



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Presenting *every man* perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume IX
Issue 201

Severed From, Severed To

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God (Romans 1:1, KJV).

Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle, severed for the evangel of God (Romans 1:1, CLT).

In the very first verse of Paul's letter to the Roman saints he employs an amazingly rich word translated in the *King James Version* as "separated," and in the *Concordant Literal Translation* as "severed."



HORIZONED-OFF

The actual Greek word that Paul used was "aphorizo." This is a compound word made up of "apo" (off) and "horizo" (horizon). Paul is literally telling us that he had been *horizoned-off* BY and FOR God.

The Greek word for 'separated' in this passage contains the thought of 'the horizon.' Paul's whole horizon was dominated by Christ. All his boundaries in life were determined by Him." – John Phillips, *Exploring Romans*, Moody (1969), page 13.

"Aphorizo" – this word is composed of "apo," away from, and "horizo," to define or set bounds. The English reader will recognize the origin of the word "horizon." – Charles H. Welch, *The Berean Expositor*, Volume 37, Page 91.

Noah Webster defines "horizon" as:

The line that terminates the view, when extended on the surface of the earth; or a great

circle of the sphere, dividing the world into two parts or hemispheres; the upper hemisphere which is visible, and the lower which is hid ... The visible horizon is a lesser circle of the sphere, which divides the visible part of the sphere from the invisible. It is eastern or western; the eastern is that wherein the sun and stars rise; the western, that wherein they set ... – *American Dictionary of the English Language*, 1828

Paul was *cut-off* from his earlier *horizon*, from his sphere of life – from his former *hemisphere* – from his earlier point of view. God *separated* him *out* from his old life and positioned him in the *circumference* of a new life – the celestial circumference of Almighty God and His concerns. He was *horizoned-off* TO the Father's abundant GOOD NEWS!

PAUL SEVERED FROM: RITUAL

Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

(see **SEVERED**, page 1947)

Author of the Week:

A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)



Born in St. Louis, he moved to Los Angeles at the age of ten. After salvation he became acquainted, and later associated with, the Plymouth Brethren.

Knoch, a printer by trade, was a great student of the Scriptures. He published a series of articles, "On Baptism," which appeared in the pages of E.W. Bullinger's magazine *Things to Come* in 1907. In 1909, with Vladimir Gelesnoff, he began publication of the Bible study magazine *Unsearchable Riches*, and founded the *Concordant Publishing Concern*.

Throughout his adult life he was a prolific author, continuing his work as editor of *Unsearchable Riches*, translating the *Concordant Version* and authoring many Bible study publications.

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(see **AUTHOR**, last page)

Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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This weekly publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7)
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11)
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25)
- true freedom and liberty apart from the law (Galatians 5:1)
- the organic nature of the church, the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12)
- the distinct ministry of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13)
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15)
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13).
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with ...
 - total forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14)
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6)
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4)

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SEVERED (continued from page 1945)

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 (Philippians 3:5-8, KJV).

Having seen that Paul had been “separated,” “severed,” or horizoned-off, and having seen the meaning of “horizon,” we will follow the course of Webster’s definition of the word to see a few rich truths that can be brought to light.

Webster says that “horizon” is:

... dividing the world into two parts or hemispheres ...

The words “separate” and “sever” have to do with *division*. Thus the *King James Version* also translates “*aphorizo*” as “*divide*” and “*sever*.”

Paul was divided *FROM* something, and *TO* something. According to Paul’s own testimony in Philippians chapter 3 he was divided, or “severed” from something that he counted as waste, or “refuse” (*CLT*). In this passage he declares that he had been severed from a sevenfold system. We shall see the first of these now. Paul had been severed from: *RITUAL*.

Circumcised the eighth day ... (:5).

Circumcision was the sign of the covenant that God made with Abraham (Genesis 17:9-14; *c.f.* Ephesians 2:11; I Samuel 17:26-27). Paul had been proud of his ritual. He was circumcised the *eighth day*. Some of Paul’s opponents were circumcised as adults. If it came to a showdown on this subject, Paul could not have been beaten.

Although circumcision had been a part of God’s purpose with Israel, Paul had been severed from this ritual. That which, in the past, had been God-honoring, Paul now counted as “refuse.” If this was true of a God-ordained ritual that had passed away with a new dispensation, imagine how worthless all man-made rituals are.

Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing ... (I Corinthians 7:19).

In Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision ... (Galatians 5:6; 6:15).

**PAUL SEVERED FROM:
RELATIONSHIP**

... of the Stock of Israel ... (Philippians 3:5).

Israel was the new name that God had given to Jacob, Abraham’s grandson (Genesis 32:27-28). Jacob had twelve sons. Their families were “tribes;” thus, the “12 Tribes of ISRAEL (*i.e.*, Jacob)” and the “CHILDREN OF ISRAEL (*i.e.*, Jacob).” Paul had not come through Ishmael. Some of his opponents were circumcised, but they were *not* of the stock of Israel.

Paul did not have *just* a ritual – circumcision – about which he had been proud; he had a *relationship*. He had greatly prided himself in the fact that he was an Israelite; but all that changed when he met the Lord Jesus Christ. He counted this, too, as “refuse” and waste. Paul was severed from: *RELATIONSHIP*.

Although Israel had been (and will be again one day) central to God’s purpose, Paul had been severed from this identity. With a new revelation from the risen, ascended, glorified and enthroned Savior, Paul now saw that there was no value in national distinctions.

*For **there is no difference** between the Jew and the Greek ... (Romans 10:12).*

Many take great pride in their national affiliation. If anyone ever had such a right it was an Israelite. After all, they were God’s nation; but the person of the Lord Jesus Christ overshadows and severs the believer from such human pride and distinction. Patriotism gives way to a Person. Paul had been severed *FROM* his national relationship *TO* something far greater!

**PAUL SEVERED FROM:
RESPECTABILITY**

Tribe of Benjamin (Philippians 3:5).

Paul was not only a descendant of Jacob (Israel), but he was also a descendant of Jacob *through* Benjamin. This was something to have been quite proud of. Benjamin and Judah were the only two tribes that initially remained loyal to the throne of David and to the Temple. They were not associated with the false setup in Samaria. Paul had been a proud member of a “loyalist” tribe, so he had very “respectable roots,” unlike most of his opponents. He had a reputable heritage.

Yet the person of the Lord Jesus Christ overshadows the vanity of human “respectability.” Paul’s calling was one that severed him from such human honors. What things Paul had considered “gain” for himself, he “*counted loss for Christ.*”

Are we any different than Paul? Or, do we place value on our “respectability” outside of Christ whether ancestral, religious or social? Paul was severed from all prestige, honor, recognition, reputation and respectability. He traded that for “*being defamed ... as the filth of the world, and the offscouring of all things*” (I Corinthians 4:13).

Why should it be any different for us?

**PAUL SEVERED FROM:
RACE**

Hebrew of the Hebrews (Philippians 3:5).

“*Hebrew*” means to “cross over.” The word is first found in Genesis 14:13. This is an “allusion to Abraham’s immigration from the other side of the Euphrates ... The title Hebrew is therefore their title of separation ...” (Bullinger’s Lexicon).

With Abraham, God started a new race of people. Paul had viewed himself not only as a “Hebrew,” but as a “real” Hebrew, i.e., a “*Hebrew of the Hebrews.*” Like we use the phrase “a man’s man,” so Paul had been “a Hebrew’s Hebrew!” He was

associated with the faction among the Jews which *maintained*, even under Roman domination, their peculiar “Jewishness.” Some Hebrews in Paul’s day had given up their language and customs for the Gentile (Greek and Roman) culture. Paul, however, had been a racial “separatist of the separatists.”

If anyone ever had the right to be proud of their race, it would have been a Hebrew. Paul had been hyper-semitic; but the Lord Jesus Christ changed all this! Paul later told the men of Athens,

*... He gives to all life, and breath, and all things; and has **made of one blood all nations of men** for to dwell on all the face of the earth ...* (Acts 17:25-26).

Paul had been severed *FROM* racial pride and counted his “*Hebrew of the Hebrews*” status as “*loss for Christ.*”

It is strange how Adam’s descendants each think that the kinsmen of their race are somehow superior to that of other races. This often is shamefully true even of believers. Yet if there was any place on earth that this should not be true it is with members of the Body of Christ.

So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another ... Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another (Romans 12:5, 10).

**PAUL SEVERED FROM:
RELIGION**

Pharisee (Philippians 3:5).

Paul had been an *orthodox* Jew. He was a Pharisee, and had opposed the creed of the Sadducees. He was an extremely religious “fundamentalist.” He was a religionist to the hilt.

... After the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee (Acts 26:5).

For you have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion ... (Galatians 1:13).

And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers (Galatians 1:14).

The etymology of our English word "religion" is "to bind" (Noah Webster), as "to bind strongly – from the same source as ligament ... a bondage" (Partridge).

James Strong defines the Greek word as "ceremonial observance ... ceremonious in worship" (Strong's Greek Lexicon #2356, #2357).

Scripture uses the term "*religion*" in reference to (or in the context of) Israel's Kingdom program and never to the Body of Christ. When Paul spoke of "*forgetting those things which are behind*" (Philippians 3:13) he was referring to his *RELIGION*, which he counted "*waste*" (:8)!

If there had ever been a "religion" to hold onto, it would have been "*the Jew's religion*," the only "religion" ever ordained by God; but Paul even counted this "*loss for Christ*."

All religion is bondage; Paul embraced true freedom – freedom *FROM* religion. Thus Paul wrote to the believer,

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage (Galatians 5:1).

Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (II Corinthians 3:17).

For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but you have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father (Romans 8:15).

Wherefore if you are dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are you subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh (Colossians 2:20-23).

PAUL SEVERED FROM: REPUTATION

Zeal (Philippians 3:6).

Paul was a true zealot. He practiced exactly what he believed. A majority of Israelites rejected their Messiah, but where was their action? Paul had been moving up the religious, political and social ladder and had developed quite a reputation – one that far exceeded those of his opponents – "*Concerning zeal, persecuting the church*."

Reputation had been something of great value to Paul, until he met Christ. Many men can never let go of their reputation, of their long history of "honorable" activity – how others view them, what others think of them is very important – but, sadly, reputation keeps them in bondage from being able to *move on* in the wonderful things of God.

Reputation is such a subtle tool used by the Adversary to keep men "in check." It will keep them from learning, progressing and growing, because first they will have to admit to having been wrong, and then proceed to correcting their errors.

Some men are so filled with the pride of their past zeal that they will live in the past, self-proclaiming their former accomplishments. They will proudly speak of their many years of never having changed. "I have taught the same thing for 40 years! I have never changed my message!" Sadly in their pride of zealous reputation, they do not realize that this speaks of a life of stagnation in the human ►

quagmire of status and repute. That others are impressed is of such great value to them.

Paul looked back too, but that he might count it “dung” (i.e., waste).

But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 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 (Philippians 3:7-8).

PAUL SEVERED FROM: RIGHTEOUSNESS

Blameless (Philippians 3:7).

Self-righteousness was at the heart of Paul’s past pride. He had rested in his good moral character. He took pride in his list of “do-and-don’t” performance. Paul could match his “self-righteous” lifestyle with anyone.

Paul started the catalog of his past pride with these words,

*Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinks that he has whereof he might trust in the flesh, **I more** (Philippians 3:4).*

What was Paul’s conclusion to his great superiority in the national religious system of Israel? Paul counted it “refuse.” What caused the change in Paul’s value system, a change that would cause him to view his own “righteousness” as “loss”? It was the living person of the Lord Jesus Christ, the entrance of a different kind of “righteousness” – “*the righteousness of God*”! The Lord Jesus Christ had become his righteousness (I Corinthians 1:30). Through Him he had been declared righteous (Romans 3:24).

Paul, Apostle to the nations, knew all too well the vanity and struggle of religion and service to it. Paul had staked his outcome on his own good

moral character and good religious deeds.

Paul was severed from his *self-righteousness* – the “righteousness” that came by the law of Moses. The Jews’ religion, in this regard, was no different from any other religion: it had no Person who could impart *life*. The Lord Jesus Christ did not come to establish a religion, but to bring *life*. Religion is man’s striving after God. Jesus brought God to man. Paul rested in that. We need only to rest in that, too.

PAUL SEVERED TO: THE CELESTIAL SECRET

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God (Romans 1:1 KJV).

Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle, severed for the evangel of God (Romans 1:1 CLT).

As we have seen, Paul has told us in the first verse of the book of Romans that he had been *horizoned-off* by and FOR God.

Following the first part of Webster’s definition of the word “horizon” – “... dividing the world into two parts or hemispheres ...” – we can see that Paul was *cut-off* from his former *horizon*, from his old sphere of life – from his past *hemisphere* – from his human point of view; but that is not all!

God not only *separated* him *out* from his former life, He positioned him *in* the *circumference* of a new life – the celestial circumference of Almighty God and His concerns. He was *horizoned-off* FROM something TO something!

Continuing to follow Webster’s course, let us see the next part of his definition of the word “horizon”:

... the upper hemisphere which is visible, and the lower which is hid ...

Paul had his eyes moved FROM the *horizon* of the visible by divine revelation. He now saw the hidden

things of God and was divinely commissioned to be the spokesman of them.

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; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world had been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ (Ephesians 3:8-9).

Paul was severed TO God's Sacred Secret.

Paul was severed TO Christ and His "unsearchable riches." These riches were "untraceable" in previous revelation. Now, however, God revealed through Paul the riches of Christ that were before unknown.

Paul was severed TO the "fellowship of the mystery," TO God's glorious, secret administration, which was unprophesied, unheard of before.

How that by revelation he made known unto me [Paul] the mystery" (Ephesians 3:3).

Paul was severed TO that which had been "hid in God," truths that over the course of all time – "from the beginning of the world," "from the eons" – had been concealed in God Himself, but were now being made known to and through Paul.

Paul was "horizoned-off" FROM so many things of earthly value: ritual, relationship, respectability, race, religion, reputation and self-righteousness. He was "severed" TO the *Secret-Evangel*, God's *Mystery-Good News!* Romans 1:1:

Separated unto the gospel of God (KJV).

Severed for the evangel of God (CLT).

"Separated to God's glad tidings" (Darby).

"Separated to the good news of God" (Young).

"Set apart for glad tidings of God" (Diaglot).

"Separated unto the glad-message of God" (Rotherham).

PAUL SEVERED TO: THE CELESTIAL SPHERE

*... I was not disobedient unto the **heavenly vision** (Acts 26:19).*

Webster's definition of "horizon" continues,

which divides the visible part of the sphere from the invisible.

Paul also had his eyes opened by God to the invisible – "things which are **not** seen." His sights were severed from the visible, earthly *sphere* and set on the invisible, heavenly realm of his calling – "things above."

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 (II Corinthians 4:18).

If you then are risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sits on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth (Colossians 3:1-2).

That Paul had been so separated to the celestial sphere can be easily seen by looking at the Ephesian collage of the "heavenly places:"

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in **heavenly places** in Christ ... Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His Own right hand in the **heavenly places** ... And has raised us up together, and made us sit together in **heavenly places** in Christ Jesus ... To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in **heavenly** ►*

places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God ... 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 **heavenly places** (Ephesians 1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12).

PAUL SEVERED TO: CELESTIAL ENLIGHTENMENT

You are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness (I Thessalonians 5:5).

Webster's definition of "horizon" continues,

the eastern is that wherein the sun and stars rise; the western, that wherein they set.

The *horizon* is also associated with the contrasts of day and night, light and darkness. Paul was *separated* from the darkness of this Adamic world and brought into the glorious light of God's full revelation of righteousness.

By revelation from God, Paul opened up new divinely-appointed *horizons* for mankind. God's masterful plan for mankind was fully revealed through His servant, Paul. We, like Paul, have been *cut off* from our former *horizon*, from our former sphere – or hemisphere. God has *horizoned* us *out from* our former identity and *horizoned* us into full identity in Christ – in a *circumference* of a new life – in the *circumference* of a loving Father and His concerns.

We now see God in a whole new way; in an entirely different sphere. We, in turn, see ourselves and

AUTHOR (continued from page 1946)

Spirit, Spirits and Spirituality (#3175) –Centering on Paul's epistle to the Ephesians, with such topics as our spiritual blessings among the celestials, the sealing and earnest of the spirit, and the unity of the spirit. Spiritual warfare is discussed, as well as matters concerning the human spirit and the Spirit of God. 157 pages, PB, \$11.²⁵

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all those around us in a completely fresh, vibrant light – Sonlight to be precise.

*For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the **light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*** (II Corinthians 4:6).

*Who has saved us, and called us with a 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, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, Who has abolished death, and has brought life and immortality **to light through the gospel*** (II Timothy 1:9-10).

*Giving thanks unto the Father, Who has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of **the saints in light**, Who has delivered us from the power of darkness, and has translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son* (Colossians 1:12-13).

We, along with Paul, have been "*separated unto the gospel of God.*" We have been *horizoned-off* unto His glorious world-wide, all-inclusive good news!

Now, along with Paul, we have also been entrusted with this early enlightenment, of which all mankind will one day partake. We are just the beginning of God's horizoned-off ones!

... The true Light, which lights every man that comes into the world (John 1:9). ■

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