

WHAT IS YOUR JUDGMENT?

„For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we *thus* judge: That if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.”—2 Cor. 5:14,15

Paul here offers a reason for his zeal for God. Some thought his mind unbalanced because he endured so much for the sake of preaching Christ and him crucified, but he assures us that from his point of view he did none too much. His reasoning and his ideas of right and justice demanded all that he was doing, and more, if he were able. Then he tells us the process of reasoning from which he judges thus: „Christ died *for* all”; if so, then *all* must have been dead, either actually dead and buried, or else under *sure sentence* of death, which would ultimately be executed. If Christ died to purchase for all the right to return from death, then, argues Paul, it is evident that the purchased life belongs to the purchaser; and I „thus judge” that all such should not henceforth live unto themselves, but should render that life in service to their Redeemer.

Do we agree with Paul? was his reasoning or judgment good? If so, let it be our excuse also for earnestness and sacrifice in the service of our Redeemer. Paul regarded it as a matter of simple *justice*, and not a favor on his part to render service; he judged it right to do thus.

This scripture shows clearly the doctrine of Christ Jesus being a substitute or representative for all in death. [We might remark that neither *substitute* nor *representative* are words which occur in the English translation of the Bible, but let us remember that the Bible was not written in English, and that in translating there is a certain liberty accorded the translator, which permits him to select such English words as he may choose, to express the *meaning* of the original text. The meaning of substitute and representative is found abundantly in Scripture, though translators have not happened to use these words in translating. The thought is generally conveyed by the words *ransom*, *redeem*, *bought*, etc., and, by this word „FOR”; one of the meanings of which and the *principal* one is, *instead of*, as a substitute or representative stands FOR or *instead of* those whom he represents.]

When the reading of the two oldest Manuscripts (Sinaitic and Vatican) is observed, the force of this

word *for* is clearly manifest. Those MSS. read it thus: „Because we thus judge, that one died FOR all, consequently all were dead.”

Nor should we fail to apply the lesson of verse 15, that since Christ died *for* all, they which live by his purchase should render life-service to him? It is not enough that we call ourselves by his name and say we are his servants, but His servants we are TO WHOM we *render service*.

Let us remember that faithfulness and obedience are qualities absolutely necessary to a *good* servant. While we may or should be ambitious to render *important* service to our Lord, let us ever remember to heartily say, Thy will be done, O Lord. If the Master has placed you in such position that you cannot render *great* service, do not neglect what he has given you, to do that which he has not given you to do. Remember that his method is, to test us in small things before committing to us greater, on the principle that he that is *faithful* in that which is least, will be faithful also in that which is greater. To him who improves the talents and opportunities given, comes a blessing and increase of opportunity, and finally the „well done, good and *faithful* servant thou hast been *faithful over a few* things, I will make thee ruler over many things.”

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