

EPHESIANS 5:15; to “walk honestly” in ROMANS 13:13 and 1 THESSALONIANS 4:12; and to “walk in wisdom” in COLOSSIANS 4:5. Note again that none of these instructions are limited by physical infirmities, nor are the following encouragements to run. 1 CORINTHIANS 9:24 *Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.* HEBREWS 12:1 *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.* 2 SAMUEL 22:30 and PSALMS 18:29 are a record of the sweet psalmist of Israel, Old Testament overcomer David, expressing to the Lord in his song of deliverance the following thought about running: *For by thee I have run through a troop: by my God have I leaped over a wall.* All full overcomers by faith in God overcome any lame or crippling condition placed on their racecourse by the Lord.

In 2 TIMOTHY 4:21 **Claudia**, whose name means “lame,” or “crippled,” is another example left us in New Testament scripture of a race-course runner pursuing God’s best as she followed Paul as he followed Christ. **Claudia** wasn’t ashamed to attach her name in the greetings sent to **Timothy** by the hand of Paul in 2 TIMOTHY 4:21. Back in ROMANS 1:16 we read: *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.* As we noted earlier history records that **Claudia** was a beautiful well educated woman of British descent, the daughter of a King, and she would have been taught how to rule and reign as a queen here on earth. The Apostle Paul taught this Gentile **Claudia** how to rule and reign with Christ!

There is one final group of people found in 2 TIMOTHY 4:21 *Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren...* and that is “all the brethren.” The phrase “all the brethren” is found seven times in scripture, and speaks to us SPIRITUAL PERFECTION, and SPIRITUAL COMPLETION, which qualities will be found in all full overcomers. “All the brethren” Paul references here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:21, along with **Luke**, **Eubulus**, **Pudens**, **Linus**, and **Claudia** would be waiting for **Timothy** to come to Rome with **Mark**. This small assembly got to hear Paul’s final words of encouragement here on earth. Paul’s final words to **Timothy** were: 2 TIMOTHY 4:22 *The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.*

“I have finished my course”

We have come to the closing chapter in our study on the life of the Apostle Paul, and have taken the title for this last of our chapters from 2 TIMOTHY 4:7. A review of 2 TIMOTHY 4:6-8 reads: *For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* Later in this chapter (lord willing) we will also examine 2 TIMOTHY 4:16-18 a little closer as the Holy Spirit directs our closing thoughts. Let’s now look at these all of these verses in greater detail.

Interestingly the portion we quoted in 2 TIMOTHY 4:6-8 can easily be subdivided into seven (SPIRITUAL PERFECTION or SPIRITUAL COMPLETION) points of interest that our beloved Apostle Paul noted, and made us all aware of as he penned his final words here on earth. Before we dive into the details of these seven points, let’s first define them. Point one: *For I am now ready to be offered.* Point two: *...and the time of my departure is at hand.* Point three: *I have fought a good fight.* Point four: *I have finished my course.* Point five: *I have kept the faith.* Point six: *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.* Point seven: *and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* The perspective we see here in these seven points comes from the heart of a full overcomer. As we get into these seven points take special notice that each point of emphasis mentioned here is spoken of in

a positive, full assurance of faith, hope, and understanding manner, which are also qualities manifested in the mature heart of all full overcomers whose eyes are ever looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of their faith, and stay focused upon the eternal things found on high! We should have expected nothing less from our beloved Apostle Paul, a man full of the Holy Ghost.

Points one and two above come from 2 TIMOTHY 4:6 *For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.* The Amplified translation of this verse reads: "For I am already about to be sacrificed [my life is about to be poured out as a drink offering]; the time of my [spirit's] release [from the body] is at hand and I will soon go free." Obviously Paul knew his time on earth was very close to an end. Looking first at point one from the Amplified translation we find Paul saying: "For I am already about to be sacrificed [my life is about to be poured out as a drink offering]." The Amplified translation comes from searching out the Greek meanings of the words that translate *...For I am now ready to be offered...* into our King James version of English. The words "I am now ready to be offered" is a single Greek word "spendomai," number 4689 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, with the meaning: "to pour out as a drink offering," and is figuratively "used of one whose blood is poured out in a violent death for the cause of God!" With this meaning we see why Paul knew his time on earth was very close to an end. Paul's Holy Ghost inspired choice of words here is beyond profound, and really has no negative connotation attached to it. To fully appreciate what Paul is saying here we need to take a brief look at the drink offering that Paul was referencing here.

There are found in scripture exactly thirty mentions of the "drink offering." Thirty is the number that has to do with THE BLOOD OF CHRIST, or THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST, and both of these topics were the foundations upon which Paul's gospel message was founded. 2 CORINTHIANS 4:5 is one of many places where Paul expresses this very thought: *For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.* THE BLOOD OF CHRIST was often preached in Paul's ministry as noted in the next two references from Paul's epistles: EPHESIANS 2:13 *But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.* COLOSSIANS 1:14 *In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.* Back to the "drink offering," the thirty mentions in the Bible of the "drink offering" are all found in the Old Testament. Often times the "drink offering" offered in sacrifice unto the Lord was wine. NUMBERS 28:7 says: *And the drink offering thereof shall be the fourth part of an hin for the one lamb: in the holy place shalt thou cause the strong wine to be poured unto the LORD for a drink offering.* Brother Hawkins wrote a study book on NUMBERS, and here writes: "The drink offering was presented on various occasions and is symbolic here of a complete pouring out unto the will of God, with no offer of resistance. In this place the liquid is strong wine which simply tells of the invigorating, intoxicating life of Christ, which Jesus so freely poured out to His Father. Such a spirit of obedience is the greatest form of worship and communion; therefore, "in the holy place shalt thou cause the strong wine to be poured unto the Lord." This same procedure was to be repeated morning and evening; again, reminding us that such an offering was never to become stale or meaningless." {End of quoting Brother Hawkins.} Paul wrote the Philippians the very thought of being poured out unto the Lord in service when he wrote in PHILIPPIANS 2:17 *Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.* The Greek word for "offered" here in PHILIPPIANS 2:17 is again the Greek word "spendomai," number 4689 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, with the meaning: "to pour out as a drink offering." 2 TIMOTHY 4:6 and PHILIPPIANS 2:17 are the only two places in scripture where the Greek word "spendomai" is found.

Wine being used in the "drink offering" is very symbolic to us, for wine figures joy, the joy of the Lord, which is further amplified by the power of the Holy Ghost. In Paul's very first epistle he wrote of the joy of the Holy Ghost, writing in 1 THESSALONIANS 1:6 *And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.* Joy is actually one of the nine-fold fruit of the Holy Spirit spoken of in GALATIANS 5:22 & 23 -- *But*

the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. In ROMANS 14:17 Paul once again expresses the thought of the joy of the Lord being magnified by the power of the Holy Ghost when he writes: *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.* Then in ROMANS 15:13 Paul adds this thought: *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.*

Having now further defined the joy of the Lord that is magnified by the power of the Holy Ghost, which is also often times pictured by wine in scripture, let's dig a little deeper into this thought of "to pour out as a drink offering" unto the Lord, which Paul expressed in 2 TIMOTHY 4:6 and PHILIPPIANS 2:17 above. Brother Hill termed the book of PHILIPPIANS as "the joy book of the Bible," and he did so because PHILIPPIANS bubbles over with Paul's expressions of joy, and rejoicing in the Lord. Paul wasn't rejoicing in circumstance when he wrote this epistle, for he was a prisoner in Rome when this letter full of joy was written. Like Abraham, Paul too was looking for a city whose builder and maker is God as he expressed the thoughts in his heart in writing the Philippian Saints. {See HEBREWS 11:10.} Brother Hill also had another expression he liked to use, and that was: "when in the king's dungeon, look for the king's wine." Paul found the King's wine in his Roman prison cell, and with his focus upon the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, Paul wrote in PHILIPPIANS 3:10 *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.* It is with this high calling mind-set that Paul wrote in PHILIPPIANS 2:17 & 18 -- *Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all. 18 For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.* Paul continues in PHILIPPIANS 3:1 *Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord...* and adds this thought in PHILIPPIANS 4:4 *Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.* Later in HEBREWS 13:14 & 15 Paul writes: *For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. 15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.* The sweet sacrifice of praise offered to God by the fruit of our lips is called worship, which we are encouraged here to do continually. Recall what Jesus said in JOHN 4:23 & 24 -- *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.* Our Pastor O'Dorisio gave us the deepest meaning of the Greek word *proskuneo*, number 4352 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, that is translated "worship" here as being: "to draw nigh in fervent love to kiss." Such fervent love is found between a bride, and a bridegroom; a husband and a wife, and in the case of Christ and His Bride an everlasting love beyond comprehension that we can participate in for the ages to come! The Shulamite says in THE SONG OF SOLOMON 1:2 *Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine.*

Thus we find the Apostle Paul exceeding joyful beyond words as he writes in 2 TIMOTHY 4:6 *For I am now ready to be offered...* or as we found in The Amplified translation: "For I am already about to be sacrificed [my life is about to be poured out as a drink offering]. His life here on earth was rapidly coming to a joyous conclusion, for he was ready to be offered like the fine wine freely poured out in the drink offering unto the Lord. We have seen in this study that Paul really did freely pour out his life in joyful service unto the Lord, fulfilling ROMANS 12:1 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.* The thought Paul wrote in PHILIPPIANS 1:21 was about to happen, and it was a win-win thought: *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* Two verse later Paul writes PHILIPPIANS 1:23 *For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better.* Now here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:6 Paul is ever closer to the "far better" time when he would forever be with the Lord. Realize too that we also are very close to the time when we shall be with the Lord forever! 1 THESSALONIANS 4:13 *But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not,*

even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words. Hopefully these are joyful words to your spiritual ears. In these last days we are certainly living in very perplexing times, but we, like Paul should be full of the joy of the Holy Ghost as we await the soon coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It won't be long until we hear with our own ears: *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready...* REVELATION 19:7. May we too be found in that Bridal Company!

We are considering the seven points of 2 TIMOTHY 4:6-8, which again reads: *For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* Point two also comes from 2 TIMOTHY 4:6 ...*and the time of my departure is at hand...* which reads in The Amplified translation: "the time of my [spirit's] release [from the body] is at hand and I will soon go free." The Centenary Translation: The New Testament in Modern English by Helen Barrett Montgomery translates this part of 2 TIMOTHY 4:6 -- "the time of my unmooring is at hand." The terms used here compares the loosing of a ship from its moorings as it begins its journey on a sea voyage, to the sailing away into the heavenlies, which Paul was about to experience. Charles B. Williams translation called The New Testament: A Translation in the Language of the People records it this way: "and the time has come for me to sail away." This is not a gloom, despair, pain and agony kind of statement, but rather an upward looking, high calling, imminent rapture expecting declaration: ...*the time of my departure is at hand.*

Pause here and reflect back on the many sea voyages the Apostle Paul has taken during his lifetime, which are really too many to count. All of these sea voyages were an adventure, some more so than others. Recall what PSALMS 37:23 says: *The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.* Sometime the steps ordered of the Lord for Paul included a trip on a rickety old-fashioned ancient ship. We know from scripture in his many sea travels that Paul was involved in at least four shipwrecks! And he got soaked in all of them, but the Lord preserved him in all of these distresses. In 2 CORINTHIANS 11:25 Paul wrote: *...a night and a day I have been in the deep...* ! You can't get more adventuresome than that? The last shipwreck Paul was in that we know of was recorded in ACTS 27, a chapter rich with typical meaning. Paul's words of admonishment in ACTS 27:21 should still echo in our spiritually in tune ears: "Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me!" Recall also from ACTS 27 that there were 276 souls on Paul's ship, and Paul told them "God hath given me all them that sail with thee." {Paraphrasing ACTS 27:24.} During your lifetime as a Christian have you hearkened unto Paul's gospel message, and sailed into the depths of it? The full overcomers of this Church Age will have hearkened unto Paul's gospel message. At the end of ACTS 27 we find that all who had sailed with Paul on this fateful ship of ACTS 27 escaped safe to land after they followed Paul's divinely ordered instructions, and there was not a even a hair missing from the head of any of them after this ordeal was over! {Study ACTS 27:34 and 44.} At any rate the Apostle Paul was very experienced in travel by ship, and had logged many a departure out to sea. Such travel in itself has a certain excitement to it. Once unloosed from the moorings, the adventure really begins; ...just ask Jonah. So back here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:6 we detect an air of excitement, and great anticipation as Paul announced that he was moments away from spreading his sails on the broad ocean of eternity that would take him to the One who would show him the exceeding riches of His grace in traveling on through the eternal ages to come! With

these words *...the time of my departure is at hand...* Paul was explaining that he was about to be loosed from the bands that confined him to the surly bonds of earth, and take flight to the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. {See HEBREWS 8:1.} In all of his adventures, Paul had never had a trip like that! He was going to his new permanent residence in heaven for in reality he was already seated in the heavenlies, as are all believers the moment they get saved. Paul told us this in EPHESIANS 2:6 *And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.* Paul hadn't been there yet, but he knew it wouldn't be much longer as he wrote these words in 2 TIMOTHY 4:6 *...the time of my departure is at hand.* Paul knew he was about to embark on his journey to his building made of God eternal in the heavens, which he wrote a little about in 2 CORINTHIANS 5:1 *For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* Recall also what Paul wrote in PHILIPPIANS 3:20 *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.* Again we note that the Greek word translated "conversation" here in verse 20 is unique in that it is only used this one time in scripture. The Greek word is politeuma {pol-it'-yoo-mah}, number 4175 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, which simply translates as citizenship, such as "our citizenship is in heaven." One commentator notes that this equates to "our life as citizens is in heaven." J. B. Philips translation of The New Testament in Modern English translates this first part of this verse as: "But we are citizens of heaven." Here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:6 Paul was announcing his final imminent voyage home to his place of citizenship: *...the time of my departure is at hand.*

Thus we see the great anticipation, and high calling excitement as Paul wrote these carefully chosen, Holy Ghost inspired words: *...the time of my departure is at hand.* Paul was saying with these words: "I am going home." Paul wrote in 2 CORINTHIANS 5:8 *We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.* Putting 2 CORINTHIANS 5:8 together with 2 TIMOTHY 4:6 we get: *For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand... ..to be present with the Lord.* So we find Paul expressing in a positive, full assurance of faith, hope, and high calling expectation his heart felt thoughts, and emotions here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:6, which are the first two of seven points of interest that our beloved Apostle Paul wrote about in 2 TIMOTHY 4:6-8.

Points three through five of the seven note worthy points of 2 TIMOTHY 4:6-8 are found in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 -- Point three: *I have fought a good fight.* Point four: *I have finished my course.* Point five: *I have kept the faith.* The Amplified translation of verse 7 reads: "I have fought the good and worthy and noble fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith [firmly guarding the gospel against error]." Before we look at these three points in greater detail, note that the perspective Paul takes is past tense when he writes: "I have:" *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.* With these statements Paul is announcing his soon retirement into eternity, he knows his time here on earth is very near its end, and his race has reached the finish line. In JOHN 17 Jesus too knows His hours here on earth were about over. We have recorded in JOHN 17 the words of one of the prayers Jesus prayed in the presence of His disciples on his final night here on earth. It was a powerful prayer of intercession that the Holy Ghost inspired one of the hearers, the Apostle John, to record in scripture. Ray Quintana called this prayer a "monument of Christ's love for us" in one of his Bible studies. Study JOHN 17 on your own, and find in this chapter nine "I have" statements made in this prayer. Nine is the number of FINALITY or DIVINE COMPLETENESS. Jesus knew His work here on earth was complete. In JOHN 17:4 Jesus said: *...I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.* Within the next twenty-four hours Jesus was crucified and announced on the cross in His final words: *"It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost..."* JOHN 19:30. Paul too in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 knew he wouldn't remain on earth much longer. Like Jesus, Paul was announcing he had finished the work he was given to do as the Apostle to the Gentiles.

Let's now examine the depth of these three points found in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 starting with

point three of the seven points found in 2 TIMOTHY 4:6-8: *I have fought a good fight*. The New Testament in Modern English by J. B. Phillips translates this portion of 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 like this: "The glorious fight that God gave me I have fought." This statement encompasses all of Paul's life's journey as a Christian. This takes us back to the very moment that Paul was arrested by that glorious Light of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus. There Paul asked: "*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*" ...ACTS 9:6. Up to this point in time Paul, who was then known as Saul of Tarsus, had been a fighter against the truth. Let this thought sink in for a second; Saul of Tarsus was a fighter against the truth. And in his head Saul of Tarsus probably knew scripture better than 99.9999% of the people in his day! But he didn't know Jesus as his Saviour until that day on the road to Damascus where he learned by first hand experience ...*by grace ye are saved...* (EPHESIANS 2:5). Saul of Tarsus didn't know the truth, even though he, in his head, knew the scriptures, the Old Testament scriptures, which was all he had in his day. And as a Pharisee he followed to the letter the 600 plus laws found in the law of Moses. (Interestingly Paul wrote about "the letter" of the law five (GRACE) times in his gospel record. In ROMANS 7:6 Paul wrote: *But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter*. Saul of Tarsus wasn't delivered from the law until that day on the road to Damascus. Paul also wrote of "the letter" of the law in 2 CORINTHIANS 3:6 *Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.*) So Saul of Tarsus followed "the letter" of the law as a very dedicated, and decorated Pharisee of the Pharisee's proving that "the letter killeth" as he went about persecuting Christians. Note again what was written of Saul of Tarsus in ACTS 9:1 & 2 -- *And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.* In the previous chapter of ACTS we read in 8:3 *As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.* In modern day lingo we would term Saul of Tarsus a terrorist. Paul in recalling his life as Saul of Tarsus wrote in GALATIANS 1:13 *For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it.* In ACTS 22:3 & 4 Paul once again recalled his former life as Saul of Tarsus in a speech he gave in his own defense before the multitude in Jerusalem saying: *I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. 4 And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.*

The point of reviewing all of this is to bring again to our mind the thought that Saul of Tarsus was a fighter against **the truth**. Make note of this too: the phrase "**the truth**" is another name of Jesus, much like "The Word of God" spoken of in REVELATION 19:13 *And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.* (In our meaning of the Bible numbers study we learned that there was a number for "**The Word of God**," and that was the number 37. [Along these very same lines the phrase "**his word**" is also found 37 times in scripture. JEREMIAH 23:18 *For who hath stood in the counsel of the LORD, and hath perceived and heard his word? who hath marked his word, and heard it?* Here are some other texts that contain the phrase "**his word**," which also reference Jesus: MATTHEW 8:16 *When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick:...* . LUKE 4:32 *And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.*] Follow me a step further here. Jesus in the Greek is Iesous, (*ee-ay-sooce*) number 2424 in The Strong's Greek Concordance. Each Greek letter has a numeric value, and the numeric value of Jesus (Iesous, (*ee-ay-sooce*) in Greek) adds up to 888. $888 = 24 \times 37$. 24 is the number that has to do with the **PRIESTHOOD**. The **PRIESTHOOD** times **THE WORD OF GOD** equals Jesus, in other words. HEBREWS 4:14 reads: *Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is*

passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.) Now let's connect these thoughts as it pertains to Jesus having a name like "**the truth**." Jesus said in JOHN 14:6 ...*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.* The phrase "**the truth**" is found 88 times in scripture! To date I haven't found a scriptural verified meaning for the number 88, but I am sure it has something to do with Jesus. The number 8 has much to do with Jesus even though it has five different meanings: NEW CREATION; NEW BIRTH; NEW BEGINNING; RESURRECTION; and BRIDE. The number 888 equals Jesus name numerically in the Greek. And now we find the phrase "**the truth**," which also points to Jesus, is found 88 times in scripture. Saul of Tarsus was a fighter against **the truth**, and as such then he was a fighter against Jesus! The Apostle John noted that Jesus Christ came to the earth "full of grace and truth" in JOHN 1:14. Three verses later John writes: JOHN 1:17 *For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* That great fighter against Jesus, who so hard fought against **the truth** as Saul of Tarsus, obtained mercy on the road to Damascus when "**the truth**," who is Jesus stopped him in the way, which was the wrong way to begin with, and questioned his fighting ability with these words: *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* ...ACTS 9:4, 22:7 and 26:14. Decades later the Apostle Paul was better able to express this most profound life saving experience as he wrote Timothy in his first letter to him. 1 TIMOTHY 1:12 *And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; 13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. 14 And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. 15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. 16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. 17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

The blow that knocked that great fighter against **the truth** out was a mighty blow of grace and truth: *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* ...ACTS 9:4, 22:7 and 26:14. Blinded by the Light, and stunned by this blow from "**the truth**," Saul of Tarsus accepted Jesus as his Saviour, realizing in this instant of time that Jesus indeed is ...*the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me...* as Jesus said in JOHN 14:6. Then with the new life Jesus had given him, Saul of Tarsus asks Jesus: *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* We know the Lord's instruction to Saul of Tarsus are recorded in ACTS 26:16-18, and are summarized in ACTS 9:6 ...*And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.* Saul of Tarsus was three days in Damascus, blind and awaiting for the Lord's instructions, which came later by the hand of Ananias of Damascus. Meanwhile Saul of Tarsus prayed. Permit me a little sanctified imagination here, as we pause to consider some of what may have been communed in prayer between the Lord and Saul of Tarsus during these three days. Perhaps the Lord spoke to Saul of Tarsus' heart during this time, and conveyed the thought: 'So Saul I have taken note that you like to fight. You were one of the best fighters against **the truth**, but that is all over now. My plans for you in the days that follow, is to make you a fighter for the truth; I want you to fight for me. This fight is not going to be like your fights against me in the past, but rather it is going to be a fight of faith, which you as yet know very little about. This is going to be a lifetime, life-long fight for **the truth**; a fight for me, for ...*I am the way, the truth, and the life...* (JOHN 14:6). You are not yet equipped for the battle, but I am sending one of my best to lay hands on you, and pray for you, and your battles ahead. And he will lay hands on you, and you will receive your sight again, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost also known as the Comforter, and the Spirit of Truth, will be your guide into all of **the truth**, which is me! David knew "*the battle is the LORD'S*," (1 SAMUEL 17:47), and Saul of Tarsus, you too will learn the depths of what this means. You will be a fighter for me.'

Meanwhile during these three days that Saul of Tarsus remained in Damascus without sight, the Lord appeared to Ananias in Damascus in a vision, and starting in ACTS 9:11 we read the

conversation the Lord had with Ananias: *And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, 12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.* Note here that Saul of Tarsus had been praying as we noted above, and by now been given a vision by the Lord also, and saw ...*a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.* Ananias questions the Lord about all of this in verse 13 & 14, then we read in ACTS 9:15 *But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: 16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.* Take special note here that it was the Lord who would show Saul of Tarsus what it was that he was to do. Jesus told Ananias of Damascus in ACTS 9:16 *For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.* Within this scripture we find the following thought presented by the Lord: 'I will show Saul of Tarsus how to fight the great fight of faith as I reveal to him the great things he must suffer for my name's sake.' ACTS 9:17 & 18 along with ACTS 22:12-15 finish the story of how Saul of Tarsus was healed of his blindness. The setting of ACTS 9:17 & 18 is after the Lord appeared unto Ananias of Damascus in a vision. ACTS 9:17 *And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.* Take notice of the following four things of significance revealed in this verse. The first thing to note is that Ananias of Damascus followed the instructions of the Lord, and made the effort to find Saul of Tarsus. Secondly pay attention how Ananias of Damascus addressed Saul of Tarsus after he found him: "Brother Saul." This shows that Ananias of Damascus believed what the Lord had told him concerning Saul of Tarsus, that he indeed was a "chosen vessel" unto the Lord, and had accepted Jesus as his personal Saviour. Thirdly see here that Ananias of Damascus announced that he had come to Saul of Tarsus that he might receive his sight. And fourthly Ananias of Damascus told Saul of Tarsus that he needed to be filled with the Holy Ghost. This fourth point was actually more important than the third, for Saul of Tarsus' spiritual eyes had not yet been fully enlightened to **the truth**, who is Jesus, who was expounded of in the Old Testament scriptures, but it would take the power of the Holy Ghost to fully see, and enlighten Saul of Tarsus' spiritual eyes of understanding as to what saith the scripture. ACTS 9:18 tells what happened as Ananias of Damascus laid his hand upon Saul of Tarsus and prayed for him: *And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, ...* Years later in ACTS 22 the Apostle Paul recalls the day Ananias of Damascus laid hands on him. ACTS 22:11 *And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. 12 And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, 13 Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. 14 And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. 15 For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.* So we see that Saul of Tarsus sight returned after Ananias of Damascus laid hands on him, and prayed for him. And Saul of Tarsus was also filled with the Holy Ghost at that time. The "Just One" Ananias of Damascus spoke about here in ACTS 22:14 was the very same "Just One" Stephen spoke of in ACTS 7:52, who was indeed Jesus Christ Himself.

Now filled with the Holy Ghost Saul of Tarsus was equipped to be the great fighter for **the truth** that he turned out to be as the Apostle Paul. Paul explains a little about this in GALATIANS 1. GALATIANS 1:1 *Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;) ...11 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. 13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: 14 And profited in*

the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. 15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, 16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: 17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

The word "conferred" in GALATIANS 1:16 means to take council with, and here we find that it wasn't man whom Paul communicated with, but rather Jesus Christ for it was ...*by the revelation of Jesus Christ...* spoken of in GALATIANS 1:12 above that Paul learned his gospel message. One of the things the Lord Jesus Christ told Paul on the road to Damascus is that He would ...*make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee...* ACTS 26:16. It was Jesus who revealed Himself to Paul while he was in the desert regions of Arabia for three years as He appeared to him like He said He would in ACTS 26:16. As Paul went over his Old Testament scriptures in the desert of Arabia, the Holy Ghost opened to him the deeper meaning of the Word of God, who is Jesus. Jesus then along the way made a proposal to Paul revealing unto him a great mystery concerning the Bride of Christ. {Study EPHESIANS 5:21-33.} Paul explains this proposal in many of his scriptures, but probably best summarizes it in ROMANS 7:4 *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.*

Note also in GALATIANS 1:16 above the phrase "flesh and blood," a phrase found five times in scripture; four times in Paul's gospel record. Here in the desert of Arabia, under the tutelage of the Holy Ghost, Paul learned the principles of the warfare of the believer, which he later wrote about in EPHESIANS 6:10-18. To fight the good fight of faith that Paul wrote about in 1 TIMOTHY 6:12 and 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 it was imperative that Paul follow the guidelines of EPHESIANS 6:10-18, which instructions all the New Testament full overcomers will have learned to follow also. Brother Hill published a booklet entitled "The Warfare of the Believer," which expounded further on the lessons taught in EPHESIANS 6:10-18. Here is what EPHESIANS 6:10-18 says: *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; 15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: 18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.* (I found it interesting that Brother Hill divided these nine verses into eight chapters after the introduction. Chapter 1 – OUR BATTLE; Chapter 2 – THE SHIELD OF FAITH; Chapter 3 – THE GIRDLE OF TRUTH; Chapter 4 – THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS; Chapter 5 – THE SHOES; Chapter 6 – THE HELMET OF SALVATION; Chapter 7 – THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT; and Chapter 8 – PRAYER. By now we should all be familiar with the fact that one of the meanings of the number eight is BRIDE, and the principles taught in these eight chapters taken from EPHESIANS 6:10-18 will be the equipment necessary to prove that the Bride of Christ hath indeed made herself ready as noted in REVELATION 19:7.) Notice again the phrase "flesh and blood" spoken of in GALATIANS 1:16 is also found here in EPHESIANS 6:12 *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.* Before he was saved Paul wrestled against "flesh and blood" as he went about persecuting Christians. Paul stated it again like this in 1 TIMOTHY 1:13 *Who was before a blasphemer, and a*

persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. In reality Paul, as Saul of Tarsus, was that great fighter against **the truth**, which point we emphasized above, and as such he was fighting against Jesus. This is why Jesus said unto him on the road to Damascus ...*Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* ...ACTS 9:4, 22:7 and 26:14. At that time in his life Paul, as Saul of Tarsus, had joined forces with the principalities, the powers, the rulers of darkness of this world, and was aligned with spiritual wickedness in high places, but as noted here in 1 TIMOTHY 1:13 he did so ignorantly in unbelief. It took the power of the Holy Ghost, and the revelation of Jesus Christ, and three years of boot camp in Arabia for our Apostle Paul to learn the eight important principles listed in EPHESIANS 6:10-18. And in the ensuing years as an Apostle sent unto the Gentiles, Paul learned by many first hand experiences EPHESIANS 6:12 *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

Approximately twenty years after getting saved Paul writes his second epistle to the Corinthians, and he writes this, his fourth epistle, near the end of his third missionary journey. This equates to the time frame of the verses between ACTS 20:3 and ACTS 20:4. In 2 CORINTHIANS 11 Paul gives a partial list of what he has encountered so far in his life as he proceeded day-by-day to fight the good fight of faith. Let's read a little from 2 CORINTHIANS 11, and as we do realize that there were approximately eleven more years of battles to follow in Paul's life, so the list of spiritual fights presented in 2 CORINTHIANS 11 is an incomplete list of the battles presented in Paul's life as he pressed toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. 2 CORINTHIANS 11:23 *Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.* 24 *Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.* 25 *Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;* 26 *In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;* 27 *In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.* 28 *Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.* 29 *Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?* 30 *If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.* 31 *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.* 32 *In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me:* 33 *And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.*

We could spend hours going over each of the above listed spiritual battles, and physical conflicts Paul faced as the great fighter for the truth that he turned out to be, but the point of reviewing all of this information is to better appreciate his statement of 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 made at the end of his life: *...I have fought a good fight.* Back here in 2 CORINTHIANS Paul had already expressed some more of the conflicts he had recently faced, stating in 2 CORINTHIANS 1:8 *For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life.* Study ACTS 19:23-41 concerning the uproar of the silversmiths at Ephesus to further appreciate the depths of Paul's statement here concerning the *...trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life.* This trouble, which Paul later called "our tribulation" happened in Ephesus as "*...all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks...*" ACTS 19:10. Even before that time Paul faced opposition at Thessalonica where we read in ACTS 17:6 that the cry against Paul was: *These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.* This was another of the spiritual battles of EPHESIANS 6:12 epic proportions: *For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual*

wickedness in high places. Additionally Paul wrote in 2 CORINTHIANS 7 some other pressed out of measure, above strength conflicts that he faced on his recent travels during his third missionary journey. 2 CORINTHIANS 7:4 *Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.* 5 *For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears.* The word translated “tribulation” here in verse 4 is *thlipsis* {thlip'-sis}, number 2347 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance, which also means: affliction, trouble, anguish, persecution, burdened, to be afflicted, a pressing, pressing together, pressure, oppression, affliction, distress, and dire straits. All full overcomers will face such “tribulation” in their life if they ever are going to be an overcomer in the first place. Here in verse 5 Paul explains his “tribulation” saying: *...our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears.* Back in 2 CORINTHIANS 1:9 & 10 Paul gave the solution to fighting this good fight of faith, writing: *But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: 10 Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.* Paul adds this commentary in 2 CORINTHIANS 4:8 *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; 10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. 11 For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. 12 So then death worketh in us, but life in you. 13 We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak; 14 Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you. 15 For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. 16 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; 18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

The bottom line of this part of 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 *I have fought a good fight...* turns out to be the victors cry of faith. Paul had learned the same cry of faith that David had as he faced certain death going up against what appeared to be a better equipped foe in Goliath in 1 SAMUEL 17:47 *...the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD’S,...* . A little over thirty years of trusting the Lord through all kinds of adversity brought Paul to write this positive conclusion in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 *I have fought a good fight...* . The one hundred chapters that Paul wrote us verified this fact.

On final thought concerning this portion of 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 *I have fought a good fight...* revolves around the word “fought” here. The Greek word translated “fought” here is found only seven times in New Testament scripture. Seven again speaks to us of SPIRITUAL PERFECTION, or SPIRITUAL COMPLETION, which we find Paul having attained at the end of his race. The Greek word translated “fought” here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 is number 75 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance, *agonizomai* {ag-o-nid'-zom-ahee}, which also translates into our English as strive, fight, and labour fervently. This word means: to enter a contest: contend in the gymnastic games; to contend with adversaries, fight; to contend, struggle, with difficulties and dangers; and to endeavor with strenuous zeal, strive: to obtain something. This is exactly what Paul did; strive to obtain something, which was God’s best!

The fourth point of the seven points noted in 2 TIMOTHY 4:6-8 comes from verse 7 also, which is this statement of Paul’s: *...I have finished my course,...* . This is a fitting statement to be found in Paul’s final one hundredth chapter of exhortation. These five words of our King James Version speak volumes to our heart. Starting with the word “finished” here, we note that it comes from the Greek word *teleo* {tel-eh'-o}, number 5055 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance. And yes,

this is the same word Jesus uttered on the cross; one of His last words in fact: *teleo*, “It is finished” JOHN 19:30.

Jesus made SEVEN statements on the cross. The first, a prayer, “*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do...*” LUKE 23:34. The second was spoken to the penitent thief in LUKE 23:43, “*Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.*” Third, “*My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?*” recorded both in MATTHEW 27:46, and MARK 15:34. The fourth, “*Woman, behold thy son; son behold thy mother...*” JOHN 19:26 & 27. Fifth, “*I thirst...*” JOHN 19:28. The sixth, “*It is finished*” (*teleo*) JOHN 19:30. Seventh, “*Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit...*” LUKE 23:46. Jesus first recorded words here on earth are also recorded in LUKE in chapter 2 where we find Jesus as a twelve year old asking His parents: “*...How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?*” LUKE 2:49. Jesus went about His Father’s business while here on earth, but His earthly business trip was announced as finished, *teleo* on the cross.

Jesus was about His Father’s business His whole life, with the first thirty being increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God, and man as he remained subject unto his earthly parents until the appointed time of His ministry here on earth. LUKE 2:51 *And he (Jesus) went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.* 52 *And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.* Let’s just put this in perspective for a moment. Jesus was twelve years old here in this portion of LUKE, and had just told Mary and Joseph that he must be about His Father God’s business. Jesus came into the world to save sinners 1 TIMOTHY 1:15 tells us, and that was the ultimate mission of His business trip. In JOHN 4:34 we find Jesus speaking unto His disciples, and ...*Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.*

Two related points jump out here in JOHN 4:34 in relation to Jesus being about His Father’s business. The first point being that Jesus was always about doing the will of Him who sent Him into the world in the first place, and that means Jesus was always about doing God’s will. Jesus was already about doing God’s will when as a twelve year old He told Mary and Joseph ...*I must be about my Father’s business...* . But a huge part of being about doing God’s will on this most important of all business trips was for Jesus to be subject unto Mary and Joseph, His worldly parents who had just lost track of Him for three days!!! {Study LUKE 2:46.} And Jesus, the Creator of all things, the One who is before all things, and the One by whom all things consist (COLOSSIANS 1:15-17), remained subject unto His worldly parents until He was about thirty years old, (LUKE 3:23)! Jesus knew that being subject unto His parents until such time as His ministry began was God’s will, and also part of His ministry here on earth. His mother Mary was probably the greatest beneficiary of these eighteen so-called silent years in Jesus life, and when it became time for Jesus to perform His first miracle in JOHN 2, Mary announced to Jesus disciples, “*Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it*” JOHN 2:5. During these eighteen so-called silent years in Jesus life our lovely Lord in doing the will of God, “*He humbled Himself*” as a man, as noted in PHILIPPIANS 2:8, and remained subject unto His parents. This humbling experience was part of the maturing process Jesus had to accomplish as a man in order to be prepared as the perfect sacrifice for sin, The Lamb without spot or blemish. The Apostle Paul explained Jesus accomplishing the will of God like this in HEBREWS 10:4 *For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.* 5 *Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:* 6 *In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.* 7 *Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.* 8 *Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law;* 9 *Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.* 10 *By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.* HEBREWS 10:4 quotes a portion of PSALMS 40:8, and aligns perfectly with JOHN 4:34 above ...*Jesus saith unto them, My*

meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

The second related point of JOHN 4:34 concerning Jesus being about His Father's business revolves around this statement: *...and to finish his work.* Jesus had announced to His disciples with this statement that He would bring to a perfect conclusion a hundred percent thoroughly complete fulfillment of God's business trip that Jesus was sent to earth by God the Father to accomplish. That is quite a statement, but defines exactly what the Greek word translated "finish" here in JOHN 4:34 means. This is a different Greek word than the Greek word *teleo* {tel-eh'-o} noted above, which Jesus uttered on the cross. Here in JOHN 4:34 we find the Greek word *teleioo* {tel-i-o'-o}, number 5048 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, and it's meaning conveys a still forward looking prospect of a mission yet to be accomplished to perfection. In other words there was still some time left for Jesus to finish God's work when He made this statement: *...My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work...* JOHN 4:34. On the cross when Jesus business trip was over, and His work here on earth completed, He then in victory proclaimed *teleo*, {tel-eh'-o} "It is finished" JOHN 19:30.

Let's now compare Paul's business trip here on earth with what we just learned of Jesus business trip. Paul's business trip here on earth began on the road to Damascus with these words "*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*" ...ACTS 9:6. The Lord Jesus Christ answered Paul's question with one sentence, which we examined in our chapter called "The Sentence." {Review pages 882-943 of these notes.} So important, and so concise, and so far reaching (inwardly and outwardly) was that one sentence, that it took Paul over twenty years to again expound Jesus words spoken to him that day on the road to Damascus. In essence Jesus answered Paul's question by informing him that He had a life-time business trip already planned for him. Here is exactly how Jesus answered Paul's question of "*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*" ...ACTS 9:6. ACTS 26:16 *But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.* It took the Apostle Paul somewhere in the neighborhood of thirty years, and one hundred chapters of written letters, and epistles, plus two thirds of Luke's writings in the book of ACTS to put on parchment Paul's gospel message that the Lord gave him to preach. All of this essentially equates to Paul's God given business trip, and in this study we have detailed Paul's life as an Apostle, and what he preached. Seventy-four times in his writings Paul references the "gospel," which he preached. The outline of the gospel message Paul was to preach is also found in ACTS 26:16-18 above, but it took the rest of Paul's life to preach it.

Let's review a few portions of Paul's scripture where he defines the who, what, where, when, and why of Paul's preaching. GALATIANS 1:11 *But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.* Here we find the source of the uniqueness of Paul's gospel, which was Jesus Christ, who revealed unto Paul the gospel message he was to preach. In ROMANS 2:16 Paul further tells us of a *...day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.* Thus we begin to see the importance of learning, and knowing Paul's gospel. Paul goes on in ROMANS to expound several important points concerning his gospel message. Starting in ROMANS 1:1 we read: *Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, 2 (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) 3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; 4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: 5 By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name.* Here we find Paul's gospel of God is to be preached among all nations, including the Gentile nations. This same point is brought out again in ROMANS 11:13 *For I speak*

to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office. Again Paul mentions this stating in ROMANS 15:15 *Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,* 16 *That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.* One of the reasons why Paul's gospel message of God was to be preached was so that we Gentiles could be established in the truth of the gospel, (recall that "the truth" is really a reference to Jesus as noted in JOHN 14:6); that we would be established in the faith of the gospel, and that our hearts be established with grace as is presented in Paul's gospel. Paul words it this way in his closing verses of ROMANS. ROMANS 16:25 *Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,* 26 *But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:* 27 *To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.* Two pages later in your Bible we find these statements of Paul in 1 CORINTHIANS 1:17 *For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.* 18 *For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.* Paul adds these thoughts concerning his preaching in 1 CORINTHIANS 2:1 *And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.* 2 *For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.* 3 *And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.* 4 *And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:* 5 *That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.* Paul's gospel message may not have been presented with excellency of speech, or enticing words of man's limited wisdom, but Paul preached his gospel message in demonstration of the Holy Spirit, and of power. And his gospel message was so powerful that Jews in opposition to Paul in Thessalonica proclaimed in ACTS 17:6 *These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.* Two chapters later in ACTS 19:10 we read that Paul's preaching and teaching in Ephesus had such far reaching effects that after two years *...all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.*

We could say much more concerning Paul's preaching, but let's for a moment also consider this. Paul's gospel message was not only preached by Paul, but there were many others who learned Paul's gospel message, and thus Paul's gospel was spread exponentially. Seven of these men also became Church Apostles, who spread, and taught Paul's gospel message. Aquila and Priscilla were two who learned Paul's gospel message, and then taught it to Apollos. Barnabas, Titus, and Timothy were three of the seven Church Apostle who spread abroad Paul's gospel, and in 2 TIMOTHY 3:10 Paul acknowledged that Timothy *...hast fully known my doctrine.*

Thus we have shown the purpose of Paul's business trip that the Lord gave him on the road to Damascus to do, which was to be a witness, and a minister, and an Apostle sent unto the Gentiles, to open their eyes to the truth, who is Jesus, and turn them from darkness unto light, who is Jesus, and preach among the Gentiles the salvation of God, and the unsearchable riches of Christ, and the inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in Jesus. All of this took the Apostle Paul thirty plus years of following Christ to fully achieve the rank of full overcomer. It also took the Apostle Paul fourteen epistles of scripture to fully expound his gospel message. This brings us back to his one hundredth chapter of written scripture that the Holy Ghost inspired Paul to write for us, which is found in 2 TIMOTHY 4 and this portion of verse 7 *...I have finished my course,...* . Again the word "finished" here comes from the Greek word *teleo* {tel-eh'-o}, number 5055 in The Strong's Greek Concordance the same word Jesus uttered on the cross as he finished His Father's business here on earth: *teleo*, "It is finished" JOHN 19:30. We have used a lot of words here to point out when Paul wrote in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 *...I have finished my course,...* the Lord had now revealed to

him that his business trip on what the Lord gave him to do there on the road to Damascus was now finished.

Now in these last few paragraphs above we have termed the Lord's answer to Paul's question he asked on the road to Damascus "*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*" ...ACTS 9:6 a business trip, which it was. This business trip was defined by Paul as "**my course**" here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7. We have spent this whole study on the life of Paul exploring the many facets of Paul's course. As born again believers realize that each of us also has a "**my course**." EPHESIANS 2:10 defines "**my course**," and your course like this: *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.* **My course** is different than your course, which is different than Paul's course, yet nevertheless each of our individual courses are ...*before ordained that we should walk in them.* Let's explore here a little further the depths of what the phrase "**my course**" encompasses.

The best way to see begin to understand a little better the meaning of "**my course**" is to look into the Greek word here translated "**my course**," which is *dromos* {drom'-os}, number 1408 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, a word found only three times in New Testament scripture. *Dromos* simply means: a course, as in the course of life; and one of the analogies of this course is a race-course. Let's look at the three scriptures in which *dromos* is found, and all of these references are spoken, or written by Paul. The first text is found in ACTS 13:25, a part of that pattern sermon we have recorded of Paul preaching in the synagogue in Antioch in Pisidia. We call it a pattern sermon because nowhere else in scripture do we have a complete record of the kind of sermon Paul preached in the Jewish synagogues, which he often first visited in every city, and town he stopped at on his missionary journeys. At any rate here is what Paul said in ACTS 13:25 concerning John the Baptist: *And as John fulfilled his course, (his dromos), he said, Whom think ye that I am? I am not he. But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose.* As you know there were many scriptures written of John the Baptist foretelling his God given mission in life, his course, (his *dromos*), which was to ...*go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways...* LUKE 1:76. The second time in New Testament scripture that we find the Greek word *dromos* used is in ACTS 20:24. (I wrote a note in my old Bible here during one of Brother W. J. Franklin's sermons as he spoke from ACTS 20:24, and the note quoted Brother Franklin as saying "here is found the spirit of the overcomer.") ACTS 20:24 *But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish **my course** (dromos) with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.* At this point in his life Paul was in the middle of his *dromos*, his before ordained race course. In 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 Paul's *dromos* was behind him when he writes ...*I have finished **my course**.* 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 is the third time *dromos* is found in the New Testament.

By this point in our study on the life of the Apostle Paul we should all know that Paul had one goal in mind as he ran his *dromos*, his course. Paul's goal was to have God's best, which we know is to win Christ as his Bridegroom. Once again Paul wrote this goal down in scripture like this in PHILIPPIANS 3:8-14 *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* Perhaps you, like me, have spent countless hours reading, and studying these verses, and have heard many a sermon, and several Bible study's

taken from this very same text. Brother Hill made this comment in his PHILIPPIANS study book: “Remember, you can get them” (these scriptures) “in your heads, but they will slip into your hearts as you continue to meditate and read them.” {End of quoting Brother Hill.}

Let’s look at another familiar scripture that Paul wrote concerning his dromos, his before ordained race course that he knew he had finished running in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7. For this information turn to 1 CORINTHIANS 9:24-26 where Paul explains more of this dromos: *Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. 25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. 26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air.* Note here in verse 26 as Paul was in the middle of his dromos, his race course, that he knew ahead of him was more running to do as he continued to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; and that there was more fight left as he fought the good fight of faith as he continued to run his race. Paul knew his race was over in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 when he wrote: *I have fought a good fight, I have finished **my course**, I have kept the faith.*

So we see that our Apostle Paul had one goal in mind as he ran his dromos, his race course, and that goal was to be part of that heavenly rib company that was made ready to be The Lamb’s wife! Recall that Eve, Adam’s wife, was made from one of Adam’s ribs, that place closest to his heart, and the heavenly wife of Christ too will be taken from a rib portion of the body of Christ, which is the church! All in the body of Christ, the church, are not the rib from which the Bride of Christ will be formed. Not all Christians are following Paul, as he followed Christ. Recall again what Paul wrote: 1 CORINTHIANS 4:16 *Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.* 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1 *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.* 2 CORINTHIANS 4:5 *For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.* PHILIPPIANS 3:17 *Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.* Why are we to mark those which walk as Paul did? Because these are the race-course runners who are forgetting those things which are behind, and pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, which indeed is to win Christ as Bridegroom. Again not all Christians have this vision, for many of their eyes are not enlightened to know what is the hope of His calling, which is Christ in you the hope of glory, that Paul wrote of in EPHESIANS 1:18, and COLOSSIANS 1:27. EPHESIANS 1:18 *The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is **the hope of his calling**, and what the riches of **the glory of his inheritance** in the saints.* COLOSSIANS 1:27 *To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, **the hope of glory.***

Paul adds another bit of encouragement to the race-course runners in HEBREWS 12:1 & 2 ...*let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.* This is exactly how the Apostle Paul was able to write ...*I have finished **my course**...* in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7, for he had spent his whole life since that day on the road to Damascus looking unto Jesus as he ran his dromos. Again as Paul penned the words in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 ...*I have finished **my course**...* he knew his race, his course, his business trip, was teleo {tel-eh'-o}, finished, completed, accomplished, and perfected! However none of us have yet finished our course, nor had Paul finished his course when he penned HEBREWS 12:1 & 2, which proclaims the encouragement to the race-course runners pursuing God’s best: ...*let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith...* Race-course runners embrace this scripture. Here the word “race” is agon {ag-one’}, number 73 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance. Agon {ag-one’} is only used by Paul, and he uses it a total of six times: once as “race” here in HEBREWS 12:1, once as “contention” in 1 THESSALONIANS 2:2, twice as “conflict” (PHILIPPIANS 1:30 and COLOSSIANS 2:1), and twice as “fight,” such as ...*Fight the good fight of*

faith... 1 TIMOTHY 6:12, and *...I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith...* in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7.

One thing we should all know by now is that each of us has our own race-course to run, and as Paul wrote in HEBREWS 12:1, we are to run our dromos with patience. On this race course each one of us has to realize that Jesus is the Author and finisher of our faith, meaning that it is our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who will bring things of His design on our race course to suffer, if need be, for the purpose of making *...you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen...* HEBREWS 13:21. In other words our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is the one who designed and brought into our lives these testing events that often make us suffer with Him, to prove Himself faithful to us in all things. There are no accidents along our specially designed race-course, only full overcoming faith testing events of His choosing. PHILIPPIANS 1:29 *For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.* What did Jesus say to the Saints of the church of Smyrna? REVELATION 2:10 *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* Those were full overcomers He was talking to; Bridal Saints. All of us on this race-course to win God's best also know ROMANS 8:28, which expounds to us like this: *And we know that all things* (whether they seem good to us, or appear to be bad to us; whether we suffer loss of some kind, or illness of some kind; all of these things) *work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.* It is the Lord Jesus Christ who will also have to show each of us what kind of great things we too may have to suffer for His name's sake. For after all, we are His workmanship, as we have so often read in EPHESIANS 2:10 *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.* HEBREWS 12:2 tells us that Jesus *...who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.* Ask yourself who was the joy that is being referred to in this verse? The joy that was set before Him goes way beyond saving sinners though there is great joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth {see LUKE 15:7 & 10}. The joy that was set before Jesus as He endured the cross was the joy He will have in taking His wife, and the close fellowship that He will eternally have with her! Paul having a perfect understanding of this bridal truth stated in 1 THESSALONIANS 2:19 & 20 -- *For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? 20 For ye are our glory and joy.* Paul's glory and joy was in pointing others to Christ Jesus, and encouraging them to go on and run the race, pursuing God's best. Thus regardless of the trial or testing at hand Paul wrote these encouraging words: PHILIPPIANS 3:1 *Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.* PHILIPPIANS 4:4 *Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.* 1 THESSALONIANS 5:16 *Rejoice evermore.* 1 THESSALONIANS 5:18 *In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*

Race-course runners, on your mark, get set, rejoice evermore, and go; go on to win Christ as your Bridegroom! Paul's gospel message encourages us to do so: *To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints...* 1 THESSALONIANS 3:13. Paul also wrote this in 1 THESSALONIANS 5:23 *And the very God of peace (The Holy Ghost) sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* May we all finish our course as full overcomers, and be found in that rank forever called The Bride of Christ! AMEN!

A quick review as we move on. We are in the midst of reviewing Paul's final words here on earth, some of which are found in 2 TIMOTHY 4:6-8, which reads: *For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my*

course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. We have subdivided this text into seven (SPIRITUAL PERFECTION or SPIRITUAL COMPLETION) points of interest that our beloved Apostle Paul noted, and made us all aware of as he penned his final words here on earth. Point one: *For I am now ready to be offered.* Point two: *...and the time of my departure is at hand.* Point three: *I have fought a good fight.* Point four: *I have finished my course.* Point five: *I have kept the faith.* Point six: *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.* Point seven: *and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* The perspective we see here in these seven points comes from the heart of a full overcomer. We have already examined in some detail the first four points, and now come to the fifth point found in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 *...I have kept the faith.*

The Amplified translation of 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 reads: “I have fought the good *and* worthy *and* noble fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith [firmly guarding the gospel against error].” We pointed out earlier how these three “I have” statements are a brief look-back over Paul’s Christian life. What we didn’t point out until now is the three elements of his overcoming life that Paul defines here: (1) his noble fight, (2) his running the race for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, and (3) his guarding the treasure committed to his trust. Brother Hill wrote a note in his Bible next to 2 TIMOTHY 4:7, which reads; “he has fought well, though a hard fight; he has run well, there was no stopping him when the course was hard; he had guarded the treasure committed to his trust.” Note that the Amplified translation of 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 *...I have kept the faith...* expounds this to mean: firmly guarding the gospel against error, and that Brother Hill further noted this portion of 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 to mean that Paul had guarded the treasure committed to his trust. The treasure Brother Hill here referenced was Paul’s gospel, and Paul gospel is a treasure because it was the Lord Jesus Christ Himself who revealed Paul’s gospel message unto him. In 1 TIMOTHY 1:11 Paul calls sound doctrine *...the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.* If we could sum up Paul’s one hundred chapters of his gospel, and wrap them in a package, and label them with five words, these five words would be *...I have kept the faith.*

2 TIMOTHY 4:7 *...I have kept the faith.* The Greek word here translated “kept” is *tereo* {tay-reh'-o}, number 5083 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance, which means: to attend to carefully; to take care of; to guard; to preserve; to be the keeper of; and to hold fast. REVELATION 3:11 is written to the New Testament worthies of faith found in the church of Philadelphia, and Jesus tells them: *Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.* The full overcomers of this first rank will be able to say with Paul: *...I have kept the faith.*

If we pause for a moment and think back on Paul’s whole life span we would recall that he was a Pharisee, and the son of a Pharisee (ACTS 23:6), who was sent from Tarsus to Jerusalem to learn from one of the best Pharisee’s, Gamaliel, how to keep the law. And Paul excelled above all the other Pharisee’s to be the best ever at keeping the law, which is why he was able to write in PHILIPPIANS 3:6 the following fact concerning himself: *...touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.* None of us have had such a back ground as did Paul, who grew up this strict, law abiding, over achieving legalist, who had achieved perfection in keeping the law of Moses. Paul thus could have easily said “I have kept the law,” which indeed he did, but the end result of that Pharisee life-style that was lived to perfection led Paul to write in 1 TIMOTHY 1:15 that he was the chiefest of sinners! Paul had reached the very pinnacle of his Pharisee life on the road to Damascus, which life Jesus viewed as the bottom of the barrel. So when our precious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, full of grace and truth appeared unto Paul on the road to Damascus, and arrested Paul in his path, Paul, who was then known as Saul of Tarsus asked: “*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*” ACTS 9:6. In Paul’s mind he was saying “I have kept the law, and kept it too perfection, but I now realize that has left me the very chiefest of sinners; *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*” Having called on the name of the Lord as now a believer, Paul got saved, and in answer to his question of

“Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” in essence Jesus told him ‘you have kept the law, but now I am going to show you a better way, and that being how to keep the faith.’ Thus when Paul writes in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 *...I have kept the faith...* this statement is a cry of victory in Christ Jesus, for Paul has now fully overcome “I have kept the law,” and has lived his Christian life to perfection, and come to the point where he can announce *...I have kept the faith!*

So what is **“the faith?”** It is very interesting how the Lord spoke the answer to this question to my heart. What is **“the faith?”** **“The faith”** is the summation of Paul’s gospel. Paul could have just as easily have written Timothy here: ‘I have kept the gospel which was given me by the Lord Jesus Christ,’ but instead Paul said the same thing when he wrote *...I have kept the faith.* These five simple words express Paul’s gospel message of grace: *...I have kept the faith.* There is a strong conviction of the truth, and a full assurance of faith found in many statements written by Paul, such as: *...my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus...* PHILIPPIANS 4:19. When Paul wrote this statement to the church at Philippi, he had many years of living by faith behind him, having learned by faith that *...God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.* Paul’s gospel message that was given him by Jesus Christ in the desert regions of Arabia according to GALATIANS 1:17, was then tested time and time again by faith. After returning to Damascus from Arabia with his gospel message, the Jews took council to kill him, (ACTS 9:23), and they convinced Aretas the king of the Damascenes to keep a garrison on the lookout for Paul to apprehend him (2 CORINTHIANS 11:32). Paul kept **“the faith”** that the dispensation of the gospel committed to him included trusting God to supply his immediate need here, which was to escape Aretas the king of Damascus’ capture. ACTS 9:25 and 2 CORINTHIANS 11:33 confirm that certain unnamed disciples of Christ aided Paul during this testing time of tremendous trial, and by night they let Paul down through a window by night, and escaped king Aretas hands. Paul there kept **“the faith”** that God would supply his seemingly impossible need here, and He did! What did Paul later write in HEBREWS 11:6 *But without faith it is impossible to please...* God, *...for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* That is how Paul kept **“the faith.”**

Paul kept **“the faith”** when he faced Elymas the sorcerer on his first missionary journey in ACTS 13:6-12. Paul by then knew without faith it is impossible to please God, (HEBREWS 11:6), and that *...the just shall live by faith...* ROMANS 1:17; GALATIANS 3:11, and HEBREWS 10:38 all of these scriptures are a part of Paul’s gospel. In ACTS 13:8 Elymas the sorcerer was seeking to turn the deputy of the country from **“the faith,”** which is indeed Paul’s gospel message. In 1 CORINTHIANS 2:4 Paul explains: *And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.* Sergius Paulus, the deputy of the country, witnessed the Apostle Paul full of the Holy Ghost as he kept **“the faith”** when he (Paul) set his eyes on Elymas the sorcerer, *...And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand...* ACTS 13:9-11. As a result of Paul keeping **“the faith”** here: *...the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord...* ACTS 13:12. The doctrine of the Lord was Paul’s gospel message, and yes Paul kept **“the faith”** that he preached.

This one incident early on in Paul’s first missionary journey may not have seemed perilous to the gospel message which Paul preached, yet the Lord here had allowed Satan to place a seemingly great obstacle in Paul’s path, testing Paul’s resolve to keep **“the faith.”** There was no way Paul was going to advance any further on his first missionary journey without the Lord reinforcing an important principle of Paul’s gospel message to him; a principle that would not be written on parchment for another fourteen years; a foundational principle taught Paul by the Lord in Arabia concerning keeping **“the faith,”** and this principle is found in EPHESIANS 6:11 & 12: *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle*

not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Paul kept **“the faith”** as he continued his first missionary journey, and we next find him preaching with great power and confidence of the Holy Ghost unto those in the synagogue in Antioch in Pisidia. In that assembly we find present both Jews and Gentiles. In ACTS 13:16-41 we have recorded a pattern sermon that Paul preached as he presented his gospel message concerning **“the faith.”** We have talked about this many times before in this study, but here in action in Antioch in Pisidia we find one instance of many, of the fulfillment of what the Lord Jesus told Paul on the road to Damascus the very day he got saved when Jesus said in ACTS 26:16-18: *I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, (the Jews), and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.* Now we know there are many parts to Paul’s gospel, which in this portion of our study is termed **“the faith.”** And here in Antioch in Pisidia Paul quickly witnessed in action that the Lord ...*is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,*... which he later wrote about in EPHESIANS 3:20. Let’s see how these very points are expressed in ACTS 13:42-49. *And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath. 43 Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. 44 And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. 45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. 46 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. 47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. 48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. 49 And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.* Note what is stated here in verse 49, that the word of the Lord, which here references the gospel message that Paul preached, **“the faith”** of the gospel was published, that is was spread abroad, and went far and wide over the whole country, most properly by word of mouth, and perhaps even in some form of written word. If Paul’s gospel here was spread abroad by pen and ink, it would have been years before any epistle was written by Paul. Note also in this portion that we just read in ACTS 13 some more facts concerning **“the faith”** that Paul later wrote about. 1 CORINTHIANS 1:23 *But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness.* EPHESIANS 3:8 *Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.*

What we have discussed above concerning **“the faith”** from Paul’s statement found in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 *...I have kept the faith...* is just the tip of the iceberg to the answer of what is **“the faith?”** **“The faith”** was not only Paul’s gospel message, but references his daily life. Paul said it like this in GALATIANS 2:20 *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* Paul kept **“the faith,”** preached **“the faith,”** daily lived **“the faith,”** and encouraged others, all of us in **“the faith.”** Yes indeed **“the faith”** is Paul’s gospel message, and he daily lived it. And as he ran his race course Paul kept **“the faith,”** and each step of the way was filled with seemingly insurmountable obstacles to overcome by faith. As we review some more highlights of Paul’s life notice that each step of his keeping **“the faith”** seemed to get harder, at least as we view it. We should expect the same in our lives too if we are truly following Paul as he

followed Christ pursuing God's best, and keeping **"the faith."** For example in ACTS chapter 14 one of the many insurmountable seemingly impossible obstacles Paul faced as he kept **"the faith"** was being stoned in verse 19, and as we have discussed many times before, the purpose, and intention of stoning someone was to kill them! And those who stoned Paul supposed he was dead, and medically speaking perhaps he was! But God wasn't through with him yet. He hadn't even yet penned one word of his gospel message concerning **"the faith."** About fourteen years later Paul wrote a little concerning this incident as he encouraged all of us in **"the faith,"** writing in 2 CORINTHIANS 12:1 *It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. 2 I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. 3 And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) 4 How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.* These few brief moments gave Paul a quick glimpse of the unsearchable riches of Christ that he was later able to write about in EPHESIANS 3:8 *Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.*

At the end of ACTS 15 we find Paul keeping **"the faith"** as he starts a long second missionary journey, this time without Barnabas. On this second missionary journey Paul had the added blessings of the Apostles and elders of the church at Jerusalem. Additionally by faith Paul and the leading of the Holy Ghost, Paul replaced Barnabas with Silas. Silas, who is also called Silvanus, the Latin for Silas, begin to learn Paul's gospel message concerning **"the faith"** as they daily progressed on this second missionary journey. In ACTS 16 a young man named Timothy is added to Paul's second missionary journey, and both Timothy and Silas daily are taught Paul's gospel message concerning **"the faith."** Several months go by without a record of even one soul getting saved. During this time the Holy Ghost was preparing two more Church Apostles to preach Paul's gospel message, and that being Timothy and Silas. By faith in ACTS 16 Paul continues to follow the leading of the Lord, and by ACTS 16:12 he ends up in Philippi. By ACTS 16:24 Paul and Silas are in the Philippian jail. Certainly their faith was being tested at this time, but both Paul and Silas kept **"the faith,"** and at the darkest hour of their trial both *...Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them...* ACTS 16:25. God then sent an earthquake, and immediately all the prisoners were set free, but none escaped as it was in God's plan for the Philippian church to be further established that night.

Paul continued to keep **"the faith"** as he then proceeded in ACTS 17 to Thessalonica, and Berea where two more churches were established. Timothy and Silas were very instrumental in this effort, having now learned Paul's gospel message themselves. By the end of ACTS 17 Paul, by faith, has preached a sermon from Mars' hill in Athens. They are still talking about this today. Amazing what happens when one keeps **"the faith."**

In ACTS 18 we read how the church in Corinth was established, and Paul continued to preach his gospel message concerning **"the faith"** there for a year and a half. During this time Paul writes his first two epistles, 1 & 2 THESSALONIANS, which also are encouragements unto us to keep **"the faith."** Paul states it this way in 1 THESSALONIANS 5:8 *But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.* Two people emerge as prominent in Paul's life while in Corinth; a sweet couple named Aquila and Priscilla. They took Paul in to live with them there in Corinth, and daily Paul preached unto them his gospel message concerning **"the faith."** Like sponges they soaked up every word of Paul's gospel message, and when Paul left Corinth, they went with him as far as Ephesus. Every time we read of Aquila and Priscilla after this, they are still in Ephesus. Paul then finished his second missionary journey with a promise to return to Ephesus, Lord willing. While Paul was away from Ephesus, Aquila and Priscilla teach a very eloquent man, who was mighty in the scriptures, from Alexandria, Egypt Paul's gospel message concerning **"the faith."** This mans name was Apollos, and Apollos goes on to become another of the Church Apostles. Because Paul kept **"the faith,"** Aquila,

and Priscilla, and Apollos also were encouraged to keep the faith, and they did.

In ACTS 19 we have the account of Paul's three years in Ephesus. As Paul kept "**the faith**" there we read in ACTS 19 these facts: 11 *And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:* 12 *So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them. ...* 20 *So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.* ACTS 19 ends with the uproar of the silversmiths at Ephesus. Then in ACTS 20 Paul concludes his stay at Ephesus; does another tour of Macedonia and Greece, and writes four more epistles: 1 & 2 CORINTHIANS, GALATIANS, and ROMANS. He then sets sail for Jerusalem as he begins to wrap up his third missionary journey. His faith was tested once again in Troas where a young man named Eutychus fell asleep during Paul's long winded sermon, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead... ACTS 20:9. Paul kept "**the faith**" which he taught, and prayed for Eutychus as he himself fell on him. With the same overcoming faith in the Lord that Elisha had in 2 KINGS 4:18-36 when he raised the Shunammite's son from the dead, Paul presented Eutychus alive, and continued talking unto the Saint's at Troas until the break of day. A few days later Paul landed at a nearby port to Ephesus, and called for the Ephesian elders to come unto him, which they did. Paul then explained to them what was involved in keeping "**the faith**," and encouraged them to do so too. Here is some of what Paul said: ACTS 20:18 *...Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, 19 Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: 20 And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, 21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. 22 And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: 23 Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. 24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.* We have pointed this out before, how that verse 24 here expresses the spirit of the overcomer, and by the time frame of 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 Paul adds: *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.*

Before arriving in Jerusalem in ACTS 21:15 Paul was warned by a prophet named Agabus not to go there. Paul's response to all who heard this warning was also a statement from his heart on how he for himself was intent on keeping "**the faith**," saying in ACTS 21:13 *...What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.* In ACTS 21:27-31 Paul was seized by an angry mob of Jews, who went about to kill him. Paul then was violently rescued by the Romans, arrested, and held a prisoner of the Roman Empire until after the last words were written by Luke concerning Paul in ACTS 28. Each test, and trial from then on seemed harder than the previous, yet as Paul faced these appointments ordained from God above, he continued to increase the more in keeping "**the faith**," and in the process got to witness to many who otherwise never would have gotten the opportunity to hear Paul's gospel message. Some of these people that heard Paul speak, and preach about his faith in Jesus Christ were governors, and Kings, and Centurions, and even Jews of the Sanhedrin council! Through many a dark mile, and troubled stormy seas Paul waxed valiant in fighting the good fight of faith, and God brought him through each of these tests a step closer to the rank of full overcomer. When he finally wrote in his last days 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith*, Paul knew what it meant to keep "**the faith**." By this time Paul had nearly finished his fourteenth epistle wherein is explained in Paul's own Holy Ghost inspired words what is "**the faith**."

Once again "**the faith**" is the summation of Paul's gospel. Paul's gospel declares in one hundred chapters the path we are to follow. In the process Paul's gospel unfolds the truths found in the Old Testament scripture, and augments the rest of the Holy Ghost inspired scripture found in the

New Testament. If we could explain the entire above dissertation in a few words, it would have to be *"The just shall live by faith."* {ROMANS 1:17; GALATIANS 3:11, and HEBREWS 10:38.} Paul indeed lived his gospel message, and proved that *"The just shall live by faith."* This is why Paul could write in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 ...*I have kept the faith.* Thus he could write about a "henceforth," which we will look into next.

When we began this last chapter in our study on the life of the Apostle Paul we identified six verses from 2 TIMOTHY 4 that were worthwhile to look into the details, and depth as to what Paul wrote. The first three verses, which we are in the midst of examining, are found in 2 TIMOTHY 4:6-8, which again says: *For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* We further noticed here seven (SPIRITUAL PERFECTION or SPIRITUAL COMPLETION) points of interest that our beloved Apostle Paul noted, and made us all aware of as he penned his final words here on earth. Point one: *For I am now ready to be offered.* Point two: *...and the time of my departure is at hand.* Point three: *I have fought a good fight.* Point four: *I have finished my course.* Point five: *I have kept the faith.* Point six: *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.* Point seven: *and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* Points six and seven are found here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:8.

Let's now look at this sixth point of interest: *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.* We have just spent considerable time discussing a little of what was involved in Paul keeping the faith as he wrote in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 ...*I have kept the faith.* We noted that **"the faith"** is the summation of Paul's gospel. And Paul's gospel wasn't only the message which he preached, but it was the life he lived after acknowledging Jesus Christ as his Saviour on the road to Damascus. On top of that Paul was anointed a "chosen vessel" unto the Lord to bear Jesus name before the Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel as noted in ACTS 9:15 -- *But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.* During the next three years of Paul's life he was given **"dispensation"** of the gospel, which he was to preach, and which he lived by. In 1 CORINTHIANS 9:17 Paul noted that ...*a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.* In EPHESIANS 3:2-7 Paul added: *If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: 3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, 4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) 5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; 6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: 7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.* That **"dispensation"** of the gospel revealed unto Paul concerned the message of the Bride of Christ, ...*That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, (joint-heirs as a husband and wife) and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel...* EPHESIANS 3:6. The Greek word translated "fellowheirs" here in EPHESIANS 3:6 is sugkleronomos {soong-klay-ron-om'-os} is number 4789 in the Strong's Greek Concordance, and is also found in ROMANS 8:17 translated "joint-heirs with Christ." ROMANS 8:16 *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.* The most profound, and complete meaning of the Greek word sugkleronomos is joint-heir, or co-inheritor as of a wife with her husband! Our thinking here is in the light of eternity. There will be a Bride of Christ, who will have made herself ready by yielding unto Him while running her race course here on earth. This ultimately is the high calling of God in Christ Jesus that was given Paul to teach unto the Gentiles about their ...*inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is*

in me... (ACTS 26:18), which subject was initially unfolded unto him while on the road to Damascus. Again most Christians even today still don't know, nor understand the depths of what we are showing here ...*That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel...* which actually speaks of an elite group of sugkleronomos Saints collectively known as the Bride of Christ, the full overcomers. This is the "**dispensation**" of the gospel, which Paul was to preach, and which he lived by. Paul again wrote of this "**dispensation**" given him to preach in COLOSSIANS 1:25 *Whereof I am made a minister, according to the **dispensation** of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;* 26 *Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:* 27 *To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:* 28 *Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:* 29 *Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.*

Now this word "**dispensation**," which we looked at in the verses above, is only found four times in the Bible, and all four times are in Paul's epistles. The one verse we didn't visit above where the word "**dispensation**" is found is EPHESIANS 1:10, which reads: *That in the **dispensation** of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.* So we find in this word "**dispensation**" a focus found in Paul's life, and in his gospel message; a focus of perfection, which is only found in Christ Jesus. Paul lived his Christian life focused upon the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, and he saw Christ first in everything, and in all things. GALATIANS 2:20 became Paul's anthem: *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* So the "**dispensation**" of the grace of God that was given to Paul to preach, and to teach, and to expound in his epistles, which is our gospel record left us in scripture by the Holy Ghost, explain **the faith** that Paul talked about in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 ...*I have kept **the faith**.* Paul was given the stewardship, the office of a manager, or the oversight of the message of the grace of God concerning ...*That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel...* EPHESIANS 3:6. This then defines the "**dispensation**" of the gospel committed unto Paul's trust, and as the Lord's anointed administrator of this gospel message, Paul kept the faith, kept the gospel message he was to preach, and lived his life focused up winning Jesus Christ as his Bridegroom. This is why Paul was able to write in PHILIPPIANS 1:21 *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

So now at the finish line of his race course Paul is able to write in 2 TIMOTHY 4:8 of a "henceforth" -- *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.* The word "henceforth" is found 33 times in scripture, and 33 is the number pointing to PROMISE. A PROMISE concerns things future, does it not? As such then the word "henceforth" looks unto the future. Thus "henceforth" is also a statement of faith. Paul had just written in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 ...*I have kept **the faith**...* and then he writes a declaration of faith: *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.* Paul had not yet received this "crown of righteousness," but by faith in God above he saw that ...*there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.* The "crown of righteousness" spoken of here is the crown of the full overcomer, the crown of the sugkleronomos joint-heir Saint's that will rule and reign with Christ. In the seven churches mentioned in REVELATION 2 & 3 we find only two churches where the full overcomers receive crowns, one is the church at Smyrna, who figures the full overcomers from this church age who died before translation, and the second is the church of Philadelphia, who pictures the full overcomers that are alive and translated before the tribulation. Their crowns are the Bridal crown because she as queen to the KING OF KINGS, and LORD OF LORDS will have a joint-heir crown. Jesus Christ the righteous judge as noted here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:8 is also found with many crowns in REVELATION

19:12. REVELATION 19:12 *His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.* This verse follows the marriage of the Lamb in REVELATION 19:7. The Lamb's wife will have a joint-heir "crown of righteousness." We should also note here that Paul's focus in his Christian walk was not to receive a "crown of righteousness," but to win Christ, not as a Savior, because Jesus Christ was already his Savior, but to win Christ as his Bridegroom! In PHILIPPIANS 3:8 Paul wrote: *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.* In PHILIPPIANS 3:14 Paul added: *I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* Note that Paul did not write I press toward the mark for the prize of a "crown of righteousness." The "crown of righteousness" is a gift given by Jesus Christ to His wife, who by virtue of faith will rule and reign with Him as sugkleronomos joint-heirs! This is why Paul is able to write in 2 TIMOTHY 4:8 *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.*

We mentioned above that the word "henceforth" as used here is a forward, upward looking statement of faith, which Paul writes at the end of his race after he says in 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.* Both Paul and Timothy had spent considerable time in Greece, and they both were familiar with the Greek national games of competition, where at the conclusion was presented a crown, or a garland to the winners. Corinth was a city in Greece, and to the Saints in Corinth Paul wrote two epistles. In 1 CORINTHIANS 9 Paul makes reference to the Greek athletic contests, and writes in 1 CORINTHIANS 9:24 & 25 -- *Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. 25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.* This incorruptible crown that Paul spoke of here is the very same "crown of righteousness" he now references in 2 TIMOTHY 4:8 *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.* It is the victors crown that is "laid up" in heaven for Paul, and to ...*unto all them also that love his appearing...* 2 TIMOTHY 4:8. By faith Paul knew this "crown of righteousness" was "laid up" for him. The phrase "laid up" is found nineteen times in scripture, and the number nineteen is the number pointing to FAITH. By faith Paul knew that *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.*

Let's spend a few moments now considering ...*the Lord, the righteous judge...* who is Jesus. This is a whole study in itself, but can be summed up by studying the following scriptures starting in REVELATION 1:9 *I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,...* . Verse 9 plainly states that John wrote the book of REVELATION from the island of Patmos. Verse 10 is called by Brother Copley "the key verse of the book" of REVELATION. Verse 10 is the first of five vision view points in the book of REVELATION. Each viewpoint has it's own chronology. Brother Copley notes that the Greek records verse 10 this way: "I became (or came to be) in spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a voice, loud as of a trumpet." Note here first of all how that the word "the" is not in the original Greek. Thus verse 10 should more properly read: *I was in Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,...* . The next and probably most important point to know in verse 10 is what is meant by the phrase "the Lord's day." "The Lord's day" does not refer to Sunday like so many commentaries of this portion read. Those who embrace such a statement miss out on what is really taking place in the whole book of REVELATION. Simply put "the Lord's day" refers to the end of this present Church age when Christ will take His own throne in heaven and begin His millennial reign. Brother Copley notes: "The Lord's Day in its full duration will embrace the entire millennial reign of Jesus Christ." Brother Copley further notes that The Lord's Day will commence as

explained in 1 THESSALONIANS 4:16 & 17, which reads: *For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.* (For more help understanding this verse refer to Brother Copley's study book on REVELATION.)

Now let's read REVELATION 1:10 again: *I was in Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,...* . Here we see John caught in Spirit to that day beyond this present Church Age, when he heard a voice behind him. John in verse 12 then turns and looks back from the view point of "the Lord's day," and describes the scene of what was going on during the Church Age in the seven representative churches found in REVELATION chapters 2 & 3. Before John is allowed to describe the events of REVELATION 2 & 3, he makes note of who it was that he heard behind him in verse 10, and as we read on we find it was the Judge, The Lord Jesus Christ, who was walking in the midst of the candlesticks, whose voice he heard. REVELATION 1:11-20 introduces Jesus Christ as the judge of this church age, with His nine-fold description noted in verses 13-16. John hears a voice behind him in REVELATION 1:11 *Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. 12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; 13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. 14 His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; 15 And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. 16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. 17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: 18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. 19 Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; 20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.* Again this is Jesus Christ the Righteous Judge who was speaking here, and it is Jesus Christ the Righteous Judge who speaks in REVELATION chapters 2 & 3.

Since Christ is the "righteous Judge" as 2 TIMOTHY 4:8 points out, (2 TIMOTHY 4:8 *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*), when does He judge? 1 PETER 4:17 tells us: *For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?* When does Christ judge the church? Now, *...For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God...*, and again that time is now. 1 CORINTHIANS 11:31 *For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.* Here judgment and chastening are explained at the same time. We are not to judge ourselves at some future time, but rather we are to judge ourselves now. We are not chastened of the Lord in some future time; we are chastened of the Lord now. Even before this Paul wrote in 1 CORINTHIANS 6:2 *Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?* So what we see here is that there is a group of people, you and me, Christians of this church age, who judge themselves now, and at a future time with Christ we will judge the world. JUDE 1:14 *And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, 15 To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard*

speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. ROMANS 2:16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel. 2 CORINTHIANS 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Brother Hawkins wrote an excellent tract on the above verse of 2 CORINTHIANS 5:10 called "The Judgment Seat of Christ." Hopefully those of you here in class have read this, and studied the contents. For those who haven't done so yet, I will go over some of what Brother Hawkins said starting with: "...we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may RECEIVE the things done in his body. The ultimate result of judgment is that we may RECEIVE A REWARD. Concerning his own ministry, Paul said, "*I judge not mine own self... but He that judgeth*" (present tense) "*is the Lord...*" 1 CORINTHIANS 4:3 & 4. *Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsel of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God...* (1 Corinthians 4:5)."

"Paul is not only talking about the works that men have done, but also the "counsels of the hearts," or the attitude in doing them. Only God can evaluate the attitudes of men, and in that regard, Paul says, "...but with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of man's judgment..." (verse 3). If wrong attitudes or works are found in us today, we have the option of ignoring them or correcting them. God is faithful to bring to light those hidden things right now; the reward will come only after this life is over. First Corinthians three describes what happens when ones works are fleshly, or as "wood, hay, or stubble." The fire of God's judgment will prove them either to be good or bad, and though his works may be burned and he has no reward, yet he himself, shall be saved (1 CORINTHIANS 3:12-15)."

"Paul's own reward, as well as ours, is defined in 2 TIMOTHY four, and it is quite evident that he knew he had already been judged. He did not leave this life fearing some unknown calamity was waiting for him beyond this mortal veil. He emphatically declares: "For I am now ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand. I HAVE FOUGHT A GOOD FIGHT. I HAVE FINISHED MY COURSE. I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day" (vs. 6-8)."

"He was confident that the Righteous Judge had finished His work in him and was assured that the crown of righteousness already belonged to him. The subject of rewards is also found in each of the Judges messages to the seven churches in Revelation. We read in each one, "to him that overcometh will I give." Each reward is different, depending upon the DEGREE of overcoming involved."

"Every Christian is an overcomer in some measure, by the virtue of the fact that he has accepted Christ as Savior. However, every Christian DOES NOT OVERCOME ALL THINGS as is evidenced by the accounts of these seven churches, along with what we see in Christendom today. There are many things that are brought to light today, but all men will not yield to God's correction, and rectify the situation. Their eternal reward will be limited. Our desire should be that of Paul's: "*Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him*" (1 Corinthians 5:9). {End of quoting Brother Hawkins.}

Brother Hawkins conclusion agrees with our thoughts above, that the "crown of righteousness" is a gift given by Jesus Christ the Righteous Judge to His wife, the full overcomers from this church age, who by virtue of faith will rule and reign with Him as sugkleronomos joint-heirs! This is why Paul is able to write in 2 TIMOTHY 4:8 *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day.* And this brings us to our seventh point of interest found in 2 TIMOTHY 4:6-8, which is: *and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* Above we found that Paul knew that ...*henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day...* and furthermore Paul also knew that this "crown of righteousness" was ...*not to me*

only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Again we need to keep in mind that Paul was not focused upon this “crown of righteousness,” but his spiritual eyes were fixed upon Jesus! Paul saw Jesus in everything, and in all things ever since that day on the road to Damascus when Jesus Christ arrested him. On that day, at high noon, Jesus Christ the Righteous Judge gave Paul, who was then known as Saul of Tarsus, a life sentence! At that instant Saul of Tarsus faced certain death, and in that same instant Saul of Tarsus received with full assurance of faith eternal life as he accepted Jesus as his personal Saviour. And he did so with these words; “*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*” {ACTS 9:6} So let’s ask the question then, do you think Saul of Tarsus loved this first of many appearing’s to him of Jesus? Think about it for a moment, and think of it like this. Five minutes prior to this appearance of Jesus Christ to Saul of Tarsus, Saul of Tarsus was the master of all he surveyed. And he had with him devout followers, whom he was now leading to Damascus with letters of authority from the high priest in Jerusalem to bind all in Damascus who called on the name of Jesus, and have them brought back to Jerusalem to be put in prison, or killed. Then Jesus full of grace and truth came, and appeared unto Saul of Tarsus, and arrested him in his tracks. Saul of Tarsus himself immediately called upon the name of the Lord for forgiveness! And he instantly received eternal life. He was born again! And this appearing to him by Jesus was the best day of his life, up to this point in time. But his career as the chief of sinners persecuting the church of God was now over. What was he going to do from this point forward? Jesus Christ the Righteous Judge gave Saul of Tarsus a life sentence at this same instance in time, and this life sentence is found in ACTS 26:16-18, which we spent much time reviewing in this study. {Review pages 882-943 of these notes.} ACTS 26:16 *But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.* There are ninety-nine words in this life sentence spoken by Jesus Christ the Righteous Judge to Saul of Tarsus. Ninety-nine words that gave Saul of Tarsus a new career, and a much higher focus in life. Read these ninety-nine words over, and over again until you get a glimpse as to far reaching magnitude of this sentence. These words reach clear down through the two thousand year old church age to you, and me, for we are apart of the people to whom Paul’s gospel message was sent! So magnificent was this appearing by Jesus Christ to Saul of Tarsus that it left him physically blind! Yet this physical blindness was only temporary, and Saul of Tarsus spiritual blindness disappeared as he began to pray for help and guidance in his new God chosen career. Three days later the Lord sent Ananias of Damascus to lay hands on Saul of Tarsus that he might receive his natural sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit then opened Saul of Tarsus understanding to see with crystal clear vision the deeper revelation of Jesus Christ found throughout all scripture. Saul of Tarsus became our Apostle Paul. So we see that Paul loved the appearing of Jesus, and how could he have not? Jesus Christ had set Paul free from the law of sin and death, and put him on the path to learn about, and teach others that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. {Study ROMANS 8:2, and 7:4.} This appearing by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to Paul on the road to Damascus was the first of many appearances that He made unto Paul during his lifetime. Paul loved every one of them. And with his spiritual eyes now focused upon the Lord, and winning His best, Paul saw Jesus in every detail in his life. And that is why he was able to write in 2 TIMOTHY 4:8 *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

So we see that Paul yet looked for, actually yearned for, and welcomed Jesus soon return. This is literally what Paul was speaking about here. The thought of Jesus soon return was paramount in Paul’s mind during his last days here on earth. We can say this by examining where he wrote the

word “**appearing**” in his epistles. The reference here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:8 to Jesus Christ’s soon “**appearing**” is the last of five such statements he wrote, and all of these usages of the word “**appearing**” are found in his last three epistles, which are in chronological order: 1 TIMOTHY, TITUS, and 2 TIMOTHY. We actually looked at the Greek word here translated “**appearing**” earlier in this study, and saw it was the Greek word *epiphaneia* {ep-if-an'-i-ah}, number 2015 in Strong’s Greek Concordance that is used here. In 1 TIMOTHY 6:12-14 Paul encourages his son in the faith Timothy to -- *Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. 13 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; 14 That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the **appearing** of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Paul then writes Titus, and encourages him along the very same lines saying in TITUS 2:11 *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; 13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious **appearing** of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; 14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* Then three more times in his last letter to Timothy, Paul highlights the appearance, or soon appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, writing in 2 TIMOTHY 1:8 *Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; 9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, 10 But is now made manifest by the **appearing** of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: 11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.* Here Paul was also reminding Timothy that he too had this very same calling on his life as a preacher, and an Apostle, and a teacher unto the Gentiles. Then in the fourth chapter of 2 TIMOTHY Paul again uses the Greek word *epiphaneia* {ep-if-an'-i-ah} translated “**appearing**” twice more. 2 TIMOTHY 4:1 *I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his **appearing** and his kingdom; 2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. 5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. 6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his **appearing**.* Notice again here as Paul penned his final epistles that he seemed to more and more every day have a greater expectancy of the soon coming and glorious **appearing** of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! This was what was upon his mind, and in his heart, and thoughts as he finished his racecourse here on earth! With great anticipation Paul was looking for the *epiphaneia* {ep-if-an'-i-ah}, the appearing his bridegroom to come!

We have talked here much about Paul’s great anticipation of Christ’s soon **appearing** as he wrote Timothy and Titus his final epistles, but here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:8 Paul also addresses you and me when he writes ...*and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his **appearing**.* Do you love His appearing? Are you looking for Jesus soon coming? These are questions you must resolve in your own heart, but I can tell you this, all of the full overcomers will be loving His **appearing**, and looking for Jesus soon coming again: *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God...* HEBREWS 12:2.

This is a good place to begin looking into our final three scriptures that we will examine in

some detail as we finish our study on the life of the Apostle Paul. We intentionally only briefly looked into 2 TIMOTHY 4:16-18 previously, as these verses properly conclude Paul's heart felt thoughts in his final written words to Timothy. 2 TIMOTHY 4:16 *At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. 17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. 18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Notice here that verse 18 ends with an Amen as Paul really concludes his letter here to Timothy. 2 TIMOTHY 4:19-22 is Paul's postscript salutation where Paul adds personal instructions, and information as he signs this most instructive letter to his son in the faith, Timothy. What we find in 2 TIMOTHY 4:16-18 is a most profound statement of faith expressed by our example to follow in what it takes to be a New Testament full overcomer.

Before we get to far in our examination of these verses we must address the time frame of these words. Obviously Paul had a trial there in Rome, which is the main point of these verses. The problem arises when trying to pin point the timing of this trial. There is no historical records that I am aware of that prove, or dispute the fact that Paul did have a trial in Rome before Caesar, who at that time was Nero. Perhaps Paul didn't appear before Nero himself, but nevertheless Paul did have an appearance before Caesar's Roman court, so it is obvious by these verses here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:16-18 that Paul did have a trial in Rome. Furthermore Timothy, to whom this letter was addressed, it seems was unaware of this trial before Paul wrote him of it here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:16-18. Recall that Timothy was with Paul when Paul wrote some of his prison epistles as noted in PHILIPPIANS 1:1; COLOSSIANS 1:1; and PHILEMON 1:1, so it would make no sense for Paul to write Timothy about a trial of which Timothy would have been aware. Also recall earlier in this study we mentioned the possibility that Paul could have been released from his earlier imprisonment here at Rome as a direct result of Josephus' efforts to release some Jewish priests held prisoner at Rome. {Review pages 1214 & 1215 of these notes.} If that were the case then Paul wouldn't of had a trial at Rome during his first imprisonment because he received an early release from prison before his trial ever took place. But now here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:16-18 we must acknowledge that Paul had an appearance in Caesar's Roman court. Thus we make the assumption that this trial had happened recently, and that Paul was informing Timothy as to what had just taken place with in a few days or weeks prior to his writing Timothy.

With this point of view now being expressed, that Paul in recent days had a day in court before Caesar's court, we continue examining the thoughts expressed in 2 TIMOTHY 4:16 *At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. 17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. 18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

Let's begin by asking the question, how important of a day was this day in court in Paul's life? It was a day he had waited for a long time ever since he was arrested back in Jerusalem in ACTS 21. It was a day Paul had requested when he appeared before Festus back in ACTS 25:11 when he said: *...I appeal unto Caesar.* King Agrippa heard Paul defend himself in ACTS 26, and would have set Paul free at that time had it not been for the fact that Paul had appealed unto Caesar. ACTS 26:32 ends that chapter with these words: *Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar.* But as we noted above it seems that Paul got released from prison prior to ever having had a trial before Caesar, that is up until this point in time noted in 2 TIMOTHY 4:16-18. So this new day in Caesar's court had long been anticipated by the Apostle Paul, and had now arrived. This was an important day in Paul's life. Obviously no other man felt this way, for Paul writes *...At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men*

forsook me... . This trial before Caesar's court was ordained by the Lord, and designed as a test for our Apostle Paul. PSALMS 37:23 informs us: The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. Paul himself wrote in EPHESIANS 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. These steps that Paul was before ordained to walk in now took him to Caesar's court. Perhaps it was another of those ...pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life... days that Paul wrote about in 2 CORINTHIANS 1:8, where he again found within himself that his ...flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears... 2 CORINTHIANS 7:5. No doubt this day in Caesar's court was a day Paul had rehearsed in his mind over and over again. When this day finally came it was memorable, ...but only to Paul, and of course the Lord. ROMANS 8:34-39 had been worked into Paul's life when he made his appearance before the court of Caesar. ROMANS 8:34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

So we find a victorious Apostle Paul standing before Caesar's court, standing alone with no man standing with him on this most important memorable day in Paul's life, and Paul writes here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:16 *...all men forsook me... . The full overcoming victorious part of 2 TIMOTHY 4:16 lies in the next statement Paul wrote after ...all men forsook me... . Paul doesn't write of any animosity towards those who forsook him, but rather he writes from his heart the attitude the Lord had worked into Paul's inner being; an attitude of Godly love, and compassion towards others. So Paul finishes 2 TIMOTHY 4:16 ...all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Paul first heard these very same words from that New Testament worthy of faith Stephen at his death, which are recorded in ACTS 7:60 when he ...cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep. Stephen's Holy Ghost inspired words recorded in ACTS 7 were among the strongest words of faith that pricked the heart of Saul of Tarsus, convicting him of sin. Stephen's parting words of ...Lord, lay not this sin to their charge... was verified as answered the day Saul of Tarsus got saved, and remained a testimony to Paul all the days of his life. Recall here also what Jesus said upon the cross in LUKE 23. LUKE 23:33 And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. 34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. Christ Jesus is the ultimate full overcomer having conquered the power of Satan, and the power of darkness, and the power of death when He finished that final seventh step down from glory mentioned in PHILIPPIANS 2:5-8, as He became obedient even unto the death of the cross. With these three examples of Jesus, Stephen, and Paul we find that the full overcomer leaves this world with a spirit of forgiveness, and a focus upon the throne of grace where resides God the Father!*

Back to this most important day in Paul's life when he appeared before the court of Caesar in Rome. This day in Caesar's court was Paul's graduation day, perhaps his final test here on earth; a day which he had already commented about in 2 TIMOTHY 4:6-8, which we looked at above: *For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* We noted earlier how Paul truly loved the Lord's appearing unto him, and on this most memorable day in Paul's life when no man that Paul knew was

in attendance, and all had forsaken him, Paul then noticed a friend that sticketh closer than a brother (PROVERBS 18:24), who is Jesus, and here Jesus makes one final appearance unto Paul before Paul's death. Don't you know that Paul here really loved Jesus appearing unto him on this most memorable day, and at the darkest time of Paul's trial? So Paul makes note of this fact to Timothy when he writes in 2 TIMOTHY 4:17 *Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me...* . This reminded me of that poem by Mary Stevenson most of you have heard, or have received in a card entitled FOOTPRINTS IN THE SAND that says:

One night I dreamed a dream.
As I was walking along the beach with my Lord.
Across the dark sky flashed scenes from my life.
For each scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand,
One belonging to me and one to my Lord.
After the last scene of my life flashed before me,
I looked back at the footprints in the sand.
I noticed that at many times along the path of my life,
especially at the very lowest and saddest times,
there was only one set of footprints.
This really troubled me, so I asked the Lord about it.
"Lord, you said once I decided to follow you,
You'd walk with me all the way.
But I noticed that during the saddest and most troublesome times of my life,
there was only one set of footprints.
I don't understand why, when I needed You the most, You would leave me."
He whispered, "My precious child, I love you and will never leave you
Never, ever, during your trials and testings.
When you saw only one set of footprints,
It was then that I carried you."

Our Apostle Paul had experienced the Lord carrying him many times during his very tested lifetime. And in a way Paul must have briefly felt himself alone at his appearance before the court of Caesar, which is why he wrote what he did in 2 TIMOTHY 4:16 *At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.* Yet Paul here knew that the Lord was indeed with him, and he continued writing in 2 TIMOTHY 4:17 *Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me;...* . As a Christian don't ever think of yourself alone, because you having living within you the Lord Jesus Christ your Saviour. Resurrected Jesus told His disciples in MATTHEW 28:20, the last verse of that book in the Bible, *...and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.* David knew that the Lord was always with him, and wrote in PSALMS 16:8 *I have set the LORD always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.* In PSALMS 17:8 David also writes: *Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings.* The Apostle Paul knew these very same Old Testament scriptures, and quoted from DEUTERONOMY 31:6 when he penned HEBREWS 13:5 *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* I can recall one of my Sunday School teachers saying that the original Greek of the last part of this verse reads: "I will never, never, never, never, never leave thee, nor forsake thee," however I can not find this in my Greek translations. Yet this statement is also true. This thought of the Lord never leaving us, nor forsaking us is repeated in five other scriptures: GENESIS 28:15; DEUTERONOMY 31:6 & 8; JOSHUA 1:5, and 1 CHRONICLES 28:20.

Let's read these scriptures starting with GENESIS 28:15 where the Lord spoke unto Jacob:

And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. DEUTERONOMY 31:6-8 are some of Moses' parting words spoken unto all Israel as Joshua was also announced to be their next leader as the Lord directed him. DEUTERONOMY 31:6 *Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.* 7 *And Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all Israel, Be strong and of a good courage: for thou must go with this people unto the land which the LORD hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it.* 8 *And the LORD, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.* It wasn't too many days after this that we read the events recorded in JOSHUA 1. For context let's read the first nine verses. JOSHUA 1:1 *Now after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD it came to pass, that the LORD spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying,* 2 *Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.* 3 *Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.* 4 *From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.* 5 *There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.* 6 *Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swore unto their fathers to give them.* 7 *Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.* 8 *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.* 9 *Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.* 1 CHRONICLES 28:20 *And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD.*

Thus we find the statement "I will never, never, never, never, never leave thee, nor forsake thee," to be true, and the above mentioned scriptures to be the inspiration for Paul writing in HEBREWS 13:5 *...for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* Brother Hill one day spent some time reflecting upon HEBREWS 13:5, and wrote the following thoughts in his Bible. "The disciples forsook Jesus. All in Asia forsook Paul (2 TIMOTHY 1:15, and 4:16). However the Lord --- how great the test of loneliness; loved ones gone; friends too busy to notice; to be alone in a crowd can be worse than solitude. "Lonesome valley," who can survive it? But Christians do not walk alone, we must walk our way for ourselves, but not by ourselves. However Jesus walked for you and me, by Himself, that He might walk it with us." {End of quoting Brother Hill's Bible notes.}

There is two parts to this statement in HEBREWS 13:5 *...for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* The first part being the Lord's words *...I will never leave thee...* . These are words of assurance, which all full overcomers have ingrained in their hearts with full assurance of faith. The phrase "leave thee" is found fourteen times scripture, fourteen being the number of DELIVERANCE or SALVATION. Be assured the Lord will never leave thee. The second concluding part of HEBREWS 13:5 find the Lord penetrating deeper into the full-assured heart with these words: *...I will never... ...forsake thee.* What makes this statement more profound is the fact that the phrase "forsake thee" is found exactly eight times in scripture. One of the meanings of the number eight had to do with the BRIDE. The Bride of Christ will never ever be forsaken by her husband Jesus Christ. Bridal Saints can rest confident in the Lord *...for he hath said, I will never*

leave thee, nor forsake thee... HEBREWS 13:5. The words “forsake thee” means: to leave in a forlorn destitute condition without any further care! Rest assured that the Lord Jesus Christ will never ever ...*leave thee, nor forsake thee...* HEBREWS 13:5. We will not be deserted by Him who gave His life for us. We are kept as the apple of His eye. {See DEUTERONOMY 32:10 & PSALMS 17:8.} HEBREWS 13:5 ...*for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* Knowing this Paul next writes in HEBREWS 13:6 *So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*

Paul wrote HEBREWS 13:5 & 6 prior to writing Timothy his final words in 2 TIMOTHY. HEBREWS 13:5 & 6 were etched in Paul’s heart when he wrote in 2 TIMOTHY 4:16 & 17 *At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. 17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.* Thus when brought before the court of Caesar, and finding that all his acquaintance had forsaken him, Paul immediately realized the Holy Ghost inspired words of HEBREWS 13:5 & 6 were still true: ...*for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.* There might have been a little fear and anxiety when Paul stood alone before the court of Caesar, yet at the same time he realized ...*The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me...* HEBREWS 13:6.

Let’s switch gears here a little bit, and ask the question when Paul writes in 2 TIMOTHY 4:17 *Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me...* who witnessed this? Obviously Paul saw the Lord standing with him, but we are not told of any others witnessing this. The reason why is that they were not permitted to here see Jesus, but Paul’s eyes were opened to behold the Lord standing with him at his time of trial. Think back in scripture to other times when the Lord made an appearance that only certain people witnessed. In DANIEL 3 Nebuchadnezzar had his eyes opened to see Jesus when others couldn’t. DANIEL 3:24 & 25 tells us the following when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were cast into the burning fiery furnace: *Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. 25 He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.* Here King Nebuchadnezzar witnessed what Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were experiencing in their time of severe testing, the presence of the Lord. Back in JOSHUA 5, Joshua too witnessed the presence of the Lord when others didn’t. JOSHUA 5:13 *And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? 14 And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? 15 And the captain of the LORD’S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.* One more example is found in ACTS 7 when Stephen announced he was seeing Jesus when none of those who heard his sermon could see Him. ACTS 7:55 *But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, 56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.* This testimony pricked the heart of Saul of Tarsus, who a short time later also saw Jesus on the road to Damascus. But those with Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus didn’t see the Lord as is noted in ACTS 9:7 *And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.*

This appearance by the Lord Jesus Christ to Paul on the road to Damascus was the first of many appearances that the Lord made unto him during Paul’s lifetime. In ACTS 9:16 the Lord in a vision came to Ananias, and told Ananias His plans concerning Paul stating: *For I will shew him*

how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. The Greek word translated “shew” here means to: (1) to show by placing under (i.e. before) the eyes: (2) to show by words and arguments, i.e. to teach: (3) to show by making known future things. The Lord Jesus Christ started doing this during the three years Paul was in training in Arabia and Damascus as noted in GALATIANS 1:16-18. GALATIANS 1:11 & 12 tells us: *11 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.* The Greek word translated “**revelation**” here is apokalupsis {ap-ok-al'-oop-sis}; number 602 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, which means among many other things: a manifestation, or appearance; a disclosure of truth, or instruction concerning things before unknown. This same Greek word is translated “**revelations**” in 2 CORINTHIANS 12:1 & 7. 2 CORINTHIANS 12:1 *It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. 2 I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. 3 And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) 4 How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.* We discussed at length the event Paul was referencing fourteen years before is found in ACTS 14:19, which reads: *And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.* This stoning of Paul was also referenced by Paul himself in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:25 when he wrote: “*once was I stoned.*” The purpose of stoning someone was to kill them, and no doubt they were successful, which is why Paul was able to write of the “**revelations of the Lord**” he had above in 2 CORINTHIANS 12:1-4. I am confident beyond words that when I am caught up into the third heaven, I will see Jesus. So did Paul, but the Lord was not finished with him at the time he was stoned in Lystra, so the Lord raised him from the dead, and this event is recorded like this in ACTS 14:20 *Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city...* In 2 CORINTHIANS 12:7 Paul continues talking about the many times he had saw the Lord Jesus Christ, writing: *And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.* Thus we find that there were numerous appearances by the Lord Jesus Christ unto Paul many times during his life. Another one of those times is found in ACTS 22:17-21 with a warning statement given to Paul by the Lord to get out of Jerusalem quick. ACTS 22:17 *And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance; 18 And saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. 19 And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: 20 And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him. 21 And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.* ACTS 23:11 tells yet of another time Jesus personally appeared unto Paul, this time in prison. ACTS 23:11 *And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.* A few years later while on the way to Rome the Lord again seen to it that Paul was given a heavenly appearance, this time by the angel of God. ACTS 27:22 *And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. 23 For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, 24 Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. 25 Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.* When Paul wrote his letter to the Ephesian Saints he once again used the Greek word apokalupsis {ap-ok-al'-oop-sis} mentioned above; number 602 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, and in EPHESIANS 3:3 we find this appearance by the Lord Jesus Christ unto Paul translated “**revelation.**” EPHESIANS 3:1 *For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, 2 If ye have heard of the dispensation*

of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: 3 How that by **revelation** (also translated appearing) he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, 4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) 5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; 6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: 7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. The last of these many appearances of the Lord Jesus Christ to Paul is found in our current text: 2 TIMOTHY 4:16 *At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. 17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, (obviously Paul saw the Lord standing there with him) and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.* So once again it is apparent by the above scriptures that the Apostle Paul saw several times in his life our resurrected Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Lord had never left him, nor forsaken him, not even for the briefest of moments, thus here again in action we find the words of HEBREWS 13:6 boldly revealed: ...*The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*

In our examination of 2 TIMOTHY 4:16-18 we find a gold mine in the word “**strengthened**” recorded in verse 17 -- *Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and **strengthened** me;...* . In mining for gold it takes some time to find the nuggets, and it will take us here a little time to glean the nuggets revealed here in this word “**strengthened**.” We will begin our mining expedition by first digging into the Greek word here translated “**strengthened**.” The Strong’s Greek Concordance tells us that the Greek word endunamoo {en-doo-nam-o'-o}, (number 1743), is the Greek word found here. Perhaps endunamoo appears some what familiar to us here, and it should, for endunamoo is a derivative of a couple of Greek words we have looked at before, dunamoo {doo-nam-o'-o} (1412 in the Strong’s), and dunamis {doo'-nam-is} (1411 in the Strong’s). Dunamis is translated “**power**” in ACTS 1:8, which reads: *But ye shall receive **power**, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you:...* . Brother Hill always made note of the fact that the word “**power**” used in ACTS 1:8 comes from the same Greek word that we get our English word dynamite from. This “**power**” references miracle working **power**, the same **power** as was manifest by, and in Jesus Christ, which **power** was the Apostles after Pentecost, and used by Stephen, and by Paul and Barnabas, and potentially by all who have been filled with the **power** of the Holy Ghost. Dunamis is found in 116 New Testament scriptures, which nuggets you can research for yourself.

The Greek word dunamoo, number 1412 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance, means: strengthen, or to enable, and is found only once in New Testament scripture, which just happens to be a scripture the Holy Ghost inspired Paul to write. This scripture is found in COLOSSIANS 1:11, which also references the enabling power of the Lord, found in the life of a Spirit filled believer. COLOSSIANS 1:11 ***Strengthened** with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness.*

This dunamoo power was amped up a notch in our text of 2 TIMOTHY 4:17 *Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and **strengthened** (endunamoo {en-doo-nam-o'-o}) me...* . Endunamoo {en-doo-nam-o'-o}, number 1743 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance, which is dunamoo enhanced with the modifier “en,” (number 1722 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance), which here simply means to be empowered by the Lord, and one commentator translated like this: “poured power into me.” Such power is manifested in all full overcomers, which will be even more evident as we proceed further in our examination of this word endunamoo. The literal Greek translation of this portion of 2 TIMOTHY 4:17 reads: “But the Lord stood with me and gave me power.” This endunamoo strengthening of the Lord is expressed in eight scriptures, seven that were written by Paul, and one by Luke concerning Paul. Since the Holy Spirit left us eight scriptures that use the Greek word endunamoo, don’t you suppose we will find Bridal qualities in each of them? Let’s examine these eight nuggets.

The first scripture where we find the Greek word endunamoo (number 1743 in The Strong's Greek Concordance) is in ACTS 9:22 where it is found twice. Setting the scene here in ACTS 9:22 we find Saul of Tarsus preaching in Damascus after Ananias had laid hands on him, and prayed that old Saul of Tarsus would receive the Holy Ghost, which he did. Saul of Tarsus received the dunamis power of the Holy Ghost spoken of in ACTS 1:8 that we looked at above, and straightway preached in the synagogues in Damascus that Jesus Christ indeed is the Son of God (ACTS 9:20). All that heard Saul of Tarsus preach that Jesus Christ is indeed the Son of God were amazed, and marveled that such a remarkable change had taken place in the life of this former persecutor of Christians. Then in ACTS 9:22 we read: *But Saul **increased** the more in **strength**, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.* The word "**increased**" here, and "**strength**" are both English translations of our Greek word endunamoo, showing in a sense a double portion of the strength of the Lord, the power of the Holy Ghost, manifested as Saul of Tarsus continued preaching. The literal Greek translation of ACTS 9:22 reads: "But Saul was more filled with power, and (he) confounded the Jews living in Damascus, proving that this One is the Christ."

The second scripture where we find the Greek word endunamoo is ROMANS 4:20, where Paul is speaking about the faith of that Old Testament full overcomer Abraham, who in this chapter is also noted to be the father of the faithful (ROMANS 4:12). ROMANS 4:20 records that Abraham *...staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was **strong** (endunamoo) in faith, giving glory to God.* The literal Greek translation of ROMANS 4:20 reads: "but at the promise of God (he) did not hesitate by unbelief, but was **empowered** by faith, giving glory to God."

In recent lessons we spent some time visiting our third scripture where we find the Greek word endunamoo, which is recorded in EPHESIANS 6:10, which reads like a definition of the Greek word endunamoo. EPHESIANS 6:10 *Finally, my brethren, be **strong** in the Lord, and in the power of his might.* Here we find we are to be made powerful in the Lord, which power we again know comes by the enabling of the Holy Ghost. {Review also pages 1470-1471 of these notes.}

The fourth scripture where we find the Greek word endunamoo is also a high water mark scripture of note found in PHILIPPIANS 4:13, which reads: *I can do all things through Christ which **strengtheneth** me.* Quoting from Brother Hill's study book on PHILIPPIANS we read; "Note this, "I can do all things through Christ." It is through Him who strengthens me. Think of it like this. At the end of this life there was a person, Christ, over there, and me over here. He has accomplished everything. He wants we to accomplish everything that is for me. He has a path of works which he ordained before the world came into existence. He chose it that I walk in it. He is over there to strengthen me. "I can do." "Oh, but Lord look at the circumstances," we might say. That is when I have looked away from Him. "I can do all things through Christ." Paul is like that tree planted by the river of water, drawing his all from the Christ. No wonder his leaf did not wither, and his fruit was sure. May it be so with you and I." {End of quoting Brother Hill.}

The fifth, sixth, and seven instances where Paul uses the Greek word endunamoo are in his epistles to Timothy. 1 TIMOTHY 1:12 *And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath **enabled** me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.* Here Paul acknowledges with thanksgiving that it was the Lord Jesus Christ who empowered him, counting him to be faithful as he put Paul into the ministry. Next in 2 TIMOTHY 2:1 we read of this same God given empowerment being encouraged in Paul's instructions to Timothy. 2 TIMOTHY 2:1 *Thou therefore, my son, be **strong** in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.* Our seventh SPIRITUAL PERFECTING, and SPIRITUAL COMPLETION reference to endunamoo strength of the Lord is found in our text of 2 TIMOTHY 4:17 *Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and **strengthened** me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.* We will comment some more on this scripture shortly.

The eighth and final time we find the Greek word endunamoo is in HEBREWS 11:34, where is discussed some of the Old Testament worthies of faith, and their acquired power from weakness manifest by their empowerment by faith in the Lord, who helped them get numerous victories in

their valiant fights. HEBREWS 11:34 summarizes the likes of David, and Samuel, and Gideon, and Daniel, and Samson, and the many others of faith who lived in Old Testament times who ...*Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made **strong**, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.*

How many nuggets have we found so far in examining the word “**strengthened**” recorded in 2 TIMOTHY 4:17 -- *Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and **strengthened** me;...* ? Almost too many to count, but there are more nuggets here to find. One of the things we should have picked up here in drilling into the depths of meaning with this word “**strengthened**” is how it applies to the full overcomer. It is the Lord’s strength that empowered all of the above-mentioned Saints to be the full overcomers they became. And there is a common link found in all of the above examples, they were worthies of faith because they believed **THE WORD OF GOD**.

In our meaning of the Bible numbers we found a number that has to do with **THE WORD OF GOD**, and that number is the number thirty-seven, which at first was hard to find the meaning of. However down through the years since that study we have located many examples of how the number thirty-seven has to do with **THE WORD OF GOD**. So bare with me for a few moments as we explain a few thoughts concerning the number thirty-seven, and how it has to do with **THE WORD OF GOD**. REVELATION 19:13 defines **THE WORD OF GOD**, noting that it is one of the many names of Jesus, who by the way is the ultimate full overcomer. REVELATION 19:13 *And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called **The Word of God**.* Thus we see that **THE WORD OF GOD** is synonymous with Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, and as such we find Him mentioned on every page in the Bible. Brother W. J. Franklin once preached a sermon he entitled “The Him Book,” noting that his Bible was “The Him Book.” The “Him” he referenced was of course Jesus Christ, our precious Lord and Saviour, who is found on every page of the Bible.

The numeric value of Jesus in Greek adds up to 888. $888 = 24 \times 37$. 24 is the number that has to do with the PRIESTHOOD. The PRIESTHOOD times **THE WORD OF GOD** equals Jesus, in other words. HEBREWS 4:14 reads: *Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.* The phrase “**his word**” is found exactly 37 times in scripture, and often this phrase references the word of the Lord, or **THE WORD OF GOD**. For example in 2 SAMUEL 23 we find the last words of David, and in verse 2 we read: *The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and **his word** was in my tongue.* Another phrase found in scripture exactly thirty-seven times is “**by faith**,” a phrase found only in The New Testament, and thirty-four of the thirty-seven “**by faith**” statements found in scripture are of Paul’s own writing. The first time Paul heard the words “**by faith**” was from Jesus, **THE WORD OF GOD** Himself, while on the road to Damascus, see ACTS 26:18 where it is said concerning the Gentiles ...*that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified **by faith** that is in me.*

So what does all of this have to do with our text here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:17 *Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and **strengthened** me;...* ? Do you think Paul believed **THE WORD OF GOD**? Do you think Paul believed “**His word**?” The correct answer is yes of course he did. Paul was **strengthened** “**by faith**” in **THE WORD OF GOD**, who is Jesus, and Paul became a mighty man because he put his confidence solely in the Lord. 2 SAMUEL 23:39 tells us of David’s mighty men that there were ...*thirty and seven in all.* And 1 CHRONICLES 11:10 informs us of these men that: *These also are the chief of the mighty men whom David had, who **strengthened** themselves with him in his kingdom, and with all Israel, to make him king, according to the word of the LORD concerning Israel.* Paul **strengthened** himself in the kingdom of God “**by faith**” in Christ Jesus, **THE WORD OF GOD**, who first appeared unto him on the road to Damascus, and last appeared to him here in Rome as noted in 2 TIMOTHY 4:17. Recall that Rome also means “**strength**,” and in Paul’s day Rome was the capital city of the then world empire. Paul’s strength didn’t come from Rome. Paul’s **strength** came from the Lord, or as Brother Copley noted, from “the throne room of Him whose name is “**Strength**,” Jehovah Almighty.” That is why Paul later wrote in EPHESIANS

6:10 Finally, my brethren, be **strong** in the Lord, and in the power of his might. The Philadelphian full overcomer “**hast a little strength**” REVELATION 3:8 tells us, but here again their only **strength** was in the Lord. That is how the Old Testament worthies of faith ...*Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens...* as noted in HEBREWS 11:34; by putting their faith and confidence in the Lord’s **strength**, and in the power of His might. Here before Caesar’s court Paul was enriched as the Lord poured power into him and **strengthened** him.

Having now been enriched ourselves by examining some of the nuggets of truth revealed in the word “strengthened” in our text of 2 TIMOTHY 4:17, let’s examine some of the treasures found in the rest of this verse. 2 TIMOTHY 4:17 *Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.* In the last part of this verse we find three immediate results of the Lord strengthening Paul here: (1) *that by me the preaching might be fully known, and* (2) *that all the Gentiles might hear: and* (3) *I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.*

Before we look further into these three points let’s put into context the time frame of these words. There are some commentators who have taken the opinion that Paul’s trial before Caesar’s court took place at an earlier time in his life, and that Paul was then subsequently released, and allowed the freedom to travel to places like Spain. However, as we have mentioned before in this study, we are of the opinion that Paul was released from an earlier imprisonment at Rome prior to having a trial, at a date subsequent to the great fire in Rome of 64 A.D. These words that Paul wrote Timothy here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:17 express recent events, and tell of Paul’s recent appearance before Caesar’s court. We know from 2 TIMOTHY 4:16 that no man stood with Paul, or came to his defense at this the time of this long awaited trial. Notwithstanding the Lord stood right there with Paul, and Paul recognized Him standing there, and the Lord strengthened Paul here to speak in his own defense, which he did. The audience, which heard him speak was no doubt large, a packed house, and Conyebare and Howson allude that the Forum, or the Basilica where this trial took place was of great size so that a vast multitude of spectators could attend, as they always did at such trials of public interest. We know from studying ACTS 24 and 26 that Paul previously had presented his own defense before magistrates, and governors, and kings by himself, without any lawyer or advocate present on his behalf, and as he spoke in his defense, he spoke before large audiences. But Paul words of defense were really his testimony as to what the Lord had told him to do. This testimony of Paul’s was indeed preaching, as he spake the name of Jesus before the multitudes who ended up hearing him speak. Perhaps here in Rome before Caesar’s court Paul had the opportunity to preach to the largest crowd he had ever spoken before. Recall also that shortly after being saved on the road to Damascus the Lord Himself had told Ananias of Damascus this concerning our Apostle Paul: “...*he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings...*” (ACTS 9:15), and certainly Paul’s appearance before Caesar’s court also fulfills this statement. So as we examine the rest of 2 TIMOTHY 4:17 realize that we are of the opinion that Paul’s words written to Timothy here reference the events of recent days.

Also keep in mind that such a trial as this would have at least two parts, phase one where the case is heard, and phase two where the verdict is given. During phase one Paul would be allowed to defend himself, which occurred here in the time frame of 2 TIMOTHY 4:17. During phase two of Paul’s trial, he would be sentenced. Meanwhile before phase two, Paul sits down, and writes Timothy this second letter.

Now back to 2 TIMOTHY 4:17 *Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.* We mentioned above that in the last part of this verse we find three immediate results of the Lord strengthening Paul here: (1) *that by me the preaching might be fully known, and* (2) *that all the Gentiles might hear: and* (3) *I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.* The Lord strengthened Paul here to loudly proclaim with Holy Ghost inspiration the gospel

message that Paul was given to preach, and to do so right here in Caesar's court. And not only was Paul here inspired to preach his gospel message with all the authority of the God head backing him up, but he preached so that his "preaching might be fully known." "Fully known" means to be fulfilled, fully carried out by being proclaimed before the rulers of the capital city of the world, which was Rome in Paul's day. Put yourself in Paul's shoes for a moment, and realize the potential anxiety that you would face standing before Caesar's court. Paul faced this moment in his life, a time he had years to think about. And as he stood there, no man stood with him. His anxiety level probably couldn't be measured, yet the Lord knew all of this that Paul was now facing, and the Lord appeared unto Paul, calming him down, and strengthening him for the purpose that the word of the Lord could be loudly, and calmly preached before the Emperor's court, with all the power of God manifest by the Holy Ghost empowering Paul, and giving him the correct words to speak. Recall Paul's words of 1 CORINTHIANS 2:4 & 5 -- *And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.* It was this same power of God that here enabled our Apostle Paul to fully make known with heavenly authority the gospel message that Paul was given to preach. We keep referencing Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus, and here we once again recall the ninety-nine word statement Jesus made unto Paul the day he got saved, which is recorded in ACTS 26:16-18 -- *But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17 Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.* On that day the Lord Jesus Christ, who knows the end from the beginning (ISAIAH 46:9 & 10) fore-saw Paul before Caesar's court proclaiming His gospel message that would ...*open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.*

It is well documented in scripture that our Apostle Paul was sent by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself to preach unto the Gentiles. Such was not the calling of the Kingdom Apostles as was the case with Peter, and John, who were sent to preach mainly unto the children of Israel. We just read about a couple of instances of this above in ACTS 9:15 and ACTS 26:17 where Jesus told how Paul was to preach his gospel message unto the Gentiles. This highly educated Pharisee, an expert in the law of Moses, was called, and sent forth to preach the message of the grace of God unto the Gentiles! On your own ponder that concept for a while, and marvel how this prudent legalist yielded unto the high calling of God in Christ Jesus to avail himself to be the instrument God used to present the Bridal message to the Gentiles, proclaiming ...*That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:...* EPHESIANS 3:6! Paul told King Agrippa how it was that he became the Apostle unto the Gentiles in ACTS 26:19-23, which reads: *Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: 20 But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. 21 For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me. 22 Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: 23 That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.* By this time Paul had already written his letter to the Romans, and he wrote in ROMANS 11:13 *For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office.* When Paul first arrived in Rome as a prisoner of the Roman Empire, he called for the chief of the Jews there in Rome to come listen to what he had to say. Paul then explained why he was in Rome, and a prisoner, and then he commenced to tell these very same Jews about Jesus, and

Paul preached unto them from morning until night. At the conclusion of this long day ...*some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not...* ACTS 28:24. Then Paul left these Jews of Rome with the following words found in ACTS 28:28 -- *Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.* Scripture goes on to record how Paul continued preaching there in Rome, even while being held prisoner. ACTS 28:30 *And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, 31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.* In this study we discussed how many came and heard Paul preach in his own hired house there in Rome, and how the great majority of these people were Gentiles. In PHILIPPIANS 4:22 we even find how the Saints of Caesar's household added their salutations at the conclusion of Paul's Philippian epistle. So many Gentiles in Rome had previously heard Paul preach down through the years, but a new group of Gentiles got to hear him preach, and testify of Jesus at his trial there in Rome, thus it is with great excitement, and appreciation of the grace of God that Paul writes Timothy here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:17 *Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear...* . Perhaps even the Emperor Nero himself was at this hearing, and heard Paul's testimony for himself, but as we have mentioned previously, there is no historical record to verify this, nor to disprove this either.

The third immediate result of the Lord strengthening Paul here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:17 was that Paul ...*was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.* What does this statement mean? This may either mean that he was delivered from Nero, who could be compared with a lion, or literally that he was saved from being thrown to lions in the amphitheater, as was common in Rome at that time. Nero was called a lion by some writers of his day. Others surmise that the lion may be a reference to Satan himself, whom Peter mentions in 1 PETER 5:8 *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.* Peter had had personal experience along these lines at the time of Jesus crucifixion, when the night before we read: LUKE 22:31 *And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: 32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. 33 And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. 34 And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.* Of course we know this happened, and that this event became one of the outstanding turning points in Peter's life. Back to our Apostle Paul, we find here that Paul ...*was delivered out of the mouth of the lion...* at this point in time, indicating that he for the moment was delivered from imminent danger. Conyebear and Howson note that this statement may mean that Paul, at this initial hearing, may have established again his right as a Roman citizen, to be exempted from punishment of exposure to wild beasts, which was commonly inflicted on many Christians during the Neorian persecutions. Paul was then sent back to the prison at Rome to wait for the second phase of his trial, which would take place in a few short days.

This then brings us to Paul's concluding words found in 2 TIMOTHY 4:18 *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* There are some very important phrases found in this verse, all of which express the heart of a victorious full overcomer. The first of these phrases is "...**the Lord shall...**" a phrase found in 182 scriptures. "**The Lord shall**" doesn't mean maybe the Lord will, or perhaps the Lord can, or I hope the Lord will, or the Lord might be able to do so and so. "**The Lord shall**" is a statement of faith, and a phrase commonly expressed by the Old Testament worthies of faith. "**The Lord shall**" means exactly that; "**the Lord shall.**" The first record of this statement "**The LORD shall**" is found in GENESIS 30:24 when Rachel had given birth to her first born: *And she called his name Joseph; and said, The LORD shall add to me another son.* She had been barren a long time before Joseph was conceived, yet in a statement of faith she declared after Joseph was born **The LORD shall add to me another son.** Rachel had a second son, but Rachel died after giving

birth to her second son, which is recorded in GENESIS 35:16-18 -- *And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. 17 And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also. 18 And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin.* Do you know any descendants of Benjamin? Our Apostle Paul came from the line of Benjamin as he wrote in ROMANS 11:1 ...*For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.*

Take the time to look up all “**the LORD shall**” statements made by Moses in EXODUS through DEUTERONOMY, and see that he uses this phrase almost forty times. “**The Lord shall**” is a statement of faith, which is also made by Joshua, Gideon, Samuel’s mother Hannah, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Joel, Ezekiel, Hosea, Micah, Zechariah, Peter, Paul, and James. Peter in ACTS 2:21, and Paul in ROMANS 10:13 quote the Prophet Joel, who said in JOEL 2:32 *And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.* Here’s how Peter quoted this in ACTS 2:21 *And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.* Paul quoted Joel in ROMANS 10:13 writing: *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.* In total Paul wrote this phrase “**the Lord shall**” six times. The last time in chronology that Paul wrote this phrase is in our text of 2 TIMOTHY 4:18 *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Note that Paul didn’t write that **the Lord shall** deliver me from death, for as noted in 2 TIMOTHY 4:6 Paul knew that the time of his departure was at hand. Paul didn’t know if he was going to depart by translation, or by way of the grave, but either way he knew that ...*the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom...* . So we note that Paul was confident with full assurance of faith that the Lord would deliver him, and He did.

The second statement we want to look at here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:18 is the phrase “**deliver me.**” This statement falls into two broad categories: (1) a request for deliverance, and (2) a full assurance overcoming statement of confidence based on faith in the Lord that He alone is the One who is able to **deliver me**. This phrase is found in forty-one scriptures: PERFECT TESTING plus GOD. One of the most familiar scriptures that emphasizes this point is found in 1 SAMUEL 17 where we find Goliath defying the armies of the living God. David, who at that time was still a stripling youth, went to King Saul and said in verse 32: *And David said to Saul, Let no man’s heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.* 33 *And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth.* 34 *And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father’s sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: 35 And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. 36 Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. 37 David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the LORD be with thee.* David’s confident statement of deliverance here exposed what is in the heart of a full overcomer, which is a true heart in full assurance of faith in God, trusting for His divine deliverance. We all know the out come of David’s encounter with Goliath, which is stated like this in 1 SAMUEL 17:45-50 -- *Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. 46 This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. 47 And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth*

not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD'S, and he will give you into our hands. 48 And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. 49 And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. 50 So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David. In life David always knew that it was the Lord who would deliver him out of all his afflictions. Thus we read David's words expressing this thought in PSALMS 34:19 *Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.* All full overcomers know, and can say for themselves by faith in God that it is the Lord who shall **deliver me**.

Let's step back for a moment, and put ourselves in Paul's current situation, and glimpse his heart. Here again is what he has written about this so far: 2 TIMOTHY 4:16 *At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. 17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.* In other words Paul was saying Timothy I can now write you this because I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion, just like Daniel. However going from this point forward this I know, ...*I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:...* 2 TIMOTHY 4:7 & 8. Furthermore I know that ...***the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen...*** 2 TIMOTHY 4:18. So we glimpse the heart of a full overcomer here, at the end of his life, confident in the Lord of further preservation, always looking up to the hills of heaven from whence cometh his help, and the source of his future deliverance.

Paul was confident that the Lord was going to deliver him "***from every evil work.***" This was a forward-looking statement of faith concerning future events in Paul's life: *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work...* . If we back up four verses we find that during his race course Paul had faced those who proceeded to engage in **evil work**, and we read this in 2 TIMOTHY 4:14 *Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works.* The "**much evil**" spoken of here references the bad things, the harm, the wrong, and the exceptional **evil** things that Alexander the coppersmith participated in against Paul, and the gospel message, which Paul preached. Paul was very familiar with what it was like being on the giving end of "**much evil**," for as Saul of Tarsus, Paul himself partook in "**much evil**," which Ananias of Damascus made mention of to the Lord in ACTS 9:13 *Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem.*

After getting saved on the road to Damascus, the Lord took this man who had done so "**much evil**," and used him to present to us of this church age the gospel message of a **much better thing for us**. Here is how the Holy Ghost inspired Paul to write this fact in HEBREWS 11:40 *God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.* That **better thing** Paul was writing about here concerns the Bride of Christ, a place reserved for the full overcomers of this church age; a place that was kept as a mystery to the Old Testament worthies of faith. Again Paul revealed this mystery in several places in his gospel writings, and one of these places is found in EPHESIANS 3, which we have covered many times in this study. Paul writes in EPHESIANS 3:3 *How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, 4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) 5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; 6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: 7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.* The **better thing** Paul wrote about in HEBREWS 11:40 is the mystery found in EPHESIANS 3:6 ...*That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.*

We noted previously how this verse has a depth to it that incorporates the other mysteries revealed unto Paul, which very few Christians ever grasp, or ever see, mainly because their pastors and teachers don't know, and haven't been properly taught what it means to be fellowheirs with Christ. The Greek word translated "fellowheirs" here in EPHESIANS 3:6 is *sunkleronomos*, sometimes written as *sugkleronomos* {soong-klay-ron-om'-os}, and *sugkleronomos* elevates the word "fellowheirs" to it's highest levels. *Sugkleronomos* also translates to "heirs with him" in HEBREWS 11:9; "heirs together" in 1 PETER 3:7; and "joint-heirs with Christ" in ROMANS 8:17. All believers won't be "joint-heirs with Christ" even though this provision is made for them during this church age. The most profound, and complete meaning of the Greek word *sugkleronomos* is joint-heir, or co-inheritor as of a wife with her husband! This is the **better thing** Paul spoke of in HEBREWS 11:40 *God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.*

So we see in the process of Paul's Christian life how the Lord had really already delivered him "**from every evil work**," and along the way revealed unto him the **better thing** concerning the mystery of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. This whole concept was an overcoming process that had been worked into the Apostle Paul's life, and ministry. Yes we live in an **evil** world, but that should not be the focus of a full overcomer. Paul wrote Timothy here in 2 TIMOTHY 3:13 *But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.* We certainly live in a day at the end of the church age when the facts of the scripture are increasingly multiplied, and the worse and worse **evil** grows seemingly unchecked every day. Jesus is coming soon to properly deal with this **evil**, and it is His soon appearing that should be the center of our attention, not the **evil** in this world.

In total Paul mentions the word **evil** forty-five times in his epistles, yet not all of these references to **evil** are negative. For example in 2 THESSALONIANS 3:3 Paul writes this bit of encouragement: *But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.* Where is the focal point of this verse? It is on the Lord is it not? Another similar statement is found in GALATIANS 1:3-5 -- *Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, 4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: 5 To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Here again in this portion of scripture the focus is directed to our Lord Jesus Christ ...*Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world.* In His final hours here on earth Jesus prayed a prayer of intercession found in JOHN 17, and Jesus says in verse 15 -- *I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.* The above scriptures match up with our text of 2 TIMOTHY 4:18, where Paul in his final hours here on earth writes: *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Here again we also find a heavenly focus as Paul looks to the Lord to preserve him unto God's heavenly kingdom.

Paul also wrote us warnings concerning **evil**, saying in 1 THESSALONIANS 5:22 *Abstain from all appearance of evil.* In EPHESIANS 5:16 Paul writes another warning: *Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.* In ROMANS 12 we find Paul writing three more warnings: ROMANS 12:9 *Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.* ROMANS 12:17 *Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.* ROMANS 12:21 *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*

In total we find the word "**evil**" 613 times in scripture, and "**evil**" is mentioned in all but five books of scripture. There is no **evil** in the grace of God. The five books of the Bible that do not mention the word "**evil**" are: THE SONG OF SOLOMON; HOSEA; OBADIAH; HAGGAI; and PHILEMON. Ponder that fact further on your own, and as you do realize that THE SONG OF SOLOMON is eight chapters with gems of bridal truth exposed throughout. No **evil** there. PHILEMON is one chapter expressing bridal quality brotherly love. No **evil** there either.

Here are some more interesting points concerning the word "**evil**." Jeremiah uses the word

“evil” 99 times in JEREMIAH, and only once in LAMENTATIONS. Solomon mentions the word “evil” 48 times in PROVERBS, and 22 times in ECCLESIASTES, but as noted above, not once in THE SONG OF SOLOMON. 39 times we find the word “evil” in PSALMS, and the Psalmist writes in PSALMS 119:101 *I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.* No doubt the Apostle Paul memorized this verse, and drew from it’s concepts when he wrote in 2 TIMOTHY 4:18 *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

Do you suppose that the first part of 2 TIMOTHY 4:18 was a prayer of Paul’s? The prayer being that the Lord deliver him **from every evil work**? I believe that Paul made mention of this to the Lord in prayer. Paul wrote in HEBREWS 4:16 *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* Paul then later writes in HEBREWS 10 how this is accomplished. HEBREWS 10:19 *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,* 20 *By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;* 21 *And having an high priest over the house of God;* 22 *Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.* The Lord delivered Paul **from every evil work** because Paul came boldly to the throne of grace with a true heart in full assurance of faith, and a heart sprinkled from an **evil** conscience, to obtain mercy, and find grace to help in his time of need.

We noted earlier that Paul mentioned the word **evil** forty-five times in his epistles. Forty-five is the number having to do with PRESERVATION. The forty-fifth time Paul wrote the word “evil” during his time here on earth was here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:18 *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Here he also mentions the thought of PRESERVATION. We could read it like this: *And the Lord... ..will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom.* Again we witness Paul’s confidence in the Lord, who also had his undivided attention, and Paul knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that the Lord would **preserve** him unto his heavenly kingdom.

The Greek word translated **preserve** here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:18 is *sozo*, number 4982 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance, which most often is translated “**save**,” or “**saved**” in our King James version of scripture. Here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:18 is the only time we find *sozo* translated “**preserve**.” *Sozo* is also translated to **make whole**, **to be whole**, and **heal** or **healed**. One example of this is found in ACTS 14:9 where the Greek word *sozo* is translated “**healed**.” We read here of Paul’s first visit to Lystra: ACTS 14:8 *And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother’s womb, who never had walked:* 9 *The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed,* 10 *Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked.* The Greek word *sozo* is also found in connection with the famous account of the woman who knew she would be **healed** of her infirmity if she could just touch the hem of Jesus garment. This story can be found in MATTHEW 9, MARK 5, and LUKE 8. The short version of this familiar story is found in MATTHEW 9:20-22, which reads: 20 *And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment:* 21 *For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.* 22 *But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.* We noted above that *sozo* (number 4982 in our Strong’s Concordance) also translates into our English “**saved**,” and is found translated “**save**,” or “**saved**” in the following verses: MATTHEW 1:21 *And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.* JOHN 3:17 *For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.* ACTS 4:12 *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.* ACTS 16:30 *And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* 31 *And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.* ROMANS 10:9 *That if thou shalt confess with*

thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be **saved**. EPHESIANS 2:5 *Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are **saved**;) ...8 For by grace are ye **saved** through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:...* . The best healing any of us have ever experienced is the day we accepted Jesus as our personal Saviour, and were sozo; **healed** of our sins, **made whole** from that very hour; **saved** of our sins. The above referenced scriptures should add a few more layers of appreciation as to the depth of meaning to the usage of sozo, translated “**preserve**” in 2 TIMOTHY 4:18. 2 TIMOTHY 4:18 *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will **preserve** me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

The word **preserve** is found exactly thirty times in scripture. The number thirty has to do with **THE BLOOD OF CHRIST**, or THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST. EPHESIANS 2:13 tells us: *But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by **the blood of Christ**.* Furthermore 1 PETER 1:18-21 tells us: *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; 19 But with the precious **blood of Christ**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: 20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, 21 Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.* We could also say that the Lord will **preserve** us unto His heavenly kingdom by **the blood of Christ**.

It is thought that the people, who were the children of Israel, as they journeyed from all parts of the country to Jerusalem to their great annual feasts, chanted the words of PSALMS 121. Our Apostle Paul often spoke of wanting to be in Jerusalem for these feasts, especially the feast of Pentecost, and as a well-trained Pharisee he would be very familiar with this song of degrees that is found in PSALMS 121. Perhaps the thoughts found in PSALMS 121 were behind the inspiration to write the words we are studying in 2 TIMOTHY 4:18 as Paul wrote of journeying to heavenly Jerusalem. PSALMS 121:1 *I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. 2 My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. 3 He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. 4 Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. 5 The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand. 6 The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. 7 The LORD shall **preserve** thee from all evil: he shall **preserve** thy soul. 8 The LORD shall **preserve** thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.*

One more thought concerning the word **preserve** in the context of how it is found in 2 TIMOTHY 4:18 *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will **preserve** me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Note here again that this is a positive, forward looking, upward looking statement of faith, how that Paul was confident that beyond a shadow of a doubt the Lord would deliver him from every evil work, and that the Lord also would **preserve** him, and bring him whole, saved unto His heavenly kingdom. 2 TIMOTHY 4:18 is a very powerful statement of faith expressing the heart of a New Testament full overcomer who was about to step into eternity, sure of his destination, and sure of his reward: 2 TIMOTHY 4:8 *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

Paul wrote next in 2 TIMOTHY 4:18 about the abode of God the Father, and Jesus Christ His Son calling it ...*his heavenly kingdom*. This is the only place in the bible where we find the phrase “**heavenly kingdom**.” In total the word “**heavenly**” is found in twenty-two verses, and twenty-two is the number having to do with **LIGHT**. There is a very strong connection between “**heavenly**,” and “**light**,” which here requires further examination. In ACTS 26:13 Paul tells King Agrippa about the **heavenly** vision he had while on the road to Damascus: *At midday, O king, I saw in the way a **light** from **heaven**, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.* The **heavenly light** that shone round about Paul was indeed Jesus, and when

Paul, then known as Saul of Tarsus, asked the **Light**, “who art thou,” Jesus answered: “*I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutes...*” ACTS 22:8. {See also ACTS 9:5, and ACTS 26:15.} We know that Jesus is the **LIGHT** of the world, and in the gospel of JOHN we read the following: JOHN 1:6 *There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the **Light**, that all men through him might believe. 8 He was not that **Light**, but was sent to bear witness of that **Light**. 9 That was the true **Light**, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. ...JOHN 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the **light** of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the **light** of life. ...JOHN 9:5 As long as I am in the world, I am the **light** of the world. ...JOHN 12:46 I am come a **light** into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. Again it was indeed Jesus whom Saul of Tarsus saw on the road to Damascus ...the true **Light**, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.... JOHN 1:9.*

This **Light** of Jesus is truly **heavenly Light**. In REVELATION 21 we read about the holy city called New Jerusalem in REVELATION 21:2. We read of it's **light** in REVELATION 21:23 & 24 -- *And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the **light** thereof. 24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the **light** of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.*

In REVELATION 19:13 we also read this of Jesus: *And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.* The Hebrew alphabet is made up of 22 letters, which are used to compose the Word of God. PSALMS 119:105 says this: *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a **light** unto my path.* The structure in the 176 verses of Psalm 119 is 22 stanzas of eight verses, each of these eight verses is dedicated to one letter of the Hebrew alphabet, of which, again, there are 22. In the book of REVELATION the Apostle John has a **heavenly** vision, and he writes what he saw concerning Jesus. In REVELATION 1:8 John writes these words of Jesus, who says: *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.* Again John writes the words of Jesus in REVELATION 22:13 who again says: *I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.* Brother Hill once preached a sermon from these texts, noting among other things that Jesus is saying He is the alphabet from A to Z, and that He also is the number system from beginning to the end, the first and the last, and everything in between. The Apostle Paul also recognized these very same things, and wrote in COLOSSIANS 1:17 *And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.* Jesus is indeed **heavenly**, and Jesus is **Light**.

We mentioned above that there are in twenty-two verses wherein is found the word “**heavenly**,” and that the number twenty-two is the number associated with **LIGHT**, and that **Light** most often points to Jesus. The Apostle Paul wrote in EPHESIANS 5:8 *For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye **light** in the Lord: walk as children of **light**:* This statement was written to believers. A believer is born again having the new birth that is in Christ Jesus. There is a number associated with NEW BIRTH, the number 8. There is a number associated with SALVATION also, the number 14. $14 + 8 = 22$. NEW BIRTH + SALVATION = **LIGHT**. **Light** points to Jesus. We find Jesus our Lord in connection with the number twenty-two, the number of **LIGHT** all throughout scripture. For example there are twenty-two chapter twenty-two's in the Bible, and here is some examples of how Jesus is pictured in some of these chapter 22's. In GENESIS 22 we find a picture of Christ as the Lamb, which God provided as the sacrifice for sin, in the story of Abraham taking Isaac up to the mountain of God as a sacrifice. In NUMBERS 22 The Angel of the Lord blocks the narrow path. In LEVITICUS 22 we find that a perfect sacrifice is demanded pointing to Christ. In JOSHUA 22 we find the story of building an altar and praising the LORD before crossing the Jordan. PSALMS 22 pictures the Christ the Saviour speaking in the first person speaking from the Cross. In EZEKIEL 22 we see the LORD's wrath for Jerusalem's sin. In MATTHEW 22 Jesus speaks of the wedding feast, and Pharisees plot against him. In LUKE 22 we find Jesus the center of attention as he is betrayed, put on trial, and He declares himself the Son of God. One of the

highlights of ACTS 22 is Jesus appearance to, and conversion of Paul. Then in REVELATION 22, the final chapter of the Bible we see Jesus, as we noted earlier, the Alpha and Omega.

Of the twenty-two verses where we find the word “**heavenly**,” thirteen are written by Paul. These are just the tip of the iceberg of Paul’s continual **heavenly** focus. From the day of his **heavenly** vision on the road to Damascus, until his going home to be forever with the Lord, Paul’s main theme concerned **heavenly** preparedness. Recall Paul in PHILIPPIANS 3:14 wrote: *I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* This was Paul’s **heavenly** vision. Three verses later Paul writes: *For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:...* PHILIPPIANS 3:20. A couple of pages later in your Bible you will find Paul writing in COLOSSIANS 1:3 *We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,* 4 *Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints,* 5 *For the hope which is laid up for you in **heaven**,...* . These verses point to the fact that Paul had long been thinking about the “**heavenly kingdom**” he wrote about in 2 TIMOTHY 4:18.

It is also interesting to note that only four of Paul’s epistles contain the thirteen verses where Paul writes the word “**heavenly**.” 1 CORINTHIANS, EPHESIANS, HEBREWS, and 2 TIMOTHY, (here listed in the order Paul wrote these letters). We will now examine some of Paul’s **heavenly** verses.

The first place where Paul writes the word “**heavenly**” is in the resurrection chapter of 1 CORINTHIANS 15, and we also know that Paul’s words here were divinely inspired. 1 CORINTHIANS 15:47 *The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from **heaven**.* 48 *As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the **heavenly**, such are they also that are **heavenly**.* 49 *And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the **heavenly**.*

Consider for a moment who the Corinthian Saints were. They were neighbors to Athens, Greece, where Paul had first preached a sermon on Mars’ hill. No doubt before Paul’s arrival in those parts, both those of Athens, and Corinth shared the same beliefs, and superstitions, which Paul addressed in his sermon on Mars’ hill. ACTS 17:22 *Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars’ hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.* 23 *For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.* 24 *God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of **heaven** and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands.* Paul then continued to explain to them a little more about **heavenly** things, and then made his way to Corinth, where he spent the next year and a half preaching and teaching because the Lord had told Paul in a vision: *For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city...* ACTS 18:10. During this year and a half Paul established the church at Corinth, which over time was visited by many of the Apostles. About three years after leaving Corinth Paul writes them his first epistle, and in 1 CORINTHIANS Paul wrote this in chapter 3:1 *And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.* 2 *I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.* 3 *For ye are yet carnal...* . Paul was trying to explain unto them spiritual things, but their focus remained upon carnal things, worldly things, not **heavenly** things. To get them to begin to focus upon **heavenly** things Paul then encouraged these carnal Christians to be followers of Paul as he followed Christ, and to become racecourse runners with a **heavenly** focus like Paul himself had. The scriptures Paul wrote them that verify these points are as follows: 1 CORINTHIANS 4:15 *For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.* 16 *Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.* Paul goes on to write more about this in 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1 *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.* A few verses earlier Paul wrote them in 1 CORINTHIANS 9:24 *Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.* 25 *And every*

man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. (Paul only wrote the word “incorruptible” twice, and both times were in this letter written to the Corinthians, once here in 1 CORINTHIANS 9:24, and the other in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:52. The incorruptible crown Paul referenced in 1 CORINTHIANS 9:25 is the same **heavenly** “crown of righteousness” Paul wrote Timothy about in 2 TIMOTHY 4:8.) Paul continues instructing the Corinthian Saint’s on how they too could be full overcoming race-course running, **heavenly** focused Saint’s, and instructs them further on spiritual gifts in chapter 12. He then devotes the next chapter instructing them concerning love. Chapter 14 expounds upon the gift of prophecy. After writing these three chapters of spiritual things, Paul then writes them the resurrection chapter of 1 CORINTHIANS 15, where we read again first place where Paul writes the word “**heavenly**.” 1 CORINTHIANS 15:47 *The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from **heaven**.* 48 *As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the **heavenly**, such are they also that are **heavenly**.* 49 *And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the **heavenly**.* Let’s look at these three verses in a little more depth, for in doing so we will best appreciate the **heavenly** teaching Paul was bring out here.

In 1 CORINTHIANS 15:47 Paul writes: *The first man is of the earth, earthy.* Who was the first man? The Bible plainly tells us that Adam was the first man. GENESIS 1:27 tells us: *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.* GENESIS 5:1 goes on to state *...that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him.* And note also in these two verses that man was created in the image of God, in the likeness of God. GENESIS 9:6 underlines this point stating: *...for in the image of God made he man.* The carnal Saints of Corinth could understand such teaching, and were well aware that Adam was the first man. Now let’s read the first part of 1 CORINTHIANS 15:22, which says: *For as in Adam all die...* . The Corinthian’s also could understand this statement. Paul then talks about the second man in his next statement of 1 CORINTHIANS 15:47 *...the second man is the Lord from **heaven**.* Two verses earlier Paul wrote in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:45 *And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.* Let’s now read again our text: 1 CORINTHIANS 15:47 *The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from **heaven**.* 48 *As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the **heavenly**, such are they also that are **heavenly**.* 49 *And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the **heavenly**.* So we plainly see that the first man is Adam, from whom we all descend, and bear his image, and the second man is the Lord Jesus Christ from **heaven**, to whom all believers ascend, bearing His **heavenly** image! This is what Paul hinted at in his complete statement of 1 CORINTHIANS 15:22 *For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

As Paul taught this **heavenly** doctrine concerning the resurrection, he also taught that there was an order in how *...even so in Christ shall all be made alive.* This order is revealed in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:23, which we will read in context starting again in verse 22 *For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.* 23 *But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.* In verse 23 Paul introduces the concept of ranks in the resurrection when he writes: *...But every man in his own order:...* . In this study we have mentioned the following before, but it certainly is worthy of review here. The word “order” found here in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:23 comes from the Greek word “tagma” {tag'-mah} (number 5001 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance), which is found only this one time in scripture, and it means: (1) that which has been arranged in order, or a thing placed in order; (2) a body of soldiers, a corps; (3) a band, a troop, a class, a rank. Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words tells us that “tagma” {tag'-mah} signifies that which has been arranged in order, which is a military term denoting a company, and speaks of the various classes of those who have part in the first resurrection. In the military there are different ranks, and each rank, or band, or troop, marches in different orders at different times. The Apostle Paul likens the resurrection to this. Simply put there are different ranks in the resurrection, and Paul expounds this doctrine in 1 CORINTHIANS 15. The

only way we are going to see ranks in the resurrection is with Holy Spirit enlightened eyes of faith.

We have a picture of ranks in the army noted of the children of Israel written about in EXODUS 12 and 13. In EXODUS 12:17 & 51 the Lord God brings the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies. Now we also know that the children of Israel had been slaves in the land of Egypt for over four hundred years at this time, and that they didn't have organized armies as we view them in these chapters, but that is not how God saw them, for He saw them by their armies. Armies are arranged by their ranks, are they not? In EXODUS 13:18 we read: *But God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red sea: and the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt.* This word harnessed comes from a Hebrew word "chamush" {khaw-moosh'} (number 2571 in Strong's Hebrew Concordance), and is a military term meaning: in battle array, arrayed for battle by five's, armed; by five in a rank; and thus shows us that it was by GRACE that the children of Israel were redeemed by the mighty hand of the Lord out of the land of bondage in Egypt, just like it is by GRACE that we were redeemed from the life of sin that we were conceived in. The ranks in the redeemed children of Israel out of Egypt is a type to us, and shows to us that there are ranks in the redeemed in the resurrection.

Now let's take what we have been taught here one step further, as Paul did in his **heavenly** teaching. Above we learned of the two Adam's as was noted in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:47 *The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from **heaven**.* The first Adam being the natural man Adam, and the last Adam being none other than the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven. 1 TIMOTHY 2:13 adds this note: *For Adam was first formed, then Eve.* Eve was the bride of Adam, Adam's wife. Jesus Christ too, like the first man Adam, will have a wife, as noted in EPHESIANS 5:32 *This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.* Recall from GENESIS 2 how Eve was formed: GENESIS 2:21 *And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; 22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made (built, builded) he a woman, and brought her unto the man. 23 And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. 24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.* The wife of Jesus Christ, like the wife of Adam, will come out of the sleeping body of Christ, (the church), a small closest to the heart rib portion of full overcoming Saints, and she will be called the Bride of Christ. Certainly in this present church age this fact has remained a mystery, but not all of Adam became Eve, only a small rib portion.

In Paul's teaching his **heavenly** doctrine, he taught that there are ranks in the redeemed in the resurrection, which we learned about in studying 1 CORINTHIANS 15:23 above. The first rank will be the Bride of Christ, which we also have termed a full overcomer. The Bride of Christ is a full grown mature believer, who has set her affection on Jesus Christ; one who has suffered with Him in order to reign with Him (see 2 TIMOTHY 2:12, and ROMANS 8:16-18). She is pictured by the Smyrna Saints of REVELATION 2, and the Philadelphia Saints of REVELATION 3. Only these Saints are found with crowns in REVELATION 2 & 3. She is found in the midst of the throne with Jesus, and round about the throne as the four living creatures in REVELATION 4 & 5. In REVELATION 4:7 we find that she bears the image of the **heavenly**, and has the characteristics of Jesus Christ the Lamb of God: *And the first creature was like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face as of a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle.* The lion is the king of beasts, and Jesus is pictured as the King of Kings in the gospel of MATTHEW. The calf, or lowly ox, is the servant to man, and in the gospel of MARK Jesus is pictured as the servant. LUKE pictures the man, the one perfect man Christ Jesus. The flying eagle is the king of birds, the king of the **heavenlies**, and as such pictures Jesus Christ the eternal **heavenly** one, whose **heavenly** story is found told in the gospel of JOHN. Again all of these characteristics are found in those who will be a part of that small rib portion company taken out of the body of Christ, known as the bride of Christ. The Bride of Christ first rank believers are seen in connection

with divine judicial authority as the cherubim and seraphim in scripture. Typical teaching of the Bride of Christ is found in GENESIS 24 in the story of a bride for Isaac. She is found illustrated as the virtuous woman of PROVERBS 31, the king's daughter of PSALMS 45, and the bride in THE SONG OF SOLOMON. REVELATION 19:7 tells us: *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.* How did the bride of Christ make herself ready? By being saved only? Or was it by spending her Christian lifetime learning all she could about her lovely Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Here at Living Waters Tabernacle we spend hours teaching and learning the deeper things of God, focusing on becoming full overcomers, and finding out just what it means to be in the Bride of Christ, and a first rank full overcomer. No wonder Brother Hill often said "come thou with us, we will do you good."

We mentioned briefly above that this first rank of believers, the full overcomers of this church age, the Bride of Christ in other words, are those found of the Philadelphia church of REVELATION 3:7-13. Hours could be spent just on these verses studying their fine qualities. I want to reference one verse in this portion: REVELATION 3:10 *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.* Here in verse 10 is revealed a mystery, which most Christians do not see or understand. The mystery is found in the phrase "*the hour of temptation,*" which is known to us as the tribulation that so soon will come upon the world. The reason most Christians don't view the tribulation as we do is because they are taught that they will be kept from the hour of tribulation (temptation) like it says here in REVELATION 3:10. Make no mistake about it, all the full overcomers of the Philadelphia rank will be kept out of the tribulation, "*the hour of temptation*" spoken of here in REVELATION 3:10, however all Christians who are alive at the soon coming of our Lord and Saviour will not be in this Philadelphia rank. This is what the majority of Christians miss. They miss this because they are not taught the facts of scripture. They are not taught the facts of scripture because their teachers for the most part, and this includes the pastors, and so called scholars, do not know or rightly divide the word of truth. Often their focus is upon worldly things, not **heavenly** things. This brings us to the fact that the majority of Christians will miss God's best, and go into the time of tribulation, which is so soon coming upon the world. Most Christians, and Christian teachers, and especially Christian scholars, do not recognize the overcoming qualities found in the Bride of Christ. Most Christians have been taught that the whole church is the Bride of Christ. Nowhere does the scripture teach this. If you mention ranks in the resurrection to most Christians, they do not have a clue what you are talking about. The Bride of Christ is mentioned here at Living Waters Tabernacle in nearly every sermon, and not once has the Bride of Christ been taught here at Living Waters Tabernacle as being the whole church. The fact is that the Bride of Christ receives the first rank rewards, coupled with the fact that this group of overcoming Saints will be married to Jesus. This Philadelphia Church of REVELATION 3 represents those full overcomers in the Bride of Christ. All Christians don't fit into this church in Philadelphia, though all could. Instead of elevating to the rank of full overcomers, most professing Christians today fall short of that overcoming rank, because, like those of Ephesus, they have left their first preeminent love (Christ Jesus) for some of what this world has to offer, and in this end time are like those of Laodicea who are neither hot nor cold to the things of God. Only a small rib portion of the body of Christ come out of Philadelphia, and Smyrna.

In this portion of our study on the life of Paul we are focusing on **heavenly** things, and have noted that the Bride of Christ is pictured by those in the church of Philadelphia. All Christians who are alive at the soon coming of our Lord and Saviour will not be in this Philadelphia rank. We find a majority of Christians from this church age arriving in **heaven** in REVELATION 7 in a completely different rank of believers. REVELATION 7:9 reads: *After these things I saw, and behold, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands.* Let's now note a couple of things in that phrase found in this verse ...*standing before the*

throne and before the Lamb... . Here we see that the great innumerable multitude standing before the throne, and before the Lamb. There is a difference between sitting and standing. In REVELATION 4:6 we find the four living ones in the midst of the throne, that is seated next to Jesus, but here in REVELATION 7:9 we see the innumerable multitude standing before the throne, and before the Lamb; an obvious different place and position than that of the full-overcomers. Those of REVELATION 7:9 are of a different rank than those of REVELATION 4 & 5. Those of REVELATION 7:9 are of a different rank than those of the church of Philadelphia, the Bride of Christ.

In REVELATION 7:15 we again see this great innumerable multitude of whom it is stated: *Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.* Note here in verse 15 that this innumerable multitude takes their place *...before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple...*, in other words they have taken their chosen place as servants, and as such they serve God day and night in His temple. The Philadelphia Saints are found to be *...a pillar in the temple of my God...* in REVELATION 3:12. There is a great difference between a servant in the temple of God and a pillar in the temple of God. A pillar refers to a solid main support, and in the case of a pillar in the temple of God it speaks of a full overcoming Saint who is solid in the things of God, a main support in the center of the temple (if you will). We find that the full-overcomers were made *...kings and priests...* in REVELATION 5:10. This shows a far different place than that of a servant. Again those in the innumerable multitude of REVELATION 7:9 are of a different rank than those of the church of Philadelphia. We see the innumerable multitude referred to again as servants in REVELATION 19, specifically in verses 5 and 6, which reads: *And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. 6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.* In REVELATION 22:3 we read: *and his servants shall serve him...* . Let's look at REVELATION 22 for a moment, and notice some other things about these servants. REVELATION 22 speaks about a time after the millennial kingdom age, and there we read: *1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. 2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him. 4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.* Again we see a big difference between those of the church of Philadelphia, and those of the innumerable multitude.

Here is another difference between the full overcomers of Philadelphia and those of the innumerable multitude. REVELATION 7:9 *After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; 10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.* Why doesn't this innumerable multitude go on and state *...Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. ...For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth...* ? {See REVELATION 4:11 and 5:9 & 10} Because they have only recognized Him as their Saviour, and didn't enter into the deeper things of God, the training things that would have made them too kings and priests. 1 CORINTHIANS 14:20 states: *Brethren, be not children in understanding...*, and 2 PETER 3:18 instructs us to *...grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* The Philadelphia full overcomers grow up into a mature Saint in Christ Jesus, and in so doing make themselves ready to be the wife of Jesus.

In studying this *...great multitude, which no man could number...* let's next for a moment

consider what REVELATION 7:13-17 has to say about them. REVELATION 7:13 *And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? 14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest.* In verse 13 we find one of the Old Testament full-overcomers asking John a couple of questions. The reason that questions are asked in the first place is “in seeking to learn or in testing another’s knowledge,” according to Webster’s Dictionary. These questions were asked in order to aid the Apostle John’s learning as to what it was he was seeing, and were not asked to embarrass him: *What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?* If you don’t know the answer to a question the simplest thing you can do is state “I don’t know,” and that is exactly what the Apostle John does in verse 14 when he states ...*Sir, thou knowest.* Thus the elder gets to answer these questions that he himself asked; *What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?* And the answer found in verses 14-17: *And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. 16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. 17 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.* Note in verse 14 that this innumerable multitude ...*came out of great tribulation.*

Note again what REVELATION 3:10 says: *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.* Consider just the Christians of the world today in this statement. How many Christians today have really kept “the word of my patience?” How many Christians today even know what the word of God says? How many Christians today rightly divide the word of truth? How many Christians today even have a Bible with a correct translation of scripture? The Philadelphia Saint’s know the word of God, they know a correct translation of scripture from a popular false translation of scripture, and have ...*kept the word of my patience...* as noted here in REVELATION 3:10.

The above discussion came about as we examined some of what Paul taught concerning **heavenly** things. We made mention of the fact that there are twenty-two verse found in scripture where the word “**heavenly**” is found, and thirteen of these verses come from Paul’s gospel record. However only four of Paul’s epistles contain the thirteen verses where Paul writes the word “**heavenly**.” 1 CORINTHIANS, EPHESIANS, HEBREWS, and 2 TIMOTHY. We have now looked at the verses in 1 CORINTHIANS where Paul wrote the word “**heavenly**” three times, so we next will give a quick mention that Paul wrote the word “**heavenly**” four time in EPHESIANS. Keep in mind also that Paul penned EPHESIANS about five years after writing 1 CORINTHIANS. 1 CORINTHIANS was written before Paul was arrested in Jerusalem, and EPHESIANS was written while Paul was a prisoner in Rome during his first imprisonment. All of this means that Paul had five more years of learning about **heavenly** things under his belt when he wrote his EPHESIANS epistle. Recall also how we have mentioned many times before in this study of how Brother Hill referenced the book of EPHESIANS as the high water mark epistle of scripture! **Heavenly** Bridal teaching is amplified in EPHESIANS as we have noted many times before. We just looked at some thoughts concerning the Bride of Christ taken from EPHESIANS 5. {See pages 1508 and 1511 of these notes.} In EPHESIANS 3:6 we found the **heavenly** teaching ...*That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.* All believers won’t be “joint-heirs with Christ” even though this provision is made for them during this church age. The most profound, and complete meaning of the Greek word sugkleronomos, translated “fellowheirs” in EPHESIANS 3:6, is joint-heir, or co-inheritor as of a wife with her husband! After making this statement in EPHESIANS 3:6 Paul writes the following sentence starting in verse 8 -- *Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; 9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the*

mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: 10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in **heavenly** places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, 11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: 12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. So we note that as Paul grew in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ in his Christian walk that his teaching became more and more **heavenly**, if we could express it like that. Thus from his prison room Paul also wrote the following **heavenly** statements found in EPHESIANS. EPHESIANS 1:3 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in **heavenly** places in Christ.* I remember Brother Hill often referencing this verse asking us: How much are you blessed? A majority of Christians can't answer such a question, not realizing we are already blessed with all spiritual blessings in **heavenly** places in Christ Jesus. Why can't they answer this question? Because for the most part their focus is upon earthly things, not **heavenly**. Another **heavenly** statement is found in EPHESIANS 1:20 *Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the **heavenly** places.* EPHESIANS 2:6 tells us where the Christian's seat is: *And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in **heavenly** places in Christ Jesus.*

The next book where Paul writes the word "**heavenly**" is HEBREWS, where we find "**heavenly**" mentioned in six different verses, a couple of which we will look at in a little more depth. Before we do, here is the list of six verses: HEBREWS 3:1, 6:4, 8:5, 9:23, 11:16, and 12:22. In HEBREWS 3:1 we see where Paul's attention was focused, and where our focus should be also: *Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the **heavenly** calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.* No worldly vision here, only a **heavenly** focus. Note in the six "**heavenly**" verses referenced above that one is found in HEBREWS 11. We have spoken of verses from HEBREWS 11 often in this study as they point to the worthies of faith from Old Testament times. In HEBREWS 11:16 we find a statement concerning the joint-heirs of Abraham: *But now they desire a better country, that is, an **heavenly**: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.* It took the inspiration of the Holy Ghost to reveal to Paul the full scope of the faith that Abraham had, and his **heavenly** vision. HEBREWS 11:8-19 concerning Abraham's faith is one part of Paul's gospel message, that neither Paul's Pharisee Father, nor his gifted Pharisee teacher Gamaliel had anything to do with Paul's learning this.

HEBREWS 11:8 *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. 9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 10 **For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.** {This is a **heavenly** vision is it not?} 11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. 12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. 13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. 15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. 16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an **heavenly**: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city. 17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, 18 Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: 19 Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.*

A few short months before Paul wrote this he had penned his letter to the PHILIPPIANS. A quick over view of PHILIPPIANS 3 reveals three main subject areas. In PHILIPPIANS 3:4-6 Paul

recalls his natural past of being of the finest stock of Israel, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, a Pharisee found blameless as far as law keeping was concerned. Yet this pedigree was of no value to Paul in wining Christ as his Bridegroom. In verses 7-13 Paul lays aside his earthly pedigree, and seeks the closest of fellowship with Jesus Christ, seeing Him in everything, and in all things, all the while gaining knowledge of Christ Jesus from the highest perspective possible, the Holy Ghost being his teacher and guide. With such guidance Paul wanted to attain unto this **heavenly** high calling whatever the cost with the end result being to apprehend the prize, which ultimately would be to be called into that select company collectively know as the Bride of Christ. Paul expresses it like this in PHILIPPIANS 3:14, the high water mark verse of this chapter: *I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*. Yet this prize winning quest wasn't exclusive to Paul. Verses 15-21 of PHILIPPIANS 3 deals with our future too! In PHILIPPIANS 3:17 Paul encourages all of us, writing: *Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample*. Verse 20 tells us why: *20 For our conversation is in **heaven**; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:...* . The word conversation translates as citizenship, such as "our citizenship is in **heaven**." Another way of saying this is "our life as citizens is in **heaven**." As such we are then pilgrims here on earth, so how then should we mind earthly things? This is exactly the point Paul was making here. We like Abraham are sojourners down here on earth (HEBREWS 11:9). Paul counted his citizenship in **heaven** as paramount, and around the same time he wrote PHILIPPIANS he put this in his epistle to the COLOSSIANS in 3:2 *Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth*. Paul had a **heavenly** vision.

So we find Paul's heart and mind focused on **heavenly** things above as he writes in HEBREWS 11:8-19 of the faith of Abraham. In fact Paul was talking about the lives of faith that the Old Testament full overcomers had as he wrote HEBREWS 11. And one of the deeper points he was making in going through their lives of faith was that their faith in God took them farther, and higher than even they could imagine. Paul was really noting that there were no limits, by faith, in what God could do. God took simple common people, who by their faith in God were able to do impossible things. God took some of these very same people and made them royalty even while they were here on earth. Men like Joseph, and Moses, and David, and Daniel just to mention a few. Through the lineage of Sarah, and Rahab, and Ruth, icons of faith themselves, came the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, that being Jesus Christ Himself. Such then was the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all who believe, according to ROMANS 4:16.

So let's read this again in HEBREWS 11:9 & 10 & 16 of the faith of Abraham: *9 By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: 10 **For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.** ...16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an **heavenly**: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city*. Paul then in HEBREWS chapters 12 and 13 expounds some more on where our **heavenly** focus should be writing in HEBREWS 12:1 *Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God*. This is a **heavenly** setting is it not? Paul continues with this **heavenly** theme in HEBREWS 12:22 *But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the **heavenly** Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, 23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in **heaven**, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel*. And then in HEBREWS 13:14 Paul adds one more **heavenly** thought: *For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come*.

In Paul's concluding words of 2 TIMOTHY 4:18 he continues his **heavenly** perspective, and

magnifies the Lord with this statement *...to whom be **glory** for ever and ever. Amen.* This reference Paul makes to the Lord *...to whom be **glory** for ever and ever...* is quite profound, and draws our attention to the awesome **glory** of the Lord, whose brightness of His manifested **glory** we have limited comprehension of, nor have we yet witnessed, except by eyes of faith. In 1 CORINTHIANS 2:9 Paul tells us: *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* Among these things we haven't yet witnessed in its fullness is the magnificence, the excellence, the brightness, the splendor, the dignity, and the majesty of the Lord's **glory**. Ponder these thoughts on Lord's **glory** for a moment, and as you do, you too will have to take a **heavenly** perspective. Paul wrote in the verses preceding two verses of 1 CORINTHIANS 2:9 the following: 1 CORINTHIANS 2:7 *But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our **glory**: 8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of **glory**.*

Now there have been some privileged down through the centuries to glimpse for a brief moment the full brightness of the Lord's **glory**. One such man was Paul himself on the day he got saved on the road to Damascus. And we have many times in this study talked about that remarkable day when the man who called himself the chiefest of sinners gave his heart to the Lord, and allowed the Lord to take him to the place where he was not the least inferior behind the very chiefest apostles. {Review 1 TIMOTHY 1:15 and 2 CORINTHIANS 11:5.} Here is how Paul recalled that day of his salvation in ACTS 22:11 *And when I could not see for the **glory** of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus.* The brightness of the **glory** of the Lord blinded for a season Saul of Tarsus, our Apostle Paul! Paul then over his years as an Apostle was able to write many things concerning the brightness of the **glory** of the Lord. One such place is found in HEBREWS 1. HEBREWS 1:1 *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 3 Who being the brightness of his **glory**, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.* Jesus Himself had foretold of His **glory**, and prayed for His **glory** to be manifest again in His prayer of JOHN 17, (and other places too). JOHN 17:5 *And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the **glory** which I had with thee before the world was. ...22 And the **glory** which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: ...24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my **glory**, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.* Again this prayer of Jesus also references a **heavenly** scene.

We mentioned above that there have been some privileged down through the centuries to glimpse for a brief moment the Lord's **glory**, and one such man was Stephen himself in ACTS 7, who under the anointing of the Holy Ghost, and with his eyes fixed on **heaven**, made it plainly known what he saw as he spoke what turned out to be his final words here on earth. ACTS 7:55 *But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the **glory** of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, 56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.* Stephen saw the **glory** of God, and his testimony pricked the heart of one man named Saul of Tarsus, who later also saw the **glory** of the Lord for a brief moment on the road to Damascus as we noted above. Take note also as to what ACTS 6:15 had to say about Stephen as he appeared before the Sanhedrin council: ACTS 6:15 *And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.* How did they know what an angel looked like? What did they see? Was it a reflection of the **glory** of the Lord? Stephen also made mention in his sermon of ACTS 7 in verses 2 & 3 how that: *The God of **glory** appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, 3 And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I*

shall shew thee. Study on your own the life of Abraham how many times in his life the God of **glory** appeared unto Abraham, however in these appearances we do not read of the Lord God revealing Himself to Abraham in His full blaze of **glory** brightness. We will discuss more about this shortly.

Moses requested of the Lord to see His **glory** in EXODUS 33:18, and here is how the conversation between Moses and the Lord is recorded, Moses speaking first here in EXODUS 33:18 *...I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.* 19 *And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.* 20 *And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.* 21 *And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: 22 And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: 23 And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.*

In EXODUS 40 we read of another place where the **glory** of the Lord was manifest. In this chapter we find the tabernacle in the wilderness being completed, and we will start our reading in EXODUS 40 with the concluding words of verse 33. EXODUS 40:33 *So Moses finished the work.* 34 *Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.* 35 *And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.* 36 *And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their journeys: 37 But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. 38 For the cloud of the LORD was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.*

As we see here also the children of Israel got distant glimpses of the **glory** of the LORD. We read in EXODUS 13:21 & 22 -- *And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: 22 He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.* This pillar of fire was really a toned down version of the **glory** of the Lord. Sometimes along their journeys the Lord turned up the intensity of the visible view of His **glory** to the children of Israel. Here are a couple of examples of this. EXODUS 16:9 *And Moses spake unto Aaron, Say unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, Come near before the LORD: for he hath heard your murmurings.* 10 *And it came to pass, as Aaron spake unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud.* Next we read in EXODUS 24:16 *And the glory of the LORD abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days: and the seventh day he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud.* 17 *And the sight of the glory of the LORD was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.*

Another small group who got to witness first hand the **glory** of the Lord was the shepherds of Bethlehem on the night of our dear Saviors' birth. LUKE 2:8 *And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.* 9 *And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.* 10 *And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.* 11 *For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.* 12 *And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.* 13 *And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.* In this portion of scripture we find the glow of the **glory** of the Lord shining about the shepherds as the angel of the Lord appeared unto them. This was a visible light. In verse 14 the heavenly hosts were also manifest in a spirit of worship, praising God, and saying (not singing) *...Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.* The **glory** expressed here was a verbal manifestation, not a visible manifestation, where words were used to paint a picture of

the glorious majesty, the absolute perfection, which belongs to God as supreme ruler. **Glory** as spoken here also references the radiant splendor, and the bliss of heaven, God being the source, and center-piece (if you will) of such admiration.

We get another example, and a different side of this word “**glory**” in JOHN the first chapter, where the Apostle John is writing his introduction of Jesus Christ the Son of God the eternal ageless heavenly One, and in JOHN 1:14 the Apostle John writes: *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his **glory**, the **glory** as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.* Now John wrote this after Jesus death and resurrection, and after being filled with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, so take note here especially what John wrote in the parenthesis: *(and we beheld his **glory**, the **glory** as of the only begotten of the Father,).* When did John realize this? Was it at the time Jesus was here on earth, or was it afterwards, or both? JOHN 2:11 helps answer this question, for there we find Jesus performing His first miracle of turning the water into exquisite wine. JOHN 2:11 *This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his **glory**; and his disciples believed on him.* The original Greek of this verse reads: “This beginning of the signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee. And (it) revealed His **glory**, and His disciples believed in Him.” There was no outward blinding flash of brightness here as the **glory** of the Lord was revealed here, much like when the God of **glory** appeared to Abraham above. Yet a layer of Jesus **glory** was manifest here, and Jesus disciples saw it, and believed on Him. Back to JOHN 1:14 where John writes: *(and we beheld his **glory**, the **glory** as of the only begotten of the Father,).* It seems it took years before John fully recognized, and appreciated the fact that those three years he spent with Jesus here on earth were years beyond compare, and John pauses in thought as he writes this epiphany: ‘...and to think that we his disciples actually got to behold His **glory**, the **glory** as of the only begotten of the Father, wow. And we got to see this **glory** for three plus years, and we got to see Him glorified after His resurrection, and we got to see Him taken up into **glory** again. Wow.’ Really words were inadequate to describe what John felt, and saw here, but John tried to convey this feeling in his 21 chapters of the book of JOHN. And as we will see in the following discussion, John did get to also witness the brightness of the **glory** of the Lord, but this incident is not recorded in his gospel record other than in this parenthetical statement of JOHN 1:14 *(and we beheld his **glory**, the **glory** as of the only begotten of the Father).*

And when John wrote *(and we beheld his **glory**, the **glory** as of the only begotten of the Father,)* the “we” he referenced not only included himself, but the other disciples who followed Jesus during His time here on earth. Peter along with John were prominent among these disciples, and both wrote more than one book of our New Testament scripture. In 2 PETER we find the Apostle Peter writing some things at near the end of his life, much like Paul was doing in his second epistle he wrote to Timothy. Let’s read a little from 2 PETER 1, and as we read this note how Peter near the end of his life was still in awe, just like John was that *(...we beheld his **glory**, the **glory** as of the only begotten of the Father,).* 2 PETER 1:13 *Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; 14 Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. 15 Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance. 16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17 For he received from God the Father honour and **glory**, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent **glory**, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. 18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.*

This incident is recorded in MATTHEW 17:1-8, MARK 9:2-8, and LUKE 9:27-36, but not mentioned in JOHN as we noted above. Let’s read the account found in LUKE 9. LUKE 9:27 *But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.* Before we read further let me ask the question, considering what we just said in the above discussion, what do you expect to see in the kingdom of God? Too many things to

describe in one sitting for sure, but prominent will be the **glory** of God. Now reading on here in LUKE 9:28 *And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.* (Above we just read some things concerning the **glory** of the Lord which both Peter, and John wrote in their scriptural records. Now here we find Peter and John together about to witness something together.) LUKE 9:29 *And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering.* 30 *And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias:* 31 *Who appeared in **glory**, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.* 32 *But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his **glory**, and the two men that stood with him.* 33 *And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said.* 34 *While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.* 35 *And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.* 36 *And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.* MARK 9:7-9 records it like this: *And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.* 8 *And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.* 9 *And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.* So we see that Peter and John were not allowed to tell others about this incident when they witnessed ...his **glory**, the **glory** as of the only begotten of the Father... until after Jesus death and resurrection. Peter late in life, after thinking about this for years finally put it in the words we read above from 2 PETER 1:16-18 writing that he was ...eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and **glory**, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent **glory**, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. Likewise the Apostle John too waited years after Jesus resurrection to express in JOHN 1:14 the words we read above: and to think ...we beheld his **glory**, the **glory** as of the only begotten of the Father.

Let's note one more thing here as we read about the **glory** of the Lord, which both Peter and John witnessed in His brightness that day of His transfiguration before them. Peter was the one who had something to say about this incident, which we read in LUKE 9:33 above: *Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said.* The God of **glory** heard Peter's words, knowing the intentions of Peter's heart. Thus we read in LUKE 9:34 & 35 -- *While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.* 35 *And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.* Here's the meaning: Moses represents the law, and Elijah the prophets. The law and the prophets had their place in Old Testament times, but the law and the prophets were forerunners who pointed out the way to Jesus, who shed His blood as the New Testament witness that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. {Study ROMANS 10:14.} Peter in his utterance of LUKE 9:33 put the law and the prophets on a par with Jesus. Because of this, God, in the form of a cloud overshadowed Peter, John, James and Jesus, and spoke: *This is my beloved Son: hear him.* In other words, the law and the prophets had their place, but now Jesus must occupy center stage, not Moses or Elijah. HEAR HIM. Two words with emphasis: HEAR HIM. This is also the message for us today, and the Apostle Paul also understood this, and wrote in HEBREWS 1:1 *God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,* 2 *Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;* 3 *Who being the brightness of his **glory**, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.* HEAR HIM. Hear the words of Jesus. Our Apostle Paul did, and the Lord gave

Paul His gospel message. And we are to be followers of Paul as he followed Christ according to 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1; 1 CORINTHIANS 4:16; and PHILIPPIANS 3:17.

Concluding Thoughts

This then brings us to our concluding thoughts in this study on the life of the Apostle Paul. Now think about this for a moment, Paul's life as an Apostle didn't begin the day he was born, but rather the life of the Apostle Paul really began the day he saw on the road to Damascus the brightness of the Lord's glory, and heard Jesus voice saying unto him: *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* {ACTS 9:4; 22:7; 26:14.} Jesus said in JOHN 5:24 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.* Saul of Tarsus, our Apostle Paul, at that instant called upon the name of the Lord now believing indeed that the Lord Jesus Christ was indeed raised from the dead, and was now speaking unto him. ROMANS 10:9 tells us: *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.* It was at this time when old Saul of Tarsus passed from death unto life, and was born again, and was told by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself in that same conversation that he would become the future Apostle Paul, though this transformation took about three to five years to complete. GALATIANS 1:15-24 explains this period of time in Paul's life like this: *But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, 16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: 17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. 18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. 19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. 20 Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. 21 Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; 22 And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ: 23 But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. 24 And they glorified God in me.*

Back up for a moment again to the day when Paul was born again on the road to Damascus. The glory of the brightness of the Lord's glory manifested to him on the road to Damascus left him blind for a season of three days. Paul was led by the hand of those who traveled with him unto Damascus, where he remained without sight, and wasn't able to eat or drink anything. All he could do was pray. Meanwhile the Lord Himself in a vision appeared unto Ananias of Damascus, and told this very devout man to go put his hands on Paul, then still known as Saul of Tarsus, and pray for him. After some convincing by the Lord, Ananias of Damascus did just that; he went and found where Saul of Tarsus was, and he ...*putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost...* ACTS 9:17. Two things happened here to Saul of Tarsus, do you know what these two things were? One, he immediately received his sight (ACTS 9:18), and two, he was filled with the Holy Ghost, which in turn opened his spiritual eyes to begin see with the guidance of the Holy Ghost all truth, just as Jesus had told his disciples in JOHN 16:13-15. JOHN 16:13 *Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. 14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. 15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.* Few, if any, had ever learned and followed the law like Saul of Tarsus. To the Jews in Jerusalem in ACTS 22:3 Paul said: *I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.* In PHILIPPIANS 3:4-6 Paul wrote: *Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man*