Our Ambassadorship

The privilege, the responsibility, the fight, and the glory

A 10-Lesson Study by Keith Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®

Study Overview & Lesson Summaries

About This Series

These ten lessons are a study of our two-fold ambassadorship in this dispensation of grace: with the gospel of God's grace, and in connection with the mystery of the gospel. It is not mainly a how-to course but "a why to course." The ambassadorship is examined under four issues, in this order: the privilege (Lessons 1–2), the responsibility (Lessons 3–6), the fight (Lessons 7–9), and the glory (Lesson 10). That privilege — not guilt or obligation — is the only motivation God wants us to operate on. The first and foremost responsibility is to be trained by God His way; the fight is against the policy of evil in its three phases — attack the message, attack the messenger, discredit, discourage the messenger. And God Himself is glorified when we function as faithful ambassadors.

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Lesson Summaries

L1

The Privilege of Our Two-fold Ambassadorship *II Corinthians 2, 5 and 6; Ephesians 6 and 3: Laboring Together with God*

A Two-fold Ambassadorship

- In this dispensation of grace we have a two-fold ambassadorship on behalf of the Lord Jesus Christ: with the gospel of God's grace, and with the mystery of the gospel

The Privilege, the Responsibility, the Fight, and the Glory

- The glory of our ambassadorship primarily has to do with proclaiming the mystery of the gospel; the four issues together are the privilege, the responsibility, the fight, and the glory

The Word of Reconciliation (II Corinthians 5)

- The word of reconciliation is the gospel of God's grace we have to proclaim — the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ as our substitute Redeemer — the first and foremost aspect of our ambassadorship

Laboring Together with God, in Christ's Stead

- God runs the evangelism show; because of the sanctified position He has given us in His Son, He has enabled and privileged us to labor together with Him in it
- "we pray *you* in Christ's stead": instead of Christ doing it, He has privileged us to do it for Him; we explain and make the appeal, but we didn't make up the message — it's His words
- The grace of God not to be received in vain (II Corinthians 6:1) is the privilege of ambassadorship; the Corinthians had been receiving it in vain and weren't doing anything about it

L2

As a Son with the Father *Romans 6; Galatians 2 and 4; Philippians 2; I Corinthians 3: Our Sanctified Position and the Privilege*

Wrong Motivations vs. the Privilege

- The whole reason to witness is the privilege of God's grace in enabling us and granting us the right to do it — the only motivation God wants you to operate on

Our Sanctified Position (Romans 6)

- Ambassadorship is one aspect of the privilege we have to labor together with God because of our sanctified position in Christ, set forth in Romans as the

second cornerstone to the edification of our souls

- Romans 6:11 is the summary verse of our identity in Christ in connection with our sanctification; newness of life is "walking consistent with the ones whose life we possess"

Sons, Not Little Children (Galatians 4)

- Because God treats us as sons He has equipped us to labor with Him side by side in what He is doing, as a son with the father
- Sonship is not the same as salvation: everybody in God's program with Israel in time past who was justified unto eternal life — men like Daniel, Isaiah, Malachi and Jeremiah — was not treated as a son but as a little child; but as a Christian, you are a son in this dispensation of grace, not a little child. Israel will not get the adoption of sons until a kingdom is established

"as a son with the father" (Philippians 2; I Corinthians 3)

- Of Timothy Paul says, "as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel" — the sonship concept: a son is privileged to labor with his father and be fully educated in his father's business

L3

Properly Trained by God: Romans 1 Through 5 *The Responsibility; the Parts of the Gospel; Wrath Consciousness (Romans 1:18–32)*

Responsibility: Properly Trained by God

- The first thing under responsibility is being properly trained by God to be the ambassadors He has privileged us to be; there is also faithfulness to the message, to God the Father Himself, and to the overall cause

Romans 1–5 Educates the Ambassador

- The first thing to be established in is the details of our own justification unto eternal life: God imputed Christ's righteousness to your account, permanently reconciled you, and you are stuck being justified
- At the same time you are educated to function as an ambassador for Christ and take that same gospel you believed, and to detect perversions and distortions in people's thinking about the gospel

Three Parts of the Gospel, then the Assurance Doctrines

- The gospel of God's grace we proclaim today has three parts; the first, Romans 1:18–32, is wrath consciousness — as a natural human being one is worthy of God's wrath
- The second part, Romans 2:1–3:20: no man can escape the wrath of God by anything he may do; it equips you to handle every self-defense tactic
- The first two parts aren't good news at all; the third, Romans 3:21–26, is the good news itself — received as a free gift by faith in Christ as one's all-sufficient Savior

L4

Self-Defense Tactics: the Second Part of the Gospel *Romans 2:1 – 3:20; the Good News of Romans 3:21–26*

The Second Part of the Gospel

- The ambassador functions much like Paul, as God's prosecuting attorney; the goal is Romans 3:19–20 — "that every mouth may be stopped" — the man realizing he is guilty before God, with nothing he can do on his own

Five Categories — Really Four

- So there are five categories of self-defense tactics — in the lesson's words, "Really, there's only four, but the fifth one really is a reiteration of the first one"

Relative Righteousness (Romans 2:1–11)

- The first and most common tactic is relative righteousness — "I'm not as bad as some other people" — thinking God will judge by comparing members of the human race

Extenuating Circumstances; the Jewish Self-Defense

- Tactic two (Romans 2:12–16), extenuating circumstances, is a peculiar Gentile response; something of their own nature, structure and function will condemn them in that day just as if the law had been given to them
- Tactic three (Romans 2:17–29) equips you to handle the unique Jewish self-defense: you need to make them realize there is no such thing as natural holiness and natural righteousness, which they think they have by nature

Tactic Four (Romans 3:1–8): Cease and Desist

- Tactic four comes out of Jewish thinking but isn't exclusive to it; it is called a self-defense tactic, though "it really isn't" — the individual is persisting in one of the previous ones

Tactic Five, the Good News, and the Training

- The fifth: if God would give his standard of righteousness, the man says he could keep it — that's where the law comes in; but God gave the law to manifest sinfulness, never for justification (Romans 3:9–20)

L5

Stewards Found Faithful: Faithful to the Message *I Corinthians 4:1–2 and 1; Galatians 5:11 and 1:6–10; II Corinthians 2 and 4; I Thessalonians 2:4*

"found faithful" (I Corinthians 4:1–2)

- Paul dealt with faithfulness because the Corinthians went by the outward appearance; the issue is not how the minister looks but faithfulness to what he has been entrusted to do
- Faithfulness breaks down into three components: faithfulness to the message; faithfulness to the one who has privileged us — really, to the opportunities given us; and remaining loyal, or faithful, to the cause

Natural Offensiveness and Foolishness (I Corinthians 1)

- The gospel of God's grace is not naturally welcomed by human nature; it has a natural offensiveness to the pride and ego of man, and the faithful ambassador is not to try to avoid that

Not Softening the Message (Galatians 5:11; 1:6–10)

- The tendency is to adjust, soften or make the message more palatable, which would not be faithfulness; only remaining faithful to it exposes that the foolishness is in the hearer's thinking, not in the message

Not Corrupting the Word of God (II Corinthians 2 and 4)

- "we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God": the corruption Paul means is watering down the gospel to remove its offensiveness and foolishness — handling the word of God deceitfully
- The first component is to stand faithful to the exact message entrusted to us, regardless; it is not our responsibility to try and alter, swerve around or avoid

the expected response, and the judgment seat of Christ will evaluate our function

L6

Faithful to the Opportunities, Loyal to the Cause *II Corinthians 5:19 – 6:2; Titus 2; I Thessalonians 1–2; Philippians 2*

An Ambassador Is to Speak

- Two more components of faithfulness remain: faithfulness to the one who has privileged us, and faithfulness — loyalty — to the cause of our ambassadorship, especially in the face of opposition from the satanic policy of evil
- An ambassador's job is to speak, not to sit there like a piece of furniture; the message committed to us is the word of reconciliation, and that word has to come out of your mouth

Faithful to the Opportunities (II Corinthians 6:1–2)

- The second aspect was first described as faithfulness to the one who has privileged us, and it is certainly that; in particular it is faithfulness to the opportunities
- We are laborers together with God; He calls people by the gospel and uses our mouth to make the call; as opportunities occur, the Corinthians are to "receive not the grace of God in vain"

Loyal to the Cause: Afflictions of the Gospel

- Loyal to the cause means remaining faithful regardless of the opposition; if the policy of evil cannot get you to become an unfaithful ambassador, its goal is to intimidate you and get you to clam up
- Loyalty means sticking it out to the end regardless of the responses you get — just being the ambassador and leaving the consequences to God Himself

L7

The Fight and the Satanic Policy of Evil *II Timothy 4:6–8; I Timothy 1; II Timothy 1*

The Fight Begins

- The fight needs at least lessons 7 and 8; it comes down to an endeavor to make us unfaithful to the message, unfaithful to the opportunities, and not loyal to the cause

"I have fought a good fight" (II Timothy 4:6–7)

- There are three phases to the satanic policy of evil against us in this dispensation of grace; all the armor of Ephesians 6 is designed to handle them
- In his last epistle Paul's three expressions — "I have fought a good fight," "I have finished *my* course," "I have kept the faith" — show him withstanding phase one, two and three respectively

Phase One: Attack the Message

- Phase one attacks the message committed to us for and about this dispensation of grace, to produce doctrinal corruption in our hearts and minds — unfaithful ambassadors proclaiming a corrupted message

Phase Two: Attack the Messenger

- If phase one fails, phase two attacks the messenger, to get you to clam up

and not take hold of your opportunities; in "I have finished *my* course" Paul was not deterred off his course

Phase Three: Discredit the Messenger

- Phase three is to discredit you as the messenger — as the lesson adds, "Actually involves more than that" — discredit, discourage the messenger, producing such discouragement that you voluntarily retreat or give up

Three Phases, Three Components; Other Gospels and Perversions

- There are three components of faithfulness because there are three phases: faithful to the message because phase one attacks the message; phase two intimidates you and depletes your ambition to preach the gospel when you have the opportunity; faithful to the cause regardless because phase three discredits and discourages

L8

Remaining Faithful to the Gospel Message Itself *Galatians 1; Philippians 1–2; II Timothy 2; Romans 1–3, 11:6: the Three Phases and Four Gospel Clichés*

Phase One: Attack the Message (Galatians 1)

- The three phases of the policy of evil: phase one, attack the message; phase two, attack the messenger; phase three, discredit, discourage the messenger
- A perversion of the gospel of Christ doesn't deny Christ died upon the cross; the perversion is saying that God's requirement of faith alone in Christ alone isn't enough

Phase One the Most Important

- If you do not become victimized by phase one, phase two will follow, and if you do not become victimized by phase two, phase three will follow; don't expect phase two if you become victimized by phase one — remaining faithful to the gospel message itself is the most important thing of all

Other Gospels and the Gospel of Christ

- The gospel of Christ (Romans 1:15–3:26) is the legitimate gospel to proclaim in this dispensation of grace; its good news has two major components: the work of salvation all done for us by Christ's redemptive work, and no works to be performed to obtain it
- A perversion adds works of any kind at any time to faith in Christ; grace and works are mutually exclusive (Romans 11:6), and the only thing compatible with grace is faith, a non-meritorious way of receiving something

Four Popular Gospel Clichés

- Four popular gospel clichés serve as typical examples of perversions of the gospel of Christ: "Make Jesus the Lord of your life," "Turn from your sins and accept Christ," "Commit your life to Christ," "Invite Jesus into your heart"

L9

Gospel Clichés: Christian Service Confused with Salvation *II Corinthians 5; Romans 6, 2 and 12; II Thessalonians 2; II Corinthians 2; Ephesians 6: Four Clichés and Standing Fast*

Salvation Confused with Christian Service

- The four gospel clichés on the board: "make Jesus the Lord of your life, turn from sin and accept Christ, commit your life to Christ, or invite Jesus into your

heart or into your life"

- These expressions describe works of Christian service a saved person really ought to be doing; Christian service confused with salvation itself is the most common way perversions of the gospel take place, and the most subtle, because the Bible itself is used to produce the perversion

Make Jesus the Lord of Your Life (II Corinthians 5)

- Proponents of what is called lordship salvation say you can't be saved without making Jesus the Lord of your life; Paul makes it plain that the only appropriate place for making Jesus Lord is once you are already saved — it's not how you get saved

Turn from Sin and Accept Christ (Romans 6 and 2)

- It is absolutely impossible for someone God has not justified and sanctified to turn from their sins; Romans 6 teaches it as one of the fruits of sanctification — only those dead to sin can turn from sin; an unsaved man is dead in sin

Commit Your Life to Christ (Romans 12:1–2)

- This is the same thing as making Jesus the Lord of your life, worded another way; Romans 12:1–2 is not telling the Romans how to get saved, but addresses saints already justified and sanctified

Invite Jesus into Your Heart (II Thessalonians 2:14)

- God doesn't use that terminology in His gospel; Paul says God is the one who does the calling, so the expression has the whole thing backwards — God offers salvation as a free gift, and you take it by faith

L10

The Glory of Our Ambassadorship *II Corinthians 5; I Thessalonians 2; Ephesians 3; Colossians 1; II Timothy 2: Privilege, Impact, Deliverance*

The Glory of It: the Final Matter

- The ambassadorship has been treated under four matters: the privilege of it, the responsibility of it, the fight of it, and in this final lesson, the glory of it

God Himself Is Glorified

- God Himself is glorified when we function as faithful ambassadors — as we walk after the Spirit and live unto Him; for the most part this glory doesn't come from men on earth, but God Himself, especially in the face of His angels, gets glorified

The Glory of the Privilege, on Both Counts

- The two aspects of our ambassadorship: ambassadors with the gospel of salvation for the unsaved, and ambassadors with the mystery of the gospel for the saved

The Glory of the Impact (Ephesians 3:10)

- Ephesians 3:10 speaks of the impact made with the fellowship of the mystery in the face of "principalities and powers in heavenly *places*"

The Glory of the Deliverance

- Glory is associated with the deliverance that takes place the moment an individual trusts the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior — they not only receive deliverance from the debt and penalty of their sins, but they have been delivered from the power of darkness and translated to the kingdom of God's dear Son (Colossians 1)
- There is also glory in the deliverance ambassadors with the mystery of the

gospel take part in; the main goal of phase one of Satan's policy of evil is to keep members of the body of Christ doctrinally immature, as children tossed to and fro

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

One Two-fold Ambassadorship: the Word of Reconciliation and the Mystery of the Gospel

Ours is a two-fold ambassadorship. Witnessing with the gospel of God's grace is "the first and foremost high privilege" of being ambassadors for Christ; our ambassadorship also involves the mystery of the gospel and what God is doing in this dispensation of grace. There are two aspects to our ambassadorship: ambassadors with the gospel of salvation for the unsaved, and ambassadors with the mystery of the gospel for the saved — the latter an ambassadorship we work out among ourselves as members of the body of Christ.

The Mystery of the Gospel: the Impact in the Heavenly Places

In Ephesians 3:9 Paul is not simply talking about getting men saved but about teaching the why of this dispensation of grace — making all men see "what *is* the fellowship of the mystery." Ephesians 3:10 speaks of the impact made with the fellowship of the mystery in the face of principalities and powers in heavenly places: God is going to reconcile those positions back to Himself "through the agency of the new creation, the church, the body of Christ."

Sons Today vs. Little Children in Time Past

Sonship is not the same as salvation: in God's program with Israel in time past, everybody who was justified unto eternal life was not treated by God as a son — men like Daniel, Isaiah, Malachi and Jeremiah were treated as little children — and Israel will not get the adoption of sons until a kingdom is established. But "as a Christian, you're a son in this dispensation of grace, not a little child."

Ambassador by Position vs. Faithful in Practice

As the teaching puts it, "Just because you're an ambassador by position doesn't mean you're going to automatically be a faithful one in practice." God gave a message with a natural offensiveness and foolishness to the human heart; trying to make it more palatable — such as not emphasizing the blood — makes you an unfaithful ambassador, functioning as the satanic policy of evil wants.

Other Gospels vs. Perversions of the Gospel of Christ

Other gospels include legitimate Bible gospels that are not the gospel for this dispensation of grace, such as the gospel of the kingdom; you can't legitimately tell someone the kingdom of heaven is at hand today, because it's not; Israel's program is temporarily suspended. A perversion of the gospel of Christ does not

deny that Christ died upon the cross; it says God's requirement of faith alone in Christ alone isn't enough, adding works of any kind at any time to faith in Christ.

Salvation vs. Christian Service: the Four Gospel Clichés

Four typical examples: "make Jesus the Lord of your life, turn from sin and accept Christ, commit your life to Christ, or invite Jesus into your heart or into your life, or into your heart and life." These expressions describe works of Christian service that a saved person ought to be involved in doing; confusing Christian service with salvation itself is the most common way the gospel is perverted, and the most subtle, because the Bible itself is used to produce the perversion.

Israel's Program vs. the Dispensation of Grace

The law is not the standard by which God deals with us today; as Paul taught in Romans 6, we are not under law but under grace. Phase one of the satanic policy of evil is to attack the message, produce doctrinal corruption and deceive Christians; he'd rather have Christians trying to live by the Bible but not trying to follow God's program for this dispensation of grace: "he doesn't care whether you're scriptural. The last thing he wants you to be is dispensational."

Key Scripture References

Romans 1:15–17	Paul not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; the power of God to salvation is resident in the gospel
Romans 1:18–32	First part of the gospel: wrath consciousness
Romans 2:1 – 3:20	Second part of the gospel: the self-defense tactics — Keith says five, though "Really, there's only four"
Romans 3:21–26	Third part of the gospel: the good news itself
I Corinthians 1:17–29	The natural foolishness of the preaching of the cross; making it so that the flesh cannot glory in God's presence
I Corinthians 3:5–9	"labourers together with God" — laborers with Him, not for Him
I Corinthians 4:1–2	"it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful"
II Corinthians 2:14–17	Always caused to triumph in Christ; "unto God a sweet savour of Christ" regardless of the response
II Corinthians 5:18–21	The word of reconciliation — the first and foremost aspect of our ambassadorship; "in Christ's stead"
II Corinthians 6:1–2	Workers together with Him; not receiving the grace of God in vain — faithful to the opportunities
Galatians 1:6–10	What the Galatians ended up believing was a perversion of the gospel of Christ; the best way to please men is to preach a perversion of the gospel of Christ

Ephesians 3:7–11	The fellowship of the mystery; the impact in the face of principalities and powers in heavenly places
Ephesians 6:18–20	Paul “an ambassador in bonds” for the mystery of the gospel
I Thessalonians 2:4	“allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel” — a privilege of God’s grace
II Timothy 2:24–26	Believers caught in “the snare of the devil” and helped to recover
II Timothy 4:6–8	Fought, finished, kept: Paul’s withstanding of the three phases of the policy of evil