

Romans 4 (Conrad Bowman) (May 28, 2008)

Jeff was pushing for a review of 1, 2, and 3; and we'll probably do part of that – Shhhhh. Down – turn it down – Ryan is being notified. Romans chapter 4 is where we are. Let me give you – let me give you a piece of information that's coming, in the absence of our school teacher. Adam – Adam has found a web site where you can access Arno Gaebelein's Annotated Commentary on the whole Bible. It's in eight volumes on the web site. And he passed it along to Phil, and I've got it on my computer at home; and I've got a couple of other things – some updates on the Roman's Notes that I want to send to you, and I'll send that to you tonight. Make sure I have your e-mail address, because I don't remember that web site. It's too long. Jackie was getting ready to write it down. You're going to have to wait. Because when I get home tonight, I'll send it out, and put it on your e-mail address. It's an outstanding find. I've been looking for it for a long time. Up until now, I've had to go find printed copies of Gaebelein's Notes and there're kind of scarce. So this will make them available to us. I'm in the habit as we start one of these studies, usually of printing out Gaebelein's entire Notes on whatever the subject is, because our access is so free. He's an Englishman, around the turn of the century – early 1900's. That's when he wrote the thing. It's absolutely outstanding. It's so readable; and you can just take it right in. Some of the other guys get very scholarly and very lofty in their language; and very turn of the century in their language. Gaebelein does not. He's marvelous; and so I'll pass that web site along to you, and you can download it by the book. You know. So download the whole thing. You won't be sorry. Because if that thing ever disappears, what a loss it would be. So, make sure you do get it while it's there. Get the whole thing, and I'll put that on your web site – on your e-mails tonight.

John Young. Could we pass out this. There're a lot of new faces in here, and I – we get you name, telephone number and e-mail address, it'll really help. So I'm going to pass this out. If you're a regular here, you don't need to do it. I've already got your name somewhere.

Conrad Bowman. Yeah.

[Class banter back and forth].

Conrad Bowman. I haven't sent anything out in the last two or three weeks, but
...

Lady. John did.

Conrad Bowman. ... we'll get caught up. John did.

Lady. ... because I got one, in Revelation.

[More class banter].

Conrad Bowman. What I'm trying to do is maintain a separate e-mail list and contact list for each class; for the Revelation class. We had one for the 9:15 class, and I've expanded that some. We had a lot of out-of-town people on it, and that sort of thing. So you'll see it. But this was – this find is a treasure, and, Sir Adam, I thank you for that. We all will before we're through with that.

Alright. Let's have a word of prayer, and then we'll get to Romans chapter 4.

Father, we thank You for the evening; for the time together. We thank You Father for the way You lead us through these passages of Scripture, just one right after the other. We thank You Father for the way that they just – they just flow together into one amazing, amazing story of the person and work of Christ on our behalf; and we thank You for that. We trust that those that are not here tonight, that wanted to be, are being ministered to by the Spirit, and bring them to our mind and bring them to our attention so that we can extend to them fellowship and assistance if they're open wherever they are and whatever their needs are. We thank You again for the price that Christ paid that we might have this so great salvation. And we trust that You'd open our eyes to it even further tonight as we study together, in Christ's name, because He paid for it, ever bit. Amen.

Ok. Let's see. Who's new with us tonight? Mike is new with us tonight. He's in town doing some work, and – how long are you going to be with us, Mike?

Mike Donaldson. Well, I'm working over here for the long term. So ... [inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. Ok.

Lady. Where is Mike from?

Conrad Bowman. Where're you from, Mike?

Mike Donaldson. Well, originally we moved to Texas from Idaho.

Conrad Bowman. Ok.

Mike Donaldson. So we traded severe winters for severe summers. [Laughter]. I think I like the winters better because I just put more clothes on.

Lady. I do too.

Conrad Bowman. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

[Class banter back and forth]

Conrad Bowman. It's good to have you Mike. Anybody else?

Gentleman. Dennis ... [Inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. Yes sir? Dennis? And you're from?

Dennis. From Houston.

Conrad Bowman. From Houston. Ok. And you wandered in and we captured you. That'll work. Works for me.

Ok. We're in the middle of Romans. We're going through the whole thing; and we've worked our way through the first three chapters; and we're going to be in chapter 4 tonight; and we'll see – we'll see how far we get on this thing. Jeff has made a bid to re-do the first three chapters yet again. But will just – that'll bog us down for another six weeks. So I don't think I'll do that. We'll get into it anyway, I betcha, before we're through.

Chapter 4. Let's start out with this thing, just like it is. Chapter 4 begins section 2 of Romans. If you look at – if you look at – I love F.W. Grant's Numerical Indexing of Romans. And he has section 2 begin with chapter 4. Now you remember the number 2, just to look at it. The number 2 in positive terms always speaks of strengthening through addition, or through multiplication. Number 2 speaks of one thing added to the other. If you follow that positive aspect of the number 2, what you're going to see here is the witness of the Old Testament – The Justification by Faith. That's the title that's in your Notes. So what you're

going to see develop in chapter 4 of Romans in this Second Section, which goes from 1 to 12. Chapter – chapter 4, [verses] 1 to 12. You're going to see a conversation Paul's having here about the Old Testament Rule of Law magnified and strengthened and added to by the New Testament Doctrine of Faith alone. In the Old Testament you had justification by faith in the God of the Law. In the New Testament, you're going to have justification by faith in the finished work of Christ. So you see those two added, and the result is a strengthening of the idea and concept of salvation by faith, or justification by faith. Which is what Luther fought for. Ok? And we were talking about that just a few minutes ago. Martin Luther's justification by faith was a dynamite break in the rigidity of the law that the Church had been led into by Roman Catholicism for twelve – fifteen hundred years. So when Luther nailed his thesis on the Wittenberg door, it was – it was astounding because it broke free from the legalism of Romanism. And it strike at the Church – just brought a fresh breath of fresh air. But what Luther missed was, and what you don't see in this stuff, is Luther took the Church from the Old Testament period of Law right on through to the cross and justification by faith, and he stopped right there. He got the fact that sins were paid for – were justified; were made free from those sins by faith. He saw that. But what Luther never grasped – it took a hundred and fifty years to two hundred years after Luther for this to develop, was that when Christ went into the grave, and He brought captive by the grave – captive to Himself, all those Old Testament saints that were in Abraham's Bosom, which is a division of Sheol – when He brought free all of those captive to Himself – He came out with resurrection life. This is where Romans is going in chapter 6; and then He took those to heaven. He brought those to resurrection life, and then on day forty, He ascended. On day fifty, the Holy Spirit descended, and that's on day fifty – that doesn't look like a "fifty" to me. But it is. And the Church Age began right there. See, now Luther didn't get that far. His – his whole message was, we're justified by faith. Ok. Justification by faith. That's where he stopped. Now, if a preacher today, or a teacher today, stops with justification by faith at the cross, and he has us attempting to live like Christ on this side of the cross, on His approach to the cross, he's denying us the life of Christ from where He is now at the Father's side as the basis for our life today in our daily walk. Ok. This is where we're supposed to be walking down here in the life of Christ – in the life of Christ that flows from where He is at the throne of God by means of the Spirit down to us and out to the whole world. That's the life we're going to live in today. So we don't take as a pattern of our life the Christ, the Messiah, on His way to the cross. We take as the pattern of our life the life of Christ, the Savior, who is in heaven victorious over SIN. And victorious over death. And victorious over sins. Ok? The one victorious over SIN is over the very presence of SIN – that's Sin with a

capital "S." The victory over "sins" is the individual victory that He gives you over the battles and struggles in your own life with things that you have to confront. Now if we confuse the two, we – don't we miss the fact that we have victory over SIN – big "S," because of what He did on the cross. We're dead to that. We're dead to it. We died on the cross, in the grave, with Christ. We died. Sin is still alive and well, living on the planet earth. And that's it. To borrow part of a title from Hal Lindsay forty years ago. Sin is still alive and living on planet earth. But you died to it. So it can't hold you accountable for anything. Nothing. Ok. Christ died and paid the entire price of the definition of sin, which is the Law. He paid for that. He satisfied it. He satisfied every claim. Now, when we get into chapter 4, we're talking about the witness of the Old Testament – to justification on the basis of faith. That's following the life of Abraham. And, we're going to add to that, the positive aspect of the work of Christ finished, and our walk with Him, on the basis of faith, in the Ascended Christ; which magnifies our life; and makes it shine; because it brings the glory of the Son, and the glory of the Father, to bear in our life, so that when people see us, they don't see us, they see the glory of the Father from within us shinning out to the finished work of Christ. Now, that's review of chapters 1, 2 and 3. [Laughter]. I'll see if I can get by with that. [Laughter].

Alright. Now we go to chapter 4.

1. What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found?

Now when Paul writes Romans and he says that, he's thinking of Abraham, literally his forefather, and he's thinking of Abraham his spiritual forefather. According – but now he's talking of our forefather according to the flesh; and he's talking about physical Abraham who had to discover walking by means of faith.

2. If Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but it would not be before God.

Because God doesn't live in the area of the flesh; and that's where he is walking. See.

3. For what does the Scripture say? "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS."

It was accounted to his account. Now you've heard this taught a thousand times by a hundred different preachers. It was added to his account – "reckoned" is an accounting term. He believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. He believed God, and the response to his belief, was Abraham was given righteousness.

4. Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor, but what is due.

Ok? So if you take the position that Abraham kept the Law and was justified by faith, then all you're saying is Abraham worked and got his wages which was justification. That wasn't the case. Abraham believed God, and it was his belief that was counted as righteousness, not his work.

4. Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor, but what is due.

5. But ...

Introduction of a contrast. The "but" is the fulcrum. Here's the one thing. Here's the other thing that stands in contrast. That's what the number 2 is referencing. Now,

5. But the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness,

And that's what Abraham did. Abraham believed God because he believed, he expressed his faith, and his faith then was counted for righteousness. God gave him righteousness just like He gave us righteousness, and He gave it to him on the same basis that He gives it to us. Ok? "He who knew no sin was made to be sin for us in order that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." Now notice the source of that righteousness. That genitive of possession. Righteousness of God. The righteousness that belonged to God. That's God's own righteousness. That's the righteousness you've been given. Man, we discount that all the time, don't we? We tend to think that the righteousness that God gave us is somehow an ability to live a life that's attractive and pleasing to God. Or that's attractive and pleasing to man. It doesn't happen that way. The righteousness that He gave us is the righteousness of His very character. His nature was righteous. He possessed absolute righteousness. That's the righteousness that He gave us. Now once we get that in our thick skulls, we

begin to see that righteousness for what it is. It's not ore that contains gold. It's gold. It's not adulterated or extenuated or any other way cut. It's the raw essence of His character. Righteousness in its absolute sense that He gave to you. Now when we look at one another, we don't look at one another as being righteous as God is righteous. At best, we look at one another as righteous almost as righteous as me. [Laughter]. Right? Isn't that right? That's the way – Ok? When we look at one another, though, we need to see someone who is as righteous as God is righteous. If God says John's righteous, who am I to say he's not? You begin to treat people different when you do that. Your brothers and your sisters are people just like you who stand in the absolute righteousness of God. Now the fact that they do not exhibit that in their lives is beside the point entirely. That begs the question. Ok? They're righteous because God declared them righteous. They're wrong because they don't agree with me. You see? We declared them in error in their walk and in their thinking. God said they're righteous nonetheless! Even though he may be a Covenant Theologian – forbid! He still is righteous. Ok? Because God declared him righteous on the basis of his belief. Now, if you put us together, it's my job to work with him and see if we can bring him along, and get him out of that Covenant thing. Right? [Laughter]. Otherwise He wouldn't have brought him there. But, he's righteous nonetheless. I have no ground on which I can stand and look down my nose at him simply because we disagree. That's not going to happen. Well it's going to happen, but it shouldn't. Right? So we look at our own flawed selves in that way. Yes sir?

Gentleman. But shouldn't that be visible? As like the light on the hill?

Conrad Bowman. Yes sir. Yes sir. In fact, the Brethren, and the reasoning never got very strong, between – between 1825 and 1925, say. The reason the Brethren had so much trouble is they developed that very thought into a principle of operation – there was a principle of separation. I'll tell you what. We rock along here, and we have a contention over some aspect of doctrine. We disagree. Ok? It may be baptism. It may be anything. And so, what we do is, we say, here's what the Brethren did. They say, wait a minute. We differ over this, and both of us are honorable men. You go one way with your position. I'll go another way with mine. We'll separate into two groups. Those who agree with me. Those who agree with you. Won't it be evident that the Holy Spirit will bless the one that's right, and not the one that's wrong. This is so infantile it's almost maddening. But – but they refined that process, so that's what they did. They would get together in a group; and when the group would get to be about this size, it's not hard to find disagreement. Not in this group. Or in any group this size. As long as it was six or eight or nine or ten – that's one thing. But when you get to be

about twenty-five or thirty or forty or eighty, you're going to find disagreement. So their method of resolving differences was to separate into two groups and see which one God blesses. You know. [Laughter].

Lady. I'm sorry. That is ...

Conrad Bowman. No. God blessed both groups. Now He's happy with both groups, because they're all sharing the righteousness of Christ, even though they differ on – it could be any number of things. One of the big issues was when we take the Lord's Supper. When we take communion. Take anybody who professes to be a believer; share the table – the communion table with us; or do you have to be a member known to this group. That was a big deal, man. They separated. They became the inclusive brethren, and the exclusive brethren, over that very issue. And that was a big rift. Well they kept doing that over issues, through the years. So they never came together in any largely defined, cohesive network of believers. The Baptists, on the other hand, began to congregate; enroll; and build buildings; and seminaries; and it just – and boom – it just grew. Methodists did the same thing. Churches of Christ did the same thing. You know, and it just – those bigger denominational churches that could – that could establish broad affiliations became more easily identified. And the Brethren just kept on dividing. Boom. Boom. Boom. See. It's my own personal opinion that the Brethren had the best scholarship that there was from eighteen – the early eighteen hundreds right on through to around 1920, 1930, 1940's. Their scholarship was impeccable. But they couldn't get along with one another. They just couldn't. They kept – they kept on with that urge to divide; and that's what they were doing. Now, we found the Brethren – the Brethren were the basis of Dallas Seminary's founding. The Brethren were the basis of – of Moody Bible Institute in Chicago's getting put together. Calvert Seminary on the West Coast was great. Wheaton was influenced greatly by Brethren; because the people with Brethren names that filtered over from England – Scofield was largely responsible for one of the identifying marks, which was the *Scofield Reference Bible* which just infuriated people who were *King James* only. You know. They liked the *King James* text. And – it was just – that's the sort of thing that plagued Evangelical Christianity since the early eighteen hundreds. But – I don't even remember where the question started now that we're ... [laughter]. It doesn't surprise – it doesn't surprise me in the least. I can just stop right there. Yes?

Jeff Little. You mentioned Churches of Christ. Actually ...

Conrad Bowman. Yeah.

Jeff Little. ... they were not a result of the division. Actually they were created by Bartstone, ... [inaudible] ... in the early eighteen hundreds. After America became America, you saw all these divisions in the Northeast.

Conrad Bowman. Yeah.

Jeff Little. And they wanted to unite all the Christians under one roof.

Conrad Bowman. Right.

Jeff Little. And so they intervened and tried to win all these denominations under one church ...

Conrad Bowman. Right.

Jeff Little. ... and they were going to call it Christ's Church, or the Church of Christ.

Conrad Bowman. Right.

Jeff Little. And their big deal was, no mottos; no creeds; only what the Bible says; if we find it in the New Testament worship, then we'll keep it; if it's not there, then we'll throw it out.

Conrad Bowman. And which became a motto. [Laughter].

Jeff Little. Well, actually ...

Lady. [Inaudible].

Jeff Little. What actually happened, unfortunately, is because they – they couldn't find worship with musical instruments in the New Testament outside of the trumpets of Revelation ... [inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. Right.

Jeff Little. And so they only had ... [inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. Right.

Jeff Little. But in these smaller churches, a lot of them weren't able to carry a tune and then you had a piano ...

Conrad Bowman. Right.

Jeff Little. ... and so then you saw the formation of Christian Churches. And so-and-so Christian Church was actually a Church of Christ with instruments.

Conrad Bowman. Yes.

Evelyn Wamble. I thought the Christian Churches were camouflaged, not the Church of Christ?

Conrad Bowman. Well it developed that way. It kind of emerged. That's kind of the way it developed. You know. And then the Churches of Christ developed the United Church of Christ, which joined with Presbyterians ...

Jeff Little. They were actually very successful. I mean, they did bring a lot of denominations together.

Conrad Bowman. They did. They sure did. And – and – and - as you look at it, look at the history of it, in my opinion – every time they brought another group in, they gave up another point in doctrine. Which is what you have to do. You start giving up doctrine in order to bring another group in. We practice politics pretty much the same way when we start negotiating with other countries. You give up a little bit of freedom here; you give up a little point here, in order to get those guys to the table; believing that the table is where we ought to be, and ...

Jeff Little. Each church has to established the mountain to live and die on and ...

Conrad Bowman. Right.

Jeff Little. ... and unfortunately a lot of churches now, they attempt to bring everybody in; and so they take down the crosses and water down the Gospel; and don't even read the Scripture anymore ...

Conrad Bowman. Right.

Jeff Little. ... and they call them secret churches and "feel good" messages.

Conrad Bowman. Yes. Yes. Beth?

Beth Davis. Was Abraham of Jewish lineage?

Conrad Bowman. I beg your pardon?

Beth Davis. Was Abraham Jewish?

Conrad Bowman. Of Jewish lineage?

Phil Richman. I will answer that. There were no Jews when Abraham was in being. There were no Jews at that time. They figured Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – beyond Jacob, I would say they were Jews. But not before.

Conrad Bowman. But not back then.

[Class banter back and forth].

Betijean Kennerly. The Tribe of Judah was called Jews. The Tribe of Judah was called Jews.

Conrad Bowman. Yeah. When you get to ...

Evelyn Wamble. [Inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. Now it's interesting, isn't it, that the pattern for our faith always goes back to Abraham. Now the Jews claim Abraham as a forefather. Father Abraham. And we do too. He's outside that camp, though, of identification as a Jew or a Hebrew, because he just wasn't far enough along. It's of interest, because Christ Himself, when He gets to - to Abraham, starts talking about Abraham paying tithes to Melchizedek who is even further – a priest – he's even further outside; and Melchizedek is a pattern of Christ's priesthood. So, you see that great separation between all that was tied to the Law, as you back up, and the life of Christ that set the stage for us to understand that our life is based on the faith that Abraham exhibited, and that each of us is expected to exhibit. It's not Abraham that should be the object. It's faith that should be the object, all along the way; because it's trust that is the actuating word. Now, that's what's referred to in verses 4 and 5.

4. ... the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor to him, but is simply what is due him.

You work, you get paid. You get paid what you earn. But – contrast,

5. ... to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness,

And righteousness is the wage. Ok. So faith earns the wage.

6. just as David also speaks of the blessing on the man to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works:

Ok. So David himself now. [Inaudible] ... Now David is going to testify to blessing upon the man who God reckons to be righteous apart from works.

7. BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED.

Now you remember I mentioned last week and the week before, the word "atonement" means to cover up. Atone – atonement means to cover; and sins are covered. In the Old Testament, they are atoned for or covered because Christ Himself has not died and paid the price. That's why that cannon shot went off when John said, "Behold the Lamb of God who is taking away the sin of the world." Not covering it up, but taking it away. That was a fresh pronouncement to the Jew. The Jew was used to their sins being atoned for and covered. They saw it every time they – every time the Day of Atonement came, and the High Priest of Israel went into the Ark of the Covenant behind the veil and put the blood of the sacrifice on the Mercy Seat – right on top on the lid of that Ark of the Covenant. And inside was Aaron's Rod that Budded, the Bowl of Manna, and the Tables of Law; Israel's greatest sin. And the blood covered those occasions of Israel's sin. And God looked and judged those sins, but He saw the blood, not the sins. So the sins were atoned for by the blood of the sacrifice. Now, that's what we're seeing here.

7. BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED.

8. "BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE SIN THE LORD WILL NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT."

Why? Because the man died to sin. Ok? Sin killed him. It was the Law which defined sin that slew Christ. The Father killed the Son in order to satisfy the Law which defined the Father's righteousness. So Christ went to the cross to satisfy

the Father's demand that righteousness be justified by a price; and He paid the price. OK? That's why Christ went to the cross. Now you are the beneficiary of His work; and He did that work and you're the beneficiary. That's what it says here.

8. "BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE SIN THE LORD WILL NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT."

9. Is this blessing then upon the circumcised, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say, "FAITH WAS RECKONED TO ABRAHAM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS."

And Abraham, though circumcised, was not of "the circumcised" which identified him as an Israelite, or Hebrew. It was – it was identified – it was based on Abraham's faith alone.

10. How then was it reckoned? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but before he was circumcised;

His faith was counted to him as righteousness. His son was born after the blessing was received. Abraham himself was not circumcised before the blessing was received. He believed God early on when he received the promise of a son and a progeny and descendants. See, he believed God when Isaac was promised. That's when the belief took place. And Abraham received righteousness at that point. Then, while uncircumcised – verse 11,

11. he received the sign of circumcision, it was a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, that he might be father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be reckoned to them,

Now I don't know about you, but I started out in chapter 3, verse 22: "Even the righteousness of God through faith." And I went through there with a green marker and started marking every occasion in this text where through faith, or by faith, or by belief, that it's referenced. And it's amazing how many green dots are jumping off the page at me, because that's the message there. And I – I do that often. I take just a set of good colored pencils and just mark right in the text. Just color those – where – where those words and those concepts are being repeated. OK? So I could find them on the page easily. And when I do that, I

come to that page, that lesson that's being taught there just flows off the page at you. Ok? Now that's a simple thing. And – and if you are trying to preserve the text in its original form by not writing in your Bible, that's Ok with me. You know. But I find a good set of colored pencils captures some things for me. Ok? Now,

11. he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had while uncircumcised,

And that's a lot of what our life is all about. In our life, we are to walk according to God's dictates as He unfolds His word and His will to us as a seal of our belief and a sign of our belief. Now,

11. ... that righteousness might be reckoned to them,

12. and the father of circumcision he might be to those ...

I'm in verse 12.

12. ... who not only are of the circumcision,

That's Israel.

12. ... but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while he was still uncircumcised.

13. Now, for the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith.

That's what tied God's promise to Abraham.

14. For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified;

It's abandoned.

15. for the Law brings about wrath, where there is no law, neither is there violation.

Now the importance of that we're going to get to in Romans 6, because we're joined to Christ in His death. When He died, we died. And Law can't reach us because we're dead to it. The Law is something associated with the flesh; we have risen to New Creation Life. So we're not tied to that which the flesh condemns, because our new life is in Christ, where He is at the right hand of the Father.

14. If those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified;

15. for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

16. For this reason it is by faith, that it might be in accordance with grace, in order that the promise may be certain to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,

Now, turn over to Galatians, and I want you to go all the way to Galatians 6. Ok. You've got Galatians, and then you have Ephesians. Ephesians is that grand treatise on the position of the believer. Our positional truth. That which we own because we are Christ's. But in Galatians chapter 6 – Galatians chapter 6, Paul is talking to a bunch of Gentiles who are listening to some Jews come in who say they have to – they really ought to adopt the Law if they want to be real Christians. You really ought to pay attention to the Law. So Paul said, "Foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you? Can you finish by Law what you started by faith? You can't do it." Now he gets to chapter 6 – and we don't have time to do all of Galatians today, but here is:

1. Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass,

And he is. That's a first class condition in the Greek, which means, "since a man is caught in a trespass."

1. ... you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of meekness; consider yourselves, lest you too be tempted.

And that "lest" is not a hypothesis, it's a "you too are going to be tempted in the same area."

2. Bear ye one another's burdens,

And the word for "burden" is *baros*. *B-A-R-O-S*. Overload. "Bear ye one another's overloads." And a *baros* is a load that's pressing down. It's oppression. Ok. If someone is being pressed down beyond their ability to carry it, it says you are to bear that burden. It didn't say share it. It said bear it. Ok? So that means you better be very close to the guy, because if somebody is going to bear your burden, you better know him well enough – or her – to take that burden and take it off of you and put it on them; and then turn and walk without the burden. Now what does that require between believers? Buddy, it requires trust. I'll tell you that. Ok? In 2004, when I had to go in the hospital for my first surgery, and all at once, sixty-nine years of virtually perfect health just started to break down all in one year. And I found that it is was something – I couldn't get out from under it. I couldn't outrun it. First it was – it was a cardiac bypass. You know. And my family's love of bread and mayonnaise finally caught up with us. That's the way you started every meal. You sat down at the table; got a loaf of bread; and put mayonnaise on every slice. You know. And we had a bunch of us. And then we'd put whatever we were going to eat on that. Well, that caught up. I had arteries that had stopped up a little bit. And so, I got those. Well, while I was in the hospital, and at the same time I was dealing with that, we – we got word that, yeah, that colonoscopy wasn't that good. You do have colon cancer and it's invaded those walls and we've got to take that out. And so I made arrangements while I was in the hospital to have that colon cancer removed. We did that; and that was in 2004 also. The first one was in, like July or April; and the next one was in August; and that didn't work out spectacular. There were a few things that kind of lingered after that. And we had to close the business. Norma couldn't keep up with all of that. She had to close the business we had for twelve years and shut that thing down rapidly. And all at once we're looking at dismantling everything that we had planned for. Everything – was gone. Just – poof. Overnight. You know. We depended on Medicare. They changed their rules. We didn't – they cut it off. They owed us tons of money, and they cut that off; and so the income stream was gone. Bingo. We're going through assets rapidly. And, it was out of control. And I had always been the guy who, if the problems got a little tough, you just extended your working day; cinched it up; put an extra tank of gas in the car; and got after it; and did whatever it took to make it right. And all at once that wasn't good enough. I was way out beyond anything I could do about it. And guys in this class and in the other class – and Tom Douthit would come by – come by the house and say, how are you doing? And I'd say, I'm not doing good at all; because I don't understand this. I'm – you know – I was comfortable. We were meeting. We were studying together. I'm teaching classes. I'm doing everything I can do. What's going on with this thing? It just didn't make sense. See. It's easy to say, the guy that opens the Book and

unfolds this stuff to us on a regular basis is kind of got a "Kings-X." A pass on things like this. Doesn't work that way. Doesn't work that way. See, I come up and face the same things you do; with the same results. You know. Norma caught me a couple of times in the – in the bedroom with my head buried in pillows trying to stifle it. You know. And she would hear it anyway. Tom Douthit – I love that guy. Tom Douthit would come and sit in a chair by my bed until I'd cried myself out so then he could tell me that God is still faithful. And He is. Now it's been five years. I don't know how we got from there to here in the shape we're in today. I don't understand it. It's been – God gives just the strength you need for today. He doesn't deliver tomorrow's, and pile it up in the front yard for you. He gives you what you need today. For today. And that keeps your trust. And the loftier your walk has been, the deeper the hole has to be to bring you down out of yourself and into Him. I can tell you, that's true. That's what He's doing here. You see, that's exactly what He's doing here. This whole thing about, "bear ye one another's burdens," means to do what Tom Douthit did for me. And what Phil Richman has done for me. And what Joe Morris has done for me. And that's take my burden what – and that's not – Betijean. Betijean has been there from the word go. Dozens of you. And Norma's back there pointing at Marilyn. You know. Because she's been there. And it's – and it's all been that way. You see.

Evelyn Wamble. They were bearing your burden.

Conrad Bowman. That's right. They took it off of me. The beauty of it is, I knew you well enough to turn it loose. I could face what I had to face because I knew that you, and Betijean, and a hundred of you – two hundred of you – you were trusting God all along the way. This guy here, not only does he remember me in prayer every day, when he's not absolutely buried with legal work, he's drinking my coffee and warming himself under my table doing what? Taking on my load. That's what he's doing. And when he walks out of there, he walks out of there with it, and I can concentrate on getting through the situation I'm faced with because he's got the load of trusting God. And when the answer comes, we both know why it came. Because we are trusting God; and John is putting it into words; and you guys are putting it into words; and all I have to do is walk in those steps of the Spirit laying down the finished work of Christ which have been done before the foundation of the world on my behalf.

Evelyn Wamble. What an example.

Conrad Bowman. He didn't ask me to do great things. He asked me to put these big feet down in the steps of the Spirit, right where He laid them down, a million years ago, before the foundation of the world. That's Ephesians 2:10, isn't it? "We are His masterpiece created in Christ Jesus for the purpose of good works." Not that we should perform them, but that He finished for us before the foundation of the world. That's it. We can get all busy trying to do something that'll impress God, or we can simply revel in the works that God has done, to impress and prepare for us; and we walk in those works. We just look for the steps of the Spirit and put our foot down; and every day, in every power, and in every way we discover in those footsteps His provision for us for that moment and it's always more than adequate. There's never a sense of not having come up with what we need. It's there; and it blesses our socks off. And He does it through moving the hearts of you guys. That's the way it works. Now we have missionaries overseas. We have missionaries all over town and everything. We're walking in those same works. But beloved, there's precious few who actually understand the process, because it's not taught. It's not preached. And I want you to understand that; so that we can be like a virus that infects the rest of them, I guess. Now,

2. Bear ye one another's burdens.

Is what it says in verse 2.

2. ... and thus fulfill the law of Christ.

And that's the way that's supposed to work. That's what that process is.

3. For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

Amen.

4. And let each one must examine his own work, then he will have reason for boasting ...

How many of our works are going to last, John? There're going up in smoke. Naked as jay birds. There we'll be at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

4. ... and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another.

5. For everyone shall bear his own load.

His own load. Now, the first word was *baros*, or *baros*, and that's an overload that can't be borne. This word is the word for "portion." Cargo. His own load. "Load" is not the same word as "burden." This word right here is the word for "cargo." In other words, you bear your own cargo.

Evelyn Wamble. Nobody else can do that, though.

Conrad Bowman. Somebody else could. Yeah, they could.

Evelyn Wamble. They could bear that?

Conrad Bowman. Yes ma'am. You see, as a ship – a ship is – a ship is designed and built and constructed in order to handle so many tons of cargo. Every ship is built to bear a certain amount of cargo. That's the word that's used. You were built by God in order to be able to bear "X" amount of cargo. That's what the Word says when it says, He'll never put on you more than you can bear.

Evelyn Wamble. That's our own burden.

Conrad Bowman. That's your own burden. You bear that. We find that the enemy has piled on you an additional load. That's overload. That's what it's talking about up here in the first verse. Overload. When the enemy has overloaded you, and he does it in so many ways, he brings circumstances in your life that just piles things up. He brings problems into your life that pile up and magnify those burdens. You see. That's overload. That's what we take off of our brother and sister. We take those off. We bear those. We take them off of them. Ok? But everyone of us bears our own load. Ok? Right on up to specks. Right on up to specks we take it on. Whatever God's designed us to carry, that's what we're going to take on ourselves. Now that the – this is the way that Paul's letter to the Galatians is developing.

6. Let the one who is taught the Word share all good things with him who teaches.

7. Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man sows, that he is going to reap.

8. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life.

Now it's important that we get to the end of this chapter.

9. Let us not lose heart in doing good things, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.

10. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, especially those who are of the household of the faith.

Household of "the" faith; and there is a "the" right there, a definite article, before faith. It's talking about the faith as he taught the Gospel. Remember what he said at the first of Galatians? That if anyone preach you any other Gospel, let him be accursed. That was Paul. He's announcing his own – his own definition of the Gospel, which is very, very important.

11. See what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand.

12. Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised,

Talking about the Judaizers.

12. ... simply that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

I won't go into that right now.

13. For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised that they may boast in your fleshly response.

14. But may it never be said that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I have been crucified to the world.

In other words, He died for the world. And that's – you can extend that. World; flesh; and devil. Now, here's the crux of it.

15. For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision anything, but a new creation.

The world is not divided into those who are under the Law and those who are outside of the Law. But the world is divided now between those two and the New Creation. Now I'm using the *New American Standard*. Ok?

16. Those who will walk by this rule,

And that's the rule of the New Creation.

16. ... peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

Now the Israel of God is this New Creation category. It's not tying them back to Abraham, though there's been a discussion about Abraham in the past. It's tying it back to the New Creation. The Israel of God. There's circumcised. There's uncircumcised. There's the Israel of God, and that's the New Creation. God is blessing the Israel of God.

16. ... peace and mercy be upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

17. From now on let no one cause trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus.

18. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren.

One of the most important verses in all of Galatians is verse 15.

15. Neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision is anything,

And that means the Law is a *non sequitur*. It doesn't even come up for discussion. We argue about the Law and whether or not man ought to keep it; or whether a man ought to observe it. And it has nothing to do with anything at this point. It's the New Creation which is the rule, and whether or not you are of the New Creation. And how did you become a New Creation Christian?

Evelyn Wamble. By faith.

Conrad Bowman. By faith. Joined to Christ in His death – Romans 6 – and we're getting there. I keep announcing that, because it's going to be real important when we get to Romans 6, we're going to put a big ring around it; so you understand that, and can come back to it. It's like a lynch pin, driven in the ground, to mark where you are in relation to Christ. The New Creation is the whole issue in determining your relationship to Christ. Now in Romans chapter 4, we got all the way ...

Evelyn Wamble. We sure did, didn't we.

Conrad Bowman. ... to chapter [verse] 16 or 17. Or verse 16 or 17. We're about half way there, which is not bad.

Betijean Kennerly. You know what, Conrad?

Conrad Bowman. Yes ma'am?

Betijean Kennerly. This is - this chapter 4 is such a beautiful picture of the actual sovereignty of God ...

Conrad Bowman. Sure it is.

Betijean Kennerly. ... who has declared – who can declare, the righteousness of ungodly.

Conrad Bowman. That's right.

Betijean Kennerly. [Inaudible].

Conrad Bowman. That's right.

Betijean Kennerly. I mean, that's ...

Conrad Bowman. He takes faith. He takes faith ...

Betijean Kennerly. And He declares the ungodly righteous because ...

Conrad Bowman. That's right.

Betijean Kennerly. ... of their faith in Christ Jesus.

Conrad Bowman. And not just good, but righteous.

Betijean Kennerly. But righteous.

Conrad Bowman. Because righteous ...

Betijean Kennerly. That is sovereign.

Conrad Bowman. Yes. Yes.

Betijean Kennerly. Absolutely.

Conrad Bowman. Only sovereignty could make that leap.

Betijean Kennerly. Only that. Aren't you glad He treats us that way. Yes sir.

Conrad Bowman. Yes ma'am. I'm glad He doesn't see me as me. I sure am. Now, questions? Yes sir? Adam?

Adam Sun. Is there a difference between Abraham's faith and our faith? A difference?

Conrad Bowman. Is there a difference between them? Well the only difference is the object. Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness. And we know from where we stand that the God who revealed Himself to Abraham was Christ in the Old Testament. A Christophany. The God who reveals Himself to Christ, so it's Christ who reveals God to us. In our day, we have a more clear view of it. So the faith is the same. The object is framed a little differently. And our vantage point, being this close to Christ's return, it gets us certain advantages, doesn't it? We've got all this history behind us.

Adam Sun. Can I say that our faith is based on the work of Christ. Abraham's faith was based on promise.

Conrad Bowman. Absolutely. Absolutely. Abraham's faith was based on the promise of God. The promises of God. Absolutely. And our faith is based on promises realized. And thought what he promised to God – what He promised to Abraham still has some revealing to be done. It's not finished yet. Our faith is based on the finished work of Christ; and Abraham's is based on the promises of God. And specific in this case.

Evelyn Wamble. They were looking forward to Christ, and we were looking back.

Conrad Bowman. Yeah. And Abraham, even that, Abraham was looking forward to descendants, and – and – and he was fairly old. They were old. You know, if the Lord showed up in the middle of the night in a vision and told you, Evelyn, you're going to have a family.

Evelyn Wamble. At ninety. [Laughter].

Conrad Bowman. Yeah. You'd kind of chuckle too, wouldn't you? Yeah. You bet I would. I bet I would. I'd – I'd want a – I'd least want a nanny and a nurse. You bet. Alright. Any other – any other comments or questions? Thank you so much for your attention tonight. Let's have a word of prayer please. Norma?

Norma Bowman. The e-mail list.

Conrad Bowman. Ok.

Father, we – we do thank You, Father, we thank You so much for the work of the Son that's completed; it's done; it's over. And we're walking in the unfolding of that every day in our life. Father, just take us and use us as lights on the hill. Keep us drawn close to the Son we serve; and Father just help us to see all that You are and all that You've done through His work on our behalf, reconciling the whole world to Yourself. We thank You Father and pray that You'd bless our walk that we would glorify You and the Son we serve and love; in His name, we pray. Amen.