Spanning the Gulf

 A Brief Commentary

 by

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 Spanning the Gulf

*Luke 16:26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.*

The above scripture refers to a rich man who had died and was in torment, He was calling to Abraham for help but Abraham told him he could not help because there was a great gulf between them and therefore, he couldn’t come to him. There is a great gulf between us and God today. That gulf is caused by man’s sin, and that gulf can be spanned by no one except our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Man continues to try to make himself presentable to God, but all attempts are futile. Only Christ can save.We are saved only by God’s grace and that salvation comes only through Christ’s shed blood.Therefore, we can do nothing but put our faith in the finished work of Christ and trust Him for our salvation.

*Galatians 2:16-18 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.* ***But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners****, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid. For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.*

*Galatians 3:1-3 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you,* ***Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?***  *Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?*

What the Apostle Paul is trying to explain to these Jewish Christians is that they were saved by the Blood of Christ, not by the law, and if they try to put themselves back under the law, that is sin. The law could not span the gulf between God and man. The law can only show us the we are sinners in need of salvation. It was Christ who paid the penalty for our sin, and He did span that gulf, therefore we are justified by Christ, not by the law.

The following verse written by the Apostle Paul under the direction of the Holy Spirit, pretty well defines Paul’s stand before the Lord:

*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.***

When Saul of Tarshish (**later re-named Paul**) met Christ on the road to Damascus, his whole life was changed. When he was stricken down there he cried out ***“Lord what wilt thou have me to do.”*** This is often the cry of sinners who meet the Lord in repentance. In fact Paul tells Timothy in 1 Timothy 1:16 that his salvation is a pattern for them which should hereafter believe on Him (Christ) to everlasting life.

*1 Timothy 1:16 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***

Saul a Pharisee, a ruler in the Jewish religion was by order of the high priest, busy capturing Christians, and having them persecuted for their beliefs.

*Acts 9:1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 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.*

That same Saul when he met Christ was forever changed, and he spent the rest of his earthly life serving and preaching Christ as the only hope for salvation. Yet he considered himself the least of the Apostles, and the chief of all sinners.

*1 Timothy 1:15 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.*

Verse 15 *“Christ came into the world to save sinners*.” Sinners like Paul, sinners like you and me. The law could not save Paul. Only Christ can save, only Christ can span that gulf between God and man.

**Christ our Saviour, of The Eternal Godhead, The Eternal Son, Creator of Heaven and Earth, Creator of man**, having given up His home in glory and taking upon Himself the body of man, suffered and died in our place, His body forever carrying the scars of His crucifixion.

It’s not possible for us to understand all that Christ did to redeem us. In every part of both Old and New Testaments, Christ is found working out our salvation and redeeming us. Animals slain for sacrifice in the Old Testament were a picture of the Saviour who would take away man’s sin.

In Genesis we see the Lord had respect for Abel’s offering, but not for Cain’s.

Why? Cain’s offering was evidently the **very best** of his crops. But --Abel’s offering was of the firstlings (best) of the flock. It was a blood sacrifice, declaring his belief that without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin, and looking forward to the coming Saviour.

The seed promised to Abraham, in which all nations of the world would be blessed, was Christ.

It was Christ who led the children of Israel in the wilderness as a cloud by day, and fire by night.

It was Christ who was the smitten Rock in the wilderness so they could drink. 1 Corinthians 10:4

It was Christ represented by the brazen serpent so they might look and live. (Doctors today wear that symbol) and many of them do not know what it means.

It was Christ of whom the prophets have inquired and search diligently.

*1 Pet 1:10,11*  *Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.*

It is Christ we need to find as we read our Bible, for only in Christ is there salvation, only Christ has spanned the gulf between man and God.

*John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

I believe in the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. All three of the Godhead have a very definite part in our salvation. But we must first come to know Christ who came to save us. He will acquaint us with the Father, and the Holy Spirit.

God can see us only through the Blood of Christ:

*Romans 3:26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness:* ***that he might be just, and the******justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.***

It is the shed blood of Christ for our sins that opens the way for our salvation.

*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*

*1 Timothy 2:5: For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;*

Only Christ can stand before God the Father, and plead our case, for only Christ spanned the great gulf between us and God.

Many attorney’s are biased, and want only to make money. They want to win a case for their own reputation, no matter whether the person is guilty or innocent. Many others do not do their homework, and as a result lose their case. Often court appointed attorneys have such a work load that they cannot take the time needed to prepare a proper case.

Christ is unbiased, and his findings are correct. Based on God’s Holy law we are all found guilty, **however, Christ paid the penalty**. Therefore, we are found guiltless before God..  **Jesus has never lost a case.** Christ died for our sin paying the penalty for us, this is how He spanned the gulf.

However, if you reject Christ as your Saviour, you are not only found guilty, but you must pay the penalty for your sin yourself, and you will hear God pronounce the sentence.......

***Matthew 7:23: And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.***

Where will you depart to:

***Matthew 25:41: Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:***

Have you trusted Christ for salvation, have you committed everything to Him? If so then you will be judged, not by your life, but by His. For it is by His righteousness imputed to us that we can enter Heaven.

We sing a song “At Calvary”

The last verse of that song is so beautiful.

“Oh the love that drew salvation’s plan, Oh the grace that brought it down to man, **Oh the mighty gulf that GOD did span,** At Calvary.”

Christ spanned that gulf without changing God’s standard of Holiness. For He was without sin and He died for us sinners, taking our sin, and imputing to us His righteousness.

Because of sin there is a great gulf between you and God. That gulf was spanned for you by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,

providing you are trusting Him as your Saviour.

Is Christ your Saviour today?