotation from the Old Testament, is found in Heb. 1:12, quoted from Ps. 102:27. Here the everlasting unchangeableness of God is presented on the background of the instability of even heaven and earth, which *ἀλλαγῆσονται*, which grow old like a garment and will be rolled up and discarded.

In Acts 6:14, St. Stephen is charged with the statement that "Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place and *ἀλλαξει* the customs which Moses delivered us." *Ἀλλάσσω* is here coupled with *καταλύω*, conveying approximately the same idea.

The idea of a radical change for the worse is present also in Rom. 1:23: In their vanity men "*ἥλλαξαν* the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things."—Of course, the glory of God cannot itself be touched by sinful man, but men's inexcusable ignorance and arrogance becomes evident in their sacrilegious attitude over against God.

A decided change for the better is indicated in I Cor. 15:51 and 52. Paul is speaking about the resurrection of the believers: "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body" (v. 42–44). Adam was from the earth, earthy; Christ is the Lord from heaven. "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" (v. 49). It is a wonderful change that the believers will undergo in their resurrection. But what about those who shall survive till judgment day? Paul says, "We shall not all sleep, but we all *ἀλλαγησόμεθα*" (v. 51, 52).

There is one more passage in which the simple verb stem *ἀλλάσσω* occurs, Gal. 4:20, where Paul expresses the wish to be personally present with the Galatians, so that he might *ἀλλαξαι*, modulate, his voice as the circumstances would indicate.

Thus *ἀλλάσσω* simply denotes a change—ranging from a slight modulation to a wonderful glorification or to practical destruction, as the case may be, and from a change that affects the object itself to a change in the estimation and treatment accorded to it.

Besides the compound *καταλλάσσω* there are four other compounds of the simple verb stem, plus one double compound. They are *ἀπ-αλλάσσω*, *δι-αλλάσσω*, *μετ-αλλάσσω*, *συναλλάσσω* and *απο-κατ-αλλάσσω*. — We may add that also a compound noun formation occurs, *ἀντ-αλλαγμα* (Mt. 16:26; Mc. 8:37).

The meaning of *ἀπαλλάσσω* may be seen from the following three passages: "When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, as thou art in the way, give diligence *ἀπήλαχθαι* from him" (Lk. 12:58). —

From Paul's body handkerchiefs and aprons were brought unto the sick so that the diseases ἀπαλλάσσεσθαι from them (Acts 19:12). —Jesus assumed human nature “that through death he might destroy ... the devil and ἀπαλλάξῃ them who through fear of death” were held in bondage (Heb. 2:15). —In each case the riddance from some evil is meant.

In Mt 5:23ff, Jesus speaks of a man who, while bringing his sacrifice, suddenly remembers that he has given his brother cause to have something against him. Jesus tells him to go at once and “διαλλαγῆθι to thy brother.” Note the passive. The man is the offender, and he must be reconciled. This does not mean that he must change his mind or his attitude toward the offended brother, but he must see that he is cleared of the offence that he has committed; he must see that his status is cleared before his brother, and an unsullied relation reestablished.

After Paul had said in Rom. 1:23, that men ἥλλαξαν the glory of the incorruptible God, he says in v. 25 that they “μετήλλαξαν the truth of God into a lie.” They twisted or contorted the truth into its very opposite. —He uses the same verb in the next verse: “Their women μετήλλαξαν the natural use into that which is against nature” (v. 26). By a judgment of God they turned into sex perverts.

Συναλλάσσω occurs only once. When Moses found two Israelites quarreling, he συνήλλαξεν them, he “would have set them at one again” (Acts 7:26). He tried to compose their differences.

We reserve a study of the double compound ἀπο-καταλλάσσω till we have investigated the meaning of καταλλάσσω from our present text and from the other passages in which it occurs, particularly Rom. 5.

Καταλλάσσω (Katallassō)

The very first verse of the section to be studied gives prominence to the concept of καταλλάσσειν. It traces the effecting of a new creation and everything that is connected with it to God as the καταλλαξας, and it sums up all the work of a Gospel herald in the word καταλλαγη. Paul then himself gives us a definition of *katallassein* in the following verse. He announces his explanatory remarks as such by ὅς ὅτι: the whole matter took place *in this way that*. For the present we disregard other remarks and concentrate on the one that describes the nature of καταλλάσσειν. Paul uses a participle to do so. God performed His καταλλάσσειν of the world μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν, not imputing their trespasses unto them. The καταλλάσσειν is basically an act of accounting, of imputing, of charging. The world had trespassed. Every individual found in that group of beings which are summarily called the world transgressed the commandments of God, and thereby burdened himself with a heavy load of guilt, if his trespasses were to be charged against his account. But God in His mercy decided not to do that. He did not impute their trespasses to the sinners. Where God imputed them, Paul does not state at once in express words. He does not leave us in doubt, however, saying that God performed this καταλλάσσειν through Christ and in Christ. In v. 21 he will tell us directly that God made Christ to be sin for us.

We thus see that καταλλαγη does not denote a change in the nature of the sinner, in the attitude of his heart. That change will take place when he is led by the Spirit to accept in faith the offered καταλλαγη. The change occurred in the standing of the sinner before his Judge. Before Christ's intervention took place God regarded him as a guilt-laden, condemned culprit. After Christ's intervention and through Christ's intervention He regards him as a guilt-free saint. The *nature* of the sinner has not been changed. *God* did not undergo a change, did not experience a change of heart. The *status* of the sinner was changed.

A few remarks from Hoenecke bear repeating. *Es ist nach allem gewiss, dass theos kosmon καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ als versoehrende Taetigkeit Gottes nicht heisst, die Welt in eine befreundete Herzensstellung mir ihm bringen, aber auch nicht, eine veraenderte Stellung seines Herzens der Welt geben, sondern das Verhaeltnis zwischen Gott und ihr so aendern, dass die Welt nicht mehr als die nach Gerechtigkeit durch Suende von ihm geschiedene und verdammliche erscheinen muss. Das katallassein ist von seiten Gottes das in Christo geschehende Aufheben der Suende- und Schuldzurechnung an die Welt. ... Das katallassein als Tat der Versoehnung Gottes ist sachlich in Wahrheit die objektive, allgemeine Lossprechung oder Rechtfertigung der ganzen Welt in Christo von Suende und Schuld, welche eine subjektive, spezielle durch den Glauben werden muss und wird* (Dogmatik III, p. 191f.).

In our passage Paul clearly indicates that καταλλάσσειν means a change of status. This fact is supported by the use of the same verb in the case of a woman who deserted her husband, I Cor. 7:11. Paul says, Let her remain ἀγαμος, single. She stepped out of her married state by deserting her husband. Now let her remain in the unmarried state. Or let her καταλλαγήτω to her former husband, return to her former state as his wife.

When Paul in our text uses a passive imperative, καταλλάγητε, it is a little more specific than the same imperative in I Cor. 7. There nothing is said concerning the manner in which the καταλλαγή is to be brought about; the demand is simply raised that the woman reenter her previous status. In our passage the invitation expressed by the imperative has been prepared most thoroughly. On the basis of the καταλλαγή which God perfected for the whole world in Christ and through Christ by not imputing their trespasses unto them He now through His apostle pleads with sinners, καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ. The meaning, as Paul himself paraphrases the expression in Rom. 5, is: καταλλαγήν λαμβανειν, to receive, to appropriate the ready made καταλλαγή.

A. Verse 18

With τὰ δὲ πάντα Paul sums up everything that he had said before about Christ's substituting for us by His death, and about our becoming a new creation by being in Him. All of this, every phase of it, has its source in God, flows ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ. But not in a general way, as from His love, His wisdom, His power; but from God in so far as He performed a very specific deed, τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ, who reconciled us unto Himself, who took us out of our former state of being guilty and condemned sinners and placed us into a position before Himself where He regards us as having been purified from our sins, as spotless, unrebukeable saints. All of this διὰ Χριστοῦ. If God finds us outside of Christ, He sees us as people who are not only over and over covered with sin, but who are through and through permeated with this poison. But as soon as Christ intervenes, and God looks at us through Christ, then all our sins are screened out. His all-searching eye finds none, and He pronounces us righteous.

Paul does not need to say more here than just διὰ Χριστοῦ. He explained before what that means: Christ went through the process of dying in our stead. He exposed Himself to the attacks of our death and wrestled with it in bitter agony till His sweat became heavy drops of blood that fell to the ground. He suffered the torments of hell, being forsaken of God on the cross. By thus tasting the bitterness of death in our stead He blotted out our guilt. God reconciled us to Himself διὰ Χριστοῦ.

No particular stress seems to attach to ἡμᾶς. Paul had said before in a very sweeping way that Christ in His death substituted for all. He had said that thus, if any one is in Christ, he is a new *creature*. With another all-inclusive expression, τὰ δὲ πάντα, he proceeded to the further development of the great truth. Keeping all of this in mind, it does not seem likely that with ἡμᾶς Paul should wish to refer to some special group. He does not use the word in contrast to some other group, not even with any noticeable emphasis.

With a second participle modifying θεοῦ Paul adds another thought on how all the above named blessings flow from God as their fountain: καὶ δόντος ἡμῖν τὴν διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς, and giving to us the administration of the καταλλαγή. God performed the καταλλαγή through Christ. Now the καταλλαγή is present as a ready blessing. All that remains is that it be administered. God establishes the administration. It is God's act alone that does this, and that is an act of giving.. We do well to pay attention to this word. When God instituted the administration of His καταλλαγή, this was a gift of His pure and simple.

Who are the ἡμῖν, to whom the administration was given? In a general way we may say, to men, to them to whom the καταλλαγή applies. When Jesus had healed the paralytic, cheering him with the forgiveness of his sins, the multitude glorified God who "had given such power unto *men*" (Mt. 9:8). On a later occasion Jesus stated that the power to forgive sins is vested in His Church. Paul could say that to him, being a called apostle of the Lord, this administration had been given in a special sense.

B. Verse 19

With ὡς ὅτι Paul announces a more specific explanation of the matter. Ὡς is a relative adverb, but while the Greek language very readily connects a new independent clause to the foregoing one by means of a relative, English idiom prefers a demonstrative. Thus instead of translating: *in which way that*, we say, *in this way that*, or briefly, *that is*.

Above we have taken note of the fact that Paul defines καταλλάσσειν as an imputative act: μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν. We need not repeat.

We take up the first part of the statement: θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσειν ἑαυτῷ, which the King James Bible translates: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." We note first of all that Paul extends God's act of καταλλάσσειν to cover the whole world. No sinner is excepted. The sins of every one were laid on Jesus, were imputed to Him. Forgiveness of sins was not only secured and provided for the sinners, it was pronounced over them. Their sins were not imputed to them; they were imputed to Christ. This applies to the whole world, to every individual sinner, whether he was living in the days of Christ, or had died centuries before His coming, or had not yet been born, perhaps has not been born to this day. It applies to the world as such, regardless of whether a particular sinner ever comes to faith, or not.

How did God perform this stupendous task? St. Paul says, He was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. The translation of the King James Bible seems to be clear, following the Greek word order. But there are some who question its correctness. They contend that the meaning is not: God was in Christ, but: God was reconciling. They combine ἦν with καταλλάσσειν as a periphrastic imperfect tense, thus emphatically making a continued action of the *katallassein*: God was in the course of history reconciling one individual after the other in an unbroken succession.

If that combination should stand then it would almost be inevitable that the meaning of καταλλάσσειν undergo a change; it would come to signify something like bringing to faith. But no matter what meaning might eventually be given to καταλλάσσειν, what about the tense that God *was* doing it? We rather should say that He *is* doing it. The difficulties are obviated if we retain the combination as the K.J. understood it, that when Christ won the new status for the world, God was in Him doing it. (Compare also Luther.)

This understanding of the construction is supported by a statement of Paul in Colossians. In speaking about the redemptive work of Jesus he there explains: ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ εὐδόκησεν πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα κατοικῆσαι, because in Him all the fulness (of the Godhead) decided to dwell (ch. 1:19). Add to this that Paul thus not only would express the same thought in the two passages, but also in a very similar connection. For it is precisely in this passage of Colossians that Paul twice uses the double compound ἀποκαταλλάσσειν, of which we shall speak a little later. —God was in Christ, and in this way, by the personal union of the divine with the human nature in the God-man, the stupendous task of changing the legal status of the whole world was achieved.

The second statement of v. 18, viz., that God gave to us the administration of the καταλλαγῆς, is explained by Paul in the last part of v. 19 as meaning that God was in Christ θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς, establishing in us (in our midst) the message of the καταλλαγῆς. The administration of the καταλλαγῆς is carried out by means of the word. The word is made the vehicle for conveying and applying the καταλλαγῆς to the world. There is no other way of administering it. This word is a very definite thing, God has placed it firmly, He has established it. It is not something that we should develop, find by observation or self-inspection, and clarify by study and speculation, no, God established it, and thus it stands, for us to proclaim without addition or subtraction or alteration. It is the word that God established through which the καταλλαγῆς is brought to us and through which we bring it to the world. In these short words Paul gives us a terse presentation of the doctrine concerning the function of the means of grace.

A fact that has troubled some exegetes considerably is the change of tense in the two participles which Paul uses, first the present καταλλάσσειν, and then the aorist θέμενος, the present denoting duration of the action. Yet the clash is more apparent than real. It is readily accounted for by the different nature of the two acts. God was in Christ refers, of course, to the historical appearance of Christ in the flesh. The whole life of Christ on earth was occupied in working out our καταλλαγῆς, His entire state of exinanition being devoted to the task. Hence the present participle, καταλλάσσειν. But the ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ throws this tedious work into the past; the present participle, though denoting duration, does not predicate a continuation of the work beyond the

earthly career of our Savior. The establishing of the message of the *καταλλαγή*, in contrast to the working out of the *καταλλαγή*, was a single act, completed in a moment; hence the aorist, *θέμενος*.

καταλασσειν in Rom. 5

Before continuing a study of our text to see how Paul applies the basic truths, which he just presented, to himself and to his ministry, it may not be out of place to check our findings against Paul's presentation of the same matter in his epistle to the Romans.

The starting point is different in both cases. In our present epistle Paul had the task of leading the Corinthians to a proper evaluation and appreciation of his ministry, since his detractors were trying, and had succeeded to some extent, to warp their views. In Romans Paul had no such difficulty. He was planning a visit to Rome, and thus took the opportunity of introducing himself by letter, presenting to them a summary statement of the Gospel that he preached.

Paul opens the fifth chapter with the statement that to have been granted justification means to "have peace with God."

How did it come about that God declared peace through justification? In the 5th verse he answers the question by referring to the love of God which "is shed abroad in our hearts." Paul is not speaking of a *caritas infusa*, although his expression sounds similar. He is speaking of the love which God so richly bestowed on us. That Paul is thinking of an attitude of God's heart toward us, a favorable disposition of His, is evident from v. 8, where he mentions God's *ἀγάπη* εἰς ἡμᾶς.

It is important to note that Paul traces the entire matter of justification, peace, etc., to God's love as its source. God's love is present and productive at the very beginning. It is the motivating cause of our *καταλλαγή*. There are some who assume that *καταλασσειν* points to a change in God, that during the process He changed from an irate into a placated God, that some sort of appeasement took place. —But no, not the least change took place in the heart of God. It was His love that was active during the entire process of *καταλασσειν*. The change was effected in our status before our Judge.

Now Paul's development of the truth in v. 6–11.

He begins by making the statement that Christ died for us (*ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν*, i.e. in our stead) when we were yet *ἀσθενεῖς*, weak in every respect, completely worthless. In order to set forth the unprecedented paradox of Christ's procedure Paul calls attention, in the next verse, to the fact that one will scarcely die for "a righteous man." Paul may have had the case of Aristides in mind, whom the Athenians surnamed the Righteous, only to ostracize and exile him later. But if people as a rule are loath to give up their life for a righteous man, how much more will they refuse to die for some worthless person?

Paul admits that *ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ* some will be ready to risk death. The definite article of *τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ*, while *δίκαιου* was anarthrous, indicates that Paul is not thinking of a good *person*; the adjective is neuter, meaning the common good. We Americans may think of Nathan Hale in the history of our own country, who regretted that he had but one life to give for his country. We may think of Arnold von Winkelried, sacrificing his life in the battle of Sempach in order to make a way for liberty. Paul certainly knew of the self-sacrificing bravery of the 300 Spartans at Thermopylae, and possibly their epitaph went through his mind as he penned these words.

Ὁ χεῖν', ἀγγελλεῖν Λακεδαιμονιοῖς ὅτι τηδε

Καιμεθα τοῖς κεινων ῥημασι πειθομενοι.

But what about Christ, who died for us when we were absolutely worthless? Paul answers in the next verse, replacing the somewhat vague term *ἀσθενεῖς* with the very concrete and specific word *ἁμαρτωλοῖ*, taking this word in its widest and deepest sense. God commends His love, lets His love shine forth in its brightest lustre, in that Christ died in our stead when we were putrid with sin. No parallel can be found to that love anywhere.

Paul does not stop to explain the matter, he proceeds on the assumption that everybody is familiar with the sacrificial character of Christ's death. Paul had spoken about His death as an *ἀπολυτρωσις* (ch. 3:24), had

said that in His blood Christ is our ἰλαστήριον (v. 25); he had said that Christ was delivered into death because of our *παραπτώματα*, and was raised because of our δικαίωσις (ch. 4:25). He can now presuppose all this and state the meaning of Christ's death in terms of justification, and proceed from this with a *conclusio a maiore ad minus*, or perhaps better *a peiore ad melius*. He says, Much more now, our justification having taken place in His blood, etc. We note that Paul uses the participle of the aorist, not of the present nor of the perfect. The present would point to the action as being in progress, and the perfect would stress the result of the completed action, viz., that we are righteous by virtue of our justification. The aorist stresses the fact that justification actually took place, it took place in the blood of Jesus. This being the case, we shall be saved from God's wrath. Paul had spoken about the wrath of God as being revealed from heaven on all godlessness and unrighteousness of men (ch. 1:18); he had warned that they who despised the call to repentance which issues from God's goodness, were treasuring up for themselves wrath on the day of wrath (ch. 2:4, 5). He now draws the conclusion that, since justification was performed by the blood of Jesus, we shall be saved from wrath in every form (ἀπὸ τῆς ὀργῆς).

So far Paul has spoken in terms of justification. He now illustrates what he has said, by substituting the term καταλλάσσειν. Thus, For if we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, our reconciliation having been achieved, shall we be saved in His life.

In determining the meaning of the last phrase, ἐν τῇ ζωῇ αὐτοῦ, it would seem best to remember ch. 4:25, that Christ was delivered for our offenses, but raised again for our justification. If the death of Jesus accomplishes great things for us, how much more His resurrection and life? *Vivit*, Luther wrote on the wall of his room, to have the fact constantly before his eyes for his own consolation.

Since Paul is speaking of καταλλάσσειν, instead of δικαιουν, he changes with the figure also the name which he applies to us. When he spoke of justification he called us sinners, for as sinners we stand in need of justification. When he changes over to καταλλάσσειν he calls us ἐχθροί, enemies.

In what sense is the word enemy here to be taken, in the active or in the passive sense? Does Paul want to say that we hated God, or that we were hated by God? It is true, we were ἀσεβεις by nature, godless, we were ἁμαρτωλοί, sinners; we were ἀσθενεις, worthless, contemptible. We deserved God's wrath and should be hated by God, should be His enemies in the passive sense of the word. Yet that is not what Paul has in mind. He rather views the enmity as a state or condition. As in v. 1 of this chapter he had said that, our justification having been achieved, we now have peace—not a feeling of relaxation, but peace as an actual state of affairs, as the cessation of hostilities—so now, going back to the time before peace was declared, he speaks of us as being enemies. That was our status before God. Though it is true that we by our sins showed hostility to God and His holy will; though it is likewise true that by our sins we forfeited the fatherly love of our God and incurred His wrath; yet Paul is here speaking of objective conditions, both of peace and of enmity.

A καταλλαγή took place. It was brought about by the death of God's Son. This does not mean a change in our personal attitude towards God, nor a change in His personal attitude toward us. In spite of the fact that we by our sins had aroused His righteous wrath, He had never wavered in His love toward us; and the more we burdened ourselves with sin and guilt, the more we displayed our aversion to His holy will, all the more His pitying love rose to ever greater heights in its efforts to save us, and finally brought the unbelievable sacrifice of His own Son. Thus the status of enmity was changed into one of peace. That is the καταλλαγή.

The objective nature of the καταλλαγή is beautifully set forth by Lenski in his commentary on Romans. Although we quoted his words some fifteen years ago they will bear repeating. They are as pertinent today as they ever were.

“Reconciliation ... signifies that *through Christ's death God changed our status*. By our enmity, our sin, our ungodliness (all synonymous) we had gotten ourselves into the desperate status that deserved nothing from God but wrath, penalty, damnation, and unless God did something *to change this our status*, it would compel him to treat us thus. By means of Christ's death (δία) God changed this into an utterly different status, one that despite our enmity, etc., enabled him to go on commending to us his love, this very love that changed our status, this love that impelled Christ to die for us hostile enemies of God... A change had to take place in our case, and we could not make it ourselves, God had to make it. It took the sacrificial death of his Son to do it... Being

enemies we were reconciled to God. *This is the objective act.* It wrought a change with or upon these enemies, not within them. It as yet did not turn their enmity into friendship, did not make the world the kingdom. *It changed the unredeemed into the redeemed world.* The instant Christ died the whole world of sinners was changed completely. It was now a world for whose sin atonement had been made, no longer a world with sins unatoned” (pp. 355ff.—Emphasis mine. M.).

How any one with this grasp of the objective nature of the καταλλαγή can still refuse to accept the objective nature of the justification of which Paul is here speaking is difficult to understand. Yet Lenski transcribes δικαιωθέντες νῦν ἐν τῷ αἵματι αὐτοῦ as we “who now already are justified in connection with Christ’s blood” in contradistinction from “all who will yet be justified, as we already have been” (p. 353). — Paul introduces his remarks on our καταλλαγή as ἐχθροί with an explanatory γαρ. But what of the explanation if the καταλλαγή and the δικαιωσις, which it is supposed to elucidate, do not refer to the same thing? A logical *quaternio terminorum* confuses and deceives. In order not to charge Paul with one we must treat δικαιωθέντες and καταλλαγέντες as covering the same case and understand the former as objective as, admittedly, is the latter.

There is a subjective way of speaking about καταλλαγή, as Paul does in the second half of the following verse, δι’ οὗ (Χριστοῦ) νῦν τὴν καταλλαγὴν ἐλάβομεν; through whom we have now received the καταλλαγή. The καταλλαγή is a ready blessing, prepared for the whole world, for every individual member of the world, brought to every one by means of the Word. Through faith we receive, we appropriate this blessing. We enjoy the reconciliation as we become subjectively reconciled. Καταλλαγὴν λαβεῖν of Rom. 5 equals the καταλλαγῆναι of II Cor. 5.

Here seems to be a convenient place for inserting a brief study of the double compound, ἀποκαταλλάσσω, as used in the NT it occurs twice in the epistle to the Colossians.

The Colossian congregation, not founded by Paul himself, most of whose members had never met Paul personally, was troubled by a peculiar error. From remarks in Paul’s epistle we may infer that it consisted to a great extent of Judaistic elements and contained also some elements that look like incipient Gnosticism. With their smooth talk, πιθανολογία, the errorists made an impression on the Colossians. —How does Paul meet the situation? He does not with keen dialectic refute the errors of the Judaistic-Gnostic falsifiers of the Gospel; he begins by fortifying the shaky faith of the Colossians. He makes Christ great before their eyes. He calls Him the εἰκὼν of the invisible God, the προτοτοκος before all creation, through whom and with reference to whom all created things exist. He also calls Him the Head of the Church.

In unfolding this thought Paul uses the word ἀποκαταλλάσσω, the first time in a parenthetical remark inserted in the following statement: Who (Christ) is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that he might be in all things the preeminent leader ... having made peace by his cross-shed blood. Into this statement Paul inserts the explanatory remark: Because all the fulness pleased to dwell in Him and through Him ἀποκαταλλάξαι all things to Him. —If all fulness dwelled in Him, not accidentally but by deliberate choice, then nothing is left outside Him. God was in Christ, so Paul says in Second Corinthians. In Colossians he repeats the thought later: For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily (ch. 2:9). This fulness determined not only to dwell in Him, but to achieve its lofty purpose through Him, namely, ἀποκαταλλάξαι τὰ πάντα εἰς αὐτόν. The meaning of the verb may be gathered from the participle that Paul uses in the main clause, εἰρηνοποιήσας, Christ definitely establishing peace by His blood which He shed on the cross. By establishing the relation of peace between God and man Christ achieved the ἀποκαταλλάξαι.

The manner of this transaction Paul now carries out with greater detail and special application to the Colossians. Why should an ἀποκαταλλαγή be necessary? Because they were ἀπηλλοτριωμένοι (a perfect participle, denoting a state of alienation) and ἐχθροί. This state was brought about by their mind in their wicked works. (The dative διανοία does not modify the noun ἐχθροί, but states the reason for the situation.) But now Christ ἀποκατήλλαξεν them by giving His very flesh into death, to present them as holy and blameless and unrebukeable in His judgment by the sacrifice of Himself.

It appears that the meaning of the double compound is the same as that of the simple compound with the idea added that this brings them *back*, restores them to a former position.

C. Verse 20

Ἐπεὶ Χριστοῦ οὖν πρεσβεύομεν, for Christ we then serve as ambassadors. With οὖν Paul connects this thought to the foregoing discussion and makes his application. It was God, and God alone, who brought about the decided change in our social standing, in our status before Him, particularly before His tribunal. He achieved it through Christ, to whom He imputed the sins of the world, and in whom all divine fulness dwelt bodily. God alone through Christ alone. In what spirit will those whom He appoints to administer the καταλλαγή perform their work?

Ἐπεὶ Χριστοῦ, Paul says emphatically. They will consider it throughout as Christ's work, being careful neither to add, nor to omit, nor to alter one iota. They will discharge their task with awe and reverence. Did Christ offer Himself as a sacrifice, Himself who is none less than the Son of God, to achieve the καταλλαγή: Then the called ministers will tremble at handling so costly, so dearly bought a treasure. They will be constrained by a Christ-like love in administering the blood-bought καταλλαγή, careful that the treasure itself be preserved unsullied, anxious that no one for whom the καταλλαγή has been prepared be prevented from enjoying it, either by a falsification of the message, or by a crude handling on the part of the administrant.

We note that the verb πρεσβεύομεν, being the present tense, here does not refer to a specific act performed at the present moment, but indicates an activity in which Paul and his associates were regularly engaged. To serve as ambassadors of Christ was their occupation, about which Paul has been speaking all this while in this epistle, and about which, since ch. 4:1, he has been pointing out that they do not grow weary. How can any one who is aware of the terrible consequences of sin for his own person, of the state of hostility which exists between him and His violated God, and has then heard the heart-cheering, soul-reviving news that through Christ's sacrifice his status has been changed, his guilt has been canceled and peace declared—how can such a one grow weary of hearing, of proclaiming, of living the καταλλαγή? Even in the face of insusceptibility and indifference, in the face of opposition and apparent failure?

An ambassador of the καταλλαγή will perform his mission, as Paul now phrases it, ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος δι' ἡμῶν, in the realization that it is God Himself who is channeling His appeal through us. He will remember that God stretches out His hand beckoning the people to come, He draws them to Himself with loving-kindness, in seeming slackness He may defer punishment, “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (II Pt. 3:9). Yes, He even endures with much long-suffering, with oft-repeated strenuous attempts at rescue, the vessels of wrath that are already ripe for destruction.

This God is proclaiming His καταλλαγή through us: can we do other than as Paul now continues: δεόμεθα ὑπερὶ Χριστοῦ, καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ, we plead in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God?

The thought that Paul here expresses with the aorist passive of καταλλάσσειν is the same for which he used two words in Rm. 5: καταλλαγὴν λαμβάνειν. The καταλλαγή is an accomplished fact, a ready blessing, achieved through the death of Christ, administered by heralding the message (λόγος) of the καταλλαγή. Now by the God-appointed heralds the invitation is extended to all, καταλλάγητε, or καταλλαγὴν λάβετε. Must the glorious, blood-bought blessing go begging among those who are to enjoy its inestimable benefits? Yes! —Yet the God-appointed heralds do not grow weary pleading, begging.

D. Verse 21

In the last verse of the chapter, v. 21, St. Paul rises to unprecedented heights, in a ringing statement of the lofty truth of the Gospel. Τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ὑπερὶ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ: the One who knew not sin He made (to be) sin in our stead, so that we on our part might become God's righteousness in Him.

The One who knew not sin, this does not merely mean that Christ never committed a sin in thought, word, or deed; that every thought which He ever conceived, every pleasure that He ever felt, every desire that ever stirred in His heart, was absolutely without stain of sin, sweet and pure; not merely that He was free from

every stain of original sin: it means that He was the One whom sin could not reach, the One who could not be tempted with sin, as St. James expresses it (ch. 1:13), the One who was holy, harmless, undefiled, *separate from sinners*, and higher than the heavens” (Heb. 7:26).—Only God is such a One. Man was tempted in Paradise, and succumbed. The holy angels, although now *confirmati in bono*, were in the beginning subject to temptation, and a great number of them fell away. God alone is *ἀπειραστος κακῶν*, so far removed from sin, so antagonistic to sin, that sin can do nothing but nauseate Him. Such a One was Christ.

True, the Word was made flesh, and as such it became subject to temptation. The temptation that Jesus endured in the flesh was no shadowboxing; it taxed His powers of resistance to the utmost. He was exhausted in body and mind when the tempter left Him in the wilderness. In spite of the fierce struggle sin had not seared His conscience in the least. He did not learn to know sin. He knew no sin. Although the temptations were repeated with a vehemence that staggers our imagination, particularly in the last hours of His life—He shuddered to drink the cup, and wrestled with death till He sweat blood which fell to the ground in heavy drops; on the cross He was forsaken of God and cruelly mocked and tortured by His enemies: yet He never wavered; He prayed, Not My will, but Thine be done; in faith He clung to His Father, and prayed for His enemies that God would not lay their sins on them, but on Him. He thus clearly demonstrated that He was One who knew no sin.

Yet He was made to be sin for us. Paul has stated above that this was done by imputation. He need not repeat. But the immensity of the matter is brought home to us by the expression that God *made* Him to be sin.

The planned fruit of all this is that we might be made God’s righteousness in Him, again by imputation,—God’s righteousness, about which Isaiah prophesied, which Paul extolled in Rm. 1:17, as being revealed in the Gospel from faith to faith, so that God is both just and justifier in one. Paul speaks about δικαιοσύνη on many places in Romans, and especially do we compare ch. 3:9 of our present epistle, where the *διακονία τῆς δικαιοσύνης* stands in contrast to *διακονία τῆς κατακρίσεως*. Δικαιοσύνη is a righteousness established and pronounced in a court proceeding.

In Christ we have God’s δικαιοσύνη, established and declared in God’s court, the validity of which dare be questioned by no one.

VI. Chapter 6:1–10

In the closing words of the previous chapter Paul rose to unprecedented heights in describing the work which God did for us: He made Him who knew not sin to be sin for us, that we might become God’s righteousness in Him. This work of God he called the *καταλλαγή*.

Paul and his associates have been called to administer this blessing that God prepared at so stupendous a cost. Paul and his associates are ambassadors of God; God through them is urging the people, His former enemies, the curse laden sinners, to accept the offered *καταλλαγή*.

This is for Paul a trust of the highest kind. On the one hand it fills him with exquisite joy that he was “allowed (i.e. approved) of God to be put in trust with the gospel” (I Thess. 2:4), on the other, he trembles because of the responsibility. It was from the bottom of his heart, on the basis of his own inner experience, that he exhorted the Ephesian elders: “Take heed unto yourselves and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers to feed the church of God, *which he hath purchased with his own blood*” (Acts 20:28). Paul as an ambassador of God was deeply concerned, on the one hand, that he deliver the glorious message of God unsullied, unadulterated, unabridged in a manner becoming its grandeur, and on the other, that it reach and benefit all consciences, for which it is intended.

What impressions must these thoughts make on the Corinthians? They had listened to false apostles, who cast suspicions on Paul’s sincerity and on the reliability of his message. Will not all their doubts and suspicions have to melt when they realize with how grand an office God has entrusted Paul, and how conscientiously he administers it? Will they not perhaps begin to feel ashamed of themselves to such a degree that they forget the blessed message which Paul had brought to them with its blessed and comforting meaning for their conscience?

Such a result would be defeating Paul's purpose. In the end of the first chapter he described his work as that of "helpers of your joy." Then he had to use sharp language in dealing with their faults—to be "beside ourselves" he called it in v. 13 of the previous chapter. He had to hurt them, make them sorry, cause them grief. But this was not an end in itself; it was just as when God does His *opus alienum* in applying the Law to us, to lead them to repentance.

These considerations we must bear in mind if we are to appreciate properly the thoughts and feelings that fill the heart of Paul and the words in which they overflow from his heart in the next section.

Structure

The structure of the section under consideration arrests our attention. It is unique. It is one long sentence, yet not at all involved. It contains a parenthetical remark, which demands our special attention. Verse 2 is parenthetical.

In v. 1 Paul states the nature of his work, and by means of a participial construction adds in v. 3 and 4a his aim of keeping his ministry blameless, beyond reproach. So far there is nothing unusual in the construction. But now begins a long list of modifiers, and we must take a look at their grouping.

First we find a group of ten in v. 4b and 5. But these ten are not simply an enumeration; there is system in their arrangement, a grouping according to content of the terms, and subordination of some to others. While nine of the terms are simple nouns, the first one of the ten stands out from the rest by having an adjective modifier: "much patience." A little closer look will readily reveal that each one of the nine following ones furnishes Paul an opportunity to practice much patience. Thus we really have a group of nine held together by the concept of much patience. If we look at these nine, it will appear that they fall into three smaller groups of three members each. The first three speak of afflictions in a general way: "afflictions, necessities, distresses." The second three consist of rather specific afflictions: "stripes, imprisonments, tumults." While Paul had no choice in these six, they were inflicted on him and he was purely passive in the matter, the last three were, in part at least, assumed by him more or less voluntarily in the interest of the Gospel: "labors, watchings, fastings."

Paul continues with a group of four nouns, each one consisting of a single word prefixed by the preposition *en*. Since the first two denote an inner quality, while the second pair denotes one which manifests itself in a transitive way, terminating on some object outside itself, the four terms are easily arranged as a square with purity and knowledge on the one side, and patience and goodness on the other.

This group of four is followed by another of the same number, each member, however, consisting of two words: a noun with its modifier, each compound term preceded by the preposition *en*. These four terms again readily fall into two pairs, the modifiers of the first two being adjectives, of the second two genitives: in a holy spirit, in unfeigned love; in a word of truth, in power of God.

This again is followed by a square of four ideas, however not of uniform shape. The fact that they are to be considered as belonging together is marked by the preposition *δια*, in the sense of *by means* or *in* the first case, then as *passing through* something in the other. The first speaks of the implements that Paul employs, which are those of *δικαιοσύνη* exclusively, since they are found on the right hand and on the left. The second consists of two pairs of opposites arranged chiasmically: through glory and shame, through evil report and good report.

While this group showed some artistic manipulation to bring out the number four, the next one shows this artifice in a still more pronounced degree. The members also of the three groups so far have been constantly increasing in size: first a single noun, then a noun with a modifier, lastly pairs of contrasting concepts. The idea of contrasts is continued in the final group, where each member is introduced by *ὡς*. Paul is acting *as* such and such a character in his work.

This group consists of seven members, which are divided into three and four respectively. Paul marks this division by changing the construction in the third member, following a participle with an indicative introduced by *ἰδοῦ*. Thus we have: as deceivers and true, as unknown and becoming well known, as dying and, behold, we live. —This triad is followed by: as chastised and not killed, as grieved but always rejoicing, as beggars but making many rich, as possessing nothing and controlling all things.

Once the structure of this unique sentence has been visualized, the separate expressions, as a rule, are readily understood, and do not call for any lengthy discussion.

We shall take up the main statement first, as it is contained in verses 1, 3, and 4a; then the parenthesis of v. 2; then the groups of modifiers in v. 4b–10.

A. Verses 1, 3, and 4a

Now as helpers we also urge you not to receive the grace of God in vain, (we) giving no occasion for stumbling to anyone, in order that the (our) administration be not blamed, but in every respect showing ourselves as God's ministers.

Συνεργοῦντες, helpers, assistants, laboring jointly with some one. With whom? In the foregoing Paul had carried out the idea that God in preparing the καταλλαγή for the world had also established the message of the καταλλαγή, and thus had given to us the administration. Then he said that he and his co-laborers were serving as God's ambassadors and God was urging (people) through them. Bearing this in mind we see Paul as laboring jointly with God.

But then Paul had addressed the Corinthians in particular. He had offered them the καταλλαγή and had pleaded with them to accept it. Plainly, he was a helper to them also.

He now places this idea emphatically at the head of the sentence, at the head of the whole paragraph. "Helpers" is the controlling concept. Because Paul is dominated by the idea that his position is that of a helper, assisting God in carrying out His great work, and helping the Corinthians to appropriate and enjoy it, he does what he is doing and in the manner in which he is doing it. It is not his own enterprise, it is a trust.

It is important that we take note of the word χάρις. Paul has been called to administer a divine blessing. In the previous chapter he had called it a διακονία τῆς καταλλαγῆς, which is carried out by delivering a message, as an ambassador of God earnestly pleading for the acceptance of the καταλλαγή. He now calls it an administration of χάρις. It was χάρις which moved God to make Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, to make Him to undergo the agony of death in our stead, so that we might be considered as having undergone this agony ourselves, so that what we are now through Christ's sacrifice might unmistakably appear as a new creation, all stemming from the fact that we were made the righteousness of God in Christ. We recall the classical definition that St. Paul gives us of χάρις in Rom. 11:6: "If by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace."

As a helper of God Paul endeavors to bring home to his hearers this grace of God, urging them to accept it by opening their hearts in faith to the message which he proclaims. And as a helper of God he continues his work by urging them not to receive this grace in vain, making of the grace an empty, meaningless thing (εἰς κενόν). This could happen in various ways, not only by considering it lightly and neglecting it, but also by attempting to add one's own merits to God's grace. This latter error was very rampant in Paul's day. The Judaizers taught the Christians that, in order to secure God's grace, they must fortify, reinforce it with their own merits by observing circumcision and the other ceremonial laws of Moses. According to Paul's definition in Rom. 11 God's grace and human merits do not mix. Any attempt to add human merits in any form or degree to God's grace will utterly ruin it and lead to its loss. In that case grace had been received εἰς κενόν.

This imposes certain obligations on Paul as a helper of God. He expresses it thus: μηδεμίαν ἐν μηδενὶ διδόντες προσκοπήν, scrupulously avoiding in every respect to give the slightest occasion for stumbling. The double negative, μηδεμίαν ἐν μηδενὶ, does not produce a positive, but reinforces the negative idea. Paul is most anxious and apprehensive lest he cause offense in any respect. For "offense" he here does not use the strong word σκάνδαλον, but a milder term, προσκοπή. While σκάνδαλον would indicate a complete loss of faith in spiritual death, προσκοπή indicates a stumbling, a momentary disturbance of faith. Paul is careful to avoid giving even the slightest offense.

His aim is: ἵνα μὴ μωμηθῇ ἡ διακονία, that our ministry be not blamed.

Paul had changed his plans of travel. Originally he announced to the Corinthians that he would visit their church first. From them he would go up to Macedonia, and then return to them, before he would go up to

Jerusalem to deliver the collection which he was gathering. For certain very good reasons he changed his plans, and went to Macedonia first. This change his detractors in Corinth construed as fickleness, and from this jumped to the conclusion that Paul's Gospel was unreliable. They attached a blame to his ministry and tried to make it stick. Paul now reminds the Corinthians how careful he is to keep his ministry clear. With this he is not telling them anything new. He had spent 18 months in their midst, where they could observe him at close range. They ought to know from their extended observations how Paul lived only for his ministry, that he steered clear of fickleness as well as of stubbornness (cf. ch. 1:17).

Having stated negatively the pitfalls that he is most careful to avoid, he now turns to a positive expression, stating that in every respect he and his associates present themselves as God's ministers. What this means in detail he will carry out in v. 4b–10. —We here note only that ὡς θεοῦ διάκονοι is the nominative case. He might have used the accusative. That would have made the phrase predicative, and the meaning would have been: we present ourselves to be the ministers of God. The nominative makes the statement stronger: We being servants of God present ourselves in the manner to be described in the following verses.

B. The Parenthesis in v. 2

Lenski thinks that to assume a parenthesis in v. 2 is derogatory to the style of Paul. "Why let grammar become pedantic and wooden? ... Paul *used* grammar, used it for what it is intended, a flexible and a beautiful medium for expressing thought" (p. 1093). Exactly. But a parenthesis is a legitimate and frequently a highly effective form for expressing a thought. In its form it usually interrupts the regular construction of a sentence. It injects a thought that may be presupposed in the regularly constructed part of the sentence, but might be overlooked if not expressly stated. The parenthesis effectively guards against such loss by oversight, without hindering the easy flow of the main sentence. —Think of the highly effective way in which Jesus made use of a parenthesis in His discussion with the Jews: "If he called them gods unto whom the word of God came—and *the scripture cannot be broken*—say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?" (John 10:35, 36).

In the part of our text now under consideration a truth which is tacitly assumed in the whole discourse and which makes the words of Paul so very weighty, is inserted parenthetically into his discourse, in v. 2, viz., that now the time has come of which the prophets spoke of old, and that Paul's work among the Corinthians is a part of the fulfillment of their prophecy.

Paul quotes from the book of Isaiah, ch. 49:8. When Paul quotes from the Old Testament he does not look for some word that may serve as a convenient proof text for some of his statements; he usually selects a verse that briefly summarizes the thoughts developed in a lengthier section. In our case we must consider verses 1–13 of Isa. 49. Here the Servant of the Lord complains: "I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for naught and in vain" (v. 4). But He receives the assurance from the Lord: "In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee" (v. 8). His work is outlined in the following words: "It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved (rather: the desolations; Luther *das Verwahrlosete*) of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth" (v. 6). The section in Is. 49 closes with a shout of rejoicing: "Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people and will have mercy upon his afflicted" (v. 13). Isaiah clearly refers to the times of the New Testament. Already Simeon borrowed from Isaiah's language in his *Nunc dimittis*: "A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel" (Luke 2:32).

Paul could well say: "Behold, now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation"—and those remarks served wonderfully to reinforce his exhortation not to squander the grace of God or to let the grand opportunity slip away. At the same time his extreme caution in avoiding every kind of offense appears in a new, impressive light.

C. Verses 4b–10

We have studied the general structure of this section above; it remains that we now look at a few details.

Ἐπομονῇ πολλῇ, full endurance, is required of God's διάκονοι, if they wish to encourage their hearers not to receive the grace of God in vain, and at the same time guard against the danger that, due to their conduct or some neglect on their part, a blame were with some show of right attached to their ministry. They must show by their ὑπομονῇ that the grace of God which they proclaim has fortified their hearts sufficiently so that they will cheerfully endure any suffering which the enemies may inflict on them, θλίψεις, ἀνάγκαι, στενοχωρίαί, no matter what concrete form they may assume, whether πληγαί, as Paul and Silas endured in Philippi, or φυλακαί, as happened to the same two men in the same place, or ἀκαταστασίαί, as brought a stoning to Paul in Lystra. Πολλῇ endurance is required if, in the face of such sufferings, the strenuous labors of bringing the Gospel to the people are to be kept up under dire privations for lack of food and lack of sleep.

Ἐν ἀγνότητι, in purity. If any impure motive can be suspected in the διάκονοι of God, this would at once cast a shadow on the message that they carry. The purity of God's grace must be reflected in the purity of the ambassadors' conduct. Their conduct must show also γνώσις, a knowledge based on experience and coupled with interest and confidence. Else they might rightly be told: "Physician, heal thyself." A bald-headed barber's recommendation of some hair-restorer does not carry much conviction. —In keeping with God's patience and His kindly way of dealing with sinners also His διάκονοι must display μακροθυμία and χρηστότης.

In the next group of four the first term, ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ, arrests our attention. All terms used so far denote some characteristic manifested by the διάκονοι of God in their work. Those following do the same. To list the Holy Ghost among them seems incongruous. But does πνεῦμα ἁγίον necessarily mean the third Person of the Trinity? Scripture often speaks of the spirit of a man. May not Paul here be speaking of the spirit in which he performs his work? A διάκονος of God must certainly evince holiness of spirit in his work, a holiness of spirit that is coupled with ἀγάπη ἀνυποκρίτος, a genuine, understanding love. A Christ-like love must constrain him. Zeal of spirit is not sufficient for a minister's work; it must be a holy zeal, the zeal of a holy spirit, which will proclaim the χάρις of God in the manner dictated by unfeigned love. That is the spirit in which our Savior Himself performed His ministry, and that is the type of work that pleases Him in His διάκονοι. —In all sincerity he will employ only the λόγος ἀληθείας, of which the Yea and Amen is in Christ, use it without trickiness or deceit, without resorting to the methods of a κατηλευών. And Himself being an earthen vessel, he will perform his work ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ.

He will use only the implements of δικαιοσύνη. This is the δικαιοσύνη of which Paul declared in the last verse of the previous chapter that we are made the righteousness of God in Christ, since God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, by imputing our trespasses unto Him and having Him undergo the agony of death in our stead. It is the δικαιοσύνη that Paul had placed in contrast to κατακρίσις, as denoting a declaratory judgment of God, acquitting us of our sins. A διάκονος of God will operate with the implements of δικαιοσύνη, and with them only, on the right hand and on the left. If he added anything to them, that would be conclusive evidence of his secretly being ashamed of the Gospel. Troubled consciences will honor him for bringing them the unadulterated message of God's δικαιοσύνη, while men of a Judaistic bent of mind will heap shame on him. Like the false apostles they will smear him with evil reports, while the true believers will speak well of him. A διάκονος of God will not let any of these things throw him off his straight course of employing only implements of righteousness in his ministry.

The double reception which the Gospel has in the world is given picturesque expression by Paul in a group of seven contrasts, which we may transcribe in a free translation: "As deceivers and true, as misunderstood (*verkannt*) and understood perfectly, as dying and behold, we are very much alive; as chastened and not put to death, as being grieved, but always rejoicing, as abject beggars, but making many rich, as having nothing and controlling all things.

If any one conducts the Gospel ministry in such spirit of confidence, can he grow weary of it? Can that spirit of confidence remain hidden from his hearers? It is in agreement with the nature of the Gospel, by which in fact it is produced, which is a power of God unto salvation, and proves itself as such on both the preacher and his hearers.

