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THE CONCEPT OF AUTHORITY IN
THE PERSUASION OF CHRIST AND ST. PAUL

A Thesis Presented to
The Faculty of Concordia Seminary
Department of Practical Theology

I. The Concept of Authority as a Persuasion of Reality . . . 4
II. The Concept of Authority of Persuasion as a Freeing
Power Changing the . . . of the Individual. . . 17
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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Bachelor of Divinity

by
Robert A. Grunow

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Approved by: John St. Louis
Richard P. Williams

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THE CONCEPT OF AUTHORITY IN THE PERSUASION
OF CHRIST AND ST. PAUL...

(OUTLINE)

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1. *Life of Paul*, The Interpreter's Bible, vol. 10, p. 314.
 Cf. also Charles S. Lewis, *The Apostle Paul*, vol. 2, p. 172, Cf.
 Albert Schweitzer, *Paul and His Age*, vol. 1, p. 77, Cf.
 Dorothy Sayers, *The Mind of St. Paul*, vol. 1, p. 24
 2. Alexander Leitch, *Epistles of the Holy Scriptures*, vol. 6, p. 343.
 Cf. also Archibald R. Ross, *Paul and His Age in the New Testament*, vol. 1,
 p. 43.
 3. Edited by G. Thum, *The Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 32, p. 321.
 4. John S. James, *A Commentary of the Holy Scriptures*, vol. 17, p. 143.

THE CONCEPT OF AUTHORITY IN PERSUASION

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

"For He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."

So reads the twenty-ninth verse of the seventh chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew. Just what the Holy Evangelist meant by these words is a question variously answered by different commentaries. Several authorities find in these words that "The deity of Jesus revealed itself in all that he said."¹ Others say that this verse merely points out to us that the people felt "the personal authority with which Christ spoke."² Another explains this passage as "the difference between the method of Jesus and the methods of the scribes forcibly impressed [on] the people."³ The Lange-Schaff Commentary explains it this way: "not merely human authority, not capacity, nor even Divine mission, but the full power of the word which is at the same time the full authority of the word."⁴ Not a few

1. R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel, p. 314. Cf. also Charles Schaeffer, The Lutheran Commentary, vol. 1, p. 178. Cf. Albert Barnes, Barnes' Notes on The New Testament, vol. 1, p. 77. Cf. Bernhard Weiss, A Commentary on The New Testament, vol. 1, p. 56

2. Alexander Maclaren, Exposition of the Holy Scripture, vol. 6, p. 363. Cf. also Archibald T. Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament, vol. 1, p. 63.

3. Edited by R. Tuck, The Pulpit Commentary, vol. 33A, p. 321.

4. John P. Lange, A Commentary of the Holy Scriptures, vol. 17, p. 145.

have looked upon Jesus as a divine Judge.⁵ Dr. Kretzmann says "this power [of speaking with authority] became evident in his teaching, carrying His hearers along with the force of a conviction greater than that of the polished orator."⁶ Still another authority gives this explanation to these words of Matthew 7, 29: "It is an ethical, not an artistic or aesthetical contrast, that is intended."⁷ Quite the opposite is stated by Maclaren when he tells us "that the first impression made on the Mount is not so much an appreciation of high morality, as a feeling of the personal authority."⁸ Still another gives us a human interpretation to these words when he states that, "the statements of Jesus were perspicuous; his exhortations persuasive; his doctrines sound and rational; and his arguments irresistible."⁹ A final explanation comes from John Broadus, who, among other interpretations, gives this one, that Christ brought to the people "the offer of help in living up to them [his moral teachings] - that of the Holy Spirit."¹⁰ Just how Jesus affected his hearers, just what it was in his preaching that made the people marvel has almost as many explanations as there are commentaries trying to explain it. So it is in the authority of persuasion in preaching today. Almost as many variations of this persuasive authority can be found as there are church bodies and religious institutions.

5. Cf. John Gibson, The Expositors Bible, v. 19, p. 102

6. Paul E. Kretzmann, Popular Commentary of the Bible, New Testament, vol. 1, p. 41.

7. W. Robertson Nicoll, The Expositors Greek New Testament, vol. 1, p. 136.

8. Alexander Maclaren, op. cit., p. 363.

9. Adam Clarke, Clarke's New Testament, vol., 5. p. 50.

10. John A. Broadus, American Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 1, p. 173.

It will be our purpose in this paper to review some of the more prominent concepts of persuasive authority found in churches today. We will then endeavor to present the Biblical concept of persuasive authority, as it is found in the New Testament, especially in the Gospels and in the life and writings of St. Paul.

I. THE CONCEPT OF AUTHORITY AS A PERSUASION OF PENALTY

All agree that there must be something - we will call it authority - that will cause men to do what the speaker wishes them to do. There must be some incentive, some reason why men act as they do when religion is preached to them. Some react by hardening themselves and refusing to listen any longer. Others listen, listen again, and soon believe it so much, that they do - or try to do - what it tells them to do. We say then they have been persuaded. Now what is that force that caused them to believe and change their lives and actions?

One form of persuasion operates with penalty. The speaker brings a penalty to bear upon the hearer if he does not conform to the speaker's view. Then the hearer acquiesces in order to escape the penalty promised by the speaker if he refuses. It is forcing the hearer to conform outwardly; it is making him do something he really does not care to do in his heart and mind. It is threatening him with a penalty, whether it merely be a feeling of shame and/or social disgrace, or the threat of excommunication and/or eternal damnation, to make him at least outwardly agree with the speaker. This we call the persuasion of penalty. The CHURCH itself has at times set itself up as the penalizing force, in that all who refuse to accept it as it is, will receive the penalty of excommunication and/or eternal damnation. This concept exercised itself fully in the Middle Ages in the Roman Church, but today it has spread itself into almost all church bodies. Let us review some of the major faiths and

their use of the church as the persuasion of penalty.

Perhaps the most influential and powerful persuasion of penalty is still exercised by the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Down through the ages it has evolved and is today one of the most complete systems of persuasion of penalty. In this church there are three mediums of bringing this authority to bear upon the members, namely, the sacraments, the infallible teaching office of the church, and the practice of penance.

"The [Catholic] church alone dispenses the sacraments. It alone makes known the light of the revealed truth. Outside the Church these gifts cannot be obtained. From this there is but one conclusion: Union with the Church is not merely one out of various means by which salvation may be obtained: it is the only means."¹¹ This plainly teaches that all who would be saved must partake of the sacraments - and they are found only in the Roman Catholic church. Thus their teaching of the sacraments persuades by penalty - for all who do not belong to them outwardly will not receive the sacrament, and as a penalty will not receive salvation, but eternal damnation. You'd better join - or go to hell.

In like manner the infallible teaching of the hierarchy is brought to bear upon the individual who must submit himself to the church's authority, or be eternally lost. "What ever authority is exercised in the Church, is exercised in virtue of the commission of Christ... As the divinely appointed teacher of revealed truth, the Church is infallible.

This gift of inerrancy is guaranteed to it by the words of Christ, in which he promised that His Spirit would abide with it forever to guide it

11. G. H. Joyce, "Infallibility," The Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. VIII, p. 752.

into all truth."¹² Christ is here pictured as handing over his authority to individuals, who have set themselves as the only Church, who then can command those following them to do whatever they feel the Spirit leads them to command. And whoever refuses to follow their commands, refuses to follow Christ, and will receive an appropriate penalty. If a man wants to follow Christ he has to join the Roman Catholic church. If he refuses, he is not following Christ and consequently will not find eternal life.

A third method of persuading by penalty is to be found in the Roman Catholic practice of Penance. It is that Christ took away the eternal punishment due the individual for mortal sins, and that he receives such remission through absolution. "However there remain the temporal punishments due to sin, and these must be suffered either here or in purgatory and are remitted only by words of satisfaction, or Penance, the third of the seven sacraments."¹³ And damnation is the lot of anyone denying this. The fourth Canon of the fourteenth Session of the Council of Trent reads:

"If anyone denieth, that, for the entire and perfect remission of sins, there are required three acts in the penitent, which are as it were the matter of the sacrament of penance, to, wit, contrition, confession, and satisfaction, which are called the three parts of penance; or saith that there are two parts only of penance, to wit, the terrors with which the conscience is smitten upon being convinced of sin, and the faith, generated by the gospel, or by the absolution, whereby one believes that his sins are forgiven him through Christ; let him be anathema."¹⁴

Therefore anyone not performing penance will receive the penalty of

12. G. H. Joyce, op. cit., p. 754

13. Th. Engelder, Popular Symbolics, p. 179

14. J. Waterworth, The Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, p. 108.

spending a longer time in purgatory, or if he despises penance, he will be damned.

The Greek Orthodox Church also sets itself up as the authority in persuasion. It alone can bring to man the truth.

"How is divine revelation spread among men and preserved in the true Church? By two channels - Holy tradition and Holy Scriptures. What is meant by the name holy tradition? By the name holy tradition is meant the doctrine of the faith, the Law of God, the Sacraments, and the ritual as handed down by the true believers and worshipers of God by word and example from one to another and from generation to generation. The Church is the sure repository of holy tradition. Igr. C., 16. 17."¹⁵

This statement tells us that the Bible in itself is incomplete and alone cannot lead to the truth; the Church must assist. The Confession of Dositheus further states, "the Holy Scripture is divine revelation. But we do not believe that the authority of the Catholic Church is less than the authority of the Scripture. Since the Holy Spirit is the Author of both, it is the same whether you hear the Church or the Scripture."¹⁶ The Orthodox Confession by Peter Mogilas states that "the Holy Spirit is the Author of the Holy Scripture; but also that which the Holy Fathers have resolved in orthodox and local councils is given by the Holy Spirit."¹⁷ Tradition then, as resolved upon and handed down by the Church Fathers, has become the authority of the Eastern Church. This also is a persuasion of penalty, for according to its teaching no one can realize the full truth except through the traditions of that church. Ignorance and perhaps damnation will result - the penalty for not being persuaded.

15. Engelder, Popular Symbolics, p. 139.

16. ibid.

17. ibid.

The Eastern Church also sets up "Nine Commandments of the Church, regarded as of the same obligation as God's own commandments."¹⁸ These include, fasting, obedience to the clergy, confession, prayer and attendance at church. "The infallibility of the Church and her authority to interpret the Bible serve to make the observance of these commandments a matter of conscience to every Orthodox Christian."¹⁹ Again as in the Roman Catholic Church, we have a church that sets up its own commandments and persuades its people to obey as if obeying Christ himself. The persuasion of penalty is again evident - for all not obeying are disobeying Christ and endangering their souls salvation.

In the Anglican Church we find a concept that seems to be striving after a freeing concept of authority in Persuasion, but it too has been cumbered with a persuasion of penalty for accepting the advise and opinions of her saints and spiritual leaders.

Dr. Snell writes that "the life stream in the (Anglican) church, which is the self-incarnating Christ, must evolve in freedom."²⁰ He also says,

"It is, moreover, definitely the authority of Jesus Christ the Son of God. And the authority of Jesus Christ thus understood as that of his Holy Spirit, speaking indeed directly to conscience - yet assuring the wholeness of that appeal and the soundness of the individual response by no fixed formulations of standards or dictas, but only by His Spirit's progressive incarnation in social body, is again a conception at one true to the central and essential feature of Catholicism, and at the same time supported and developed by modern thought and

18. ibid., p. 142

19. Laird Wingate Snell, "Nature of Authority," Anglican Theological Review, III(1920, 1921), 277

20. ibid. p. 277

modern science."²¹

But certain limitations are placed upon these sentences. He had stated earlier in the article that "He (God) must have provided somewhere...the Word of Authority, sufficient and final, behind which man will not, must not go."²² That authority appears in the form of "the inner corporate life," again, a persuasion of penalty. He continues,

"...discovering authority in no outward standard or word, nor yet leaving the formulation of truth that is the pabulum of the soul to as many minds as there are men or as many sects as there are types of minds; recognizing conscience, indeed, as the ultimate authority, man's sole and only absolute, but trusting the developing corporate mind and conscience of the Church, the self-incarnate Spirit of Jesus Christ, to guide individuals and society into all the truth; while for standards of interpretation for Bible and creed, for the advisory authority of the specialist in things religious, for varying formulation of truth to meet the needs so deep and serious of all souls in all conditions and of all times, she looks to the great works of the Great ones of the Church and saints and spiritual leaders, the choicest fruit of whose thought and toil and prayer she possesses and preserves in the slowly growing, but all the more true and completely vital forms of Church devotional observances, seasons, customs, ways, worship and liturgy."²³

So we find that this concept does rest upon an external persuasive authority, that of the corporate mind of the church, which is advised and formulated by the saints and spiritual leaders in the church. Such a basis actually is a persuasion of penalty, for it compels the conscience of the individual to accept the "corporate mind," and put his "trust in the inner corporate life," or be without the truth.²⁴

Calvin would make the church persuade by penalty by giving to it

21. ibid. p. 280.
22. ibid. p. 269.
23. ibid. p. 277.
24. ibid.

alone the power to bring an individual to faith. He declares in his Institutes,

"When the Church receives it [doctrine], and seals it with her suffrage, she does not authenticate a thing otherwise dubious or controvertible; but, knowing it to be the truth of her God, performs a duty of piety, by treating it with immediate veneration. But with regard to the question, How shall we be persuaded of its divine original, unless we have recourse to the decree of the Church? ... Thus the authority of the Church is an introduction to prepare us for the faith of the Gospel."²⁵

From these words Calvin would have us believe that outside the church there can be no knowledge of God, no faith and therefore no salvation. Thus individuals hearing this teaching might be persuaded because of penalty - the penalty of losing one's soul if he refused to be persuaded.

Dr. Walther tells us of some men who called themselves Lutherans and also used the church as a persuasion of penalty. These men, in determined opposition to the unionistic tendencies of their day, proceeded to prove their claim,

"by asserting that the true visible Church is the Church mentioned in the Third Article of the Creed, in these words: I believe a holy Christian Church, the communion of saints." They held that the Lutheran Church is the Church par excellence, the Church in the most exalted and proper sense, the ecclesia, extra quam nulla est salus, the Church outside of which there is no salvation, possibly with this limitation: "except that God in a miraculous and extraordinary manner may save a person also outside of the Church and lead him to eternal life."²⁶

This too was a persuasion of penalty, endeavoring to force anyone who would be saved, except by extraordinary means, to belong to the Lutheran

25. Hugh Kerr, A Compend of the Institutes of the Christian Religion, p. 15 f.

26. C. F. W. Walther, Law and Gospel, pp. 333 f.

church as a visible organization. For anytime the church is made a necessity for salvation, immediately it says in practice, either you belong to me, or be without the truth or/and be eternally lost.

The BIBLE, God's revealed Word is also used as an absolute authority in the persuading the individual to accept the truth contained therein, or to receive the penalty. This is done in several ways by different church bodies.

The Roman Catholic Church outrightly makes it a persuasion of penalty by damning anyone who will not accept it as a moral code, binding upon all individuals. "If anyone saith, that nothing besides faith is commanded in the Gospel; that other things are indifferent, neither commanded nor prohibited, but free; or, that the ten commandments no wise appertain to Christians; let him be anathema."²⁷ Thus the Romanist would make of the sweet Gospel message of the redemption of Jesus Christ a moral code, demanding faith and strict obedience, if they at all hope to be saved. The penalty of not accepting their teaching regarding the Bible, according to them, will lead to damnation.

The Calvinistic churches have followed out this principle in their practice of the Sabbath, graven images, and other legalistic observances. They teach,

"As it is of the law of nature that in general a due proportion of time be set apart for the worship of God, so in His Word by a positive moral and perpetual command, binding all men in all ages, He hath particularly appointed one day in seven for a Sabbath, to be kept holy unto him...which in Scripture is called the Lord's Day and is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath."²⁸

27. J. Waterworth, op. cit., p. 47.

28. Th. Engelder, op. cit., p. 222.

Therefore we have the Reformed bodies agitating for "blue laws," whereby citizens of the State are forced to limit their activity on the Sabbath. "This keeping of the Sabbath in puritanical fashion, their propaganda for Prohibition, and their principle, 'Away with everything which the Bible does not mention' is typically the legalistic attitude of the Reformed."²⁹ But by such legalistic interpretation of the Bible they are also making it a moral code to follow, endeavoring to persuade everyone that otherwise they are not in harmony with the Bible - persuading by penalty.

The authority of Persuasion is also perverted into one of penalty when one uses it as only effectual among the elect. Calvin clearly teaches this in his Institutes, when he writes,

"The declaration of Christ, that 'many are called and few chosen,' is very improperly understood. For there will be no ambiguity in it, if we remember...that there are two kinds of calling. For there is a universal call, by which God, in the external preaching of the word, invites all, indiscriminately, to come to him, even those to whom he intends it as a savour of death, and an occasion of heavier condemnation. There is also a special call, with which he, for the most part, favours only believers, then, by the inward illumination of his Spirit, he causes the word preached to sink into the hearts"³⁰

Thus a man, if he at all even wants to consider himself saved, must accept the word and be persuaded, even though his heart inwardly may be far from change. The unfortunate thing also is that those who refuse to accept this outward expression of persuasive authority usually despair and never learn of the love and forgiveness of their Savior, trying to comfort themselves by saying, "I wasn't to be saved anyway." So this persuasion

29. ibid.

30. Hugh Kerr, op. cit., p. 136 ff.

works a penalty either way it is taken.

Another view taken by the Reformed of the Bible also leads to authority as a persuasion of penalty. That is their insistence upon using reason in interpreting Scripture. Calvin teaches "That reason must be granted a voice when questions of religion are being decided."³¹ Zwingli's position concerning the human nature of Jesus, "plainly makes reason the arbiter as to what we must accept in the Bible,"³² And that this is still taught in the Reformed Church today can be seen in the writings of Boettner, when he writes, "to give a restatement to that great system which is known as the Reformed faith of Calvinism and to show that his is beyond doubt the teaching of the Bible and reason" is the purpose of his book.³³ This too plainly becomes a persuasion of penalty. If you cannot reason the depths of God, according to the Reformed, your's is a penalty - the penalty of ignorance and not being of God and understanding Him.

If the Bible is regarded as merely the moral restraint exercised by a certain church body, it again becomes a persuasion of penalty - being accepted merely because other people are doing that very thing. This is the view found in Augustine, as reported by T. A. Lacey, who writes,

"The impact (for believing the Bible) came, he (Augustine) says, from the 'auctoritas,' the moral restraint exercised by the Catholic church. He attempts some analysis of this authority and one important element is consensus populorum atque gentium. That gives me what I am seeking. I am sure that the widespread veneration for the Bible is due to nothing else but the general consent of Christendom, mediated by particular instructions given to children in their

31. Th. Engelder, op. cit., p. 211.

32. ibid.

33. Loraine Boettner, The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination, P: 1.

early years."³⁴

If people only accept the Bible as an authority and are persuaded for these reasons, and not because of an inner changing of their hearts, it is merely a persuasion of penalty. The moral restraint is so strong that it is a penalty in itself to try and fight, so one merely goes along with the crowd.

The Bible can also become an outward expression of binding authority if it is taught as inspired and for that reason must be accepted as is or else -. Some Lutherans stress the inspiration of the Bible so that they lose sight of the true persuasive power inherent in it. In instructing children and adults, too often they start out by reasoning about the inspiration of the Bible. Sometimes they seem to feel that if one will not believe this, there is no need for going further into Christian doctrine. This, indeed is not their theory, but it does too often become evident in their practice. It then becomes an authority of penalty, permitting souls to think that they cannot be saved until they accept the divine inspiration of the Bible. That is merely making salvation depend on the accepting of the Bible as inspired, instead of upon the redemption of Christ that it contains.

But some churches do not only use themselves and the Bible as a persuasion of penalty, but they also endeavor to use the STATE in forcing individuals to accept their teachings. "Both the Catholic and the Reformed Churches demand that the State enforce piety, that its laws and

34. T.A. Lacey, "The Place of Authority in Religion," Hibbert Journal, XXVIII (Jan, 1930), 324.

ordinances be in conformity with the Bible, and thus become the servants of the Church [the ruling denomination] while the Church offers to press the means of grace into service for expediting the business of the State."³⁵

Calvin teaches in his Institutes:

"Thus they have all confessed that no government can be happily constituted, unless its first object be the promotion of piety and that all laws are preposterous which neglect the claims of God, and merely provide for the interests of men... that they are constituted the protectors and vindicators of the public innocence, modesty, probity, and tranquility, whose sole object it ought to be to promote the common peace and security of all..."³⁶

He furthermore "requires that the State share in "the care of divine things" and govern according to the Scriptures, which in effect subjects the civil government to the control of the clergy."³⁷

The claim of the Roman Church goes back into history. "The Pope became king of kings in 755, when Stephan III girded on two swords, one on each side, emblems of temporal and spiritual power, and crowned Pepin King of France."³⁸ In 1303, Boniface VIII issued his famous bull, Unam Sanctam, which among other things claimed: 1. It is necessary for salvation that every man should submit to the Pope. 2. The temporal power of Christian princes does not exempt them from obedience to the head of the Church. 3. To the ecclesiastical authority the words of the prophet Jeremiah apply: 'lo, I have set thee this day over the nations and over the kingdoms to root up and pull down, and to waste, and to destroy, and to

35. Th. Engelder, Mimeographed notes on the "Means of Grace," p. 7.

36. Engelder, Popular Symbolics, p. 118

37. Kerr, op. cit., p. 207

38. ibid., p. 164.

build, and to plant.' 4. For obtaining eternal happiness, each one is required to submit to the Pope. 5. The supremacy of the Pope, even in temporal things, is to be enforced.³⁹

From this we readily see that these church bodies are determined to make the State their tool to enforce their persuasion upon the citizens. We need only note the religious legislation and "blue laws," in our own country and the church-controlled governments in Spain, Italy, France, Mexico and the South American countries. Such use of authority through the State is purely one of compulsion and external force. It easily becomes a persuasive penalty - those who object or disobey are dealt with by the State.

Generally, "the essence of persuasion lies in its relationship with its audience, rather than with its subject." In persuasion we are dealing with people-people with feelings, emotions, desires and a will. So our definitions of the term persuasion are directed primarily to people. Dr. Oliver defines persuasion as, "the art of motivating, or of inspiring, activating, or directing in another individual of other individuals a type of conduct recommended by the speaker."

There are two steps which bring about complete persuasion. They are first, conditioning, and secondly, persuasion proper, or the "change." The definite action of the persuaded one follows upon these two steps.

By the term conditioning, we mean "the creating in the hearer of the

L. Robert F. Oliver, *The Psychology of Persuasive Speech*, p. 9.
 S. *Ibid.*, p. 10. Also Cf. R.A. Conzalez, "Structure on Persuasion in Preaching," *Abstract* 559, Concordia Seminary. "Persuasion is the process of changing the hearer's mind so that, first, he comprehends with mind, heart and goal of the speaker, and, secondly, moves to action and progress in his practical life and experience."

39. ibid., p. 164.

II. THE CONCEPT OF AUTHORITY OF PERSUASION AS A FREEING POWER CHANG-
ING THE WILL AND DESIRE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Having reviewed the concept of authority as a persuasion of penalty, we now discuss persuasion through freedom. First, what is the essence of persuasion? What is it psychologically, as we find it operating between human beings, and what is it religiously, as we find it operating between God and man?

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1. Robert T. Oliver, The Psychology of Persuasive Speech, p. 9.
2. *ibid.*, p. 10. Also Cf. R.R. Caemmerer, "Factors on Persuasion in Preaching," Elective 559, Concordia Seminary, "Persuasion is the process of changing the hearer's mind so that, first, he concentrates with mind and emotion on the one field and goal of the speaker, and, secondly moves to activate the information and program in his practical life and experience."

readiness and the desire to understand and to be changed by it."³ Dr. Oliver lists these as his four "fundamental bases of the thinking of the individual which determines his reaction to a proposal or situation confronting the individual. These are, 1. The influence of self interest, 2. The influence of social-consciousness, 3. The speaker and the occasion, and, 4. The hidden barriers within the individual."⁴ He explains them saying:

Self interest pulls us in one direction; sentiment in another; social consciousness in a third. The influences exerted by the speaker's personality and by the occasion provide strong biases which divert the reaction into still other channels. And within each auditor's own mind are hidden barriers of compensatory mechanisms, of subconscious and physiological activity, and of fixed thought patterns which he understands but dimly himself, but which powerfully affect the type of response he makes by persuasive appeal.⁵

Dr. Caemmerer also lists four factors of conditioning. They are, 1. Curiosity, 2. Mass excitement, 3. Desire for approval, and 4. Speaking of need. The first three may be advantageously used at times, but never are to be used alone. The fourth conditioning method is the best and will always work most effectively. For it is the purpose of conditioning to look into the person's mind, make clear to him what you want him to do, let him know that you are there to help him, haul out the resistors within him, and help him to understand himself. Then you will have accomplished your task of conditioning.⁶

But conditioning, as the word implies, never persuaded anyone, but

3. R.R. Caemmerer, Foundations of Preaching, p. 5.

4. Oliver, op. cit., p. 31.

5. ibid.

6. Cf. Caemmerer, "Factors of Persuasion in Preaching."

merely conditions, or leads up to the actual change. But when conditioning is completed, then comes persuasion proper, or the "change." In psychological persuasion, this is brought about by appealing to motives. Dr. Oliver writes, "they [the motives] may be appealed to emotionally, logically, or through rationalization... Emotion, reason, and rationalization are the avenues down which the motivational forces march to attack the citadel of the mind."⁷ Of these three avenues of motivation, rationalization, which partakes of both the nature of reason and emotion, may be the most influential of the three. But the best course for the persuasive speaker to take, undoubtedly, is to intermingle all three types of appeal in speaking. "Like the wise military strategist, his efforts should be advance on all fronts."⁸

The means by which the basic motives may be projected along the avenues of persuasion are listed by Dr. Oliver as,

"1. Attention, 2. Suggestion, and 3. Commonground. These may be likened to vehicles in which the motives may be carried into the minds of the auditors. Any one or a combination of all three may be used with emotion, reason, or rationalization; to appeal to self-interest, sentiment, or social consciousness; to help the speaker take advantage of his personality and of the occasion; and to convert the hidden barriers into hidden allies."⁹

Religious persuasion is made up of the same characteristics; conditioning and persuasion proper. However there is a difference of opinion as to how this persuasion is to be applied to the individual; immediately, or mediately through the Bible. They both use the Power of God as the persuasive force to free the individual, but one school would use it

7. Oliver, *op. cit.*, p. 161

8. *ibid.*, p. 197

9. *ibid.*, p. 197

directly and the other indirectly.

Those who use the Power of God and His Spirit directly without any means, we call "enthusiasts." Their concept of the persuasion of freedom is that God brings about the freedom by a subjective feeling of the Spirit produced without means.

Zwingli teaches this when he writes in his Fidei Ratio,

"I believe, yea, I know that all sacraments not merely do not distribute or convey grace, but not even bring or administer it... For as grace comes from the divine Spirit and is given by it, so this gift reaches only the Spirit, but for the Spirit no guide or vessel is required, for it is itself Power and Conveyor by which all things are borne, and it does not require itself to be borne. Besides, we have never read in Holy Scriptures that sensuous things like the Sacraments are surely accompanied by the Holy Spirit. But if sensuous things were ever conferred together with the Spirit, it was the Spirit who did the conferring, not the sensuous things."¹⁰ Calvin too states that God can convert in a different manner, and this other method He undoubtedly employed in the calling of many people to whom He, only through inward illumination, without the means of preaching, gave true understanding."¹¹

This denial of the means of grace, the visible and invisible Word of God, causes a perversion of these gifts. In his Law and Gospel, Dr. Walther points out how those who would use the power of God without means pervert the Law and Gospel, the conditioning and persuading powers respectively. They make of the conditioning power, the Law, their means of subjective feeling whereby they receive the Holy Spirit. He writes, "they also preach the Law with great sternness, which is quite proper," but they depict "the infernal torment...in such a drastic manner as to engage the imagination rather than to make their words sink into the depth of the heart...they put them [their Hearers] in a state of mind which makes them

10. Engelder, Popular Symbolics, p., 215

11. ibid., p. 216.

say;

"Is it not terrible to hear God uttering such awful threatenings on account of sin?" They give them a long list of efforts that they must make in order, if possible, to be received into grace: how long they must pray, how strenuously they must fight and wrestle and cry, until they can say that they feel they have received the Holy Ghost and divine grace and can rise from their knees shouting hallelujah. In order to accelerate this process in larger gatherings, Methodist preachers induce the brethren and sisters to kneel with the candidate for conversion and cry for the forgiveness of his sins. Sometimes the effort is futile, sometimes the desired result is not attained in weeks and months. If a sincere candidate confesses that he only feels his inability and is full of evil inclinations, he is told that he is still in a sorry condition and that he must continue to wrestle in prayer until he finally experiences a feeling of divine grace. Then he is told to praise God because he is rid of sin; all is well with him, the penitential agony is over, and he has become a child of God's grace."¹²

From this quotation we learn that those who would use the power of God directly have a persuasion of freedom- a self persuasion through the testimony of the Holy Spirit coming directly upon them while they are wrestling and praying. And it is all brought on by the stern preaching of the Law.

Meanwhile the Gospel is despised and refused. Dr. Walther continues, "they neither believe nor teach a real and complete reconciliation of man with God because they regard our heavenly Father as being a God very hard to deal with, whose heart must be softened by passionate cries and bitter tears."¹³ Thus the true freeing power, the Gospel is put aside and the conditioning factor in persuasion is used to free the individual. That is the concept of the persuasion of freedom of those who refuse the means of grace, and insist that the Power of God and His Spirit work directly upon

12. Dr. Walther, Law and Gospel, p. 134 f.

13. ibid., p. 135

the individual.

The other concept of persuasion as freedom, is that concept that recognizes means of grace for the conveying of the Power of God and His Holy Spirit to individuals. This concept too is based upon the Power of God and the Holy Spirit in the lives of individuals, but as far as we are concerned, it is brought to man through the means God has provided. "In order to offer and convey to men the merits which Christ has secured for the world by His death on the cross, God employs certain external, visible means through which the Holy Spirit works and preserves faith and thus accomplishes the sinner's salvation."¹⁴

This visible means is the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the Bible and the sacraments. But since we are dealing with the preaching aspect of persuasion we will limit ourselves to a discussion of the Word as a persuasion of freedom. In the Bible we have two distinct doctrines, the doctrine of the Law and the Doctrine of the Gospel. In the persuasion of freedom we use both of these doctrines.

Religiously, to condition the hearer, the speaker must first seek to engage the hearer in active concern for the message. "While novelty and surprize have limited value to this end, the chief device will again be the coming to grip with the hearer's actual concrete problems of living. As the hearer recognizes the speaker's concern with his own needs, he is conditioned to accept the speaker's remedy and solution."¹⁵

The religious speaker discusses the need of his hearer in terms of the hearer's relation to God. He points out unhappiness and shortcomings

14. Dr. John T. Mueller, Christian Dogmatics, p. 441
 15. Caemmerer, Factors of Persuasion in Preaching.

in every area of life and on the level of the hearer's recognition and consciousness. But he goes on to diagnose these needs as representative of a covering and pervading deficit in the life of God. Man without the life of God is dead; the flesh even of the regenerate man, flesh without God, is dead. This death shows itself in every handicap and unhappiness of man."¹⁶ The religious speaker points out that, "man's basic problem is this, that by nature and choice he is separate from God, endeavors to live his life without the help of God, refuses to be responsible to God, sees no profit in a life with God."¹⁷

In religious persuasion, this conditioning that helps the hearer to ponder this death and lead him to look to the speaker for a remedy, is found in the Law. Dr. Walther explains the use of the Law in showing man his deficit and need. "The Law tells us what we are to do... In the Law we hear the tenfold summons, 'thou shalt'... The law issues only commands and demands... When reading the Law, pondering it, and measuring our conduct against its teaching, we are terrified by the multitude of demands which it makes upon us... The Law is nothing but threats... The Law uncovers to man his sins...it conjures up the terrors of hell, of death, of the wrath of God."¹⁸

And the Law is only a conditioning force, as Dr. Walther says:

"The Law produces, not life, but the knowledge of sin. A person, can, indeed, possess that knowledge without life of God... Many sins are slumbering in a person who is still ignorant of the Law. Let the Law be preached to such a person forcefully, let it strike his conscience with lightning

16. Caemmerer, Factors of Persuasion in Preaching.

17. Caemmerer, Foundations of Preaching, p. 6.

18. Walther, op. cit., p. 9. ff.

force, and the person will not become better, but worse."¹⁹

Persuasion proper is the process by which the speaker, directing himself to the conditioned and prepared interests of the hearer, describes the solution to the hearer's need and sets up goals for the hearer's action.²⁰ This is only brought about by the second doctrine contained in the Bible, the Gospel. Dr. Caemmerer explains: "The Preacher is not content merely with diagnosis, but he wants to cure...he knows that he is working with God's own cure for that cleavage between God and man... The actual power in the message by which it persuades and leads to its objective is a superhuman thing; it is the power of God. In this respect Christian preaching differs from every other form of public address."²¹

Dr. Walther speaks of this power of God, the Gospel, thus:

The Gospel reveals to us only what God is doing... It makes no demands whatever...the Gospel is a kind invitation to partake of heavenly blessing... The Gospel only makes offers... The Gospel promises everlasting life and salvation...without any condition whatsoever... The Gospel contains no threats at all... The Gospel, when demanding faith, offers and gives in that very demand...the Gospel does not at all reprove the sinner...the Gospel does not require anything good that men must furnish.²²

In doing all this for the sinner, the Gospel becomes a powerful persuasive force by releasing and freeing him, and answering his need and deficit. By using the Gospel, the Christian preacher engages in a process of persuasion which is that in the fullest sense of the term, namely the changing of the hearer's mind, repentance, the turning of the mind from

19. *ibid.* p. 237

20. Caemmerer, Factors in Persuasion in Preaching

21. Caemmerer, Foundations of Preaching, p. 6.

22. Walther, op. cit., p. pp. 9-17

ignorance to knowledge, from unbelief to faith, from death to life, from lesser capacity for life or inferior use of life to the richer exercise of life.²³

Dr. Walther puts it this way: "The Christian religion gives us the correct meaning in one word: METAVOEITE which means, 'change your mind' or as Luther translated correctly; 'repent.' With this word the Lord confronts the sinner, telling him that, first of all, a change of his innermost self must take place."²⁴ He continues; "Genuine repentance is to quit what you have been doing. What God requires is a new mind, a new heart, a new spirit... He puts the ax to the root of the evil tree."²⁵ And the Gospel has this power, because it is the redemptive power of Jesus Christ Himself. For He alone can, "bid us simply accept as a gift the gracious forgiveness of our sins, and everlasting bliss offered us."²⁶

All the other factors of psychological persuasion are used. "Clear definition, clarity, and concreteness of language, removing of prejudices and preconceptions, concentration upon one unified goal of action, are to be utilized."²⁷

The preacher is ever to realize that his business is to employ the fact of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. He succeeds in that when he sets up in the hearer's mind the recognition that God through Christ is again for man and ready to live in man again, for man has been reconciled through the redemption of His son. For the religious persuader persuades not

23. Caemmerer, Factors of Persuasion in Preaching.

24. Walther, op. cit., p. 300.

25. ibid

26. ibid. p. 19.

27. Caemmerer, Factors of Persuasion in Preaching

merely by restating the Gospel, but by helping the hearer to understand its practical purpose. That he accomplishes by pointing out the Gospel's meaning of the Gospel to the hearer's own specific situation and as a remedy for his specific need.²⁸

The power of the Gospel to free and change is to be found in the Word in this way, that it conveys the Holy Spirit of God who works through it. Not only must the hearer have set up in his mind the recognition that God is again for man through Christ, but the "Holy Spirit must bear upon the hearer through the very account of the redemption."²⁹ Then and then only will the preacher persuade for "By virtue of the Spirit inherent in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the fact of His redeeming mankind from sin to God, the Christian preacher succeeds in bringing God's own dynamic to bear upon the hearer."³⁰

So the persuasive and changing power in the Bible is that of the Holy Spirit. The Bible alone brings the Holy Spirit who frees by working repentance and faith in the conditioned sinner. Our Confessions teach so... "through the Word and Sacraments...the Holy Ghost is given, who works faith..."³¹ "God the Holy Ghost, however, does not effect conversion without means, but uses for this purpose the preaching and hearing of God's Word..."³² And the Holy Ghost continues and preserves this action through His Word. We read, "through the same Spirit and His grace, by

28. ibid.

29. ibid.

30. ibid.

31. "Augsburg Confession," Concordia Triglotta, Article V, p. 45.

32. "Formula of Concord," Concordia Triglotta, Epitome II, Of Free Will. p. 787.

means of the daily exercise of reading and practising God's Word, He would preserve in us faith and His heavenly gifts, strengthen us from day to day, and keep us to the end."³³ Dr. Mueller also points this out in his discussion of the "Means of Grace," saying, "Wherever the divine Word is, there is also the divine Spirit; and wherever a person used the Word of God in any form, God is divinely operative in it."³⁴ Quenstedt writes, "The Holy Ghost does not by Himself do something and the Word of God by itself something else, but they produce the one effect by one and the same action."³⁵ The two are inseparable and always work together for the freeing of the individual; the Spirit through the Word, and the Word because of the Spirit in it.

The test of the completeness of religious persuasion, as is also the test of psychological persuasion, is the achievement of the goals. In religious persuasion there is a definite gauge as to its completeness. It is gauged "by the hearers readiness to incorporate the life of God into his life because of the Atonement. The hearer must find himself moved to use the Atonement of Jesus Christ as the one means by which the life of God in him overcomes the flesh negatively, and positively produces life, thanksgiving, courage and hope."³⁶

This then is the place of the Bible, with its two doctrines of Law

33. *ibid*, Concordia Triglotta, Thorough Declaration II. Of Free Will, p. 887.

34. Mueller, op. cit., p. 443

35. *ibid.*, p. 444.

36. Caemmerer, Factors of Persuasion in Preaching

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35. *Ibid.*, p. 444.

36. Caemmerer, Factors of Persuasion in Preaching

and Gospel, in the concept of the Persuasion of Freedom. The Law is the conditioning factor, preparing the individual for the change, and the Gospel is the power to change - the persuasion of freedom proper.

III. CHRIST'S AND ST. PAUL'S CONCEPT OF THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL IN THE LIVES OF MEN.

In the following three chapters we would develop the concept of persuasion as a freeing force as it is found in the New Testament. Reading the New Testament, one finds two men who are by far the most influential in its presentation. These two are Christ and St. Paul. There is a difference between the teaching of Jesus and the preaching of St. Paul, but Dr. Hayes explains it this way:

The difference, however, is only one of degree and not of kind. Jesus never formulated his principles into a system... the founder of Christianity never wrote anything for presentation by his disciples, nor dictated any creed or philosophy of theology for their guidance in the days after his death. He enunciated germinal principles. In conversations and informal discourses he gave them seed thoughts. His fundamental conceptions are few in number and unrelated to each other in any logical or systematic form. Neither in ethics nor in civic or social duties nor in church affairs nor in religious requirements did he set forth his teachings in any precise or fixed formulation. He never intimates that his teachings are complete. On the contrary, he said to his disciples that he had many things to tell them for which they were not yet prepared, and he promised them the Spirit's coming, that he would guide them into the further truth.¹

Paul and the other New Testament writers... took the germinal ideas of Jesus and gave them fuller development... there is nothing absolutely new in their writings... all of Paul's theology is latent in Christ's teaching, and all of Christ's teaching is patent in Paul's epistles.¹

In the teaching of Christ and St. Paul we now extract the teaching of their concept of the power of the Christian religion. We will answer the

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1. D.A. Hayes, Paul and His Epistles, p. 129.

question, How was this power reflected in the teaching of Jesus and in the life and letters of St. Paul?

Christ taught people, first of all, that everyone needed to be aware of their need for a power. To be sure, Jesus was not blind to the sins and shortcomings of his fellowmen. He was terribly honest and frank in dealing with them. He called Peter, one of His closest disciples, "Satan," when He rebuked him, saying: "Get behind me Satan; you are a hindrance to me; for you are not on the side of God, but of men."² He told the Pharisees that they were a "generation of vipers."³ While not condoning the adulterous woman, He pointed out to those who had brought her to see if He would order her to be stoned, that they were just as bad as she, and even worse in that they were hypocritical about it.⁴ He confronted the immoral woman of Samaria.⁵ He told a rich man who saw nothing in life but the amassing of great wealth that he was a fool.⁶ In Luke 10 we find Christ confronting a self-righteous lawyer who thinks that he is keeping the law, with the parable of the "Good Samaritan", with a final remark, "Go and do Thou likewise."⁷ He told the rich young man to sell all that he had, and the man went away sad and "sorrowful, for he had great possessions."⁸ Even Martha, a beloved friend of Jesus had to be rebuked about being "anxious and troubled about many things," but not the one thing needful.⁹

2. Matthew 16: 23; Mark 8: 33; Luke 4: 8.

3. Matthew 12: 34; 23: 33.

4. John 8: 3 ff.

5. John 4.

6. Luke 12, 21.

7. Luke 10, 37.

8. Matthew 19, 22.

9. Luke 10, 40.

These and many other incidents in the life of our Savior demonstrate that all men and women, even those closest to him, needed a continual power in their lives to change them and keep them changed. There was something wrong with every individual he met, some were greedy, some immoral, some self-righteous, some selfish, some thoughtless - all in need of a changing power.

But Christ also taught that this power could only exercise its influence in the lives of those who realized their need for it. In Matthew 9 we read, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick... For I came not to call the righteous, but sinner to repentance."¹⁰ Again He says, "Truly, I say unto you, the tax collectors and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you."¹¹ Unless they would realize that they were sinners and needed a change, they could have no hope for one.

Christ looked upon the heart - the seat of man's innermost desire, intent, delight and want - as that part of man that must be changed and which must control the entire actions and performances of the rest of his members. It was not what man pretended to do, or what he said or did, but rather what really came out of the heart. He said to the Pharisees, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil man out of his evil treasure brings forth evil."¹² He said to the people, "Hear and understand: not what goes into the mouth defiles a man, but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man."¹³ Later he explained this to his disciples, saying,

9. Luke 10, 40.
10. Matthew 9, 12.

11. Matthew 21, 13
12. Matthew 13: 34, 35.
13. Matthew 15: 10, 11.

"Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach, and so passes on? But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a man. For out of the heart comes evil thoughts, murder, adultery, fornication, thefts, false witness, slander. These are what defile a man."¹⁴

Christ looked into the heart of individuals, for thereby He knew what their real motive was. When his disciples argued about who was the greatest, we are told Jesus, "perceived the thought of their hearts."¹⁵ Jesus made one of the conditions of the power of faith depend upon the absence of doubt in the heart.¹⁶ Judas is represented as betraying our Lord, "when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot."¹⁷ And after His resurrection, Jesus upbraids his disciples, saying, "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken."¹⁸ To Jesus the heart was the important thing to be changed. Until that was changed and until it controlled the other members of the individual absolutely, the person was not truly persuaded and Christ's whole ministry had no meaning for the individual.

It was for this reason that Jesus told the Parable of the Sower and the Seed. In His own explanation of this parable He describes to us several kinds of people and why His power did not exercise any influence in their lives. The first type is made up of anyone who "hears the word of the Kingdom and does not understand it," and loses it, when "the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in his heart."¹⁹

14. Matthew 15: 17-19.

15. Luke 9: 47.

16. Matthew 21: 21.

17. John 13: 2.

18. Luke 24: 25.

19. Matthew 13: 19.

The second type is made up of anyone "who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away."²⁰ And the third type who do not truly realize their need is "he who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the delight in riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful."²¹ The first group was not persuaded for its heart was ignorant of the true power of the Kingdom of God within it. The second group was not changed for there was no root in its heart, and it only held on to a false superficial power until a real trial came and then it failed. And the third group was just too concerned about the world - its heart was set upon the cares of this life and the thought of riches to be bothered about the power of God in it's heart and life.

Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount because He realized that this power of God He was preaching had to persuade and change the hearts of men to be of any good. There He was telling His disciples that outward appearances didn't always mean anything, it was rather what was coming from their hearts. He states in His opening words, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."²² For not the formal act of murder or adultery would keep men from seeing God - from having God rule in their hearts and lives within them - but that which was the inner activating force towards such a demonstration - hatred and immoral thoughts.²³ This was also true of the common practice of divorce, the use of swearing,

20. Matthew 13: 20 ff.
21. Matthew 13: 22 ff.

22. Matthew 5: 8.
23. Matthew 5: 22; 28.

the attitude towards one's enemies, and even the false outward sense of piety and practice of praying.²⁴ The common method of fasting, the concern about treasures, the cares about this life, the attitude of finding fault, and the lack of trust in God were all signs that the heart of the individuals had to be changed, and that they were not seeing God as a rule and guide in their lives.²⁵ It was all summed up in His discourse about the Kingdom of God; "not everyone that says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he who does the will of my father."²⁶ Christ was simply telling His disciples that not everyone who outwardly confessed Him and seemed to be His, would really have His rule in their hearts, but only those who did His will, who had His will, whose hearts were changed and were now controlling every member of their bodies in complete service to Him. Therefore only those who realized the need for a complete change of heart, could actually be influenced by this power in their hearts and in the rest of their lives. Jesus said it in these words: "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well."²⁷

Jesus closed with this idea too, when he said that whoever heard him - that is, took these words as his very own and made them a matter of the heart - and did them, - that is, let these words then control all his actions, he was as "a wise man who built his house upon a rock; and the rain fell, and the floods came and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded upon the rock."²⁸

24. Matthew 5: 32 - 6: 7.
 25. Matthew 6: 16 - 7: 12.
 26. Matthew 7: 21.

27. Matthew 6: 33.
 28. Matthew 7: 24, 25.

By impressing upon His hearers that all were in need of a change through His power, and that only those who realized this need could be influenced by it, Jesus actually conditioned them for the change itself. Christ conditioned them for His freeing Gospel by making clear to all their need of His power. He used the Law to condition, but for the actual change and freeing power, He too, had to use the fact of the redemption of man through Himself. Just what was the action of that power?

The foremost power of the Gospel of Jesus was freedom - freedom from that which separated man from God - from sin. This freedom of man was the whole purpose of the life and death of Jesus. Christ came to "seek and to save that which was lost."²⁹ For Jesus also said that "everyone who commits sins is a slave to sin."³⁰ But He had come to free, as He said "to the Jews who had believed in Him, "if you continue in my word, you are my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."³¹ And "so if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed."³² Isaiah had promised this very mission of Christ already in the Old Testament, when he prophesied, speaking of Christ, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord hath appointed me...to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound."³³ This was His divine mission.

His coming, dying, and rising from the dead, implied that He came to make man at one with His Father. Jesus' purpose was to have the miracle of a transformation through love work on sin-crippled men and women in

29. Luke 19: 10.

30. John 8: 34.

31. John 8: 31 ff.

32. John 8: 36.

33. Isaiah 61: 1.

every walk of life. His purpose was to make the alchemy of love change the base metals of humanity into the gold of divinity.

This concept of the rule of God in the freed person is found in His teaching of the Kingdom of God. He once told His hearers that "the Kingdom of God is within you."³⁴ He compared this Kingdom of God in the hearts of people to a seed that is planted in the ground and which naturally grows and bears fruit.³⁵ Again He compares it to the leaven in bread, though small, influencing all of the "three measures of meal."³⁶ That is why he told His hearers to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness; for then, God working in them, all other needs would be answered.³⁷

It was because of this Kingdom of God - this rule of God in the freed individual that called out the potential Cephas hidden and hardly suspected in the impulsive Simon.³⁸ It was God's rule that changed a despised tax collector into an honest and unselfish man.³⁹ It was the Kingdom of God working in the heart of the blasphemer and murderer of those following Christ, that made of him the greatest missionary of all times.⁴⁰ It was this power that brought a dying thief to the portals of heaven.⁴¹

These and many other men who came into contact with Christ and were freed from their slavery to sin, were filled with the rule of God in their hearts. Jesus had told His disciples that this would happen when He says, "He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for

34. Luke 17: 21.
35. Mark 4: 30 ff.
36. Luke 13: 20.
37. Matthew 6: 33.

38. Matthew 16: 18.
39. Matthew 9: 9.
40. Acts 9: 6.
41. Luke 23: 43.

apart from me you can do nothing."⁴² And again, "I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide."⁴³

This rule of God in the heart of men meant a resumption of true life with the eternal God, both here in this life and the life to come. Christ said, "I am come that they might have life and they might have it more abundantly."⁴⁴ Again, truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word, and believes him who sent me has eternal life; he does not come into judgement, but has passed from death to life."⁴⁵ And to the adulterous Samaritan woman He made this promise, "...whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."⁴⁶

But what is the dynamic of this power? Why should the fact of the redemption be so powerful in the lives of individuals and be able to usher in the entire rule of God Himself? What causes belief in Christ and his death to be able to resume that life with God interrupted by sin?

Our answer is found alone in the fact that He who came, died and rose again was the very God Himself and that His work was God's plan for redemption. Only God Himself could effect such power. Jesus taught Himself to be this very God who was to die for man. He said, "I and my Father are one."⁴⁷ "He that sees me, sees Him who sent me."⁴⁸ When Pilate pointedly asked Him, "Are you the Son of God?" He replied, "You say that

42. John 15: 5.
43. John 15: 16.
44. John 10: 10.
45. John 5: 24.

46. John 4: 14.
47. John 10: 30.
48. John 12: 45.

I am."⁴⁹ Again He says, "All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you."⁵⁰

And He taught that His way of freeing man was by dying. He compared Himself to a Shepherd who "calls his own sheep by their name and leads them out." He states, "I am the door; if any one enters by me, he will be saved, and will go in and out finding pasture."⁵¹ This was their freedom and it was to be brought about by His death. He continues, "...and I lay down my life for the sheep... I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."⁵²

And in plain words Christ taught that His death, the glorification of God and Himself was the means of giving men true freedom - eternal life. He prayed, "Father, the hour has come; glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee, since thou hast given him power over all flesh, so that he might give eternal life to all whom thou hast given me."⁵³ Christ indeed realized that his dying was to free men from death - that all might have life.

This fact is also seen from His great cry from Calvary "It is finished."⁵⁴ At that moment the redemption of man was complete and God was satisfied. Jesus realized it and said so in just so many words. Then the word of the Evangelist John were reality, which tell of God's plan, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."⁵⁵

49. Luke 22: 70.

50. John 16: 15.

51. John 10: 3-9.

52. John 10: 15-18.

53. John 17: 1-2.

54. John 19: 30.

55. John 3: 16.

That is the concept of the power of Gospel as found in the teaching of Christ. It is the freeing of the individual from sin - that which separates man from God. And it resumes in man that life with God intended for him from eternity, by introducing the rule of God into His heart. This new life here and in eternity became possible when God Himself, Jesus Christ, died on Calvary to take the place of man.

But Christ is no longer bodily present with us. How then can that power still be with us, if his bodily presence is gone? Christ told us why it was necessary that He go away when He said, "...it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you."⁵⁶

Jesus sends the Comforter into our hearts to lead us into all truth and to remind them of the things He taught. He tells His disciples, "...you know Him (the Holy Spirit), for he dwells within you, and will be in you."⁵⁷ And also, "The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you."⁵⁸ And again, "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth."⁵⁹

But Christ also taught that the Spirit would bring the personal power of Himself, for He had also taught, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me."⁶⁰ He said, "When the Counselor comes, whom I shall send from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness to me."⁶¹

56. John 16: 7.
57. John 14: 17.
58. John 14: 26.

59. John 16: 13.
60. John 14: 6.
61. John 15: 26.

Also He said, "He, [the Holy Spirit] will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you."⁶² We are told that through the Spirit we will see Jesus as he is with the Father.⁶³ And Jesus personally will come into our hearts to abide there.⁶⁴

The coming of the Spirit and Jesus also means the indwelling of the Father Himself. For Jesus taught that "I am in the Father and the Father in me."⁶⁵ And on the day of Pentecost, all would realize that "I am in the Father, and you in me, and I in you."⁶⁶

St. Paul's concept of the power of the Gospel is readily found in his own personal life and in his writings. As Christ, he realized that the need for this power must be realized before it can actually influence the heart of man. He knew it well, for he could not forget his own conversion on the way to Damascus.

In his own words he tells us of his life just before this miracle:

I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things in opposing the name of Jesus of Nazareth... And I punished them often in all the synagogues and tried to make them blaspheme; and in raging fury against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities. Thus I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests.⁶⁷

Then it happened. Jesus Christ Himself appeared to him, and the personal power of Christ exercised its influence upon him, after he realized he needed it, for Luke tells us, that when Jesus said to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" and, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," Paul "Trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou

62. John 16: 14.
63. John 14: 18 ff.
64. John 14: 23.

65. John 14: 11.
66. John 14: 20.
67. Acts. 26: 9.

have me to do?"⁶⁸ Paul indeed had been struck by the power of Jesus Christ, and he had realized his need for the heart-changing power.

Paul realized his continual need of this power in his later life too. To his Corinthian congregation he enumerates the trials he has as a servant of God; "in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labors, watching, hunger;" These are listed as the commendations to them that he truly was of God and sent by Him. The fact that he can follow this listing up with these; "by purity, knowledge, forbearance, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God," proved beyond all doubt that he realized his need and was making full use of the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.⁶⁹

His beautiful confession concerning the thorn in the flesh, which was not taken away although he had pleaded especially with God three times for its deliverance, shows conclusively how he regarded the power of God in his personal life. When God told him, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness," he answered, "I will all the more gladly boast of my weakness, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities; for when I am weak, then I am strong."⁷⁰ His strength was in realizing his need for the power of God.

68. Acts 9: 6.

69. II Corinthians 6: 4-7.

70. II Corinthians 12: 9 ff.

His realization of the need of this power outside himself - the power of God, is evident in his expression concerning the warring natures within him. He says, "...I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" And his immediate glorious answer is, "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord."⁷¹

Learning this great truth from his own life, Paul used it effectively in the lives of others. He used the Law in all its sternness to convince sinners that they were offensive to God and to bring them to realization that they were utterly helpless. He wrote to the Romans, "Therefore by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight; for by the Law is the knowledge of sin"⁷² And again writing to them he points out that as they are, they are doomed, when he says, "All who have sinned without the Law, will also perish without the Law, and all who have sinned under the Law, will be judged by the Law."⁷³ And, "Now we know that whatever the Law says it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God."⁷⁴

He described the state of his Ephesian followers before their conversion thus:

And you he made alive, when you were dead through the trespasses and sins in which you once walked following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of

71. Romans 7: 23
72. Romans 3: 20.

73. Romans 2: 12.
74. Romans 3: 19.

the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience. Among these we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of body and mind, and so we were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.⁷⁵

That is the way Paul preached the Law to his hearers. He made them realize their helplessness and that all had sinned and come short of the glory of God.⁷⁶ He also taught them that it was impossible for them to do anything about it, as when he wrote to his Corinthian congregation, "But the unspiritual man does not receive the gifts of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned."⁷⁷ And to his Ephesian congregation, "... as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their mind; they are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart."⁷⁸

What was the force and power of the Gospel Paul taught? What actually did it do in the lives and hearts of men? Paul was well qualified to answer this for it had happened in his own life and he had seen it so active in the lives of his listeners.

Paul's conversion is an example of this power. Here was a man hating the Lord, and killing those who professed his name, all of a sudden becoming the greatest missionary and the greatest preacher of the New Testament era. That very change demonstrates the influence of this power. On two occasions he gave this experience as the reason for his actions and attitude, and may we not suppose that he mentioned it even more often

75. Ephesians 2: 1-3.
76. Romans 3: 23.

77. I Corinthians 2: 14.
78. Ephesians 4: 18.

than recorded by Luke.⁷⁹

Paul's concept of this power of Jesus and His Gospel is evidenced also in his sanctified life. He was a completely changed man. Now he was ready to die for His Lord Jesus.⁸⁰ He was now ready to help the weak, even though it meant personal labors and toil.⁸¹ He was now a devout man of prayer.⁸² He was obedient to all God had revealed to him.⁸³ He was full of "purity, knowledge, forbearance, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God."⁸⁴

Paul's trials and temptations also showed the power of the Gospel in him. He was willing to wear chains for the Gospel's sake, finding in the bonds, the power to declare His message as he should.⁸⁵ He was lashed, beaten, stoned, shipwrecked, adrift at sea; on journeys, in dangers on the sea, in the city, in the wilderness, among false brethren; in toil and hardship, in hunger and thirst, and especially the daily pressure of all the churches weighed heavily upon him.⁸⁶ Yet through all these persecutions and trials caused by his adherence to the Gospel he never ceased to preach Christ crucified. How could he have done this without the very power of God Himself? He answers himself, "I can do all things in him who strengthens me."⁸⁷

This power of the Gospel also shines in the writings of this great man of God. In the opening words to the Romans he masterfully tells them

79. Cf. Acts 22: 4-16; 26: 9-18.

80. Acts 21: 13.

81. Acts 20: 34; Cf. II Thess. 3: 7.

82. Acts 20: 31.

83. Acts 26: 19.

84. II Corinthians 6: 6.

85. Ephesians 5: 20.

86. II Corinth. 11: 23 ff.

87. Philippians 4: 13.

his personal conception of the Gospel of Jesus Christ as he knows it. "I am not ashamed of the Gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."⁸⁸ Simply but powerfully stated is his conception of the power of the Gospel he preaches. He closes this epistle with the same thought, writing, "Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ."⁸⁹ To his Ephesian congregation he writes, "you...have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation."⁹⁰ And later he remarks, "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."⁹¹ And to Timothy he writes his famous words, which clearly teach his concept of this Gospel as being the power of God unto salvation, "...and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus."⁹²

To Paul this power of God found in the Gospel unto salvation is a freeing power. Often he speaks of it as such. He himself has been set free by it as he exclaims, "...the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set me free from the law of sin and death."⁹³ He writes to the Galatians, "Stand fast in the liberty, wherewith Christ has made us free."⁹⁴ This freedom leads to a "bondage of righteousness," as we read, "...And having been set free from sin, [you] have become slaves of righteousness."⁹⁵

88. Romans 1: 16; Cf. Titus, 3: 16.
 89. Romans 16: 25.
 90. Ephesians 1: 13.
 91. Ephesians 6: 17.

92. II Timothy 3: 15.
 93. Romans 8: 2.
 94. Galatians 5: 1.
 95. Romans 6: 18.

And again, "...he who was free when called is a slave of Christ."⁹⁶

Paul, also often speaks of himself as being a slave of Jesus Christ.⁹⁷

This slavery simply means a new life in Christ, as Paul say, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come."⁹⁸ This power of God frees man from his former self, makes his heart new and ruled by God alone. This persuaded heart now controls each member of the body, making it entirely new in its action, thoughts and deeds. That is the power of the Gospel Paul knew and preached.

Paul's concept of this life was also to be found in his congregations. For he recognized the manifestation of this power in the lives of his hearers, when he wrote them at Corinth, "You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on your hearts, to be known and read by all men; and you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit to the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts."⁹⁹ Their lives and actions was proof to him, and he felt it should be enough proof to all men about them, that the Gospel he preached was freeing men unto a new creation in Christ. He knew he had the right and only Gospel, and he knew it was powerful, for it was working in the hearts of men.

The dynamic for this power in Paul's message is alone the work of God through the fact of the redemption of man through Christ Jesus.

96. I Corinthians 7: 22.

97. Cf. Romans 1: 1; 9: 19; Galatians 1: 10.

98. II Corinthians 5: 17.

99. II Corinthians 3: 3.

He writes, "...so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and consecration and redemption."¹⁰⁰ And again, "All this [being made a new creation in Christ] is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not counting their trespasses against them..."¹⁰¹ And to the Ephesians he writes these beautiful words, "...in Christ Jesus you... have been brought near in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace... and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility,...that he might... reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end...for through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father."¹⁰² And to the Thessalonians he writes, "For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us so that whether we wake or sleep we might live with him."¹⁰³

For Paul there was only this one power for persuading and changing the hearts of men to desire and want that rule of God in their hearts that would make them a new creation. But since Paul realized that man by himself was unable to comprehend those mysteries of God, he pointed out to his listeners that this power in the Gospel could only become a reality through the working of the Holy Spirit through the word. He

100. I Corinthians 1: 30.

101. II Corinthians 3: 11, 12.

102. Ephesians 2: 13 ff.

103. I Thessalonians 5: 9.

wrote to his Corinthian congregation, "...none comprehends the thought of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. Again he writes them, "Now the Lord is the Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all...are being changed into His likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit."¹⁰⁴

Writing to the Romans Paul tells them that through this Holy Spirit they obtain that rule of God in their hearts that makes them sons and heirs of God with Christ.¹⁰⁵ And the same idea he writes to the Galatians, "And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!' So through God you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then an heir."¹⁰⁶ In fact this presence of the Spirit through the word is made an absolute necessity, when Paul writes, "Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him."¹⁰⁷

Paul's concept of the Gospel of Christ through the Holy Spirit is the only powerful persuading factor in changing the heart of the hearer to want the rule of God within him. No wonder he was not ashamed of this Gospel of Jesus Christ, and wanted to preach it only wherever he went. He had been changed by it himself and he wanted all others to realize

104. II Corinthians 3: 17 ff.

105. Romans 8: 16.

106. Galatians 4: 6.

107. Romans 8: 9.

this plan of God, as he wrote the Ephesians, "Of this Gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace which was given me by the working of His power. To me this grace was given...to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things."¹⁰⁸

108. Ephesians 3: 7 ff.

IV. CHRIST'S AND ST. PAUL'S CONCEPT OF PREACHING.

We have just learned what the concept of the power of the Gospel was as found in the teachings of Jesus. Now we would present His concept of conveying that power to the individual. We call this His Concept of Preaching.

What was the essence of Christ's concept of Preaching? Christ clearly taught that the fact of reconciliation effected by Himself was to be brought to man not by immediate and direct action of Himself upon the hearts of men, but rather that this fact should be spread among men, by men themselves through the medium of speech. He Himself practiced this when He was here on earth by being the Master preacher, going about in Galilee, in Judea, in the cities and the synagogues.¹ On several occasions he sent out groups of men to preach. "He appointed seventy others, and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to come."² He sent out his twelve disciples several times.³ Three times He asked Peter if He loved Him and three times receiving an affirmative, He told Peter to spread His word.⁴

That this was not a temporary practice is revealed when we read Jesus told them to "pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his

1. Matthew 4: 23; 11: 1; 19: 2; Mark 9: 35.

2. Luke 10: 1 ff.

3. Matthew 10: 7; Mark 16: 15.

4. John 21: 15.

harvest."⁵ And before his ascension he informed them after telling them to preach to all nations that He himself would always be with them, to the close of ages.⁶ Christ wanted this always to be the means of bringing His fact of redemption to men.

Those who preached this fact of the redemption - the power of God - had a divine mission; and this message was as effectual as if God Himself spread it. For they were sent by God Himself. Jesus told those he sent out. "He that hears you hears me, and he who rejects you rejects me, and he who rejects you rejects him who sent me."⁷

This is also the meaning of the great "therefore" in the Great Commission.⁸ Because Christ had been given all power in heaven and earth, he "therefore" sent out his disciples with that very same power. They would be as effectual through the spoken word, as if God Himself, who had all power were speaking to them.

This was true because of the character of the message they were to spread, for Christ had informed them just what to announce to the people that would listen to them. "What I tell you in the dark, utter in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim upon the housetops."⁹ He was referring here to the Gospel for he told his disciples, "preach as you go, saying, 'The Kingdom of heaven is at hand',"¹⁰ and "preach the Gospel to the whole creation."¹¹ And again His great command to His disciples at

5. Luke 10: 2.

6. Matthew 28: 20.

7. Luke 10: 16.

8. Matthew 28: 19.

9. Matthew 10: 27.

10. Matthew 10: 7.

11. Mark 16: 15.

his ascension, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."¹² Men were to be as effectual as God Himself for in their message they conveyed God.

But Christ not only taught that men were to be the agents to announce and spread the fact of the redemption won for them by Himself, and that their preaching was as effectual as if God Himself had spread it, but He also taught that those words spoken and spread actually were the means of conveying to man that freeing power of God Himself and would affect them as such. He gave His disciples a great and mighty power when He said to them, "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."¹³ Also just before His ascension he told them "...that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations..."¹⁴ In His prayer before his betrayal and capture Jesus spoke of the power of their preaching when he said to His Father, "I do not pray for these only, but also for those who are to believe in me through their word, that they may all be one."¹⁵ And again His last words to his disciples promised power to their words when he said, "...preach the gospel to the whole creation. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."¹⁶

As pointed out in the last chapter, the power of the words of this Gospel does not depend on the person delivering them but upon the fact of

12. Matthew 28: 19.

13. John 20: 23.

14. Luke 24: 47.

15. Matthew 26: 28.

16. Mark 16: 15.

the reconciliation itself. The fact of the suffering and death and resurrection of Christ is the power which makes the preaching by men effective. Jesus sums it up saying, "...Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead..." with the results that now "...repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in His name."¹⁷

What was the method of preaching used by Jesus? We know that much of his preaching was accompanied by miracles. He did not do them for a show of power, of self-glorification, or to raise within the minds of those about him false hopes for a temporal Kingdom, simply to force his hearers to conform to him and believe in him. But he performed miracles, "that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I am in the Father."¹⁸ When He came to raise Lazarus from the dead, He said he had been permitted to die, "...so that you may believe."¹⁹ He performed the miracle of foretelling the future, "so that when it does take place, you may believe."²⁰ He healed the paralytic to prove to all concerned that He truly was God and could without a doubt forgive sins.²¹ This use of miracles was a means of setting Himself up as the helper who met human need and to condition the people for his preaching of persuasion proper - the fact of the redemption.

But most of the people missed the point of His ministry of miracles. True, they recognized his great powers, yet their hearts had been unaffected. There was no desire for a change for they realized no need.

17. Luke 24: 46 ff.

18. John 10: 38.

19. John 11: 15.

20. John 14: 29.

21. Matthew 9: 6.

Christ told them in so many words, saying, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves."²² And John reports, "Though he had done so many signs before them, yet they did not believe in him; it was that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: "Lord, who has believed our report, and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?"²³

These people did not accept these miracles in their hearts because they did not realize a need for a change within themselves. And because of this blindness, Christ's method of preaching to them was one of parables. We are told that at times, Christ always spoke in parables. We read, "All this Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed he said nothing to them without a parable."²⁴ And again, "With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; he did not speak to them without a parable..."²⁵

And when His disciples bluntly asked Jesus why these people did not understand His parables, He explained;

To you it has been given to know that secrets of the Kingdom, but to them it has not been given. For to him who has will more be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.²⁶

Why the people could not see, and did not hear nor understand had been prophecied by the prophet when he wrote, "For this people's heart

22. John 6: 26.

23. John 12: 37 ff.

24. Matthew 13: 34.

25. Mark 4: 33.

26. Matthew 13: 13 ff.

has grown dull, and their ears are heavy of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should perceive with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and turn for me to heal them."²⁷ And Jeremiah writes, "I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world."²⁸ From these words we see that Christ spoke in parables as a warning and punishment to those who rejected him whom they should have recognized and readily accepted because of his miracles. Indeed, there was no arbitrary or penalizing force exerted upon his hearers, but many failed to grasp the true meaning for they refused to accept Him and His teachings, while others, as we shall see later, through these same parables received a clear and helpful picture of the truth.

Christ also gave detailed instructions to his disciples as to the method of their preaching to these stubborn men. When sending out the seventy, he instructed them,

"Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you; heal the sick in it and say to them, 'The Kingdom of God has come near to you.' But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, 'Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you; nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near.'"²⁹

And in sending out the twelve, our Lord gave these instructions:

...go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And preach as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse leper, cast out demons...And whatever town or village you enter, find out who is worthy in it, and stay with him until you depart. As

27. Matthew 13: 15.

28. Matthew 13: 35.

29. Luke 10: 8-11.

you enter the house, salute it. And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. And if any one will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town.³⁰

But to those who realized their need and came to him humbly and seeking help, Christ's method was quite different. What the wise and haughty could not understand, the simple and humble recognized fully. Jesus said, "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes... Come unto me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."³¹ Jesus implored those realizing their need for help to come. Notice, he does not ask the church leaders, the self-righteous, those who seem to have no troubles at all, those who are respected and honored in their community, but rather those who have problems, burdens, sins, and knew it.

To these he also spoke in terms of parables, but notice the words of explanation. To Nicodemus' query for salvation, Christ answers with the simple Gospel, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life."³² To His humble and sincere disciples, we are told concerning the parables, "...but privately to his own disciples he explained everything."³³ And to humble Mary and Martha, he spoke not only in parables, but in clear simple language He said, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever

30. Matthew 10: 6 ff.

31. Matthew 11: 25, 28.

32. John 3: 16.

33. Luke 4: 34.

lives and believes in me shall never die."³⁴

But to those who realized their need, and that Christ was their redemption, the very parables, which to the proud were nothing but dark obscure stories, became sources of deep doctrine. Undoubtedly many understood His doctrine of God when He explained it in the story about a father and two sons; and how one of them went wrong, and the other was hard and bitter toward him; and how the former stupid lad bethought himself, and ventured home; and of the large welcome his father gave him; and of the correction of his brother's churlishness toward him.³⁵ Or perhaps one day Christ sensed that someone in the little cluster of listeners had made a mess of things and had lost heart, felt that now it was too late, and no use trying any further. And so He told a little tale about a woman who had lost a coin.³⁶ So each parable was crammed full of doctrine; Christ's method of presenting truths to the humble who undoubtedly understood it, while the self-righteous failed to realize the meaning.

What was the results of Christ's use of preaching as conveying His freeing power to the hearts and lives of individuals? By many, perhaps we can say the majority, Christ was misunderstood. We find many examples in the New Testament where the Jew, Pharisees, and even his own disciples did not understand His plain statements. He told the Pharisees about the Good Shepherd, but John has to insert, "This figure Jesus used with them but they did not understand what he was saying to them."³⁷ And after many

34. John 11: 25.

35. Luke 15: 11. ff.

36. Luke 15: 8 ff.

37. John 10: 6.

explanations of His deity, the Jews still asked, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly."³⁸ But perhaps the most prominent example of misunderstanding was found in those who accompanied Him continually and yet did not understand Him correctly. When foretelling His death we are told of His disciples, "But they did not understand this saying..."³⁹ Even one of His closest disciples misunderstood His cause completely, when Christ foretold Peter's threefold denial.⁴⁰ And many other examples of misunderstanding by all types of listeners are recorded in Scriptures.⁴¹

Very often we find that His preaching caused discordant opinions among those hearing Him. When Christ called the ruler of the synagogue a hypocrite and spoke to the crowd, we are told "As He said this, all his adversaries were put to shame; and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him."⁴² And at the feast at Jerusalem we are told that "there was much muttering about him among the people. While some said, 'He is a good man,' others said, 'No, he is leading the people astray.'"⁴³ And later at the same feast it is reported that after Christ had spoken about Himself as the water of life, "When they heard these words, some of the people said, 'This is really the prophet.' Others said, 'This is the Christ.' But some said, 'Is the Christ to come from Galilee? ... So there was a division among the people over him. Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him."⁴⁴

38. John 10: 24.

39. Luke 9: 45; 18: 34.

40. John 13: 37.

41. Cf. Mark 9: 32; 11: 28 ff.

John 4: 3; 6: 41; 7: 36;

8: 24; 14: 4; 16: 17.

42. Luke 13: 17.

43. John 7: 12.

44. John 7: 40-43.

At other times His preaching aroused real hatred and actual persecution. After cleaning the temple of the money changers within the temple and his address to the people Mark states, "And the chief priests and the scribes heard it and sought a way to destroy him; for they feared him, because all the multitude was astonished at his teaching."⁴⁵ His parables were understood to be against the Pharisees so they sought to arrest Him but feared the multitude.⁴⁶ Christ pointed out to the Jews that their desire to kill Him was because "my word finds no place in you."⁴⁷ The Jews admitted that their reason for wanting to stone Him was not because he was performing miracles, "but for blasphemy; because you, being a man, make yourself God."⁴⁸ And again in council they said, "If we let him go on thus, every one will believe in him..."⁴⁹

So deep was their hatred for Him that we are told, "...the Jews had already agreed that if any one should confess him to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue."⁵⁰ Not only did these Jews hate and reject Him themselves but they would force everyone else to conform to their rejection of Him. So was the effect of His preaching on many.

On the other hand often it is recorded that His listeners, although not completely changed, were astonished, receptive, and willing to hear him again. We are told of the people of Capernaum that "when Jesus returned, the crowd welcomed him, for they were all waiting for him."⁵¹ In the introduction to this thesis we discussed the results of the Sermon on the

45. Mark 11: 18
 46. Mark 12: 12.
 47. John 8: 37.
 48. John 10: 33.

49. John 11: 48.
 50. John 9: 22.
 51. Luke 8: 40.

Mount as it is recorded, "And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes."⁵² In Galilee, "the Galileans welcomed him, having seen all that he had done in Jerusalem at the feast."⁵³ And even the despised Samaritans wanted to hear more after the woman at the well with Jesus had told them of Him. We read, "So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days."⁵⁴ In this case the results were as intended; "And many more believed because of his word."⁵⁵

On others, too, the effect was as it was intended - a freeing power - liberating the individual from his bondage to sin, and bringing him back to his original state of oneness with God. Zacchaeus was such an example. We are told that he "received him joyfully."⁵⁶ We know he had heard about Jesus and undoubtedly he had heard Him personally. The Gospel had worked upon his heart, so that when Jesus was in his home, he showed the result of that power in the words, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have defrauded any one of anything, I restore it four-fold."⁵⁷ That this was a genuine result of the Gospel is shown by the answer of Jesus when he said, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost."⁵⁸ Christ had sought with His power, and the lost had been saved.

52. Matthew 7: 28 ff.

53. John 4: 45.

54. John 4: 40.

55. John 4: 41.

56. Luke 19: 6.

57. Luke 19: 8.

58. Luke 19: 1-10.

Nicodemus was also affected so by the preaching of Christ's persuasion of freedom. The first time he came to Jesus he said, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do, unless God is with him."⁵⁹ He has been prepared for persuasion proper by the signs of Jesus, and now Christ's discourse on conversion and salvation brings to his heart the change that was evidenced in his life. John reports later that Nicodemus defended Jesus in the Sanhedrin and was asked, "Are you from Galilee too?"⁶⁰ And after Christ's death he openly professed his belief in Christ when it is reported, "Nicodemus, also, who had at first come to him by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds weight."⁶¹

His disciples were also won by a change of will and desire through the preaching of the word. It is true, Jesus used the words, "Come and see,"⁶² and "Follow me,"⁶³ but these were merely used to focus their attention on that which persuaded - Himself. For we see that the men to whom these words were addressed immediately went out and said, "We have found the Messiah."⁶⁴ They were convinced within their own minds that Christ was their Savior, and therefore they followed Him. But what had really prepared them for this discipleship was the word that had been preached to them before, both by John the Baptist and Christ Himself.⁶⁵

This was the essence, method and result of Christ's concept of preaching as the means of conveying to men the power of God in the

59. John 3: 2.
60. John 7: 52.
61. John 19: 39.
62. John 1: 39.

63. John 1: 43; Matthew 9: 9.
64. John 1: 41.
65. John 1: 29 ff.; John 1: 47 ff.

Gospel of the redemption, which is able to change the innermost will and desire - the heart. This alone is the true authority of persuasion in preaching.

Paul's concept of preaching as the means of conveying the power of God into the hearts and lives of men is demonstrated in his sermons and writings. To discover this concept we will first ask, what was the essence of his preaching?

First of all we note that the instilling of faith in the hearts of men comes through preaching; and only the preaching of Christ. Paul writes to the Romans: "Faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ."⁶⁶ To the Corinthians he wrote that which to the world was sheer foolishness - namely preaching - was God's way of saving souls.⁶⁷ This also he implied when he asked the Galatians the question, "Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith?"⁶⁸

In bringing to faith through preaching, Paul teaches that it is the power of God alone that does it. He writes to the Corinthians, "...my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power, that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God."⁶⁹ And again, "For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face

66. Romans 10: 17.

67. I Corinthians 1: 21.

68. Galatians 3: 5.

69. I Corinthians 2: 4-5.

of Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us."⁷⁰

And Paul also teaches that man through preaching is a co-worker with God. He writes his Corinthians, "What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through who you believed, as the Lord assigned to each...For we are fellow workmen with God."⁷¹ Although the power of God is the changing and persuading force, the communication by men is necessary. He writes the Romans:

But how are men to call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach good news!' But they have not all heeded the gospel; for Isaiah says, 'Lord who has believed what he has heard from us?'⁷²

Although men are necessary for the communication of this power of God, yet it is God Himself who inspires, prepares, controls and encourages the preacher. Paul tells his Colossians, "Him we preach...For this I toil, striving with all the energy which he mightily inspires within me."⁷³ And to the Corinthians he writes, "He who has prepared us for this very thing is God."⁷⁴ And again, "...the love of Christ controls us."⁷⁵ And he makes this statement to his Philippian congregation, "So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any incentive of love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind..."⁷⁶

70. II Corinthians 4: 6 ff.
71. I Corinthians 3: 5; 9.
72. Romans 10: 14 ff.
73. Colossians 1: 28.

74. II Corinthians 5: 5.
75. II Corinthians 5: 14.
76. Philippians 2: 1, 2.

The essence of Paul's preaching message was Jesus Christ and Him only. He writes the Corinthians the famous words, "...We preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."⁷⁷ And again, "What we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake."⁷⁸ He realized it had been entrusted to him and was his first obligation as he wrote the Corinthians also, "...God...gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, God was in Christ...entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. So we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us,"⁷⁹ and "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scripture..."⁸⁰ So positive was he that this the one and only Gospel to preach, he wrote to the Galatians, "But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, If any one is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that which you received, let him be accursed."⁸¹

His preaching material was not from men as he told the Galatians; "...that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia."⁸² His purpose was to tell of the

77. I Corinthians 1: 23.
78. II Corinthians 4: 5.
79. II Corinthians 5: 19 ff.

80. I Corinthians 15: 3.
81. Galatians 1: 8 ff.
82. Galatians 1: 16 ff.

whole plan of salvation. He said to his elders at Ephesus, "...I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God."⁸³ And to the Colossians he wrote, "...I became a minister according to the divine office which was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now made manifest to his saints."⁸⁴

Paul's method of preaching is summed up in his advice to his student, Timothy. He wrote him, "I charge you...preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching...Always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry."⁸⁵

He carried these instructions out in his own ministry. We have a summary of two of Paul's sermons to the heathen recorded in the book of Acts, the one preached at Lystra,⁸⁶ and the other at Athens.⁸⁷ However a fuller outline of his preaching ministry to the heathen is given us in his first epistle to the Thessalonians. We find in this letter that Paul did not make much use of the Old Testament, although once the prophets are referred to.⁸⁸ Often however, the Old Testament language either consciously or unconsciously is woven in.⁸⁹ Herein we find little theology, no arguments, no deep reasoning, and not too much dogma. However his method of approach and preaching is described. His appeal and speech was not to please them but only to please God who tests man's heart.⁹⁰

83. Acts 20: 27.
 84. Colossians 1: 25ff.
 85. II Timothy 4: 1ff.
 86. Acts 14: 15-17.
 87. Acts 17; 22-31.

88. I Thessalonians 2: 15.
 89. I Thessalonians 2: 16;
 4: 5,6,8: 5: 8,22.
 90. I Thessalonians 2: 4.

He never used words of flattery, nor a cloak for greed.⁹¹ He made no demands for glory, but rather was gentle as a nurse caring for children.⁹² He was desirous not only to share the Gospel with them, but also his own self, because they were very dear to him.⁹³

He labored and toiled for them.⁹⁴ He exhorted each one, and encouraged them, and charged them to lead a life worthy of God.⁹⁵ His method of preaching to them also included sending Timothy to them "to establish you in your faith and to exhort you, that no one be moved by these afflictions."⁹⁶ For in his preaching to them he had also warned them of the afflictions that would be theirs.⁹⁷

He had taught them how they ought to live and please God.⁹⁸ He had become very frank with them concerning their sinful life and solemnly forewarned them concerning the passions of lust.⁹⁹ He had charged them to work, "so that you may command the respect of outsiders, and be dependent on nobody."¹⁰⁰

This was Paul's method of preaching to the heathen. In the epistle to the Galatians we have an example of his method of preaching to those already won for Christ, but who were forsaking Him soon after. He is severe, damning all who are preaching anything opposing his preaching.¹⁰¹ And for the people themselves he has no praise, but censure when he begins, "I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in

91. I Thessalonians 2: 5.
 92. I Thessalonians 2: 6, 7.
 93. I Thessalonians 2: 8.
 94. I Thessalonians 2: 9.
 95. I Thessalonians 2: 11, 12.
 96. I Thessalonians 3: 2 ff.

97. I Thessalonians 3: 4.
 98. I Thessalonians 4: 1 ff.
 99. I Thessalonians 4: 6.
 100. I Thessalonians 4: 12.
 101. Galatians 1: 8, 9.

the grace of Christ and turning to a different gospel."¹⁰² He continues by castigating them for their many faults, immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like."¹⁰³ Paul had no mercy on anything of this sort. He wrote, "O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you...?"¹⁰⁴ And, "Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule...Henceforth let no man trouble me."¹⁰⁵ "I am afraid I have labored over you in vain."¹⁰⁶ He uses no delicate language in telling those who would continue circumcising that he wishes they would go so far as to mutilate themselves.¹⁰⁷

He appeals to their sense of truth, and not to the whims of men. He asks, "Am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men?"¹⁰⁸ And later again he asks, "Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth?"¹⁰⁹ This was Paul's method of preaching to those who had fallen from the Gospel he had taught them.

His method to those who knew the truths he had preached to them, but who were subject to all sorts of temptations and false ideas was one of patience, thanks and praise for God's grace to them through his initial preaching, and warnings to them to continue in it. He writes the weak Corinthians, "I give thanks to God always for you because of the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, that in every way you were enriched in him with all speech and all knowledge."¹¹⁰ He warns

102. Galatians 1: 6.
 103. Galatians 5: 19-21.
 104. Galatians 3: 1.
 105. Galatians 6: 16, 17.
 106. Galatians 4: 11.

107. Galatians 5: 12.
 108. Galatians 1: 10.
 109. Galatians 4: 16.
 110. I Corinthians 1: 4.

and admonishes them as his beloved children.¹¹¹ He even gives them a choice, "What do you wish? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love in a spirit of gentleness?"¹¹²

In their quarrelings he appeals to them in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.¹¹³ He refuses at once to give them deep doctrine, writing, "I brethren, could not address you as spiritual men, but as men of the flesh, as babes in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food; for you were not ready for it; and even yet you are not ready, for you are still of the flesh."¹¹⁴ The only doctrine he mentions to any extent is the doctrine of the resurrection in the 15th. chapter. He warns against boasting, saying, "Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven ferments the whole lump of dough?"¹¹⁵

His epistle to these people is filled with practical wisdom. He takes up the problem of the man living with his father's wife.¹¹⁶ In the following chapter he discusses the problem of a Christian going to court with another.¹¹⁷ Temptations to immorality for both the married and unmarried are discussed and given a practical answer.¹¹⁸ The problem of the food offered to idols is answered in several chapters.¹¹⁹ The question of custom, concerning the covering of the head during communion, and the use of the Lord's Supper as a memorial, and not a full course meal.¹²⁰ Three chapters are spent discussing spiritual gifts and their relative value, including the well known discourse on faith, hope,

111. I Corinthians 4: 14.
112. I Corinthians 4: 21.
113. I Corinthians 1: 10.
114. I Corinthians 3: 1, 2.
115. I Corinthians 5: 6.

116. I Corinthians, Chapter 5.
117. I Corinthians, Chapter 6.
118. I Corinthians, Chapter 7.
119. I Corinthians, Chapter 8.
120. I Corinthians 11: 2-34.

and love.¹²¹ He closes with words concerning the collection and some personal remarks.¹²²

This was Paul's method of preaching to those who were won for Christ, but still not too strong in him and still having trouble of the flesh among themselves. His approach to the Romans, who were a well organized and strong church, was filled with deep doctrines of the Christian

faith.¹²³ We readily see that Paul's method of preaching depended upon those to whom he spoke, but it always contained the word of God.

Our next question to answer is, what was the results of Paul's preaching of the power of the Gospel upon those who heard him?

Some of them refused the power of God in the preaching of Paul. Although some Jews were converted, the majority of them in Antioch of Pisidia did not as Paul said, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles."¹²⁴ But they did even more; we read later, "But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city, and stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabus, and drove them out of the district."¹²⁵ But still they were not satisfied, for we read, that when Paul was at Lystra, "Jews came there from Antioch and Iconium; and having persuaded the people, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead."¹²⁶ This was continuous throughout his life as he wrote Timothy, "...the Gospel for which I am suffering and wearing

121. I Corinthians, Chapters 12-14.

122. I Corinthians, Chapter 16.

123. Cf. "The Letter of Paul to the Romans."

124. Acts 13: 46.

125. Acts 13: 50.

126. Acts 14: 19.

fetters."¹²⁷ And later in the same letter, "Now you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life... Indeed all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil men and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived."¹²⁸

Some were simply interested but actually indifferent to the preaching of Paul. Governor Felix heard Paul "speak upon faith in Christ Jesus. And as he argued about justice and self-control and future judgement, Felix was alarmed and said, "Go away for the present; when I have an opportunity I will summon you."¹²⁹ Soon after, King Agrippa gave also a interested but finally indifferent answer when he said, "Paul, almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."¹³⁰ And at the Areopagus in Athens we are told of those who heard Paul's famous speech that they said, "We will hear you again about this."¹³¹ Paul warns Timothy that this will happen to him, as well as every preacher, when he gives the advice, "For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own likings, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths."¹³²

But also many of them believed when they heard Paul's preaching. Paul tells his Thessalonian congregation their reaction to his preaching "...when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of

127. II Timothy 2: 9.
128. II Timothy 3: 10,12.
129. Acts 24: 25.

130. Acts 26: 28.
131. Acts 17: 32.
132. II Timothy 4: 3,4.

God, which is at work in you believers."¹³³ It is recorded by Luke that "when the Gentiles heard this [the preaching of Paul], they were glad and glorified the word of God; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."¹³⁴ He tells his Corinthian congregation that all preaching has this effect, writing, "Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed."¹³⁵ His preaching to those at the Areopagus was not all in vain, for we are told "some men joined him and believed, among them Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them."¹³⁶

But Paul's concept of the effectiveness of his preaching did not rest on the mere fact that people joined his group and said they believed, but rather on the change it effected in their hearts, which was brought out by their actions. Often he mentions this change in their lives as the proof of the effectiveness of his preaching. His Galatian congregation was ready to prove their change of heart by plucking out their eyes and giving them to him if possible.¹³⁷ His Thessalonian congregation who believed, proved their belief by becoming examples, as Paul writes, "And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit; so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia

133. I Thessalonians 2: 13. Also Acts 17: 1 ff. "...they came to Thessalonica...and Paul went in saying, 'This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ.' And some of them were persuaded, and joined Paul and Silas; as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women."

134. Acts 13: 48.

135. I Corinthians 15: 11.

136. Acts 17: 34.

137. Galatians 4: 15.

and in Achaia...your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything."¹³⁸ Paul speaks of the liberality of the Macedonian congregation as evidence of the effect of his preaching among them in these words,

"...the grace of God which has been shown in the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of liberality on their part. For they gave...beyond their means, of their own free will, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints - first they gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God."¹³⁹

He sets them up as an example for his Corinthian congregation telling them, "Now as you excel in everything - in faith, in utterance, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in your love for us - see that you excel in this gracious work also."¹⁴⁰ He expected those who heard him to express their belief in acts.

This was the essence, method and results of Paul's preaching. Not unlike Christ was he in preaching the truth and only the truth, dividing correctly the Law and Gospel, and getting the same results - persecution, indifference, and that which he really wanted, the turning of the individual to belief in Christ as his Savior, and a life that proved it.

138. I Thessalonians 1: 6-8.
 139. II Corinthians 8: 1-5.
 140. II Corinthians 8: 7.

V. CHRIST'S AND ST. PAUL'S CONCEPT OF THE SPEAKER AS THE
INSTRUMENT CONVEYING THE POWER OF GOD TO MAN.

Our last chapter deals with the speaker himself. Just what kind of man does Christ and St. Paul describe to us as those who are best suited to be the ambassadors of the power of God? What are to be their characteristics, their attitudes, their personalities, their outlook on life and humanity, their concern for people and their personal habits?

Christ gives us an example of what is expected of a preacher of the word in his own life. For the very preparation for his ministry of three years gives us an idea of the ideal. We are told that when Jesus and His family returned from Egypt that "the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him."¹ He studied and had an understanding that startled even the most learned, for we are told, "they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions; and all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers."² Yet we are quite certain that he did not study in any famous rabbinical schools of the time, at least the people knew nothing of it, since we are told, "The Jews marveled at it, saying, 'How is it that this man has learning (or: this man knows his letters), when he has never studied?'"³ He had

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1. Luke 2: 40.
 2. Luke 2: 46, 47.
 3. John 7: 15.

undoubtedly prepared himself in languages as we know he quotes the Old Testament, which was in the original Hebrew; He knew his own tongue, Aramaic, a dialect of the Hebrew; and his native tongue, which he undoubtedly learned from his mother's knee; and finally he knew Greek, the vernacular of the civilized world.

The life of Prayer that Christ lived showed what he expected of the teacher of His word. We are told that immediately after he was baptized He began his ministry with a prayer of preparation.⁴ He prepared with prayer for impending conflicts with the leaders concerning his popular acclaim He received after His miracles.⁵ He prayed before He chose His twelve disciples, for indeed much depended upon His choice for the Gospel they were to proclaim.⁶ Jesus prayed just before his first announcement of His death to His disciples.⁷

The praying Jesus became the transfigured Jesus. Luke reports that our Lord "went up on the mountain to pray. And as he was praying, the appearance of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became dazzling white."⁸

The disciples of Jesus observed Him in His devotions and took his example. "He was praying in a certain place, and when he ceased, one of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.'⁹ This request was answered with the masterful Lord's Prayer.¹⁰ He even gave them the example of rising early "in the morning, a great

4. Luke 3: 21.
5. Luke 5: 16-26.
6. Luke 6: 12.
7. Luke 9: 18-27.

8. Luke 9: 28 ff.
9. Luke 11: 1.
10. Luke 11: 2-4.
Cf. Matthew 6: 9-13.

while before day,...to a lonely place" and praying.¹¹

Christ also gave prayers of Thanksgiving, reminding His followers ever to be thankful. At the rising of Lazarus, he prayed, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. I knew that thou hearest me always, but I have said this on account of the people standing by, that they may believe that thou didst send me."¹² He was thankful for the answered former petitions. At another time He thanked His Father that he had revealed the truth to men of humility.¹³

He taught His disciples to pray for others. Jesus prayed that Peter's faith might not fail him in his hour of trial and sifting.¹⁴ Also the great intercessory prayer was for all the disciples of all ages.¹⁵ Even on the cross he remembered others.¹⁶ He taught His disciples how to pray in time of need by His own example. He prayed for his coming suffering.¹⁷ Similarly was His thrice repeated Gethsemene prayer, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."¹⁸ And finally in His greatest need on the cross he prayed.¹⁹

These are the words he spoke to His disciples concerning their life of prayer:

Ask and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For every one who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man of you, if his son asks him for a loaf, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish,

11. Mark 1: 35.

12. John 11: 41.

13. Matthew 11: 25, 26.

14. Luke 22: 32.

15. John 17: 9 ff.

16. Luke 23: 34.

17. John 12: 27.

18. Luke 22: 42. ff.

19. Matthew 27: 46. ff.

will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him? So whatever you wish that men should do to you, do so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.²⁰

Christ also gave many other instructions to his disciples concerning their attitude as preachers of His word. He sent out the twelve with these words, "Lo, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves."²¹ Such should be their attitude and method of approach. He also taught them if they were to be truly great they must be servants, as He had given an example, in these words, "...but whoever would be greatest among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."²² Again He told them to be like Himself, saying, "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master; it is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master."²³ And to his disciples who were worrying about who would be the greatest in the Kingdom, He told this lesson of humility, "Whoever humbles himself like this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."²⁴

Jesus taught those who would be his disciples that they must be self-sacrificing. To several asking to be permitted to follow him he answered, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the

20. Matthew 7: 7-12.

21. Matthew 10: 16.

22. Matthew 20: 26-28. Cf. Luke 22: 26.

23. Matthew 10: 24, 25.

24. Matthew 18: 4.

Son of man has no where to lay his head."²⁵ And to one who would first bury his dead father, He said, "leave the dead to bury the dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God."²⁶ And to a third who would first say farewell to his relatives at home, he said, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."²⁷ Only those who loved Him more than anything in the world were worthy to be teachers of His. "He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."²⁸

They had one thing to preach, "The kingdom of God is at hand,"²⁹ and "Go into the whole world and preach the gospel to the whole creation."³⁰ To Peter his words were, "Feed my lambs," and "Tend my sheep."³¹

The men who were to spread this message had to be brave and strong men of trust and faith. Jesus often warned them of the persecution and trials they would encounter. Early in His ministry in the Sermon on the Mount He warned them, "Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you."³² And when He commissions them, he warns,

"Beware of men; for they will deliver you up to councils, and flog you in their synagogues, and you will be dragged

25. Luke 9: 58.

26. Luke 9: 60.

27. Luke 9: 62.

28. Matthew 10: 37.

29. Matthew 10: 7.

30. Mark 16: 15.

31. John 21: 16 ff.

32. Matthew 5: 11,12.

before governors and kings for my sake, to bear testimony before them and the Gentiles...Brother will deliver up brother to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all for my name's sake."³³

And John reports, "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master! If they persecuted me, they will persecute you; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also."³⁴

In the face of all this promised persecution, however, they were to be men of calmness and courage. Jesus told his messengers, "Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell."³⁵ They were to remember the Lord's words and that would keep them from falling away. Jesus tells them so, "I have said all this to you to keep you from falling away. They will put you out of the synagogues; indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God...But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told you of them."³⁶

The type of men chosen by our Lord for discipleship with Him here on earth gives us an idea of the ideal speaker. Speaking to them he says, "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide."³⁷ The speaker of the power of God is chosen by Him; the preacher does not choose Jesus and the fruit thereof. Those whom he chose while here on earth were of

33. Matthew 10: 18-22.

34. John 15: 20.

35. Matthew 10: 28. Cf. Matthew.

36. John 16: 1-4.

37. John 15: 16.

lowly station as far as the world is concerned. Four of them, Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John, were all fishermen.³⁸ Matthew was a hated and despised tax-collector.³⁹ Saul, His last appointed disciple, was a tentmaker.⁴⁰ They were not the rich haughty, self-righteous type, but men of humility, faith, obedience and trust.

Paul's concept of the messenger of the Power of God to men was similar to that of the Master's. We find this concept in the preparation God gave for his future life as His messenger, in His own personal life, and in the instructions He gave to his student preachers.

Paul's preparation for this great task began already in his mother's womb. He tells his Galatian congregations so, writing to them, "...He who had set me apart before I was born, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles."⁴¹

In his letter to the Philippians he tells them of his preparation for apostleship as a Jew. He had been well prepared as a Jew, "circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law a Pharisee, as to zeal a persecutor of the church, as to righteousness under the law blameless."⁴² No one could find fault with Saul's reputation as a youth and young man. He told King Agrippa, "My manner of life from my youth, spent from the beginning among my own nation and at Jerusalem, is known by all the Jews. They have known for a long time, if they are willing to testify that

38. Mark 1: 17-20.

39. Matthew 9: 9.

40. Acts 18: 3.

41. Galatians 1: 15 ff.

42. Philippians 3: 5, 6.

according to the strictest party of our religion I have lived as a Pharisee."⁴³

Paul tells of his early youth and schooling in his defense before the people of Jerusalem. "I am a Jew, born at Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in the city [Jerusalem] at the feet of Gamaliel, educated according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God as you all are this day."⁴⁴ Paul had been sincere, faithful and true to what he thought was right. The fact that which he believed was wrong does not detract from the fact of his loyal and sincere character.

Such was the case of his early life just before his conversion. He thought he was doing the will of God. He tells Agrippa, "I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things in opposing the name of Jesus of Nazareth. And I did so in Jerusalem."⁴⁵ As far as he was concerned he was keeping the law.

Although Paul was blind to the real meaning contained therein until Jesus Himself called him as His own ambassador, Paul had prepared himself for his latter life of ministry by diligently studying the Old Testament. There was only one book in the synagogue school both at Tarsus and Jerusalem and that was the Jewish Bible. The following facts make us realize that Paul had studied his Old Testament diligently and thereby had prepared himself for his missionary life:

All of his own teaching is buttressed with proof passages from the Sacred Book. He quotes from one hundred and forty-one different chapters and over two hundred single verses.

43. Acts 26: 4, 5.

44. Acts 22: 3.

45. Acts 26: 9.

The Jewish Bible had the three divisions - the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. Paul quotes from all of these divisions. He quotes from each of the five books of the Law. In the second division he quotes from First and Second Samuel, First Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Malachi. In the third division he quotes from Psalms, Proverbs, and Job. Among these his favorites would seem to be the book of Psalms and the book of Isaiah. From the former he quotes thirty-three different psalms, and from the latter twenty-nine chapters. He evidently knows all his Bible, and he is so saturated with scripture that he scarcely can write a page without directly or indirectly borrowing from it.⁴⁶

His ministry also characterizes the concept of the ideal preacher.

Of most importance in the ministry of Paul was the fact that he had been called and placed in that office by God Himself. He tells the Ephesians, "Of this Gospel I was made minister according to the gift of God's grace which was given me by the working of his power."⁴⁷ To Timothy he says, "I thank him who has given me strength for this, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful by appointing me to his service."⁴⁸ And again to Timothy, "For this gospel I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher..."⁴⁹ To the Galatians he writes, "Paul, and apostle - not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead."⁵⁰ To the Corinthians he writes, "Therefore, being engaged in this service by the mercy of God..."⁵¹ And finally also to the Romans, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scripture."⁵² Paul wanted each of his congregation to know and remember that the messenger

46. D.A. Hayes, Paul and His Epistles, p.25.

47. Ephesians 3: 7.

48. I Timothy 1: 12.

49. II Timothy 1: 11.

50. Galatians 1: 1.

51. II Corinthians 4: 1.

52. Romans 1: 1.

of God is sent by God.

From Paul's ministry the speaker of God's power can find that there is a time for humility and a time for self-assertion. The very name "Paul" signifies humility, meaning "the little one." And did not he show it? He said, "I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle."⁵³ He said, "I am the chief of sinners."⁵⁴ He said, "I am less than the least of all the saints."⁵⁵ He said, "Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant?"⁵⁶

And yet he was self assertive enough he set himself up as an example to be followed. He wrote, "Brethren, join in imitating me, and mark those who live as you have an example in us."⁵⁷ And again to the Philippians, "What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, do."⁵⁸ To the Corinthians he writes of his position among the apostles, "For I am not at all inferior to these superlative apostles, even though I am nothing."⁵⁹ And again, "I worked harder than any of them."⁶⁰

Though because of attack, Paul had to assert himself thus, he nevertheless gave all glory and credit to God. "By the grace of God I am what I am,"⁶¹ and "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."⁶²

Paul's personal ministry gave the example of the courage and patience to be found in the speaker. Courageously he said, "I am not

53. I Corinthians 15: 9.
 54. I Timothy 1: 15.
 55. Ephesians 3: 8.
 56. II Corinthians 11: 29.
 57. Philippians 3: 17.

58. Philippians 4: 9.
 59. II Corinthians 12: 11.
 60. I Corinthians 15: 9.
 61. I Corinthians 15: 10.
 62. Galatians 2: 20.

ashamed of the gospel."⁶³ And he proved it by standing before crowned monarchs, by meeting the philosophers of Athens, by facing the mobs of Jerusalem, Ephesus, and Philippi.⁶⁴ Immediately after his conversion he went into the synagogues and preached Christ.⁶⁵ And on his way to hostile Jerusalem for the last time, we are told he said, "I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."⁶⁶ And after being stoned at Lystra, and dragged out of the city and left for dead, instead of arising and running away, "he rose up and entered the city;"⁶⁷ And later again he returned to the same city.

But through all these trials and troubles Paul was patient. Even though he knew this would be his lot as told him by God through Ananias,⁶⁸ he endures it all and at the end of his life he could write, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."⁶⁹

For Paul "to live was Christ."⁷⁰ Those words characterize his consecration and devotion. Those words tells us why he could apply to himself the words of the forty fourth Psalm, "For thy sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."⁷¹

Paul as an ideal minister of the word, was also chartered as a man of prayer, as was our Savior. Often he mentions his praying, as to the Ephesians he says, "I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers."⁷² Of the Thessalonians he says, "We give thanks

63. Romans 1: 16.

64. Cf. Acts 24: 3; 26: 2; Acts 17: 18ff.
Acts 19: 30ff., Acts 16: 22.

65. Acts 9: 20.

66. Acts 21: 13.

67. Acts 14: 20 ff.

68. II Timothy 4: 7.

69. Acts 9: 16.

70. Philippians 1: 21.

71. Romans 8: 36.

72. Ephesians 1: 16.

to God always for you all, constantly mentioning you in our prayers..."⁷³

To Philemon he writes, "I thank my God always when I remember you in my prayers..."⁷⁴ So wrote he to the Colossians, the Corinthians, the Philippians, and the Romans.⁷⁵ The praying Paul became the preaching Paul.

Paul's concept of the conveyor of the power of God to men through preaching is also found in his instructions to his students, whom he was tutoring to become as he was. We find various sections of some letters devoted to the qualifications and characteristics of good preachers. In his first letter to his pupil Timothy he gives this instruction:

If anyone aspires to the office of bishop, he desires a noble task. Now a bishop must be above reproach, married only once, temperate, sensible, dignified, hospitable, an apt teacher, no drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, and no lover of money. He must manage his own household well, keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way; for if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how can he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may be puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil; moreover he must be well thought of by outsiders, or he may fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.⁷⁶

And in this same letter he speaks to Timothy again, telling him of some of the qualities he should foster and maintain:

But as for you man of God, shun all this; aim at righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses...I charge you to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach...As for the rich in this world, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on uncertain riches but on God... O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Avoid the

73. I Thessalonians 1: 2.

74. Philemon 4.

75. Cf. Colossians 1: 39; I Corinthians 14:15; Philemons 1: 9;

76. I Timothy 3: 2-7.

Romans 1: 9.

godless chatter, and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge, for by professing it some have missed the mark as regards the faith.⁷⁷

In his second letter to Timothy he again gives some personal advice and adds instructions concerning others who also may become ministers.

He writes:

You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. Take your share of suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier on service gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to satisfy the one who enlisted him. An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. Think over what I say, for the Lord will grant you understanding in everything.⁷⁸

And in the same chapter he gives Timothy these solemn words: "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. Avoid such godless chatter for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, and their talk will eat its way like gangrene."⁷⁹ A few chapters later, he addresses this charge to him:

I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own likings, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths. As for you, always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.⁸⁰

77. I Timothy 6: 11-21.

78. II Timothy 2: 1-7.

79. II Timothy 2: 15-17.

80. II Timothy 4: 1-5.

Writing to Titus, Paul gives another general list of instructions, and some qualities the minister of God should have:

...men who are blameless, married only once, whose children are believers and not open to the charge of being profligate or insubordinate. For a bishop, as God's steward, must be blameless; he must not be arrogant or quick-tempered of a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, lover of goodness, master of himself upright, holy, and self-controlled; he must hold firm to the sure word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to confute those who contradict it. For there are many insubordinate men, empty talkers and deceivers...rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, instead of giving heed to Jewish myths or to commands of men who reject the truth... But as for you, teach what befits sound doctrine.⁸¹

Interspersed among these general instruction passages Paul makes brief statements as to the type of man that is needed to spread the power of God here on earth. He commands patience and gentleness. "And the Lord's servants must not be quarrelsome but kindly to everyone, an apt teacher, forbearing, correcting his opponents with gentleness."⁸² Of the speaker he demands purity and other qualities, writing, "Command these things. Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity,"⁸³ and "Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor participate in another man's sins; keep yourself pure."⁸⁴

The messengers of God's power are to read and study their Bibles, as Paul tells Timothy, "But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you have learned it and how

81. Titus 1: 6; 2: 1.

82. II Timothy 2: 24.

83. I Timothy 4: 12.

84. I Timothy 5: 22.

87

from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation..."⁸⁵

Paul tells Titus he is to be an example to those people he ministers and to those outside the church: "Show yourself in all respects a model of good deeds, and in your teaching show integrity, gravity, and sound speech that cannot be censured, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say of us."⁸⁶

In several places Paul tells both pastor and congregations that the pastor is to devote his full time to the work of preaching and they are to support him with their earnings. He tells the Galatians, "Let him who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches."⁸⁷ And to the Corinthians he says, "Do we not have the right to our food and drink? ...Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Who tends a flock without getting some of the milk?"⁸⁸ The answer is quite evident. And he says to the minister, "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching; for the scripture says 'You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain,' and, 'The laborer deserves his wages.'"⁸⁹

Paul's concept of the teacher of God's power was a man of courage, unafraid to meet certain persecution. They were to be faithful no matter of the consequences. "It is required of stewards that they be found

85. II Timothy 3: 14; 15.

86. Titus 2: 7, 8.

87. Galatians 6: 6.

88. I Corinthians 9: 4-7.

89. I Timothy 5: 17, 18.

trustworthy."⁹⁰ He tells his pupil to "Fight the good fight of faith."⁹¹ Also he wrote, "...take your share of suffering for the gospel,"⁹² and, "Take your share of suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus."⁹³

That was the concept Paul had of the preacher and teacher of the word of God to men, to free them from sin and make them free unto God, through the Holy Spirit. His concept began in the womb, developed in his youth, became manifest in his life, and was given to others in his instructions to his followers.

Dr. Joyce mentions four objections the people of Paul's day had against him. They are:

- (1) They said that he was a nobody. Paul calls himself "a wild untamed bear...the least of the apostles, that men are not to be called as apostle." His enemies took him at his word. They regarded it as literal truth. Who was he anyway? Where had he come from? Who had given him any authority to preach? He was an upstart, self-appointed to this work.
- (2) "He never had seen Christ in the flesh. He never had been a disciple of Jesus. Jesus had appointed twelve apostles while he was here upon the earth and Paul had not been among them. Where, then, did he get his authority? Not from Jesus."
- (3) "He had no commendatory letters from the mother church at Jerusalem or from any member of the apostolic college there. Where, then, did he get authority, if not from Jesus and not from the apostles, who were the authorities in the church? He had no credentials of any kind. No one had given him any letters of introduction or of commendation. He changed his name and introduced his own law. He took his papers. Who can tell what he ever had been ordained?" What followed from all of these facts.
- (4) "Paul was no true apostle. He held no commission from the constituted apostolate. Their standing was unquestionable one. They were out-and-out apostles. They could not boast of any such position as

90. I Corinthians 4: 2.
 91. I Timothy 6; 12.
 92. II Timothy 1: 8.
 93. II Timothy 2: 3.

CONCLUSION

The Concept of Authority in the Persuasion of Christ and St. Paul presented in the foregoing pages can and must be the concept today. This authority of persuasion manifested in every true Gospel preacher in the world of all times. It is true, the world will question and deny it, as they did in the case of Paul Himself.

Dr. Hayes mentions four objections the people of Paul's day had against him. They are:

(1) They said that he was a nobody. Paul calls himself "a child untimely born...the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle." His enemies took him at his word. They repeated it as literal truth. Who was he anyway? Where had he come from? Who had given him any authority to preach? He was an upstart, self-appointed to this work.

(2) "He never had seen Christ in the flesh. He never had been a disciple of Jesus. Jesus had appointed twelve apostles while he was here upon the earth and Paul had not been among them. Where, then, did he get his authority? Not from Jesus."

(3) "He had no commendatory letters from the mother church at Jerusalem or from any member of the apostolic college there. Where, then, did he get authority, if not from Jesus and not from the apostles, who were the authorities in the church? He had no credentials of any kind. No one had given him any letters of introduction or of commendation. No church body had indorsed him in this way. Nobody ever had seen his papers. Who was sure that he ever had been ordained?" What followed from all of these facts.

(4) "Paul was no true apostle. He held no commission from the constituted apostolate. Their standing was an unquestioned and unquestionable one. They were out-and-out apostles. Paul could not boast of any such position as theirs."¹

1. D.A. Hayes, op. cit., p. 238,239.

Like charges can and are hurled today against those who are to have and use their God-given authority in their persuasion. But like Paul they must answer these charges. Paul said, "I think that I am not in the least inferior to these superlative apostles."² And perhaps they did see Jesus in the flesh, but He is risen and has ascended to His heavenly throne, "From now on therefore, we regard no one from the human point of view; even though we once regarded Christ from a human point of view, we regard him thus no longer."³ We are all on the same plane now. It does not follow that because I was not one of the original twelve, I was not commissioned by Christ Himself, for I "am an apostle - not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead."⁴ He had been called by the risen Christ. The Lord gave him his authority.⁵

Paul continues answering the charges of those who question his authority by telling them "it is not the man who commends himself that is accepted, but the man whom the Lord commends."⁶ No, he had no letters of commendation from others, for "You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on your hearts, to be known and read by all men; and you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts."⁷ They themselves were the proof that

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2. II Corinthians 11: 5.
 3. II Corinthians 5: 16.
 4. Galatians 1: 1.
 5. II Corinthians 10: 8.
 6. II Corinthians 10: 18.
 7. II Corinthians 3: 1-3.

his authority was of God. If anyone asked for his credentials, he needed only to point to his Corinthian converts, and his many others.

Another question often raised by modern critics is, "Does a Gospel preacher do violence to the Scriptural doctrine of conversion as the power of God, by exerting the authority of exhorting his unconverted listeners to repentance and faith? "The answer is, No, he does not." He can believe with all his heart that his unconverted listener is 'dead in trespasses and sins' and still issue the call to spiritual life - not indeed because his listener has the power to answer his call, but because his call has the power to generate faith in the heart of his listener."⁸

Concerning the evangelical imperatives of the Lutheran evangelist, Mr. Gockel has this to say:

The older dogmaticians termed this call to faith the evangelical imperative. Thus, when St. Paul commanded the jailer at Philippi: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," he was indeed preaching the Gospel and not the Law. It is true, he was asking the jailer to do something which, as far as his natural powers were concerned, he was utterly unable to do; but the invitation itself, being a part of God's gracious Gospel revelation, carried with it the power to do the thing commanded. As Dr. John Theodore Mueller puts it in his Christian Dogmatics, this evangelical imperative of the Apostle "preached faith into the heart of the jailer."

The Lutheran evangelist will, of course, be on his guard lest he preach as though faith were a condition of salvation. The conversion of the sinner is not conditioned upon his willingness to believe. The fact is, he is not willing to believe until after he is converted. Our evangelistic appeal dare never be: "If you will do this for God, then God will do that for you." Our appeal must be: "God has done everything for you! Accept His full and free salvation."⁹

8. Rev. H.W. Gockel, "Is There a Lutheran Evangelism?" Today, p. 17.

9. ibid.

That is the answer we must give to those who would question our authority. Paul adds his own authority to our own and tells the congregations to "honor such men,"¹⁰ and he urges them "to be subject to such men and to every fellow worker and laborer."¹¹ To the Thessalonians he wrote, "But we beseech you brethren, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work."¹² And he tells Timothy to let no one despise his youth.¹³

With Paul's and our own authority then in our persuasion, we have the concept that Christ Himself used and taught. Our preaching then will persuade not with a force of penalty but it will persuade with the power of God Himself working upon the heart of the individual to bring about a true conversion of the will and desire, and not only upon the outward actions and life.

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10. Philippians 2: 29.
 11. I Corinthians 16: 16.
 12. I Thessalonians 5: 12.
 13. I Timothy 4: 12.

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