***The Great Expectation, No. 1 - PH21-02  
  
Advanced Bible Doctrine - Philippians 1:19-20***

In Philippians 1:19-20, we are going to be looking at something that we may entitle The Great Expectation. The Bible records many examples of believers who once were very mature spiritually and who were producing divine good service, but who fell in what we have been describing as spiritual retrogression or a condition of reversionism. We have only to think of such people as: Abraham; David; Solomon; Peter; Paul; Ananias and Sapphira; John Mark; Demas; and, the whole Corinthian church, just to name a few. There have been many who once were at a point of spiritual maturity, but who fell into spiritual incapacity. Such were some of the Christians who were in Rome which is the background here of the letter to the Philippians who were negligent to instruction which came from the apostle Paul, and were antagonistic and opposed to his leadership. This was by specific design in order to bring additional burdens to him in the imprisonment that he already suffered.

The road to carnality is wide, and it's well traveled. Consequently, we never lack any company to encourage us on that road in our downward slide from maturity to immaturity. However the road of spirituality is narrow, and it is under constant demonic attack. It is under constant harassment. It is one problem; one roadblock; and, one obstacle after another. It is constantly under a system of interdict because Satan is seeking to keep you from moving forward on that road. Therefore, there are obstacles and there are oppositions to your mind to keep you from moving up the road of spiritual maturity.

Well, the time spent in reversionism is always very costly to ourselves. It is costly to those who are near to us. It is costly to members of our family. It is costly to other believers who are closely associated with us. Very often when we are in this condition of reversionism, we come up with a pseudo spiritual maturity structure which deceives us into thinking that we are something other than we are, and our true condition of reversion is not realized. In other words, we're faking it. This is often very impressive to other people around us. They, if they are not spiritually discerning, do not realize that we are faking it. Therefore, the intake of God's Word and the positive response to the doctrine that we learn is the protection against reversionism. The demons are forever substituting something other than the Word of God. They are trying to sell us on something else instead of this that God has provided for spiritual development and spiritual maturity.

Remember that we're talking about Christians. The world out there is way out. It already is spiritually devastated and disoriented. We're talking about Christians who moved on with God; who came into spiritual understanding; and, then blew it. Therefore, before we leave this subject (and we will be coming back to it again in the course of the study of this book), let's summarize the whole concept of going backwards in the Christian life into the spiritual disaster zone of reversionism.

**Reversionism**

1. Reversionism is the end result of super backsliding from a mature spiritual maturity structure. It is the result of consistent persistent carnality. A Christian who goes negative to the Word of God or is indifferent to the Word of God starts on the road down. You can always start retrogressing anywhere along the line of your spiritual life, but when you come to the top and then go all the way down to the bottom, the bottom point is reversionism. The process is retrogression.
2. Reversionism is accompanied by emotional domination of the soul and calluses on the facets of the soul. The reversionistic Christian is always emotionally oriented. He is always a person who tries to think with his emotions. He operates on how he feels about things. He does not operate on the objective information of what God thinks as he has learned it from the Word of God. The poor average Christian who sits in the average church situation doesn't have a chance because he is seldom really brought into an understanding of what God thinks. He is never taught the principles of the Word of God. Therefore, how can he be objective? How can he operate in his life on what he thinks? He can't. Therefore, what does he do? He reverts to his emotional controls and his emotional domination.
3. The principle of reversionism is described in Galatians 5:4 as falling from grace. It is falling from a spiritual maturity structure functioning at the super grace level, and just falling away from that into complete incapacity spiritually. That is falling from grace.
4. The reversionistic Christian has gone negative to Bible doctrine. That's where it all starts. One of the most common areas of negative response to the Word of God is the verse that cautions us not to neglect attending church services: "Neglect not the assembling of yourselves together." That's the admonition of Scripture. That's one of the prime points of negative reaction that begins a person on the road down from reversionism. You cannot survive in your Christian life if you do not attend church services and the Bible instruction times. There is no way you can make it. I care not what your background is. So the reversionistic Christians started on this road by going negative to the Word of God. This means rejection of true doctrine, and thus of true divine viewpoint.

This Christian is sporadic in his attendance at church services; he is negligent of any personal bible study; and, he is the Christian who just absolutely never listens to audio recordings of Bible study. There are vast, profitable, valued, considered, worked out, analyzed, prepared studies of the Word of God. Fantastic information lies in those folders of MP3 files. This is the Christian who never thinks that he needs to listen to those at home. He never needs to supplement his study of the Word of God during the week. He wants entertainment, actually, more than he wants instruction. This is the one who's kind of bored in church. If he goes to church where they instruct in the Word of God, he's the one who leaves and makes some smart-alec remark like, "Well, it's been a long time since I've been back in the classroom."

The reversionist rejects the instruction of his right pastor-teacher. He is cool toward the man who is delivering God's straight scoop to him. Often he is cool because he resents the views that are being delivered. He doesn't enter into those views. He doesn't share those views, and he assumes that, therefore, those views are wrong. The pastor-teacher's authority is a thing that must be respected in the local church. I realize that the authority of a pastor-teacher does not stem from who or what he is or because he has been given a certain declaration by the congregation that he is in charge (which, of course, he has to have). That's how he comes into his position of authority. The congregation says, "You're the commander-in-chief of this local assembly. You're in charge."

His authority actually flows from the fact that he performs the functions of teaching doctrine. If he does not teach the Word of God, he will not carry any authority with anyone. Therefore, the poor average preacher in the poor average church is really a sad sack of potatoes in the eyes of the congregation. He is nothing more than just another good Joe to socialize with; another good organizer; and, another good person to pay his personnel to run the church team; watch the operation; and, take care of the properties. But they do not see in him God's channel of communication. They can never see that in him unless he is taking the trouble to learn the Word and then to explain it.

So this is his job. I'll tell you what many pastors do. What they do instead, when they don't study, and they don't prepare, and so they can't explain the Word of God, then they have to come up with a cover-up program. The cover-up program is to lead people to put the pastor on a pedestal. Preachers deliberately, in a professional way, go about putting themselves on a pedestal in the eyes of the people. They speak in a certain pontifical way. They act in a certain way. They walk around constantly with a very aloof and heavenly smile on their face. Sometimes there's a faint flicker of looking like they smell something bad, which is all these people down below them standing around the pedestal. They simply put themselves up in an esteem as star personalities.

The result of this is that it causes the congregation to get its eyes on the pastor instead of Jesus Christ. In time, the congregation is going to be burned. This is because, with the pastor-teacher having an old sin nature, sooner or later, they're going to discover that he doesn't belong on a pedestal anymore than anyone else does. His authority does not come because he's standing up there above the crowd. His authority comes from the fact that he is able to explain the Word of God and handle his own spiritual problems like anybody else, and better than anybody else. The cover-up system that preachers use for lack of being able to instruct, and to seek to gain authority in the eyes of the congregation by putting themselves on a pedestal is devastating to the individual member of the congregation.

Therefore, don't fall for that. The pastor-teacher gift was never meant to qualify anybody for elevation above anyone else. It was only meant as a good means of communication. His authority in the local church does not stem from the fact that he has sinless perfection or that he can meet someone else's ideas of what they think a preacher should be or a preacher should do. However, it comes from the fact that he has clear doctrinal instruction to the people of God.

I'll tell you something else. When that pastor-teacher refuses to let anybody put him on a pedestal, and when he preoccupies himself with hard core instruction in the Word of God, those of us in the ministry who have discussed this with one another have all discovered a common factor in congregations. I've been very fascinated in talking other pastors who have had big congregations or small congregations, all in different places. They all come with one consistent pattern. In their experience, they found that the more intense they became on instructing people in the Word of God, the less apologetic they were about telling it the way it is as God has laid it out in the Word of God. The more forceful they were in expository preaching and application of that truth, they discovered a very strange phenomenon taking place in their congregations. That was simply this:

The more intense they were at teaching doctrine, the faster the nice Christians in the congregation and the pillars of the church deserted to go to some other church. When you're in the ministry, you think that that's kind of a unique phenomenon within your own situation. But it is amazing to talk to other pastors and say, "That happened to you too? That's exactly what happened in my church. The more I determined to devote myself to the Word of God, and less to anything else, so that I could deliver to the people of God that which was going to save them in a nation torn up by apostasy and doomed on every account to be able to survive as individuals, the faster the nice Christians and the pillars rose up in indignation and deserted."

These are the ones who are 100 percent behind you. These are the ones who often had false motivation in their own service like these people in Rome. The pastor-teacher must spot false motivation. You have to work with it all the time, and if you're discerning, you spot it. You work within the context of hoping to guide that person's efforts to where it will be from right motivation. But to spot it is to compound the disaster. Consequently, God often will lead the reversionistic rebels out of a congregation for this very simple reason: in order to bring peace and to bring freedom for the expression of the Word of God within that congregation. When God leads the reversionistic rebels out, there is a sense of breathing a sigh of relief. There is a sense of a sigh of freedom for the Word of God. There is a cleansing breeze of doctrine flowing through the congregation that somehow seems to be polluted up to that point. Putting yourself on a pedestal as a pastor is bad business. The question is, what is being delivered to me as an individual believer from the Word of God? That is the thing that counts. When that is done, it soon shows what the false motivations are. Those are the people who scoot the fastest.

1. We have biblical descriptions of reversionistic Christians. In Jeremiah 9:25-26, they're called "those with the uncircumcised heart." In 2 Peter 2:7-8, they're described as having "a tortured soul." 2 Peter 2:14 describes them as "an unstable soul." Romans 1:28 describes them as having "a reprobate mind."

Recovery from reversionism requires confession of sins to return to the status of spirituality and to the daily functioning under the grace system of learning Bible doctrine. If you find yourself in the status of reversionism, or if you find yourself on the road of retrogression, the first thing you do is say, "Wait a minute." And you go to the Lord and you make confession of that sin and confession of anything else that's involved. Then you turn to the study of the Word of God. And the farther you have been out of it, the more of a crash program you need in returning to the Word of God. Hebrews 6 describes for us a group of Christians who fell into reversionism. They were in a state of apostasy, and until they had corrected that condition, they could not begin to move on back. When they did move on back, they had to start with baby elementary stuff all over again. That's what reversionism does to your understanding of the Word of God and to your spiritual insights.

Reversionism leads Christians to false objects of affection and loyalty. It is characteristic of a reversionistic Christian that he chooses the wrong thing. He chooses the wrong people; he chooses the wrong church; he chooses the wrong pastor; he chooses the wrong friends; he chooses the wrong person to marry; and, he chooses the wrong employment. He is disloyal to the things that he ought to be loyal to, and he is loyal to the things he should reject. This is because he has a distorted twisted mind. Thus, instead of occupation with Christ, that is replaced by devotion to some idle object like drugs; sex; booze; social status; wealth; or, something else. He substitutes for occupation with Christ to some idle object.

Instead of being devoted to her right man or his right woman, that individual is replaced in his affection by some unimportant wolf or some cute flirt. Instead of genuine friends, these are rejected and attacked, and he gravitates toward insignificant people, but people who have certain prominence; who carry prestige; and, who play roles that he goes along with. The right pastor is deserted for the wrong pastor by the reversionist. The right church is abandoned for a church where his carnality will be unruffled. A government which provides liberty is held in contempt and rejected in favor of some system of government that promises equality. That's a prime sign of reversionism, and it's extremely common in our society.

The eternal things are ignored in the face of temporal things. This is reflected in how a person spends his money and his time. The reversionist is zealous for legalism. He attacks grace, and he attacks the privacy of other Christians. The reversionist finds himself the companion of those who oppose the pastor-teacher and the Word of God as it is being taught, but he is quite antagonistic toward the pastor and toward the Word of God. He finds himself companions of those who are opponents. The reversionistic Christian deserts divine viewpoint in rearing of his children. Instead he replaces it with the human viewpoint of the old sin nature; the human viewpoint of society; and, the human viewpoint of progressive education that goes up to a child and says, "What do you want to do?"

I had to remind all of our students in Berean Academy that when they are told to do something in this school by a staff member or by a teacher, we betide them if they respond with the word, "Why?" The worst word to say around here is, "Why?" I told them that I am looking for little peanuts who are going around saying, "Why?" We are going to have a lot of peanut butter around here when they do. Before we were through, in the quietness of the auditorium, the signal got through loud and clear. Everybody understood. In some campuses kids have swear words and they have dirty stories. But here you should hear the response if somebody says, "Why?" They say, "Ooh, what you said!" It's bad.

It's all this worldly viewpoint that tells you to go to your children and consult with them what their wishes are. What would they like to do? God help the child whose parents do not tell him what to do, right on up through high school. Let's hope that as they get toward high school age, your training has been such that you won't have to be telling them so much what to do because they're going to be doing exactly what you want them to do. There'll be rare occasions when you have to reach out and jerk the rope and say, "Just a minute. Let's have some re-learning here. That was a wrong decision. That was a wrong loyalty."

Many children learn a reversionistic way of life from their parents. They learn false values and false choices from their parents who did not insist that they make right choices and pursue right and true values when they were children--when the kid couldn't make the distinctions. He couldn't tell what's good; what's right; what I should choose; or, what I shouldn't. It's up to a parent who's got the spiritual discernment and who's oriented to God's thinking to say, "This is what you're going to do." I'll tell you that youngster breathes a sigh of relief in the depths of his soul; and, when he is grown, he thanks God that he had parents who called the plays for him. It's like the fans of the Dallas Cowboys. When the coach is calling the plays, everybody breathes a sigh of relief, probably including the quarterback on the field because things seem to go better that way.

1. Constant criticism, slander, complaining, and judging is a sign of reversionism. This is a habitual unrestrained verbal sin. This is manifested in the kind of a Christian that you hate to get into a conversation with. This is the kind of a Christian that you suddenly find yourself, when you're walking down the street and see him coming, you turn 180 degrees and all of a sudden you remember you had something to do in the other direction. You don't want to get into a conversation with him because you know that if you start talking to this person, it's going to be criticism; it's going to be slander; it's going to be complaining; and, it's going to be judging until you've had a stomach full, and you don't even want to get near them. That's a sure sign of reversionism--a Christian who is a constant complainer. What a complainer does or what a slanderer does is to presume that God cannot handle His business and straighten people out. Therefore, you are going around to do it for the Lord. Anybody who thinks that he has to do anything for the Lord is out of fellowship right there. He's on the road of spiritual retrogression. God doesn't need any of us to do anything for Him. It is what He does that's counts, and He does it in spite of us. Therefore, don't go trying to help the Lord.
2. Persistent reversionism may result in the sin unto death. There's something else about reversionism (and we may get into this again) reflected in Hebrews 6. There's something about revisionism that sets up certain forces within our lives. It's like a swimmer swimming against a bad tide. He is trying to turn around and go right, and he can't. He cannot reverse his direction against the tide that has carried him. There are certain directions that you may set up that it is almost impossible to turn around and reverse the direction of reversionism. There have been people who have found themselves in a physical condition and they can tell you, "I'm dying. And what I'm dying of is the result of the discipline of the Lord because of this thing of which I was willful and persisted in," and they can't change it. That's what's so pathetic. They sense that there's no return for them. And we have seen cases like that. So reversionism may result in the sin unto death, even when you're aware that that's where it's leading and you cannot reverse the direction.
3. The breakdown in one's mastery of the details of life is a first step on the backsliding road down into reversionism. If you can't handle your prosperity, then you better pray, "God, don't give me too much dough. Don't make me too wealthy." Until you have developed a spiritual maturity structure in your soul that the Word of God describes for us in so many places, you are not ready to have money. You're not ready to handle wealth. You are going to hurt yourself when you come into that prosperity.
4. Mental sins are a major contributor to reversionism (Hebrews 12:15). It is often these mental sins that set the whole trend to reversionism into motion.
5. The reversionistic Christian is never to be trusted. A lot of you are going to get hurt because you do not spot reversionistic Christians. You do not pick up the signals that are being described to you so that you can see this in people. You're not picking those signals up. Consequently, you are not on guard against this type of believer, and he is a very dangerous person. He is the sweetness and humility type. And I don't mean that he's lying to you. He thinks he is sweet, and he thinks he is humble. He is just as sincere as he can be. However, he's disoriented to the Lord. This is the person who will declare his undying love for you--his goodwill and his allegiance. However, that's emotional flattery. It's sentimentalism, and unless that comes from a Christian who is stable and oriented to the Word of God, you'd better not take that declaration of undying love too seriously.

This is the same thing as when you're going to marry somebody. When that declaration of undying love comes from someone who does not have a strong spiritual maturity structure, you'd better not count on that undying love. It's going to go along for a while, and then it's going to begin to be abrasive against you. Then it's going to begin to cool off, and you're going to find yourself drifting off after somebody else. You're going to get the shock of your life wondering how you could have done that, or how other people could have done that. Well, the reason for is that there was no true declaration of undying love possible because the person was not in a place where they had the capacity to love. Don't ever forget that the spiritual maturity structure is a container in the soul for the grace of God to be poured into which enables us to do all these things.

This is the person who uses flattery. This is the person who walks up and asks your opinion about things so as to use you for their own promotion; for their own security; for their own social gain; and for their passing happiness and prosperity. Isn't it really thrilling to you when somebody walks up to you after a service and asks you, "What do you think about that?" It's flattering. This has been one of the great problems of seminary students around Berean church--people hitting them up who are looking for a club to oppose what they heard taught. Well, the greatest point of danger in the life of a positive believer is when a reversionistic believer becomes attractive to you. When a reversionistic believer does not send up red flag signals in your soul, you are in very great danger.

There are some idiotic believers who think, "Well, that's being very unkind. That's not being very loving for me to be on my guard against a person that begins to reflect reversionistic qualities." It is loving. That's exactly what it is. It's loving. You're mistaken in thinking that it is harsh or that it is other than that. Just remember that it was our Lord Jesus Christ who said, "If you are not for Me, you are against Me."

There are a lot of Christians who have taken a position relative to the Lord; relative to the mind of God; relative to what His divine viewpoint is; relative to a local assembly; or, relative to its spiritual leadership. Then along comes somebody else and says, "I reject all that." You may say, "That's all right. We're still buddies. We're still fellowshipping friends." Well, that's wonderful that you can say that. But all that the poor Lord Jesus Christ could say was, "If you're not for Me, you're against Me." You're better than the Lord. You have a great future in heaven. They can use people like you up there. Take care. When the reversionistic Christian becomes attractive to you, it may cost you your own spiritual maturity structure.

1. Reversionists are calloused so they are miserable; they are to be pitied; they're beggarly; they're spiritually blind; and, they are minus the covering of the spiritual maturity structure which is reflecting the glory of God (Revelation 4:14-20).
2. The reversionistic Christian often operates with a pseudo spiritual maturity structure which blinds him to his true spiritual condition. God does not promote or bless a Christian in reversionism. What blessing and promotion comes to a Christian who is a rejecter of true divine viewpoint teaching is self-made promotion. And if God does not promote you, you have not been promoted. I care not how successful and how impressive you look to those among whom you may move.
3. Every Christian is constantly moving toward super grace or back down toward reversionism. Every Christian is constantly moving toward super grace with a complete spiritual maturity structure, or he's going back down to reversionism. There is no alternative.

These are the kind of people who were facing the apostle Paul and bringing misery into his life. I want to call your attention again to the end of Philippians 1:18: After reviewing this situation that has been brought against him, the apostle Paul says, "I do rejoice. Yea, and I will rejoice." The apostle Paul declares in these verses that he has an inner happiness. This inner happiness he expects to continue in the future. Here's a very important point to remember and to notice here. The apostle Paul says, "I'm happy. I'm happy because I have built happiness within my soul through the Word of God." He makes this statement under the pressures of the imprisonment and the attacks by these reversionistic Christians. His future happiness is going to be there, but notice what the basis of it will be. You would think that under these conditions he would say, "If I am released from prison, I am going to be so happy in the future." Or, "If these Christians will stop trying to give me misery here in Rome, I'll be so happy."

However, he does not say that. He says, "I am happy in the Lord now, and I will be happy in the future." He doesn't know where that future is going to go. He doesn't know, as a matter of fact, that in a short time he faces Nero, and Nero was one of the most violent, vicious, contemptible Roman rulers that ever ruled. This was the character who amused himself by putting tar all over Christians; tying them to a stake; and, then setting them on fire in order to illuminate his lawn parties. Nero's character was manifested by the joy, the delight, and the giggles over his listening to these Christians scream as they went into the Lord's presence all aflame. This is the man that Paul was going to face very shortly as his judge in trial. It so happens that the first time he faced him, the evidence was so overwhelming in his favor that Nero had to declare him not guilty and set him free. However, at this point, Paul expects to be set free, yet whether he will be or not, remains to be seen. However, his happiness is not contingent upon that.

A lot of people make the mistake of thinking that happiness is a point you are going to achieve when something happens. Happiness is going to be achieved when you get a certain amount of money so you have freedom to do some things you'd like to do. This might even include good things for the Lord. You are wrong. If you are not happy before you get that money, you will not be happy afterwards. Some people think that you'll be happy when you find that right girl or that right fellow so you can get married. Wrong. If you are not a deeply happy person before you get married, you will not be a deeply happy person after you're married. Make no mistake about that. I don't care what it is: what circumstance; what person; or, what thing you think out there is the point at which happiness begins for you. You're wrong. Happiness has to be before you achieve that, and then you will be able to be happy.

This is such a simple little fact that the average person knows nothing about it. So he spends his life chasing things that he thinks are going to make him happy. Then he leans back and says, "You know, I got it now. However, it's not cutting it for me. I'm still not what I thought I was going to be. The apostle Paul gives you the clue right here. He says, "I am happy in these circumstances; I will continue to be happy in the future; and, I may live or I may die, but I'm going to be happy whatever the outcome of the situation in which I now find myself. His spiritual maturity structure was already intact, so he had the inner happiness and, consequently, nothing could affect that. Most Christians try to reverse this order, and so they never come to the contentment in life that they're seeking.

**Philippians 1:19**

So let's begin at Philippians 1:19 where the apostle Paul says, "For I know that this shall turn to my salvation." "For" is the Greek word "gar," and it is the contrasting word here with what he has just said. "I'm happy. And I'm going to be happy in the future." Why, Paul? Why are you going to be happy in the future? Is he going to be happy in the future because he's going to be released? No. Because he's going to die? No. He doesn't know which way it's going to go, but it doesn't make any difference. He is still going to be happy because his eyes are centered on something else. His eyes are centered on the Lord's glory, and therefore his life is going to count whether he lives or dies. His life is going to count, and it's going to confirm the happiness that he already has. His spiritual maturity structure has given him certainly illuminating information. The Lord is going to be glorified no matter what.

So he says, "For I know." The word "know" is the Greek word "oida." This is the word that means knowing from information that you receive. There is a different Greek word ("ginosko") which means to know from your experience. I learn things as a result of my experience. This is information that he has stored from doctrine. On the basis of that information, he has developed inner happiness. On the basis of that inner happiness, he can declare something concerning his circumstances. He has a human spirit that's full of doctrine, and, consequently, he can draw from that pool of information in order to guide himself in what the Lord wants him to do.

You've heard me mention this man Edgar Cayce. I hate to keep giving you these little previews, but Edgar Cayce was a man who would hypnotize himself and diagnose the ills of people. One of the fascinating things about Edgar Cayce is that he came to the point where finally he asked the spirit (whatever it was that was speaking with him), "How do I do this?" The spirit answered him that there was a great pool of information in the subconscious; his subconscious was connected with all the subconsciouses of all the other people in the world; and, therefore, in his hypnotic state, through the spirits who spoke to him, he was able to draw all this information and tell people what they needed to know. That is rather fascinating because out of that spirit pool of subconsciousness came the doctrine of reincarnation that Cayce committed himself to. By the way, Cayce was a Bible student. He was a Sunday school teacher for years. Many of the people who had been in his class became missionaries and went around the world as servants of the Lord.

Cayce, in his hypnotic state, asked the spirit who was speaking to him, "Why hasn't the doctrine of reincarnation been revealed in Christianity?" The spirit talking through Cayce said, "Because when the leaders of Christianity decided to make Christianity a religion of the common man, and not just of the leadership and the rabbis, they decided to drop the doctrine of incarnation because it was so complex, and because if people thought they were going to get a chance to live another life, they would live badly; they wouldn't be worried about how they lived; and, it would be a moral problem, so they dropped it. Then the Spirit said, "But the Gnostics resisted this." The Gnostics wanted to keep the doctrine of reincarnation.

If you know anything about church history, one of the most rabid heretics of the New Testament were the Gnostics. 1 John was written, in part, to answer that bunch of heretics, the Gnostics. Here from this pool of information from the subconscious of Cayce, in his hypnotic state, speaking (notice) revelation beyond the Bible, he attributes loyalty to doctrine to a heretical group. I thought this is rather fascinating that Satan, the great imitator and the counterfeiter, through Cayce convinced a lot of people that there was a universal mind that they could draw on--that there was within themselves a subconscious pool that they could draw information up from, if only they could make the connection. That's exactly what God has done with us. He has given us a human spirit. He has given us information that we may put into it, and there is a pool indeed within you from which you may draw God's viewpoint and guidance. However, it is that which comes from the objective Word of God, and not from some spirit speaking through a hypnotized character.

The apostle Paul was drawing up from that pool what had been placed within him, and therefore he could say, "I know." That's the kind of knowledge he was talking about--the knowledge that you have at your fingertips today, to the extent that you have a human spirit filled with the Word of God. You too can say, "I know." This grammatically in form is perfect, but it is actually used in the present tense, so this meant something that Paul constantly knows as a result of this pool of information.

So he says, "I know this" ("houtos)". He's now going to show the situation that he is facing and what's going to come out of this. "This situation" refers to his rejection by the Christians and his opposition and his adverse condition of being in prison. "For I know that this shall turn." "Shall turn" is "apobaino." "Apobaino" simply means "to turn out." He said, "My condition is going to turn out in a certain way." Paul has some information both from doctrine and from the leading of the Spirit of God. On the basis of that, Paul knows where he's going. It is future. It is in the immediate future when he faces Nero in that court trial. It is middle. Paul will benefit. It shall turn out. The results will be to his benefit. That's what middle means. Indicative is a statement of fact.

"This should turn out to," and that's the little word "es" indicating the result is going to be what? Salvation. The word "salvation" here is "soteria." "Soteria" is not salvation in terms of whether a person goes to heaven or hell. It is used like that, but here it means "deliverance." This is used in terms of his being acquitted and freed. The deliverance is in the future, but the happiness he now already processes. Paul is confident that he is going to be released in the future. He already has the happiness. He does not feel so confident when we get to his second imprisonment. In 2 Timothy 4:6, he very clearly says, "It's all over. My job, my course, and my life are finished. I will soon be in the Lord's presence.

We are coming into a section here on a subject that preachers generally know it is better not to announce, but I'm going to tell you it's coming. The reason they don't announce it is because people stay home and don't attend. Therefore, I'm going to run an experiment, and we're going to get to it next time. We're going to talk about death. Next week, we're going to talk about death, and I'm going to see how many of you stay home. The apostle Paul is going to bring up some very serious matters concerning death--meeting death constantly. This problem comes up. All of a sudden, the Christian is faced with a matter that maybe life is at an end. I've had a stream of them this week. Some of the news has been good. Some of the news is in abeyance. Some of the news is bad (from the human point of view). However, the issue of death is the reality that is going to be dealt with someplace along the line.

Our Father we do thank you for the fact that you have been our guide and our director. We do thank you that prayer is our immediate access to you, and that we as priests in the age of grace do not go through anyone else. We go directly to you. We thank you that the throne of grace is just that. It is a place where God is willing to listen and eager to hear and eager to help. Our Heavenly Father, we do thank you that the apostle Paul, because of what he knew from the Word of God, was capable of making right decisions. He was capable of being oriented to true loyalties; and thus, he knew that even in his darkest circumstances and the most burdensome problems that bore in on him there in Rome, that all of this was moving to a wonderful marvelous victory. He knew where he was going. We pray, our Father that you will help us to know that through Your Word in Christ's name. Amen.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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