

Scripturalism vs Judaism XXII

Paul Turns the World Upside Down

Fred R. Coulter—August 8, 1998

Whenever you're dealing with issues, you can always tell whether a person wants the truth by sticking with the issues or whether they want their own way. How do you determine that? How can you know? If they want to know the truth, then when they hear the truth and see the truth and know the truth they will understand it as the truth. It may be a little complicated in some cases, and it may be difficult for them to understand the truth, but nevertheless, they will recognize truth is truth. If they don't want it, what they always do is say, 'yeah but...'

For example: We all ought to keep the commandments of God—'yeah but we're all sinners; who's ever kept it perfect' or if they're talking about a person then they impugn the person, they ridicule the person. Like it's been said of me, 'Oh, I know him...' and they haven't seen me for 25 years. Do you suppose that even if your impression were right, there could be some change. That's how you know.

If they want the truth then they'll recognize it. This is the problem we're dealing with when we're talking about Scripturalism vs Judaism. Since WWII we've also been programmed that if you say anything against the Jews you're an anti-Semite, which is not true. If we talk about the faults that they have, especially in their antagonisms toward Christianity, then we are not being anti-Semitic.

I'm just going to survey certain key Scriptures. The whole thing has to get down to this: ***You're either Christ's or you're not!*** That's it! Granted, when they came teaching and preaching the Gospel, we're going to see that it really turned the Jews on end. Why? *They were losing power!* What happens when you lose power? What do you see today in the political realm when the Democrats think they're losing power? *They always attack the Republicans*—don't they? They don't go to the issue.

Take this thing on campaign financing. They've got the huge 116-page memo that they can't get Janet Reno to release because she knows that everybody is cooked if they release it. So, they say, 'Well, Republicans do...' There's one thing between snitching a piece of candy and driving off with the whole truck. So, you always get attacked! We'll see that as we go through here.

First of all, we just want to summarize something here. Paul then had Timothy recommended to him. Timothy's father was a Greek and what he had to do, even after the decree that

circumcision was not required, he did this because of the Jews.

Acts 16:3: "*And Paul desired to take him with him; but because of the Jews in those places, he took him and circumcised him, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. And as they passed through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep...*" (vs 3-4). It kind of seems like a bifurcated purpose here. First of all, you have the decree in your hand that you don't need to be circumcised for the rest of the Gentiles, and then you take Timothy and have him circumcised. But that's just the strangeness of the world and the tension that was between the Christians and the Jews.

Then he went on over to Philippi and he baptized Lydia, and that started the Church at Philippi. He also had persecutions from the Jews, was thrown in prison.

Verse 25—this time the Gentiles came along and did their dirty work: "But about midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing praises to God, and the prisoners were listening to them; and suddenly there was a great earthquake... [Just picture this in your mind: God intervening, heard them at midnight, 'why don't you shut up.'] ...so *great* that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors opened, and the bonds of all were loosed" (vs 25-26). Clunk! Off came the handcuffs and all the chains.

Verse 27: "When the jailer awoke from his sleep and saw the doors of the prison open, he drew a sword and was about to kill himself, supposing *that* the prisoners had escaped." It would cost him his head if they found out that all the prisoners had left.

Verse 28: "But Paul called out with a loud voice, saying, 'Do not harm yourself; for we are all here.' And after asking for lights, he rushed in and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. And when he had brought them out, he said, 'Sirs, what must I do, that I may be saved?'.... [You talk about instant conviction for salvation!] ...Then they said, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, you and your household.' And he took them in that hour of the night, and washed *their* wounds; and he and all his *household* were immediately baptized. Then he brought them into his house *and* laid out a table *for them*; and he rejoiced with all *his* household, who had believed in God. Now when day came, the captains sent the sergeants, saying, 'Let those men go'" (vs 28-35).

Acts 17—Paul goes into the synagogue. They were to go to the Jews first, because God promised that the message would go to the Jews first. Paul always did that. That doesn't mean that he kept Sunday when he didn't go to the synagogue on the Sabbath, as we already saw in Acts 13.

Acts 17:1: "And after journeying through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where *there* was a synagogue of the Jews. And as was the custom with Paul, he went in to them and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, expounding and demonstrating that it was necessary for Christ to suffer and to rise from *the* dead, and *testifying*, 'This Jesus, Whom I am proclaiming to you, is **the Christ.**' Now, some of them were convinced, and joined themselves to Paul and Silas, including a great multitude of devout Greeks, and of the chief women not a few. But the unbelieving Jews became envious and took to *them* certain evil men of the baser sort; and when they had gathered a huge crowd, they set the city in an uproar..." (vs 1-5). What do you do politically when you don't get your way? *You have a march! A riot!* That's what they were doing.

"...and they assaulted the house of Jason, looking for *Paul and Silas*, to bring them out to the people. And when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and certain brethren before the city magistrates, crying out, 'Those who have set the whole world in confusion have come here also'" (vs 5-6). Here they are turning the world upside down. I tell you what, when you look at the *Code of Jewish Law* and see all of their laws, and Paul comes along and says, 'By grace are you saved through faith, believe in Christ'—that is turning all of their customs and traditions upside down! He gives them no power base.

Verse 7: "'Whom Jason has received; and these all do *what is* contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying *that* there is another king, Jesus.'.... [They twist and turn the words—don't they? Try and make it appear that it's a civil uprising.] ...And they caused *great* agitation among the people and the city magistrates, who heard these things. But after taking security from Jason and the rest, they let them go" (vs 7-9). That is they found out what was being said wasn't true, so they let them go.

Verse 10: "Then the brethren immediately sent away by night to Berea... [They had to escape at night. I mean, we lead rather dull lives—don't we? *Compared to them!*] ...both Paul and Silas, who, when they arrived, went into the synagogue of the Jews. Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, *for* they received the Word with all readiness of mind *and* examined the Scriptures daily *to see* if these things were so" (vs 10-11). This is the

only synagogue that Paul did not have a riot in. They received it. Granted, there were other Jews who came along and were in Thessalonica and did them in, but here they were receptive.

Verse 12: "As a result, a great number of them believed, including not a few of the honorable Greek women and men. But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that Paul was preaching the Word of God in Berea also... [they weren't content enough to just leave them alone in Berea; they were probably figuring that that synagogue in Berea got subverted by Paul, 'we better go down and rescue them.'] ...they came there to stir up the multitude. Then the brethren immediately sent Paul away, as *if* he were going to the sea; but both Silas and Timothy remained there" (vs 12-14).

So, they brought them down to Athens. I imagine Athens was quite an experience. I have never traveled to Europe, but I imagine Europe is much the same. I see the pictures of Rome especially. They have statues and idols everywhere! Not being overseas, I don't know what it's like to live in a land where there's an idol on every corner that you turn. But here is what it was in Athens, idols everywhere!

Verse 16: "But while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he saw *that* the city *was* wholly given to idolatry..." Bowing down before this, that and the other thing. Like at St. Peter's Basilica today, the foot of the so-called St. Peter, so many people have kissed it they have worn down the big toe over the years. Can you imagine that? The slobber of a million people reduced his toe. What would happen if someone would come with an acid mouth and the foot falls off? It makes you wonder! The Vatican is filled with idols! Everything is an idol! Every single thing has some sort of mystic significance to it, and that's what they had in Athens.

Verse 17: "Because of this, he reasoned earnestly in the synagogue with the Jews and those who worshiped *there*, and daily in the marketplace with those who met with *him*. Then some philosophers..." (vs 17-18). Philosophers were the religious leaders of the pagan religion. That's why when you come into the thing concerning the trinity it always goes back to philosophy because that's where it came from—the philosophy of Greek, the philosophy of Babylon.

"...of the Epicureans and the Stoics..." (v 18). The Epicureans were those who said, 'Let's eat, drink and make merry for that's why we were made.' The Stoics said no, 'let's be more like the Pharisees, let's discipline the flesh, let's beat the flesh, let's deprive ourselves, let's be more like someone who is in a monastery.'

“...[they] encountered him. And some of *them* said, ‘What will this babbler have to say?’ And some *said*, ‘He seems to be a preacher of foreign gods,’ because he was preaching to them the Gospel of Jesus and the resurrection.... [They wanted to know this. They didn’t have a television set, so they wanted to find out so they took him person to person.] ...And they took him and brought *him* to Mars Hill, saying, ‘May we know what this new teaching *is* that is spoken by you?’.... [The ‘ariocarpus’ was where they had their open debates.] ...For you are bringing certain strange things to our ears. So then, we desire to know what these things mean.’ (Now all *the* Athenians and the strangers sojourning *among them* spent their leisure in nothing other than to tell and to hear something new.)” (vs 18-21).

I don’t know how they made their living, I don’t have a clue, but here all they did was talk all day long; come and go and ‘Argyroupolis’ was the center for it. I know that in Los Angeles they have a town square and they have a little place down there and anybody can get up and preach anything they want to. You get some of the strangest things that are taught. They also have it in London: Piccadilly Square. They’ve got all the little places where different ones can get up and speak. This is what it’s talking about here.

Verse 22: “Then Paul stood in *the* center of Mars Hill... [Right next to the temple of Mars. I don’t imagine that the temple to Diana or Athena was too far away.] ...*and* said, ‘Men, Athenians, I perceive *that* in all things you are very reverent to deities... [demonized; sounds like the world today. He didn’t waste any words—did he?] ...For *as* I was passing through and observing the objects of your veneration, I also found an altar on which was inscribed, “To an unknown God”....” (vs 22-23). He took advantage of it. He had to begin someplace. He couldn’t start off and say, ‘You’re Gentiles, you’re cutoff and I’m a Jew and I’m the greatest thing there ever was’ and all this sort of thing. That wouldn’t go!

“...So then, He Whom you worship in ignorance *is* the one *that* I proclaim to you. He *is* the God Who made the world and all things that *are* in it. Being *the* Lord of heaven and earth, He does not dwell in temples made by hands...” (vs 23-24)—pointing to all the temples they had there. Can you imagine what a statement that was? What he’s literally saying is that there is ‘no god in any one of these temples here. You’re all demonized!’ What a statement!

Verse 25: “Nor is He served by the hands of men, as *though* He needs anything, *for* He gives to all life and breath and all things. And He made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell upon all

the face of the earth, having determined beforehand *their* appointed times and the boundaries of their dwelling; in order that they might seek the Lord, if perhaps they might feel after Him and **might find Him; though truly, He is not far from each one of us**” (vs 25-27). That’s a key statement—isn’t it? In most of these religions God has gone way off someplace.

Verse 28: “**For in Him we live and move and have our being**; as some of the poets among you also have said, “For we are His offspring.” Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we should not think that the Godhead *is* like that which *is made* of gold, or silver, or stone—a graven thing of art *devised by the* imagination of man” (vs 28-29).

Later on in Acts 19 He destroyed the economy of Ephesus, because the economy of Ephesus was wholly given over to making idols, statues, crucifixes, lucky charms and rosaries. All pagan religions have rosaries. Did you know that the Hindu religion has rosaries, Islamic religion has rosaries and the Japanese religion Shintoism has rosaries? It’s amazing how similar they all are when you really put them together. That’s something! This tells us that in the New Testament **no** religious art, religious statues, idols, engravings, crosses, crucifixes, etc.

Verse 30: “For *although* God has indeed overlooked the times of this ignorance, He now commands all men everywhere to repent... [then he lays it on them]: ...because He has set a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by a man Whom He has appointed, having given proof to all *by* raising Him from *the* dead” (vs 30-31).

Let me just state this: ***All the religions of the world are religions of the dead!*** You go to any Catholic Church and what do you have? ***Tombs right within the church! Graveyards right next to it!*** You go to the Vatican and all the popes are buried someplace within the Vatican. It’s all built on dead men’s bones! That’s why being raised from the dead is a phenomenal thing!

Verse 32: “And after hearing *about the* resurrection of *the* dead, some mocked; but some said, ‘We will hear you again concerning this *matter*.’ And so Paul went out from among them. But certain ones *who* believed joined themselves to him, among whom also *were* Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them” (vs 32-34). Out of all of Athens, what did he have? ***Just a few! Just a very few!***

Don’t think it’s very strange that we’re just a few. When it gets right down to really loving the Truth and loving God and doing the things that God wants, everything gets narrowed down to the few.

Acts 18:1: “Now after these things, Paul departed from Athens *and* came to Corinth; and *there* he found a certain Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with Priscilla his wife (because Claudius had ordered all the Jews out of Rome). *And* he came to their *house*. And because he was of the same trade, he dwelt with them and worked; for they were tent makers by trade. And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded *both* Jews and Greeks” (vs 1-4). He was there every Sabbath!

Verse 5: “Now, when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was stirred in his spirit... [When he came he felt fortified. ‘I’ve been here in the synagogue and I’ve been sort of easily stepping into it with the Jews’] ...*and* was earnestly testifying to the Jews *that* Jesus *was* the Christ.” Whenever that happens notice the reaction:

Verse 6: “But when they set themselves in opposition and were blaspheming... [They had a knock-down drag-out in the synagogue. You go through and analyze every time he went into the synagogue it ended up being, in most cases, a knock-down, drag-out. This one here is really quite ironic.] ...*Paul* shook *his* garments *and* said to them, ‘Your blood *be* upon your own heads....’” Sounds a little bit like Ezek. 3. That’s a tough task. I would hate go into a hard-shelled Baptist church every Sunday and preach to tell them to come back next Sabbath. Or I would hate to go into the synagogue of the Jews and preach Christ. I mean, think of it! Nevertheless, he was doing what God said here; when he went into the synagogues he was doing this:

Ezekiel 3:17: “Son of man, I have made you a watchman to the house of Israel. Therefore hear the word from My mouth, and give them warning from Me.... [that’s what Paul was doing, speaking the words of Christ] ...When I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die’; and you do not give him warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked one shall die in his iniquity; but I will require his blood at your hand. Yet if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul” (vs 17-19). That’s what Paul just did in Acts 17. He preached Christ; He warned them; they didn’t want it so he delivered his soul.

Verse 20: “And when the righteous turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die. Because you have not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness, which he has done, shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand. But if you warn the righteous so that the righteous does not sin, and if he does not

sin, he shall surely live because he is warned; also you have delivered your soul” (vs 20-21). You can just take Ezek. 3 and look at how in all the Epistles of Paul you have all of those factors combined:

- He *warns the wicked* whether they will change or not
- He *warns the righteous* to not sin

So Paul here is doing the same thing.

Acts 18:6: “‘From this time forward I will go to the Gentiles.’ And after departing from there, he went into *the* house of a certain one named Justus, who worshiped God, whose house adjoined the synagogue.... [I think this is ironic! He didn’t go across town, he went next door.] ...But Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with his whole house; and many of the Corinthians who heard believed and were baptized” (vs 6-8). He split the synagogue right down the middle. They were meeting right next door at Justus’ house.

Verse 9: “And the Lord said to Paul in a vision in *the* night, ‘Do not be afraid; but speak, and do not be silent, for I am with you; and no one shall set upon you to mistreat you because I have many people in this city’” (vs 9-10). Right there in that city God was dealing with a lot of people and Paul didn’t know that God had already been laying the groundwork for Paul coming there.

It makes you wonder that a lot of the things that we have been doing here if God is laying the groundwork for something. I don’t know. He may or may not be. I’m not going to say that He is. I’m not going to say that He isn’t. I think we all need to be ready just in case He is. There are a lot of things we don’t know anything about.

Verse 11: “And he remained *there* for a year and six months, teaching the Word of God among them.” Notice that he stayed in Corinth 18 months preaching every Sabbath in Justus’ house next to the synagogue. You talk about a tough set of circumstances, that’s really something! This really got to them!

Verse 12: “Now when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews rose up against Paul with one accord and led him to the judgment seat.” If you can’t handle the truth, then you get politics on your side. Sound familiar? You use the political and the judicial system to get your dirty work done. This sounds like many organizations we know of today: AMA, federal government, Sierra Club—all of those things—same type of thing that went on here.

Verse 13: “Saying, ‘This *man* is persuading men to worship God contrary to the law.’ And when Paul was about to open *his* mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, ‘Now then, if it were a matter of some injustice, or wicked criminality, O Jews, according

to reason, I should put up with you; but on the other hand, if it be a question about a message and names and a law of your own, you see *to it* yourselves; for I have no desire to be a judge of these things.’... [at least it was a righteous judge] ...And he drove them from the judgment seat. Then all the Greeks laid hold on Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, *and* beat *him* before the judgment seat.... [God had a way doing it, because the chief ruler Sosthenes was the one who was carrying it out.] ...But none of these things mattered to Gallio. And after Paul had remained *there* many days...” (vs 13-18). Then Paul went over to Ephesus.

Verse 21: “But took leave of them, saying, ‘I must by all means keep the Feast that is coming at Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing.’ And he sailed from Ephesus. And after landing at Caesarea, he went up *to Jerusalem* and visited the Church; *then* he went down to Antioch. And when he had stayed *there* some time, he left *and* went through the country of the Galatians and the Phrygians in order, establishing all the disciples” (vs 21-23).

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Let’s see what happened here in Ephesus. This is very important because Ephesus then is referred to in the book of Revelation, chapter two, as the very first church along the mail route with the seven churches.

Acts 19:1: “Now it came to pass *that* while Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the upper parts *and* came to Ephesus; and when he found certain disciples... [A disciple is a learner—we are all disciples of Christ. We’re all learners of Christ.] ...he said to them, ‘Did you receive *the* Holy Spirit after you believed?’...” (vs 1-2). This is a very important section of Scripture, because this gives us the precedent that if a person needs to be baptized again, or re-baptized because they don’t have the Holy Spirit, then it should be done.

“...And they said to him, ‘We have not even heard that *there* is a Holy Spirit.’ Then he said to them, ‘Unto what, then, were you baptized?’ And they said, ‘Unto the baptism of John.’ And Paul said, ‘John truly baptized *with* a baptism unto repentance, saying to the people that they should believe in Him Who was coming after him—that is, in Jesus, the Christ.’ And after hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus” (vs 2-5).

How many times were they baptized? *Twice!* If you’ve been baptized in the Baptist Church then you need to be baptized again. Even if you were baptized in the Church of God, perhaps there’s a situation where the minister may not have really been a minister indeed, and there have been cases of that where a person needed to be re-baptized. I

remember the first time I was confronted with that, someone said, ‘We were baptized in the Church of God Seventh Day and we don’t think we have God’s Holy Spirit.’ They had never heard of the Holy Spirit being a begettal in your mind.

Whenever that occurs, I don’t like to say, ‘Oh good, let’s go re-baptize.’ No, that’s not what to do. What to do is this: Everyone who has that question in the their mind should go ahead and fast and pray about it and ask God to reveal whether the Holy Spirit is *in* you or *with* you. It’s a very important thing to understand.

John 14—Christ is saying something here that’s very important. While the disciples were with Christ, none of them were begotten with the Spirit *internally*. But they had the Holy Spirit *with* them. When the Holy Spirit is *with* a person, it will lead them to want to know about God. They will feel something different than has happened in their life up to that particular point. God’s Spirit is dealing with the individual to call that individual. If they choose to repent and then are subsequently baptized, then the Holy Spirit will be begotten in their mind.

John 14:16: “And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter that it may be with you throughout the age ... [see sermon series: *Holy Spirit*—it goes through showing that in the Greek this should not have been called ‘he’ in any instance, but it should be called ‘it’—because the definite article is neuter, ‘ta pneuma’] ...*Even* the Spirit of the Truth, which the world cannot receive because it perceives it not, nor knows it... [Why cannot the world receive the Spirit of God? *Because they are not seeking God! God is not calling them!* That’s why!] ...but you know it because it dwells with you, and shall be **within** [‘en’] you...” (vs 16-18).

Back in Acts 19:2—Paul asked them whether they had the Holy Spirit: “...And they said to him, ‘We have not even heard that *there* is a Holy Spirit.’” Let’s also understand that in the time sequence between the time that Christ was here and the Church was started, we are dealing with some 19 years, maybe 20 years altogether. These people were just following the way of the baptism of John.

“...they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Now when Paul laid *his* hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with *other* languages and prophesied” (vs 5-6). That didn’t happen with every baptism, but this happened for a particular reason so that Paul would know that God wanted him there for a long time.

Verse 7: “And all the men were about twelve. Then he entered into the synagogue *and* spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading... [arguing, with some knock-down

drag-outs] ...the things concerning the Kingdom of God. But when some were hardened and refused to believe, speaking evil of the way before the multitude, he departed from them *and* separated the disciples; *and* he disputed *these things* daily in the school of a certain Tyrannus. And this took place for two years..." (vs 7-10).

There was a lot friction here in Ephesus; Ephesus became a real spiritual and literal warfare place, because Paul was turning the world upside down from Ephesus. Remember, Ephesus was the chief worship place of the goddess Diana.

Notice the impact here: "...so that all those who inhabited Asia heard the message of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. And God worked special works of power by the hands of Paul, so that even when handkerchiefs or cloths were brought from his body *to* those who were sick, the diseases departed from them and the wicked spirits went out from them" (vs 10-12). This is where we get the precedence of the anointed cloths.

Now then, you always have some competition come along and this is one of the ones I really like. You could do this up in a movie, v 13: "Then certain vagabond Jews... [Gypsy Jews] ...exorcists... [they dealt in demonology] ...took it upon themselves to pronounce over those who had wicked spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, 'We adjure you *by* Jesus, whom Paul proclaims.' Now, there were certain *men*, seven sons of a Jew named Sceva, a high priest, who were doing this. But the wicked spirit answered *and* said, 'Jesus I know, and Paul I have knowledge of; but you, who are you?' And the man in whom was the wicked spirit attacked them, overpowered them and prevailed against them, so that they escaped out of that house naked and wounded" (vs 13-16). You're dealing with violent spirits!

Verse 17: "Now this became known to everyone inhabiting Ephesus..." They had something better than a local newspaper. They had word of mouth and it went like wildfire and it went everywhere. They didn't have President Clinton to talk about, they had Paul to talk about. So, it went everywhere. Can you imagine what the people thought when they saw these guys running naked and wounded and bleeding down the street? 'Did you see that? What happened there?' It was known everywhere.

"...both Jews and Greeks; and fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.... [right at the seat of Diana] ...Then many of those who believed came *forward* to confess and declare their deeds.... [now we're going to have an economic depression because of conversion] ...And many of those who practiced the occult arts... [little statues of Diana; probably rosary

type beads] ...brought their books... [all the teachings contained in that] ...*and* burned *them* before all; and they calculated the cost of them and found *it to be* fifty thousand pieces of silver. And so the Word of the Lord spread and prevailed mightily" (vs 17-20). This was really quite a thing going on. *If God is going to do anything like that in the future, we'd better all be prepared.*

Verse 21: "Now, when all these things had taken place, Paul determined in *his* spirit *that* when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, he must go to Jerusalem, saying, 'After going there, I must also see Rome.' And when he had sent to Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, he remained in Asia *for* a time. And at that time it came to pass *that there was* no small tumult about the way. For *there was* a certain *man* named Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver temples for Diana, *which* brought the artificers no small gain" (vs 21-24).

They were all being unemployed! Talk about downsizing! They were getting rid of all of the idols, being downsized, no question about it.

Verse 25: "After gathering together the workmen *who worked* in such things, he said, 'Men, you know that from this *craft* we gain our wealth.'" Just think of this: If there was all of a sudden in Rome, at the Vatican, a destruction of all the idols and Madonnas and rosaries, don't you think they'd have conference like this in the Vatican? *You know they would!*

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Verse 26: "'And you see and hear that not only in Ephesus, but almost all of Asia, this Paul has persuaded a great multitude to turn away, saying that they are not gods which are made by hands. Now not only is our business in danger of coming into disrepute, but also the temple of the great goddess Diana, whom all Asia and the world worship, is in danger of being regarded as nothing, and her majesty also is about to be destroyed.' And after hearing *this*, they were filled with rage; *and* they cried out, saying, 'Great *is* Diana of *the* Ephesians!'" (vs 26-28).

In Greek that has a rhythmic saying that is something! You can just hear the whole group chanting it! Just get the cadence and the whole group going, like everyone out in front of St. Peter's Basilica. They're all rhythmically going thorough and giving this great salute to Diana—here it's 'Artemis'; Diana is an English derivation of it.

Verse 29: "And the whole city was filled with confusion; and they seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians *and* fellow travelers of Paul, *and* rushed with one accord to the theater. Now

Paul was determined to go in to the people, *but* the disciples prevented him....” (vs 29-31). The disciples didn’t all him to do it. He was going to go and say, ‘I’m going to speak’ and they said ‘you better not.’ So, he didn’t!

“...And some of the chiefs of Asia, who also were his friends, sent to him, urging *him* not to venture into the theater. Now, some were crying out one thing and some another; for the assembly was confused, and the majority *of them* did not know for what reason they had come together. Then they selected Alexander from among the multitude, the Jews pushing him forward; and Alexander made a sign with his hand, wishing to make a defense to the people. But when they recognized that he was a Jew, there was a unified shout from all for about *the space of* two hours *as* they cried out, ‘Great is Diana of the Ephesians!’” (vs 31-34). For two hours just ranting and raving!

Verse 35: “Now, after the recorder had calmed the multitude, he said, ‘Men of Ephesus, what man is there who does not know that the inhabitants of the city of Ephesus are keepers of the temple of the great goddess Diana, and of the *image* that fell down from Jupiter? Since these things are undeniable, it is imperative that you be calm and do nothing recklessly’” (vs 35-36). They went ahead and they settled the thing and Paul escaped.

Acts 20:1: “When the tumult was over, Paul called the disciples to *him* and embraced *them*; *then* he left to go into Macedonia.” He went over in there. Then we have a whole section here concerning how he came back and talked to the elders at Ephesus and warned them of the things that were going to take place, because he knew at that time, as he was on his way to Jerusalem, that the whole Church would literally be torn asunder. We find this warning to the elders beginning in:

Verse 28: “**Take heed therefore to yourselves...**” That’s the first thing any minister and teacher needs to do:

- don’t get exalted
- don’t get the big head
- don’t overlord the brethren
- watch out for yourselves
- don’t get carried away with doctrine
- stick with the Truth

All of those things are implied.

“...and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, **to feed the Church of God**, which He purchased with His own blood” (v 30). That’s why all the brethren that any minister or teacher teaches, he is a steward of those brethren, because they’re all the property of God. **You all belong to God!** That’s very important to

understand. As a steward then one is going to be a faithful steward is going to help all of those that God has purchased with the blood of Christ become the best that they can be through the power of the Holy Spirit. That’s the whole work of the ministry. This is what Paul is saying here.

Verse 29: ““For I know this: that after my departure grievous wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will rise up speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves”” (v 29-30). Sounds like what is happening today.

Verse 31: ““Watch, therefore, remembering that *for* three years I ceased not to admonish each one night and day with tears. And now I commit you, brethren, to God and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have coveted no one’s silver or gold or clothing. Rather, you yourselves know that these hands did minister to my needs and to those who were with me. *In* all things, I have showed you that you are obligated to so labor to support those who are weak, remembering the words that the Lord Jesus Himself said: “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”” And after saying these things, he knelt with them all *and* prayed. Then there was much weeping by everyone; and they embraced Paul *and* fervently kissed him, being distressed most of all by his saying that they would not see his face any more. Then they accompanied him to the ship” (vs 31-38).

Then he was on his way to Jerusalem. Acts 21 becomes a very important part of this Scripturalism vs Judaism. What do we have in Jerusalem? *Where the New Testament Church began—correct?*

- we have the temple
- we have James
- we have thousands and thousands of those who believed

And, of course, they were all still zealous of the Law. What we are going to do is see that now Paul succumbs to a political solution that backfired. God knew it would backfire and Paul barely escaped with his life. Let’s see what it is, because he is confronted with the Circumcision Party. Paul was warned all the way through that when he stopped he would have trouble in Jerusalem.

Acts 21:17: “Now, when we arrived in Jerusalem, the brethren gladly received us. And on the following *day*, Paul went with us to *see* James; and all the elders *were* assembled” (vs 17-18). This you might say is the Jewish Sanhedrin of the Christian Church in Jerusalem. They had it all structured much like the Sanhedrin of the Jews before them. Of course, when you have that, you

have politics.

Verse 19: “And after greeting them, he reported one by one the things that God had worked among the Gentiles through his ministry. And when they heard *this*, they glorified the Lord. Then they said to him, ‘Brother, you see how many thousands of Jews there are who believe and they are all zealous of the law *of rituals*’” (vs 19-20).

Getting into numbers. Are all of them converted? *No!* The book of Hebrews proves it, because they were ready to go back to the animal sacrifices, because certain of the promises that Jesus gave did not happen in the time sequence that *they thought* would happen. So, they were giving up on Christ and being zealous for the law. We have thousands here.

What happens when you start counting? What happened when David numbered Israel? *Joab gave him the advice:* ‘David, why are you numbering the children of Israel? It doesn’t matter how many we have, because God is going to deliver the victory—isn’t He?’ But David persisted on it: 70,000 children of Israel lost their lives because of David’s sin. We have here “...thousands of Jews there are who believe and they are all zealous of the law *of rituals*.”

Verse 21: “But they have been informed that you are teaching all *the* Jews who are among the Gentiles to apostatize from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children, nor to walk in the customs.” Part of this is true. You don’t have to keep the *traditions* of the Jews. But in Jerusalem they could never get away from it, even though they believed in Christ. This presented a problem. This is the Circumcision Party that Paul talks about later: *those of the circumcision* who still look down on all the Gentiles. What is it there for? What is it going to do?

Verse 22—here is a political solution: “What then is going to happen? A multitude is going to assemble... [It’s ordained or obligatory that they’re going to come together for one meeting or another.] ...for they will hear that you have come. Therefore, do this that we tell you: there are four men with us who have a vow on themselves” (vs 22-23).

Paul made a bad decision here. I’m sure God let it be to prove a point. He could have said, ‘Look, this temple is going to be destroyed. All the rituals that are done here at the temple are of no effect whatsoever:

- they do not change the heart
- they do not bring about conversion

Though these people are zealous of it, they need to

realize that God is going to destroy it! But he didn’t do that. What happened?

Verse 24: “Take these and be purified with them, and pay their expenses... [by the sacrifices that they were going to have and purify yourself according to the ritual of the temple] ...so that they may shave *their* heads; and everyone will know that what they have been informed about you is nothing, and that you yourself also are walking orderly *and* keeping the law *of rituals*.” They’re asking him to be two-faced in this: one way to the Gentiles and another way to the Jews.

Verse 25: “But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we wrote *to them* after deciding *that* they do not have to observe any such thing, except to keep themselves from things that are offered to idols, and *from* blood, and *from* what is strangled, and *from* sexual immorality.’ Then Paul took the men, *and* on the next day he was purified with them *and* went into the temple, signifying the fulfillment of the days of purification, until each of them had offered *his* offering. But when the seven days were about to be completed, the Jews from Asia, who had seen him in the temple...” (vs 25-27).

The ones in Asia, what did they always do with Paul? They were after him, chasing him down. When he went into the synagogue and had the arguments and split the synagogue. Then they sent people out to stir up the Gentiles. One place they stoned him. So, when they saw Paul in their home territory up at the temple, great trouble was at hand.

“...[They] stirred up all the multitude; and they laid *their* hands on him...” (v 27). ‘Come on now, let’s get him! Now’s our chance!’ Lesson #1: ***political solution always backfires!*** God rescued him because He wanted them to have a witness.

Verse 28: “[They were] crying out, ‘Men of Israel, help! This is the man who is teaching everyone everywhere against the people and the law and this place; and furthermore, he has also brought Greeks into the temple, and has defiled this Holy place.’ For they had previously seen Trophimus, the Ephesian, in the city with him, *and* they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple. And the whole city was stirred up, and the people ran together; and they took hold of Paul *and* drew him outside the temple... [Hooray! Now we can get our mob rule!'] ...and the doors were immediately shut. But as they were attempting to kill him... [they meant it; they’re finally going to get him; they had Christ, now they’re going to get him] ...a report came to the chief captain of the band that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. *And* he immediately took soldiers and centurions with *him and* ran down to them. And when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul” (vs 28-32).

They were beating him unmercifully, probably pulling at his beard and pulling his clothes.

Verse 33: “Then the chief captain came up *and* laid hold of him, and commanded that he be bound with two chains; and he inquired who he might be, and what he had been doing. But some in the multitude were crying one thing, and some another. When he was not able to determine the facts because of the uproar, he commanded him to be brought into the fortress.... [where the prison was] ...Now, when he came upon the stairs, it happened *that* he was being carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the multitude” (vs 33-35). The soldiers just picked him up and carried him off; this was really a mob scene. This tells you in this:

- you have the Jews who didn’t know anything about Christ knowing this
- you had the Jews who were those who supposedly believed

You’ve got a whole mixture here. They thought that what he was teaching the Gentiles that this was really the end of the earth. Can you imagine teaching non-circumcision? Can you imagine saying that God is going to destroy this temple? Why, this is where we worship! How could God do that? You must not be of God! You must be of Satan the devil! You can almost write the script.

Verse 36: “For the multitude of people followed, shouting, ‘Away with him!’.... [That’s what they said of Jesus—didn’t they? Same thing!] ...And when he was about to be brought into the fortress, Paul said to the chief captain, ‘Is it permissible for me to say something to you?’ And he said, ‘Do you know Greek? Are not you the Egyptian who previously caused confusion and led into the desert four thousand men who were murderers?’ But Paul said, ‘I am a man *who is* indeed a Jew, a citizen of Cilicia from Tarsus, which is no insignificant city. I beseech you, allow me to speak to the people.’ And after receiving permission from him, Paul stood on the stairs *and* motioned with his hand to the people; and when there was great silence, he spoke to *them* in the Hebrew language, saying” (vs 36-40). This is quite a thing. Everything was quiet, until he gets to one point:

Acts 22:1: “Men, brethren and fathers, hear now my defense to you.’ And when they heard him speak to them in the Hebrew language, they kept the more silent; and he said, ‘I am a man *who is* indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel... [one of the very leading teachers in Jerusalem] ...having been instructed according to *the* exactness of the law of our fathers, being a zealot for God, even as you all are this day; *and* I persecuted this way unto death, binding and delivering up to prisons both men and women, As

also the high priest and all the elderhood bear witness to me; from whom I received letters to the brethren, *and* went to Damascus to bring bound to Jerusalem those who were there also, in order that they might be punished” (vs 1-5). I don’t know what they did to punish him, but I imagine they were beaten, scourge, some were put to death. The Inquisition did not begin with the Catholics, the Inquisition began with the Jews.

Verse 6: “Now it happened *that* while I was journeying, as I was drawing near to Damascus about midday, a great light from heaven suddenly shined around me. And I fell to the ground; and I heard a voice say to me, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?’ And I answered, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said to me, ‘I am Jesus the Nazarean, Whom you are persecuting.’ Now those who were with me indeed saw the light, and were alarmed; but they did not hear the voice of the one Who spoke to me. Then I said, ‘What shall I do, Lord?’ And the Lord said to me, ‘Stand up *and* go into Damascus, and there all the things that have been appointed for you to do shall be told to you.’ And since I could not see because of the brilliance of that light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me, *and* I came to Damascus. And a certain Ananias, a devout man according to the law, who had a good report by all the Jews dwelling *there*, came to me; and he stood *and* said to me, ‘Brother Saul, look up.’ And I looked up at him at that time. And he said, ‘The God of our fathers has personally chosen you to know His will, and to see the Just One, and to hear *the* voice of His mouth; for you shall be a witness for Him to all men of what you have seen and heard. And now why do you delay? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord”” (vs 6-16).

Verse 17: “And it came to pass *that* when I returned to Jerusalem, and I was praying in the temple, I entered into a trance; and I saw Him saying to me, ‘Hurry, and get out of Jerusalem with *all* speed, because they will not receive your testimony concerning Me.’ And I said, ‘Lord, they themselves are aware that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue those who believe in You. And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was being poured out, I myself was also standing by and consenting to putting him to death, and was holding the garments of those who killed him.’ But He said to me, ‘Go, for I am sending you afar off to the Gentiles.” And they listened until they *heard* him say this; then they lifted up their voices, saying...” (vs 17-22).

As soon as he came to the Gentiles, mentioned the Gentiles, everything changed. Judaism would accept no Gentile under any circumstances—period—*unless* they were circumcised; *unless* they became a proselyte, *unless*

they were a second-class citizen—which is contrary to what God wants. God wants us all brethren in Christ, circumcised in heart and mind having the Spirit of God. Here’s what happened when he got to the point of saying *Gentiles*.

“...‘Away with such a one from the *face* of the earth, for he is not fit to live!’... [he barely saved his life] ...And as they were shouting and casting off *their* garments and throwing dust into the air... [this was a real riot; tremendous riot] ...the chief captain commanded that he be brought into the fortress and ordered that he be examined by scourging, so that he might know for what cause they were crying out against him in this way” (vs 22-24). So, the long and short of it is that he found out that Paul was a Roman citizen, a free man, and he said, ‘Look, we’ve got to get you out of here.’ He got out there by night and went on down to Caesarea and was put in prison there.

The Jews still wanted him, Acts 24:1: “Then after five days, the high priest Ananias came down with the elders and a certain orator *named* Tertullus, who made a presentation to the governor against Paul.” The long and short of it is they came down there, Paul saw that he had to defend himself, and in the whole situation—chapters 24-26—he talked to King Agrippa, he said to Paul, ‘You almost convince me to be a Christian.’ Paul escaped with this life, he appealed to Caesar and that’s how he got to Rome. He got to Rome as a prisoner.

Then he was pretty much all done with things concerning Jerusalem, and when he came to Rome, Acts 28:16: “And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the commander of the camp; but Paul was allowed to remain by himself with the soldier who kept him.” This is when he did a lot of his writing. This is when he wrote Ephesians, Philipians and Colossians.

Verse 17: “Now, it came to pass *that* after three days, Paul called together those who were chief among the Jews. And when they had come together, he said to them, ‘Men *and* brethren, although I have done nothing against the people or the customs of our fathers, I was delivered into the hands of the Romans *as* a prisoner from Jerusalem.’ After examining me, they desired to let *me* go because there was not one cause of death in me. But when the Jews objected, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar...” (vs 17-19). He used the law legally to save his neck.

“... —not as though I had anything to charge against my nation. For this cause then, I have called for you, in order that I might see you and speak to you; because *it is* for the hope of Israel that I have this chain around *me*.’ Then they said to him, ‘We have neither received letters concerning you from Judea, nor have any of the brethren [Jews] who have

arrived reported anything or spoken evil of you. But we would like to hear from you *and to know* what you think, because we are indeed very aware that this sect is everywhere spoken against.’ And when they appointed a day *for* him *to speak*, many came into his lodging to *hear* him; *and* he expounded to them from morning until evening, fully testifying *of* the Kingdom of God and persuading them *of* the things concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and *from* the prophets. And some were truly convinced of the things that were spoken, but some did not believe” (vs 19-24).

“And they departed in disagreement with one another after Paul had spoken *these* words: ‘Well did the Holy Spirit speak by Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, saying, “Go to this people and say, ‘In hearing you shall hear, and in no way understand; and *in* seeing you shall see, but in no way perceive. For the heart of this people has grown fat, and their ears are dull of hearing, and they have closed their eyes; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them.’” Be it known to you, that the salvation of God has, therefore, been sent to the Gentiles; and they will hear.’” (vs 25-28). That’s a mighty challenging statement to them.

Verse 29: “And after he said these things, the Jews went away with much debate among themselves. And Paul remained two whole years in his own hired house, welcoming all who came to him, proclaiming the Kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, no man forbidding *him*” (vs 29-31).

It sounds like it’s cut right off in the middle of something—doesn’t it? Apparently it is. There is no ‘Amen’ at the end of the book of Acts—none whatsoever. I don’t know all of the meaning or implications of that. Some have said that there’s going to be more added to it later on. I don’t know if there’s going to be a future book of Acts or not, and if there is, what all of it would contain. We’ll just leave it at that.

What we are dealing with is the perversion of the Gospel by intermixing Judaism with it. This particular Judaism that we have not only came from Jerusalem, but we now know also came from the Essenes from which we get today the Dead Sea Scrolls. We also now know that they had a calendar that was contrary to the true solar/lunar calendar that we have. Those of the Essenes over there where there are caves and the remnant of it, were basically sun-worshippers. *Their* sabbath was actually in the middle of the week on a Wednesday, strange as that may seem.

There was this intermixture of Judaism with the true Gospel, which Paul addresses very directly

in Galatians 1:6: “I am astonished that you are so quickly being turned away from Him Who called you into *the* grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which *in reality* is not another *gospel*...” (vs 6-7). In other words, there’s only one *true Gospel* and any other gospel is a fake one. If you take and add something to it that shouldn’t be, it’s not the Gospel of Christ.

“...but there are some who are troubling you and are desiring to pervert the Gospel of Christ. But if we, or even an angel from heaven, should preach a gospel to you *that* is contrary to what we have preached, LET HIM BE ACCURSED!.... [Cut off from God; these are not very kind ecumenical words—are they? Think on that!] ...As we have said before, I also now say again. If anyone is preaching a gospel contrary to what you have received, LET HIM BE ACCURSED! Now then, am I striving to please men, or God?...” (vs 7-10). If he would have remembered that when he went to Jerusalem, maybe the story would have been different. He had a lapse and slip by going and doing something political to please men. He learned his lesson.

“...Or am I motivated to please men? For if I am yet pleasing men, I would not be a servant of Christ. But I certify to you, brethren, that the Gospel that was preached by me is not according to man; because neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught *it by man*; rather, *it was by the revelation of Jesus Christ*. For you heard of my former conduct when I was in Judaism, how I was excessively persecuting the Church of God and was destroying it” (vs 10-13).

Then we have the whole story leading up to where he came up to Jerusalem. Titus went with him and he wasn’t compelled to be circumcised. He told them what he was doing. He wasn’t going to give space unto any of them for anything. He wasn’t coming up to play politics. He was received of them and given the right hand of fellowship.

Galatians 2—here’s the whole vital point. Here was Peter’s great mistake. What happened at this point we are not sure, but we can only guess what happened. It is known in history that those Jews who kept the customs of the Jews and Pharisees—who later became called Nazarenes and the Ebonites—before the destruction of the temple they moved over to Pella.

As we covered in Acts 15, remember the Pharisees were the ones causing the problem and we hear nothing of the Pharisees from that time on. I think there were two events that led to the loss of nearly all the Jewish congregations.

1. Acts 15 when they decided it was clear from the Word of God that they did not have to have physical circumcision

2. Galatians 2 when Peter and Barnabas did what they did here in dissimulating, separating and following the custom of Judaism.

Galatians 2:11: “But when Peter came to Antioch, I withstood him to *his* face... [no politics this time] ...because he was to be condemned; for before certain *ones* came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles...” (vs 11-12). Remember, Peter was the apostle to the circumcision; he got caught up in the politics of the Circumcision Party in this case, and got himself in great trouble. I believe [speculation] that he lost a good number of the churches that were the Jewish churches. I’ll show you why I believe that.

“...However, when they came, he drew back and separated himself *from the Gentiles*, being afraid of those of *the* circumcision party. And the rest of *the* Jews joined him in *this* hypocritical act, insomuch that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy [‘hupokrites’].... [he was playing politics and being a hypocrite] ...But when I saw that they did not walk uprightly according to the Truth of the Gospel, I said to Peter in the presence of them all, ‘If you, being a Jew, are living like the Gentiles, and not according to Judaism, why do you compel the Gentiles to Judaize?’” (vs 12-14). In other words, separate yourself from the Jews. Physical separation had nothing to do with spiritual conversion.

Verse 15: ““We who are Jews by nature—and not sinners of *the* Gentiles—knowing that a man is not justified by works of law... [see sermon series: *Justification by Faith*—we go through the Greek Interlinear and cover all of this.] ...but through *the* faith of Jesus Christ, we also have believed in Christ Jesus in order that we might be justified by *the* faith of Christ...” (vs 15-16). As a matter of fact, it made it worse. These were brethren in Christ that God has called. What do we have? *Hypocrisy! I am better than you! We are the chosen people!*

“...and not by works of law; because by works of law shall no flesh be justified...” (v 16). Why? *Because a work of law is not the sacrifice of Christ!*—period! You’re justified by the sacrifice of Christ. All of these dos and don’ts of Judaism cause division. That’s why we have this series: Scripturalism vs Judaism.

Verse 17: “Now then, if we are seeking to be justified in Christ, *and* we ourselves are found to be sinners, *is* Christ then *the* minister of sin? MAY IT NEVER BE! For if I build again those things that I destroyed, I am making myself a transgressor” (vs 17-18). Paul was a leading Pharisee—wasn’t he? If he went back to Pharisaim he would make himself a

transgressor.

Verse 19: “For I, through law, died to law, in order that I may live to God.” These are the laws of dos and don’ts of Judaism, not the laws and commandments of God. This is where Protestantism gets so wrong!

Verse 20: “I have been crucified with Christ, yet I live. *Indeed*, it is no longer I; but Christ lives in me. For *the life* that I am now living in *the flesh*, I live by faith—that *very faith* of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness *is* through *works of law*, then Christ died in vain” (vs 20-21).

If it be circumcision, if it be any of the other things of Judaism it all ties in there together. Let me show you why I think that Peter lost a good deal of the churches, which were Jewish churches. If Peter lost a good number of those churches, what was he going to do? *First of all, he had to repent*—didn’t he? Could he still be an apostle? *Sure! He just made a mistake! A big one, though.*

1-Peter 1:1: “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to *the* elect strangers... [not Jews] ...scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.” These were some of the areas that Paul taught in. This is a letter going out to areas where Paul had already taught. Why is this not to the Jews at large? *Most of the Jewish congregations went with Judaism!* That is my supposition.

1-Peter 5:5—we’ll see, I think, a repentant Peter: “In the same manner, *you* younger men be subject to *the* older men; and all *of you* be subject to one another, being clothed with humility because God sets Himself against *the* proud, but He gives grace to *the* humble. Be humbled therefore under the mighty hand of God so that He may exalt you in *due* time; casting all your cares upon Him, because He cares for you. Be sober! Be vigilant! For your adversary *the* devil is prowling about as a roaring lion, seeking anyone he may devour” (vs 5-8).

Was Satan after Peter? *Yes!* ‘Get you behind Me, Satan’ when Christ talked to Peter (Matt. 16:23_[transcriber’s correction]). ‘Satan has demanded to have you, but I’ve prayed that your faith would not fail’ (Luke 22:31-32_[transcriber’s correction]). He almost got him with this Judaism and the Circumcision Party from Jerusalem.

I think he’s talking about his own experience here, v 9: “Whom resist, steadfast in the faith, knowing *that* the same afflictions are being fulfilled among your brethren who *are* in *the* world. Now, may the God of all grace, Who has called us unto His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after *you* have suffered a little while... [which Peter did; that happened] ...Himself perfect you, establish, strengthen, *and* settle *you*: (vs 9-10). I think that’s an

indication of his repentance and reacceptance by God.

2-Peter 3:15—again, I think this shows a repentant Peter and accepting of Paul: “And bear in mind that the long-suffering of our Lord *is* salvation, exactly as our beloved brother Paul... [I don’t think he felt too good after he was corrected by Paul in front of everybody. Paul had died by the time Peter was writing this, so he learned his lesson.] ...according to the wisdom given to him, has also written to you; as *he has* also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them concerning these things; in which are some things *that are* difficult to understand, which the ignorant and unstable are twisting *and* *distorting*, as *they* also *twist and distort* the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. Therefore, beloved, since you know this in advance, be on guard against *such practices*, lest you be led astray with the error of the lawless ones, *and* you fall from your own steadfastness” (vs 15-17). I think, again, he was falling upon his own experience.

Verse 18: “Rather, **be growing in *the* grace and *the* knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* glory both now and into *the* day of eternity. Amen.**”

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Acts 16-3-4, 25-35
- 2) Acts 17:1-14, 16-34
- 3) Acts 18:1-6
- 4) Ezekiel 3:17-21
- 5) Acts 18:6-18, 21-33
- 6) Acts 19:1-5
- 7) John 14:16-18
- 8) Acts 19:2, 5-36
- 9) Acts 20: 1, 28-38
- 10) Acts 21:17-40
- 11) Acts 22:1-24
- 12) Acts 24:1
- 13) Acts 28:16-31
- 14) Galatians 1:6-13
- 15) Galatians 2:11-21
- 16) 1 Peter 1:1
- 17) 2 Peter 5:5-10
- 18) 2 Peter 3:15-18

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Acts 13
- Acts 24-26
- Acts 15
- Matthew 16:23
- Luke 22:31-32

Also referenced:

Sermon Series:

- *Holy Spirit*
- *Justification by Faith*

Books:

- ✓ *Code of Jewish Law* by Ganzfried & Goldin
- ✓ *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George Ricker Berry

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