

The Just shall live by Faith

Volume 2 - Study 6 Acts 13, and Romans 14 and 15, ... **'the just shall live by faith'**.

C. Ronald Johnson, Christian Wilderness Press: **Acts 13:14,16) 'But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down... Then Paul stood up...'**

Studies – Acts 13:38,39 ...In Jesus is 'forgiveness of sins' and 'justification by faith'.

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These are brief studies, not  
“teachings” or “doctrines.”

Volume 2, Study 6

Doctor Luke, the author of the Book of Acts (of the Apostles) began in chapter 13 describing the work and travels of the Apostle Paul and the Apostle Barnabas who had taken with them John Mark, a young man who was a cousin to Barnabas. (John Mark became the author of the Gospel of Mark.)

However, soon in the work John Mark departed from the work and returned to Jerusalem where was the home base for all of the apostles (except, as it turns out, not for the Apostle Paul). The Council of the Apostles oversaw the work of the apostles among the nations known to them at that time. The Council was located in Jerusalem (but Jerusalem would be destroyed some 60 or so years following the resurrection of Christ Jesus).

I have often pointed out in these short studies, especially in the Gospels, that the author of a book of the Bible would emphasize some aspect of Truth even as he gave detailed accounts of what occurred on certain occasions. In Acts 13, then, we see it: 1) in the beginning of this first ministry trip, we see emphasized the work of God in the Holy Ghost: however, 2) in verse 14 Luke began giving a more detailed account of what occurred in ‘**Antioch in Pisidia**’ where Paul and Barnabas ‘**went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down**’. At this point, then, Luke elaborated Paul's teaching, a doctrine of extreme importance to God's people. The date of that sermon was so early in the Church that possibly Paul and Barnabas did not realize that there would be a vast Church to develop from that time onward.

In the early chapters of Acts, up to the point when the missionary work of Paul began in chapter 13, are 1) *the acts of the apostles* and 2) *the acts of God* as He was developing His Plan outward from the Jews in Jerusalem into the nations of the Gentiles.

In the early part of Acts 13 we see more of the same, but in regards to Paul and Barnabas. However, in 13:14-43 there is described a setting in a synagogue where a very important doctrinal teaching was given. Likely this doctrine had been given earlier to Paul by the Holy Ghost and then through the Spirit by Paul had been taught and fully examined in the scriptures (Old Testament) in the early days of the Church at Antioch (see verse 13:1).

For the first time, Luke made this very important doctrine known to all who would read his long letter (i.e. Acts) sent out to the fast growing and spreading Church.

Therefore, notice how Luke *emphasized* this particular doctrine. The early chapters of Acts contain the acts of the apostles and *little or no doctrine*. Upon finishing this doctrinal teaching by Paul in 13:14-43, Luke resumed writing about *the acts of the apostles* for several more chapters with almost no doctrine: setting apart this particular teaching or doctrine of the Church.

I have no doubt in 13:6-12 (which ends with '**the deputy...believed** (i.e. faithd), **being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord**') that this doctrine was personally taught by Paul to the deputy who had become privileged to hear it before the Jews and Gentiles in the synagogue at Antioch of Pisidia. Consider that no doctrine was mentioned in chapter 14 except in verse 22. In chapter 15 is but a confirmation (6-11) that the Gospel was for both Israelites and Gentiles. In chapter 16 is no doctrine. In chapter 17 verse 3 was declared again from the Olden scriptures '**that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and this Jesus...is Christ**', and in verses 30 and 31 is repeated that *God had raised Jesus from the dead*.

Therefore, we see that most chapters of the Book of Acts are about *the acts of the*

*apostles and what God was doing in the early Church.* In this short study, then, we shall visit the very pertinent doctrine of Acts 13:14-43 where for the first time the doctrine was put in writing to be made known to the early Church. Besides the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, this doctrine is the most essential doctrine for *the advancement* of the Church.

I need not remind the reader that innumerable things happened in God's work through the apostles and through many others, which were not recorded in the Bible; and so the things that were recorded are altogether important...not just in recorded details, but also in the *teachings of doctrine* by the Bible's authors. As first mentioned above: *I have often pointed out in these short studies, especially in the Gospels, that the author of a book of the Bible would emphasize some aspect of Truth even as he gave detailed accounts of what occurred on certain occasions.*

Read now Acts 13:1-13 to see how this ministry of Paul and Barnabas began in the Holy Ghost and how it proceeded in force as God worked in His power to prove to all (who had been enabled by God to believe) (i.e. faith) that this early and ongoing work was of Him.

(See also Volume 2 - Study 5 for more on "the Holy Ghost as differentiated from Holy Spirit in the King James Version translation.)

**Acts 13:1) Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.**

**13:2) As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said [i.e. to the leadership of the church], Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they [i.e. the whole church] had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they [i.e. the church] sent them away.**

**13:4) So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.**

**13:5) And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister.**

This was where the "field" of ministry began. Note in the beginning that Paul and Barnabas had to preach where there were Jews and Jewish synagogues, for they could preach only out of the Bible (their Bible, our Old Testament). Few people in those places (the nations) studied the Bible and most of the people had not even heard of the Bible (the Jewish Scriptures). *Bible preaching and teaching* (i.e. regardless of 'signs') initially had to have for an audience those who, at least to some extent, knew and respected the Jewish Scriptures. (This is why quoting scripture to people who disrespect scripture only makes them laugh.)

Moreover, though Paul and Barnabas had a compelling desire and duty to spread the new Gospel to the Gentiles, Paul had a particularly deep desire toward the Israelites among the nations. Thus, by the leading of the Holy Spirit and the energizing of the Holy Ghost, the earliest preaching began '**first to the Jews**' in their synagogues among the nations.

To this point Luke had only recorded the fact of preaching, but not the details of preaching. However, in verses 14-43 are recorded important particulars in the preaching, which from then on would be preached as Paul and Barnabas worked from the Jewish Scriptures.

**13:6-13) And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus: Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and**

thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord. 13:13) Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem.

13:14) But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down.

Remember that the people in this congregation were learned and were familiar with the Jewish Scriptures.

13:15,16) And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent [a person] unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on. Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience.

Note that ‘and ye that fear God’ were Gentiles (i.e. people of the nations) who were believers with the Jews and were familiar with and followed the Jewish Scriptures; and they gathered with the Jews and worshiped in the synagogue. Thus, Paul shall be preaching from passages which all these people knew.

13:17-22) The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought he them out of it. And about the time of forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness. And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Chanaan, he divided their land to them by lot. And after that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years. And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

Through the means of David ‘a man after mine own heart’ God shall ‘fulfill all my will’. Here, then, is where Paul brought in the new Gospel of Jesus Christ as promised by God in the Jewish Scriptures.

13:23) Of this man's seed [i.e. David] hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus:

Paul and Barnabas in their travels had learned that Jewish communications had been going through the nations before them, informing the Jews and their adherents about what had been going on in the land of Israel and in Jerusalem. Thus, the people of this congregation knew about *the revival of repentance* that God had been working through John the Baptist. Moreover, they had heard about *a new Jewish sect* that was perhaps misleading Jews and Jewish adherents away from “the Faith of Israel”; that is, the sect taught that the Messiah had come...and well, “who knows what to believe about all this”?

13:24,25) [Paul continues] When John had first preached before his coming [i.e. the coming of Jesus the Messiah] [about] the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John fulfilled his course [i.e. before he died at the hand of Herod], he said, Whom think ye that I am? I am not he. But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose.

God had used John the Baptist in a mighty way; so much so that *the revival of repentance* had been spreading out from Israel into the nations. This being the case, then, Paul wanted the people to understand that John had proclaimed that he was not the Messiah; and then Paul introduced *the name of Jesus*, which Name he then connected to *the revival of*

*repentance* that had become famous by God working in the preaching of John.

The revival had been spreading out from the land of Israel and it was being worked among God's people Israel among the nations. We are told little of it in the New Testament, but there are inferences to it. An example is in the preaching and teaching of Apollos in Acts 18 and 19.

In the Book of Acts, then, Doctor Luke recorded *the fullness of refusal by the Israelites as a whole* to accept Jesus Christ as the (their) Messiah. We saw it in Jerusalem and now we see it in the nations. It occurred over a period of some years and in many places where the majority of Israelites rejected Jesus.

It happened not so much out of unbelief of their own Scriptures, but was *due to jealousy that God was including the Gentiles*, whom the Jews thought of as spiritually beneath them. Indeed, even for some years a significant number of Jewish Christians continued to believe that Gentiles had also to be subject to the Mosaic Law.

**13:26) Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent.**

Here Paul listed three groups of people to whom the new Gospel is addressed, for he did not know these people to whom he was preaching: 1) **'Men and brethren'** were Israelites. 2) **'Children of the stock of Abraham'** were the many other groups (nations) of people to whom the Messiah was also Promised; that is, the Promise by means of the Covenant to Abraham of the coming of Christ to the people of the loins of Abraham. 3) **'Whosoever among you feareth God'** are all the other people of the world in this congregation who had become adherents to the Jewish Scriptures and the God portrayed therein. These also were believers (i.e. fathers) in the prophetic promises extended to all mankind.

**13:27) For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not [i.e. knew not in the sense of God revealing these things to them], nor yet [knew in the same manner] the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them [i.e. those prophesies] in condemning him.**

This congregation on this Sabbath day had just heard the synagogue rulers read to them out of the Jewish Scriptures from the prophets (verse 15). It was likely that the Holy Ghost had arranged that those scriptures just heard were about the Messiah, of which Paul was now speaking to them and quoting scriptures.

**13:28,29) And though they [in Jerusalem] found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre.**

Regarding those old scriptures (i.e. **'all that was written of him'**) we see that *the condemnation of Jesus* was prophesied to be 'fulfilled' in Jerusalem and nowhere else. It was to be fulfilled by the leaders and the people of Jerusalem. (To put it differently, God foreknew each and every person who would thus be involved: from each Jewish leader, to each Roman, to each person in the yelling crowds of the streets.)

**13:30,31) But God raised him from the dead: And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people.**

**13:32,33) And [now] we [are here before you Israelite brethren on this Sabbath day to] declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made [long ago] unto the fathers, God hath [recently] fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.**

**13:34-37) And as concerning that he raised him [i.e. Jesus] up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption [of the dead], he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on**

**sleep, and was laid [to rest] unto his fathers, and [thus] saw corruption: But he [i.e. Jesus], whom God raised again, saw no corruption.**



- Here is the essential doctrine for the growth of the Church which I want to emphasize.

**13:38) [Then] Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:**

The Law of Moses also '*preached unto you the forgiveness of sins*'; indeed, most of its sacrifices were for sins; and Moses had declared that another one like unto him (i.e. unto Moses) would come from God and the people were to switch over and heed him (i.e. the Messiah). Therefore, it was understood in the Law that the coming of the Messiah would bring in a new Covenant. (The new Covenant had been promised in the earliest Covenant to Abraham, with the prophets emphasizing it again and again.)

For what are '**the sure mercies of David**' in verse 34 see Isaiah 55:1-6 and then read the forgoing chapters of Isaiah 50-54, which have to do with the Messiah coming to Israel and a new kingdom.

**13:39) And by him all that believe [i.e. faith] are justified from all things, from which [i.e. the 'all things'] ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.**

The word 'believe' is the *verb form* of the word 'faith'. Example: We use the word "doubt" both ways 1) as a verb "do not doubt it" and 2) as a noun "you seem to have some doubt". Similarly the word 'faith' should be used both ways 1) as a verb "I faith in Jesus" and 2) as a noun "the just shall live by faith". When you see "have faith" or "believe" in scripture, actually it is one Greek word - the *verb form of faith* - and I think that the verb form of the word should best be translated 'faith'. The reason for this is that when we typically think of 'believe' we think of a mental function, but scripture refers to a spiritual function. I.e. To truly believe in God is of faith; mental thought alone does not work.

1) Note that 'the law of Moses' gave 'life' only by obedience as covered in the bounds of the law (i.e. for Israel, the Mosaic Law did not cover things outside the law).

- For 'life' and 'justification' *within the law* see: Matthew 19:16-19; Romans 2:10-13; 7:12-14; and 10:5.

- For 'life' and 'justification' *within faith* see: Romans 3:27,28; 8:3,4; 10:4.

- Moreover, *always before and during the time of the law*, God's truth was that 'the just [i.e. the justified] shall live by faith' (Habakkuk 2:4).

2) Note that now, within the new Covenant (i.e. in Jesus the Messiah), that justification has become a function of *faith within obedience to God* (even as *it had been very early before the time of the law*.) In other words, regarding justification by faith, God had started it with the sins of Adam and Eve (see the story of Cain and Abel), and He finished or completed the process in Jesus Christ. (There are always more to the things of God than our little minds can process. Indeed, more remains in God's processes until Jesus Christ comes again.)

3) Paul would continually preach that Christ did not die and resurrect to make the Mosaic Law better; quite the contrary, the Resurrection had made the law *obsolete*. Indeed, Paul called the new Covenant 'the law of Christ'.

4) Yet, understand that the new Covenant in Christ contains so much more than justification...and that the new faith-justification works in regards to '**all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses**'. Indeed, a great many things in the time of the law were outside the law of Moses. That was why Israelites tried to stay away from Gentiles so as to stay clear of the things of the Gentiles, which most of their things were outside the law. Now, however, the Gospel is to the Gentiles also and so the Jew-

ish Christians needed no longer to fear things outside the law, because justification by faith in Christ covers all such things. (An example of things outside the law that had now become permissible to all Christians by faith in Christ were meats bought cheaply in the marketplace which had been offered to idols.)

5) Ah, *but justification by faith had always also covered the things within the law*; for Paul taught again and again that the Israelites too often failed to achieve *the righteousness of the law* because they had been trying to achieve righteousness by human works at the law instead of by simple faith in their God who had given them the law.

- Here ends the essential doctrine for the growth of the Church which I wanted to emphasize.

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Paul continues, and we see how the message is received by Jews and by Gentiles.

**13:40,41) Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets [i.e. said to the Jews]; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.**

This message was in the beginning of Paul's ministry and he and all the apostles thought that Jesus would be coming back soon. Therefore, they were entirely serious about the warning that God would judge His people Israel, and then only by means of a remnant would He set up the promised kingdom.

**13:42) And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath.**

The Jews left to go home or to gather in groups to mull over all what Paul had said. However, these Gentiles (converts to the Jewish religion) along with some of the Jews were very interested to hear more.

**13:43) Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.**

After asking Paul and Barnabas to come back the next Sabbath, the most interested ones followed them about. Note that these people of the Jewish Scriptures were '**in the grace of God**', within which Paul encouraged and persuaded them because they were thinking that perhaps a new and better "religion" was being set up. However, Paul assured them that the 'promise of God' was not "a new religion", but rather it was the new Covenant long ago promised to Abraham and thus to the nations that came out of Abraham's seed (verse 26).

**13:44,45) And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.**

The envious Jews likely took issue with the new notion that "all things outside the law of Moses (i.e. Gentile things) were now justified within the faith of Jesus Christ." In other words, they were choosing their understanding of their law over Paul's understanding of scripture about faith and the promises. In many places, the Jews in their synagogues would have to make a decision about this, and most of them would decide against Jesus.

**13:46) Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.**

Here is the first time that Paul declared he and Barnabas would 'turn to the Gentiles'.

**13:47,48) For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as**

were ordained to eternal life believed [i.e. faithed].

**'and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.'** All the Gentiles were glad and all glorified the word of the Lord that came to them by Paul and Barnabas. But what does the last part of the verse mean? Who had 'ordained certain ones to eternal life'?

Today we can call it "God foreknowing such things" or something similar. Yet, here is portrayed in scripture 1) *the preaching of the Gospel and the honoring and glorifying of God's word regarding the Lord Jesus*, and amid that 2) we must understand what Doctor Luke and Paul and Barnabas fully understood: that *God Himself is in charge of 'eternal life'*. For the apostles did not know who had entered 'eternal life'; they only knew that God was working amid the work of His messengers.

In time the messengers would probably recognize, by means of the Spirit, "brothers and sisters in the Lord"; that some had been 'ordained to eternal life' by God and some not.

**13:49) And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region. But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.**

Here we see '**devout and honourable women**' going by what *seems right to them* and thus they took a stand against God's work which was *not according to their understanding*. In Washington DC, I would never take issue with men and women who were 'devout' to the American Way and '**honorable**' in the methods of their work. There are many who are 'devout', but it seems there are few 'honorable' in their methods of work and speech.

In this verse, who were 'the disciples'? They were those accompanying Paul and Barnabas, including quite a few who in this place had recently decided to leave their homes and follow along (as it was with Jesus in his ministry).

Therefore, note in scripture that the definition of 'disciple' continued the same. Meanwhile God in the Holy Ghost was making Himself known to assure all that He was with all the believers (i.e. the fathers).



Now we shall take a peek at Paul's later ministry to the churches to see how this essential doctrine (13:38,39 above) continued to be woven into nearly all that Paul preached to Christians (Jews and Gentiles). I shall emphasize three forms of the word 'faith'; 1) the verb or action form of the word, for which I will insert 'faithing'; 2) the noun form of the word, which of course is 'faith'.

But Paul also uses the word 'faith' 3) to stand for *all that is Truth*, which are *the things we are to believe*, which includes *God the Father and the Son and the Spirit*. This is not mental understanding. Rather, Truth has been placed inside a true father to change him or her. And by such changing in those of God's people who will allow it to be worked, these are 'set free'; in that '**the truth shall set you free**'.

## Romans 14 and 15

**14:1-4) Him that is weak in the faith** [i.e. 3) the things of Truth] **receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one** [who is strong] **believeth** [i.e. 1) faithing] **that he may eat all things:** [while] **another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him** [i.e. God has received each]. **Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him** [i.e. strong and weak] **stand.**



'Faithing' (1) and 'the faith' (3) should be at the very core of each Christian...emphasized by the Apostle Paul; yet, God is able to make stand both the strong and the weak. Note that the weak are not weak in Christ, but due to not allowing Truth to change them.

In these four verses we see that God shall uphold each, in that He is *able to make each stand*. Dear reader, here is a truth that too many of the stronger ones in faith do not yet understand: That God is *altogether able to make stand* both the strong and the weak and all brothers and sisters in varying degrees of strength and weakness.

If stronger ones do not help the weaker in this, then God is able when the weak turn to Him. However, God fully expects the stronger 'in faithing' to help. Stronger ones often do not help due to pride. Only *humbled strength* is willing and able to help the weak, and this is done 'in faithing' through means of the Holy Ghost.

**14:5,6) One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded [toward God] in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and [also] giveth God thanks.**

**14:7) For [by God's Design] none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.**

**14:8) For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.**

Paul spoke not of brotherly connection, but of each Christian's connection to God. Each belongs to God, bought with Great Price and Precious Blood.

**14:9) For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived [i.e. recovered life and lived again], that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.**

You and I have been bought. Living or dead, we are God's.

14:10) But why [now] dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

You should be aware that much (if not most) of Paul's preaching to Christians had to do with "how Christians should act when gathered together"...that is, "in church". If the stronger Christian were constantly and humbly helping the weaker Christian then all would be 'walking by faith' each in his own degree of faith. It was not so then and it is not so now. Paul and all the apostles had to preach and teach of it...and we need to heed.

Sadly by necessity, most of the Apostolic doctrines (teachings) were not *God's Truth to 'set us free'*, but instead *proper ways to conduct ourselves when we meet together*. Indeed, now is preached mostly the latter. In this we think we are 'set free', but such freedom is in churches where the like-minded gather together so that their freedom has only set a church or denomination free from the other churches or denominations. In our little comfort zones we feel free and are happy.

In verse 10: Everything that I and you have ever said and done, and ever will say and do, in *that day* those things will have long since been recorded in books, and the books will be opened to judge me by my book and to judge you by your book.

**14:11-13) For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man [should] put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.**

**14:14) I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.**

**14:15-17) But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably [toward him]. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. Let not then your good [faithing in your walk before God] be evil spoken of: For the kingdom of God is not meat and**

**drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.**

The Greek word translated here and elsewhere in the KJV typically means 'food' and not just 'meat'. Besides food and drink, strong Christians have found many other ways to become stumbling blocks to weaker brethren. Indeed, strong brethren too often stumble against strong brethren.

**14:18) For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.**

In this verse, '**in these things serve Christ**' has much to do with 3) 'the faith' or Truth that has made strong a child of God. But it also has to do with 2) the 'faith' that has been placed in each child of God so that all may *believe God*; for here is but *one faith* (Biblical faith) given of heaven to each child of God, which is in the strong and in the weak.

(My book, God's Hook, is about Biblical faith).

Even so, the faith of heaven that is in every child of God is *treated differently by each child of God*. If a child of God simply allows his faith to *act according* to heaven's energizing of his faith, then he will be more like Paul as Paul *walked by the faith of heaven*. Yet, if a child of God tries to use his faith *to move heaven to do that which the child thinks is best for God*, then he will be more like the person in verse 15.

**14:19-21) Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things where-with one may edify another. For meat [i.e. food] destroy not the work of God [worked in weaker brethren]. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence [to others]. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.**

Here of course 'to eat flesh' refers to the buying of cheap meat (though still good) that was earlier offered to idols in heathen temples.

Here is an example of something that *was not justified or covered within and under the Mosaic Law* (Acts 13:39); yet, it *is justifiable in Jesus Christ* within the faith of a strong Christian. Paul used this as an example of all things that could not be justified by the law.

In the law there are so many things prohibited due to the strict bounds of the Righteous Law as given by God through Moses to the Israelites. Yet, when '**all things**' are considered within the Spirit of the Righteous Law then those things fall into the category of '**All things indeed are pure**'; that is, when a person operates in the Law of Christ.

**14:22) Hast thou faith? [if you do then] have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth [by faithing].**

As I have said before, when you see 'have faith' in scripture it is the verb (action) form of the word 'faith'. '**Hast thou faith?**' means 'is your faith being energized by heaven in some matter?'

'**have it to thyself before God**' means '*let your faith be energized (i.e. the action) before God in private and not before brethren to whom it would be a stumbling block*'. If the one being energized in his faith treats his brothers disrespectfully (which also means that he is disrespecting his faith and God who energizes faith), then he is '**condemning**' himself before God.

In other words, *acting in faith* is supposed to please God (Hebrews 11:6), but such blatant misuse of the faith-privilege is very distasteful to God.

On the other hand, understand Paul: He teaches that the faith of heaven installed in every child of God is personal to the person, and that the person is held responsible for how he follows (or not) his faith. Below we shall see why.

**14:23) [On the other hand] And he that doubteth [that he should eat flesh offered to idols] is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin [i.e. missing the mark of God's requirement].**

Again, see Hebrews 11:6. Dear reader understand this: Biblical faith is the essential

factor *in walking pleasing before God*...in that, '*the just shall live by faith*'.

It was true of all men and women in Old Testament times and is true today. God's requirement for His children to *grow unto completion in Christ* has everything to do with '*walking by faith*'.

**Rom 15:1) We then that are strong** [i.e. walking in faith, or faithing] **ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.**

One such '**infirmity of the weak**' is, for the most part, that they deal with life issues *without* their faith being energized in them from heaven. (The book of James deals expressly with this subject.) Of course it is their fault for not habitually following their faith and not allowing 3) 'the faith' or Truth to work in them to 'set them free'.

That which passes for faithing in weaker brethren is their working by *mental believing*. Essentially this means that they make decisions by doctrine or by good thoughts or by deciding for themselves "what Jesus would do if he were in my situation"...but not by the instant energizing of faith from heaven...which was the very failing of the Jews who put their law over their faith.

Believing by heaven's faith (faithing) is *to have heaven decide things and not the child of God decide things*...except that the child does have to decide to *follow his faith*. This is what Paul means by '*walking by faith*'.

Paul says that the faith-walking brother must carry the load (infirmity) of brethren who do not so walk. Here, then, is the '*patience and love of Christ*'.

For the weak brother or sister often the faith of heaven is not leading, yet they determine that "something must be done" and so by their own intellect they decide what to do. And, if it is a "very good thought" then they claim that they are "stepping out on faith". Many church buildings have been built and the debt continues. Many a ministry has been started that results in man-working instead of God-working...far too many.

Our modern day time given to 'waiting on the Lord' has become much shorter.

**15:2-4) Let every one of us please** [i.e. be agreeable to] **his neighbour for his good to edification** [i.e. toward his being built up]. **For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches** [i.e. humiliation or scornful treatment] **of them that reproached thee fell on me. For whatsoever things were written aforetime** [i.e. Old Testament] **were written for our learning, that we** [i.e. *both* the stronger and the weaker] **through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.**

**15:5) Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:**

Paul makes it clear that God intends that the burden of brotherly help toward further growth of weaker brethren is to be carried by the stronger brothers, and this has everything to do with each stronger brother's 1) faith being heaven-energized and 2) respect for every brother and sister regardless of their spiritual growth. Too many strong leaders have not the shepherd's *patient and compassionate heart* for 'the little sheep', whom they are supposed to be feeding.

For Christians to be 'likeminded' does not mean "to be likeminded in doctrines or values"; instead 'likeminded' according to all Paul's teaching above regarding respect, love, and acceptance of the position and place of each brother and sister in the Family of God.

Respect, love, and acceptance should flow both ways: stronger to weaker and weaker to stronger.

**15:6) That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

'**with one mind and one mouth glorifying God**' has everything to do with '**glorifying God**' and has nothing to do with agreeing or disagreeing about anything else. In other

words, this is a command and not a doctrine.

**15:7) Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.**

Paul spoke to all Christians in Rome. In the church there was a mixture of Jews, long-time Gentile adherents to the Jewish Scriptures, and many new converts. The mixture composed was of strong men and women *walking by faith*, also very weak men and women *not walking by faith*, and men and women *walking to varying degrees of faith*. Each had his own individual walk with God, but all should respect and love each other as they glorify God together. It is a command.



**15:8) Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision** [i.e. a minister of Israel] **for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers** [i.e. made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel]:

**15:9 And that the Gentiles might** [also] **glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people. And again, Esaias** [i.e. Isaiah] **saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.**

The Olden Promises had been given at differing times by differing means. Even so, the Promises were for Israel and for Gentiles (the nations).

**15:13) Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing** [1) faithing], **that ye may abound in hope, through the power** [i.e. force] **of the Holy Ghost.**

Many church members and certainly the church leaders knew the Scriptures and knew and taught of the '*hope contained in the promises*'. Paul constantly had to remind the churches about how '*the things of hope*' would arrive: God by the Holy Ghost must properly prepare in the people a place where '*things of hope*' could properly fit and endure.

It is not simply by *putting up with one another* that '**joy and peace**' arrives in an assembly; rather it is in believing [1) faithing] by each brother and sister...within the measure of faith in each.

In other words, real acceptance and love of other brethren is best accomplished in faithing because a) Biblical faith becomes energized by heaven and b) such faith-action is not a work of one's own character.

To say it differently, within faithing heaven will most properly join the strong and the weak and all the brethren in between, which is *pleasing to God* (Hebrews 11:6).

**15:14-16) And I myself also am persuaded of you, my** [stronger] **brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you** [i.e. the stronger] **in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.**

**15:17,18) [And] I have therefore whereof** [many truths to teach in the assemblies so that] **I [too] may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which** [most properly] **pertain to God. For I will not dare to speak of any of those things** ['which pertain to God'] **which Christ hath not wrought by me, [as] to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,**

In other words, Paul also had a need to '**glory through Christ Jesus**'. And his '**glory**' was *proper completion of his duty to the nations* according to a) what God in Christ had worked in him and b) the truths he had to convey in teaching. Paul focused upon his ministry and left the ministries of others to them.

**15:19-21) Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power** [i.e. force] **of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel**

**of Christ** [as it was given to me]. **Yea, so** [in this manner] **have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.**

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 We see in Acts 13 the beginning of Paul's ministry. In Romans 14 and 15 we see Paul ministering not too many years before the end of his ministry. All through his ministry, Biblical faith was the key and he constantly taught that faith was the key for each individual Christian, if the individual was to be 'pleasing in God's sight'. But also, faithing is the means for respect, love, and peace in the church among the brethren so as to please the Father.

Every true child of God is 'justified in Christ Jesus'. However, to actually live in and walk in and experience that justification is within the 'walk of faith' worked in the child of God by the Holy Ghost.

Please note in scripture both Old and New that a 'just' person was known as 'just' by his consistent faith-actions; he lived that way leaning on God. Yes, all are 'justified in Christ', but only a minority mentioned in Scripture were referred to as 'a just man' or 'a just woman'.

Paul preached it consistently and repeatedly -

**Romans 1:17) For therein is the righteousness<sup>G1343</sup> of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just<sup>G1342</sup> shall live by faith.**

Note Strong's Numbers by the words 'righteousness' and 'just': the numbers are essentially the same; that is, they are in a group of Greek words that include holy, innocent, just, justified, righteous, etc.

The phrase 'the righteousness of God' is not referring to "God's righteousness"; rather it refers to the righteousness that can arrive from God to a child of God, even as the child walks by faith with God, even as it is being accomplished in the Holy Ghost.

**Gal 3:11) But that no man is justified<sup>G1344</sup> by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just<sup>G1342</sup> shall live by faith.**

**Heb 10:38) Now the just<sup>G1342</sup> shall live by faith: but if *any man* draw back, my soul [i.e. God's soul] shall have no pleasure in him [see also 11:6].**

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 'The just shall live by faith' in the New Testament is a quote from the small book of Habakkuk (verse 2:4). The situation among God's people at the time of that prophesy is described in 1:4 **Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous [i.e. just];<sup>H6662</sup> therefore wrong judgment proceedeth [in the land].**

And at end of the prophesy, Habakkuk (a just man) claims for himself -

**Habakkuk 3:17-19 Although [for Judea] the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places.**

In the Bible, if you will look 1) before the time of the Mosaic Law you will find 'just' men and women. If you will look 2) during the time of the law you will find 'just' men and women. If you will look 3) after the time of the law you will find 'just' men and women. Always before the face of God the 'just' (i.e. justified) men and women of scripture 'walked by faith'. It is what Paul constantly taught to Christians: Jews, Gentiles, and anyone who had accepted Christ's sacrifice: the sinless man Jesus upon the cross and in three days raised from the dead.

To experience the life of a 'just' Christian, the Christian must walk before God in faith to please Him. Thus, God accounts him or her as 'righteous', all of it worked by the Holy Ghost.



Yesterday I was at the point of printing this out for Barbara to proofread, but then this morning early I awoke and opened my bedside Bible, which fell to Micah 7:13 (and thus on to the end of the prophesy). Verses 13,14 have to do with God judging Israel and the post-judgment condition of desolation that shall exist in the land; the kind of dire condition when it is really necessary that **'the just shall live by faith'**, as Habakkuk had stated.

However, verses 15-20 contain the oft repeated Promise of Christ's kingdom on earth. And the passage ends with -

**Micah 7:20) Thou [i.e. God] wilt perform the truth to Jacob, *and* the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.**

Here is the entire Promise in a nutshell, in that it encapsulates this study and everything stated in Scripture having to do with the Promise, both to Israelites and to Gentiles and to all peoples.

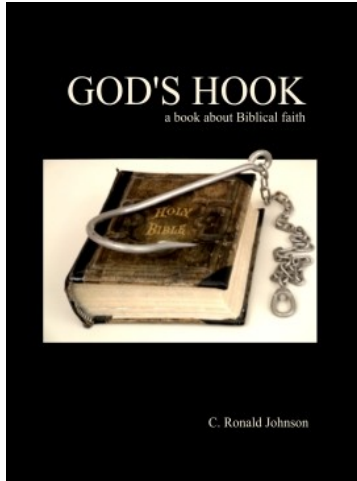
First to the Israelites: what does **'the truth to Jacob'** mean? To Jacob and his lineage was promised the twelve-tribed nation of Israel, and to that nation God gave a narrow or limiting Mosaic Covenant, also referred to as the **'Righteous Law'** or the **'Law of Righteousness'**. As already stated, 'just' and 'righteous' are the same word in Hebrew and the same word in Greek. An Israelite in faith-actions who keeps the Righteous Law, walking in it in faith (i.e. living it), was considered a 'just' man or woman. Many of them were recorded in scripture.

Now we know that the Law was perfect and could not be continually kept in its letter, and so within the Covenant was included the sacrificial part of the Law. Also we know that Paul taught that Christ Jesus is the Fulfillment of the Righteous Law.

Therefore, in its finalization (in the End) God **'wilt perform the truth to Jacob'** in that God shall *install His Truth in every Israelite heart: in every man, woman, and child* of the remnant kingdom.

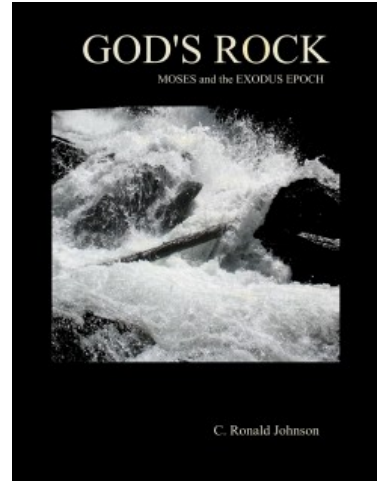
Then to the Gentiles: what does **'the mercy to Abraham'** mean? Well before Jacob and his lineage, God gave to Jacob's grandfather Abraham and his lineage quite a broad Covenant. Within the Abrahamic Covenant was Promised the coming of a Savior to save the nations. This Savior would be a **'seed'** in Abraham's lineage. (Whereupon in the Mosaic Covenant it became specified for the Savior to be of King David's lineage.) The nations of the lineage of Abraham are defined in scripture and it was to them that the Apostle Paul was sent. Yet, by the time of Paul, many varied people groups and the nations and many Israelites were intermixed, and Paul made it clear that all of mankind had been included in the Promise. Therefore, at the time of the End, God also **'wilt perform...the mercy to Abraham'**.

Interesting is it not how the Lord drew my attention this morning to a prophetic verse that encapsulates everything said above in this little study (which has grown to be more than just "a little study").



a book  
about  
Biblical  
Faith

the life of  
Moses  
and the  
Exodus



C. Ronald Johnson