

The Book of Romans

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Chapters 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Israel (Chapters 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

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Chapter 1

Introduction & Overview to the Book of Romans (Romans 1:1)

Introduction & Overview

Written 2000 yrs Ago / Written to us Today / Freely gives – Gives this book to US

This letter was written to a group of believers in Rome 2,000 years ago, and by the Spirit of the Living God it was written for us today; the God who has freely given us all things, even His Only Begotten Son, gives us this Book so that we might be transformed into His image:

(Rom 8:32 NKJV) He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

(Rom 12:1 NKJV) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

(Rom 12:2 NKJV) And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

God had us on His Heart – when Written / We want to get God's Heart / Word flesh Again

When God wrote this epistle through the Apostle Paul He had us on His heart, and now our goal here today and the weeks to come is to get the heart of God into us. We are to look for His heart toward us, towards our lives, towards our church, our community, our County, our World; we are looking for His Word to become flesh again, to become alive in us, cutting down and dividing that which is soulish from that which is spiritual. We are looking for the Word to become seeds in our lives to produce fruit. We are to present our bodies as clay, and allow the Master Potter to mold us and shape us into His glory, for His glory.

Written around 57AD / Not the continuation of Acts / Written while Paul in Corinth

The Book of Romans was written "around" 56 or 57 AD, by the Apostle Paul. So to not be confused, the Book of Romans is not a follow-up to the Book of Acts where we ended with Paul in Rome awaiting his trial before Caesar. Paul wrote this epistle when he was in Corinth about 3 years prior to him actually arriving in Rome via the courtesy and expense of the Roman government.

(Acts 28:16 NKJV) Now when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard; but Paul was permitted to dwell by himself with the soldier who guarded him.

(Acts 28:30 NKJV) Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him,

(Acts 28:31 NKJV) preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.

3 Years Later / Bunch people waiting for Paul in Rome / Acts 2 - Pentecost

When Paul does get there 3 years after this writing there are a bunch of people waiting for him as we read and closed out the Book of Acts. There were a bunch of believers in Rome even though Paul had never been to Rome on any of his three missionary journeys, but I think Acts 2 tells us how the believers of Rome came to be, and that is that they caught a fresh wind of the Spirit, and on the Day of Pentecost there were people present from Rome:

(Acts 2:10 NKJV) "Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,

Acts 18 – Priscilla & Aquilla / Expelled by Claudius / Church in Home

In Acts 18 we know that Paul's good friends Priscilla and Aquilla that he had met in Corinth had once lived in Rome, and as of the writing of this epistle had moved back to Rome to live; and they had a church in their home. Priscilla and Aquilla had to originally leave Rome because Emperor Claudius had forced all the Jews out of Rome (a fact that recorded for us in secular history books btw). Emperor Claudius, an anti-Semite, drove the Jews from Rome, and it is recorded in history

books that about 20,000 were forced to leave. But Priscilla and Aquilla are back in Rome at the writings of this book.

(Acts 18:1 NKJV) After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth.

(Acts 18:2 NKJV) And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them.

(Acts 18:3 NKJV) So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers.

(Rom 16:3 NKJV) Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,

(Rom 16:4 NKJV) who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

(Rom 16:5 NKJV) Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia to Christ.

We call it a Book – started as a Letter / Delivered by Phoebe – Cenchrea / Help her Business

The Book of Romans as we called it started out as a letter, and it is believed by most scholars that the letter (scroll) was hand-carried and delivered by a dear sister in the faith named Phoebe who it appears was going to Rome for business from Corinth where she had met Paul. Paul will tell the church in Rome at the end of the letter to receive Phoebe and assist her in her business venture.

Romans 16:1-2 (NKJV) ¹I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea, ²that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also.

Piece it all Together – Acts 20 / 3 months / Phoebe going to Rome – Great please Deliver

We piece all this together based on Acts 20:2 Paul came to Greece (Corinth is in Greece). Acts 20:3 says Paul stayed in Corinth for 3 months, So she was probably talking with Paul in Corinth and she said well I'm heading to Rome next week on a business trip, and Paul said really, that is great, I've been wanting to write them a letter, and would you please deliver it for me – please make sure that it gets there. During these three months in Corinth, Paul penned the Epistle to the Romans (most likely). It would seem the Paul heard that Phoebe was on her way to Rome from Cenchreae, Romans 16:1-2, (which is the eastern most port in Corinth), and thus felt compelled to write it and have it sent with her.

(Acts 20:2 NKJV) Now when he had gone over that region and encouraged them with many words, he came to Greece

(Acts 20:3 NKJV) and stayed three months. And when the Jews plotted against him as he was about to sail to Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia.

Why I give so Much Attention / How Perfectly Woven Together / More Read – Less Faith

Hey why do I give this much attention to the detail of things like this? Because this Book never ceases to amaze me how perfectly it is woven together (there are no loose ends, everything ties so perfectly together). Yes, I am ready to give a defense when skeptics come just as I am instructed to be ready; but these things just continually strengthen my faith, because this Bible the more I read it, the less I walk in faith, because now I am working with facts. The more we study this Bible, the less we will walk in faith (Romans 10:17). I am living on much less faith today than I was 10 years ago, there are just too many facts for me through the years and years of studying and analyzing that I need less and less faith to walk – for I know my Redeemer lives, fact!

(1 Peter 3:15 NKJV) But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;

(Rom 10:17 NKJV) So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

So Phoebe the servant Delivers / They copy it over and over Again / Less Faith Needed

So this servant Phoebe delivers this letter to the beloved in Roman, and they hand copy it over and over again and again that we now get to break it open for a weekly feast. The oldest known handwritten manuscript of the Book of Romans dates to approximate 175-225 AD and it contains the last 8 chapters of the Book of Romans. There is no book for the history of man that has as many handwritten copies (10,000+) still in existence, and when comparing those hand written copies to one another they are 99% the same, and the 1% are minor word changes (such a

saying “those” – rather than “them”, but the majority are commas, period, and other punctuation difference. Yes, the more and more I study, the less and less I am walking in faith.

Booked changed People & World / Next time Lord gives you something Small

Hey Phoebe can you deliver this for me – sure Paul! Hey Christian you never know how significant the insignificant may really be.

- The Book of Romans - what a mighty book, from a doctrinal standpoint and a duty standpoint. The Book of Romans - Great leaders such as Augustine, Martin Luther, and John Wesley all say that it was the reading of the Book of Romans that brought them to the place to surrender their life to Christ.
- The Book of Romans has changed the course of all Christianity as Martin Luther read it and upon reading it he nail his 95 pt thesis on the door of the Catholic Church and the Protestant Reformation began.
- The Book of Romans – the Romans Road, the beautiful and easy way to present the gospel to someone.
- The Book of Romans, what a great and mighty book, it has literally changed the world (Protestant Reformation).

Please remember that next time you think some task or labor the Lord gives you is small and insignificant. Hey Phoebe, I hear you are going to Rome, could you deliver this letter for me to the Church? Sure thing Paul!

So Paul knows many People in Rome / Will call 26 by personal Name / LETTER not Book

So Paul knows many people in Rome, his dear friends Priscilla and Aquilla are there whom he lived with and made tents together with, who knows how much they encouraged his heart when he was with them in Corinth; and Paul knows many other people in Rome by name as he will call them out by name, some 26 of them in chapter 16. We call it the Book of Romans, but it really was a letter. It is important to see the heart Paul has for his beloved in Rome. The listing of the people, the warmth of his words, we are not reading a book of theology but a letter of love. May we establish that from the beginning, that this is a love letter. Sadly the Book of Romans has been used as a sword to stab to the heart of a brother or sister in the augments of theology. Yes it is probably the richest and deepest book on Theology in the NT, but it was originally written as a love letter from a man who has personally met the Author of Love personally, Jesus Christ, and he is sharing his heart to reach and minister to the heart of a people he loved.

Rich Book – but first a Letter / Let us Study it as Such

It is a rich book, but before it was “a book”, it was a letter, so let us read it and study it as such. *Romans is so foundational to the faith that it has been called the “Constitution of Christianity”.*

In Romans, just about every major doctrine of the Christian faith is put forth.

In a survey of Bible teachers, 75% said if they could only teach from one book of the Bible, it would be the book of Romans.

(Rom 1:1 NKJV) Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God

We are the Familiar with Paul / We owe him a Tremendous Debt / He Sweat & Bled / Quit?

Verse 1 – Paul – We are all the familiar with Paul as we have just spent about a half year studying him and his ministry in the Book of Acts. We owe our brother a tremendous debt, for all that he labored and endured for the sake of the gospel. Paul’s sweat and endurance gives us the pleasure and opportunity to be blessed by this Book of Romans. For you who have quit, have said the sweat and tears are too much to endure – you leave nothing for the future. But to you who continue to labor and toil, sweat and bleed, carry on Christian soldier, carry on, for the Captain of your Salvation says well done, well done; and your labor will not be in vain for nothing we do for King and the Kingdom is ever in vain, not today nor in the tomorrows to come. Had Paul quit, we’d have little to study and be encouraged with today (50 % of the NT), but he endured and we are blessed, and may we endure so other are blessed themselves.

Hebrews 2:10-11 (NKJV) ¹⁰For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. ¹¹For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren,

FCA – Open Mouth

Sometimes I open my mouth and things just come out, it can make for some awkward moments. But a while back I was putting a group together to get more FCA Huddles into the public schools here in the County; well I had met this young lady who was just a few years out of college and she started to tell me about the FCA she attended faithfully while in college. She said it changed her life; she walked in victory, lived in victory, in the extremely hard and challenging times of college. She said she would have never kept her faith through college had it not been for the FCA Huddle and the FCA Leader that ran the huddle. She said I think it is the greatest. I said great, you know the power it has with the youth, how about joining us and helping us. She immediately said, oh I can't, I'm much too busy now with my career, I just don't have the time. Immediately I heard words being spoken, but they were finished by the time I realized that it was me that was speaking them, for I had said to her "I'm glad that person that invested so much in you, that his career didn't keep him from being too busy for you." Yes, it was a very quiet moment immediately after I said that, and I then said alrighty time for me to get back to work. Ole Paul, what a brother, what a brother, to be blessed to have such a brother like a Paul in our lives, how wonderful if we could be a Paul (even just a sliver) to someone in our lifetime. Someone invested in me, now it is my turn to invest in someone other than myself.

Slave – not a Servant / No Rights – No Pay / Socrates – Plato / Property / 60 Million

Verse 1 – Paul, a bondservant – Paul uses the word "doulos" a slave, not a servant. A servant had rights and got pay, but the "doulos" had no right and received no pay except what his master chose to give him or her. Plato and Socrates, the great minds of that culture said "*the greatest insult you could hurl on someone was to call them a "doulos", a slave*". In the Roman Empire your slave was a simple possession no different than your ox or cattle cart. You could trade them, beat them, kill them and nobody cared. At the time of this writing of Paul, there were 60 million slaves in the Roman Empire. How shocked it must have been to the believers to open this letter from the great Apostle, and he opens it with, "Paul a slave".

But he was Slave to Jesus Christ / Every Man a Slave to Something / Paul slave for 25

Verse 1 – a slave of Jesus Christ – But Paul was a slave to Jesus thus making him free. Paul will talk about slaves in this Book of Romans, and he will make it clear that every man is a slave to something (or someone), man is either a slave to sin, or a slave to Christ. Paul has now been a slave for 25 years now; it has been 25 years since his Damascus road experience/conversion, yet he still burns brightly and is still sold out for the Master that meet him 25 years ago.

(Rom 6:16 NKJV) Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?

(Rom 6:17 NKJV) But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.

How still on-fire 25 Years Later / Theme 1:16-17 / Not cared thoughts – Gospel was Power

How about you today, are you more on fire today than you were last year, 5 years, 10 years? How could Paul be like he was? He tells us in the thematic verse of this Book we study (1:16-17), and that is that he was not ashamed of the Gospel. Paul cared not about what the world and others thought, for he was a "doulos" to the One who met him on the road to Damascus, and that Gospel comes with pure power. Paul was pure power.

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "*The just shall live by faith.*"

Something to Grab – Nothing he wrote is Theory / Not Theology – writing Pwr / Will Change

And here is something for us to grab hold of today, right here, right now, and that is nothing that Paul writes to us in this book is theory! It is nothing that he was "inspired" to write, it was nothing

that he heard from Peter, James, or John – it is all what God had done in him, it is all things that he can personally attest to that they are true. Paul isn't writing a theological thesis, he is writing to his personal friends saying our God is awesome in power, and we can live in his power today and every day (and I speak from experience). Christian everything we read in this book for the next 16 chapters are for you, this book will change your life! Will you allow it to?

(Rom 15:18 NKJV) *For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient;*

(Rom 15:19 NKJV) *in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.*

Jim Elliot – at 22

I am reminded of what Jim Elliot said (who was martyred for his faith in the mission field of Ecuador): *“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose”*. He said that because so many of his friends challenged him for being so bright and intelligent and that he was throwing it all away by becoming a missionary. What is so powerful is that he wrote this and he said this at the age of 22. He also wrote Lord, *“take my blood, my life, my all, just let my life account for something”*. At 22 years old. He also wrote in his journal, *“Lord I ask not for a long life, but for a full one like yours”*. At 22 years old. How about we say that today? How about we ask the same to the Lord today and see what He will do over the next few months as we study this book?

Book has changed many People in Slaves / I long to go Deeper – Not Content

Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ - This book has changed many a men and woman into “bondslaves of Jesus Christ”, and it will do the same for us. How I long to go deeper, how I desire a deeper more intimate relationship with Him. I never want to be content, satisfied, I want more of Him and less of me!

Beauty of Slave – No Prerequisite / No 8 years of Seminary / Can we write – A Slave of Jesus

Here is the beauty of being a slave, there is no 8 years of seminary to prepare to be a slave, all we have to do is lay down our will and say Lord I am yours! Who could write a letter today and start it with, “Ray – a slave of Jesus Christ? May we be able to say it louder and louder each week that goes by as we examine this book, and this book examines us.

Has changed Many into Slaves – will do the same for Us

Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ - This book has changed many a men and woman into “bondslaves of Jesus Christ”, and it will do the same for us. We will study it for about 6 months, and barely scratch the surface, but even at the surface we will be changed forever. If you want to go really deep you can always checkout these teachers ☺

Martyn Lloyd-Jones, the great expositor of Scripture, spent 14 years teaching through the book of Romans and yet never finishing his series before he retired from his church.

Donald Grey Barnhouse broadcast weekly messages through Romans for 11 years on the radio.

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Has changed Many into Slaves – will do the same for Us

Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ - This book has changed many a men and woman into “bondslaves of Jesus Christ”, and it will do the same for us.

John Chrysotom - (an early church father; 347-407AD) had this epistle read to him once a week for 18 years.

Augustine - (early church father) - In 386 A.D., Aurelius Augustine received Jesus Christ as his Savior after reading a passage from the Book of Romans. He went on to become one of the church's most outstanding leaders and theologians.

Martin Luther - A thousand years later, Martin Luther wrote, "*Night and day I pondered Romans until I grasped the truth. I felt myself to be reborn. This passage of Paul became to me a gateway to heaven.*"

John Wesley - Several centuries later (May 24, 1738 to be precise), a discouraged missionary went "very unwillingly" to a religious meeting in London. There a miracle took place. "About a quarter before nine," he wrote in his journal, "*I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.*" That missionary was John Wesley. The message he heard that evening was the preface to Martin Luther's commentary on Romans. Just a few months before, John Wesley had written in his journal: "I went to America to convert the Indians; but Oh! who shall convert me?" That evening in Aldersgate Street, his question was answered. And the result was the great Wesleyan Revival that swept England and transformed the nation.

John Calvin - In assessing the importance of the Book of Romans, John Calvin said, "*When one gains a knowledge of this Epistle, he has an entrance opened to him to all the most hidden treasures of Scripture.*"

William Tyndale - The famous sixteenth-century Bible translator William Tyndale wrote of Romans: "*It is the principle and most excellent part of the New Testament... No man can read it too often or study it too well; for the more it is studied, the easier it is; the more it is chewed, the pleasanter it is. . . the more it is searched, the preciouser things are found....*"

Unknown - *It has been said that Romans will delight the greatest logician and captivate the mind of the consummate genius, yet it will bring tears to the humblest soul and refreshment to the simplest mind.*

Romans is still Transforming Today / Brings man from Religion into Relationship

Paul's Epistle to the Romans is still transforming people's lives, just the way it transformed Martin Luther and John Wesley. The one Scripture above all others that brought Luther out of mere religion into the joy of salvation by grace, through faith, was Romans 1:17: "The just shall live by faith." The Protestant Reformation and the Wesleyan Revival were both the fruit of this wonderful letter written by Paul from Corinth about the year 56 AD.

We can be the Same – be Inspired Just the Same

Imagine! You and I can read and study the same inspired letter that brought life and power to Luther and Wesley! And the same Holy Spirit who taught them can teach us! You and I can experience revival in our hearts, homes, and churches if the message of this letter grips us as it has gripped men of faith in centuries past. For it is Pure Power!

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "[The just shall live by faith.](#)"*

Pure Power from the Start

(Romans 1:1-6)

God's Righteousness & Grace – concerning Salvation (Chapters 1-8)

Book Theme – Righteousness & Grace Revealed / Through Gospel / Many Lives Changed

The Righteousness and Grace of God is revealed in this book, and that is done through the Gospel (Good News) - (Rom 1:16-17). This book has changed the lives of many a man and woman, and many of those people then went on to change human history as we see such examples in Martin Luther (the Protestant Reformation that swept through the whole world – and still effecting the world today), John Wesley (and the Wesleyan Revival that swept through England in the 1700's), and the list goes on and on, including a man named Chuck Smith who was teaching through Romans in a Foursquare Church, realizing he could throw off the yoke of religion, and could just teach on the personal relationship with Jesus Christ and his life was changed. He went on to pastor a little twenty-five-member church called Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, which today numbers in the tens of thousands and is one of the fastest-growing evangelistic movements in the world today. It is not the result of any attempt at organization. It's just revival as the Living God flows through willing vessels.

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

Reveal great Depths (Righteousness & Grace) / Degree Understand / Spiritual Depths

This book will reveal to us in great depths the righteousness (the Holiness) of God, and the unsearchable depths of God's Grace. Christian it is the degree that you/we understands His Holiness (perfection), will be the degree that we understand His Grace, Mercy, and Love. This book will take us to spiritual depths we have never been to before.

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Will change our Lives – if we Allow it to / Throw distractions Aside / Not Conformed

This book will change your life and mine if we will allow it. Will you allow it right now? Will you lay aside (throw aside if need be) anything that could be distracting your mind right now that you may settle in on God's Holy operating table and let Him do spiritual surgery upon your heart. He says to us here in this study today, that we be not conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of your mind, and that He will do that transforming through His life changing Word going through us.

(Rom 12:1 NKJV) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

(Rom 12:2 NKJV) And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

(Rom 10:17 NKJV) So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Paul the Author – Not declare Except what Accomplished / Not Theology – a Letter

It is important to see who the author of this book is, the Apostle Paul, and he makes a powerful statement to us that he will not declare to us anything, except that which the Lord has already proven out in his life. Paul is not speaking theory, he is expounding on what he lived and experienced in his life, and he writes to them (and us) that all that he experienced, we can too if we take these words, receive them, believe them, apply them, and we shall live in the same power that he had too. May I again remind you, Paul didn't start out to pen a book of theology, he

wrote this as a letter to a group of people he knew and loved in Rome, and he is telling them, grab hold of what grabbed hold of me, and your life will never be the same!

(Rom 15:18 NKJV) *For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient;*

(Rom 15:19 NKJV) *in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.*

Paul unlocks key to Power – being a Slave / Christian need make Decision – how Far Go

In verse 1 he unlocks the first key in how to live in this power that he had, and that is to submit oneself as a slave to Jesus Christ; Paul identifies himself as a slave of Jesus Christ, and he will make it clear in this book that every man is a slave to someone or something (Rom 6:16-17), and then make it clear how to be a slave to Jesus Christ and not be conformed into this world. At some point Christian, you will have to make a decision of how far you are willing to go, at what degree are you willing to die to your wants and desires, and live for the things of the Kingdom of God. I will tell you up front, and I will state it every week hereafter, only those willing to be slaves will have their lives changed through this study.

(Rom 1:1 NKJV) *Paul, a **bondservant** of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God*

(Rom 6:16 NKJV) *Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?*

(Rom 6:17 NKJV) *But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.*

Today's Study – Start Book Pure Power / This Book will change your Life Powerfully

In our study today, verses 1:1-7, Paul is going to start this book out with pure power, so there is no doubt of its power, brother Paul is telling us, “what I am going to be telling you is pure power, and it will change your life powerfully.”

Outline – Pure Power from the Start (Rom 1:1-6)

- Paul – a Testimony of God's Power
- Promise – the Good News of Jesus was Promised in the OT
- Proof – the Resurrection is Proof of God's Promise and Power
- People – We the People are why He did it all.

Paul – a Testimony of God's Power

What God did in the life of the writer of this book was pure power, and the author is proof to us that God is more than willing and able to do the same in our lives too.

Powerful Start - from the Start

(Rom 1:1 NKJV) *Paul, a **bondservant** of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God*

Doulos – Slave / Exodus 21 – Ear to the Door / It is a Wise Decision

Verse 1 - Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ - The word “bondservant” is *doulos*, meaning “bondslave.” Exodus 21 sheds light on what this means: In Israel, a slave was required to serve only six years before he was set free. If, however, at the end of six years, he said, “I like it here. I want to become a bondslave,” the master would drive a nail through his right earlobe and place an earring in it, signifying he was a *doulos*, a slave by choice. It's a wise decision to give yourself fully to the Lord as His bondslave because He takes excellent care of those committed to Him. Their lives are filled with purpose and focus; their hearts with peace and joy.

Exodus 21:2 (NKJV) ²*If you buy a Hebrew servant, he shall serve six years; and in the seventh he shall go out free and pay nothing.*

Exodus 21:5-6 (NKJV) ⁵*But if the servant plainly says, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,'* ⁶*then his master shall bring him to the judges. He shall also bring him to the door, or to the doorpost, and his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him forever.*

Commitment – a Slave / Function – an Apostle / Apostle – sent out (with Good News)

Verse 1 - called to be an apostle - Paul's commitment was to be a slave, a slave to Jesus Christ. Paul's function was to be an apostle. The word "apostle" means "sent out", and Paul knew that he was called of God to go forth with the "gospel", the "Good News" from God to mankind.

Commitment – Function / Consecration in mind – Set Apart / From Womb – Murder / You

Verse 1 - separated to the gospel of God - Paul's commitment was to be a slave, a slave to Jesus Christ. Paul's function was to be an apostle; and his consecration in his mind was that he was called and separated unto and for the gospel of God. Paul would say that he was separated unto God while he still in his mother's womb; which is an amazing statement considering that before he was the great apostle, he was a disciple, and before a disciple he was Paul, and before he was Paul he was Saul – a widow and orphan maker. When Paul would speak of God's grace and forgiveness to these people in Rome, they would know it was undeniably true. How about you today, do you think that God's grace for everyone else but you? Do you think he will surely forgive that murderer, that mean person, that sexual immoral person, but for some reason He doesn't look upon you with that same grace or compassion? (read the next paragraph)

Galatians 1:15-16 (NKJV) ¹⁵But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, ¹⁶to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood,

Separated – marked-off Boundaries / This One is MINE - Special

Verse 1 – separated - Separated means to be set apart, to be marked-off with boundaries. As God says of Paul, so he says of you and me, and that is that we have been set-apart, marked off with boundaries, these one's are mine, they are special to Me!

Important notice Difference / Separated "To" not From / Miserable – Legalism / Horizon

Verse 1 – separated to the gospel of God - It is important to notice the difference here for Paul (and us), it is not separated "from" something, but separated "to" something (eis in the Greek). A miserable Christianity is to be separated from something, oh I can't do this, and I can't go there, and that is a life of legalism. But to be separated "to" something, as Paul was, are we should be, is to be living in freedom. From the Greek word for "separated", is "*aphorizō*", and it where we get our word "horizon". Our horizon gets bigger and bigger the more we get separated unto the Lord. Christianity that about do's and don't, and about narrowing down what you can and can't do, has a very narrow horizon; but when we see that God has separated us unto Himself, our horizon gets wider and wider, as we see we are not walking a tightrope, but running hand-and-hand with the Lord Jesus free and unshackled. Free to enjoy Him, free to love without worry or constraint, always secure in His unconditional acceptance of us. To me it is the picture of two lovers running freely in wide open fields, no care of where they end up, because where they end they will be together and that is all that matters. Oh Christian, He loves you, He has set you apart unto Himself that you might come away with Him, to run together, to love and to laugh. The Song of Solomon is a book about God's love for you (His Bride), here is what He thinks of you, imagine that He says that with just one look, you have ravished His heart – it is true, because His Word is true:

Song of Songs 2:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ My beloved spoke, and said to me: "Rise up, my love, my fair one, And come away.

Song of Songs 4:7-9 (NKJV) ⁷ You are all fair, my love, And there is no spot in you. ⁸ Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, With me from Lebanon. Look from the top of Amana, From the top of Senir and Hermon, From the lions' dens, From the mountains of the leopards. ⁹ You have ravished my heart, My sister, my spouse; You have ravished my heart With one look of your eyes, With one link of your necklace.

Song of Songs 7:11-12 (NKJV) ¹¹ Come, my beloved, Let us go forth to the field; Let us lodge in the villages. ¹² Let us get up early to the vineyards; Let us see if the vine has budded, Whether the grape blossoms are open, And the pomegranates are in bloom. There I will give you my love.

WOW – we ravish His heart with just one look! – But it is true because His Word is true.

Promise – the Good News of Jesus was Promised in the OT

Old Testament prophecies predicting the coming Messiah are mind blowing, and the more I read and study them, the less and less I find myself walking in faith, for I see clear facts, and facts take no faith to believe. This Bible is amazing, no one could make a story like this up.

(Rom 1:2 NKJV) which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, (Rom 1:3 NKJV) concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,

Paul makes Clear – not new Sect / Genesis 3

Verse 2 - which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures – Paul right from the start is making it clear that this isn't some new sect, some new religion, it is all that has been prophesied from the beginning. All the way back to the first mention of the gospel, theological called the "*proto-evangelicum*", the first mention of the gospel; that Satan would bruise the Seed of Eve (referring to the Messiah to come), but the Messiah would crush the head (head representing authority) of Satan:

Genesis 3:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ *And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."*

300 Prophecies – had to be Jesus / Only 1 Man could Fulfill Them / No Fairytale - Power

Paul is referring them to the 300 some prophecies concerning the Messiah that would come (as written by the Law and the Prophets). Paul is pointing them to the prophecies referring to the Messiah, and only one Man who walked this earth could have fulfilled them, and that was Jesus Christ of Nazareth. This isn't no fairytale, this is pure power, the Messiah came exactly as prophesied in the past Scriptures. The prophecies are undeniable!

His Birth & Lineage

- 1.) The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Micah 5:2a / Matthew 2:1-2
- 2.) The Messiah would be a descendant of David. Isaiah 9:7 / Matthew 1:1

His Environment & the World Setting

- 3.) The Messiah would be announced to his people 483 years, to the exact day, after the decree to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. Daniel 9:25 / John 12:12-13
- 4.) The Messiah would be killed before the destruction of the temple. Daniel 9:26c / Matthew 27:50-51
- 5.) The Jew's authority to administer capital punishment would be gone when the Messiah arrived. Genesis 49:10c / John 18:31

His Death

- 6.) The Messiah would be sacrificed on the same mountain where God tested Abraham. Genesis 22:14 / Luke 23:33
- 7.) The Messiah's back would be whipped. Isaiah 53:5c Matthew 27:26
- 8.) The Messiah's hands and feet would be pierced. Psalm 22:16c Matthew 27:38

A Coin in Texas / 10 to 17th / 262,000 sq miles – 25 million residents / 14 hrs to Drive

Speaking of just these 8 prophecies; the following probabilities (The Law of Compound Probability) are taken from Peter Stoner in *Science Speaks* (Moody Press, 1963) to show that coincidence is ruled out by the science of probability. Stoner says that by using the modern science of probability in reference to eight prophecies, 'we find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled all eight prophecies is 1 in 10 to the 17th.' That would be 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000. In order to help us comprehend this staggering probability, Stoner illustrates it by supposing that "we take 10 to the 17th silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state two feet deep (that is a State that is 262,000 square miles, 130 million acres of farmland (that doesn't count the cities), and enough land to easily house all 25 million of its States residents. Two feet deep over 262,000 square miles - "Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes (it took me 14 hours at

70 mph to drive across the whole State from East to West), but he must then pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would have had of writing these eight prophecies (not even counting the other 292 Jesus fulfilled) and having them all come true in any one man."

Concerning – Perri / Gospel all about Jesus / Jesus surrounds His Gospel

Verse 3 - concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord - The word "concerning" in Greek is "perri", it means "to be on all side, surrounding or around", we use it in our English language with other words to make up compound words such as, "periscope". With the periscope you can scan with it 360 degrees. With "perimeter" meaning all around. Thus the Gospel that is preached is all about Jesus, and it is surrounded by Jesus Christ.

Seed of David – Fully Man – Fully God / Sperma – Isaiah 7 / Larry King

Verse 3 - who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh – According to the flesh, meaning Jesus was fully man, and fully God, He was the God-Man. The word for "seed" here in the Greek is "sperma", it is our word for "sperm". It clearly merges the human aspect (Mary born through procreation), and Jesus supernaturally conceived in Mary's womb for the virgin birth. The virgin birth – Larry King was asked if he could interview anyone in history who would it be, and he said Jesus Christ. They said what would you ask Him, and he said just one question, the virgin birth – because if you can settle that one question, then all the other question fall into place. **Isaiah 7:14 (NKJV)** ¹⁴Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

Had to be Lineage David / 9 months Pregnant / What else they Ask – Get to Bethlehem

Jesus had to be born through the lineage of David, just as the Scriptures declared. He had to be born in Bethlehem (the city of David – it is where David was born), just as the Scriptures declared. Now I have never been 9 months pregnant, but I've watch woman who have, and I don't think a 90 mile (Nazareth to Bethlehem) donkey ride is one of the things you prefer to do at this stage in your pregnancy. But you know I think Mary and Joseph knew their Scriptures, They believed the angel, they believed Mary was carrying the Messiah, they believed the virgin birth, through the lineage of David. Now if you knew you were carrying the Messiah, fulfilling prophecy and Scripture, I would think you would go find out what else you were a part of, and I think they would read the Scriptures and/or went and ask the rabbis hey what all do the Scriptures have to say about the Messiah, and thus they would have known the Messiah had to be born in Bethlehem. Now when things were getting real close in that 9th month, they were probably like now how exactly is the Messiah born in Bethlehem when we are 90 miles away here in Nazareth. Knock, knock, hear ye hear ye, a degree has been set forth by Augustus that all are to be registered in their hometowns, thus you folks from the lineage of David need to head to Bethlehem asap.

Christian Sweating getting to next Place / Have Ears to Hear – Eyes to See

Christian, if you are sweating or struggling worrying how you are going to get from Point A to Point B, because you know that is where you really need to be, that you feel in your heart is where God wants you to be – relax, don't strive or struggle on how you are going to get there, just have ears top hear and eyes to see when God is opening the way to get you there. Yes, it may be way later than you comfort zone would like, it may be in the final hour, but He will get you there – Right on Time!

Proof – the Resurrection is Proof of God's Promise and Power

The resurrection is the power of the gospel – no resurrection, no hope, and no hope then no power to change lives.

(Rom 1:3 NKJV) concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,

(Rom 1:4 NKJV) and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.

Resurrection Proves Everything – Only God Raise Dead / 300 Prophecies would Mean 0

The resurrection proves everything, the resurrection declares (proves) that Jesus is the Son of God, for only God can raise the dead. Even with all 300 prophecies perfectly fulfilled by Jesus, if there is no resurrection, they would all be meaningless. So what we would say, He is still dead, He isn't the Living God, and a dead God can't change my life!

Spirit Holiness – Holy Spirit, Resurrection, Virgin Birth, Jesus Son / All Impossible

Verse 4 - according to the Spirit of holiness - Now this phrase "Spirit of holiness" is found nowhere else in the Scriptures (in this Greek form). Scholars have many takes on what exactly it means. Some say it simply is another reference to the Holy Spirit. I agree with that, especially how it is used here for I believe it is impossible to believe in the resurrection from the dead apart from the Holy Spirit testifying it to us. In fact when you tie this whole sentence together you can see it also referencing the virgin birth, and I don't believe it is possible to believe the virgin birth without the Holy Spirit testifying that to us for we know intellectually that a virgin birth is impossible. Not only does this passage tie together the virgin birth and the resurrection, but it also ties together that Jesus is Son of God, and I say it is equally impossible to believe that God would send His only Begotten Son to save a wretch like me apart from the Holy Spirit testifying that to me.

John 14:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷*the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.*

John 14:26 (NKJV) ²⁶*But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.*

Important Takeaway / Resurrection is Holy God / Holy – not Common / Sacrifice Accepted

But here is a very important takeaway that the Lord impressed upon my heart as I dwelt on this verse, and that is the holiness of the resurrection, the Spirit of holiness that is over and upon the resurrection. Christian, the resurrection is "Holy Ground". Holy means "not common", and the resurrection is anything but common, it is the Father accepting the substitution, Jesus taking our place, and the Father saying I accept the trade, and I will raise my Son from the dead, and all others who cast their sin upon Him for the punishment sin deserves. Christian, when you speak of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, don't speak about it like it is some everyday occurrence, some common happening, speak about it for what it was – the greatest event in the history of humankind. When you speak about it, when you think about it, when you pray about, make a conscious awareness that you are standing on Holy Ground. When you talk about it with others, may the Holy ground we stand on, become a Holy moment (not common) and the Spirit of God comes and moves in a mighty way as we speak of the Day that God raised His only Son from the grave.

Love the Picture – Jesus Stands Up

Speaking of pure power, I like to picture events of the Bible in my mind, and as I studied the meaning of this word resurrection one of the uses of it was when a person would rise up from a seat. And so there is Jesus in Paradise, sitting down with Abraham, Issac, Jacob, and the rest of the cloud of witnesses (Luke 16:22-23). Satan doesn't have Him in hell, but no doubt satisfied to see Him in the grave, the wounds of the cross see fresh upon His body. But then after 3 days (as prophesied – Matt 12), Satan's smile is wiped from his face as Jesus "stands up", Satan looking on, what is He doing, where does He think He is going? And Jesus says, "time to go!" Today they will see Me in glory and Power, the Power of the Resurrection. I wonder if Jesus gave Satan a look over the "gulf" separating hell from Paradise, a head nod, time to go! What a mighty and awesome God – who loves us! And His resurrection power is available for our lives today (Ephesians 1:19).

Matthew 12:40 (NKJV) ⁴⁰*For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*

Luke 16:22-23 (NKJV) ²²*So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*

Ephesians 1:19-20 (NKJV) ¹⁹and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

People – We the People are why He did it all.

It was and is all for us; a God who says we ravished His heart with one look, and that is why He went to the lengths that He did, so that we might be His forever. That is pure power, you are no one of the 6 billion on the earth, you are the one that ravished His heart.

(Rom 1:5 NKJV) Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name,

(Rom 1:6 NKJV) among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;

Socrates – 1st Half right – missed Grace / OT Prophecy / Book Romans Reveals Both

Verse 5 - Through Him we have received grace - It may be that the Deity can forgive sins, but I do not see how (Socrates wrote to Plato, 360BC). Socrates had the first half right, and that is that God is not man, His ways are higher than man's way, and to offend Him by sin is a great offense. He said maybe God is gracious, and will forgive sin, but how could He, what could it be based on? Socrates understood the righteousness of God, but not the Grace of God - **GRACE = "God's Riches At Christ's Expense."** Sadly Socrates, it was promised in the Old Testament, and he would have done well to go to the ultimate higher thinking by searching the Scriptures. For man today, this Book of Romans is all about revealing God's Righteousness, but His wonderful Grace too!

(Rom 5:1 NKJV) Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

(Rom 5:2 NKJV) through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Major Point – Received (Iambano) – to take / Man the Doer / Man's Way – Satan's Lie

Verse 5 - Through Him we have **received grace and apostleship** - But here is a major point to be made, that word in verse 5 for "received" is the Greek word "Iambano" and means to take and receive but what I want you to clearly understand is that the verb tense of this word and sentence structure (Tense: 2nd Aorist, Voice: Active, Mood: Indicative). All this means that the subject (which is "we") are to be the "doers", we are to be the takers! Example, in the sentence "the boy hit the ball", the boy is the "doer" in the sentence. In verse 5, we are the "doer" in that we are to take/receive God's grace. It is God extending His grace (**God's Riches At Christ's Expense**) and saying here, take it, it is all your's for the taking but you must take it, I will not force it upon you. Sadly how many people refuse it, saying I'll do it my way, or buy the lie of Satan that they are not worthy to take it – when God is screaming out to them "take it". Maybe even you here today, you've taken His grace for salvation, received Jesus as taking you punishment for sin, but now you buy the lie of Satan or your flesh, that that is all you get, because you are so unworthy – No Christian, what is it that you need, God's grace wants to supply it for you, He is your Abba Father who loves you, wants to give to you and love on you, just like you want to do to your kids. Freely receive it and allow Him to do it.

(Rom 8:32 NKJV) He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

Exciting Sentence Structure – Includes Apostleship / He extends His Hand / Mission Impos

Verse 5 - Through Him we have **received grace and apostleship** And Christian, here is what is so exciting, and that is that the same sentence structure not only applies for that word grace, but also apostleship. The Creator of the Universe is extending His hand and saying, and take this too "apostleship". Apostle means "sent out one", and the Lord is saying take this, I want you to go out on My behalf. God has a purpose in your life, and the great adventure is to discover what it is. God extends the hand, says will you take this mission, will you be My apostle – I can hear the theme song to Mission Impossible playing in my mind. But it is not mission impossible, it is mission possible because wherever you go, whatever you do, He promises to be with you as you do it.

Matthew 28:18-20 (NKJV) ¹⁸And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Go ^εtherefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." ^εAmen.

Mission to Proclaim Gospel (Good News) / We get too Stressed Out / G2097 vs G2098

The calling with the apostleship (sent out ones) is simply to proclaim the gospel (which means – Good News). We get way too stressed out about this calling, and I think the reason is because we've made the Gospel so narrow in our minds in the sense that we think it only means telling people they are sinners going to hell and need Jesus as their Savior. Yes that is part of the Gospel, but the word means "good tidings", "good news", and Paul not only proclaimed the good news to the lost, but to the saved (like right here in this letter to the Romans). Gospel or Glad Tidings uses the same root word in the Greek (euagge) in all these verses, the difference is that one word (*euaggelion*) is the 'good news', the other word (*euaggelizō*) is the telling of that "good news". The Greek word translated "gospel" is euaggelion, from which we get our word "evangelist." In the Septuagint, this was the word used when the people of Israel were released from their Babylonian captivity. It meant, "You can go home. You're free. Good news!"

G2097 - εὐαγγελίζω (*euaggelizō*) From G2095 and G32; to announce good news ("evangelize") especially the gospel:—declare, bring (declare, show) glad (good) tidings, preach (the gospel).

G2098 - εὐαγγέλιον (*euaggelion*) From the same as G2097; a good message, that is, the gospel:—gospel.

Luke 2:10-12 (NKJV) ¹⁰Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you *good tidings (euaggelizō)* of great joy which will be to all people. ¹¹For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."

Luke 4:18-19 (NKJV) ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach *the gospel (euaggelizō)* to the poor; He has sent Me ^εto heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."^ε

Matthew 4:23 (NKJV) ²³And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching *the gospel (euaggelion)* of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

Romans 1:1 (NKJV) ¹Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to *the gospel (euaggelion)* of God

Romans 1:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶For I am not ashamed of *the gospel (euaggelion)* of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

Vines Definition of Glad Tidings / Tell the Believers Too / It will overflow from There

I like Vines dictionary definition of glad tidings, which is "any message designed to cheer those who receive it." Tell the Believers the Good news, the tomb is empty, good news the resurrection is true, good news grace is yours for the taking, apostleship too! Good news God has a bright and broad horizon for you, and He says come away with Me My love! Get in the habit of telling your believing friends the good news, and you'll find it just welling up in your heart and it will just overflow out on to the people who are separated from Him because of their sin – Good News unsaved one, the tomb is empty, the resurrection is true, the substitution has been accepted, He is ready to receive you – can I tell you more.

Spoken to Individuals / But then United in Powerful Witness / God's Symphony

May I remind you also, that Paul is writing a letter to a group of people that he personally knows; so yes the call is to individuals, but let us not forget that these individuals would then be united together by a common cause and purpose, and it would as Paul will go on to say in verse 8, that the whole world has heard of their faith and they are a mighty witness for God. God took a bunch of individuals and created a beautiful symphony, powerful booming symphony. For us here today, first we respond individually, but then we work corporately as the Body of Christ for His glory, becoming His symphony. This Christian life is exciting, let's do it together as church, let's change our world together as a group of individuals becoming God's symphony.

(Rom 1:8 NKJV) First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

Grace – Apostleship – Obedience / Nations – Individuals / God making a Body

(Rom 1:5 NKJV) Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name,

Through Him we have received grace (have you taken it?), through Him we have received apostleship (have you said send me?), for the continual obedience (is the exact translation) to the faith (are you being obedient?), among all nations for His name; nations are made up of individuals and we as individuals make up the nation, the body of Christ, for that is ultimately what God is doing, He is building Himself a body (Ephesians 1:22-23).

(Ephesians 1:22 NKJV) And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, (Ephesians 1:23 NKJV) which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Called – Invited / Holy Spirit screams Come Away with Me

Verse 6 - among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ – I love that Greek word for called in this verse, it means “invited”. Can the Holy Spirit through Paul scream out any louder to us in these first six verses, “come to Me, Come away with Me”.

Conclusion

Brother Paul is telling the beloved in Rome, and here today, what I am going to tell you is pure power, right from the start I am going to blow you away, and this is only the beginning, so hang on.

Recap today's Study

Outline – Pure Power from the Start (Rom 1:1-6)

- Paul – a Testimony of God's Power
- Promise – the Good News of Jesus was Promised in the OT
- Proof – the Resurrection is Proof of God's Promise and Power
- People – We the People are why He did it all.

For I Long to See You

Keys to Building of a Powerful Body of Christ

(Romans 1:7-14)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (Ch12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Verse 11 - Context

Our passage of Scriptures will be verses 7 through 14, but I want to start with verse 11 to understand the context of these eight verses.

(Rom 1:11 NKJV) *For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established;*

Burden – to see Brothers / Desire – to Fellowship & Refresh / God's Desire – shows us Heart

The burden in Paul's heart is to see his brother and sisters in the Lord. His desire is to fellowship with them, he desires to refresh them, and he is looking forward to being refreshed by them. Beloved, this is God's desire for us to have towards each other today. God in this passage is showing us Paul's heart, so that we might see our hearts, so that we might open our hearts and say Lord I want the heart you want me to have, I want the heart that Paul had (as you've shown it to me as an example).

(Rom 15:4 NKJV) *For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.*

God is Building a Body / A Nation – 1 Nation Under God

Christian, God is building Himself a body, a body to call His own, a family to love and to cherish forever, for all eternity. A nation is made up of individuals, and the Lord is creating His ultimate "One Nation under God".

(Ephesians 1:22 NKJV) *And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church,*
(Ephesians 1:23 NKJV) *which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*

A Loving Body – is a Powerful Body / Last Weeks Study – Pure Power / Change Life

Now let me tell you this, a healthy and loving body is pure power. Last week in our study of verse 1-6 was Brother Paul telling us that this Book of Romans is pure power, and it has the power to change your life individually, and corporately it has the power to change the course of human history (as it has proven in the past through men such as Martin Luther, John Wesley, and Chuck Smith). We need each other kindle this power; Paul himself (the powerful apostle) will say he wants to see them so that he might be refreshed.

Verse 5 – Called to be Apostles / Not a study on Evangelism / Calling Family Home - Body

We studied verse 5 to see God extending to us the call to apostleship, to be sent out from Him to the nations, to build His Nation, His body. Now today's study isn't about evangelism, but let me say evangelism in a sense is simply "calling the family members home" as they respond to this Gospel of grace they become part of the family, part of His Body, become part of "One Nation Under God".

(Rom 1:5 NKJV) *Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name,*

Matthew 28:18-20 (NKJV) ¹⁸And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Go ^εtherefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Lambano – extended Hand / Mission Possible / Remember Mr. Phelps / God – Whole Nation

We saw that the word for "received" in verse 5 was the Greek word "lambano", and it meant "to take". The picture is of the Lord stretching forth His hands and offering to us to be "apostles – sent out ones". As I said it was like you could hear the theme song to "Mission Impossible" playing in the background as the Lord says to us, "will you accept?" But it is not "mission impossible", but "mission possible", because wherever we go and whatever we do He is with us for He never leaves us for He is with us always (Matt 28:20). We all who were television watchers in the 70's remember the show "Mission Impossible" – good morning Mr. Phelps, we have a mission for you, and should you decide to accept (as it would go on), and then it would end with – this tape will self-destruct in 3 seconds (and it would then start to smoke). He and his small team would then go and save the world (literally); but God has something much bigger and better than a small team saving the world, we have God putting a whole nation together, and he takes countless individuals and forms them into not small bands, individual groups over here, and groups over there, but all one together – creating, well – an orchestra, a beautiful symphony that is in perfect harmony with one another, following every motion and stroke of the Master Conductor's hand.

Play Video – Orchestra playing Mission Impossible

Symphony begins us a Heart for Each Other / God shows us Paul's Heart / Pure Power

That symphony begins with us having a heart for each other, a love, a burden, a longing, and a passion for each others; and God in these next 8 verses shows us Paul's heart, so that we might have the same heart, and that we might move and flow ever so beautifully together. When that happens, there is pure power flowing and emanating from the Body of Christ, both individually and corporately.

Outline: For I Long to See You

The Building of a Powerful Body (Romans 1:7-14)

1. Identifying the Saints (v.7)
2. Thankful for the Saints (v.8)
3. Praying for the Saints (v.9-10)
4. Imparting to the Saints (v.11)
5. Receiving from the Saints (v.12-14)

1 - Identifying the Saints (v.7)

The first step in building a powerful body of Christ is the identification of the saints, of who makes up the body, and how we are to view them.

(Rom 1:7 NKJV) To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Beloved – same Word / God the Father loves you as much as Jesus / Ravish His Heart

Verse 7 - beloved of God - Beloved of God, this is the same word used when God the Father says this is My Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. This is pretty amazing stuff. God is saying He loves you as much as He loves His Son. In John 17, Jesus said that the Father loves us the same as He loves Jesus, and Jesus says we are "Beloved of God", the same word. Imagine that! Christian, meditate on that for a moment, God the Creator of the Universe, the mighty and infinite One, the One who holds the world in His hand, says "I love you, as much as I

love My only Begotten Son". Christian, you are precious in His sight, you have ravished His heart, you take His breath away – Amazing.

Matthew 3:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Matthew 17:5 (NKJV) ⁵While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"

John 17:23 (NKJV) ²³I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

Song of Songs 4:7-9 (NKJV) ⁷ You are all fair, my love, And there is no spot in you. ⁸ Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, With me from Lebanon. Look from the top of Amana, From the top of Senir and Hermon, From the lions' dens, From the mountains of the leopards. ⁹ You have ravished my heart, My sister, my spouse; You have ravished my heart With one look of your eyes, With one link of your necklace.

Beloved – Agape – Unconditional / James 1 – no Variation / He is Rock Solid

Beloved - The Greek Word used is "Agapoes" which is the unconditional love; no conditions are set on receiving that love. James says through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that every good gift and perfect gift comes from the Father and there is no variation. Not only is God good in the gifts He gives, but in who He is. In Him there is no variableness or shadow of turning. That is, He's not moody. He doesn't have bad days. He's not generous with me one day, but grouchy the next—as I can so often be. We're variable. We go up and down. God doesn't. He can be nothing but good. He doesn't react to me according to how I'm doing with Him (how were my devotions, Bible reading, loving my neighbor, etc). He is faithful when I am faithless (2 Timothy 2:13). He is good when I am grumpy. He doesn't change. He's locked into His nature. That's why I love the Lord so much. He's solid as a Rock. And I can just enjoy Him without worrying about Him being ticked with me or tired of me. He gives nothing but good gifts, for He is a good God.

(James 1:17 NKJV) Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

2 Timothy 2:13 (NKJV) ¹³ If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.

Saints – no "to be" – Called Saints / 2 Categories / Set Apart / People who light Shines

Verse 7 - called to be saints - The words "to be" are in italics in the King James Version because they don't appear in the original Greek text. Thus, this verse should read, "You are called saints." Most people have the idea that saints are special people in religious history. But the truth is, there are only two categories of people: saints and unsaved. Therefore, if you're a believer—you're a saint. The word saint means "called out, set apart". We have been called out of the world of darkness into His marvelous light. A little boy attended a church that had beautiful stained-glass windows depicting St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. John. One day, when asked in his Sunday-school class, "What are saints?" he answered, "They're people who the light shines through." Good answer! We can claim the proclamation that we are saints, because the whole gospel is about Jesus, and Jesus surrounds the whole gospel, and in Him is no variation, and we can have peace in that.

1 Peter 2:9 (NKJV) ⁹But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

Matthew 5:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Saints – Hagios – Godesh / Holy of Holies / 1 Cor 3

Saints, the Greek word is "hagios" and its corresponding word in the Hebrew is "qodesh", and it was a word that was used for the utensils used by the priests in the Tabernacle, and the word was used for the "Holy of Holies", the inner-most place in the Tabernacle where God dwelt and His glory emanated. We are the Holy of Holies, as the Living God takes up residence within us, and we are the Temple of God that He dwells in, and his glory emanates from.

1 Corinthians 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

Easier to Live to Calling

You know, this is what God thinks of you who have accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you are a saint; it is settled already in eternity, there is nothing more to do about it, than just live it. It is much easier living from a calling, than to a calling. When we try to live to a calling we have all this pressure and expectation, but when we live from a calling, there is no pressure and expectation – so just say, “I’m going to live up to my calling”, and God will be there to help us do so.

Maybe – Don’t feel Like Saint / Opp to be Like God / See others as Saint – Touching Heaven

Maybe you say well I believe I am a saint, but I surely don’t see it in the mirror each morning - It has not yet appeared of what we shall be, but when He comes we shall become like Him. And hence, the point of point one, and that is that is that we have an opportunity to be like God when we look at others believers, in that we can look at them outside of our time domain, and look at people from the eternal perspective, already made perfect. There will be a day where we are made perfect in a twinkling of an eye, but today we still live with our flaws, but God sees us in perfected state even while we still live in these unperfected body. Often we don’t have a problem believing that we are saints because God says we are, but we can have some struggles believing that brother who is irritating us is a saint. Do you want to be like God, then look upon yourself, and that saint sitting next to as the perfected saint they are. When you do that, you will be touching on the eternal things that few men or woman ever tread on in this lifetime. When you do, when we can, we will start a fire of passion for each other that will be unquenchable, for we won’t allow the quenching things of the world and our flesh douse the passion kindled in our heart. The resultant will be a powerful body. Paul here sees them for as they are, says “I long to see you”.

1 John 3:1-3 (NKJV) ¹Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of ²God! Therefore the world does not know ³us, because it did not know Him. ²Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

Grace & Peace / Always same Order / Understand Grace – have Peace

Verse 7 - Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ – As if we needed any more convincing of this that we are saints, in the salutation of each of his epistles, Paul linked these two words together. He always put them in the same order because man will never experience peace until he understands grace. If you’re trying to be holier or more deserving of God’s blessings, your Christian life will not be full of peace. But if you understand grace—that God blesses and gives unconditionally—you’ll stop trying to earn His blessings, and you’ll have peace.

Two Components of Peace / Peace with God

Peace from God has two components. First of all, peace from God implies peace with God, which is positional and unconditional because Jesus Christ took upon Himself all of our shortcomings and sins, problems, weakness, and rebelliousness (Romans 5:1).

Romans 5:1-2 (NKJV) ¹Therefore, having been justified by faith, ²we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ³through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

2nd – Peace of God / Prayer brings Peace

Second, we have the peace of God, which is experiential and comes through prayer (Philippians 4:7). Paul is telling us that the peace of God, the settling of our hearts, can be found in prayer. How many times I just find myself irritable, cranky, and grumpy; why? Many times I really don’t know what it is, it doesn’t seem to be one certain thing, maybe it is a compounding of things, or maybe it that one thing! In all cases peace is only a prayer away, but I have to be willing to let it go, and I have to be willing to spend the time to go into the prayer closet and let the Lord do His Divine surgery on my heart.

Philippians 4:6-7 (NKJV) ⁶Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Paul sees the Believers – Saints – Perfect / I Long to See You

So Paul sees the believers of Rome as saints, perfect in God's eyes, and Paul see them for as they are, says "I long to see you".

2 - Thankful for the Saints (v.8)

Secondly, Paul gives thanks for them, a key for building a powerful body.

Thanksgiving & Prayer

(Rom 1:8 NKJV) First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

God of Possessive Pronoun

Verse 8 - First, I thank my God – My God, Paul says "my God". Martin Luther said, "Christianity is uniquely the religion of the possessive pronoun." He is my God, I proudly claim Him, and amazingly He proudly claims me as His own too!

Key to Unlocking Power / Make a Habit Giving Thanks – For Church - for Brother

Verse 8 - for you all – Paul gives thanks for his brothers and sisters in the Lord, and that is a powerful key in unlocking a powerful body of Christ. Make it a habit in your life to give thanks for that brother or sister that God has put in your life, your church, your Pastor, your building, your worship team, your prayer team, your ushers, your Sunday school teachers, your sanctuary set-up team, the guy who made the worship slide show, the one who made the coffee, got the donuts. Give thanks! Now here is a key to giving thanks, you have to think of the reason to give thanks for them, and as you think, you will see, they are special, they are a blessing. We can have the tendency to always see the bad parts of people because that seems to stand out the most, but as we look for their good qualities, their good qualities will come out, and our hearts will be warmed towards them, and as Paul – we will say – *I long to see them!*

Body of Rome Pure Power – All World heard of Them

Verse 8 - that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world – Whatever was going on in this body of believers in Rome, it was pure power because they were heard about all over the world. Man, did you hear about the faith of those believers in Rome, they are amazing.

3 - Praying for the Saints (v.9-10)

Now Paul prays for these people that are on his heart.

(Rom 1:9 NKJV) For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers,

(Rom 1:10 NKJV) making request if, by some means, now at last I may find a way in the will of God to come to you.

Paul was Hindered

Paul was hindered in coming to see them. I wonder if people in Rome were saying if Paul really cared about us he would come see us, but he doesn't, see he doesn't care. Paul dispels that if that was the case, he tells them I've been wanting to come see you but it is not the will of God at this time. So Christian, be careful that you don't fall into that trap, expecting something that you may think is the only way it could be, while all along it just wasn't the Lord's will. You may find yourself becoming bitter and resentful, all the while not even knowing that the person you are upset with, is praying for you every day, and is longing to see you. The question is, have you been praying for that person every day?

The Simplest Key – Hardest in overstuffed Life / Prayer is Supernatural / Hearts Drawn

Verse 9 - that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers – Paul prayed continually, daily for these people. This is the simplest of keys, but the most under-utilized in our

over-stuffed lives, and that is praying for others. Prayer is supernatural, just plain and simple, it is supernatural for it absolutely defies human logic that you speak out into the air, and something powerful happens out of it. But we know in our spiritual hearts that we aren't speaking out into nothingness, but that we are speaking to a God who inclines His ear to hear every word that we utter. Prayer is supernatural, and thus when we pray supernatural things happen in our hearts and lives. One such thing is that as we pray for our brothers and sisters, their hearts are moved towards them, not ways from them, for prayer draws together, it draws us to God and it draws us to whatever it is we are praying for. So as we pray for each other, our hearts are drawn together, and that is a key to building a powerful body of Christ. Paul had to see them, "*I long to see you*", because his heart was drawn to these people of Rome because every day they were on his heart and mind because of his daily prayer for them.

As Pray – Moved into Action

As you pray for others the Lord will move you into action for them, for it is impossible to pray for someone or something and then not be moved into action to do something for them or about the situation they are in.

In Regards to Service – Greatest Saints knew need God for the Work

In regards to our service to the Lord, the greatest of saints, including our Lord Jesus, knew they could not do their work for God or live their everyday lives without praying, thus we need to pray continually.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NKJV) ¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

William Booth

Work as if everything depended upon your work, and pray as if everything depended upon your prayer - William Booth.

It's been 3 Years / Rather than Defeated – Couldn't & Could Do

Now, it will be three years before God answers their prayer. Paul desired to go to Rome to see them, but was unable to get there. But instead of feeling defeated by what he couldn't do, Paul grabbed parchment and pen, and did what he could do. That's what David did. After becoming king of Israel, David said, "Why should I dwell in this palace, while God lives in a tent?" (see 2 Samuel 7:2). "I want to build God a temple." "All that's in your heart, do," Nathan replied (see 2 Samuel 7:3). But that night the Lord said to Nathan in a dream, "You spoke too quickly. David can't build Me a temple. He's a man of war, and the temple must be a place of peace" (see 1 Chronicles 22:8). So what did David do? Did he pout? No. Did he vegetate? No. He drew plans, gathered materials, and lined up laborers so that when his son, Solomon, ascended the throne, everything was ready for him to begin construction (1 Chronicles 22:1–5). David wasn't hung up by what he couldn't do. Rather he asked, "What can I do?" Unable to go to Rome, Paul instead penned a letter to the Romans.

Christian – If can't be or doing – Ask Lord what can Do

Hey Christian if you can't be where you want to be, doing what you want to be doing, then ask the Lord, "well then what can I do?" The Lord may say pray for that place you want to be, send a love offering to that place, tell others about that place and maybe they will get a heart for that place or someone like you have. Then when God says it is time, he will bring that thing to pass, and you will be amazed at how much preparation and work God had done before you even got there – just like Paul here, who writes the letter, and when he finally gets there 3 years later, there are a whole lot of people waiting for him and ready for him, excited about him being there. I did missions to Ireland for 6 years, and the whole mission work began with a pastor of a church of 25 having a burden on his heart for Ireland. He picked an area (as led by the Lord) and said what can we do to help the Christians there, and they said send Bibles, so he and his church did. Well that led to a small team going, which led to multi-church teams going, which led to crusades, which led to many people getting saved. It all started with a man sending bibles.

Identifies – Thanks – Prays / I Long to see You

Paul prays for the saints that he identified and gave thanks for, and his heart just beat for them as he prayed for them, and he just had to see them, and so too will it be for us if we apply these same principles to our lives.

4 - Imparting to the Saints (v.11)

Paul wants to see them, so he can give something to them.

(Rom 1:11 NKJV) For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established;

Paul wants to Impart Spiritual Gifts / Chapter 12

Paul wants to come to them to impart gifts (which are simply something that blesses a person), so that they will be established, which is to make their foundation steady and sure. In chapter 12 Paul is going to speak about spiritual gifts which he no doubt desired to exercise amongst his brothers and sisters in Rome, but we will wait to do an in-depth study of spiritual gifts when we get to chapter 12.

Our Application today – Like Paul – Wherever Go – Go to Bless

But for our application today, the building of a powerful body of Christ, see the example of Paul that God gives for us to apply to our hearts and lives; and that is that wherever you go, go there looking to impart some spiritual gift to help that saint next to you to be firmly established in their walk with the Lord.

Come to Church Looking to impart Blessing / Will do if do 1-3 / Cancer Cell - Devours

Come to church (youth group, that special activity, ladies group, men's group, etc) looking to impart a blessing unto another, and you'll be desiring to do that if you see them as the saint they are, give thanks for something about them, and be praying for them. And here is the dangerous side of not coming to give, and that is that your Christianity will be all about you, what can other do for me, what can the church do for me, I come to church – "for me." Do you know what a cancer cell is? It is a cell in a body that is isolated from the rest of the cells, it isn't part of the other cells in purpose and behavior, and then we know that a cancer cell is never content on being alone and it starts to devour the other healthy cells within the body until it eventually is either cutout of the body or brings death unto the body.

What Gifts / Start with Simple

What gifts you may say? Let's just start simple and keep it simple, and watch what God does with the simple things such as a hi, or a hug, a how are you. Just start with "love", and God will bring out the other spiritual gifts in you from there, but love has to be the start and the basis for all spiritual gifts to flow. When people know you genuinely care about them, the doors of their heart will be opened, and they will be opened for more.

Establish in your Mind – I'm Coming to Bless / If so Strong – Good come to Bless

Come to where the body is gathering, and establish in your mind before coming, that you are coming not only to receive, but to give, so that you may bless another. How many people say I don't need to come to church regularly because I am spiritually strong – and rather than argue with them I'd would just recommend we say, "Good, come to impart some spiritual gift so other can continue to do well, or help the person who isn't doing well.

Hebrews 10:23-25 (NKJV) ²³Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. ²⁴And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Paul can't wait Impart Blessing / I long to See You

Paul can't wait to impart a blessing to the beloved in Rome, and says "I long to see you".

5 - Receiving from the Saints (v.12-14)

Yes, even the great Apostle Paul wants to be blessed and refreshed from the other saints.

(Rom 1:12 NKJV) that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

(Rom 1:13 NKJV) Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles.

David – Psalm 133 / It is Wonderful & Refreshing

Just as David said, oh how good and blessed it is when brethren dwell together. It is a most wonderful and refreshing thing to come together as a body and just share life together. Even the great apostle Paul longed for fellowship, to be refreshed and nourished by his fellow brothers and sisters.

***Psalms 133:1-3 (NKJV)** ¹ Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brethren to dwell together in unity! ² It is like the precious oil upon the head, Running down on the beard, The beard of Aaron, Running down on the edge of his garments. ³ It is like the dew of Hermon, Descending upon the mountains of Zion; For there the Lord commanded the blessing— Life forevermore.*

(Rom 1:14 NKJV) I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise.

Barbarian – Non-Gentile / He who Forgiveness Much – Loves Much

Barbarian simply means not of the Greek culture, it is not derogatory remark, Paul is saying his heart and passion was to all men and woman, everywhere. In Luke 7 it says that “he who has been forgiven much, loves much”. How much have you been forgiven? People think this verse means “yea I was once part of biker group and we robbed banks, and I use to get drunk every night, but then I got saved. I don’t think it means that at all, for whether that man murdered 50 people and I none, on the Day of Judgment had neither of us received Jesus as Lord we were both going to hell – and hell is going to be hell! I believe, because I experience it in my life, that the more I see and realize how offensive my sin was to the Holy God, and see the brutal cross that Jesus endured for me, that is more how I realize of how much I have been forgiven, and that forgiveness causes me to love much, forgive others much, and over-look peoples short-comings much quickly.

***Luke 7:43-47 (NKJV)** ⁴³Simon answered and said, “I suppose the one whom he forgave more.” And He said to him, “You have rightly judged.” ⁴⁴Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. ⁴⁵You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. ⁴⁶You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. ⁴⁷Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.”*

Paul’s Debt to God – Payment to Man / Forgiveness Much – Loves Much

Here is a key statement for today’s study as the study unfolds, as we have seen in the life of Paul, and is applicable to every one of us here today, and that is: *Paul’s debt was to God, but his payment was to man.* Whoever is forgiven much, loves much. So, how much do you love?

God Building a Powerful Body / Guarantee – Apply these Principles – Pure Power

Well, God is building Himself a beautiful body, and a powerful body, and we are that body. That body is not just this church, but every believer, for a Nation is made up of individuals. I will promise you, and guarantee you, if we apply these principles we have just studied – our lives and our church will never be the same, we will be living and experience power like never before, and this season in our life will be like none other we have ever touched on before.

***(Ephesians 1:22 NKJV)** And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, **(Ephesians 1:23 NKJV)** which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*

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Paul

Paul says "I long to see you".

The 3 “I am” Statements of Paul (I am a Debtor, I am Ready, I am not Ashamed) *Romans 1:14-17*

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God’s Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God’s Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God’s Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (Ch12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Read for Context

Let’s read our passage for today’s study, verses 14-17.

Not Ashamed of the Gospel

(Rom 1:14 NKJV) **I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise.**

(Rom 1:15 NKJV) **So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also.**

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) **For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.**

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) **For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."**

Notice 3 “I am” Statements / Another Key to Living a Powerful Christian Life

Notice the three “I am” statements that Paul makes in these verses; I am a debtor, I am ready, and I am not ashamed. We have three keys to unlocking a powerful Christian life here in the example of Paul before us. Paul continually lived an exciting and powerful Christian life I believe because of these three things (he was a debtor, he was ready, and he was not ashamed).

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Outline: The 3 “I am” Statements of the Apostle Paul (1:14-17)

- 1. I am a Debtor (v.14)**
- 2. I am Ready (v.15)**
- 3. I am Not Ashamed (v.16)**

Like last week’s Study – a Man after God’s own Heart / Today – 1 Step Closer

Like last week’s study on the heart of Paul, God reveals his heart to us again in these verses as examples of a man or woman after God’s own heart. Paul, like David, lived for one thing their whole life, and that was to apprehend that which we were apprehended for. How about you, how about me today – have we apprehended what we have been apprehended for? hardly not – but here today we can get one step closer.

Acts 13:22 (NKJV) ²²*And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David^e the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.^e*

Philippians 3:12-14 (NKJV) ¹²*Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. ¹³Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but*

one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, ¹⁴I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

The 3 are Inseparable

These three things need to be in place in our lives; they are really inseparable in that you can't have one of the three, you can't have two of the three, you must have three for three, for if you are missing one, then you won't have the other two. If you are not a debtor to God, you'll see no reason to be ready, and if you are not ready you'll be afraid to ever open your mouth up about the gospel of God. If you are not ready, it is highly doubtful that you feel an indebtedness to God for all that He has done for you. If you are ashamed of the gospel, then need I say more.

I am a Debtor (v.14)

(Rom 1:14 NKJV) I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise.

Not Derogatory

Barbarian was not a derogatory remark; it simply means those who were not of the Greek culture. Paul is simply saying I am in debt to all men.

Paul's Debt to God – Payment to Man / Forgiven Much – Loves Much

Verse 14 - I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise - Here is a key statement for the life of Paul, and is applicable to every one of us here today, and that is: *Paul's debt was to God, but his payment was to man.* Paul has this sense of indebtedness to the Lord, and he repays that debt to his fellow man.

Andrew Murray Quote

God has no more precious gift to a church or an age than a man who lives as an embodiment of *His* will, and inspires those around him with the faith of what grace can do. - Andrew Murray, quoted in Men of Integrity (July/August 2000)

Definition

Debtor (*opheiletēs*)

- 1) one who owes another, a debtor
 - a) one held by some obligation, bound by some duty
 - b) one who has not yet made amends to whom he has injured:

Debt paid on Calvary / Salvation Free – Discipleship Life / How can we be anything But

The debt of our sin was paid in full on Calvary's Cross; salvation is free, but discipleship will cost you your life. Who are you indebted to? I like that second definition, "for whom he has injured" – oh how can we be anything but debtors when we look He whom was beaten so badly for us that His face was beyond recognition, the One who endured the cross, despised the shame for our sake.

Isaiah 50:6 (NKJV) ⁶ *I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.*

Hebrews 12:2 (NKJV) ²*looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Lt. Col. Gary Morsch

In 1993, Lt. Col. Gary Morsch joined the Army Reserves as a doctor to care not only for U.S. soldiers, but also for wounded civilians and prisoners of war. In 2005, as a part of the war in Iraq, he was called up to serve as the field doctor for a battalion near the Iranian border. In an article for Today's Christian, he shares a story of something that happened on the last day of his tour of duty:

The Saturday before I left Iraq was one of the most amazing days of my life. I was scheduled to see patients and make rounds at the POW camp, and I asked the chaplain to join me. I wanted to say goodbye to the prisoners. Many of these Muslims had become Christians, and they had been asking for a baptismal service.

The chaplain suddenly decided to conduct a simple service. The POWs gathered their water bottles, and we pulled a cot out of one of the tents, setting it in the middle of the compound. One by one, the POWs sat on the cot and leaned back while we poured water over their heads and baptized them in the name of Christ. We baptized about a dozen that day.

During the baptisms, we asked each man if he wished to take a Christian name. One man asked me to write down each of the apostles' names so he could choose one. Another prisoner, named Afshin, asked me to suggest a name. I suggested James, the brother of Jesus, and told him that my father and brother are named James. Since my family name was on my uniform, Afshin asked about Morsch as well.

The chaplain asked me to baptize Afshin. I asked my friend what name he wished to take. He said, "I wish to take the name James Afshin Morsch." With tears in my eyes, I poured water onto his head, baptizing my former Muslim friend into the fellowship of Christ.

After our baptismal service, James pulled me aside and told me it was an Iraqi tradition to give a good friend a gift. He slowly slipped a ring off his hand. "This is my wedding ring," he said. "I haven't seen my wife in many years, and I probably will never see her again. I'd like to give it to you." I was stunned. "No, James, you must keep it," I eventually said. "Someday you will see your wife again." "No, I want you to have it," he said, as he pressed the ring into my hand.

We hugged and said a tearful goodbye, and then I walked out of the POW compound. It was time to return home. I left on a plane full of wounded soldiers. The airstrip was under attack even as we taxied for takeoff. But I was at peace. God had brought me to Iraq to serve soldiers, civilians, and the enemy. But I saw that those categories are meaningless before God. He loves them all, and calls us to serve them all.

May we take on His Name / Paul was Debtor

May we take on His name, may we take on His nature. Paul was a debtor to God, but his payment was to man.

I am Ready (v.15)

(Rom 1:15 NKJV) So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also.

Ready because Point 1 / Vertical – Horizontal / Paul had People on Heart

Paul was always ready because of point 1, Paul was a debtor to God but his payment was to man. We see a beautiful picture of the cross as Paul's debt was to God (the vertical relationship), but his debt was to man (the horizontal relationship). I will also say in addition to that horizontal relationship is that Paul had the people on his heart, because of what we studied last week. Paul longed to see men, because his prayer life continually fueled his love for both the saved and the unsaved, as Paul wanted to see the Kingdom of God grow. Paul just loved people, period. His prayer life proved it, and ours will too.

Outline: For I Long to See You

The Building of a Powerful Body (Romans 1:7-14)

1. Identifying the Saints (v.7)
2. Thankful for the Saints (v.8)
3. Praying for the Saints (v.9-10)
4. Imparting to the Saints (v.11)
5. Receiving from the Saints (v.12-14)

Paul loved the Lost

Paul loved the lost of Israel so much he said he wished himself accursed for their sake. The passion he had for the lost kept him in a continual state of being ready, for where your treasures are, there your heart will be.

(Rom 9:1 NKJV) I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit,

(Rom 9:2 NKJV) that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart.

(Rom 9:3 NKJV) For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh,

Matthew 6:21 (NKJV) ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Paul simply Loved all Men

Paul loved both the saved and the unsaved, and his heart was always towards God and man, Paul embodied a person who loved the Lord God with all his heart, mind, and soul; and loved his neighbor as himself.

Matthew 22:37-40 (NKJV) ³⁷Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” ³⁸This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹And the second is like it: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” ⁴⁰On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

Paul loved to Point – willing to Die / 2 Tim 4 / Quote – Live & Die

Paul loved to the point he was willing to die for both the saved and unsaved, at the end of his life (knowing execution awaited him because of his witness for Christ) he penned that heart to his young protégé Timothy (2 Tim 4:6). It has been said, “No man knows what he is living for until he knows what he'll die for”.

2 Timothy 4:6 (NKJV) ⁶For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.

Paul loved People – because he was Always Ready

Paul loved people, and because of that love his was always ready. Being ready is a key to unlocking the exciting and powerful Christian life the Lord desires for all of us.

Gospel means Good News / Let's tell each Other the Good News

Again, the gospel means good news, and Paul is saying I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome (he is writing to a bunch of believers). The gospel is more than the story of the repentance; it is all the good news that comes with the victory of the cross for all who believe. Paul was ready to proclaim the goodness of God to the people of Rome (saved and unsaved). May we take that same example and apply it in our lives today, let's encourage one another with the Good News (empty cross – empty tomb – life eternal – Jesus has won the day). Let's tell the same to the lost and dying world too!

I am Not Ashamed (v.16)

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, **for** it is the power of God to salvation **for** everyone who believes, **for** the Jew first and also for the Greek.

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) **For** in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "*The just shall live by faith.*"

Why wasn't Paul Ashamed? – Opposite is Proud / Four 4's

Why could Paul not only declare that he wasn't ashamed of the gospel, but that He was ready to preach it in Rome"? Because the opposite of ashamed is “to be proud”. Paul gives 4 reasons to be proud of the gospel we believe in, the gospel that has changed our life, and the gospel we will tell to anyone who will listen.

Paul gives us 4 reasons why he is not ashamed of the Gospel:

1. For it is the power of God to salvation
2. For everyone who believes,
3. For the Jew first and also for the Greek.
4. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "*The just shall live by faith.*"

1.) - For it is the power of God to salvation

Definition

Salvation (sōtēria), means “deliverance, preservation, safety, salvation”

It is Through the Gospel

We have been delivered safely. This Gospel is so beautiful.

It is through the Gospel!

- It is through the Gospel – Sin has be Identified
- It is through the Gospel – Sin has been Provided for
- It is through the Gospel – Sin has been Conquered.

It is through the Gospel – Sin has be Identified

Deliverance of Molestation / My Life so Empty – What Wrong / Separated

This word “salvation” as it was used during the time of this writing, and still applicable today, was (deliverance from the molestation of enemies). Oh the life I lived, it was so empty. I would look at all the world laughing and going about its business, and I wondered silently and secretly in my heart why I was so empty, why everything seemed so vain, what is wrong with me – but then I picked up this Bible and saw that it was my sin that was molesting me, keeping my heart pinned down, paralyzing my life from living, because my sin was separating me from the Holy God:

Isaiah 59:1-2 (NKJV)¹ Behold, the Lord'S hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear.² But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.

Beauty of Gospel – Identifies what is Wrong / Proud of That

The beauty of the gospel is that it reveals our sin, identifies what is wrong with our lives, and what needs to be corrected. No wonder Paul was so proud of the Gospel he shared with people.

Romans 3:20 (NKJV)²⁰Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

It is through the Gospel – Sin has been Provided for.

Paul proud of Gospel that Saved Him / Will save all he Tells / Sin Provided For

Paul is proud of the gospel that saved him, and he tells us will save them as well, for the payment (penalty) of sin has been provided for through Jesus Christ. God traded places with us, taking the wrath that was intended for us for offending the Holy God for the wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23). For God.....

Romans 3:23 (NKJV)²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23 (NKJV)²³For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 3:16 (NKJV)¹⁶For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Proud – because Gospel is the Greatest

Paul is proud of this gospel, because it is simply the greatest:

- *For God (the greatest Giver)*
- *so loved (the greatest motive)*
- *the world (the greatest need),*
- *that He gave (the greatest act)*
- *His only begotten Son (the greatest gift),*
- *that whosoever (the greatest invitation)*
- *believeth (the greatest decision)*
- *in Him (the greatest Person)*
- *should not perish (the greatest deliverance),*
- *but (the greatest difference)*
- *have (the greatest certainty)*
- *everlasting life (the greatest possession).*

It is through the Gospel – Sin has been Conquered.

Village of Dibagat – Philippines / Dick Roe

Story from man in Philippines (named - Nard Puygao) - In March of 1956 (when I was about 6), a tall, pale, white man stumbled into my home village of Dibagat in the northern jungles of the Philippine island of Luzon. The man didn't speak our language, so our elders asked him the best they knew how, "Why are you here?" "I've come to learn your language," he said. "I'd like to write it down and then give you God's Word in your language." "Who is your God?" the elders asked. "He's the God of Heaven and earth," the man answered. "He's the Creator of the universe. He created you, too." "Is he powerful?" the elders probed. "More powerful than the spirits that have controlled our lives from the beginning of time? Is he more powerful than our ancestors, the head-hunters?" "Yes, he's more powerful." Hopeful, we started teaching this man, Dick Roe, our language. Maybe his God could free us from the spirits.

When I was about 13, Dick had to return to the United States to raise support for his ministry. But before he went back, he translated the Gospel of Mark and gave me a copy. While he was gone, I started reading the Bible for the first time, beginning with the Easter story and continuing through chapter 16. Sitting on top of a rock, I read the Gospel of Mark in my heart language. It felt like I was actually there, seeing the characters.

But the further I read, the more distressed I felt. A mob of people came to get Jesus out of the Garden of Gethsemane. What did he do wrong? I read as fast as I could. They accused him of all kinds of false things. They mocked him, spat on him, beat him, and took him before Pilate. Then the scourge and the crown of thorns. It was excruciating to read that they forced him to carry a wooden cross and then nailed him to it.

Deep in my heart, a hatred of God swelled. I shook my fist and shouted: "I hate you, God, for being so powerless! Why should I believe in a powerless God like you?" With all my strength I threw the Gospel of Mark down to the rocks and started walking home. I couldn't understand why God wouldn't protect his own Son. Our headhunters defended us to the death. Because of them, no one could touch us. I wanted a god like that—someone who would protect me from the spirits that demanded we sacrifice our cows, chickens, pigs, and dogs. This God didn't even save his own Son.

Suddenly, God reached down into my heart. "Nard, don't you understand?" I heard him say. "That's how much I love you. I gave my Son on your behalf." For the first time, I understood grace. I understood how much God loved me.

"God, if you love me that much," I prayed, "I want to give you my life, my heart. It's all yours." I went back and picked up my Gospel, brushed it off, and sat back on that rock to see what happened next. It was an incredible moment as I read that Jesus rose from the grave on the third day. Nobody in all of Dibagat, nobody from among the Isnag people, had ever risen from the grave. The resurrection story changed my life.

Resurrection is Rest of Story / Exclamation Point / It is Holy Ground

The resurrection is the rest of the story, it is what makes it the greatest story, and it is the exclamation point of the Gospel (the Good News). The resurrection is Holy Ground, and we are standing on it right now.

Romans 10:9-10 (NKJV) ⁹that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Same Power Available Today / Arthur Pink

The same power that raised Jesus from the dead is available for our lives today, and who could ever be ashamed to tell people that such power is available. Scripture describes a fourfold salvation: saved from the penalty, power, presence and the pleasure of sin. (cf. Arthur W. Pink, A Fourfold Salvation). The power of sin has been conquered!

Ephesians 1:19-20 (NKJV) ¹⁹and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

Paul not Ashamed – Because.....

Paul was not ashamed of the Gospel, because.....

2.) - For everyone who believes,

Paul not Ashamed because for Everyone / Everyone / Honestly – if not I wouldn't Be

Paul is not ashamed of this gospel, he is proud of this gospel, because it is for everyone who believes. That word in the Greek for everyone actually means everyone. Honestly, I would be ashamed of the gospel if it wasn't for everyone; I would surely not be a Pastor, for my heart couldn't take the thought or the telling to someone that it is only for a select few, that my God doesn't love everyone, and turns His back on some.

God wants us to be Found / Milk Cartons / Camden Hide and Seek

God wants us to be found; He wants no one to be lost or separated from Him. He has His milk cartons posted all over because He wants you to be found. I love playing hide-and-seek with my three year old, because he really doesn't get the whole concept of it. I put my hands over my eyes, and I'll say ok Camden I am going to count to three and then I am going to come look for you. So I'll say 1, 2, and then he goes runs and hides in the closet. But as soon as I say 3!, he bursts out of the closet and comes running to me and jumps in my arms with a big smile on his face and laughter in his belly. He doesn't want to be hidden from his daddy, he wants to be found, and you know of course, his daddy doesn't want him to be separated from him. God the Father says to all (everyone) come, just come!

2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV)⁹*The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward ^{us}, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

Russia 1930 - Stalin

God has His milk cartons, they come in many ways, here is a story I came across – God never ceases to amaze me.

In the 1930s in Stavropol, Russia, Stalin ordered that all Bibles be confiscated and Christian believers be sent to prison camps. Ironically, most of the Bibles were not destroyed, yet many Christians died as "enemies of the state."

With the recent dissolution of the U.S.S.R., a CoMission team arrived in Stavropol in 1994 for ministry. Their request to have Bibles shipped to Moscow was being held up. But someone told them about a warehouse outside of town where confiscated Bibles were still stored. Remarkably, the team was granted permission to distribute them. Hiring several local Russian workers, they began to load their trucks.

One young man, a hostile agnostic, came only for the day's wages. But not long after they had started, he disappeared. He was found in the corner of the warehouse, weeping, a Bible in his hands. Intending to steal it for himself to later sell on the street, but (by chance) he had picked his own grandmother's off the shelf! Her signature was on the front page. Today, that young Russian is in the process of being transformed by the very Bible that his grandmother was persecuted for, but still held dear.

Paul not Ashamed

Paul was not ashamed of this gospel, he was proud of this gospel, because this gospel is for everyone.

3.) - For the Jew first and also for the Greek.

Gospel is Fulfillment

Paul is not ashamed of this gospel because it is total fulfillment of all that God promised that he would do for man, as He would provide Himself the Sacrifice for man's sin. From the Jewish nation, to all Nations, Jesus saves. Jesus is the (mashiach –Hebrew), Jesus is the (Messiah – Gentile), He is the God of the Jews and Gentiles.

Genesis 22:8 (NKJV)⁸*And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together.*

John 1:29 (NKJV)²⁹*The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*

Billy Graham – Great Message

Graeme Keith, treasurer of the Billy Graham Association and Billy's lifelong friend, says: I was on an elevator with Billy when another man in the elevator recognized him. He said, "You're Billy Graham, aren't you?" "Yes," Billy said. "Well," the man said, "you are truly a great man." Billy immediately responded, "No, I'm not a great man. I just have a great message."

Paul not Ashamed

Paul wasn't ashamed of gospel

4.) - For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

Theme

Verse 17 gives us the theme of the whole book of Romans, "the righteousness of God revealed".

Right Standing

Righteousness in terms of God means "just, his justice, holy" – in that God is just and fair in his dealing with the offense of sin because He is a Holy God. Righteousness for a person means to have "right standing" with God.

Next 3 Chapters / Throw self at Feet

The righteousness of God is going to be revealed in the remaining of chapters 1-3 and when chapter 1-3 is done there is no man left standing; for anyone who has truly been honest with

themselves about God's righteousness and their offense before Him should be throwing themselves at His feet crying out, "what must I do to be saved".

See His Righteousness – See Holiness – See Grace / From Faith to Faith

When we see God's righteousness, we see His Holiness, and we see there is nothing that man can do to bridge his sin that has offended the Holy God. Hence, comes God's grace, through His work on the cross. The statement "from faith to faith" is glorious and freeing; it means we started with faith (believing Jesus is all that we need to be saved), and we live and finish with the same faith (that Jesus is all that we need to be saved), no works, no worries, just free to live and love with the Savior. We will be building on and developing this point for the next weeks and months to come.

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NKJV) ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹not of works, lest anyone should boast.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Baseball Card

Just one last note - on eBay right now is a baseball card that usually sells for around 100, it is the 1982 Topps card called "Future Stars of the Baltimore Orioles". There are three players on this card.

- The first is Jeff Schneider. Schneider played 1 year of professional baseball, pitched in 11 games, and gave up 13 earned runs in those 11 games.
- The second player is Bobby Bonner, who played 4 years of baseball but only appeared in 61 games, with 8 runs batted in, and 0 home runs.
- The third "Future Star" played 21 years for the Baltimore Orioles and appeared in 3,001 games. He came to bat 11,551 times, collected 3,184 hits and 431 home runs, and batted in 1,695 runs. His name is Cal Ripken, Jr.

Now imagine if you met Bobby Bonner, and he shook your hand and boasted, "Did you know that my baseball card is worth over \$100?" You would laugh because you know the worth of the card has nothing to do with him. That's how it is when we come to Christ and point to our good works, our statistics, and ask, "Is this good enough?" If you want to hold up your stats to God, you don't have a chance. But when you put your faith in Christ, his statistics become yours, and your baseball card becomes worth a lot because of someone else's stats. Bobby Bonner and Jeff Schneider's baseball card is worth \$100, not because of their statistics, but because of what someone else has done.

Outline: The 3 "I am" Statements of the Apostle Paul (1:14-17)

1. **I am a Debtor (v.14)**
2. **I am Ready (v.15)**
3. **I am Not Ashamed (v.16)**

Paul gives us 4 reasons why he is not ashamed of the Gospel:

1. For it is the power of God to salvation

It is through the Gospel!

- It is through the Gospel – Sin has been Identified
 - It is through the Gospel – Sin has been Provided for
 - It is through the Gospel – Sin has been Conquered.
2. For everyone who believes,
 3. For the Jew first and also for the Greek.
 4. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

The Righteousness of God

(Romans 1:17)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (Ch12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

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Theme / Good to have Specific Study on Righteousness

Verse 16-17 (verse 17 specifically) gives us the theme of the whole book of Romans "the righteousness of God revealed"; so I think it best that we spend a whole study specifically on what is the "righteousness of God".

Outline

Righteousness:

- The Righteousness "of" God
- The Righteousness "with" God

The Righteousness "of" God

Deals with Justice – God is Right to Judge / Principal of Right is Holiness / Can't Look

The righteousness of God deals with "justice", is God "right", is He "just" to bring judgment upon individuals? The principal factor in His righteousness is His Holiness. When we speak of Holiness in regarding God, it means His perfection, sinless, purity. God is perfect and pure and in Him is not fault. In God's holiness, He cannot look upon wickedness; and because of His righteousness, He must judge anyone who is morally imperfect. God gives the standard for perfection in His Holy Law, the 10 Commandments (and Romans 3:20 says everyone is guilty).

Habakkuk 1:13 (NKJV)¹³ You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he?

Isaiah 59:1-2 (NKJV)¹ Behold, the Lord'S hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear.² But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.

Romans 3:20 (NKJV)²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Law God's Standard / Diff from mans / Max Lucado

The Law is God's standard, regardless how men may try to change the standard to make themselves look better. I am reminded of what Max Lucado said in one of his books,

All of us occasionally do what is right. A few predominately do what is right. But do any of us always do what is right? According to Paul we don't. "There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10, NKJV). Some may beg to differ. "I'm not perfect, Max, but I'm better than most folks. I've led a good life. I don't break the rules. I don't break hearts. I help people. I

like people. Compared to others, I think I could say I'm a righteous person." I used to try that on my mother. She'd tell me that my room wasn't clean, and I'd ask her to go with me to my brother's room. His was always messier than mine. "See, my room is clean; just look at his." Never worked. She'd walk me down the hall to her room. When it came to tidy rooms, my mom was righteous. Her closet was just right. Her bed was just right. Her bathroom was just right. Compared to hers, my room was, well, just wrong. She would show me her room and say, "This is what I mean by clean." God does the same. He points to himself and says, "This is what I mean by righteousness." Max Lucado, *Traveling Light* (Word, 2001).

No Belabor – God is Just / Righteous Judge – can't clear Guilty / Grace? – Bernie Madoff

So, no need to belabor the point, God is just to judge the offender of His Holy law, just as we judge a person in our society who breaks the laws of this land. If a murder stood before a judge today and the judge said, although you are clearly guilty, I am not going to punish or fine you, you are free to go; we would not say that judge is a righteous judge, in fact would call into question that he is a corrupt judge, clearly ignoring the laws of the land and needs to be removed from the bench. People would like to be gracious, and say well we should be light on a thief because they only stole; but I ask anyone who says such things – what if that thief was Bernie Madoff who stole your entire life savings, and you now have to live in a homeless shelter while he is sipping Champaign and eating lobster in the Riviera, would you still feel the same way about turning the eye from his lawlessness.

God hates Sin – for it is never Limited

God hates sin because of His perfection, His holiness, and He hates it because sin is never limited, regardless what anyone says, in that sin always hurts someone else along the way. A thief hurts the owner, a murderer steals a life, adultery robs the spouse and children, and hatred robs from love.

Deuteronomy 32 / 5 Times He is the Rock

In Deuteronomy 32, the scriptures are clear that God is just and true in all His ways, including His judgment upon the offender. Five times in the chapter God is referred to as the Rock, for His righteousness never changes, His Justice is unailing, He is Faithful in His dealing with man according to His nature

Deuteronomy 32:3-4 (NKJV) ³ For I proclaim the name of the Lord: Ascribe greatness to our God. ⁴ He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He.

Revelation 19 – He is Unchanging

Revelation 19 is our New Testament passage that shows that God never changes His position on the matter:

Revelation 19:11-13 (NKJV) ¹¹Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹²His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He ¹³had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

Key – Righteousness is God's Holiness in Action

Key for Understanding: Righteousness is God's Holiness in action. Righteousness is bringing judgment and justice against those who have offended and broken the Holy law of God.

Revealed – Revelation

Verse 17 - For in it the righteousness of God is revealed – The word for revealed is the Greek word (Apokalyptō), and it means:

- 1) to uncover, lay open what has been veiled or covered up a) disclose, make bare
- 2) to make known, make manifest, disclose what before was unknown

Same Root Word of Revelation 1 / Comprehensive Description of Jesus

The Greek word used here in Romans 1:17 for "revealed" is the root of the word used in Revelation 1 for "revelation" (the revelation of Jesus Christ). Revelation chapter 1 is probably the most comprehensive description of Jesus Christ given in the whole Bible.

(Revelation 1:13 NKJV) and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.

(Revelation 1:14 NKJV) His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire;

(Revelation 1:15 NKJV) His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters;

(Revelation 1:16 NKJV) He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.

Revelation 1:13-15

Verse 13 – **The Garment** – robed in Majesty.

Verse 13 – **Golden Band** –the gold representing His deity

Verse 14 – **His Head & Hair** - like wool – speaking of His purity and perfection.

Verse 14 – **His Eyes** – His eyes are as a flame - where there will be nothing hidden that won't be revealed and exposed.

Verse 15 – **His Feet** – like brass – brass throughout the scriptures represent judgment, and God's judgment will be solid and firm, it is the base on which He stands.

Verse 15 – **His Voice** –the sound of many waters, like water rushing over a waterfall, - representing sheer power and awe.

His Righteousness is Clearly Revealed / He is Right to Judge

God's righteousness is clearly "revealed", and He is "right", and "just" to judge.

Key – Righteousness is God's Holiness in Action

Key for Understanding: Righteousness is God's Holiness in action. Righteousness is bringing judgment and justice against those who have offended and broken the Holy law of God, of the Perfect and Pure God.

The Righteousness "with' God

For the Person – Means Right Standing

Righteousness in terms of God means "just, his justice, holy" – in that God is just and fair in his dealing with the offense of sin because He is a Holy God. Righteousness for a person means to have "right standing" with God.

All His Moral Attributes in these 2 – Holiness & Love

Perhaps all God's moral attributes are encompassed in these two: His Holiness and His Love. In His Holiness He is unapproachable; In His Love He approaches us. In the Finished Atoning Work of Christ, the demands of Holiness are satisfied, and the outpouring of Love is realized.

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "*The just shall live by faith.*"

In It – Refers back to the Gospel / Better Translation – "From God"

Verse 17 – for in it – refers back to verse 16, the gospel. So the gospel reveals the righteousness of God. The better translation of this verse would be "righteousness from God".

Definition of Righteousness

Verse 17- Righteousness – Greek word (*dikaioynē*), which means:

- 1) in a broad sense: state of him who is as he ought to be, righteousness, the condition acceptable to God
 - a) the doctrine concerning the way in which man may attain a state approved of God
 - b) integrity, virtue, purity of life, rightness, correctness of thinking feeling, and acting
- 2) in a narrower sense, justice or the virtue which gives each his due

Definition of Just / Root Word for Righteousness

Verse 17 - the just – Greek word (*dikaio*) – is the root word for "righteousness". It is through God's righteousness that we become the following (innocent, faultless, accepted of God).

- 1) righteous, observing divine laws
 - a) in a wide sense, upright, righteous, virtuous, keeping the commands of God
- 1) of those who seem to themselves to be righteous, who pride themselves to be righteous, who pride themselves in their virtues, whether real or imagined
- 2) innocent, faultless, guiltless
- 3) used of him whose way of thinking, feeling, and acting is wholly conformed to the will of God, and who therefore needs no rectification in the heart or life
 - a) only Christ truly
- 4) approved of or acceptable of God
 - b) in a narrower sense, rendering to each his due and that in a judicial sense, passing just judgment on others, whether expressed in words or shown by the manner of dealing with them

God Imputes Righteousness to Us – Based on Jesus / Jehovah Tsidgenuw / 2 Cor 5:21

The “righteousness from God” is the imputing of righteousness unto us according to the finished works of Christ on the cross. Righteousness comes to us as God maintains His righteousness (for He must judge sin) by punishing Jesus who traded places with any who will lay their hands upon His head and transfer their guilt and shame unto Him. Perhaps all God’s moral attributes are encompassed in these two: His Holiness and His Love. In His Holiness He is unapproachable; In His Love He approaches us. In the Finished Atoning Work of Christ, the demands of Holiness are satisfied, and the outpouring of Love is realized. The compound name of God in Jeremiah 23 reveals His love and nature to us, by saying “He is our Righteousness (Jehovah Tsidgenuw)”, He can make us Right before Him! For He who knew no sin, became sin for us (2 Cor 5:21).

Jeremiah 23:5-6 (NKJV) ⁵ “Behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord, “That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. ⁶ In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: ^εTHE Lord OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Man’s Role - Faith

Man’s role in righteousness? Faith!

Genesis 15:6 (NKJV) ⁶And he (Abraham) believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

Definition of Faith

Verse 17 – by faith – Greek word (pistis)

- 1) conviction of the truth of anything, belief; in the NT of a conviction or belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervour born of faith and joined with it
 - a) relating to God
 - 1) the conviction that God exists and is the creator and ruler of all things, the provider and bestower of eternal salvation through Christ
 - b) relating to Christ
 - 1) a strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through whom we obtain eternal salvation in the kingdom of God
 - c) the religious beliefs of Christians
 - d) belief with the predominate idea of trust (or confidence) whether in God or in Christ, springing from faith in the same
- 2) fidelity, faithfulness
 - a) the character of one who can be relied on

Faith is the Currency of Heaven

The just shall live by faith. By faith; not by intellect, sight, or feelings. Faith is the currency of eternity. God wants us to be rich people. Faith is not believing in spite of evidence; it is obeying in spite of the consequences.

Faith to Faith / Baseball Card

Verse 17 – from faith to faith – it is all based on our faith that it is all Jesus, and there are no works that man can do to be made righteous before the Holy God. Remember the illustration from last week? On eBay right now is a baseball card that usually sells for around 100 dollars, it is the 1982 Topps card called "Future Stars of the Baltimore Orioles". There are three players on this card.

- The first is Jeff Schneider. Schneider played 1 year of professional baseball, pitched in 11 games, and gave up 13 earned runs in those 11 games.
- The second player is Bobby Bonner, who played 4 years of baseball but only appeared in 61 games, with 8 runs batted in, and 0 home runs.
- The third "Future Star" played 21 years for the Baltimore Orioles and appeared in 3,001 games. He came to bat 11,551 times, collected 3,184 hits and 431 home runs, and batted in 1,695 runs. His name is Cal Ripken, Jr.

Now imagine if you met Bobby Bonner, and he shook your hand and boasted, "Did you know that my baseball card is worth over \$100?" You would laugh because you know the worth of the card has nothing to do with him. That's how it is when we come to Christ and point to our good works, our statistics, and ask, "Is this good enough?" If you want to hold up your stats to God, you don't have a chance. But when you put your faith in Christ, his statistics become yours, and your baseball card becomes worth a lot because of someone else's stats. Bobby Bonner and Jeff Schneider's baseball card is worth \$100, not because of their statistics, but because of what someone else has done.

Quoting Habakkuk 2:4 / 3 NT Epistles to Expound on these 6 Words

Verse 17 – the just shall live by faith – Paul is quoting from Habakkuk 2:4 which has led to a Trilogy of epistles in New Testament: "The Just Shall Live by Faith." Each of these epistles use Hab 2:4 as its cornerstone. It takes three epistles of the New Testament to expound just one Old Testament text of six words! One small verse in Habakkuk changed the course of history. Among the most fascinating portions of the Bible are the lesser known "Minor" prophets. (The scholastic term "minor" derives from their small size, not their significance!) Why not undertake a personally tutored study of some of them.

- The Just... (Who are they?) Romans (Rom 1:17)
- ...Shall live (How?) Galatians (Gal 3:11)
- ...By Faith! Hebrews (Heb 10:38) (introduces the "Hall of Faith, Hebrews 11.)

Launched the Protestant Reformation / Martin Luther / 95 Points - Indulgences

This verse was the verse that launched the Protestant Reformation. In the year 1483 in Eisleben, Saxony, a baby boy was born to a poor coal miner. As he grew up and observed the poverty of his father, this boy, named Martin, chose to pursue a different vocation.

He decided to become a lawyer and, in 1501, entered the University of Erfurt, where he excelled in his studies. As he came to the end of his schooling in 1504, an event took place which changed his life. While he was walking the campus grounds, a storm broke so forcefully that Martin fell on his face in fear. The thunder was deafening and lightning struck all around him. Instinctively, he cried out to the patron saint of coal miners, whose name he had heard invoked during his childhood, "Saint Anne! Save me from the lightning. If you save me I will become a monk." Shortly thereafter the storm stopped. Being a man of his word, Martin withdrew from law school and entered an Augustinian monastery where he applied himself so diligently that he obtained a Doctorate of Theology within a few years. But the more he studied, the more troubled his heart became; for although he was becoming an expert in theology, he lacked peace personally.

The question he repeatedly wrote in his diary was: "How can a man find favor with God?" In search of such peace, Martin devoted himself to an exceedingly pious life-style. He would fast for ten to fifteen days at a time. When temperatures dropped below freezing, he slept outside without

a blanket. Between his studies, he beat his body until it was black and blue and bleeding-hoping that somehow by punishing his flesh, he could rid himself of the thoughts and motives that he knew were not right. (These were typical practices of the medieval church...) He went to confession so many times a day that finally the abbot said, "Martin, either go out and commit a sin worth confessing or stop coming here so often!"

Martin was so introspective and continually plagued by what he knew of his own depravity and sinfulness that once, while sitting at his desk writing theology, he felt the presence of Satan so tangibly that he grabbed a bottle of ink and hurled it across the room to where he thought the devil was standing. The bottle crashed against the wall and left a mark that can still be seen today.

Finally, in 1509, Martin decided to make a pilgrimage to Rome in hope of finding the elusive peace for which he longed. He set out on foot and crossed the Alps. On his descent, he almost died of a high fever before making his way to a monastery at the foot of the mountains. There the Brothers nursed him back to health. While there, a wise monk approached him and said, "You need to read the Book of Habakkuk." And so Martin did just that. He read Habakkuk. It was a good suggestion. Habakkuk was a struggler just like Martin, and like us today: If God is good, why does He allow suffering? If there really is a devil, why doesn't God just obliterate him? (When we throw out questions, we then plunge into our personal pursuits-and wonder why we don't get answers.)

One verse captured Martin's imagination: Habakkuk 2:4. "The just shall live by faith." He couldn't get it out of his mind. Having recovered sufficiently to continue his journey to Rome, he went to the Church of St. John's Lateran, a typical cathedral of that day. There is a staircase there that is said to be from Pilate's judgment hall. The existing stairs are four parts: the special inner two are said to have been transported there miraculously from Jerusalem. The outer two are ordinary. The inner steps are not walked on. Here pilgrims mount painfully on their knees, a step at a time, saying prayers as they go. The pope had promised an indulgence to all who would undergo this rite.

As Martin repeated his prayers on the Lateran staircase, Habakkuk 2:4 suddenly came into his mind: "the just shall live by faith." He ceased his prayers, returned to the University of Wittenberg, and went on to explore the revolutionary idea of "justification by faith." And with great deliberation, on October 31, 1517, Martin drove a stake into the heart of the prevailing pagan concepts by nailing his famous 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany, and started the movement known today as the Reformation-the single most important event in modern history.

Appropriately, he did this on Halloween. His name, of course, was Martin Luther. The church leadership didn't like the implications of his views and ultimately, at the Diet (council) of Worms (a town) they excommunicated him as a heretic. He went on to write commentaries that are classics today; hymns like, "A Mighty Fortress is our God"; and translated the entire Bible into German, a classic which remains the literary masterpiece in the Germanic tongue.

Based on 3 Things (Scriptures – Jesus – Faith)

Luther's teaching based on this one verse were 3 things:

1. Solo Scriptura (The Scriptures Only) – The Scriptures only are the word of God, not the pope or traditions.
2. Solo Jesus (Jesus Only) - Only the Blood of Jesus Saves.
3. Solo Fida (Faith Only) – no works for salvation or pleasing God.

Solo Scriptura (The Scriptures Only)

Inspired / Indulgences / 1st Point of 95

Luther and the followers of the Reformation believed that the Bible was the inspired Word of God. One of the things that sent Luther off was that Rome was selling “indulgences” which for a donation to the Church you could buy someone out of Purgatory (which is non-Scriptural anyway); and, for a donation you could buy a night of “pleasure” and be forgiven of your sins.

Luther first point of his 95 Point Theses was:

Point 1. *When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, "Repent" (Mt 4:17), he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance.*

We need a Reformation Today Individually / Luther fell Short

How we need a “new” reformation today! Each of individually should be fully convinced in our minds that “every word of God is pure”, even the ones we don’t like or fully understand why He said what He did – for when you do, you will have a mighty shield about you, for the Word of God is a mighty defense from the ills of this world. No reformation is ever complete, and even if you are totally on-board, there is a place to examine every thought in light of God’s Word. Even Luther’s reformation wasn’t complete, even though He believed the Word of God was inspired, he was anti-Semitic, hated the Jewish people, even though Romans 11 clearly says that God is not done with Israel. We all need a continual reformation, even in the midst of a Reformation.

Proverbs 30:5 (NKJV) ⁵ *Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.*

Solo Jesus (Jesus Only).

How Beautiful the Cross / We have Put on the Lord Jesus Christ

Luther and the followers of the Reformation believed it was Jesus and Jesus only for salvation. Oh how beautiful the story of the cross is. Accepted because of the cross, because we can “put on the Lord Jesus Christ”

Galatians 3:27 (NKJV) ²⁷*For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*

Lambs in Scotland

If you go over to Scotland, or anywhere there are lots of sheep, sooner or later you're going to see a very unusual sight. You'll see a little lamb running around the field, and you'll notice this lamb has what looks like an extra fleece tied around its back. In fact, you'll see there are little holes in the fleece for its four legs and usually a hole for its head. If you see a little lamb running around like that, that usually means its mother has died. And without the protection and nourishment of a mother, any orphaned lamb will die. If you take the orphaned lamb and try to introduce it to another mother, the new mother will butt it away. She won't recognize the lamb's scent and will know the new baby is not one of her own lambs. But thankfully, most flocks are large enough that there is a ewe that has recently lost a lamb. The shepherd will skin the dead lamb and make its fleece into a covering for the orphaned lamb, then he'll take the orphaned lamb to the mother whose baby just died. Now, when she sniffs the orphaned lamb, she will smell the fleece of her own lamb. Instead of butting the lamb away, she will accept it as one of her own. In a similar way, we have become acceptable to God by being clothed with Christ.

Solo Fida (Faith Only)

Faith Alone – Not Works – No Boasting

Luther and the followers of the Reformation believed it was by faith alone, not of works, lest any man boast. Again, one of the things that sent Luther off was that Rome was selling “indulgences” which for a donation to the Church you could buy someone out of Purgatory (which is non-Scriptural anyway); and, for a donation you could buy a night of “pleasure” and be forgiven of your sins.

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NKJV) ⁸*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

Warren Buffet / My 20\$ / Cattle – 2 Mites – Impossible without Faith

In June of 2006, Warren Buffet, the world's second-richest man at the time, announced that he would donate 85 percent of his \$44 billion fortune to five charitable foundations. Commenting on

this extreme level of generosity, Buffet said: "There is more than one way to get to heaven, but this is a great way." (Associated Press, "How Do You Spend \$1.5 Billion a Year?" - CBSnews.com (6-27-06). Now, 37.5 Billion dollars sounds like a lot, and that is quite charitable, but let's put it in this context for Mr. Buffet; let's say I met him at an event one day, and I said Mr. Buffet I am a great admirer of you, here I want to give you this 20 dollar bill, please go spend it on anything you like and enjoy it. He would look at me and (at least to himself) say, 20 bucks, dude I make that in a nano-second just off the interest in my bank account. And, I would say exactly, your 37.5 billion dollars to the Creator of the Universe is even more pettily than my 20 dollars to you. He owns the cattle on the thousand hills, do you really think your 37 billion moves Him? The woman's 2 mites exceed yours 37 billion beyond measure, because hers was given by faith – and without faith it is impossible to please God, and it is Faith Alone.

Psalms 50:10 (NKJV)¹⁰ For every beast of the forest is Mine, And the cattle on a thousand hills.

Luke 21:1-4 (NKJV)¹ And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, ²and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. ³So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; ⁴for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings ⁵for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had."

Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV)⁶ But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

What could we Give / Dr. Samuel Weinstein

What could we possibly offer to the One who is Righteous, then makes us Righteous. I am reminded of the true story of Dr. Samuel Weinstein who is the chief of pediatric cardio-thoracic surgery for the Children's Hospital at Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx, New York. In May of 2006, he traveled to El Salvador with Heart Care International in order to provide life-saving operations for less-fortunate children. However, it would take more than his expertise and advanced equipment to save the life of 8-year-old Francisco Calderon Anthony Fernandez.

Dr. Weinstein and his team began operating on Francisco's heart shortly before noon. Twelve hours later, the procedure took a deadly turn. "The surgery had been going well, everything was working great, but he was bleeding a lot and they didn't have a lot of the medicines we would use to stop the bleeding," Weinstein said. "After a while, they said they couldn't give him blood because they were running out and he had a rare type." In fact, Francisco's blood type was B-negative, which—according to the American Red Cross—is present in only 2 percent of the population.

As it was, the only other person in the room with a blood type of B-negative was Dr. Weinstein. Knowing what he had to do, he stepped down from the operating table. As his colleagues continued their precision work, Dr. Weinstein set aside his scalpel, took off his gloves, and began washing his hands and forearm. Then, in the corner of an unfamiliar operating room, the prestigious doctor from one of the most advanced hospitals in the world sat down to give away his own blood.

When he had given his pint, Dr. Weinstein drank some bottled water and ate a Pop-Tart. Then—20 minutes after stepping away from the table—he rejoined his colleagues. After watching his own blood begin circulating into the boy's small veins, Dr. Weinstein completed the operation that saved Francisco's heart—and his life.

Conclusion

For He who knew no sin, became sin, so that we might become the righteousness of God. The scalpel of the Law could not save us, but the very God of that Law, gave His own blood that we might have life. Righteousness is God's Holiness in action. In His Holiness He is unapproachable; In His Love He approaches us. In the Finished Atoning Work of Christ, the demands of Holiness are satisfied, and the outpouring of Love is realized.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV)²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

THE 95 THESES - by Martin Luther (October 31, 1517)

Out of love and concern for the truth, and with the object of eliciting it, the following heads will be the subject of a public discussion at Wittenberg under the presidency of the reverend father, Martin Luther, Augustinian, Master of Arts and Sacred Theology, and duly appointed Lecturer on these subjects in that place. He requests that whoever cannot be present personally to debate the matter orally will do so in absence in writing.

1. When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, "Repent" (Mt 4:17), he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance.
2. This word cannot be understood as referring to the sacrament of penance, that is, confession and satisfaction, as administered by the clergy.
3. Yet it does not mean solely inner repentance; such inner repentance is worthless unless it produces various outward mortification of the flesh.
4. The penalty of sin remains as long as the hatred of self (that is, true inner repentance), namely till our entrance into the kingdom of heaven.
5. The pope neither desires nor is able to remit any penalties except those imposed by his own authority or that of the canons.
6. The pope cannot remit any guilt, except by declaring and showing that it has been remitted by God; or, to be sure, by remitting guilt in cases reserved to his judgment. If his right to grant remission in these cases were disregarded, the guilt would certainly remain unforgiven.
7. God remits guilt to no one unless at the same time he humbles him in all things and makes him submissive to the vicar, the priest.
8. The penitential canons are imposed only on the living, and, according to the canons themselves, nothing should be imposed on the dying.
9. Therefore the Holy Spirit through the pope is kind to us insofar as the pope in his decrees always makes exception of the article of death and of necessity.
10. Those priests act ignorantly and wickedly who, in the case of the dying, reserve canonical penalties for purgatory.
11. Those tares of changing the canonical penalty to the penalty of purgatory were evidently sown while the bishops slept (Mt 13:25).
12. In former times canonical penalties were imposed, not after, but before absolution, as tests of true contrition.
13. The dying are freed by death from all penalties, are already dead as far as the canon laws are concerned, and have a right to be released from them.
14. Imperfect piety or love on the part of the dying person necessarily brings with it great fear; and the smaller the love, the greater the fear.
15. This fear or horror is sufficient in itself, to say nothing of other things, to constitute the penalty of purgatory, since it is very near to the horror of despair.
16. Hell, purgatory, and heaven seem to differ the same as despair, fear, and assurance of salvation.

17. It seems as though for the souls in purgatory fear should necessarily decrease and love increase.
18. Furthermore, it does not seem proved, either by reason or by Scripture, that souls in purgatory are outside the state of merit, that is, unable to grow in love.
19. Nor does it seem proved that souls in purgatory, at least not all of them, are certain and assured of their own salvation, even if we ourselves may be entirely certain of it.
20. Therefore the pope, when he uses the words "plenary remission of all penalties," does not actually mean "all penalties," but only those imposed by himself.
21. Thus those indulgence preachers are in error who say that a man is absolved from every penalty and saved by papal indulgences.
22. As a matter of fact, the pope remits to souls in purgatory no penalty which, according to canon law, they should have paid in this life.
23. If remission of all penalties whatsoever could be granted to anyone at all, certainly it would be granted only to the most perfect, that is, to very few.
24. For this reason most people are necessarily deceived by that indiscriminate and high-sounding promise of release from penalty.
25. That power which the pope has in general over purgatory corresponds to the power which any bishop or curate has in a particular way in his own diocese and parish.
26. The pope does very well when he grants remission to souls in purgatory, not by the power of the keys, which he does not have, but by way of intercession for them.
27. They preach only human doctrines who say that as soon as the money clinks into the money chest, the soul flies out of purgatory.
28. It is certain that when money clinks in the money chest, greed and avarice can be increased; but when the church intercedes, the result is in the hands of God alone.
29. Who knows whether all souls in purgatory wish to be redeemed, since we have exceptions in St. Severinus and St. Paschal, as related in a legend.
30. No one is sure of the integrity of his own contrition, much less of having received plenary remission.
31. The man who actually buys indulgences is as rare as he who is really penitent; indeed, he is exceedingly rare.
32. Those who believe that they can be certain of their salvation because they have indulgence letters will be eternally damned, together with their teachers.
33. Men must especially be on guard against those who say that the pope's pardons are that inestimable gift of God by which man is reconciled to him.
34. For the graces of indulgences are concerned only with the penalties of sacramental satisfaction established by man.

35. They who teach that contrition is not necessary on the part of those who intend to buy souls out of purgatory or to buy confessional privileges preach unchristian doctrine.
36. Any truly repentant Christian has a right to full remission of penalty and guilt, even without indulgence letters.
37. Any true Christian, whether living or dead, participates in all the blessings of Christ and the church; and this is granted him by God, even without indulgence letters.
38. Nevertheless, papal remission and blessing are by no means to be disregarded, for they are, as I have said (Thesis 6), the proclamation of the divine remission.
39. It is very difficult, even for the most learned theologians, at one and the same time to commend to the people the bounty of indulgences and the need of true contrition.
40. A Christian who is truly contrite seeks and loves to pay penalties for his sins; the bounty of indulgences, however, relaxes penalties and causes men to hate them -- at least it furnishes occasion for hating them.
41. Papal indulgences must be preached with caution, lest people erroneously think that they are preferable to other good works of love.
42. Christians are to be taught that the pope does not intend that the buying of indulgences should in any way be compared with works of mercy.
43. Christians are to be taught that he who gives to the poor or lends to the needy does a better deed than he who buys indulgences.
44. Because love grows by works of love, man thereby becomes better. Man does not, however, become better by means of indulgences but is merely freed from penalties.
45. Christians are to be taught that he who sees a needy man and passes him by, yet gives his money for indulgences, does not buy papal indulgences but God's wrath.
46. Christians are to be taught that, unless they have more than they need, they must reserve enough for their family needs and by no means squander it on indulgences.
47. Christians are to be taught that they buying of indulgences is a matter of free choice, not commanded.
48. Christians are to be taught that the pope, in granting indulgences, needs and thus desires their devout prayer more than their money.
49. Christians are to be taught that papal indulgences are useful only if they do not put their trust in them, but very harmful if they lose their fear of God because of them.
50. Christians are to be taught that if the pope knew the exactions of the indulgence preachers, he would rather that the basilica of St. Peter were burned to ashes than built up with the skin, flesh, and bones of his sheep.
51. Christians are to be taught that the pope would and should wish to give of his own money, even though he had to sell the basilica of St. Peter, to many of those from whom certain hawkers of indulgences cajole money.
52. It is vain to trust in salvation by indulgence letters, even though the indulgence commissary, or even the pope, were to offer his soul as security.

53. They are the enemies of Christ and the pope who forbid altogether the preaching of the Word of God in some churches in order that indulgences may be preached in others.

54. Injury is done to the Word of God when, in the same sermon, an equal or larger amount of time is devoted to indulgences than to the Word.

55. It is certainly the pope's sentiment that if indulgences, which are a very insignificant thing, are celebrated with one bell, one procession, and one ceremony, then the gospel, which is the very greatest thing, should be preached with a hundred bells, a hundred processions, a hundred ceremonies.

56. The true treasures of the church, out of which the pope distributes indulgences, are not sufficiently discussed or known among the people of Christ.

57. That indulgences are not temporal treasures is certainly clear, for many indulgence sellers do not distribute them freely but only gather them.

58. Nor are they the merits of Christ and the saints, for, even without the pope, the latter always work grace for the inner man, and the cross, death, and hell for the outer man.

59. St. Lawrence said that the poor of the church were the treasures of the church, but he spoke according to the usage of the word in his own time.

60. Without want of consideration we say that the keys of the church, given by the merits of Christ, are that treasure.

61. For it is clear that the pope's power is of itself sufficient for the remission of penalties and cases reserved by himself.

62. The true treasure of the church is the most holy gospel of the glory and grace of God.

63. But this treasure is naturally most odious, for it makes the first to be last (Mt. 20:16).

64. On the other hand, the treasure of indulgences is naturally most acceptable, for it makes the last to be first.

65. Therefore the treasures of the gospel are nets with which one formerly fished for men of wealth.

66. The treasures of indulgences are nets with which one now fishes for the wealth of men.

67. The indulgences which the demagogues acclaim as the greatest graces are actually understood to be such only insofar as they promote gain.

68. They are nevertheless in truth the most insignificant graces when compared with the grace of God and the piety of the cross.

69. Bishops and curates are bound to admit the commissaries of papal indulgences with all reverence.

70. But they are much more bound to strain their eyes and ears lest these men preach their own dreams instead of what the pope has commissioned.

71. Let him who speaks against the truth concerning papal indulgences be anathema and accursed.

72. But let him who guards against the lust and license of the indulgence preachers be blessed.
73. Just as the pope justly thunders against those who by any means whatever contrive harm to the sale of indulgences.
74. Much more does he intend to thunder against those who use indulgences as a pretext to contrive harm to holy love and truth.
75. To consider papal indulgences so great that they could absolve a man even if he had done the impossible and had violated the mother of God is madness.
76. We say on the contrary that papal indulgences cannot remove the very least of venial sins as far as guilt is concerned.
77. To say that even St. Peter if he were now pope, could not grant greater graces is blasphemy against St. Peter and the pope.
78. We say on the contrary that even the present pope, or any pope whatsoever, has greater graces at his disposal, that is, the gospel, spiritual powers, gifts of healing, etc., as it is written, 1 Co 12[:28].
79. To say that the cross emblazoned with the papal coat of arms, and set up by the indulgence preachers is equal in worth to the cross of Christ is blasphemy.
80. The bishops, curates, and theologians who permit such talk to be spread among the people will have to answer for this.
81. This unbridled preaching of indulgences makes it difficult even for learned men to rescue the reverence which is due the pope from slander or from the shrewd questions of the laity.
82. Such as: "Why does not the pope empty purgatory for the sake of holy love and the dire need of the souls that are there if he redeems an infinite number of souls for the sake of miserable money with which to build a church? The former reason would be most just; the latter is most trivial.
83. Again, "Why are funeral and anniversary masses for the dead continued and why does he not return or permit the withdrawal of the endowments founded for them, since it is wrong to pray for the redeemed?"
84. Again, "What is this new piety of God and the pope that for a consideration of money they permit a man who is impious and their enemy to buy out of purgatory the pious soul of a friend of God and do not rather, because of the need of that pious and beloved soul, free it for pure love's sake?"
85. Again, "Why are the penitential canons, long since abrogated and dead in actual fact and through disuse, now satisfied by the granting of indulgences as though they were still alive and in force?"
86. Again, "Why does not the pope, whose wealth is today greater than the wealth of the richest Crassus, build this one basilica of St. Peter with his own money rather than with the money of poor believers?"
87. Again, "What does the pope remit or grant to those who by perfect contrition already have a right to full remission and blessings?"

88. Again, "What greater blessing could come to the church than if the pope were to bestow these remissions and blessings on every believer a hundred times a day, as he now does but once?"

89. "Since the pope seeks the salvation of souls rather than money by his indulgences, why does he suspend the indulgences and pardons previously granted when they have equal efficacy?"

90. To repress these very sharp arguments of the laity by force alone, and not to resolve them by giving reasons, is to expose the church and the pope to the ridicule of their enemies and to make Christians unhappy.

91. If, therefore, indulgences were preached according to the spirit and intention of the pope, all these doubts would be readily resolved. Indeed, they would not exist.

92. Away, then, with all those prophets who say to the people of Christ, "Peace, peace," and there is no peace! (Jer 6:14)

93. Blessed be all those prophets who say to the people of Christ, "Cross, cross," and there is no cross!

94. Christians should be exhorted to be diligent in following Christ, their Head, through penalties, death and hell.

95. And thus be confident of entering into heaven through many tribulations rather than through the false security of peace (Acts 14:22).

The De-Evolution of Man – (1:18-25)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (Ch12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Darwin & Evolution

Well this month (On the Origin of Species, published on Thursday 24 November 1859) marks the 150th anniversary of the publishing of Darwin's book that launched the theory of evolution to its zenith, and it has continued to grow greater and greater in magnitude in the world we live today as many a people have embraced evolution over creation. The evolution theory has brought anything near man growing better and better, rather it has reversed what it claims to be as we see man going deeper and deeper into depravity. Evolution has not brought man into a higher state, but only lower, evolution has not brought man into life and that more abundant, but life and that more deprived.

Paul not Ashamed – Gospel brings Life / How Live as God Determined / Any other - Empty

Thus why Paul was not ashamed of the gospel because the gospel is life and brings life. The Gospel reveals how man is to live as God designed and determined for him. When man lives any other way than how God determined for him, a man's life will be futile and empty. Sin robs, it robs man of all God intended for him.

(Rom 1:21 NKJV) *because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.*

(Rom 1:22 NKJV) *Professing to be wise, they became fools,*

Creator knows Best

I was thinking back to a time when I was working in the private sector and I had created a computer program that did some special analysis. Another worker liked it so much that he made a few changes here and there, and then presented it as an improvement to mine. Lots of people loved it and started to use it, and he received a lot of praises for his good work. I must admit, it did look good, and I know he spent considerable time working on it. There was only one problem, somewhere along the line when the co-worker tried to improve my work he induced errors into the program. Now for the average person they wouldn't notice the errors, but for me, since I was the original creator, the errors induced jumped off the pages at me and I knew that somewhere along the line those errors were going to cause all the users a lot of problems.

This story reminded me of how man can think they know what is best, and question if God's ways are really the best, and that just maybe we can improve on his original design, never realizing that we are inducing errors and problems into something that was once perfect.

Paint black Canvas – So Gem of Gospel Stands out / God won't Allow - Physician

So Paul in the passages before us today will start to paint the canvas black in order that the gem of the Gospel might stand out against the dark backdrop of human depravity. God will not allow people to continue in sin any more than a physician would say to a person with cancer, "Well, I don't want to carve into you or cause you any discomfort, so I won't do anything about it." No, just as a doctor knows there must be surgery, so, too, the wrath of God will deal surgically and powerfully with humanity whenever people fail to embrace Jesus Christ and refuse to allow His blood to remove the cancer of their iniquity.

De-Evolution of Man

In our passage before us today, we will see man goes from intelligence, to ignorance, to idolatry, to indulgence. This is the natural flow once a man rejects what God has clearly shown him; it is not the evolution of man, but the de-evolution of man.

Outline: The Downward Fall of a Man:

- Refuses Intelligent Design (1:18-20)
- Becomes willfully Ignorant (1:21-22)
- Enters into Idolatry (1:23)
- Lives in Indulgence (1:24-25)

Refuses Intelligent Design (1:18-20)

The proof of intelligent design is clearly displayed all around in creation.

Man is without Excuse Creation declares His Existence

(Rom 1:18 NKJV) For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, (Rom 1:19 NKJV) because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.

Based on Righteousness – His Holiness Demands

Verse 18 - For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven - Based on His righteousness, God's wrath is justified. His Holiness demands justice against all ungodliness and unrighteousness. We covered this in great detail in our last study.

College Student – Good News Only

Again, Paul has no problem telling people that God's wrath is justified, and he has no problem telling people because he has the good news on how man can become right with God, and not face the wrath that is due. I am reminded of the story of the young college student who was seeking employment, this is before the internet, it goes all the way back to the days of telegrams, and he went to a telegram office and said I like to work for you. The manager said you look like a good able body, I'll hire you to deliver telegrams to the homes and business. The boy said great, but I only want to deliver good news such as baby births, and happy birthdays, and you just received an inheritance, I don't want to deliver news that may upset people. Obviously the man didn't hire him, for the message is sometimes very appealing, and sometimes it is very unsettling, and causes people to become upset. So if you are considering being involved in the ministry of God, you need to be ready to deliver both the happy easy to receive messages, and the messages that upset people. We have nothing to be ashamed of, even if people get upset, for we have the greatest news for anyone, you can be right with God, He loves you, and you can have eternal life.

Ungodliness – Unrighteousness / 2 Tablets of Law

Verse 18 - For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men – The wrath will come against all ungodliness and unrighteousness. Ungodliness is sin against God. Unrighteousness is sin against man. Exodus 20, when Moses came down from Sinai, he had two tablets in his hand. The first four commandments deal with our relationship to God (violating any of those 4 is ungodliness)—and that the second tablet contained the remaining six commandments—all dealing with our relationship to our fellow man (violating any of those 6 are unrighteousness). A man is ungodly when he isn't right with God: he is unrighteous when he isn't right with his fellow man as God wishes him to be. So, the person who says that he loves God and is right with God, but has hatred in his heart towards his fellow man needs to examine himself. So we see the vertical relationship (in relationship to God), and the horizontal relationship (in relationship with fellow man).

ONE: *'You shall have no other gods before Me.'*

TWO: 'You shall not make for yourself a carved image--any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.'

THREE: 'You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.'

FOUR: 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.'

FIVE: 'Honor your father and your mother.'

SIX: 'You shall not murder.'

SEVEN: 'You shall not commit adultery.'

EIGHT: 'You shall not steal.'

NINE: 'You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.'

TEN: 'You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's.'

1 John 2:9-11(NKJV) ⁹He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. ¹⁰He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. ¹¹But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

Suppress – Hold against the Current / Creation testifies there is a God

Verse 18 - Suppressing the truth - The word “suppress” is very important. Referring to a helmsman steering a boat against the current, it means “to suppress.” In other words, the current wants to take the boat a certain way, but, determined to go the opposite way, the helmsman holds the rudder in such a way that he might go his way instead of the way of the current. So, too, the wrath of God is revealed against those who are determined to go their own way regardless of what they know is true. For, as we will see, Romans 1 makes it clear that creation around him testifies of the reality of God to every man, while chapter 2 clearly declares that conscience within him tells every man how he ought to live.

(Rom 1:20 NKJV) For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,

Divine Attribute Clearly Seen / Psalms 19 – Acts 14

The divine attributes of God are clearly seen, that there is a Master Creator behind all design. Psalm 19 says that man cannot look at the heavens without declaring there was a Creator who created them.

Psalms 19:1(NKJV) *The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork.*

Acts 14:15-17(NKJV) ¹⁵and saying, “Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, ¹⁶who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. ¹⁷Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.”

Napoleon – Pointing to Stars

Walking with a group of admirals one evening who were discussing whether or not God existed, Napoleon is said to have pointed to the heavens and said, “Sirs, if you’re going to get rid of God, you must get rid of those.” Napoleon was right. The heavens declare the glory, the reality, the substance, the weight of God.

Fool = Insane

Psalm 14 says the fool has said in his heart there is no God. The word for fool can literally be translated to mean “insane”. So the insane person says that there is no God.

Psalms 14:1(NKJV) *The fool has said in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, They have done abominable works, There is none who does good.*

US Government looking for Extraterrestrial Life / Prerequisite – Order Pattern

You may or may not know that our US Government invests money to determine if there is extraterrestrial life outside of our planet. They pay scientist to research and search the galaxies to see if there is life beyond earth. To determine such a thing they had to set prerequisites on what would constitute proof and evidence of life that exists (or had existed) outside this planet – so whether they were receiving some type of radio transmission, or seeing something in a

telescope, the prerequisites was that there is order (a pattern), it could not be just some random chance radio signal they picked up, or some random one-time blip they seen on a radar screen, but something had repeated order to it. Do you want to see amazing order, just look at our Solar System, want to see amazing order, just look at the DNA chain; from the telescope to the microscope, the world before us is built and maintained in amazing order – clearly demonstration that there is a Creator outside of our planet. Peter speaks of people being willingly ignorant: **2 Peter 3:3-5(KJV)** ³Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, ⁴And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. ⁵For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

Telescope to Microscope / Sheets of Paper

From the telescope to the microscope, there is a testimony of design. One astronomer said that if you were to take the distance of the earth to the sun (93 million miles) and that one piece of paper laid flat equaled that (93 million miles); then you would need a stack of paper 31 feet high to get to the next star past the sun (which is alpha centurion), you would need a stack of paper 310 feet high to measure from the earth to the end of our Milky Way Galaxy; and you would need a stack of paper 31 million miles high to measure from the earth to the end of the universe we know it as today. This is a huge universe we live in, and in one sense it is getting smaller and smaller (as our technology expands and we see further and further), but in the same sense the universe is getting larger and larger (as our technology expands and we see further and further), but everywhere you look – God can be seen through His wondrous and creative design. It has been said, as knowledge increases, wonder deepens (and how true as we see and learn more and more of this world we live in, how can't we stand in awe of Him).

Slide Show

Show Nature Slide Show

The Challenge – It is not Blind Faith

People often challenge and say, 'you want me to blindly follow this God of yours that I can't see'; we need only respond, "look around, no one is asking you for blind faith".

God's Wrath – Against those who Refuse Existence / Because – Then Accountable

God is revealing His wrath against man, for they refuse the testimony He gives that He exists; and thus if He exists, then each man has a responsible to then know what is it that He demands of me. Men don't want to acknowledge the first part, because they don't want to answer the second, because to answer the second would mean to have to admit and submit to someone other than themselves.

Why Doesn't God Show Himself – Because Consuming Fire

The question is often asked "why doesn't God just show Himself than?", and the answer is last week's study – He is Holy, and any impurity that would come into His presence must be consumed:

Habakkuk 1:13 (NKJV) ¹³ You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he?

Hebrews 12:29(NKJV) ²⁹For our God is a consuming fire.

1st Suppress Truth – 2nd Willfully Ignorant

First the wrath of God is revealed because man suppresses the truth that God exists and now secondly.....

Becomes willfully Ignorant (1:21-22)

Then there are those who admit there has to be a Creator, but they simply say, "but I will not allow this Creator to rule over me".

(Rom 1:21 NKJV) because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. (Rom 1:22 NKJV) Professing to be wise, they became fools,

1st Suppress Truth – 2nd Willfully Ignorant / Refuse to Submit

First the wrath of God is revealed because man suppresses the truth that God exists and now secondly, even when they concur He is God, they still refuse to submit to Him, and live their lives as they want to with no regards to God's ways and Commands.

Cell Phone Ringtone

Have you heard about the cell phone ringtone that junior high and high school kids are using to keep teachers from discovering that they are using their cell phones in school? The pitch of this ringtone, called the "mosquito tone," is too high for people over 25 to hear. So the kids can still send and receive text messages during class without the teacher knowing. The mosquito tone was first developed in Great Britain to irritate teenagers who were loitering around convenience stores and keeping customers away by their loud and obnoxious behavior. Some kid simply figured out how to use that sound as his cell phone's ringtone and—voilà—kids are downloading it by the millions.

How does the mosquito tone go undetected by adults older than 25? Inside our ears we have tiny microscopic hairs that move with the impulses of incoming sound waves, and those hair movements send electrical signals to our brain. As we age, those hairs get worn down, actually damaged, so our hearing becomes less sensitive. We first lose the ability to detect the sounds of high frequencies. People over 25 can't hear sounds above 16 kilohertz. (The highest note on a piano is 4 Khz; the mosquito tone is 17 Khz.)

This situation serves as an analogy to help us understand the common difficulty of detecting communication from God. According to Scripture, the reality of God can be perceived in the wonders of creation, and all people—including nonbelievers—can detect this information. But if they fail to respond, they gradually lose the ability to sense God altogether. They lose "spiritual ear hair" so to speak. The same principle holds true even for Christians. Just as unbelievers can lose their ability to perceive God in the macro-messages of nature if they don't respond appropriately to what they detect, believers can lose their sensitivity to God if we don't respond appropriately to his specific promptings.

Parents – 80%

Parents, 80% of the professions for Christ come before the age of 18. I know there is that thought that seems and sounds so logical, that we don't want to push Jesus on them, to allow them to make their own decisions, and/or let them decide for themselves when they are older. I don't mean to discount the Spirit, but I just want to put this out there for you, and that is that you are trusting that your child will be one of the 20%. Even a betting man would put his wager on the 80% over the 20%, so why would we ever trust that with our child's eternal life. We need to teach them about creation versus evolution inside the home because the public schools, Disney World, and Hollywood are bombarding them with the evolution theory; and God gives us a very clear warning here in this passage, and that is once a person doubts creation, they are easily influenced into being willfully ignorant.

Notice the Attributes

We must get them now, because notice the attributes of the people who first reject God is the Creator and that he exists, and/or – they just willing refuse to submit their life to Him:

- 1.) **they did not glorify Him as God.** - We can fall into this same error as believers. Knowing God, we can fail to glorify Him as God. How? By insisting on our own way, by saying, "God, I believe in You, and now I'm telling You what I want You to do. You better solve this situation, take care of this problem, grant this request, or heal this sickness. I'm naming it. I'm claiming it." He's God. We're not. He knows things we can't know and sees things we can't see. Therefore, for me to rub the lamp of faith and expect God to become my genie is, in a sense, blasphemous. Father knows best. Therefore, my part is

- to talk things over with Him, cast my cares upon Him, and have faith that He will do what's right—even though I might not initially agree or understand.
- 2.) **nor were thankful**, - Although we know God, we fail to glorify Him as God whenever we stop being thankful for whatever He sends our way.
 - 3.) **but became futile in their thoughts** – Futile thoughts, meaning they their thoughts have no meaning, no value – basically they only think of themselves and their small world, and care little of their fellow man, and little if not nothing of God.
 - 4.) **and their foolish hearts were darkened** – darkened hearts, sounds like a good description of depression.
 - 5.) **Professing to be wise, they became fools** – the word here for fools is the Greek word “mōrainō”. (mōrainō mo-rah'ee-no From G3474; to become insipid; figuratively to make (passively act) as a simpleton:—become fool, make foolish, lose savour.)

Enters into Idolatry (1:23)

Everyone worships something, and if a man doesn't worship God, they will worship something.

(Rom 1:23 NKJV) and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man; and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

Man is Born Worshipper – Must Worship Something

Man is a born worshipper, and thus if he doesn't worship God he will worship something, whether that be his favorite sports team, money, home, children, career – whatever it may be every man worships something. Idolatry is anything that is supreme in your life, over God.

Creeping Things

Creeping things – I think that refers to some of the musicians we see on MTV.

Lives in Indulgence (1:24-25)

Once a person doubts or refuses Intelligent design, they easily become willfully ignorant and refuse to submit their lives wholly to God, they will worship something because man is a born worshipper, and these three easily leads to filling their flesh with every desire of their heart, thinking of immediate and self-gratification over anything else in their world – and the wrath of God will and must come against them.

(Rom 1:24 NKJV) Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves,

Uncleanness means Filth

The word “uncleanness” means “filth”.

Gave up – Judicial Term

Gave up is a judicial term in the Greek and it was used for handing over a prisoner to his sentence.

Give Up – Part of Wrath / If that is what you Want – Man Free-will Agent / Love vs Rape

God “giving them up” is part of His wrath. God will “give them up” meaning that God says if this is really what you want, I will not force My will upon yours. Man is a free-will agent and is allowed to make his own decisions; God will not violate a man's will. God will not force a man to love Him, forced love is not love, it is rape.

Psalms 81:11-12(NKJV) *“But My people would not heed My voice, And Israel would have none of Me. So I gave them over to their own stubborn heart, To walk in their own counsels.*

Not a Pretty Sight

When God gives a man up, it is not a pretty sight. 3 God gave them up:

- (Rom 1:24 NKJV) Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness
- (Rom 1:26 NKJV) For this reason God gave them up to vile passions
- (Rom 1:28 NKJV) ..God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;

Pastor Chuck

As Pastor Chuck says, “when God goes, anything goes”, and we will study verses 26-32 in our future study.

(Rom 1:25 NKJV) who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

Here is the De-Evolution of Man

Herein is the devolution of man. He who suppresses the truth and denies there is a God begins to act like an animal and to worship the creation rather than the Creator.

1st Lie – Heart of all Lies

The first lie, is the heart and soul of every lie – Satan and Eve in the Garden. The lie that God is withholding something from man, that God’s Words are not all the best for us, that we can improve on it by some intelligence of our own.

Genesis 3:4-5(NKJV) ⁴Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, *and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.*”

God’s Rebuttal to Evolution

I believe this is God’s rebuttal to the theory of evolution that has existed since man has existed. We will study that in our next study.

Made - Poem

Verse 20 - are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made – back in verse 18, the word for “made” there is poem (same word in Ephesians 2:10), and God is writing all men everywhere a poem of His great love for them.

Ephesians 2:10(NKJV) ¹⁰For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Creation versus Evolution – Just the Facts

Romans 1:20

(Rom 1:20 NKJV) For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,

Paul would also write to his young protégée Timothy and say,
*(1 Timothy 6:20 KJV) O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:
(1 Timothy 6:21 KJV) Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.*

Science – falsely so-called!

Intimidated by the Intellectuals – there is no personal God

Paul is writing this young Pastor Timothy to instruct and guide him in the ministry. Timothy being young would have been easily intimidated by guys that would come on the scene with all this spiritual or academic knowledge (as too can we). They would say Timothy (they will say to us), you don't get it, and you haven't been educated at the finest Universities by the brightest teachers in the world. These so-called intellectuals, the educated, those with the Masters and PHD's, would say Timothy (and to us), science disproves conclusively that there is not a personal Creator God.

Science Based on Facts

There was a time when science was based on factual evidence, something you could prove, but today it is based many times on nothingness. It can seem so intimidating when they pour all their so-called Scientific Facts on us.

College Education

But, I'm reminded of the story of the young man who came home from his first semester in college at a big city university, his dad, a blue-collar worker, says "how was it son", "oh it was great dad we are learning so many things". As the son goes on the dad could detect a tone and attitude that his son was talking down to him because his father never went to college. As the son went on he said dad, science fascinates me, dad we created an acid in the lab that can eat through anything, and dad we created that right in our very lab he says proudly. Thinking he just proved he is now the smart one of the family and that his father is just a hunky from the steel mills he sits down in front of his father with the "what do you think of that look". The dad shakes his head, that's good son, so what do you keep it in?

Cross-Examined by the Obvious

Evolution, it looks so solid, so sure of itself, until it cross-examined by the obvious. This study will look at some of the obvious errors of science, the major contradictions this evolution theory has against the facts of science.

Evolution – Replacement to Creation

Evolution comes in with all its facts, now and then they may confess it is just a theory, but go into the high schools and universities and you don't hear them teaching it as an alternative to Creation, but in replacement of Creation. I believe this bombardment is having its way in a destructive way upon our kids as they are getting deceived by this continual lie that man evolved from nothing, and that creation is just a fairytale for the weak-minded people. The great survey taker, George Barna did a survey of several thousand young adults in their 20's, who were once actively involved in church during their teen years, but have since walked away from church and maybe attend on Easter and Christmas. Here are two questions that were very interesting to me, *first* how active were they, and 95% said they were extremely active (weekly) up through middle school, then in high school the church involvement/attendance dropped down to 55%, and then

by college age they were only attending and involved 11% of the time. Out of that sample he found 1000 who said they don't get involved because they simply doubt that the accounts of the Bible are true. He asked them when you first started to doubt, and 40% said in middle-school, 44% said in high school, and only 11% in college. I think there is a correlation here for it is at each level; the evolution theory is propagated further and further, deeper and deeper. Parents, what I see here is that we are starting to lose our kids to the world in middle school, not high school; and the damage is done long before they enter into college.

We Must Teach Them Now - Often

We must teach them, and teach them often, evolution is a lie from the pit of hell; and we need not ask them to believe it by faith, but show them the facts. Today we will look at "just the facts". In the end yes, we all must walk by faith, but my hope is that after our study today, it will be anything but blind faith.

Outline: Creation vs. Evolution (Just the Facts)

1. The Laws of Science (Just the Facts)
2. The Geological Record (Just the Facts)
3. The Bible and Science (Just the Facts)
4. The Bible and Prophecies (Just the Facts)
5. The God who Created You (Just the Facts)

1 - The Laws of Science (Just the Facts)

World Based on 2 Laws

This whole world is energy; therefore all Science is based on 2 Laws (the first and second laws of thermodynamics). If you violate any one of these law, then your theory has to be thrown out' because without energy, there is no power to perform anything. Energy is the building block of the Universe.

The First Law of Thermodynamics

The First Law of Thermodynamics is known as the "Law of Energy Conservation". It states that energy cannot be created nor destroyed; it can only change from one form to another. Simply meaning there is no new energy being created.

Energy for Big Bang / God or Energy is Eternal

For the Evolution Theory the question has to be asked if energy cannot be created nor destroyed, then where did the energy come for the "Big Bang." If you step back, this law means that either God is eternal, or energy is eternal, for one of them had to exist "in the beginning".

Genesis Account ----Bara/Asah

How interesting that in Genesis God uses two different words for "create". One word (bara) is to create out of nothing; the other (asah) is to create out of existing substance.

(Genesis 1:1 KJV) In the beginning God created (bara) the heaven and the earth.

Bara – means to create out of nothing

(Genesis 1:7 KJV) And God made (asah) the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.

Asah – create from existing

4000 Years Ago

How did the writer of Genesis almost 4,000 years ago know the First Law of Thermodynamics? How did he know that the first creation had to be out of nothing, and then all the rest were created from the existing matter?

The Second Law of Thermodynamics

The Second Law of Thermodynamics is known as the “Law of Energy Decay.” Which says that every system left to itself will move from order to disorder.

Examples

A few practical examples are that new car you paid 20,000\$ for – now five years doesn't look so new now does it (this law is why the cash for clunkers program was so popular – this law is why the junk yards of so full of once new cars – they are decaying). You that are 40, go look at your High School Class photo. Parents go look at your kids' room a day after you just cleaned it – everything is moving from order to disorder.

Disorder cannot Evolve in Order (No First Bang – No Second move into Order)

The Second Law therefore concludes that disorder cannot evolve into order, neither can a simple structure evolve into a more complex one. The First Law of Thermodynamics prevents a “Big Bang” from happening from nothing, and the Second Law prevents that bang (which never could have happened) from ever organizing into the complex ordered system we call our universe.

We are watching our earth pass away, global warming and the likes, just as the scriptures declare, just as the first and second Law of Thermodynamics declare:

(Isaiah 51:6 KJV) Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment,

(Matthew 24:35 KJV) Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

(Psalms 102:25 NKJV) Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands.

(Psalms 102:26 NKJV) They will perish, but You will endure; Yes, they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will change them, And they will be changed.

(Psalms 102:27 NKJV) But You are the same, And Your years will have no end.

Now by violating these two laws there is nothing left to build the Evolution Theory, but we might as well dispel some other key points:

The 3rd Law of Motion / No Magic Tornadoes / How could Bang – Produce Order

The 3rd Law of Motion states that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction, and no effect can be greater than the cause. This means that a tornado could not come through a junk yard and a fully functional Boeing 747 is the outcome. This law leads us to the question of how can we explain such a highly complex ordered system the universe is in if it all began with a big explosion.

Our Galaxy

To say a random explosion created this complex universe is quite a leap of faith. Our Universe is made up of countless Galaxies; within each galaxy are many solar systems (with each solar system consisting of a burning star and its family of sub planets). Our Galaxy is called the Milky Way. It is estimated (at the least) that there are about 100 billion stars in our galaxy alone (other estimates say 200-400 billion). And, are you ready for this, within telescope range there are about 100 million other such galaxies like ours, and who knows how many beyond that. By the way, our Milky Way Galaxy can be compared to the one trillion stars of the neighboring Andromeda Galaxy

Earth 93 Million / Pluto 3.6 Billion – 7 Billion Diameter

A Galaxy is made up of solar systems The earth is 93 million miles from the sun, and Pluto which is the last planet in our solar system, on the average stays 3.6 billion miles from the sun, that means this solar system is 7 billion miles in diameter. Consider this is just one solar system that comprises our whole Galaxy. Just take my conservation calculation, if there are 100 million galaxies, each 7 billion miles in diameter, then the universe is 700,000,000,000,000,000, miles in diameter.

66.600mph / 24hr spin

Here is what is most interesting: The earth orbits the sun one time a year at the speed of 66,600mph. That speed is just enough to offset the gravitation pull of the sun, for if the speed was any greater it would pull away from the sun and freeze, if it was any slower it would pull closer to the sun and be scorched. The earth rotates on its axis every 24 hours, giving equal amounts of light and darkness, if it didn't the earth would either be a desert or a sub-zero wasteland.

9 Sub-planets / 100million Galaxies in Motion-

Even more amazing is the fact that the other 8 planets in our solar system have to stay on their exact paths, if they did not they would collide into each other destroying themselves. If we look at the big picture, every solar system within every 100 million plus galaxies throughout the universe must stay in perfect order or else galaxies would start colliding into galaxy destroying themselves.

Scriptures – Earth held Together

How can we explain how the universe this vast is held together?

(Isaiah 48:13 KJV) Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together.

(Psalms 147:4 NKJV) He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name.

(Psalms 147:5 NKJV) Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite.

(Isaiah 40:22 NKJV) It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.

The Law of Biogenesis

Moving on to "The Law of Biogenesis" says that life can only arise from life which is similar to itself. Evolution defies this law, because they say life evolved from inorganic (no life present) substance into an organic (life present) substance. So you start with nothing, then electrons form, then protons, then atoms, then amino acids, then nucleotides, then proteins, then DNA, then protozoa, then fish, amphibians, reptiles, mammals, and then man. So in the beginning all this matter was floating around space, then it formed together into a mass and exploded. Over time it formed into the solar systems we know today, and then building blocks of life appeared out of this organic (non-living) matter, and then life began to evolve.

Glass of Water / Billions of Years for Evolution

Now, if I took a glass of water and said tomorrow a man will pop out of it, you would say I'm crazy. If I said in 1 Billion years a man would pop out, people would say that's possible. Given enough time anything can happen. That is what the backbone of Evolution is, "Time", for they need time to cover all the Scientific Laws they defy. They say evolution is a process that would take billions of years to happen. Given enough time anything is possible, for the Evolution Theory, they estimate the age of the universe between 9-15 billion years old.

Shrinking Sun

Now back to the First Law of Thermodynamics, which states that Energy cannot be created nor destroyed, it can only change properties. The Sun is shrinking at the rate of 0.1 percent per century, or the equivalent of 5 feet per hour. It changes properties as it is absorbed into the other planets (Hence the global warming we are seeing today). At this rate 100,000 years ago the sun would have been twice as large as it is today. The size and radiation of the sun 1,000,000 years ago would have made life on the earth impossible. 20 million years ago the sun would have been large enough to touch the earth. The size of the sun millions of years ago nullifies the Evolution Theory, for they say they needed billions of years for the first life form to develop.

The Earth's Magnetic Field

Analysis and data collected over the last 130 years shows that the earth's magnetic field is getting weaker and weaker every year. If we were to reverse the decay recorded, and add it up

backwards, to just 30,000 years ago then the magnetic strength of the earth would have been sufficient enough to generate temperatures in excess of 5000 degree Celsius. This temperature is sufficient to melt or vaporize the elements of the earth.

The Moon Dust

When we went to the Moon, all the smart people there at NASA were basing the age of the Universe on millions of years old. Go to the Smithsonian in DC and you will see in the museum of natural history everything is based on an Old earth, billions and billions of years old, all this came from the theory of Evolution. Well with the use of satellite technology the scientist are capable of determining how much cosmic dust filters into the earth atmosphere every year. They calculated that the moon would gather at the same rate as the earth, and based on 4.5 billion years, there would be over 50 feet of cosmic dust. They calculated that in when they designed the Lunar Module, and that is why there are those big pads on the base, so they wouldn't sink into the dust. When they landed they found only a few inches of dust, what would be equivalent to less than 10,000 years of accumulation.

Universe Billion Years Old

Obvious fact, there wasn't billions and billions of years for evolution to happen; the Laws of Thermodynamics prove it.

Creator God:

Genesis 1:1-5(NKJV) ¹In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ²The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. ³Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. ⁴And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

Psalms 148:5-6(NKJV) ⁵ Let them praise the name of the Lord, For He commanded and they were created. ⁶ He also established them forever and ever; He made a decree which shall not pass away.

Proverbs 3:19-20(NKJV) ¹⁹ The Lord by wisdom founded the earth; By understanding He established the heavens; ²⁰ By His knowledge the depths were broken up, And clouds drop down the dew.

The Geological Record (Just the Facts)

Fossil Record

Darwin said the key to validating the Evolution theory would be the Fossil Record, that there will be transitional fossils. 1859 Darwin wrote, "the Origin of the Species." Still to this day, almost 150 years later, still no transitional form found.

Geological Column

The Geological Column uses circular reasoning. It is based on the evolutionary theory that lower simple organisms evolved into more complex organisms; such as a protozoa evolved into fish, then into amphibian, then into reptiles, then into mammal, and finally into man. Then they estimate how many billions years it would take to evolve from each stage based on the theory of evolution. Then, when they find a fossil (say a fish), they go to their table and say this fossil is so many billion years old. Our country has bought into it because if you go to the museum of natural History, you will see the Geological Column when you enter the display, and then see every display is dated millions of years old. By the way, a funny thing is that they have found human fossils in each of the periods that man wasn't supposed to be existent yet (such as they found a human footprint in the Cambrian Period which is supposed to be 100 million years ago, and man was only to be evolved 1 million years ago). Also, the more knowledge increases, the more scientist admit that it would take longer for evolution to happen, the more they continually have to adjust the geological column. As Pastor Chuck says, when he was in high school they told him the world was 100 million years old, now scientist say that the earth is 6 billion years old, and as he says "and I am not that old".

The Missing Link

The search continues.

The Monkey Business

Here are all the so-called missing links that man says they have found, but in the end they were all frauds:

- Heidelberg Man
 - Built from a jawbone
- Nebraska Man, 1922 (Henry Osborn)
 - Built from just one tooth
 - Later discover to be an extinct pig
- Piltdown Man, 1912 (Charles Dawson)
 - Built from a jaw bone of a modern ape
 - A deliberate fraud. Filed and treated with iron salts
- Peking Man, 1921
 - Evidence disappeared, an outright fraud
- Neanderthal man
 - Found in a cave in the Neander Valley near Dusseldorf
 - Int'l Congress of Zoology, 1958, determined was an old man suffering from arthritis
- Java Man, 1922
 - Concealed evidence, teeth were of an orangutan.

Mutations

Scientific test prove that 99% of mutations are harmful, yet evolution say it is that 1% over billions of years that have created these amazing bodies we live in.

The Human Body / DNA

Just the human eye, amazing, the human eye has 100 million rods and cones, and the neurons perform 10 billion calculations per second. Charles Darwin himself realized that it seemed incredible that evolutionary processes had to explain human vision. He said:

'To suppose that the eye with all its inimitable contrivances for adjusting the focus to different distances, for admitting different amounts of light, and for the correction of spherical and chromatic aberration, could have been formed by natural selection, seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest degree.' (Darwin, Charles. The Origin of Species, J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, London, 1971, p. 167.)

(Psalms 139:13 NKJV) For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb.

(Psalms 139:14 NKJV) I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well.

Creator God:

Psalms 111:2(NKJV)² The works of the Lord are great, Studied by all who have pleasure in them.

The Bible and Science (Just the Facts)

The bible isn't a book of science, but when it speaks of science it is always right on:

The Earth Hangs on Nothing

--- *(Job 26:7 NKJV) He stretches out the north over empty space; **He hangs the earth on nothing.***

This was written 4,000 years ago when the common belief that the earth was held up by four elephants standing on a turtle.

The Round Earth

- ---*(Isaiah 40:22 NKJV) It is He who sits **above the circle of the earth**, And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.*

- Written approximately 2,700 years ago. Yet it was just 1492 Columbus sailed the Ocean Blue, and everyone said he was going to fall off the face of the earth because the earth was flat.

The Earth's Water Cycle

- --- (Ecclesiastes 1:7 NKJV) *All the rivers run into the sea, Yet the sea is not full; To the place from which the rivers come, **There they return again.***
- Written 3,000 years ago

The Expanding Universe

- ---- (Isaiah 51:13 KJV) *And forgettest the LORD thy maker, that hath **stretched forth the heavens**, and laid the foundations of the earth;*
- The word there for "stretched" means "spread out", and science has proven that the universe is expanding and this was written 2,700 years ago. The word "stretched forth" means to keep expanding.

The Fading Earth

- **Hebrews 1:10-12(NKJV)** ¹⁰And: *"You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. ¹¹ They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow old like a garment; ¹² Like a cloak You will fold them up, And they will be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will not fail."*[£]
- The earth is fading away, just as the Laws of Thermodynamics said they would (written 2000 years, quoting passages from Old Testament (Psalm 102:25-27) (written 2500-3000 years ago)

Light Divides

- (Job 38:24 KJV) ***By what way is the light parted**, which scattereth the east wind upon the earth?*
- The Light spectrum, was only discovered a few hundred years ago.

Paths in the Sea

- (Psalms 8:8 KJV) *The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever **passeth through the paths of the seas.***
- Paths in the sea wasn't known in the shipping industry until only a hundred or so years ago.

The Jet Stream

- (Ecclesiastes 1:6 NKJV) *The wind goes toward the south, And turns around to the north; The wind whirls about continually, **And comes again on its circuit.***
- Paths in the air (Jet Stream) wasn't known until only a hundred or so years ago.

Thermodynamic Principles

- (2 Peter 3:10 KJV) *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, **and the elements shall melt with fervent heat**, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*
- Spoken of in the Bible 2000 years ago.

Snakes with Hip Sockets

- Here is an interesting one I have to throw out there, if you look at the xray or pictures of certain snakes, you will see they have hip sockets, as if they once walked upright before they began to slither on the ground. In Genesis 3, God curses the serpent, and part of the curse is that the serpent would slither on the ground.

• Genesis 3:14(NKJV) So the Lord God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life.

Creator God'

Isaiah 42:5(NKJV)⁵ Thus says God the Lord, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread forth the earth and that which comes from it, Who gives breath to the people on it, And spirit to those who walk on it:

Isaiah 40:12(NKJV)¹² Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, Measured heaven with a span And calculated the dust of the earth in a measure? Weighed the mountains in scales And the hills in a balance?

The Bible and Prophecies (Just the Facts)

Romans 1:1-4(NKJV)¹Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God² which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures,³ concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,⁴ and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.

Verse 2 - which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures – Paul right from the start is making it clear that this isn't some new sect, some new religion, it is all that has been prophesied from the beginning. All the way back to the first mention of the gospel, theological called the "proto-evangelicum", the first mention of the gospel; that Satan would bruise the Seed of Eve (referring to the Messiah to come), but the Messiah would crush the head (head representing authority) of Satan:

Genesis 3:15 (NKJV)¹⁵ And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

300 Prophecies – had to be Jesus / Only 1 Man could Fulfill Them / No Fairytale - Power

Paul is referring them to the 300 some prophecies concerning the Messiah that would come (as written by the Law and the Prophets). Paul is pointing them to the prophecies referring to the Messiah, and only one Man who walked this earth could have fulfilled them, and that was Jesus Christ of Nazareth. This isn't no fairytale, this is pure power, the Messiah came exactly as prophesied in the past Scriptures. The prophecies are undeniable!

His Birth & Lineage

- 1.) The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Micah 5:2a / Matthew 2:1-2
- 2.) The Messiah would be a descendant of David. Isaiah 9:7 / Matthew 1:1

His Environment & the World Setting

- 3.) The Messiah would be announced to his people 483 years, to the exact day, after the decree to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. Daniel 9:25 / John 12:12-13
- 4.) The Messiah would be killed before the destruction of the temple. Daniel 9:26c / Matthew 27:50-51
- 5.) The Jew's authority to administer capital punishment would be gone when the Messiah arrived. Genesis 49:10c / John 18:31

His Death

- 6.) The Messiah would be sacrificed on the same mountain where God tested Abraham. Genesis 22:14 / Luke 23:33
- 7.) The Messiah's back would be whipped. Isaiah 53:5c Matthew 27:26
- 8.) The Messiah's hands and feet would be pierced. Psalm 22:16c Matthew 27:38

A Coin in Texas / 10 to 17th / 262,000 sq miles – 25 million residents / 14 hrs to Drive

Speaking of just these 8 prophecies; the following probabilities (The Law of Compound Probability) are taken from Peter Stoner in Science Speaks (Moody Press, 1963) to show that coincidence is ruled out by the science of probability. Stoner says that by using the modern science of probability in reference to eight prophecies, 'we find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled all eight prophecies is 1 in 10 to the 17th.' That would be 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000. In order to help us comprehend this staggering probability, Stoner illustrates it by supposing that "we take 10 to the 17th silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas. They will cover all of the state two feet deep (that is a State that is 262,000 square miles, 130 million acres of farmland (that doesn't count the cities), and enough land to easily house all 25 million of its States residents. Two feet deep over 262,000 square miles - "Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes (it took me 14 hours at 70 mph to drive across the whole State from East to West), but he must then pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would have had of writing these eight prophecies (not even counting the other 292 Jesus fulfilled) and having them all come true in any one man."

Christian – Evolution vs Creation / Eternal God outside our Time and Dimension / Proves

Listen Christian, I tell people that I can't prove evolution is false (even though I can make some really strong points that at the end of the conversation you'll have to admit that following evolution takes a lot of faith), I can't prove to you, produce evidence, of Divine creation. But to me, the most powerfully proof/evidence that I can present of an external God entering into our time and universe, is the fulfilled prophecies of the Bible, and how amazing the yet-to-be-fulfilled prophecies are coming to together (Israel would be a Nation again, a mark/chip to do money exchange, the revived Roman Empire, the rise of Babylon, Iran and Russia forming ties, just to name a few – totally amazing). But to show people the past prophecies, prove the validity of this Book, that a God who is outside of our time dimension (Eternal) entered our world, and if we can convince them the inspiration of this Bible, then we can tell them – and this is what the Book says about eternal salvation, there is only one way, through Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself took the same approach by saying I speak things before they happen, to prove I am who I say I am – God!:

Isaiah 46:9-10 (NKJV) ⁹ Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, ¹⁰ Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'

Money Card/Chip

(Revelation 13:16 NKJV) He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads,

(Revelation 13:17 NKJV) and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

Israel a Nation Again

(Ezekiel 36:24 NKJV) "For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land.

Knowledge shall Increase:

(Daniel 12:4 NKJV) "But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase."

Creator God:

Psalms 145:10-12(NKJV) ¹⁰ All Your works shall praise You, O Lord, And Your saints shall bless You. ¹¹ They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom, And talk of Your power, ¹² To make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, And the glorious majesty of His kingdom.

Job 12:7-9(NKJV) ⁷ "But now ask the beasts, and they will teach you; And the birds of the air, and they will tell you; ⁸ Or speak to the earth, and it will teach you; And the fish of the sea will explain to you. ⁹ Who among all these does not know That the hand of the Lord has done this,

The God who Created You (Just the Facts)

Why do people buy into this

Why do people buy into this, It's a moral question, people will say I have a problem with this, if there is a God the why doesn't He show Himself, then why is their pain and suffering in the world, then why, then why. But the issue is clearly shown in the Bible

(Romans 1:20 NKJV) For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,

(Romans 1:21 NKJV) because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

(Romans 1:22 NKJV) Professing to be wise, they became fools,

(Romans 1:23 NKJV) and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man; and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

(Romans 1:24 NKJV) Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves,

(Romans 1:25 NKJV) who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

This Man will not rule over Us

To acknowledge that He does exist, that we are not a happening of random chances, would mean every man is answerable to Him. But for many, they do not want any King in their life, for they want to be on the throne of their lives, doing as they see is reasonable and allowable.

(Luke 19:14 KJV) But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.

(John 19:12 KJV) And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.

People are deceived by this "theory" of evolution, if only they knew that the greatest freedom comes when you surrender your life to him. They have the God who created the heaven and earth, who died for their sins, ready to live with them.

John 3:16-21

It all comes down to, people love their sin. John 3:19.

(John 3:16 NKJV) "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

(John 3:17 NKJV) "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

(John 3:18 NKJV) "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

(John 3:19 NKJV) "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

(John 3:20 NKJV) "For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

(John 3:21 NKJV) "But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

Not Enough Faith to believe Evolution

I met a man who said I tried to be an evolutionist, but I didn't have enough faith. It is true, it will take more faith to follow evolution, then to follow Jesus.

For Me

For me although I didn't give my life to Jesus until I was 27 years old, ever since I was a child I always believed in Creation and believed there was a God and He created all. I didn't start to struggle with Creation versus evolution until after I committed my life to Christ. After about a year of committing my life to Christ I had all these doubts, so I studied and studied evolution, looking for any truths that I could grab hold of, but what I shared with you today is what I found out then. But why did I had such doubts, why did I spend such time studying evolution? It wasn't that there was a God and He was powerful enough to create all that is seen and unseen (which still blows my mind today), my struggle was that there was a God who could love the way He said He loved.

I struggled that God would care enough about me to know my name, and not only that, take on all my wretchedness and filth of sin and pile it upon His only Son, and then pour upon Him the wrath of heaven against sin, so that He might call me "son".

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

1 John 3:1(NKJV) ¹Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

This Body isn't Fit for Heaven

He created us, the body we live in is for this planet, we need a new one before we leave this planet and go to heaven. Time to trade it in, for this earth and that is in it is going to fade away like an old garment. Man is a created eternal being:

Genesis 1:26(NKJV) ²⁶Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Ecclesiastes 3:11(NKJV) ¹¹He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.

The Beam in the Eye (1:26-32)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (Ch12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

Continue on from last Study

We continue with our flow from the last study as we seen a continual progression downward in the heart and soul of man after they willfully reject the word and prompting of God; and I should add that even believers can follow this path if they do not guard their hearts and minds and thus I commend you for setting apart this time to come and look into the things of the Lord.

Outline: The Downward Fall of a Man (1:18-25):

- Refuses Intelligent Design (1:18-20)
- Becomes willfully Ignorant (1:21-22)
- Enters into Idolatry (1:23)
- Lives in Indulgence (1:24-25)

Pointed & Direct Passage

The passage before us today is quite a pointed and very directed message about personal sin, and a person can feel a burden that the Lord is laying the lashes on the back of the sinner, that He is insensitive to us, upset and now it is judgment time – in all passages of Scripture remember the beautiful balance of the mighty God, He is strong, He is firm, but at the same time he is sensitive and loving. Jesus, the perfect balance of power and sensitivity -

A carpenter before the days of power tools and Ace Hardware, Jesus exuded such strength that when an angry mob threatened to throw Him over a cliff, it took only a look from Him to part the crowd (Luke 4:29, 30). Yet He exuded such sensitivity that children loved to be around Him (Matthew 19:13–15).

He was masculinity personified as He strode through the temple with eyes flashing and biceps bulging, turning over tables, driving out the moneychangers, and the oxen, with no one daring to stop Him. Yet He was tenderness exemplified when, in the midst of His righteous anger, He stopped to make sure the doves would suffer no harm (John 2:16).

He was the picture of strength as He pulled Peter—the one whom history calls “the Giant”—out of the Sea of Galilee with a one-armed curl (Matthew 14:31). Yet He was the picture of sensitivity in His desire to retreat with His disciples (John 18:2).

He was the essence of masculinity as He rode an donkey into Jerusalem, yet a portrait of tenderness as He wept over Jerusalem.

Keep that in Mind

May we keep that in mind as we study the passage before us; may we remember that He is a God who is ready to forgive, to move in a person lives, and is dying to hear those words – “Jesus come into my life, come and be my Lord and Savior”. We read over and over again through the Scriptures a God wanting to forgive, and every time we read this word may we be reminded that this word is an invitation to repentance first, and then only after rejection does it bring the promise

of judgment and correction. The Lord in chapter 1 is painting a picture and He is covering the canvas with the deepest and darkest black so that when He applies the bright red blood of Jesus to the canvas it will leap off the pages to His creation the message and promise of forgiveness and restoration to all those who will receive and repent.

So let's pick up our study in verse 26 of chapter 1:

God gave them up to their Vile Passions

(Rom 1:26 NKJV) For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.

(Rom 1:27 NKJV) Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

Dispel Debate – Created that Way

I want to dispel some points of debate. First of all God did not create a person to be gay, a person is gay because they choose to be. Right here in verse 26-27 it says they leave the "natural" use. Natural comes from the word nature, and it means "how originally created. So the homosexual is choosing to leave from how they were originally created. God's word leaves no room for that debate.

Natural - physikos

- 1) produced by nature, inborn
- 2) agreeable to nature
- 3) governed by (the instincts of) nature

No Need to Argue – we are Subject to His word

But I/we need not argue that point, because even if it was true that God created them with homosexual desires, man is still subject to the obedience of God's word, and His word clearly says right here and in other passages that homosexuality is a sin.

Oswald Chambers

Oswald Chambers (My Utmost for His Highest – December 1st) *The Law and the Gospel* "Whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2:10)..... The moral law does not consider our weaknesses as human beings; in fact, it does not take into account our heredity or infirmities. It simply demands that we be absolutely moral. The moral law never changes, either for the highest of society or for the weakest in the world. It is enduring and eternally the same. The moral law, ordained by God, does not make itself weak to the weak by excusing our shortcomings. It remains absolute for all time and eternity.

No need to Argue – God gives Power for Obedience

So again we need not argue that point with anyone who says I was created that way, because even if it was true that God created them with homosexual desires, man is still subject to the obedience of God's word, and His word clearly says homosexuality is a sin. Now the same power that raised Christ from the dead is available for us today (Ephesians 1:19-20); and that power can and will give us victory over each and every sin if we so choose. You see I could make the same case that the homosexual makes by saying I was born a fornicator, I proved it to be true in my life, however when I gave my life to Jesus Christ, I understood His word saying, fornication is a violation of His Holy law, and I made the decision to obey His command. Now it wasn't easy, and I had my struggles, but God gave me victory in that area. I had decided if I never knew intimacy again (meaning if I never married) then so be it, for it would be worth it to be pleasing to the Holy One who gave His only Son for me, so that I might have eternal life. My obedience was a good indicator to me (by the way) that I really had met Jesus Christ and that He took up residence within my body, for His word says, "by this we know that we know Him, and that is that we keep His commands (1 John 2:3)" For eight years I maintained my purity, and it

wasn't always easy, I had my struggles, but the Lord helped me along. As I said I had my struggles, but there was one person that I was perfect with, blameless with, and I can stand here today and say I was perfect and blameless the whole time I dated my wife, and our wedding day was exactly how the Lord said it should be. You couples who are dating, it is worth the wait, and you will be so glad when you have "that" conversation with your child, and you will be able to say, "do as I say, and as I did".

Ephesians 1:19-21(NKJV) ¹⁹and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

1 John 2:3-6(NKJV) ³Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. ⁴He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. ⁶He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

Throw the Switch / Corinthians Overcame

Now I know for the person who is engaged in the homosexual lifestyle that it isn't easy to just walk away, and I don't want to come across that I am saying "just throw the switch – turn it to off", for I think a lot of Christians are so harsh, judgmental, and insensitive to the homosexual by not trying to understand how hard it is to walk away from that lifestyle, but I want them to know it is possible, for God is more than able, and the Scriptures declared it to be so by saying that some of the believers in Corinth, which was the homosexual capital of the Roman Empire, and Paul said to the church there, "such were some of you" (see 1 Corinthians 6:9–11). They had been sanctified, justified, and changed by the reality of Jesus Christ. So the scriptures testify that people can walk away from that lifestyle.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11(NKJV) ⁹Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor ^εhomosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

No Argument for any Church / Word is Clear

There is no argument from any pastor and church that says that God is ok with homosexuality (or fornication and adultery) for the word is clear in Corinthians that the sexually immoral will not inherit the kingdom of God, and there are plenty of passages in the Old testament that concur that God has never changed His position on the matter, and God is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Leviticus 20:13 (KJV) *If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.*

Malachi 3:6(NKJV) *"For I am the Lord, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.*

Hebrews 13:8(NKJV) *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*

Small Percentage – Loud Voice / Throws off the Sensitivity to other Sins

Now here is a very important spiritual point I want you to take away with you today, and that is that the homosexual population is a minority, but their voice is coming across as a majority. In a recent study it is estimated that homosexuals make up about 3% of the world's population (and yes it is increasing as it get promoted more and more as acceptable), but I point that out as significant because what the homosexuality debate has done is thrown off the severity of other sins such as fornication and adultery (amongst believers and unbelievers). Just this week as the headlines read of Tiger Woods having an adulterous relationship, how many times did I hear or read people say, "it was only adultery, he is human by the way".

The EF Hutton Moment

One day I was sitting among a couple dozen people, none were believers, and many were living in sexual immorality. One of the people sitting in the group was gay, and one of the guys wanting to stir up some trouble said, "hey pastor, what does the bible say about homosexuality?" Well it was an EF Hutton moment, for they really thought they had me, for they knew that I agreed with

what God says about homosexuality. My answer? I said, "God says the same thing about homosexuality as he does about fornication and adultery, and that is that they will not inherit the kingdom of God. The room remained silent, until someone quickly changed the subject to the Baltimore Raven.

Today talking to Believers / Satan diminishing Severity of other Sins

Today I am talking mostly to a group of believers so I see not the point to make a long study that homosexuality is sin, not to mention an extremely dangerous lifestyle; but I want to clearly point out how masterfully Satan has used the homosexuality agenda within the church by getting the church riled up against it.....what you may say, it should be a good thing that the church is against homosexuality. It is, but what I want you to recognize today is that Satan is working masterfully again in that he is diminishing the severity of fornication and adultery, by making them seem tame in light of homosexuality (hey it's only sex outside of marriage they will say). We need not have to go very far to see that our country and world has a serious issue with the amount of people engaged in fornication (sex outside of marriage) and adultery, and sadly, these practices are much too prevalent amongst those who call themselves Christians. It is only natural many Christian's defend, but Christian listen, we aren't called to the natural, we are called to the supernatural, the things outside of this world, we are called into the spiritual realm of God:

Romans 12:1-2(NKJV) ¹I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ²And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Holy Spirit describes 22 Specific actions of Sin

I have dozens of commentaries in my library, and every commentary I had gave detailed paragraphs of verses 26-27, and then gave a sentence or two for verses 28-31. These verses need to be evaluated in our hearts on the same balance that we evaluated the words concerning homosexuality. I want you to see that the Holy Spirit doesn't get distracted by the homosexual argument; He just groups it in with the other 22 actions of unrighteousness, and He considers the gossip as guilty as the person in homosexuality, and fornication, and adultery, and lust.....

James 2:10(NKJV) ¹⁰For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

(Rom 1:28 NKJV) And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;

(Rom 1:29 NKJV) being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers,

(Rom 1:30 NKJV) backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

(Rom 1:31 NKJV) undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful;

I like what Holy Spirit is Doing – 10 Commandments

I like what the holy Spirit is doing here in that everything we have just read falls under one of the 10 Commandments, but He is just wording it differently; I like that for sometimes we need to say the same thing, but differently, so people listen, for they thing they already have heard or know it already.

Let's take a look at this list in a little more detail, but still at a very high level.

(Rom 1:29 NKJV) being filled with all unrighteousness,

sexual immorality, -covers all sex outside of marriage, heterosexual or homosexual, adultery and lust; Lust because the Greek word is "pornia", where we get our word for pornography. Jesus said if a man looks upon a woman with lust in his heart he is guilty of adultery (Matthew 5:28). So a word of warning to those looking at pornography.

wickedness, - means depraved thoughts, and it appears to mean in this context that it is relating to thoughts concerning sexual immorality.

covetousness, - greed, wanting more, never satisfied.

maliciousness; - just plain old mean-spirited; and its root word malice means to enjoy seeing bad things happen to other people.

full of envy, - never satisfied with what they have, and upset about what others do have.

murder, - To take a life, and that would include abortion as we see in the context of the Scriptures. Not to mention that Jesus said if you have hatred in your heart towards another you are guilty of murder (Matthew 5:22).

strife, - one who is always stirring up trouble and contentions, disrupting unity.

deceit, - lying and tricking others, not owning up to the truth.

evil-mindedness; - the word speaks for itself

they are whisperers, - telling the secrets about another, regardless if they are true, is sin.

(Rom 1:30 NKJV)

backbiters, - talking behind peoples back with purpose to tear down another person in the sight of another

haters of God, - the word speaks for itself, using His Name in vain, cursing Him, rebelling against Him.

violent, - this word cover both to hurt with words or fists.

proud, - means appearing above others, I'm better than you.

boasters, - even when it is true that you are something great, God calls it sin when you boast of yourself – take credit for all your glory and stealing His.

inventors of evil things – I look at this one especially when one person draws another into their sin – hey come on and try this out, it won't hurt you, it will be fun.

disobedient to parents, - disobedient means “unwilling to be persuaded” – not having ears to hear, being unmovable in thinking that they are absolutely right, and the other is absolutely wrong, and not even willing to consider what the other is saying. This is command is clearly spoken, and clearly to be obeyed. It is not becoming of age, it is sin. This command doesn't recognize age period, so even when you are 40, 50, etc you need to respect your parents.

(Rom 1:31 NKJV)

undiscerning, - foolish, not stopping to consider their actions in light of the word of the Holy God.

untrustworthy, - not letting our yes be yes, making promises then breaking them.

unloving, - also translated to mean, hard-hearted.

unforgiving, - always holding a grudge against the person who failed or hurt them, even if they asked for forgiveness.

unmerciful; - always giving people what they deserve – being the judge, the jury, and the executioner.

Those who watch are just as Guilty

Verse 32 goes on to say that those who look on with approval are just as guilty as those who are doing it

(Rom 1:32 NKJV) who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

Very Extensive List – Often Overlooked / These Actions an Offense

This list is very long, very extensive, and so often it gets overlooked because the church is focused on the homosexual piece of this passage, and misses the message that is being said in regards to these other 22, and that is that they are equally offensive before the Holy God. These actions are offensive to the Holy God whether you are saved or not saved

James 2:10(NKJV) *For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.*

The Beam in the Eye / Be Holy – for I Am Holy

We talk about the specks in other people's eyes when we have the beam in ours, but I say we should all have a beam in our eye, the beam of the cross, for every and all sin comes into clear focus there are the cross, for you will never see more clearly than there at the cross. So let's not let Satan work his ways here today, and let us take 5 minutes to pray over this list and speak to the Lord about making some corrections in our lives, watching and doing, so that we might be set-apart and Holy before Him. That we might be walking in the Christian life He desires for us, and has called us to live, to be Holy, just as He is Holy.

1 Peter 1:13-16(NKJV) ¹³*Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; ¹⁴as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; ¹⁵but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."*

Meditate on this song before entering into prayer – Source of Life

Pray this list and speak to the Lord about where you need to make changes. Repentance was a military word, it meant "about face" – everyone turn and march in the direction of the Captain. Confession means to "agree with" – yes Lord what I am doing is wrong, and I need to go the way you are directing. And, may I add - give God praise and thanksgiving for every area that you are doing well in, give Him thanks for keeping you right-on in that area, and see how mighty a work He has done in your life.

God moved the Fence

If God is the Holy One, how could He love such sinful people? *The story is told of a man in World War II gunned down by the Nazis outside of Paris. Two of his friends picked up his body after the skirmish was over and walked half a mile to a small church outside the village. They knocked on the door and asked the priest if they could bury their friend. "Was he Catholic?" the priest asked. "No, he was a Methodist," they said. "You can't bury him in our cemetery," the priest said. "But you can bury him outside the fence." So his two friends did just that. A couple of weeks later, these same two friends, marching back through the area wanted to pay their respects at the grave of their friend. They went to the church and walked along the fence but couldn't find the grave. So they knocked at the door of the church and said, "We're confused. We buried our friend a couple of weeks ago, but we can't find his grave." The priest answered, "That night, after you left, I couldn't sleep a wink. So the next day I got up and moved the fence. He's inside now."*

You are on the Inside

For all who have asked Jesus Christ to become their Lord and Savior, He has moved the fence, you are now on the inside, the fence of the Cross has now brought you into His arms. If you have never made that decision to accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, today would be the best day to do so, for you know not what tomorrow may bring. For all that have chosen to follow Him, let us live it in the fullest of obedience, and deepest of gratitude.

Chapter 2

It's the Kindness of God that leads to Repentance – (2:1-11)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (C12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Man's Judging – God's Judgment (according to man's deeds)

(Rom 2:1 NKJV) **Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.**

Therefore / No Chapter Breaks

Anytime we see a "therefore" in the scriptures we need to ask "what is it there for?", and in this case it is the referring back to the things we had studied in chapter 1. Remember this was written as a letter so there was no chapter breaks, it just kept flowing.

Outline: The Downward Fall of a Man (1:18-25):

- Refuses Intelligent Design (1:18-20)
- Becomes willfully Ignorant (1:21-22)
- Enters into Idolatry (1:23)
- Lives in Indulgence (1:24-25)

Used Chp 1 as Light – Search inner Recesses of Heart / Good go back Regularly / Theme

I think we covered this well in our last study. I think we did well in that we didn't use chapter one to point at other people's sin, but used it as a light to search the inner recesses of our own heart, and ask ourselves on how are we doing in terms of personal holiness. I think we would do well on a regular basis to go back to the study and ask ourselves, how are we doing in those areas, both in our actions and in our thoughts. What the bible focuses on, is what we would do well to focus on, and if you look at the Bible in whole, one of the central themes is "holiness" – the Holiness of God, and God's call for man to be holy.

(Rom 1:28 NKJV) *And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;*

(Rom 1:29 NKJV) *being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers,*

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1 Peter 1:13-16(NKJV) ¹³*Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; ¹⁴as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; ¹⁵but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."*

You're just as Guilty only in a Different Way / Camera Crew

So here in verse one, as the continuation of chapter 1, God says don't judge another, for you are just as guilty as they, only just in a different way. Oh the wisdom of God, writing this for their day and our day. How I need to hear this word to keep me in wisdom. If a camera crew came to the church right now and said, what is your stance and position on homosexuality, I would be ready

to quote scriptures, say that it is wrong, condemnation and judgment will come upon them and all the viewers watching who are in agreement would be saying “right-on brother, preach it!”. Now the homosexuals watching would say, “jerk” – click (turning the television). But when I say I am a sinner just the same, and God’s word is an invitation to meet with Him and fellowship with Him. That we are no less guilty than they or anyone else, we prayerfully open the door of their heart to see we genuinely care about them, that we are not here to judge, but to guide them into the arms of God.

Word Judge – with Condemnation

May we all understand this, and that is that the Greek word “krino”, translated “judge,” means to judge to condemnation. In other words, it speaks of judging with a sneer on one’s face and a finger angrily pointed at him, or her, or them. That kind of judgment is wrong because, although it might appear in a different form, the same sort of sin is going on within us whenever we judge condemnably.

We Judge for Identification / Fruit & False Prophets / Protection & Purity

Now, while we are not to make judgments in condemnation, we are to judge for identification. Jesus said, “By their fruits you’ll know them” (see Matthew 7:16), and “Beware of wolves in sheep’s clothing” (see Matthew 7:15). Although there’s a fine line between condemnation and identification, we inherently know the difference between identifying something that is wrong and self-righteously condemning someone with hostility. How do we tell the difference, judging with condemnation is when we are judge, jury, and executioner; judging for identification is when we are the jury looking at the facts in order that we might protect the people (we must do that to keep the church pure and to protect the flock – again it is a fine line, we must be careful, but we must also be wise.

Matthew 7:16-17(NKJV) ¹⁶You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? ¹⁷Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.

Matthew 7:15(NKJV) ¹⁵“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.

(Rom 2:2 NKJV) But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things.

(Rom 2:3 NKJV) And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God?

God silencing the “Good Person” / Those who Rack & Stack Sin – Compare to Others

What the Holy Spirit is doing here is silencing the self-righteous, the moralist, the person who feels good about themselves because they are comparing themselves against other people’s actions, racking and stacking sin, and feeling good about themselves based on the actions and lifestyles of others.

Guilty in Chp 1 – Guilty as Other / James 2:10

The Lord is saying if you are guilty of any one of those acts of unrighteousness listed in chapter one, I consider you just as guilty as that person you judge (whether you are saved or not). The crushing defeat comes when He adds that if you are watching it on television, or reading it on the web, I consider you are actually doing it physically – ouch!

James 2:10(NKJV) For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

(Rom 1:32 NKJV) who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

You are “Inexcusable” – no Defense – Caught in the Act

As we started in verse 1, it says you are “inexcusable”, which means “having no defense”, the evidence is against you, the witnesses have spoken and testify against you, the video tape has captured you in the act. The root of this word is “*apologçtos*” where we get our English word “apology”, which means “valid excuse”. This word used here has the prefix “ana” which means without, so the word *anapologçtos* means “without excuse”.

(Rom 2:1 NKJV) Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.

Witness to Family – have to Get them Unsaved / Measure against Standard not Others

You know what it is like to witness to a family member, a friend, who is self-righteous, a moralist, thinks they are a good person, who thinks they are religious, or even think they are a Christian because they went forward at a church calling, or singed some church membership card, so they think they are saved because of that – and it is like we need to get them unsaved so that we can get them really saved. That is what this passage of Scripture is doing in that it is showing that person who thinks they are a good person (as they measure themselves against others – chapter one actions) that they are not a good person measured against God's perfect and pure Holiness. So the Lord here is removing all the religious footing a person thinks they have.

(Rom 2:4 NKJV) Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

Take too Lightly / Patience isn't Condoning

The word *despise* means "to think little or, take lightly". The person is taking lightly:

God's *Goodness* – means to be gentle and kind

His *Forbearance* – means to tolerate

And His *Longsuffering* – being patient, waiting before acting.

Paul is saying you are taking God's patience with you way too lightly, you think because He hasn't come down upon you, that you must be a special exception to the rule, your situation is justified for some reason.

God still blast ray of Light / Arms still wide Open

But, even after we made that very pointed and convicting run all the way through chapter 2 and these three verses, God blasts a ray of light and love through this deep dark canvas He has painted to convict the sinner of his/her unrighteousness, the Lord in the second part of this verse says His arms are spread wide open for the sinner to come to for forgiveness - - - ***not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance.*** Even as much as we have offended the Holy God, His arms are still holding open saying come, I've waited your whole lifetime for this.

Word is Invitation to Repentance / He is giving time to Respond / Cheat Lake WVU

Once again we see God's word as always an invitation to repentance first before His correction or judgment comes. He is so gracious and kind, so long suffering, giving us time to respond to His call. I remember the time when I was 18 years old and me and some friends went down to Cheat Lake in West Virginia on a hot summer day. As we stood on the shoreline we said hey lets swim to the other side, which was about a half mile across, and so we swam across the lake. Well of course the only way back across would be to swim it again. About half was back across I got this terrible cramp in my side, and it got worse and worse, and as I slowed down in my swim all my buddies got ahead of me and just kept going and I was all alone. Well then the cramp got so bad I couldn't even swim anymore, and then I went under once, then I went under a second and third time, and all the energy I had was to fight to get to the surface, I couldn't even scream for help. I remember saying to myself, I can't believe I'm going to die, and die like this. I can't explain what happened next, for all I remember next was crawling out on to the shoreline. I remember going under for the third time, and then the next thing I seen was the shore. From that day to this day I pictured in my mind the Lord reaching down from heaven with His shepherd's staff, lifting from under the water and placing me on the shore. But what later would blow me away was, that that day at Cheat Lake WV, was 9 years and 1000 miles away from my salvation. Had I died that day I would have had to stand before the judgment of God and give an account for my sin, and I would have been inexcusable.

When I reflect on Patience – Tolerance – Kindness (leads me to Repentance / Military

As I look back on His patience, tolerance, and gentleness towards me, when I reflect on those things, His kindness leads me to repentance. As I look at the cross of Christ, I see ever so clearly His great love and passion for me, and I see clearly the price of sin, and His kindness leads me to repentance. Repentance was a military word, it meant “about face” – everyone turn and march in the direction of the Captain. I know His goodness, and I know He loves me, and it is His goodness that when I hear His voice (through His word), I turn to it, and follow it.

Gave me 9 more Years – 1000 miles / Remember how Patient He was with You

God is so good, He was so kind, He spared my life that day, He gave me 9 more years, and met me 1000 miles away in a little bedroom in Cocoa Beach Florida, and opened His arms and said will you come now, and I respond yes – please be my Lord and Savior. May you remember today the goodness of God on how he was ever so patient with you, was so-so tolerant of you sin and pride, and was ever so kind to wait for you to – “see clearly”.

May we remember that in Others

In this context of judging, may we recognize God’s goodness as he displays it to others around us, as He is willing to be tolerant, patient, and kind to them, as He give that person 9 more years and 1000 more miles to “figure it out, to see Him clearly”. When you do that, your heart will be filled with more grace towards them, and more heart for them as you long for them to be where you are at.

But God – say there is a Limit

But God will go on to say in the next verses, don’t take my patience, tolerance, gentleness as agreeing to what you are doing is right, and that I will excuse it, for at some point my grace and mercy comes to an end, and you will answer for your deeds.

RC Sproul

On the first day teaching his class of 250 college freshmen, R. C. Sproul carefully explained the assignment of three term papers. Each paper was due on the last day of September, October, and November. Sproul clearly stated there would be no extensions (except for medical reasons). At the end of September, some 225 students dutifully turned in their papers, while 25 remorseful students quaked in fear. "We're so sorry," they said. "We didn't make the proper adjustments from high school to college, but we promise to do better next time." He bowed to their pleas for mercy, gave them an extension, but warned them not to be late next month.

The end of October rolled around, and about 200 students turned in their papers, while 50 students showed up empty-handed. "Oh, please," they begged, "it was homecoming weekend, and we ran out of time." Sproul relented once more but warned them, "This is it. No excuses next time. You will get an F."

The end of November came, and only 100 students turned in their papers. The rest told Sproul, "We'll get it in soon." "Sorry," Sproul replied. "It's too late now. You get an F." The students howled in protest, "That's not fair!" "Okay," Sproul replied, "you want justice, do you? Here's what's just: you'll get an F for all three papers that were late. That was the rule, right?" "The students had quickly taken my mercy for granted," Sproul later reflected. "They assumed it. When justice suddenly fell, they were unprepared for it. It came as a shock, and they were outraged."

(Rom 2:5 NKJV) But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,

Remember Paul speaking to “Good Person” / Hey don’t deceive Self because go Church

Remind you Paul is speaking to those who thought they were righteous, that they were holier than thou, they were a good person for they gave to the beggar at the market, mopped the floors in the temple, read the torah daily – but Paul says you deceive yourself when you take your sin

too lightly, when you think it isn't that big of a deal because you are a "good person" as a whole, especially compared to those other people over there. Pastor Greg's daily devotion this week was on this verse, and it was right on!

Pastor Greg Laurie Devotional – December 1st, 2009

Where is the easiest place to get a hardened heart? In church. The same truth that will set one person free can cause another person to become more hardened against the things of God.

It really depends on how you listen and respond when you are in the presence of God's Word being proclaimed and God's people as they are worshiping. The same sun that softens the wax also hardens the clay. And the same truth that liberates one will cause another to say, "Well, I have heard that before. I know this. You can't tell me anything new."

Here is the problem: people with a hardened heart have never turned from darkness to light. They are just educated unbelievers. They may know more than the person who has never set foot in a church, but they are not one step closer to the kingdom of God. In fact I would venture to say they may even be a little further from the kingdom of God than the person who hasn't been to church. Why? Because when someone who has never been to church comes and hears it all for the first time, he or she might believe on the spot. But those who have heard it their whole lives and think they know it all might be so hardened and resistant that they might not believe.

They will end up like Herod Agrippa who put off a decision to believe, or the rich young ruler who said no to following Jesus, or Judas Iscariot who spent hours on end with God in human form, only to betray Him for 30 pieces of silver. No matter how much we may try, we can't live in two worlds. It is not enough to be exposed to the truth. We must act on it.

(Rom 2:6 NKJV) who "will render to each one according to his deeds":

(Rom 2:7 NKJV) eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality;

(Rom 2:8 NKJV) but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness; indignation and wrath,

(Rom 2:9 NKJV) tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek;

(Rom 2:10 NKJV) but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

(Rom 2:11 NKJV) For there is no partiality with God.

Verse 6 – Paul is quoting Psalm 62:12, and Proverbs 24:12

Salvation not by Works – Judgment Is by Works

Is Paul saying here that salvation comes by works? Of course not. But he is saying that judgment will be according to works (for those who think they are a good person). All unbelievers will one day stand before God at the Great White Throne, where what they have done will be judged. If they have done total good, giving God all glory in everything they've said, done, or thought, they'll make it to heaven. In other words, to the moralist, to the person who is super pious, Paul is saying, "If you are really good, you'll make it in. If all of your days you've glorified God with all of your heart, and have lived honorably in everything you do, say, and think, you'll inherit eternal life." But guess what. Only one Man has ever lived like that—and it was His blood that was shed for the rest of us.

Titus 3:3-7(NKJV) ³For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. ⁴But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, ⁵not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

John 6:28-29(NKJV) ²⁸Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" ²⁹Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."

If you have not Given Life to Christ / Glad to Share This / No Seeker Church – You Drawn

Oh if you are here today and you have never given your life to Jesus Christ, to ask Him to cover your offense of sin before the Holy God, I pray today you will make that step towards Him today. Give yourself the greatest Christmas gift ever. And may I say, I am glad to share this passage of scripture with you, for this is truly good news for you, the gift of new life, and eternal life. Maybe you have heard about seeker friendly churches, where they try to make everyone comfortable and happy, so they can “seek” God – let me tell you, that theory of ministry contradicts itself simply in what Romans 3 says, there are none that seek after Him; man doesn’t seek God, man is drawn by God (John 6:44) – so you see if you are hear today and hearing these things for the first time, or you’ve heard them before but this time God is pricking at your heart, it is because God is drawing you, He is calling you, and He is saying come unto Me, so come unto Him TODAY!

Romans 3:10-12(NKJV) ¹⁰As it is written: “There is none righteous, no, not one; ¹¹ There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. ¹² They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one.”

John 6:44-45(NKJV) ⁴⁴No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁴⁵It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by God.’ ⁴⁶Therefore everyone who ⁴⁷has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.

Application for Believers: No Judging – Be Patient – Celebrate His Goodness / Yoke

What is the application for those believers here today, well first may we not be the judge, jury and executioner of those who are living in habitual sin, may we extend to them the same patience, tolerance, and kindness the Lord gave us. And today may we celebrate and praise Him for His goodness. That word goodness was used in the time of this writing referring to two oxens yoked together, and the oxen of goodness was the one that carried the burden, while the other oxen just walked along. Our Jesus is the one who carries the burden of the yoke as we can just walk along enjoying His power.

Matthew 11:28-30(NKJV) ²⁸Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Seek This – Verse 7

And, although salvation is free, verse 7 (I like the KJV better) gives us a beautiful word of what we should “seek” if you would:

Seek (zeteo) – seek in order to find, to crave for (the following 4 things):

Glory (doxa) – means to shine, as we should seek His shining, and seek to shine for Him.

Honor (time) – means valuing the price paid, and the one who paid it.

Immortality (*aphtharsia*) – meaning being incorruptible, pure.

Eternal Life (*aiōnios*) – seek heaven, live life backwards, not living for today, but tomorrow in glory.

Romans 2:7(KJV) ⁷To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:

Mister are you There

I close with this story:

“Mister, Are You There?” A New York Sunday-school superintendent urged his teachers to bring new children with them the next Sunday, and as he walked down Sixth Avenue attempted himself to win a street boy. “Will you go to Sunday School?” he said, and in the vernacular of the street the boy said, “Nope.” The superintendent said: “We have picture papers for every boy,” and he would not come. “We have music, we have everything to make you have a good time,” and the boy steadily refused. Disappointed, the superintendent turned away and, when he had gone a short distance, he heard the patter of little feet behind him and, turning back he saw the boy. He said with an earnest, eager look: “Mister, are you there?” and the superintendent said, “Yes, I am there.” “Well,” he said, “next Sunday I’ll be there.” And he was. — J. Wilbur Chapman

His Kindness Leads to Repentance

It is His kindness that leads to repentance, and it is to me is all about where He is, is where I want to be, and I don't really care about the stuff, but Him, for He went out of His way looking for me, drawing me to Himself, expressing His love for me, and it is that kindness that leads me to Him.

The Law - Written on Every Man's Hearts (2:12-16)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (C12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

God removes all Excuses / Final Blow – Law on Heart / Believers – Unlocks the Power

In our past studies the Lord has removed every excuse a person brings up as to why they don't believe in God, or follows God, or wrongly believes they are believers, He has stripped every man bare, and has left them naked in their sin before the Holy God. In our passage today, we have the final and most conclusive evidence upon every man and woman, and that is that God has written his Law (the 10 Commandments) upon every person's heart, therefore He has put right and wrong into every person's heart. So if anyone thought they had any hope of an excuse for not submitting their life to God, this passage blows-up their final excuse. But, for those who are believers, who have a heart and desire to see their family, friends, neighbor, countryman, and abroad come to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior – then this passage unlocks one of the greatest and empowering truths in all the Scripture, and that is the using of the Law that God has written upon everyman's heart in the presenting and proclaiming of the gospel.

Bypasses man's Intellect – goes to their Conscience / Reveals their need for a Savior

It is through the Law written on their heart that we can bypass the intellect and go straight to their conscience. We need not have an answer to every question, from evolution, to the accuracy of the bible, to why bad things happen upon the earth (but these are all good to have a defense for as we are called to do in 1 Peter 3), but we can cut through all that, and in 3 minutes (more if they allow) we can reach right into the heart of the matter, and that is their heart condition, and that is that their sin separates them from the Holy God, and they need a solution to the problem, and that solution is the Savior Jesus Christ. Let's take a look at this great and powerful passage of Scripture:

1 Peter 3:15(NKJV) *¹⁵But sanctify ²the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;*

The Law Judges (whether heard or written in the heart)

(Rom 2:12 NKJV) *For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law*

Guilty in God's Courtroom

Not having the law, by what standard will the non-Jew be judged? Paul will go on to say that his conscience within him and creation around him will indict every man—leaving all men without a case in the courtroom of God's judgment.

Judge – Krino – to Condemnation

Remember that word for judge we read in verse 1 last week (krino), and it meant to judge with condemnation and we saw how we should not judge other to condemnation, well here it is again saying that based on the Law of God (the Mosaic law – the 10 Commandments), God will judge every person.

Law – Nomos – law decreed by State (standard for administering Justice)

Law – “nomos”, means to “to divide out, distribute,” primarily meant “that which is assigned”; this word “nomos” became the established name for “law” as decreed by a state and set up as the standard for the administration of justice. Simply put for all, the 10 Commandments are God’s standard that He uses to judge (guilty or not guilty), and administer justice (punishment or not).

(Rom 2:13 NKJV) (for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified;

Justified – deemed to be Right / Keep the Law & you are deemed Right

Justified – means “deemed to be right”. So those who keep the Law will be “deemed right” before the Lord; notice the hearing part means nothing in God’s economy. And, I might add, the keeping part must be “perfect”, 100%.

James 2:10(NKJV) ¹⁰For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

Great hazard – Think Hearing same as Doing / Always have Journal in Hand

I believe one of the great hazards for those who love to study the Scriptures, and who take seriously the privilege of plowing through God’s Word, is that we can begin to think that hearing the Word automatically implies doing the Word. It’s a very subtle, but a very real danger. In your morning devotions, during a mid-week study, in a Sunday morning service, or whenever you’re in the Word, ask the Lord to give you one thing to do—not just to journal, or to ponder, but one thing through His Word to do by His Spirit.

(Rom 2:14 NKJV) for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves,

(Rom 2:15 NKJV) who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them)

Law on Heart – why man knows Right & Wrong

“The Gentiles don’t have the Scripture, but they understand right and wrong intuitively,” said Paul. Men know right from wrong intuitively. In no culture is murder, adultery, lying ever allowed. Men innately know right from wrong and will be judged according to whether or not they live up to that knowledge.

Conscience – With Knowledge / No one can Claim Ignorance

Conscience, is the compound word con-science, science meaning “knowledge”, and con meaning “with”, so “with knowledge”. God is giving knowledge to every man and woman of what His standard is, He is writing it on their heart so they can’t say they lost the paper! No person can ever claim ignorance, that they didn’t know the Law.

Work – there is a Continual Work going On

Verse 15 - who show the work of the law written in their hearts - Work - GK2041. ἔργον ἔργον, er’-gon; from a primary (but obs.) ἔργω ἔργω (to work); toil (as an effort or occupation); by impl. an act:— deed, doing, labour, work. Work, there is a continual action going on, when I was cutting down the 40 foot tree in my yard last week I was continually moving, lifting, cutting, dragging, sweating, I was working without stop – and so too the Law is continually working, moving, cutting, lifting, and sweating to continually bear witness to whether what we are doing is right or wrong in accordance to God’s standards.

Written – Inscribed / When? – the Womb

Written – means to inscribe on something. Every written letter has a scribe, and so it is the hand of God inscribing on something (man’s heart) – His Holy Law. Just as God wrote the commandments on the stone, so that same finger writes them on our heart. Imagine the hand of God writing on your heart. When does He do that, I would think when He was forming us in our mother’s womb.

Exodus 24:12 (NKJV) Then the Lord said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them."

Psalms 139:13-15(NKJV) ¹³ For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

The Law is Continually Working on the Heart – Showing Offense/Guilt before Holy God

The law is working on the heart of man, and it is working hard to open a man's eyes for their offense, and the need for help because of the offense before the Holy God.

Psalms 19:7(NKJV) ⁷ The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple;

Romans 3:20(NKJV) ²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Galatians 3:24(NKJV) ²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Romans 7:7(NKJV) ⁷ What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet."

(Rom 2:16 NKJV) in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

Judge - Krino

Judge – there is that word "krino" again, to judge to condemnation.

Secrets – even our thought life

Secrets – ever thought we ever had, not action only.

There is a Day of Judgment

In the Day of Judgment, the heathen will be judged by the conscience he has honored or violated, and the Hebrew will be judged by the Scriptures with which he has been entrusted.

According to my Gospel

Verse 16 - according to my gospel - My gospel Paul says – I like that, I like that a lot, Paul is saying "this is my gospel" euangelion (εὐαγγέλιον, GK2098) originally denoted a reward for good tidings; later, the idea of reward dropped, and the word stood for "the good news" itself. The Eng. word "gospel," i.e. "good message," is the equivalent of euangelion (Eng., "evangel"). Paul is saying I have good news to tell you,

We all need a "my gospel" / Only 1 Gospel

Each of us needs to have a "my gospel", just as Paul did. Now there is only one gospel, and that is the gospel of Jesus Christ (as declared in the NT); but the "my gospel" for each of us is our declaring of the gospel of Jesus Christ from our very hearts.

15 Years Ago – 4 Laws/Ray Comfort / Studied-Prayed-Practiced / 5 P's

About 15 years ago I met a man who showed me "his gospel" (if you will), and his name was Ray Comfort. I took "his gospel", along with Bill Bright's gospel (Campus Crusade for Christ – 4 Spiritual Laws, aka – Roman's Road), and I studied them, I prayed over them, and I worked them into my flavor, my style, my heart, until I came up with "my gospel". I call mine the "5 P's". today I want to share my 5P's with you (the detailed study can be found on our website, just go to the Resource page, and scroll to the bottom). And, what I pray is that you will do the same as I have done (even if you already have a "my gospel") and that you will listen to it, study it, consider it, refine yours (as I continually do to mine) until you have a "my gospel". *Note: the audio file by Ray Comfort can be found on our media player – it is called "Hell's best Kept Secret".*

Key – It is in your Heart / we need Bypass Intellect to Heart / Not Obligation – but Passion

Now here is the key to anyone's gospel, and that is that it is in your heart. You see as we desire to bypass the intellect of the person we are sharing with and reach into their heart (conscience), so too should we do the same. We should present a gospel that we have memorized from someone else, but present a gospel that dwells in our heart, is a fire burning within our heart, a passion in us. The resultant will be that we will share the gospel not out of obligation in our minds, but from a true burden and passion that is in our heart.

5 P's

The 5P's

1. Personal
2. Problem
3. Penalty
4. Provision
5. Profession

Will just Overview / Pray & Interact with the Word

We will really just overview today, but what I want to do so more is to pray each of these points as we go; that we would ask God to put a passion in our hearts for the lost, and to pray specifically for people who he lays upon our heart this very day. So this will be an interactive study as we study and then pray along the way.

Personal

Let them know they are Special / Not Cross Time

Tell them what God thinks of them, and how special they are to God. Let people know right from the beginning how special they are to God and that God is not a distant impersonal God, but a God who cares deeply for them. *This is not the time to tell them about the cross, they first need to see a need for a Savior before they will look for a Savior.

(Jeremiah 29:11) For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

(Psalm 56:8) You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book?

(Matthew 10:30) "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

(Psalm 139:17-18) How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; When I awake, I am still with You.

We must have Personal Passion for Them / Only happen in Prayer Chamber

But, we must have a personal passion for them, so that when we speak, it is as if God is speaking to them. From the mouth proceeds the condition of the heart and may our hearts be burdened for them. The only place that burden can come from is through personal and intimate prayer

Vietnam War Memorial

If you ever get the opportunity to visit the Vietnam Memorial in Washington D.C., at the end of the Memorial Wall you will see a very moving bronze sculpture. The sculpture is of 3 women nurses, and a dying serviceman. One woman is holding the dying serviceman in her arms looking unto him with compassion, the second is kneeling beside her with her head down in despair, and the third is standing looking upward towards the sky in hope that the medical helicopter is coming. The artist intentions were to show three emotions of war: compassion, despair, and hope. The heart of the evangelist is much the same as this sculpture. As we watch sin destroy the lives around us, with its ultimate end in eternal damnation, our heart breaks for the lost. We do not judge their sin, but burn with compassion that they turn to the Lord. At times we are filled with despair, a feeling of hopelessness, but it is that hope of salvation that keeps us looking upward. We look up to our Heavenly Father and know that He desires for all to turn to Him. It is because of this heart that God uses us. God flows through us because we see sin as He sees it.

Prayer

Prayer - Father we pray first and foremost that you would give us a passion for the lost, that you would give us a heart for them, that you would give us eyes to see their state and their destiny. Oh Lord would you use us to do something about it, let us be vessels that you would flow through. May we not idly sit by, but be your hands and feet. Lord your goodness has led us to repentance, may it be the same for them, may we have the same patience, tolerance, and gentleness that you have for them – and not fall for that deception that it is hopeless, they are unreachable, that they would never turn towards you. Lord may they see you in us, may they feel they are in your presence, and hearing from you, and that you are calling out to them at the very moment.

Problem

However – there is a Problem

Tell them that even though God thinks these things for them, there is a problem. The problem is that God is so Holy and Pure, nothing impure can come into his presence. Our sin makes us impure, therefore we are separated from Him.

(Romans 3:23) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

(Isaiah 59:1-2) Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.

(Habakkuk 1:13) You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness.

Many people don't think they are Sinners / Use the Law to Show them

Many people do not see that they are sinners. We have to show them that they are. We can show them though the law. We don't have to nail them on fornication, adultery, drunkardness, etc. The 10 commandments are all we need, and then we also don't come across as if we are Sin Sniffing Bible Thumpers.

The 10 Commandments

- #1. "You shall have no other gods before Me... (Exodus 20:3).
- #2. "You shall not make for yourself a carved image... (Exodus 20:4-6).
- #3. "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain... (Exodus 20:7)
- #4. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy...(Exodus 20:8-11)
- #5. "Honor your father and your mother... (Exodus 20:12)
- #6. "You shall not murder. (Exodus 20:13)
- #7. "You shall not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14)
- #8. "You shall not steal. (Exodus 20:15)
- #9. "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. (Exodus 20:16)
- #10. "You shall not covet your neighbor's goods; (Exodus 20:17)

Video – Camden age 3

How easy is it to memorize the 10 Commandments, so easy a 3 can do it (please see video of my 3 year old reciting them on YouTube).

Video – Ray Comfort

I want you to see how powerful this is – watch the video of Ray Comfort using the Law to witness (wayofmaster.com).

Prayer

Prayer - Father we pray that the Law that You have written on their hearts will clearly come upon their conscience, that we may skip the intellect, and that the sword of your word will pierce their heart, that they will be convicted of their sin before You the Holy God. Lord may we not get sidetrack with useless and endless debates, but just be given the opportunity to present to them the heart of the matter – Holy God, sinful man. Lord we know the Evil One will be there to disrupt

and try to bring an end to the witness, but we pray that You will bind him even now, and allow us to present the gospel. Lord, when our nerves and anxiety start to rise, may you give us peace, boldness, and power – not for our sake, but for their sake.

Penalty

There is a Penalty / Hell

Tell them by breaking Gods law, we have just offend the Holy God, we have to pay a penalty for it. This is a key point, they have to hear that they have offended their Creator. Tell them the penalty isn't just separation from God now, but eternal separation which is hell, eternal damnation.

(Romans 6:23) For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Prayer

Prayer - Father, the penalty is at stake, eternal separation, eternal damnation, the Lake of Fire, it is real and it is near. Oh Lord, please bring that to our mind, the seriousness of what is at stake, and may we not rest in the opportunity of tomorrow, but give us the opportunity today. Lord again, may we proclaim the whole gospel, and not water it down out of the fear of man. Your Law is a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ, may we see the power of using it in our personal witness.

Provision

Recap to them – then tell the Provision / Substitution

Tell them here is the situation, God loves us and wants a personal relationship with us, but our sin separates us from Him. God does not want us to be separated from Him, and He surely does not want you to go to hell. Good news God has not left us alone in this predicament. God devised a plan that would allow Him to be merciful to us, while at the same time judging sin. Jesus Christ took our place, took our punishment.

(John 3:16) "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

(Romans 5:8) But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Prayer

Prayer - Father, truly the greatest news ever told, God providing Himself the sacrifice, but Lord we will never convey that goodness unless we are living in the glory of the cross, that we are daily celebrating the provision, the substitution, that was provided at the cross. Lord we will never speak with the tone and excitement of that victory if we ourselves are not celebrating and reflecting on the cross daily. Lord I pray over this time that we step out to meet our lost loved ones, to we pray open their hearts to see their sin, their separation, and the solution to their problem, Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, that we would first see you high and lifted up, that we will have a continual remembrance of the Lamb that was slain, for us, for our sin, for our offense before You. Lord that we wouldn't be telling them a story about something we have read, but we have lived and experience. We thank you for Jesus, we love you because of Jesus, we give you praise for Jesus, and may the pounding of our heart for Jesus, be heard by all that we share Him with, may they sense our passion for You.

Profession

They have to Respond

At this point you can tell them that God has done all this for them, but there is a response on their end.

(Romans 10:9) That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

Profession is to believe the following:

1. Recognize
2. Repent
3. Receive

Let me save you four years of seminary and foolish debates on what "Believe" means: It means to Recognize, Repent, and Receive.

1.) Recognize:

People must Recognize they are a sinner and that the only way to take their sin away is by what Jesus did on the cross. Forgiveness means "to carry away", and only Jesus can carry our sins away. Today people buy into all this self-esteem stuff, I'm ok your ok lie. They refuse to believe that they are bad. If they do wrong, then they embrace today's society lie, that they are the result of bad child rearing, or victims of a cruel world. They must recognize they are sinners, and can't try to pass the blame onto others.

(Romans 3:23) All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

(John 14:6) Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

2.) Repent:

Repent means to turn away. Why must we preach repentance? Because if we do not we will make false converts. Too many people are preaching an easy believism gospel. People will receive Jesus as fire insurance figuring they can still live any way they want but in the end go to heaven because they prayed some prayer years ago. Wrong! No repentance, No regeneration. *(2 Corinthians 7:10) For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.*

3.) Receive

Give them an opportunity to pray and ask Jesus into their heart and life.

(Romans 10:9) that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL - The Resurrection Must Be Told

Jesus took your place and my place on the cross. We know that God accepted this substitution because Jesus rose from the dead on the third day. This is the power of the gospel, for anybody can die, but only Jesus could rise from the dead. And we know that we too shall not go to hell, but go to heaven where Jesus is. God totally wipes away our sins and forgives us.

Prayer

Prayer – Father, we want to proclaim this Gospel so clearly that they will make a decision, that they will know and understand that our words spoken require them to make a decision either for or against you, that they will not leave our conversation thinking they are all right, when they aren't, and equally as bad that they have time to postpone this decision. Father we pray for the following people (list them in your mind individually) you even right now are preparing their heart, preparing us opportunity, opening doors of opportunity for us.

5 P's

The 5P's

1. Personal
2. Problem
3. Penalty
4. Provision
5. Profession

Tid-bits for our Souls; Oswald Chambers (December 15th – My Utmost for His Highest)

“Approved to God” - “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).

If you cannot express yourself well on each of your beliefs, work and study until you can. If you don't, other people may miss out on the blessings that come from knowing the truth. Strive to re-express a truth of God to yourself clearly and understandably, and God will use that same explanation when you share it with someone else. But you must be willing to go through God's winepress where the grapes are crushed. You must struggle, experiment, and rehearse your words to express God's truth clearly. Then the time will come when that very expression will become God's wine of strength to someone else. But if you are not diligent and say, "I'm not going to study and struggle to express this truth in my own words; I'll just borrow my words from someone else," then the words will be of no value to you or to others. Try to state to yourself what you believe to be the absolute truth of God, and you will be allowing God the opportunity to pass it on through you to someone else. Always make it a practice to stir your own mind thoroughly to think through what you have easily believed. Your position is not really yours until you make it yours through suffering and study. The author or speaker from whom you learn the most is not the one who teaches you something you didn't know before, but the one who helps you take a truth with which you have quietly struggled, give it expression, and speak it clearly and boldly.

Religion won't Save You Either

Romans 2:17-29

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (C12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

Atheist – Self-Right – Island/Gentile / Black Canvas

As we have studied up to this point, we have seen that nature reveals the testimony of God, the good person (as they compared themselves to others) is guilty, and God writes His Law upon every man's heart, and thus no one is with excuse, for every man is guilty, the whole world is guilty before Him. But God has a solution for guilty man, His mighty provision (Him very self) and He will reveal that in chapters three and four. Paul loves to paint picture pictures, and he is painting the beautiful brilliance of God's gift, His son Jesus Christ – but before Paul begins to paint, he stains the canvas the deepest darkest black so that the bright red crimson color of the blood of Jesus stands out, and the brilliant yellow of the resurrection! Oh we the sinner world deserving wrath, yet God offers us life with Him, that we might live in the Spirit and walk after Him.

(Rom 3:23 NKJV) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Today's Study – Jewish People (chosen – entrusted – called to point Messiah)

As we finish out chapter two in our study today we come to God speaking to the Jewish people, those who He had delivered from Egypt, those who He made a special nation, His chosen one's, those, those who He had given the Law to on Mt. Sinai, and those who He entrusted to be the base and foundation of His "if you will" religion, and ultimately those who would present the Messiah to the world.

6 Indictments of Confidence / Religion won't Save

Here we read of six aspects of self confidence that the Jews had in themselves, in their religion (Judaism). When we boil these next verses down we will quickly see that this is not just an indictment against a Jewish person individually, nor just the Jewish religion, but against all people who boast in their religion rather than their relationship with God, people who take confidence in their religion for salvation, or some religious ceremony or ritual they went through, rather than confessing they are a sinner who has offended the Holy God, that they are not alright, and that they need a Savior.

The Jews Boast in the Law – but are Blind Guides

(Rom 2:17 NKJV) Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God,

(Rom 2:18 NKJV) and know His will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law,

Not living up to Name

The first indictment was that they were not living up to their name (called a Jew). The name Jew came from be a Judaiser, which is a descendant of Judah. Judah means "praise God"; and they started out being praising God, but then began to seek the praises of men rather than God, and thus they were not living up to their name as we will see as we read through this passage. How about you here today who call yourself Christian, are you living up to your name?

Had the Law – didn't live up to it

The second indictment, they had the Law of Moses (the torah), they were instructed personally by God, they were specifically entrusted with the word, but tragically the Jews reached a point where they thought having the Bible "if you will" was the same as reading and doing the bible. They thought having the Law was the same as keeping the Law. How about you here today, are you living what you are reading?

James 1:22-25(NKJV)

²²But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

²³For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror;

²⁴for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.

²⁵But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

(Rom 2:19 NKJV) and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness,

(Rom 2:20 NKJV) an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the law.

(Rom 2:21 NKJV) You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal?

(Rom 2:22 NKJV) You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?

(Rom 2:23 NKJV) You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law?

External Law – Internal Law

The third indictment, they thought because they might have been keeping the Law externally they were pure, but Paul has pointed out that God even judges the secrets of a man's heart. How about you here today, does your thought life align with the word of God?

(Rom 2:16 NKJV) *in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.*

Robbing

Verses 21 – stealing: Again, the secrets of a man's heart, God knows them. "When did we steal?" the Jews asked God in Malachi. "In not giving the tithe you've robbed Me," He answered (see Malachi 3:8). Tithing isn't God's way of raising money, but raising His kids, His way of breaking them away from selfish, greed, and above – trusting in their bank account rather than trusting in their God.

Malachi 3:8(NKJV) *"Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings.*

Lust

Verse 22 – Lusting: As Jesus taught on the Sermon on the Mount, if you lust in your heart you are guilty of adultery.

Matthew 5:27-29(NKJV) *²⁷"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' ²⁸But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.*

Idols

Verse 22 – idols: God saw into their secret thought life, and secret life (as we saw when God told the prophet Ezekiel to dig a hole into a cave that God said was an example of the thought life of the religious leaders, and he saw idols:

Ezekiel 8:8-12(NKJV) *⁸Then He said to me, "Son of man, dig into the wall"; and when I dug into the wall, there was a door. ⁹And He said to me, "Go in, and see the wicked abominations which they are doing there." ¹⁰So I went in and saw, and there—every sort of creeping thing, abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed all around on the walls. ¹¹And there stood before them seventy men of the elders of the house of Israel, and in their midst stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan. Each man had a censer in his hand, and a thick cloud of incense went up. ¹²Then He said to me, "Son of man, have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the room of his idols? For they say, 'The Lord does not see us, the Lord has forsaken the land.'"*

Teaching – not Living It

The fourth indictment they thought because they were teachers of others (even though they weren't living it out personally and practically) they were ok with the Lord. I've personally met hundred's of people who know the Scriptures much better than I do, but they were lost as can be. How many times we see in the news a man or woman of God who were totally living a hypocritical life, but they thought because God was using them, they had the title and respect of people that they were alright with the Lord. How about you here today, are you serving in a ministry, have people giving you a title and respect, but deep down you have secrets you pray no one ever finds out about?

Note

Note: for you who are saved - I say it often, and I'll say it again, it is good to be teaching "publically", because teaching publically will keep you in-check. Many times I'll say to myself I can't watch this, see that, listen to them, for that stuff will totally quench the Spirit, and I have to stand before people in a day or so and "try" represent God.

Circumcision is of the Heart – not the Law

(Rom 2:23 NKJV) You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law?

(Rom 2:24 NKJV) For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," as it is written.

Cross-reference

Paul here is quoting (Isaiah 52:5, Ezekiel 36:22)

Causing people to Blaspheme God

The fifth indictment – their life was causing the on-lookers to blaspheme God.

Most Dreadful place to Be

Ahh, possibly the most dreadful thing I fear in my life, and that is to not reflect the glory of my Lord as He is. That the unbeliever would look at me and say if that is Christianity, then no thank you, I don't want anything to do with it.

2 Corinthians 3:1-3(NKJV) ¹Do we begin again to commend ourselves? Or do we need, as some others, epistles of commendation to you or letters of commendation from you? ²You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; ³clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

Humility goes a long Way

Let me say this to all of, especially for those who are married to unbelievers for I know how hard that is, you need not walk around continually on eggshells fearing your next failing, nor beat yourself up when you do, but know this – and that is that a little humility goes a long way. Three of the hardest words to utter together in the human language is "I was wrong". But when you can say that to your partner, that unbeliever, it goes a long way for they see how different we really are. The world continually justifies their wrongs, blames shifts, denies, refuses to acknowledge; but how moving it is when someone actually says, "I was wrong", "I am sorry", "please forgive me",

(Rom 2:25 NKJV) For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.

(Rom 2:26 NKJV) Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision?

(Rom 2:27 NKJV) And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills the law, judge you who, even with your written code and circumcision, are a transgressor of the law?

Thought ritual secured Salvation

The sixth indictment was that they thought a ritual (in this case circumcision) could save them. The Talmud declared that if you were circumcised you were sealed for life, guaranteed salvation; regardless of what you did outwardly.

John McArthur - One rabbi has said that no circumcised man will see hell. That's Rabbi Manachem(?) in his commentary on The Book of Moses. In the Jalkute(?) Ruebem(?) it is taught, "Circumcision saves from hell." In the Midrash it is said, "God swore to Abraham that no one who was circumcised should be sent to hell." In the book Akadath(?) Jezbac(?), it says, "Abraham sets before the gate of hell and does not allow any circumcised Israelite to enter there."

People and Baptism – then live no Regard

So too it is today with many people and baptism, confirmation, people think those ceremonies are a saving ceremony, and since they were baptized or whatever it was they are sealed. They then live with no regard to the ways of the Lord, but cling to that ceremony. Whether it be circumcision or baptism, the issue is the matter of the heart, what is in the person's heart.

Deuteronomy 10:16(NKJV) ¹⁶Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer.

Circumcision: Identification & Illustration

Circumcision was (1) an identification of God's covenant people, an outward sign of what was to be an inward reality; and (2) an illustration of God's dealing with the flesh. In the Old Testament, God defined how the illustration of circumcision was intended to work.

- Exodus 6:12 speaks of the circumcision of the lips.
- Jeremiah 6:10 speaks of the circumcision of the ears.
- Ezekiel 44 speaks of the circumcision of the heart.

Exodus 6:12(NKJV) ¹²And Moses spoke before the Lord, saying, "The children of Israel have not heeded me. How then shall Pharaoh heed me, for I am of uncircumcised lips?"

Jeremiah 6:10(NKJV) ¹⁰ To whom shall I speak and give warning, That they may hear? Indeed their ear is uncircumcised, And they cannot give heed. Behold, the word of the Lord is a reproach to them; They have no delight in it.

Ezekiel 44:9(NKJV) ⁹Thus says the Lord GOD: "No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart or uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter My sanctuary, including any foreigner who is among the children of Israel.

Speak Tenderness / Hear Sensitivity / Feel with Compassion / They missed It

God's people were to speak with tenderness, hear with sensitivity, feel with compassion. Circumcision was meant to be a picture externally of the transformation that takes place internally. Yet although the Jews were outwardly circumcised, they were far from where they should have been internally.

Before Promised Land – Cut the Flesh away – Before Victory in Spirit / They missed It

As the Israelites were about to enter the Promised Land, the Lord said, "Before you can take on Jericho in victory, before you can enter the Promised Land and enjoy the milk and honey, you must circumcise all those who came out of Egypt" (see Joshua 5). They needed to do away with the flesh before they could have victory in the Spirit. But this principle became lost in the community of the super-religious, for although they boasted of their circumcision physically, their hearts, lips, and ears were hardened to the Lord in reality.

Warning against Outward Sign / Baptism – Confirmation - Communion

I point this out to you because Paul is making a very important point concerning outward signs and religion. "I've been baptized," people say. "I've gone through Confirmation. I've had Communion." And many people think that, because they've gone through a baptismal ceremony, been christened as an infant, or come to the Lord's table, they will be especially blessed. Not so, outward expression means nothing if not accompanied by inward experience, the inward change of the heart.

(Rom 2:28 NKJV) For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh;

(Rom 2:29 NKJV) but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.

Jew – Praise / Man's receives Praise from God when Circumcised of the Heart

A derivative of the word "Judah," the word "Jew" means "Praise." Who is the true circumcision, the true Jew, the one worthy of praise in the sight of God? Not those who legalistically and self-righteously try to deal with the flesh—but rather those who, in joy and amazement, worship God in the Spirit. The true Jew rejoices in Christ Jesus, has no confidence in his own flesh, and simply says, "Lord, I know that apart from You I can do nothing."

Chp 1-3 Indictment against Atheist – Self-Right – Island – Religious / Canvas / My Desire

From chapter one, through chapter two, and we will continue into chapter three, the indictment has been made against the atheist, the self-righteous, the person on the remote island, and the religious. The canvas has been painted black by the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit will start to add the brilliance of the red blood of Christ, the blue of heaven, and the golden yellow of the throne of God. But I don't want to wait to see Jesus, it is my desire in every study to see Jesus now. There will be a day when every eye will see, in Zechariah speaking of the Jewish people (applying to all people also) they will see the One whom they have pierced; unfortunately it will be too late for them, but not us in this room, for we do see Him – the one whom we have pierced because of our sin and iniquity:

Zechariah 12:10(NKJV) ¹⁰*And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.*

John 19 – the Piercing

John knew about the piercing of Jesus and is the only Gospel writer to describe this event...

John 19:30-34(NKJV) ³⁰*So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit. ³¹Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. ³²Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. ³³But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. ³⁴But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.*

Why was Jesus pierced as He hung on the Cross of Calvary? Following are six reasons which I believe are significant for you and me...

1st – Fulfill Prophecy / to be Pierced

First, Jesus was pierced to fulfill prophecy. When a man was hung on a cross, the nails through his wrists would cause such excruciating pain that the pectoral muscles would be paralyzed and breathing would stop. The only way he could stay alive was to stand upon the nail in his feet, thereby forcing air into his lungs before relieving the weight on his feet, only to repeat the process for each breath. When the Romans wanted to kill a man, they would break the legs, thus ending the victim's life through suffocation. But when they came to break the legs of Jesus, He was already dead. So, to ensure His death, a soldier thrust a spear into His side—exactly as prophesied five hundred years earlier by Zechariah.

Zechariah 12:10(NKJV) ¹⁰*And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.*

2nd – Typology / Passover Lamb

Not only was this a fulfillment of prophecy, but it was in keeping with typology. Concerning the Passover lamb—a picture of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ—Exodus 12 and Numbers 6 forbade the breaking of its bones.

Exodus 12:46(NKJV) ⁴⁶*In one house it shall be eaten; you shall not carry any of the flesh outside the house, nor shall you break one of its bones.*

Ever Consider – not Broken

I just wanted to throw this out there for you, just some thoughts as I meditated on this point of no broken bones. I find it so amazing that God would say no broken bones because do you know, it is the bone marrow that produces the blood stem cell – meaning it is the bone marrow that produces the new blood cells in the body. The bone protects the bone marrow, which produces the new blood cells. No new blood cells, no life! As you may know, leukemia is cancer of the blood. The way they combat leukemia is to do bone marrow transplant, as the bone marrow produces new and healthy blood which gives and brings life to the body that was dying of cancer. There are three general categories of the blood cell (red blood cells, white blood cells, and platelets). Red blood cells carry the oxygen through the body, white blood cells are the core of the immune system, and the platelets are the core of coagulation, which is essential for the healing of wounds. Oh what a beautiful picture of the work of the blood of Jesus against the cancer of sin in our life, as His blood gives us life (oxygen), and eternal life at that; His blood is the immunity system against the ravishes of sin that would destroy us; and His blood brings healing of the hurts and the wounds we experience. Oh how precious is the blood, and no bone could be broken, for the bone protects the bone marrow, that produces new blood cell. By the way, a transplant recipient can only happen if the donor and recipient are compatible – have you made yourself compatible with Jesus today, have you laid your life down and said, come in to my life it is not religion, but a personal relationship with You?

3rd – Revealed His Heart – a Broken heart

Third, the piercing of Jesus' side revealed His heart emotionally. That is, the blood and water that poured forth were indicative of coronary thrombosis—a broken heart. Being spat at, mocked, cursed, and yet dying for the very people who were doing this, Jesus' own heart was breaking—not for Himself but for those who would find themselves in hell for their refusal to accept the work He was accomplishing on their behalf at that very moment.

4th – Sacraments – Communion (Blood) / Baptism (Water)

Fourth, the piercing of Jesus' side shows us the sacraments' priority. The water that flowed speaks of baptism; the blood, of Communion. Communion, remembering the sacrifice that was paid, and baptism – the statement to the world that the old man and his nature is dead, and a new man has risen. The death, the burial, and the resurrection!

5th – Great Mystery (Birthing the Bride) / First Adam – Last Adam

Fifth, the piercing of Jesus' side shows us a great mystery. Blood and water are the elements of birth. As Jesus hung on the Cross, the church was born. Just as Adam's bride was formed from Adam's side (Genesis 2:21, 22), when the spear entered the side of the last Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45), the bride of Christ was born.

6th – Salvation in Totality / Regeneration & Sanctification

Finally, the piercing of Jesus' side speaks of our salvation in totality. Salvation has two aspects: regeneration and sanctification. The penalty of sin has been removed through the blood of Jesus Christ. But the power of sin that hounds us daily is overcome by the power of the Spirit, pictured as water throughout the Word.

1 John 5:4-6(NKJV) ⁴For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—⁵our faith. ⁶Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? ⁶This is He who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth

Blood Cleanses – Water Empowers Us

The blood cleanses us from the penalty of sin. And the water, a type of the Spirit, gives us power over sin. Both are necessary. And both are freely available because of the piercing proof of Jesus' love on the Cross.

500yrs after Zechariah Prophecy / Feast of Tabernacle

Five hundred years after Zechariah's prophecy was given, Jesus Himself went to the Feast of Tabernacles. In John 7, we read that on the eighth day, the great day of the feast, something

interesting happened. You see, every day of the feast, the priests would take pitchers to the pool of Siloam outside of the city and fill them with water. Then they would reenter the city and empty the pitchers as an illustration of God's provision of water for them during their wilderness wandering. But on the final day of the Feast, although the priests would proceed to the pool of Siloam, or literally, "Sent One," they would come back with empty pitchers, signifying that they were still waiting for Messiah, the "Sent One" to come. As the priests returned with their empty pitchers, this Scripture would be read:

Isaiah 44:3(NKJV) ³ *For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring;*

Priest ask for Silence

Then the priest would ask for silence as the people prayed for Messiah to come. But on the eighth day of this particular feast, a Man's voice could be heard, crying out from the crowd of perhaps one million, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. And out of his innermost being shall gush forth torrents of living water" (see John 7:37, 38).

John 7:37-38(NKJV) ³⁷*On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."*

What a Picture

Oh the picture, Jesus had to be pierced, and out from His innermost being flowed blood and water, so that we might be cleansed and filled with His Spirit so that we too will have torrents of living water flowing from us. To God be the glory.

Chapter 3

Let God be True & Every Man a Liar

(Romans 3:1-26)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (C12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Eternal – Cause Effect – Intelligent - Outside

Dr Mark Eastman (one of my teachers at Bible College) was speaking at one of the universities on the subject (Origin of Man), and he was confronted by two professors who were not in agreement with his God-center presentation. So he said to them, well for argument sake, let's just say there is a creator, and from your scientific perspective, what would a Creator have to be, what would his minimum attribute have to be based on everything we see and know today. They said well the creator would have to be outside of our time domain because space, time, and energy would need a beginning. Dr Eastman said ok attribute number one, the creator must be eternal, which incidentally is just what the Bible says God is. What else, and they said well the law of cause and effect would mean that the being who created all that we see would have to be greater than what we see in order to create it, thus the creator would have to be all-powerful. Dr Eastman said ok attribute number two, the creator must be omnipotent, which incidentally is just what the Bible says God is. What else, and they said well all the scientist in the world say that to create the DNA molecule (the building blocks of life), you would need incredible, infinite intelligence. Dr Eastman said ok attribute number three, the creator must be all-knowing, which incidentally is just what the Bible says God is. What else, the creator would have to be outside our dimension, but able to step into and out of our dimension, not limited by the laws of science, but kind of like a fish aquarium filled with fish, but the human is able to put their hand into the aquarium, so they are part of the aquarium but they are not in the aquarium. Dr Eastman said ok attribute number four, the creator must be all-present, which incidentally is just what the Bible says God is.

Bible reveals these Things – so does Creation / Reveals His Character / What Advantage

The Bible reveals God's power, His intelligences, His eternal being.....but so does creation; what set's the Bible apart and above is that it also reveals God's character and nature. The Bible reveals to us that God is love, He is compassionate, He is merciful, He is righteous, He is holy, and the list goes on and on. This word of God, this "logos", is a gift from God to you today. In verse 1 the Jews asked, what is the advantage of being a Jew if being a Jew isn't a guarantee of being saved, and Paul will say much in every way, for you have been entrusted with the word of God, and before the chapter is over, as he brings chapters 1-3 all together and to a great climax, and it is this word of God that reveals His nature to us. That nature is holiness, and man must respond accordingly.

The Jews blessed because Entrusted with the Word of God

(Rom 3:1 NKJV) **What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision?**

(Rom 3:2 NKJV) **Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.**

Logos

Verse 2 – the oracles of God – the “logos”, the word of God.

Scribes Meticulous / One Error – Burn Scroll / Letter by Letter / Dbl Checked

The Jewish Scribes were meticulous in the care and reproduction of the word of God, and we should be greatly thankful to them for that. They would copy letter by letter, not word by word. If they made one error on the scroll, they would throw the whole scroll away. The scroll of Isaiah that was found (Dead Sea scrolls) was over 25 feet long. They would have another scribe check their work when they were done, and if just one error was found, they would burn it (they didn't send it the goodwill store to be sold at a discounted price).

Dead Sea Scroll 1947 - <1% / 900AD vs 200 BC

When they found the Dead Sea scrolls in 1947, they found the accuracy was within 1% of all other existing hand written manuscripts, no other ancient manuscript can even come close to this in accuracy. This is amazing because before the finding of the Dead Sea scrolls, the oldest “complete” Hebrew manuscript was dated about 900 AD, but the Dead Sea Isaiah scroll was dated about 200 BC, yet the accuracy between the two were less than a 1% difference.

The Reverence of His Name

So revered is His name that Jews refused to even pronounce His name. They removed the vowels from His name so man wouldn't try to pronounce His name in the possibility they would pronounce it incorrectly. They would then spell it as YHVH (known as the tetragrammaton). When the teachers would come to the name of God in the writings they wouldn't even pronounce it in fear of pronouncing it incorrectly, instead they would just say “the Name” When the Scribes came to His name when they were copying the manuscripts, so Holy did they consider His name that they would first take a bath, change clothes, get a fresh pen, and write out His Name. Imagine doing that in some verses where His name is mentioned three or four times, or some chapter where it is mention a dozen times His name was revered. Just think how long it would take to write Genesis chapter 1. These Scribes were meticulous in their transcribing.

This Word – Comes with Revelation / Knowledge by study & exp / His nature – by Reveal

This word came (and comes) with the revelation of God. We have a couple ways of gaining knowledge; some of it is learnt knowledge as we read and study things, and another is experiential knowledge, which we gain by life's experience (I took drivers education and studied how to drive in the snow, but my actual experience of driving in the snow was my greatest teacher), and then there is some knowledge that comes only by revelation – things that we could never know unless God revealed them to us personally. You see I can see the power of God by looking at nature, His creation. I can see the intelligence and genius of God by looking at the laws of the universe. I can see His complex order by looking at the universe He holds together. But for me to understand and see His character and nature (of love, mercy, grace, and kindness) I could never know that unless He reveals it to me. Nature cannot reveal His character, only a revelation from Him can do that, and He does that through His word as His Spirit moves and is couple with His word.

None of these Diseases

Verse 1 - what is the profit of circumcision? The Jew asked, and Paul responded “much in every way”. The Jews thought circumcision could save (Chapter 2), and then to hear that it couldn't they say what good was all the pain. Circumcision was more than the spiritual illustration of being set-apart, an illustration of cutting away the flesh and living in the spirit, it had health reason also. In 1949 gynecologists at the Mayo Clinic noted that in 568 consecutive cases of cervical cancer, not a single Jewess was among the victims. Seven per cent of the admissions at Mayo Clinic are Jewish, and one would expect seven per cent of 568, or forty Jewesses, to have had uterine cancer. Instead, there was not a single case. Why are Jewish women comparatively free of cervical cancer? Medical researchers now agree that this spectacular freedom results from the practice of circumcision in Jewish men – which God ordered Abraham to institute four thousand years ago. The uncircumcised male carries many virulent bacteria, including the cancer-

producing Smegma bacillus, which can grow profusely. During sexual intercourse these bacteria are deposited on the cervix of the uterus, but if the mucous membrane of the cervix is intact, little harm results. However, if lacerations exist, as they frequently do after childbirth, these bacteria can cause considerable irritation. Since any part of the body which is subjected to irritation is susceptible to cancer. So, there you have it, circumcision had tremendous blessings to the Jewish people, apart from the religious illustration it was intended to be (as we studied last study).

God's Judgment Defended (it is Just)

Paul's Response to Objections

In verses 3-8, Paul is going to be a wise-guy in a sense and respond to some of the ridiculous statements he has heard in response to the Gospel. People make all kinds of challenges to the gospel, the word of God, trying to justify their actions and lifestyles, and so too was it in Paul's day so he shoots down three of the most common objections to the statements Paul has just made.

(Rom 3:3 NKJV) For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect?

(Rom 3:4 NKJV) Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: "That You may be justified in Your words, And may overcome when You are judged."

Cross-Reference: Psalm 51:4 –

David admits that God was "justified" when he judged David for his sin with Bathsheba.

Psalms 51:4(NKJV) ⁴ Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight— That You may be found just ²when You speak, And blameless when You judge.

Modern Interpretation – If God is love – why people go to Hell / God not Able

People would say even if God gave this word, some people wouldn't believe, and that would make God's faithfulness useless anyways. A modern interpretation of this verse would be people saying, "If God is so loving, then why will some people go to hell; does God's free offer then fall short, is it lacking?" Paul says certainly not, God has kept up His end of the offer (faithfully), but He gives man his choice to receive the offer or reject it, and when man rejects His offer, God was still faithful because he offered it to that person, even knowing they were going to throw it back in His face and reject Him, and say I'm fine on my own, I'm not a bad person, I don't need God's help.

(Rom 3:5 NKJV) But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unjust who inflicts wrath? (I speak as a man.)

(Rom 3:6 NKJV) Certainly not! For then how will God judge the world?

Modern – My sin Proves He is Right – how can He Punish Me

Modern translation, it is the same as saying, well God knew I was going to sin, He made me that way, so why should He punish me for it; if anything I am only proving His word is true. Paul will speak about this again in chapter 6.

Romans 6:1-2(NKJV) ¹What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ²Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

Same Thought v7-8

Verse 7-8 are along the same thought.....

(Rom 3:7 NKJV) For if the truth of God has increased through my lie to His glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner?

(Rom 3:8 NKJV) And why not say, "Let us do evil that good may come"?; as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their condemnation is just.

Born sinners – thus we Sin / God knows – accepts me as Such

Their argument is that they were born sinners, and thus why they sin. We see that mindset all around us today, and sadly too often amongst those professing to be believers. They say, yes I know that I am sinning, I shouldn't be engaged in that activity, or speak the way that I do, or am prone to tip a few too many beers now and then, but it is ok for that is how I am, and God accepts me just as I am. Me following God (they say) is proof of how loving and gracious He is.

Paul wipes Atheist – Self Right – Island – Last (if wrong – God Love – I'll be Ok)

So Paul has wiped out the atheist, the self-righteous, the man who says he never heard the gospel, the religious person, and he finishes off in these last couple of verses with the person who may think well if I'm wrong about everything I think of God, it will be ok in the end because He is a God of love and His love will allow me to be wrong, and also the person who thinks sin as you want, God accepts me as I am.

Paul now sums up all Chp 1-3 / All man is under Sin

Paul sums it all up, chapters 1, 2 and to this point – all man is under sin (verse 9)!

All have Sinned – All are Guilty before the Holy God

(Rom 3:9 NKJV) What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin.

Now will List Indictments / Use OT Scriptures – Jews should Known / Not new religion

The Holy Spirit (through Paul) will list the indictments against every man on this earth in verses 10-18, and just for good measure the Lord will quote OT scriptures to let the Jew and everyone else know that you should have known, because I (God) told you so, and to make it clear that Jesus Christ didn't start a new religion, but fulfilled the original.

Character – then Conduct

First the indictment is against our character (10-12), and then secondly against our conduct (13-18), because conduct proves a man's character.

(Rom 3:10 NKJV) As it is written: *"There is none righteous, no, not one;*

Cross-Reference (3:10-12): Psalm 14:1-3, Psalm 53:1-3, Ecclesiastes 7:20

No One stands Right Before Him / Every man a Liar

Righteousness, "right-standing"; there is none that have "right-standing" before God, because their sin disqualifies them. Man can say what he wants that he is alright before the Lord because he is this or has done that, but let God be true and every man a liar.

(Rom 3:4 NKJV) Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: *"That You may be justified in Your words, And may overcome when You are judged."*

(Rom 3:11 NKJV) *There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God.*

Sin Clouds Understand – No man Understands His Holiness / Every man a Liar

Verse 11 - *There is none who understands;* - because sin clouds our understanding, no one can understand the ways of the Lord, His standard of perfection, because sin clouds their understanding. Man can say what he wants, but let God be true and every man a liar.

(Rom 3:4 NKJV) Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: *"That You may be justified in Your words, And may overcome when You are judged."*

No man Seeks / Only by God's Drawing / Every man a Liar

Verse 11 – *There is none who seeks after God* – No man seeks God, man's sin keeps man seeking his own satisfaction, not seeking to satisfy God. Only by the drawing of God will man come to God (John 6:44). Forget the seek-services that churches offer, for no one seeks the Lord, it is God drawing them, so you might as well just cut to the chase and give them what they

need to hear to have a relationship with the Lord. People can say or think they are seeking the Lord, but none do. Man can say what he wants, but let God be true and every man a liar.

(Rom 3:4 NKJV) Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: "That You may be justified in Your words, And may overcome when You are judged."

John 6:44(NKJV) ⁴⁴No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

(Rom 3:12 NKJV) *They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one.*

No One is Good – no matter how Good they think they Are / Every man a Liar

There is none that does good, no one qualifies as a good person, because once a person is weighed in the balance and light of God's holy standard, no man can stand. Man can say what he wants, but let God be true and every man a liar.

(Rom 3:4 NKJV) Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: "That You may be justified in Your words, And may overcome when You are judged."

Now Conduct

Now he talks about our conduct (13-18)

(Rom 3:13 NKJV) *"Their throat is an open tomb; With their tongues they have practiced deceit"; "The poison of asps is under their lips";*

Cross-Reference (3:13): Psalm 5:9, Psalm 140:3

(Rom 3:14 NKJV) *"Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness."*

Cross-Reference (3:10-14): Psalm 10:7

From Throat – tongue – to Lips / James 1

He goes from the throat, to the tongue, to the lips. Jesus said from the mouth precedes the condition of the heart – meaning our mouth reveals who we truly are. Our brother James reminds of the power of tongue, and gives a good commentary on this point:

Matthew 15:18-19(NKJV) ¹⁸But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man.

¹⁹For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

James 1:26(NKJV) ²⁶If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless.

Every man a Liar

Man can say what he wants, but let God be true and every man a liar.

(Rom 3:4 NKJV) Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: "That You may be justified in Your words, And may overcome when You are judged."

(Rom 3:15 NKJV) *"Their feet are swift to shed blood;*

(Rom 3:16 NKJV) *Destruction and misery are in their ways;*

(Rom 3:17 NKJV) *And the way of peace they have not known."*

Cross-Reference (3:10-15-17): Isaiah 59:7-8

From Killing words to Swords / 3500 – 260 without war

From killing with words, to killing with swords. In the last 3500 years, only 260 years have seen no war (and there has not been a day of peace on this earth currently since 1945). Jesus pointing out that the Law is spiritual elevated this by saying if you have hatred in your heart you are a murderer:

Matthew 5:21-22(NKJV) ²¹"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, [£] and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' ²²But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother [£]without a cause shall be in

danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire.

Every man a Liar

Man can say what he wants, but let God be true and every man a liar.

(Rom 3:4 NKJV) *Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: "That You may be justified in Your words, And may overcome when You are judged."*

(Rom 3:18 NKJV) *"There is no fear of God before their eyes."*

Cross-Reference (3:10-15-17): Psalm 36:1

The Cause of it All – No Reverence

The cause of it all, there is no reverence of God. Paul summarizes all of chapters 1-3 into one sentence, and brings to the heart of man's indictment, man does not fear God, man does not give God the reverence and respect due Him, because man is choosing to be on the throne of his life rather than bowing his knee to God.

Every man a Liar

Man can say what he wants, but let God be true and every man a liar.

(Rom 3:4 NKJV) *Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: "That You may be justified in Your words, And may overcome when You are judged."*

The Law brings Knowledge of Sin

(Rom 3:19 NKJV) Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

(Rom 3:20 NKJV) Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

The Law is Continually Working on the Heart – Showing Offense/Guilt before Holy God

This word (logos) of God comes with revelation. The law is working on the heart of man, and it is working hard to open a man's eyes for their offense, and the need for help because of the offense before the Holy God. The Law leaves every man guilty before the Holy God. The Law doesn't help us, it just leaves us helpless. It doesn't justify us, it just leaves us guilty before the standard of the Holy God.

Romans 2:14-15(NKJV) ¹⁴for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, ¹⁵who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them)

Psalms 19:7(NKJV) ⁷ The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple;

Galatians 3:24(NKJV) ²⁴Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

God's Righteousness through Faith in Jesus Christ

(Rom 3:21 NKJV) But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

(Rom 3:22 NKJV) even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;

(Rom 3:23 NKJV) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Recap Chp 1-3 / All fall short / 10 Commands the Standard

Paul recaps all of chapters 1-3 into one sentence, "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God". The glory? His standard of perfection as called out and required in the Law, the 10 Commandments before the Perfect and Pure Holy God.

Verb Tense – Continually falling short / Athletic Term – Not cross finish Line

Verse 23 – all have sinned - the verb tense says that all have sinned and are continually fallen short of the glory of God. The word used for fall (in the original Greek) was an athletic term and it meant to not finish, not complete the race, to not cross the finish line.

Prophets witnessed we needed Help

Verse 21 – being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets - The prophets testify that the law could not save, but that the Lamb would have to be slain. The Law doesn't help us, it just leaves us helpless. It doesn't justify us, it just leaves us guilty before the standard of the Holy God.

*Isaiah 53:5-6(NKJV)*⁵ *But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.*⁶ *All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*

*Zechariah 12:10(NKJV)*¹⁰ *And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.*

Paul tells how God can be Light & Love at Same Time

Paul will now go on to tell how God can be gracious and merciful to us, yet still uphold the holy standards of the Law, which require judgment upon all who break that Law. Justification solves a divine dilemma. In 1 John 4:8, John declares that God is love. But 1 John 1:5 tells us He is also light. Therefore, although God loves us deeply, He also sees our rebellion clearly. And if He said, "I love them so much I'm going to overlook their sin," He would no longer be light.

*1 John 4:8(NKJV)*⁸ *He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.*

*1 John 1:5(NKJV)*⁵ *This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.*

3 words

He will use three key words, justification, redemption, and propitiation to describe how God does this, and thus he will leave no doubt of how holy God is, and at the same degree, how loving God is. These three words sum up every society, for every society has a set of laws man is to abide by; every society has some sort of commerce (economic) system; and every society has a religious system (and for Paul he is speaking directly to the Jewish people):

- Justification – was a legal term in Paul's day
- Redemption – was a term used in commerce
- Propitiation. – was a term used in the religious system

(Rom 3:24 NKJV) being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

Justification – legal term / Aorist Tense – Continually happening

Justification – Justification is a legal term that speaks of much more than forgiveness or pardon. Justification means being declared righteous—as though we never sinned at all. So, Just-as-if-I-never-sinned, justified! Justification is by grace exclusively. What is grace? It is unmerited, undeserved, unearned favor. The riches of God climax in justification. And if that isn't enough, the phrase "being justified" is in the aorist tense, which means it is an action that happens continually. Justification didn't only take place the day we were saved or baptized, for even this very moment we are being justified and declared righteous. So often we feel that, because of our sin, we've forfeited the access and the freedom we once had with God. Not true. Justification is a continual action, a continual declaration of righteousness.

Freely – without Cause

Verse 24 - Freely - In John 15:25, the Greek word here translated "freely" is translated "without a cause." That's how it should have been translated here as well: "being justified without a cause." There is nothing a person can do in himself to be justified, God justifies us without a cause, something we have done, but based on everything He has done.

*John 15:25(NKJV)*²⁵ *But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause.'*

Just receive it / Chp 6 deals with Easy Believe

Freely – you mean all I have to do is receive Him, I don't have to do works, that's right!. Chapter 6 will deal with sinning freely, and the warning that if you think you can make a profession with your mouth but go on and live in sin, you are greatly mistaken that that is salvation.

Romans 6:1-4(NKJV) *¹What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ²Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ³Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

Redemption: 3 Words

Redemption – was a term used in commerce (the buying and selling) - Redemption - To Paul's readers, the concept of redemption was even clearer, for in the center of every Greek city stood the agora—the place of redemption—where buying and selling took place. Specifically, although not exclusively, this was the place where slaves were bought and sold. Thus, the Greek word for the act of redemption is agorazo. But agorazo is not the word used in this verse.

There's a second word for redemption that the Greek reader of Scripture would readily understand: exagorazo, or “the act of purchasing or redeeming never to return.” You see, oftentimes, a man would buy a slave, use him for a season of harvesting or cultivating, and then return him to be sold again. Exagorazo was the antithesis of this practice, in that it spoke of permanent possession. But exagorazo isn't the word used in this verse.

Apolutrosis, the third Greek word for redemption, is the word used in this verse. Apolutrosis speaks of a man going into the agora to purchase a slave for the purpose of setting him free totally and completely—never to be a slave again. I love it! Yes, for us redemption is agorazo—for we have been purchased by the Lord. Yes, it's exagorazo—for we'll never be sold again, but even more than that it's apolutrosis—for we were purchased for the purpose of being set free.

(Rom 3:25 NKJV) whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,

Propitiation – Mercy seat

Propitiation. – was a term used in the religious system. The Greek word translated “propitiation” is hilasterion, which means “to appease the wrath of.” Hilasterion, or “propitiation”—the word we don't hear much today—is used only five times in the entire New Testament: Romans 3:25; 1 John 2:1–2; 1 John 4:10; and Hebrews 9 are four of them. The Hebrews reference, I believe, is a real key to unlocking this understanding, for in describing the mercy seat, the author of Hebrews uses the word hilasterion. The mercy seat, or hilasterion, covered the ark of the covenant. The ark of the covenant contained the law, and once a year on the Day of Atonement the High priest would go into the Holy of Holies and sprinkle the mercy sea with the blood of the sacrificial lamb that was slain for the covering of sins. Therefore, through the mercy seat, God says, “I know you've broken the law. I know you deserve to be consumed because of it. But I'm going to put a lid on it through the sacrifice of My Son. He is the hilasterion, the mercy seat, the propitiation. It's not something He gives, it's who He is, for He has come between you and the broken law. The wrath that I should vent on you was instead placed upon My Son, who died in your place.” Jesus throws himself over the Law, and the blood was shed; it is the same as Jesus throwing Himself over you, and when the wrath came down, the blood shed and poured was His – not yours.

Hebrews 9:5(NKJV) *⁵and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.*

(Rom 3:26 NKJV) to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Don't Join – Born In / Justifier – Redeemer – Propitiation

You can't join the church, you have to be born into it, through faith. I have 2 children and they didn't join the family, they were born into it. They didn't have to fill out an application to join, just birthed in. We are born again, "by faith", when we believe Jesus is our "justifier", "our redeemer", and our "propitiation".

Handwriting Wiped Out / Records Lost

The handwriting of the Law that condemned us has been wiped out, and so too were the record books that recorded our sins:

Colossians 2:11-15(NKJV) ¹¹In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹²buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. ¹³And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

Hebrews 10:17-18(NKJV) ¹⁷then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." ¹⁸Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.

Psalms 103:12(NKJV) ¹² As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

Here is what he does Remember

Here is what God remembers.

A Book of Remembrance – Malachi 3:16-17

Malachi 3:16-17(NKJV) ¹⁶ Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, And the Lord listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the Lord And who meditate on His name. ¹⁷ "They shall be Mine," says the Lord of hosts, "On the day that I make them My jewels." And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him."

A Bottle of Tears - Psalm 56:8-11

Psalms 56:8-11(NKJV) ⁸ You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book? ⁹ When I cry out to You, Then my enemies will turn back; This I know, because God is for me. ¹⁰ In God (I will praise His word), In the Lord (I will praise His word), ¹¹ In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?

A Bowl of Prayers - Revelation 5:8; 8:3

Revelation 5:8(NKJV) ⁸Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

Let God be True & Every Man a Liar!

Chapter 4

The Law of Faith (3:27 – 4:25)

Part 1 (3:27-4:8)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (C12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

3 Chapter Summary – Guilty / Light & Love / Justified – Redeemed – Propitiation

We finished off our last study by wrapping together all three chapters and summarizing all that the Holy Spirit was making clear, and that is that all have sinned and fall short of the glory (Standard - Law – 10 Commandments) of God. So we end with all are busted and guilty before the Holy God; but not only is God Light (just, holy, perfect, and pure), He is also love (gracious, compassionate, desiring intimacy with His creation – that is you and me). And so we closed by looking at the Lamb that was slain for us, who became our justifier (just-as-if-I-never-sinned), our redeemer (set free never to be sold again), and our propitiation (He became the mercy seat to cover the Law that found and showed us guilty). We saw how God could be light (judging sin), yet still be love (by taking our place in sin).

(Rom 3:23 NKJV) *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

1 John 1:5(NKJV) ⁵*This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.*

1 John 4:8(NKJV) ⁸*He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.*

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹*For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

Chp 4 – Economy of Heaven - Faith

And now, chapter 4 we look at the language of heaven, "faith", the economy of heaven "faith", for all of heaven is based on faith, and not on man's works.

Romans 1:17(NKJV) ¹⁷*For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

The Law of Faith Removes all Boasting

(Rom 3:27 NKJV) **Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith.**

No Boasting in Heaven – yeah / Romans 3:12 – None Good

Verse 27 - Where is boasting then? No boasting in heaven, thank God; I'd hate to have to spend eternity listening to people tell me how great they were and are, for they aren't and they weren't, for God made that clear in last week's study (3:12). I'll be looking forward to spending eternity talking about how great my God is who saved a wretch like me.

Romans 3:12(NKJV) ¹² *They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one."*

The Law of Faith / Law of Nature – Law of Gravity - Law Commands / Law Faith - Economy

Verse 27 - No, but by the law of faith – There is a "law of faith", and that is a powerful statement being made by the Lord. He is saying just as there are the laws of nature and science such as

the law of gravity, there is the law of faith. The law of gravity cannot be defied; whether a person believes it or not – jump from a tall building and you will fall (there are no superman's); and, defy the Law of the Commandments – and you will fall (short of the glory of God's Holy standard). There is a law of faith that God says is fact, and unchanging (Let God be true, and every man a liar – Romans 3:4). Faith is the law, faith is the language, and faith is the economy of God. Break the laws of the commandments, break the laws of faith, break the laws of gravity – and you will fall. Oh, but keep the law of faith – and you will soar into the heavenly places. I pray that is your desire today, I pray there is a passion in your heart today to go higher, that you have come here for this time to be changed – to go leave this world behind, and go to higher ground.

Ephesians 2:4-9(NKJV) ⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Prayer - Let's have a time of prayer right now to prepare our hearts for the Word of God that is before us today.

Prayer puts Boasting in its Place / No Boasting – Saved by Faith

Verse 27 - Where is boasting then? – Isn't it amazing how prayer puts boasting in its place? After I pray I realize there isn't anything in me, I am totally dependent and in need of the power source. So there will be no boasting, for we are saved by grace through faith, nothing in and of ourselves, but everything that He has done.

Ephesians 2:8-9(NKJV) ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Verses 28-31: Repeating Guilty / Helpless – Just leaves us Guilty

Moving on now to verses 28-31, Paul knows that about 50% of those reading this letter would be men, so he repeats it again for like the 10th time that the Law shows every man is guilty (the purpose of the Law), and that every man is in need of a Savior. The Law doesn't help us, it just leaves us helpless; the Law doesn't justify us, it just leaves us guilty. The Law stops every man's lips, silences every man's excuse; such as the one that says "stop judging me", or the one that says "well nobody's perfect", and of course "me and the Big Man Upstairs are ok". The Law says "no you are not".

(Rom 3:19 NKJV) Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

(Rom 3:20 NKJV) Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

(Rom 3:28 NKJV) Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.

(Rom 3:29 NKJV) Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also,

(Rom 3:30 NKJV) since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.

(Rom 3:31 NKJV) Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.

Law establishes Faith – for it Leaves all Guilty – in Need of Savior / Polished Mirror

Verse 31 - Why does Paul say faith in Jesus Christ establishes the law? Because the purpose of the law, according to Galatians 3:24, is to bring us to Christ. Therefore, belief in Christ accomplishes the very purpose for which the law was given, for man to see his need for a Savior. The Law is a mirror to show every man that he is dirty. When Jesus came He polished the mirror "if you will" by showing it isn't only the outward actions of a man, but his inwards thoughts as well (lusting, hating) that he will be judged according to. The Law doesn't help us, it just leaves us helpless; the Law doesn't justify us, it just leaves us guilty.

Galatians 3:24(NKJV) ²⁴Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

2 Groups (Behaving & Believing) / James emphasizes Believing – affect Behaving

There are two groups in religion today: those who emphasize behaving and those who emphasize believing. In actuality, James tells us that the emphasis needs to be on believing, since the way we believe will affect the way we behave, and Paul will develop that theme as we study on in this chapter and through the whole Book of Romans.

James 2:18(NKJV) ¹⁸But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

Chp 4 see Salvation always Faith / Chp 3 Theologically – Chp 4 Historically

Now in chapter 4, we will see that salvation has always been through faith, as the Lord will show us that faith was and is the language and economy of heaven, long before works, religion, or the Law was ever given. So, after arguing theologically in chapter 3 that justification and salvation come simply by believing, Paul makes his point historically here in chapter 4.

- Faith was before Works (4:1-8)
- Faith was before Religion (4:9-12)
- Faith was before the Law (4:13-15)

Abraham Justified by Faith – not Works

Account (logizomia) – add to Inventory / Deals with Facts / Christ - Mine / Sin - His

There is a key word here in chapter four that unlocks the chapter for us, and it is all the same Greek word (*logizomai*) and it is used here for the words ("accounted" "counted", "impute" and "imputed"), again they are all the same Greek word – "*logizoma*" which was a business term used in the financial aspect. It meant to "put to someone's account, to add to inventory". This word deals with reality, facts, real currency. If I "logizomai" or impute, count, account that my bank book has \$25 in it, it has \$25 in it. If I count 25, I can't spend 125. So the blessings for us is that God takes Christ work and puts it on to our account, and then takes our work (sin) and puts it on to Jesus account, and thus Jesus had to pay the price (penalty) for our sin, and we then get to spend all riches he has placed into our account.

Ephesians 1:3(NKJV) ³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

Negative Side / Reject charged to Account / Either Or – not Both / Accounting Class

Now, there is the negative side of this balance sheet, and that is if a person rejects the work of Christ, then that is charged to his account. The inventory of a man's account is either on Christ's work (credited), or your work (debited), but not both, and the hope (deception) that in the end the credit outweighs the debit. One side of the balance sheet has inventory, the other side doesn't, and in this chapter the Lord is giving us an accounting class to ensure that the "faith" side of the ledger is populated, and the "works" side is zeroed out. The Law of Faith!

The Accounted Chp of NT / The Master CPA

The word "accounted" (in its Greek form) is used 41 time in the NT, 35 times by Paul, 19 times here in Romans, and 11 of those times here in this chapter. So this is the "imputed, accounted", "put to our account" chapter in the NT. This is the great accounting chapter in all the Bible, and we see Jesus is the greatest CPA (Certified Public Accountant) as He is certified based on the cross (Certified), His work is for every man (Public), and He enters the ledger perfectly and accurately as to whether there is a debit or credit to each man's account (Accountant).

(Rom 4:3 NKJV) For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

(Rom 4:4 NKJV) Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.

(Rom 4:5 NKJV) But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,

(Rom 4:6 NKJV) just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:

(Rom 4:8 NKJV) Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin."

(Rom 4:9 NKJV) Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness.

(Rom 4:10 NKJV) How then was it **accounted**? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised.
(Rom 4:11 NKJV) And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be **imputed** to them also,
(Rom 4:22 NKJV) And therefore "it was **accounted to him for righteousness.**"
(Rom 4:23 NKJV) Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was **imputed** to him,
(Rom 4:24 NKJV) but also for us. It shall be **imputed** to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead,

Faith was before Works (4:1-8)

(Rom 4:1 NKJV) What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh?

Jews related DNA / Everyone related - Faith

Paul will relate to the Jews in that they are related to Abraham through DNA, but before Paul is all done he will show that Abraham is the Father of all nations, both the Jew and the Gentile, through faith.

(Rom 4:2 NKJV) For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.

(Rom 4:3 NKJV) For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

Quoting Genesis 15:6

Faith before Works / Ur – Isaac / Genesis 15 / Saved when Believe – Not doing

Faith was before works! When was Abraham accounted to be righteous? Was it when Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees (Genesis 12)—a place of real sophistication and wealth—that God declared Abraham righteous? No. Was it when Abraham took his son Isaac to Mount Moriah in order to offer him as a sacrifice that God declared him justified (Genesis 22)? No. God declared Abraham righteous when Abraham simply believed Him (Genesis 15:6). When is a man saved? Not when he follows God's call obediently or even offers himself sacrificially, but when, like Abraham, he simply says, "Lord, I believe You. I believe what You say is true—that I'm righteous in Christ Jesus, that my sins past, present, and future are all forgiven." To these Jews who knew Scripture well, Paul said, "Think about it. Abraham was not pronounced righteous when he was doing something spiritual or sacrificial. He was pronounced righteous when he simply believed God."

Genesis 15:5-6(NKJV) ⁵Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." ⁶And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

1st use of word Believe / Genesis 15 after Gen 14 / Melchizedek – Bread & Wine

The first time the word "believe" is used in the Bible is in Genesis 15:6. I do find it so interesting that Genesis 15 follows Genesis 14, which is the account of Abraham after he defeated an alliance of kings and rescued his nephew Lot whom they had taken captive, and Abraham then on his return home meeting King Melchizedek (which is an OT appearance of Jesus Christ). *And Jesus came out and broke bread and poured wine* with Abraham (the signs of communion). It is chapter 15 when Abraham believed and it was accounted for righteousness. When does anyone come into faith, it is after they partake of the broken bread (His body) and the poured out wine (His blood) of Jesus Christ. It is after they meet Jesus personally.

Genesis 14:18-20(NKJV) ¹⁸Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. ¹⁹And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; ²⁰ And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.

Hebrews 5:5-6(NKJV) ⁵So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You." ⁶As He also says in another place: "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek";

Lord spoke in Genesis 12 & 13 – but not Until 15 after 14

The Lord had spoken to Abraham this very same thing (about being a great nation and possessing the land) back in Genesis 12, and then again in Genesis 13, but it is not until Genesis 15, after Genesis 14 (the appearance of King Melchizedek) that Abraham believed God, and then it was accounted unto him as righteousness. Faith, will only come after the broken bread and the poured out wine are seen and experienced personally.

Genesis 12:1-4(NKJV) ¹Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you." ²I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." ⁴So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

Genesis 13:14-17(NKJV) ¹⁴And the Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; ¹⁵for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. ¹⁶And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered. ¹⁷Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you."

Jews struggling with Issue / Good Principle – what Scriptures say

Verse 3 - For what does the Scripture say? – The Jewish people, and all others for that sake, are struggling with this issue of faith, of something you simply believe and can't earn (especially when you put it in light of all we have read in chapters 1-3). A good principle is given here to whatever it is that you may be struggling with, trying to determine what is the right thing, and what is the right thing to do, and that is – "for what does the Scripture say?" So there is our model for anything and everything, *what does the Scripture say*. And after you find that out, now do it.

Not Believe In – but Believed / James 2 / Look at Context of Demons Believe

Verse 3 – Abraham believed God – it doesn't say that Abraham believed in God, but he believed God. He believed what God had said, and his life responded accordingly. Many people will say they believe "in" God, but that as far as it goes, their lips, for we see nothing further thereafter. We all know the verse (even the demons believe – James 2) but what is important is to look at that verse in context, and see that it bookended on each side by the call to faith. Faith goes beyond believing, faith is believing put into action. Believing affects the way we behave; precious saint, faith looks like something, there is a response to faith, not just movement of the lips.

James isn't a contradiction; it is clarity – faith looks like something, faith has life and action to it. **James 2:18-24(NKJV)** ¹⁸But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. ¹⁹You believe that there is one God. You do well. *Even the demons believe—and tremble!* ²⁰But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? ²¹Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? ²²Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? ²³And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God. ²⁴You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

Abraham's faith Looked like Something / He lived it Out / So Freeing

So Abraham believed God, and his account was credited for that, and then his faith looked like something as he started to live it out in a real and experiential way. This is so freeing to me, for when I see that it is no longer dependent upon me, that my salvation is simply through "believing God", then I feel no pressure of having to perform to gain God's acceptance, rather my life just becomes a response to His goodness, His unconditional love and acceptance of me, and I am now in a love relationship – not a labor relationship, and love just flows as freely as water down a mountain stream, whereas labor is like trying to push a boulder up a mountain trail. God is so Good!

(Rom 4:4 NKJV) Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.

(Rom 4:5 NKJV) But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,

Master Bookkeeper – tallying the Ledger / Works = Debit / God no man's Debtor / Rags

Here we are again at the Master Bookkeeper's office, tallying the ledger, and for those who want to earn their salvation by their own merits, their works are put into the "debit" side of the ledger. God will be no man's debtor; for all of man's work are filthy rags before the Holy God. Isaiah 64, the word there for filthy rags is the word that was used for menstrual rags (yes – a tampon), and God says don't bring me filthy rags and think I will be impressed with what you have done, for they are menstrual blood in comparison to the blood of My Son.

Ephesians 2:8-9(NKJV) ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Isaiah 64:6(NKJV) ⁶ But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away.

You who have believed – Give Him praise / Un – godly / All God is – we are Not

Verse 5 - but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly – You who have "believed God", give Him thanks and praise right now, for He justifies the "ungodly". The compound word "un" and "godly"; the word "un" meaning "not". We are not godly; aka – all that God is, we were not. The Law proved that, we are not perfect, pure, and holy. All that God is, we are not – until Jesus came and didn't "balance the books", He flipped the books and wiped out our debit, and filled our "inventory with righteous".

He is God who justifies Ungodly / We love Him – Cause 1st Loved Us / Propitiation - Seat

He is the God who justifies the ungodly. Oh I pray you remember that today. The Bible says that we love Him because He first loved us. He gave Himself to be the "propitiation", the "mercy seat" where he threw Himself over the Law that condemned us, He threw Himself over our souls, and when the wrath of God came down, He took it all. It was Light and Love being fully displayed at that moment in time – there at the cross.

1 John 4:10(NKJV) ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Jesus – Sweat drops of Blood / Any other Way – Separation / Father's Answer / My son's

God's only begotten Son comes into this world for me, and sweats great drops of blood in the garden of Gethsemane as He says "Dad, if there be any other way", as he is beaten beyond human recognition, as the spit in His face, put a crown of thorns upon His head, scourged Him probably until His internal organs were exposed, but that is still not why He sweat drops of blood, it was because he knew he was going to be separated from His Heavenly Father for the first time ever. Then He was stripped naked and hung before the whole world, and then – He would be clothed "if you will", with the sins of the whole world, but not just the whole world, but very specifically the sins of Adolf Hitler, the pedophile, the rapist, the adultery, of every abortion, of every murder, of my sin, your sin, my outward sin, my inward thought life, every sin. And then, darkness, and He cries out Father (Daddy) why has thou forsaken Me? Experiencing separation, not knowing what it felt like because He had never experienced it before. God answers to His Son's cry – propitiation, not comfort. Jesus crying out to the Father, and the response is verbal silence, the response is physical wrath, the force of wrath poured out totally and fully upon the innocent Lamb, and the response is relational separation. I can't imagine the pain of the Father either! I have two fine sons, I love them with all my heart. I can't imagine them crying out in pain to me, reaching out for me to come, and then I do something that is completely inconsistent with my whole nature and our whole life together, the way I have treated them their whole life, and I having the power to stop their pain, and I respond with silence, I respond by turning my back on them. That I have to power to correct the indictments laid against them that they are murders, pedophiles, thieves and adultery. But I turn my back on them? Oh the pain the Father was willing to endure for you and for me.

Luke 22:41-44(NKJV) ⁴¹And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, ⁴²saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." ⁴³Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. ⁴⁴And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Matthew 27:45-46(NKJV) ⁴⁵Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. ⁴⁶And

about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

Light & Love Combined

The Cross on that Friday on a hill in Palestine, the perfect merging of Light and Love.

After reflecting on That – Nothing left but Faith

After reflecting on that, there is nothing left but faith, for what could we ever do that compares to this?

1 John 4:10(NKJV) ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

He Justifies the Ungodly

It is He who justifies the ungodly:

(Rom 4:5 NKJV) But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,

Need an Example – David

Paul says do you need an example for proof that God truly does justify the ungodly? Then let me tell you the story about an adulterous, a murderer, a cover-up, a wicked story of an ungodly man – you call him king, King David!

(Rom 4:6 NKJV) just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:

(Rom 4:7 NKJV) "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered;

(Rom 4:8 NKJV) Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin."

Quoting Psalm 32 / Oh how Happy

Paul is quoting Psalm 32 here, written by David after his sin with Bathsheba, and after he finally confesses his sin; and his heart rejoices (blessed means "oh how happy") is the man whose sins are covered, and do not show up in the debit ledger, still left to be paid. Oh how happy is the man!

Psalms 32:1-11(NKJV) ¹ Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered. ² Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit. ³ When I kept silent, my bones grew old Through my groaning all the day long. ⁴ For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was turned into the drought of summer. Selah ⁵ I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," And You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah ⁶ For this cause everyone who is godly shall pray to You In a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters They shall not come near him. ⁷ You are my hiding place; You shall preserve me from trouble; You shall surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah ⁸ I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye. ⁹ Do not be like the horse or like the mule, Which have no understanding, Which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, Else they will not come near you. ¹⁰ Many sorrows shall be to the wicked; But he who trusts in the Lord, mercy shall surround him. ¹¹ Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you righteous; And shout for joy, all you upright in heart!

David being Redundant / Day of Atonment

"Oh, how happy," David said, "is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." I used to think David was being a little redundant when he said, "whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered," but upon further study, I found something that intrigues me. The word "forgiven" literally means "to send away." The word "covered" means "to be sprinkled." There was only one day in which these two acts were practiced together. That was the day we call Yom Kippur—the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16). On one day each year, around October 10, two goats would be brought before the high priest. Upon one, the scapegoat, the high priest would symbolically lay the sins of the entire nation, then release it into the wilderness. As for the second goat, its throat was slit, and the blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat. Not only is our sin out of God's sight, but it's out of His memory (Jeremiah 31:34). Remember—there was a second goat, whose blood, sprinkled on the mercy seat on the Day of Atonement, covered the law that was inside the Ark of the Covenant. So, too, the blood of Jesus Christ blots out even the memory in God's mind of the law that you've broken. Whether you've been into pornography, adultery,

gossiping, lying, or cheating on your taxes, God says once confession is made, your sin is blotted out. He cannot remember it.

Jeremiah 31:34(NKJV) ³⁴No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

David can't sing any Louder than Me

Oh my body ached when I had to carry my sin, David said; my soul was in drought condition, there was no joy, my life was parched. But then you forgave me Lord, and my soul was revived, and joy filled my heart, oh how happy is the man whose sins are forgiven. David can't sing it any louder than I can, nor we should. Let's enter into a time of worship.

Blessed is the Man – whose sins are forgiven

(Rom 4:7 NKJV) *"Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered;*

(Rom 4:8 NKJV) *Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin."*

What a Foreign Love

(1 John 3:1) "Behold" is plural there in that verse, literally, "behold ye." The usual form is singular. John is calling upon all the saints to wonder at the particular kind of love God has bestowed upon them. "What manner of" is *potapēn* (ποταπειν), meaning "from what country, race or tribe?" The word speaks of something foreign. The translation could read, "Behold, what foreign kind of love the Father has bestowed upon us." The love of God is foreign to the human race. It is not found naturally in humanity. When it exists there, it is in a saved individual, and by reason of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. It suggests, "from what far realm? What unearthly love, ... how other-worldly."

(1 John 3:1-3) *Behold ^awhat manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that ^bwe should be called children of ^cGod! Therefore the world does not know ²us, ^cbecause it did not know Him.*

The Law of Faith (3:27 – 4:25)

Part 2 (4:9-25)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (C12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

Chp 4 see Salvation always Faith / Ch3 Theologically – Ch4 Historically / Language Heaven

This week we continue in our study "The Law of Faith". The Lord, after three chapters of showing that every man is guilty before Him because of their sin, He now goes on to make the point clear that salvation is by faith alone (not by man's works). Here in chapter 4, we will see that salvation has always been through faith, as the Lord will show us that faith was and is the language and economy of heaven, long before works, religion, or the Law was ever given. So, after arguing theologically in chapter 3 that justification and salvation come simply by believing, Paul makes his point historically here in chapter 4.

- Faith was before Works (4:1-8)
- Faith was before Religion (4:9-12)
- Faith was before the Law (4:13-15)

(Rom 3:27 NKJV) Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith.

Recap – Faith before Works / Faith comes after seeing the Broken Bread & Poured Wine

To recap our first point, God showed historically that Abraham was considered righteous (right before God) not when he was doing something super-spiritual (like leave his homeland to go where God told him to move to), or when he was to sacrifice his son Isaac (as seen in Genesis 22), but simply when He believed God! And as we saw in our study last week, God had told Abraham that He would make him a father of many nation on two other occasions (Genesis 12 & 13), but Abraham didn't believe until Genesis 15, because it is in Genesis 14 that Abraham met God face-to-face in the OT appearance of Jesus Christ as King Melchizedek who greeted Abraham that day with bread and wine, the symbols of communion. Genesis 15 is the first time the word "believe" is used in the Bible, and we see it is when a man meet Jesus face-to-face. When does a man or woman believe today? It still and always has been, and only will be, after they meet Jesus Christ face-to-face, after they partake in His broken body (bread), and poured out blood (wine).

(Rom 4:2 NKJV) For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.

(Rom 4:3 NKJV) For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

Genesis 15:5-6(NKJV) ⁵Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." ⁶And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

Genesis 14:18-20(NKJV) ¹⁸Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. ¹⁹And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; ²⁰ And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.

Hebrews 5:5-6(NKJV) ⁵So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You." ⁶As He also says in another place: "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek";

Accounted / You Owe or have Coming

As a reminder, the word “accounted” (in its Greek form - *logizomai*) is used 41 time in the NT, 35 times by Paul, 19 times here in Romans, and 11 of those times here in this chapter. So this is the “imputed, accounted”, “put to our account” chapter in the NT. This is the great accounting chapter in all the Bible, and we see Jesus is the greatest CPA (Certified Public Accountant) as He is certified based on the cross (Certified), His work is for every man (Public), and He enters the ledger perfectly and accurately as to whether there is a debit or credit to each man’s account (Accountant). As this word was used in the time of this writing (no different today) you either had a debit you owed, or had inventory in your account that you could use and spend.

Debit vs Credit / Wipes the Ledger Clear & Clean

Debit will placed to any man’s account who thinks salvation is by any means other than the finished works of Christ, and the credit is accounted to all those who simply believe. The most amazing and wonderful thing is that when Jesus credits our account for faith, He then goes and wipes clear and clean all the debits that are against us, and the slate, the ledger, is wiped clean

The Purest Stream

The Lord is giving us here in this chapter the purest stream of salvation – that it is through faith, through grace. Not on my works, but His great work there upon the cross.

License to Sin – By No Means

Is this a license to sin, the simply believing and you are saved, by no means! – as we look at the outline of this book and where we will go after “simply believing”, we will see that there is a calling (a high calling at that) for those who believe. We will see doctrine, and then duty. And I personally believe that the way we behave, is a true indicator of what we truly believe. The high calling, present our bodies as living sacrifices – to not be conformed to this world, but be transformed! How are you doing in this area?

(Rom 12:1 NKJV) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

(Rom 12:2 NKJV) And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

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Faith was before Religion (4:9-12)

So faith was before works, and now the Lord shows us very clearly that faith was and is before religion.

Abraham Justified before Circumcision

(Rom 4:9 NKJV) Does this blessedness then come upon the circumcised only, or upon the uncircumcised also? For we say that faith was accounted to Abraham for righteousness.

(Rom 4:10 NKJV) How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised.

(Rom 4:11 NKJV) And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while still uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also,

(Rom 4:12 NKJV) and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised.

Statement blows the Jews Away / No Passover Feast / Before entering Hell

Now to the Jew who was reading this they would be blown away by this statement that Paul is making because to the Jew according to the Talmud they were not even allowed to come to the Passover Feast if they were not circumcised, let alone have salvation (the Talmud calls circumcision – “the mark of Abraham in the flesh). Not only that, the rabbinic teaching stated that if a Jew totally walked away from God, went back to worshipping idols, that before they entered into hell God would place the flesh back on to them so as if they had never been circumcised in the first place.

Making it Clear – Circumcision doesn't Save / Genesis 15 was 14 years before Circum

Now Paul is making the point very clear that God called Abraham justified by faith before he was ever circumcised, in fact Genesis 15 happened at least 14 years before Genesis 17 when Abraham and his whole family are given the command of God to be circumcised. Thus circumcision cannot save a person.

Genesis 15:5-6(NKJV) ⁵Then He brought him outside and said, “Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” ⁶And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

(Genesis 17:23-27) ²³ So Abraham took Ishmael his son, all who were born in his house and all who were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house, and circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very same day, as God had said to him. ²⁴ Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁵ And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. ²⁶ That very same day Abraham was circumcised, and his son Ishmael; ²⁷ and all the men of his house, born in the house or bought with money from a foreigner, were circumcised with him.

Does not confer – but Confirms / Baptism the Same – I want to go on Record / Free Lunch

Circumcision did not confer righteousness. It confirmed righteousness. So, too, you can be baptized a dozen times next summer, but it won't save you if you don't believe in your heart that the work is done, that the price is already paid for your sin. The basis of everything we enjoy is that which God has done for us and on that fact that He views us through the lens of His Son. So I get baptized because I want to go on record externally, declaring what I know is already true internally.

Circumcision a Sign of Faith / After personal encounter life Changed / Looking for a City

Circumcision was a sign of faith. Abraham had a personal encounter with Jesus Christ (Genesis 14) when he was returning from battling an alliance of kings to rescue his nephew Lot. After his great victory Jesus appears to him (called a Christophany in the OT – in the person of King Melchizedek). Jesus comes out to meet Abraham with bread and wine, the elements of Communion. It is then that Abraham's life is changed forever, and we read that Abraham spent a life looking for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God; he was a pilgrim and stranger, just passing through looking for that eternal city. Abraham walked in the Land of Promise, but waited for the Eternal Promise.

(Hebrews 11:8-10) ⁸ By faith ¹Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, ¹dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, ²the heirs with him of the same promise; ¹⁰ for he waited for ¹the city which has foundations, ²whose builder and maker is God.

Abe walked in Promise – but Waited for eternal Promise / Live life Backwards

Abraham walked in the Land of Promise, but waited for the Eternal Promise. How about you today? What is it that you are looking for? Are you walking in the Promise land (the promise of your salvation) but still looking for the world to fulfill you? Abraham had the promise, walked in the Promise Land; but knew the ultimate fulfillment would only be found in the City of God. Tell ya what Christian, want to relieve a whole lot of stress up your life, your marriage, your family, your job, your ministry – live like Abraham did, live life backwards (from heaven your ultimate destination, to earth your present location) and lots of things in your life will come into their proper perspective and focus. You will find yourself getting less wrapped up in the petty things, and more involved in the eternal things.

Faith was before the Law (4:13-15)

Genesis 15 was 430 before the Law

Faith was before works, before religion (circumcision), and now we see that faith was before the Law, for Abraham was called righteous in Genesis 15 some 430 years before the Law was instituted. But, may I note, faith was after the Law also because David was accounted righteous by faith and that was after the Law had been given, and David had broken the Law greatly as we studied last week.

The Promise (Abraham Father of ALL Nations) granted through Faith

(Rom 4:13 NKJV) For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

(Rom 4:14 NKJV) For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect,

Law has works

The Law doesn't need faith, for it has works the Lord is saying.

(Rom 4:15 NKJV) because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression.

Law Given to show Guilt

Paul reiterates again, that the Law was given to show every man they have offended the Holy God and will give an account for their guilt.

(Rom 3:19 NKJV) Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

(Rom 3:20 NKJV) Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Keeps producing Wrath – because we Keep being Guilty

Verses 15 can literally read, “the Law keeps on producing wrath”, as a consequence of disobedience. No one can keep the Law fully; therefore God, in wrath against sin, judges those who disobey. If you sin in one point of the Law you will be judged as if you broke all points of the Law. The law can only curse. It cannot bless. Why is this so important to us? If we come to God on the basis of the law, the only result can be wrath. So if we come on the basis of the Law (works), then we must be perfect on the basis of our own merit. It's the same principle—the same basis—that is the same trap for us. We, too, fall into the trap of attempting to rely on our own merit, rather than His.

(James 2:10) For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

Therefore.....(Paul is building up to a conclusion)

(Rom 4:16 NKJV) Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all

If His Promises Dependant on us – they are hardly Promises

Verse 16 - so that the promise might be sure - If God's promise to us was dependent upon us keeping the Law, then all His promises would be so fleeting (here today and gone tomorrow).

The reason God's promise is sure to all of us today is because they are all dependant on grace, on being undeserved, unearned, and totally based on Him. If God's promises were dependant on us keeping the Law, then how could we ever depend on God – for we would always have to be depending on ourselves. This goes beyond salvation only, but every promise of God. As sure as God's promise is about salvation (by grace and faith), then as sure are all His other promises to us, and we never have to doubt that they are based on anything to do with our faithfulness.

- When God says I will never leave you nor forsake you – THEN even in my yuckiest and most unloving moments God is still there.

- When God says I forgive you – THEN even after I did what I said I wouldn't do God is still forgiving me.
- When God says I love you – THEN even when I brought Him shame and disgrace through my actions, God is still loving me.
- When God says draw near to me – THEN even when I haven't fellowshiped with Him for weeks, maybe months, His invitation to fellowship is still ready and willing.
- When God says you are precious in My sight – THEN even when I have spent months or even years pursuing my own self-interest having no regard for the things of God, God eyes are still lovingly fixed upon us.
- **(2 Timothy 2:13)** *If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.*
- **(2 Corinthians 1:20)** ^{20 b} *For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.*

Light becomes Light / We are what he says we Are

Christian, if God say let there be light where light once did not exist, then He can say of you and me anything He chooses, and it becomes as He calls it. It is all dependant on being unearned, unmerited, nothing of me but all of Him, and thus I can trust in each and every Promise of God, not only salvation, but each and every promise, such as being His child and His sons and daughters..

(Romans 8:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

Galatians 3:26) For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Prodigal

Just a word - If you are a prodigal here today, you need to come back home (today)! You know what this means more than I can ever expound, because you know the promises he made to you and about you, but you have walked away and now you think they are no longer available to you – God says come back, right now, and I'll show you they are, for ALL My promises are yes and amen!

(Rom 4:17 NKJV) (as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed; God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did;

Confirms Point by quoting Genesis 17

Paul then supported his conclusion in verse 16 with scriptural authority, quoting God's covenantal promise from Genesis 17:5.

When Promise made – Isaac not Born / Past Tense for Future event

Verse 17 - I have made you a father of many nations - When God made His promise to Abraham, he said I have "made" you a father of many nations – and Isaac had not yet even been born. Past tense of a yet future event, something that only God can do.

I Like That – We serve a God who can Call things which are Not / Fills the Account

Verse 17 - and calls those things which do not exist as though they did – I like that, we are a people who follow and serve a God who calls things which do not exist as though they do. Hence why He can say we are justified, sanctified, and glorified, even in our present flesh. Satan, say what you will about me, but it doesn't matter for God is a God who calls things which do not exist as though they do, and God calls me RIGHTEOUS (right before Him), and fills my account with righteousness and empties the ledger of debit of all unrighteousness.

(Rom 4:18 NKJV) who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be."

You can be sure Satan Challenged

You don't think Satan was there to challenge God's call and promise upon Abraham, you don't think as Abraham retold God's promise that he wasn't challenged? So Abraham you are like 99 years old, have no kids, you are married to a woman well past the flower of her youth, and you are become the father of a nation? What is the testimony of Abraham's life, what is to be our testimony? He believed that which was spoken (so shall your descendant be).

Abraham Believed – he did not Waver at God's Promise

(Rom 4:19 NKJV) And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb.

(Rom 4:20 NKJV) He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God,

(Rom 4:21 NKJV) and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.

(Rom 4:22 NKJV) And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness."

Paul Reinforcing by Recapping

Paul is just reinforcing what he has been saying, Abraham was declared righteous not because of something he did for the Lord, or by virtue of the fact he proved himself to the Lord, but because he simply believed in the Lord.

Examples

Romans 15:4 says these things written are an example for us. So what an example we can glean from Abraham's life:

Romans 15:4 (NKJV) *For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.*

Romans 4:19-21

Look at Romans 4:19–21, and note four elements of Abraham's faith that are vital for you and me.

Abraham Did Not Look at His Limitations

(Rom 4:19 NKJV) And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. - At the age of

eighty-six, Abraham received the promise that he and his wife, Sarah, would have a child. Fourteen years later, at the age of one hundred, Abraham still believed God would honor His Word. Reproductively, his body was dead. Physiologically, Sarah had been barren all the days of her life. But Abraham didn't consider the frailties of his flesh. Instead, he counted on the faithfulness of his God. You who are wondering why God's promise has not been fulfilled in your own life, take hope and know this: There is almost invariably a time gap between the promise of God and the performance of God. Why? So that the Lord can prepare you for what's coming. Therefore, don't look at your limitations because you will be sure to find all kinds of them. It is not a miracle until it is impossible. So if you are facing what seems like an impossible situation, good news, you have met the condition for a miracle, now God can do a work and get the glory.

Abraham Did Not Lower His Expectations

(Rom 4:20 NKJV) He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was

strengthened in faith... "Abram," the original name given to Abraham, means "Exalted Father."

Thus, for the first one hundred years of his life, Abraham must have had his fill of taunts like, "Hey, Exalted Father, how many kids do you have?" But it got worse when, at one hundred years of age, the Lord told Abram he was to change his name to Abraham, or, "Father of *Many* Nations." Yet he didn't stagger. He didn't say, "I refuse to go by that name. Call me Father Wannabe." No, he said, "Call me Father of Many Nations. It's going to happen." Hey Christian don't lower your expectations because time has passed. You singles don't settle. You parents don't give up, don't accept anything less than the best. Don't think your spouse can't be changed. In your own life, He who began a good work will be faithful to complete (Phil 1:6) – so

don't say, well I've been saved for all these years now so I guess this is as far as I go – don't lower your expectation, settle for nothing less than what God has promised you.

Abraham Gave Glory to God

(Rom 4:20 NKJV)giving glory to God, - Here's a real key to faith: I find that faith comes and fear flees when I give God glory. I can be struggling when I go into the sanctuary, or when I head up to the mountaintop. But when I start worshipping, my faith begins to grow. That is why worship is so important. Not only does it bless the Father—it feeds our faith. Give God the glory, even when the promise is still far off.

Abraham Handed God the Situation

(Rom 4:21 NKJV) and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.- Abraham knew that if God promised, it was up to Him to fulfill His promise. So often I try to figure out how He's going to do it. "Okay, God, how is it going to happen?" I ask. Not Abraham. He was fully persuaded that what God had promised, He would perform.

So the life of Abraham, a great example of faith for us today.

(Rom 4:23 NKJV) Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, (Rom 4:24 NKJV) but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead,

Catch This Saint / You are a Hero of Faith / Everything Else is Tiny Faith

Verse 24 - but also for us - Catch this oh precious Christian, on the basis of Romans 4, if you believe Jesus was raised from the dead, you are exercising the same quality of faith as did Abraham—a hero of faith (you are in the Hall of Faith). So, whatever problem or pressure is upon you at this time, it's nothing in comparison to the incredible faith you have already demonstrated. Once a believer grasps the fact that he's already done the hard stuff—that his belief in the Resurrection sets him apart as a hero of faith—then any other pressure or problem is a piece of cake, minute in comparison to the fact that he has already embraced a concept that the world mocks

(Hebrews 11:8-10) ⁸ By faith ⁱAbraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, ^ddwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, ^kthe heirs with him of the same promise; ¹⁰ for he waited for ^lthe city which has foundations, ^mwhose builder and maker is God.

Acts 17:32 (NKJV) ³² And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, while others said, "We will hear you again on this matter."

Salvation Snippet

Salvation: The Father thought it. The Son bought it. The Spirit taught it. The Bible brought it. Satan fought it. But, praise the Lord, by His grace, we got it!

The Promise is sure – to the one who Believes / It is Finished

The promise is sure to the one who simply believes that God did what He said He did when on the Cross He declared, "It is finished" (John 19:30).

John 19:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

Today is Day of Salvation

If you have never received Jesus Christ for your personal salvation, then your first step of faith is today, to receive Him as your Lord and Savior, and you too will enter the Hall of Faith!

2 Corinthians 6:2 (NKJV) ² For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

(Rom 4:25 NKJV) who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.

Justification – Acquitted

Justification: Greek dikaiōsis—4:25; 5:18—derived from the Greek verb dikaiō, meaning “to acquit” or “to declare righteous,” used by Paul in 4:2, 5; 5:1. It is a legal term used of a favorable verdict in a trial. The word depicts a courtroom setting, with God presiding as the Judge, determining the faithfulness of each person to the law. In the first section of Romans, Paul makes it clear that no one can withstand God’s judgment (3:9–20). The law was not given to justify sinners but to expose their sin. To remedy this deplorable situation, God sent His Son to die for our sins in our place. When we believe in Jesus, God imputes His righteousness to us, and we are declared righteous before God. In this way, God demonstrates that He is both a righteous Judge and the One who declares us righteous, our Justifier (3:26).

Jesus – Our Redeemer, Justifier, Advocate, Attorney, Intercessor

Not only did Jesus die for our sins to redeem us, but He was raised from the dead to justify us and to be an Advocate for us. As our Advocate, our defense attorney, Jesus lives to make intercession for us continually (Hebrews 7:25). Satan, on the other hand, condemns us not only in our hearts day and night, but before the very throne of God (Revelations 12:10), saying, “Look at those people down there. They’re hypocritical, weak, and faltering.” But the moment he hisses these accusations, Jesus is literally there, saying, “Depart, Satan. They’re washed in My blood and robed in My righteousness.” And the Father says, “Case dismissed for lack of evidence,” as He casts our sins into the depths of the sea (see Micah 7:19).

Micah 7:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹He will again have compassion on us, And will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins, Into the depths of the sea.

Micah – Throw into the Sea / Toxic Waste dump

Why did Micah say God cast our sins into the depths of the sea? Because, as a people, the Jews were terrified of the ocean. Therefore, the Lord put their sins in the last place a Jew would have gone looking for them. To our culture, He would say, “I have cast your sin into the bottom of a toxic waste dump. Your sins are not only forgotten by Me, but I’m putting them in a place where there’s no danger of anybody looking at, digging up, or talking about them. On the basis of the finished work of Calvary, every sin you’ve ever committed, are committing, or will commit is forgiven, forgotten, and out of sight.” That’s forgiveness. That’s justification. That’s Good News!

Conclusion

Today’s Preaching Agendas

Today it is fashionable to derive our preaching agendas from the “felt needs” of men and women on the street— the homiletics of consensus. But I am convinced that the average person on the street does not know what he needs. What today’s person really needs is a clear understanding of the opening chapters of Romans. I am convinced that is what the church needs too, far more than advice on how to raise children or how to handle money (subjects which I do preach on!).

******People are starving for the greatness of God – John Piper*

We need to Understand how Radically Sinful we Are

We need to understand just how radically sinful we are—how sin so effects every part of us that we are totally unable to live up to God’s standards and effect our own salvation—that we are lost in ourselves.

In Need of Radical Righteousness / Only comes through His Righteousness – by Faith

We need to understand that we are in need of a radical righteousness which comes “from God” alone (1:17) and that “This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe” (3:22). We need to understand that we must “be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith” (Philippians 3:9), so that we can say, “he saved us, not because of righteous things we have done, but because of his mercy” (Titus 3:5a).

It is Sola Fide (Faith Alone)

It was *sola fide* for Abraham—*sola fide* for David—*sola fide* for the Gentiles—*sola fide* before, during, and after the Law—it is always for all *sola fide*.

*Not what these hands have done
Can save this guilty soul;
Not what this toiling flesh has borne
Can make my spirit whole.
Not what I feel or do
Can give me peace with God,
Not all my prayers and sighs and tears
Can bear my awful load.
Thy work alone O Christ,
Can ease this weight of sin;
Thy blood alone, O Lamb of God,
Can give me peace within.
Thy grace alone, O God,
To me can pardon speak,
Thy power alone, O Son of God,
Can this sore bondage break.
I bless the Christ of God;
I rest on love divine;
And, with unfalt'ring lip and heart,
I call this Savior mine.*

(Horatius Bonar, 1861)

Chapter 5

These Things Being So Romans 5:1-11

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (C12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "*The just shall live by faith.*"

Begin with a Therefore – These things being So

We begin chapter 5 with a “therefore”, (therefore means “these things being so”), and it is an important “therefore (these things being so)” based on where we have been in our study of these first four chapters. The “therefore (these things being so)”:

- In 3:20 says therefore (everything I have said up to this point comes to this summation and that is) by the deeds of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight (everyone is guilty).
- Now the next “major” therefore here in chapter 5 says, “therefore these things being so (talking about justification by faith, simply believing in the finished works of Christ, in chapter 4)”, we have peace with God.
- And, as a foretaste of oh how good our Lord is to us, chapter 8 has a mighty “therefore these things being so” to start it off with in verse one, that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (saved and sealed).
- And then, the “therefore these things being so” of chapter 12, as we respond to all these marvelous things, and we present our bodies as living sacrifices unto Him.

(Rom 3:20 NKJV) Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

(Rom 5:1 NKJV) Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

(Rom 8:1 NKJV) There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

(Rom 12:1 NKJV) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

(Rom 12:2 NKJV) And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Chp 5 – Deep Theological Definitions / But, Heart is the Life we get to Experience

Chapter 5 will bring on some deep theological definitions such as, justification, reconciliation, and righteousness; but the heart of the chapter is the clear revelation of the life we get to experience because of justification, reconciliation, and righteousness. It is through these things we get such things as:

- Access directly to the throne of heaven, the very fellowship with the living God, that we could speak to Him, and.....amazingly that He would speak to us!
- We have a hope and we have peace. When I am in need of hope because my situation is bleak, when my heart is in a state of unrest, these words such as justified, reconciled, and righteous make sure to me that the promises of God are true, they are sure, and thus I can have hope because I have access!

(Rom 4:16 NKJV) Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all

Peace with God through Jesus Christ – by Faith

(Rom 5:1 NKJV) Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

The Argument – The Summation

The argument of this book has come to this point, and that is that man is guilty because of our sin, that God is Holy, but God could be both just (judging sin) and a justifier (forgiving us) – by faith! We are justified by faith, and therefore have peace with Him. We have been cleared of our guilt.

We have Peace – War is Over / The Indelible Ink

We have peace with God! Halleluiaah, the war is over, the treaty has been signed, inked with the blood of Jesus Christ, the indelible ink that never fadeth away, thus this treaty is eternal. Let me add, many Christians don't consider that they were ever at war with God, that they and God have always been friends, but that is not correct (4 chapters of Romans declare how wrong that is) – our sin is an offense before the Holy God, and no man can come into His presence until the sin issue has been dealt with. People who miss this point, consistently are the ones who miss seeing His holiness, and thus don't see the cross for all the power it speaks, and they spend their Christian life – lukewarm, because the cross was more of an event for them (a moment in life), rather than the beginning of a movement, a life of continually seeking and growing and drawing closer to God.

Peace (face-to-face) / No Man can See God & Live – Jesus only Way (John 14)

Verse 1 – Peace with God - The preposition, “with” (pros), meaning facing forward, face-to-face; intimate relationship, understanding. Man can only come face-to-face with God through Jesus Christ. No man can see God face to face and live unless they have come with and through Jesus Christ.

Exodus 33:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ But He said, “You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live.”

1 Timothy 6:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

(Rom 5:2 NKJV) through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Access – to grant Admission/Entrance / Ticket signed with Blood of Christ

Not only do we have peace, we have access. Access, to grant admission/entrance. We have access (admission) by faith believing in the One who totally and completely paid the price for admission. His name is signed on the admission pass if you would, signed in the indelible ink that never fades, signed in His own blood.

Verb tense Perfect / Protocol – how to approach Royalty / My trip to the White House

“Access:” prosagwgh ,prosagoge, privilege of approach. “Through whom we have obtained access” (perfect sense: in the past, with results that continue on; nothing changes it). This is where we get our English word “protocol” and it is the word used for how to properly approach royalty. When I went on a tour of the White House last year I couldn't just show up, I had to make my arrangements in advance, I had to meet all the security measures, and even after that when I showed up I had to present my invitation and display my identification to the Secret Service to gain access.

Exodus – Could only come to the Base / We get to the Peak

We have access right into His Holy presence. In Exodus they could only come to the foot of the mountain base or they would be consumed by His wrath if they went one step further, but here we are today able to not only come to the base of the mountain, but we get to ascend all the way to the peak of the mountain and behold the glory of God in our own arms, our own eyes. Can you picture the mountain base and then picture the beauty of the mountain peak?

Deuteronomy 4:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ "Then you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire to the midst of heaven, with darkness, cloud, and thick darkness.

Verb Tense – Present Tense / Stay as Long as you Want

Verse 2 - in which we stand, "wherein we stand" = go on standing (present tense, continuing on).

This word was used in that it meant that it couldn't be moved. So it is that we stand and we withstand! We are able and allowed to stand and stay as long as we want. How long would you like to stay? May we come and stand and stay for awhile, may we not rush out of His presence, the sweet fellowship, wherever you have to go today, it will be there when you get there, but for right now, let's stay awhile, let's enjoy Him. Pull up a chair, make it a rocking chair at that, rock gently with Him and share your heart with Him, tell Him what is on your mind, tell Him your anxieties (what worries you), tell Him what you are excited about, dream with Him on what you will do together, and simply look into His face and behold His beauty, kiss His face with your heart, tell him how much you love Him. Enter into the beauty of the Lord, behold His glory.

Song – Show me your Glory

What are you Rejoicing in Today / We are fulfilling this Scripture

Verse 2 - and rejoice in hope of the glory of God – What is it that you are rejoicing in today? The fact that you are here I think is an answer in itself. We too rejoice in the Glory of God; we are the current and present fulfillment of this Scripture. We fulfill prophecy we our very faith!

Our Hope is Certain – People say we are out of Our Minds

Verse 2 - , and rejoice in hope of the glory of God - The hope we have in Christ is a certainty! The world thinks we are crazy; people say we are out of our minds, and they are right, for we now have the mind of Christ.

Philippians 2:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

Not like Hope of World / The world hopes (job, relation, team, heaven) / Us - Indelible Ink

Now we as Christians have a hope that is sure, it is not like the hope that the world has. The world hopes they get that new job, they hope they get that house, that car, or into that college or they hope their sport team is going to win, and they hope there is a heaven and if so, they will get there when they die – all a possibility to them, but no certainty. But that is not the hope of the Christian, for our hope is an assurance, a certainty, a guarantee! Our salvation is sure, the possibility of it not being so has been wiped out by the blood of the Lamb! The hope is settled for the ink never fades, the treaty stands forever.

1 Peter 1:3-4 (NKJV) ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

Tribulation produces Perseverance – Character - & Hope

(Rom 5:3 NKJV) And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;

(Rom 5:4 NKJV) and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

See Relationship – Hope & Tribulation produce Hope / Divine Linking here in Scriptures

Do you see the relationship here? We are to rejoice in hope, we are to rejoice in tribulations, for both reveal the glory of God. Listen, we have been through four chapters of some of the deepest theological waters, and for the Holy Spirit to dive into the topic of "tribulation" is clearly by Divine design.

Tribulation – to be pressed or squeezed / Crushing Olives produce Olive Oil

Tribulation, it means to be pressed or to be squeezed. It was the word used when crushing the olives to make olive oil. Anyone here today being pressed or squeezed? Good, for the oil of the Holy Spirit is being poured forth.

You will not have Best Life Today / Until Corruption puts on Incorruption

Now I am not trying to be funny here, nor am I attacking, but Christian – you will not have your best life today! You might have a good life, a nice life (especially if you live here in the USA), but you will not have your best life until this corruption (our bodies) put on incorruption, and that won't happen until we leave this corrupted fallen world. It is a fallen world filled with fallen people.

1 Corinthians 15:51–54 (NKJV) ⁵¹ Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— ⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.”

Why doesn't God Fix It?

The question is always asked, why does God (if He is a God of love) allow these hurricanes, earthquakes, cancer, blindness, wars, and famine – why doesn't He fix them or prevent them. The answer is, if God is going to fix that part of the corrupted (fallen world) then He has to fix everything that is corrupted (that includes the people who have yet to be regenerated through faith in Jesus Christ). The fallen world is the result of sin, to fix the world, He has to fix sin, all of it. He will have to judge Satan (the god of this world) at that moment, which means the end of choices. When God fixes it all, that means that that person who would have accepted Him next week, or next month, or next year – will miss it on salvation because the day God fixes the world (and He will someday – Revelation 21:1), He will have to judge everyman at that moment on what they did about their sin (did they receive Jesus Christ or not). As hard as this is to grasp, it is really God's grace and love that hurricane, earthquakes, cancer and the rest of the ills of this world exist, because He is being gracious, desiring that none should perish and that all should seek repentance:

2 Corinthians 4:4 (NKJV) ⁴ whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

Revelation 21:1 (NKJV) Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.

2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV) ⁻⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

At some Point – God says Enough / Today is the Day of Salvation

At some point he will say enough, and for everyone who missed the opportunity, will miss it, and face eternity separated from Him in Hell; if you are here today and have not received Him as your Lord and savior, and have not dealt with and fixed the sin issue of your life, you will miss it.

Today!

2 Corinthians 6:2 (NKJV) ² For He says: “In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you.” Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

Not Best Life Today – not all Happy & Healthy / Try to fix Trial by Human Ways / Shallow

Now back to the point – you will not have your best life today. Some people will not accept that, they believe that if you are saved then all should be happy, healthy, and tingly. When the promised tribulation comes, they then do all that it takes to escape it. They will fix it by human ingenuity, they will fix by “making exceptions to God's word and His way”. They will look for the easy way, the comfortable way, any way to ensure they remain in a state of comfort. The scripture here says that tribulation produces perseverance, character, and hope. People who refuse tribulation, avoid it at all costs, will never then develop these three things in their lives – they will always be spiritually shallow, have stunted spiritual growth, and they will never get to the end result of tribulation in this life – to see and be filled more and more with the glory of God.

Perseverance – to prove Purity of Metal / Character = Reputation = Standing

Perseverance, meant to prove, and it was what they did when they wanted to test a metal (such as gold and silver) to prove its purity. Character, means “moral fiber”, what you are made of, It is synonymous with “reputation” for the two are inseparable. Reputation means ‘standing’ and here we are back at the word standing as we can stand face-to-face with the God of glory – and see all of His glory! And when He sees me through these times of tribulation, my hope strengthens because I see how His hand is upon my life.

Those who Won't – Never Produce (Perseverance – Character – Hope)

People who won't face a tribulation, even if they can't escape it, they just moan and complain all the way through it – will never produce perseverance, character, and hope. The opposite of hope, is despair, and so they live a life of despair ever time bad news comes, they don't live in the confidence of their almighty God. The opposite of perseverance, uncertainty, wavering, indecisiveness, and thus that person is left paralyzed by and with fear. The opposite of character? This is no antonym (opposite) for character – it simply what a person is.

*Matthew 13:20–21 (NKJV)*²⁰ *But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.*

*John 16:33 (NKJV)*³³ *These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”*

*Romans 8:35 (NKJV)*³⁵ *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

*Romans 12:12 (NKJV)*¹² *rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;*

Driven Nails

A Christian who was suffering under Communists once said, “We are like nails: the harder you hit us the deeper you drive us.”

What to do when in Tribulation – Use your Access

What am I to do when I am in these fierce trials you may ask? Use your access, hold up your “admission ticket” and get to the throne, get face-to-face, get to the ‘glory”

The Anchor Holds

The anchor holds, in spite of the storm my Christian brother and sister; anchor deep in His holy love and let the storm rage for God is doing His mighty work in you, anchor deep in the hope that we have.

*Hebrews 6:17–19 (NKJV)*¹⁷ *Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, ¹⁸ that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. ¹⁹ This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil,*

I don't like Tribulation – But recognize what God is Doing / Weight of It keeps me Steady

I by no means am saying I love tribulation, but I have learned to embrace because I recognize what God does in my life through it. But, I must also admit I have a tendency to enjoy the easy life, and I find I can easily become distracted in my life of ease, so the Lord allows the weight and pressure of tribulation in my life to ensure that I don't get swept away and stop seeking Him daily.

These Strange Anchors

The late Dr. Thomas Lambie, missionary to Ethiopia, had to ford many streams and rivers during his years in Africa. The danger in swollen waters was great, for one can easily be swept off one's feet and carried down the stream to greater depths or hurled to death against hidden rocks. Dr. Lambie learned from the nationals the best way to make such a hazardous crossing. A local person would find a large stone, the heavier the better, lift it onto his shoulder, and carry it across the stream as “ballast.” The extra weight of the stone kept his feet solid on the bed of the stream allowing him to cross safely without being swept away. Dr. Lambie said, “While crossing the

dangerous stream of life, enemies constantly seek to overthrow us and rush us down to ruin. We need the ballast of burden bearing, a load of affliction, to keep us from being swept off our feet.”
Psalm 94:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ *If I say, “My foot slips,” Your mercy, O LORD, will hold me up.*

Hope does not Disappoint

(Rom 5:5 NKJV) Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Does not Disappoint – Not an Illusion / The Hope of World an Illusion

The word used there in verse 5 for “disappoint” has also be translated to mean, “is not an illusion”. Our hope is not an illusion, it is sure and certain. The hope that the world has to offer, now that is an illusion, for how quickly we get something and are enjoying it and then it is gone.

Hope comes around full Circle

So hope comes around full-circle.

- We rejoice in hope (as we see the glory of God).
- We grow in hope (through tribulations)
- And, because of hope we are not disappointed; because through this hope the love of god is poured out, flows through our hearts.

1st Mention Holy Spirit – Pouring Love out in Our Heart

This is the first mention of the Holy Spirit working in a believer. And, we see the Holy Spirit pouring the love of God out in our hearts, as this is one of the works the Holy Spirit does in our lives. I love this word picture here, the Holy Spirit pouring buckets of love, agape love, and unconditional love out upon us. Oh may we get under the bucket, and say pour it out upon me Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit – Wash Over Us

Does the Holy Spirit convict of us sin and righteousness, Yes! Is the Holy Spirit our teacher? Yes! But let us never forget this word picture here, and call out to Him, Spirit, God in me, pour it out, pour out your love over me:

- wash over me (for love covers a multitude of sins),
- soak me (for thy word is a lamp unto my feet)
- refresh my dry and thirsty soul (Song of Solomon 2:5 – for we are lovesick for you).

Titus 3:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ *not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,* ⁶ *whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior,*

Song of Solomon 2:5 (NKJV) ⁵ *Sustain me with cakes of raisins, Refresh me with apples, For I am lovesick.*

(Rom 5:6 NKJV) For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

For – Instead Of

Verse 6 Christ died for the ungodly – the word there “for” means “instead of”; so Christ died instead of me.

(Rom 5:7 NKJV) For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.

(Rom 5:8 NKJV) But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

There is None Good

There are no good men to die for.

Romans 3:12 (NKJV) ¹² *They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one.”*

Tribulation squeezed between Mountains / Only Temporary – Inked / Remember Cross

It is no coincidence how tribulation (pressured, squeezing) is sandwiched before these mountains of God's great love statements. The father is saying pain is the normal in this life, but always remember the pain I took so that your pain is only temporary, for you have a heavenly and eternal calling, the peace treated has been inked with the indelible blood of My Only Begotten Son – It is Sure! And, when you are in are in a trail, and question My love for you, where I am at in your pain, remember the cross and you'll see and know how precious you are to me.

(Rom 5:1 NKJV) Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

(Rom 5:8 NKJV) But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Helpless – because Ungodly

Verse 6 – we were without strength (helpless) because we were ungodly

God Demonstrated (proved) – Screamed from the Mountain Top / 777 Meters

God demonstrated, proved, screamed from the mountain top, literally – Mt. Golgotha is 777 meters at its peak (7 the number of completion). His statement is complete, I Love You, the cross leaves nothing more to be said, His statement of love for you and I is complete!

Original Usage

I love to see how these original words were used in the day of their writing,

- This word “demonstrated” was used to mean to set together (I like that as Light and Love was so perfectly set together there upon the cross).
- It was used to bring together, as a friend introducing one to another (Jesus introduced us to the Father).
- It meant to “stand with” – (and Jesus stood and stands with us, even in our yuckiest)
- And it means “proof” – The cross of God, do we need any more proof of His love for us.
- One ancient writing I found written in AD25, the word was used in this following sentence, I am sure that I shall be introduced to the King. – and so we have!
- Another (written in 55BC) – A woman states she has appointed her grandson to act as her representative in a lawsuit. – Jesus has represented us and we have been acquitted (justified) of all guilt.
- Another (AD41) – wrote a, a trial has been arranged to find out your guilt or innocence.

Verse 8 – allows for Verse 9

Because of verse 8, verse 9 can be stated.

(Rom 5:9 NKJV) Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

Acquitted

Justified, acquitted, the charges have been dismissed, the wrath shall Passover.

(Rom 5:10 NKJV) For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Reconcile – Trade Places

Reconcile, means to exchange; Jesus traded places with us.

2 Corinthians 5:18–19 (NKJV)¹⁸ Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,¹⁹ that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

(Rom 5:11 NKJV) And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

We Rejoice in the Lord

We rejoice in the Lord – lets rejoice in the Lord today, tomorrow, through the week, and come back together next week and rejoice some more.

Therefore - These Things Being So

Adam by Birth – Christ by Choice (5:12-21)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (C12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

Mountain Peak / Propitiation – appease Wrath / Trade Places / Rom 3:23 – now Root of Sin

We finished our last study on a mountain peak, the glorious verse (Romans 5:8); Paul has taken us to the mountain to show us with all clarity of how much we are of value to God, that He loves us – even to the point that He was willing (and did) die so that we might be His. That Jesus would be the "propitiation" which means "to appease the wrath of.", that he would trade places with us by taking the wrath due us for breaking God's Holy Law, and that we in turn would get to trade places and become sons and daughters of God. For all have sinned (Rom 3:23), Paul has made that case over these past 4 chapters, he has shown every man is guilty (the religious man, the self-righteous man, and the wretched man – that all are guilty). Now Paul (under inspiration of the Holy Spirit) is going to take us all the way back to the root of sin, the beginning of sin, back to Adam in the garden.

Romans 5:8 (NKJV) ⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 3:23–25 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,

Why – Determine so as to Attack / We have Sin Nature – Need New Nature

Why? A couple reasons, there is always power in determining the root cause of a problem, so you can attack the problem at the root rather than the branches (which are merely symptoms); and in the case of sinful man, we must clearly see that our sin is the result of our sin nature (that which is born into us), we are not sinners because we sinned, but we sin because we are sinners (it is our very nature) – THUS, we need a new nature, a new birth, we MUST be born again!

John 3:3 (NKJV) ³ Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Also – Sets up Chp 6, 7, 12 / The Old Nature is Strong – But Free Gift of Holy Spirit

This passage of scripture sets up chapter 6, which sets up chapter 7, which sets up chapter 12; all flowing and speaking to us that the old man (our sin nature is powerful, it is strong, but through the free gift of the Holy Spirit we can overcome the old nature, overpower the old man, and live victorious Christian lives.

Romans 6:1–2 (NKJV) What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ² Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

Romans 7:24–25 (NKJV) ²⁴ O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Glove

If I had a glove laying here on the floor and I said glove arise, the glove would just sit there lifeless and helpless. If I said glove, lift this chair, the glove would just lay there limp. But when this glove is picked up, when this glove has life breathed into it, when this glove is filled (by my hand), this glove has power, because this glove is filled and controlled by the one who has power. I pray you have come here today to be filled, to be empowered, to be over-comers of the old man. How? By becoming less of you, and allowing more of Him in your life – thus it is not another Sunday, but a Sunday upon Sunday, and study after study, word by word, we are being shaped and conformed into His image by His Spirit through His Word that becomes flesh again and again in each one of us, transforming us by the renewing of our minds.

Romans 12:2 (NKJV) ² *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

Death in Adam – Life in Christ (1 man's Offense – One Man's Offering)

(Rom 5:12 NKJV) Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned;

Comparing & Contrasting

If you look through the verses, you see the word “one” lift off the page at you (12 times), for we will see a comparison/contrasting through the rest of this chapter; the contrast of one man's sin, compared to One Man's sacrifice for sin. To make the contrast come out, we will see the words “much more” three times, and we are also going to see 4 kings reigning in this passage, and as with every Bible study we get to respond in our hearts and decide which king will reign in us:

- Verse 14 – death reigning
- Verse 21 – sin reigning
- Verse 21 – grace reigning
- Verse 17 – (if you can believe it, you'll receive it) we will be reigning (those who believe).

(Rom 5:12 NKJV) Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned;

Notice 1 Man – Not Eve

Notice it says through one man (not one woman, nor two people) – Adam willingly and knowingly sinned, he was not deceived, he was not tricked, he willingly and knowingly violated the word of God which said you shall not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In 1 Timothy 2:14 he makes the point that Adam, unlike Eve, was not deceived, but sinned deliberately.

1 Timothy 2:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ *And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.*

Sin Entered – Passed Through

In the case of Adam, it was through one man that sin entered into the world. It is important to note that Paul does not say that sin originated with Adam but only that sin entered the world. To enter in, it had to be passed from somewhere, and it was – through the Evil One, Satan. Water is waiting to come into my house, through the water pipes, but it is only when I lift the spigot handle does the water flow. Adam lifted the spigot handle of sin, and there was a fountain head of sin behind it and there was no shutting it off at that point.

1 John 3:8 (NKJV) ⁸ *He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.*

Isaiah 14:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ *For you have said in your heart:*

*I will ascend into heaven,
I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;
I will also sit on the mount of the congregation
On the farthest sides of the north;*

¹⁴ *I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,
I will be like the Most High.*

Perfect World before Sin Entered / Adam removes all Excuses

So the world was perfect, before sin entered in, before Adam lifted the spigot handle of sin; Adam was perfect, before sin entered in. Adam's sin removes all excuses that a person may have.

People say.....

- **Perfect Environment** – if only I didn't live where I live I wouldn't be who I am, and I wouldn't do the things that I do – well Adam lived in the perfect environment and he still chose sin, it isn't our environment, it is our nature.
- **Perfect Parent (Family)** – if only I didn't live in the home that I do and have the parents that I have, I would be all sold out for God – well Adam had the perfect parent and the perfect family, and he still chose sin, it isn't our parents, it is our nature. Hey mom and dad, you with wayward children, quit beating yourself up, it isn't you, they are choosing to exercise their free-will just like Adam did.
- **Perfect Church** – man if only I could find an on-fire church, a better pastor, cooler Christians, then I would be all on-fire for the Lord and would be doing the things that I am doing. Well Adam had the perfect church and the perfect pastor, he had the most awesome fellowship hall in the universe (the Garden) and he still chose sin. It isn't our church, it is our nature.
- **Perfect Government** – If it wasn't for this government upsetting me with all their foolishness and wastefulness I would have peace and security, and wouldn't be so fired-up all the time, and I could spend more time with the Lord. Well Adam had the perfect government and the perfect president/king, yet he still chose sin. It isn't our government, it is our nature.
- **Perfect Job (with Perfect Boss)** – perfect job, perfect boss – need I say more, Adam tended to the Garden, and God was his boss. It isn't our jobs that shape us, it is our nature.
- **Perfect Mate** – perfect mate, ahh it is my spouse that keeps me from seeking the Lord, always causing me problems. Adam had the perfect wife (and she was perfect because she was the one God picked her out just for him), yet Adam still chose sin. It isn't our spouse, it is our nature.
- **Perfect Health** – if I wasn't me, if I was more beautiful, more fit, younger or older, healthier, not struggling with this health issue, I could focus solely on the Lord. Adam had perfect health, yet he chose sin. It is not our health, it is our nature.

Adam – mankind / Our Champion – Olympian / 400 meters

Adam lived in perfection, and he still chose sin, and so too would have we. Adam means "mankind". He was our champion, the best of the best. If the best couldn't have victory, than neither would have we if it was you or I in the garden. Once again I did not get selected to represent the USA Olympic Team, another disappointing year for me. Now I don't want to brag, but I am pretty fast. In fact I ran the 400 meters (a quarter mile) in under a minute, 57 seconds to be exact, now that is pretty fast. However, the US representative for the Olympics (Michael Johnson), he ran it in 43.18 seconds (the current world record). The equivalence is that when Michael crosses the finish line, I still have 100 yards to go (that is difference between those 14 seconds). God sent the best of the best to prove, that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

John Duncan / Adam was our Champion

My teacher in school, a pastor at a local church, just one of those cool guys (a hippie that got saved in the Jesus movement of the 70's). I remember him telling the story that when him and a bunch of his hippie friends got saved, they all were living under the stars, taking small jobs to get enough money for food, and then just spending the nights worshipping and praising the Lord. He said they all got a job picking apples at an orchard in California, and one day the owner said we are going to pick this area today, but see that one tree over there that has the fence around it, don't pick that tree, for that is a special tree we are trying to special cross-seeding to see if we can produce a better apple, so that is off-limits. We the owner had no sooner drove away, and they all looked at each other and said, we got to taste that apple. So John jumped the fence,

picked an apple, cut it up and passed it to the others, they all started to eat it, and then John stopped and looked at everybody and said, “we just did it again didn’t we?”. Adam was our champion, and he only did what we would have done.

In Garden – Adam created Body, Soul, Spirit / Breathed Lives / not pass Spiritual Life

Verse 12 - and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned – In the Garden when God formed Adam, He gave him body, He gave him conscience (ability to think and reason), and He gave Him spiritual life. It is fascinating to me that in Genesis 2:7, where it reads that God breathed into the nostrils of Adam the breath of life – in the Hebrew, it reads God “breathed lives” into Adam, “plural”. When Adam reproduced, he was able to pass on physical life (lives) unto his offspring’s (that is you and me – by the way a clear demonstration that life begins at conception), but because of the fall, he (Adam) was not able to pass on spiritual life (everlasting life) thus death spread unto every man, and thus every man dies.

Genesis 2:7 (NKJV) ⁷ *And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.*

(Rom 5:13 NKJV) (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

(Rom 5:14 NKJV) Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

Adam infused mankind with Death / God breathed into Adam / God infuses us with Life

Verse 14 - who is a type of Him who was to come - Adam passed on, infused mankind with death, but Jesus (for all who will receive Him) infuses us with spiritual life. Just as Adam lay their as a dead lifeless lump of clay, he became alive when the Living God went chest-to-chest, face-to-face, and breathed life into his being. So too it is, when we are dead in our trespasses and sin, a dead lifeless lump of clay, and the Living God comes to us, presses chest-to-chest, face-to-face, and by grace breathes life (spiritual life, everlasting life) into our being and we are made alive in Christ. Oh glory to the Lamb!

Genesis 2:7 (NKJV) ⁷ *And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being*

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

What? – not Imputed / Show me in Writing

What does this mean about “sin was in the world, but not imputed (counted) against man until the Law was given through Moses”? Simply, God wrote His Law upon every man’s heart (we know that from Rom 2:15), but when the Law had come down from Moses there upon Mt. Sinai, every mouth was stopped forever. We know the argument, hey what you did is wrong – oh yea, show it to me in writing where I am wrong! For the Lord, He says here you go – guilty!

Romans 2:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ *who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them)*

Difficult Passage

Now verses 12-21 have been considered by many scholars to be some of the most difficult passages in all the Bible to break down and fully explain (with clarity), and I totally agree. Let’s just read through first to get a flavor.

(Rom 5:15 NKJV) But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man’s offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.

(Rom 5:16 NKJV) And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification.

(Rom 5:17 NKJV) For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)

(Rom 5:18 NKJV) Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.

(Rom 5:19 NKJV) For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

(Rom 5:20 NKJV) Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,

(Rom 5:21 NKJV) so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Scripture like Eating a Cookie

Rich and deep indeed! But I kind of seeing Scripture like eating a cookie of you will. You can just bite in the cookie and thoroughly enjoy it. But if you are like my wife, she enjoys the cookie as she just simply eats it, but then somewhere along the line she says I wonder what the ingredients are in this cookie; and that is what we do every week as we go verse-by-verse, breaking the ingredients down of each verse, what does this mean in the original language, how was it used in that day and age, what were the customs associated with the cultural, etc, etc. Well today for our study I am going to enjoy the cookie simply.

Simplest Form – Comparing & Contrasting

In its simplest form, Paul is drawing the contrast, so we can clearly see the contrast between life and death, the first Adam and the Last Adam.

1 Corinthians 15:20–22 (NKJV) ²⁰ But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹ For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. ²² For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

1 Corinthians 15:45 (NKJV) ⁴⁵ And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

(Rom 5:15 NKJV) But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.

Verse 15 – the debit versus the gift.

Adam-Bomb / Rains Destruction – Jesus rains Grace

Adam, the ultimate Adam-Bomb, rained bombs of destruction on the human race; Jesus rains gifts of grace (unmerited, unearned, undeserving).

(Rom 5:16 NKJV) And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification.

Verse 16 – judgment versus justification.

(Rom 5:17 NKJV) For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.)

Verse 17 – death versus life.

If 1 Can mess it Up – How much more can the ONE fix it

If one man's action can affect the whole human race, how much more so can the action of One (Jesus Christ who created the whole human race) be able to save the human race. The world

(religious people) people struggle with this fact that One Person can fix the mess of sin, that there has to be more added on to it to make it right (good works, other people, other sacrifices), but this verse (which should be added to your Scripture Memory list) makes the statement – if it only took one man to totally mess up the world, then how much more so can only One Man fix it, since He holds the world in the palm of His hand.

(Rom 5:18 NKJV) Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.

Verse 18 – condemnation versus justification.

Pollutes - Purifies

Adam polluted us, Jesus purifies us; Adam washed out, Jesus washes us clean.

(Rom 5:19 NKJV) For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

Verse 19 – disobedience versus obedience.

Sin continues to Enter – Righteousness continually Offered

Through the first Adam's failure sin continues to enter the world (that speaks of you and me today); but through the last Adam (Jesus) makes us righteous (right before God), and thus gives us spiritual life, but only to those who call upon Him to become Lord and savior of their life. Don't be confused with the word "many" as it is used, it is used in a poetic sense to make the comparison and contrast; the facts have been established in 4 chapters, all have sinned and are guilty, but many (not all) can be made righteous if they accept the free gift of salvation through Jesus Christ and His finished works on the cross.

Romans 10:9-10 (NKJV)⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

All Roads don't Lead t New York

Many a people think all roads lead heaven, and they can just go along and it will all work out, and they will end up in heaven. That is amazing that people will apply that reasoning to their theology, but nowhere else in life. Last week I went to Brooklyn New York, and I did not get in my car and just start to drive figuring all roads lead to NYC. I got the map out, and I studied the map, to ensure that I knew the way to NYC. If you are here today, do not leave here until you are sure you have the direction to heaven.

(Rom 5:20 NKJV) Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,

Verse 20 – sin abounding versus grace abounding.

(Rom 5:21 NKJV) so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Verse 21 – sin reigning versus grace reigning.

Law given so Offense Magnified / Mushroom Cloud / See magnitude of Grace

The law was given so the offense would be clearly magnified, the mushroom cloud of sin, the magnitude of what we have done – so that we can see the magnitude of God's great love and grace, by giving us His only Begotten Son so that we might be forgiven and given, forgiven of our sin, and given new life, a new nature, to become a new man/woman.

Sin Abounds – Grace Abounds

Where sin abounds, grace abounds much more. Regardless of what you have done, or failed to do, the grace of God is enough, covers it abundantly.

Conclusion - Adam Knew the Lamb

Contrast Clear – Adam by Birth – Christ by Choice / 2 Doors / Life based on the Lamb

The contrast has been made clear through this passage, we are in Adam by birth, and in Christ by choice. In a subtle but clear way God is saying there are two doors before man, one leads to death and hell, and the other leads to life and heaven. Life and heaven based on one thing, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*

Genesis 3:21 (NKJV) ²¹ *Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.*

Eden means Delight / Delight is God prepared it

I believe Adam knew the work of the Lamb, as the Lord made a covering for he and Eve after the fall, no doubt out of a lamb (the first sacrifice for sin – would be like the last). Imagine Adam walked with God in the Garden of Eden; Eden means, "delight"; Eden was a delightful place to be. The delight wasn't the beautiful floral and tropical vegetation (as delightful as that was); the delight was that this is the place God had prepared for Adam, a place where God walked, a place where Adam and God would fellowship.

Worshipper / florist not a worker

Adam was to tend and keep it. One of the root meanings of the word "tend" is "worshipper". You see sin had not entered into the picture at this point. Adam wasn't trying to maintain the garden, fight back the thorns and thistles, Adam was a florist creating beautiful arrangements to be enjoyed. His labors were a joy, not a burden. Adam was making a beautiful garden sanctuary where he and his creator could fellowship and commune. A place Adam could worship his creator. But then the fall came, and everything changed.

Imagine growing Up

Imagine what it must have been like growing up being Cain and Abel for they didn't know what it was like to walk with God the way their father did. But still living in the Garden must have been something for the four of them

Look what I found / Adam not Excited

They had this incredible garden for a playground. I could imagine them bringing home giant grasshoppers, turtles, baby animals, and giant mangoes. Mom, dad, look what we found, isn't it cool. Mom would do what mom's do, ohh boys that is great, wow good job. But, Adam, I would imagine Adam saying (in an unexcited way) that's cool boys, real cool. They would say mom what is up with dad, why does he act so weird some times, how come he doesn't get excited about stuff like this.

Adam never the Same Again / Living in the Light

You see after the fall I believe that Adam was never the same again, how could he!. There really is no mention of Adam walking with God again in the cool of the day like he did before the fall. Adam would always be living in the light of, "I remember what it was like before the fall.". He would remember walking side by side with the Father, talking, laughing, asking, that sweet communion and fellowship. But after the fall, things would never be the same, Adam was now living in a fallen state, subject to the consequences that came with the fall.

Adam would take the Lamb

Things of this world wouldn't excite him anymore, how could they after he had walked so close to the Father. The boys probably thought it strange when every now and again he would pick up a lamb and head into the woods, alone, to go be with his Father. Eve would say, boys give your

father some time alone. Then Adam would come back with peace and contentment on his heart, but it would always be temporary. Why do I believe this as I do? First because I believe Adam understood the prophecy of Genesis 3, which through Eve would come the Savior. But more so, because I believe that anyone who has truly ever walked with the Lord, spent time in His presence, knows this one thing -***But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,*** and their life will never be the same, and they will always be looking for the Lamb.

Genesis 3:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ *And I will put enmity
Between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her Seed;
He shall bruise your head,
And you shall bruise His heel."*

(Rom 5:20 NKJV) *Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,*

Chapter 6

Know, Know, Know; not No, No, No! (Romans 6:1-11)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (C12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

Knowledge is Power

Knowledge is power, and in the next three chapters Paul by inspiration of the Holy Spirit will use the word "know" some twelve times (in eleven verses) to bring that point out, and to empower the believer, for when we know the mind and will of God, we have power in our lives to walk this walk, and live this life, of the new man or woman in Christ, no longer slaves to the old man, and the way the old man (nature) thought. We've been born-again, and with that washing comes newness of life.

Romans 6:3 (NKJV) ³ Or do you not *know* that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

Romans 6:6 (NKJV) ⁶ *knowing* this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

Romans 6:9 (NKJV) ⁹ *knowing* that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.

Romans 6:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Do you not *know* that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?

Romans 7:1 (NKJV) ¹ Or do you not *know*, brethren (for I speak to those who *know* the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?

Romans 7:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ For we *know* that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.

Romans 7:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ For I *know* that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.

Romans 8:22 (NKJV) ²² For we *know* that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.

Romans 8:26 (NKJV) ²⁶ Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not *know* what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Romans 8:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ Now He who searches the hearts *knows* what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Romans 8:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ And we *know* that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

Breaking New Ground

Here, we come to a new section and break new ground in our study through the Epistle to the Romans. Chapters 1 through 5 dealt with justification (Just-as-if-we-never-sinned). In chapters 6 through 8, the emphasis switches from the positional truth of justification to the practical truth of sanctification. To be sanctified means to be set apart. Because we are justified positionally, we

are sanctified practically. That is, we are set apart to be used by the Lord, and to become more like the Lord.

- *Romans 1 through 5 tells us we are dead **in** sin.*
- *Chapters 6 through 8 tell us we are dead **to** sin.*
- *Chapters 1 through 5 tell us we are free from the **penalty** of sin.*
- *Chapters 6 through 8 tell us we are free from the **power** of sin.*

Preaching Grace produces loose Living

Thus, we have arrived at one of the most powerful and potent passages ever penned by the apostle Paul. Paul masterfully and persuasively made his point in the first five chapters that salvation is apart from works. But this causes problems for people who say, "If you preach grace, people will live loosely unless you lay down the law, and tell them what to do and how to think." In chapter 6, Paul will address that issue as he presents his argument to those who insist that grace leads to loose- living.

2-fold Argument

Paul will make a two-fold argument against grace being a danger. All too often, Christians try to fight sin by preaching, "No, no, no." Paul's method was to teach, "Know, know, know." He said,

- Know you have a new identification with Jesus Christ (verses 3–5).
- Know you have liberation and power through Jesus' Cross (verses 6–23);

Shall we Sin – so Grace Abound? – NOT!

(Rom 5:20 NKJV) Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,

(Rom 5:21 NKJV) so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(Rom 6:1 NKJV) What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

(Rom 6:2 NKJV) Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

Next 3 Chapters – Series of Q&A / For Building & Explaining Truths / Knowing!

In the next three chapters to come, Paul is going to build a series of questions and answers, with each question producing an answer, which produces another set of questions. Thus a continual building and explaining to bring out the truths of God in a believers' life, to build on our knowing so we can build on our living (living for Him).

- **(Rom 6:1 NKJV)** What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?
- **(Rom 6:15 NKJV)** What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!
- **(Rom 7:7 NKJV)** What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "**You shall not covet.**"
- **(Rom 8:31 NKJV)** What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

Question meant to be Ridiculous

Verse 1 the question (meant to be ridiculous) is asked if we should (can) sin as we desire because grace abounds (Paul says certainly not – that's ridiculous). His answer was: "By no means!" (v. 2a) ("May it never be," NASB; "Of course not!," TLB; "God forbid," KJV; "No, no!," NEB; "What a ghastly thought!" Phillips). As ridiculous as it is meant to be, Paul poses it because he knows that some will try to apply it to their lives so they can live in the flesh.

Paul addresses this Mentality with Church in Corinth

Paul address that mentality very clearly in his letter to the church at Corinth who was winking at sin, and in some cases promoting it by not addressing it directly; Paul says that if you can continue to live habitually in sin, have no repentance, that the person needs to examine themselves to see if they are actually saved, for they may be deceiving themselves. Is that you today?

2 Corinthians 13:5 (NKJV) ⁵ *Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.*

For Believers – Paul address Powerful Spiritual Truths / Knowing!

Now, for the believers here today, Paul is going to go on here and address some powerful spiritual truths (Knowing), so that we might put that knowledge into action and have power in our lives today. We don't need to wait for heaven (glorified bodies) to start living victoriously.

Positionally – Past Tense / How work Practically

Positionally (from God's perspective) we are justified, sanctified, and glorified; but how does that work our practically in our lives in our present form (not our new heavenly bodies)? Paul will now explain that Christ has broken the penalty of sin in our lives, but He also broke the power of sin over our lives.

- To be able to claim that power, apply that power, wield that power – we have to “know” (be taught), **(Romans 6:1-11)**
- and then take that knowledge and reckon (the old man dead – believe that it is possible),
- and then live a life “yielding” to God. **(Romans 6:12)**
- So the knowing deals with our minds, the reckoning deals with our hearts, and the yielding deals with our wills. **(Romans 6:13-21)**

All Starts with Knowing

It all starts with the “knowing”, and the knowing comes from reading this word.

Survey

I came across this article in a California newspaper a few years back (by Jeffery Haydon – Orange County Register), it was a survey of “*Main Line Protestant Clergy in America*”, and it was rather large, so the sampling is more than statistically qualifying (7441 Ministers Surveyed) –

Do you believe Jesus Christ physical resurrection as a fact:

- 51% Methodist ministers said no,
- 35% Episcopalian ministers said no,
- 33% American Baptist ministers said no,
- 30% Presbyterian ministers said no,
- 13% Lutheran ministers said no.

Do you believe in the virgin birth of Jesus

- 60% Methodist ministers said no,
- 44% Episcopalian ministers said no,
- 34% American Baptist ministers said no,
- 49% Presbyterian ministers said no,
- 19% Lutheran ministers said no.

Do you believe the Bible is infallible word of God

- 87% Methodist ministers said no,
- 95% Episcopalian ministers said no,
- 66% American Baptist ministers said no,
- 82% Presbyterian ministers said no,
- 77% Lutheran ministers said no.

Paul said “Know” / So we can be set-free

Paul said “know”, we need to know these things if we are to be set free and live the lives that Christ wants us to live. God honors His word above His name, and heaven and earth are going to pass away, but not one jot or tittle of the word will pass away. It is important to add, that it is not just reading His word, but do we actually believe it, for the knowing comes when we believe it, not just read it.

Psalm 138:2 (NKJV) ² I will worship toward Your holy temple, And praise Your name For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.

Matthew 24:35 (NKJV) ³⁵ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

I make no Apologies

And I make no apologies for teaching this word, chapter-by-chapter, and verse-by-verse. For the power is in the knowing – Do what you know, and you’ll know what to do!. I received just recently one of my greatest compliments in all my years of ministry, “that I say the same thing week after week, and that I talk too much about Jesus”. We pick up every Bible Study, right where we left off, we are learning of Him (the Word that became flesh), and thus - Do what you know, and you’ll know what to do!. The power is in the knowing – and Paul develops that ever so powerfully here in chapter 6, and then he builds on it through chapters 7-8. I thank God for this Word, for it has changed my life, and it is transforming my mind daily!

The Picture of Baptism (Dead to Sin – Alive to God)

(Rom 6:3 NKJV) Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

(Rom 6:4 NKJV) Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

(Rom 6:5 NKJV) For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,

Our Identification w/ Christ is Symbolized in Baptism / Placed in / Change Identity - Adam

Our identification with Jesus Christ is symbolized by baptism. Baptism is being placed into something, and we are being placed into Christ. Baptism means to “change identity” remember we are trailing on the close of chapter 5 where we were likened to Adam (sin nature by birth), but likened to Christ (new nature by choice).

Desert Strom

An army chaplain reported his amazement at the large number of Desert Storm soldiers who gave their hearts and lives to Jesus Christ, then asked if they could be baptized. To accommodate their requests, a wise pastor used the only “baptismal” available in the middle of the Saudi Arabian desert: a coffin—a potent and perfect symbol of the death, burial, and resurrection of which baptism is a picture.

Paul – when Baptized received new Identification / Not necessary for Salvation

“Know this,” Paul said. “When you were baptized, you received a new identification. Dead to your old life, you became publicly linked to Jesus Christ through baptism.” Does one have to be baptized to be saved? Ask the thief on the cross, to whom Jesus said, “Today you’ll be with Me in paradise” (Luke 23:43). There are those who say, “Unless you are baptized in a specific manner, your salvation is invalid.” Not true. Anyone can be saved without baptism, for salvation is by faith alone in the work of Jesus Christ on the Cross. The role of baptism simply serves as an outward symbol of an inward commitment.

Chuck Colson

Chuck Colson tells of an event that took place when Russia was still very much closed to the gospel as a group of Christians meeting secretly in the basement of a home outside Kiev heard a knock on the door. Because they refused to answer the knock, suddenly the door was kicked in,

and two armed KGB officers walked into the room. “This meeting is illegal,” they thundered. “If anyone wants to deny he’s a part of this Christian movement, he can leave right now. If you stay, however, you must be willing to pay the price and suffer the consequences.” With terror on their faces, two or three left the meeting, after which time, the KGB officers said, “Anyone else want to join those who left?” No one did. “Keep your hands up,” they said to those who remained, “and we’ll put our hands up and worship the Lord with you. You see, two weeks ago, we broke into a group like this one and we got saved. But as KGB officers, we know that if people are not fully committed to Christ, we cannot trust them in our company.”

Baptism – Going Public

Baptism is a marvelous way of getting Christians out of the spiritual closet. And Paul refers to this by saying, “Know this: when you were baptized, you were identified with Jesus Christ and a new way of living.” Baptism is “going public” letting the world know (as the song goes), the cross before me, the world behind me, no turning back, no turning back. We will be having a baptism here in the summer, and you can make that public profession yourself.

Prayer – Burying

But one thing I know, your heart has been moved by His word today, and even though you’ve already been baptized, you want to bury the sins of the past week, month, maybe even morning! Let’s do that right now in prayer – if you want a fresh cleansing, a fresh anointing, let’s do that right here, right now, for the Father desperately wants to hear and meet with you over the matter.

(Rom 6:6 NKJV) knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

(Rom 6:7 NKJV) For he who has died has been freed from sin.

(Rom 6:8 NKJV) Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

(Rom 6:9 NKJV) knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.

Claim Verses 6-9 because of Verse 5 (we United) / Sin & Death in Adam – Life in Christ

We can claim verse 6, because of verse 5, we are united (like Him) not only in death, but in the power of the resurrection. Sin and death has reigned through Adam, but since Christ came into the world grace and life reigns (our study in chapter 5).

(Rom 6:5 NKJV) For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,

Ephesians 1:19–20 (NKJV) -¹⁹ and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power²⁰ which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

2000 Yrs ago – Sin Nature Crucified / “Katargeo” – Paralyzed / Old Sin nature can only Yell

Verse 6 - that the body of sin might be done away with, - When Jesus died on the Cross two thousand years ago, something incredible happened. My old sin nature was crucified with Him. Katargeo, the Greek word translated “done away with” in this verse, means “rendered inactive” or “paralyzed.” It doesn’t mean “annihilated.” Therefore, when your old sin nature screams, “You’ve got to take that smoke, pour that drink, toy with that fantasy, lose your temper, or gossip”—Paul says that, although he can yell, he is powerless to act, since the Cross paralyzed him from the neck down.

Flesh Paralyzed – but Sure can yell / Battle going on Within Us

The flesh is paralyzed, but it sure can scream loudly can’t it. So loud I will go and pick it up, and help it move. Chapter 6 begins the discourse of this battle that is going on in our within us each day (the Spirit versus the flesh).

Galatians – Flesh battling against the Spirit

Paul says in Galatians that the flesh wars against the Spirit against the flesh. There is no third choice, one of those two wins out at each decision we make, and there are no ties either. Paul

says in verse 17 that they are contrary, and that word means “entrenched”, it is a military term meaning the forces are dug in for a fight, and neither is going to give up ground with a fight.

Galatians 5:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Walk in Spirit – not fulfill the Flesh

Notice he says if you walk in the Spirit you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh; many Christians misunderstand that verse to mean that if we don't fulfill the lust of the flesh we will walk in the Spirit – that isn't what is being said here, he said “Walk” in the spirit and we won't fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Old Indian – 2 Dogs Fighting

An old American Indian tells the story, "Inside of me there are two dogs (a black dog and a white dog). One of the dogs (the black one) is mean and evil. The other dog (white) is good. The mean black dog fights the good white dog, all of the time." When asked which dog wins, he reflected for a moment and replied "The one I feed the most."

Good News – Dead men don't Wrestle

Here is the good news, and it is a counter of verses 1-2, freely sinning because we are under grace, but we know that isn't true because when we sin we have that struggle within us, our conscience convicting us, thus why we felt freedom and cleansing when we stopped and prayed a few minutes ago. Charles Spurgeon said “dead men don't wrestle”. That is the good news, and that is that you wrestle against the flesh – that means you are alive. Those who don't wrestle against the flesh, have this so-called “clear conscience” even when they are performing habitual sin, are dead. If I dropped a 100 pound barbell on you it would hurt; now if I dropped that same 100 barbell on a corpse at the funeral home around the corner, the corpse wouldn't feel a thing – for he is dead. Dead men don't wrestle; praise the Lord you are struggling, fighting to do right, for dead men don't wrestle. The fight is evidence that you have been born-again!

How do we Walk in the Spirit – Not no, no, no – But Know, Know, Know

How do we walk in the Spirit then so that we might resist the flesh you may ask? It is not “no,no.no”, but “know, know, know”. I am glad you are here today feeding the white dog!

(Rom 6:10 NKJV) For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

Cross Complete

Verse 10 - He died to sin once for all - In other words, the work of the Cross was complete, and every promise that goes along the cross is complete too.

Don't just be Content to be Saved

Verse 10 - but the life that He lives, He lives to God - Don't just live content that you are saved, but that you may live in the newness of life, a life transformed.

(Rom 6:11 NKJV) Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Reckon (Count it Up) – You are Dead to Sin

The word logizomai, or “reckon,” is an accounting term. “Add it up,” says Paul, “and the answer you'll arrive at will be that you are dead to sin.”

We will still Struggle – but not a Habitual Lifestyle

Does this mean that we will no longer sin, no – the struggle will last until like Jesus we put off this earthly body, and step into our eternal bodies. The scriptures say we will still sin, but it won't be a habitual lifestyle.

1 John 1:8–10 (NKJV) ⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

1 John 2:1 (NKJV) ¹ My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

2 Corinthians 13:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.

I sin because I want to – Not because I have To!

When I sin it is because I am stupid and I want, not because sin has the power over me that I can't refuse. It is because I am stupid and foolish.

Know-Know-Know / The Battleground is in the Mind / Must take Thoughts Captive

It is knowing, knowing, knowing! The knowing is our mind, and thus we see where the battle begins and ends, it begins in the mind, the actions are only the playing out of what the mind has already determined is going to happen.

2 Corinthians 10:5 (NKJV) ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

Sow a Thought Quote

Sow a thought and you reap an action; sow an action and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny.

Key to New Man – to Think Differently

One of the keys to the life of the new man is the way we think, we need to think differently, and the key to thinking differently is “knowing” We need to have the mind of Christ, and that comes by knowing.

1 Peter 1:13 (NKJV) ¹³ Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

Learned Behavior

We need to reprogram our minds from the stuff we have been taught in the world (by our parents, by the movie industry, by the people who mentored us like teachers and coaches), for it is amazing how many of our actions (based on our thoughts) were things we learned from them, and then started doing them ourselves, even after we were saved. I remember one day totally acting out in anger over something someone had done to me. Later that night driving home I started rehashing the whole things in my mind and then I just came to the place where I said, that really doesn't bother me, I really don't care about that, so why did I react the way I did? Then I realized, it was just what I watched my whole life, it was learned behavior – when someone does this, you react and act this way, because if you don't, they'll keep doing it, and so you got to react like this to show you mean business. It was all just learned behavior, I didn't have to be a slave to that any more, I can react according to the Spirit of the Living God that has taken up residence within me.

1 Corinthians 2:14–16 (NKJV) ¹⁴ But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵ But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. ¹⁶ For “who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

2nd – Stop thinking in it – for you give it Life when You Do

Secondly Christian, don't dwell on those things, and I mean those things that “call out” to you, come and lift me up, breathe life into me. The more you think on it, the more you are reviving it, you must take each thought into captivity. Here is how it works (say you have a struggle with drunkardness): I am not going to think about drinking today, I am not going to think about drinking today, I am not going to think about a tall glass of beer, I am not going to think about a tall glass of beer fishing with my buddies, at our favorite fishing hole, drinking our favorite beer. It is just a matter of time before you go out to the garage and load up your fishing gear and swing by the packaging store. Why, because you gave life to the thought, and you let it grow – you feed the

black dog! I used a cute example, because a lust example, or anger, hatred, gossip, and slander examples were too graphic.

2 Corinthians 10:5 (NKJV) ⁵ *casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,*

Take Thought Captive – Dwell on Christ

Take the thought captive, then get into the word (the knowing), and let the mind of Christ work in you, and you do that by dwelling on the word that became flesh:

Colossians 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

Philippians 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ *Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.*

The Emancipation Proclamation (Set Free)

Romans 6:11-21

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (C12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "*The just shall live by faith.*"

Video Song – “Free” by Steven Curtis Chapman

Emancipation Proclamation

On September 22, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln made the “Emancipation Proclamation” that set all slaves free.

.....And by virtue of the power, and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States, and parts of States, are, and henceforward shall be free; and that the Executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

Executive Order / Romans 6 – the Christians Emancipation Proclamation

The “Emancipation Proclamation” was an executive Order issued from the highest authority in the land, and it was law! And so we come to our study here in the Book of Romans, the “Emancipation Proclamation” for all Christians, you are free, you are no longer slaves to sin. Now just as 150 years ago not everyone was happy to hear about this proclamation, a war broke out over it; well there is a war raging over God's Executive Order, His Emancipation Proclamation that we have been freed from sin, and today we will not only read the proclamation of our freedom over sin, but we will hear God's life changing word on how you and I can secure the victory of this war going on against us trying to keep us from enjoying the freedom that has been declared unto us.

(Rom 6:17 NKJV) But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.

Let's be Honest

I'll be honest with you, if you'll be honest with me, there are things that we agree we are tired of being slaves to isn't there? Are you tired of the chains, are you tired of the beatings, are you tired of the cruel taskmaster? Let's do something about it – today!

(Rom 6:11 NKJV) Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Reckon (Count it Up) – You are Dead to Sin

The word logizomai, or “reckon,” is an accounting term. “Add it up,” says Paul, “and the answer you'll arrive at will be that you are dead to sin because of the Cross of Christ”.

Don't try to Rehabilitate

So many Christians because they don't know (in their mind), they think they can rehabilitate the old man, fix him up and make him presentable) – rather than crucifying him, reckoning him dead,

Circus Elephant

Have you ever seen a circus elephant tied to a small wooden stake outside a circus tent? That grown elephant could easily rip the wooden stake out of the ground. But when elephant handlers

are training baby elephants, they use a strong iron anchor bar and drive it deep into the ground. When the baby elephant tugs and tries to get away, he can't and experiences the pain of the shackle on his leg. Finally, he gives up and stops pulling. Gradually as the elephant grows up, they replace the iron anchor bar with a wooden stake. That's why the grown elephant doesn't pull away; he doesn't think he can, so he can't. It's not the stake in the ground keeping him in place; it's the thought in his mind that keeps him there. One of the devil's greatest tools is to try to erect a stronghold in your mind to make you think you can't do something God has told you to do. In our minds today we have to settle the issue, the old man is dead, he no longer has power over me!

Do not let Sin Reign in your Body – Do not be a Slave to Sin

(Rom 6:12 NKJV) Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.

Mortal Bodies / Flesh Paralyzed

Verse 12 – your mortal body – We are not in our regenerated perfect bodies yet, that comes in heaven, thus we have this war against this mortal body. However, as we studied last week, *Verse 6 - that the body of sin might be done away with*, - When Jesus died on the Cross two thousand years ago, something incredible happened. My old sin nature was crucified with Him. Katargeo, the Greek word translated “done away with” in this verse, means “rendered inactive” or “paralyzed.” It doesn't mean “annihilated.” Therefore, when your old sin nature screams, “You've got to take that smoke, pour that drink, toy with that fantasy, lose your temper, or gossip”—Paul says that, although he can yell, he is powerless to act, since the Cross paralyzed him from the neck down.

(Rom 6:6 NKJV) knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

Sure can yell / Battle going on Within Us

The flesh is paralyzed, but it sure can scream loudly can't it. So loud I will go and pick it up, and help it move. Chapter 6 is the discourse of this battle that is going on in our within us each day (the Spirit versus the flesh).

Screams – Lust / Lust not Mysterious – Means to Crave / Take every thought Captive

Verse 12- that you should obey it in its lusts - It screams loudly, that scream comes in the form of lusts. That word lust can carry such a lofty and mysterious connotation to it, so simply put – craving! Lust is that craving in our bodies, our minds, that makes us start to think about something, then start to want it more, then act upon that want (whether it just entertaining it in our minds, or actually physically engaging in it). If you missed last week's study about taking every thought captive, you must go back and listen to that recording – God's word was really moving on this issue.

2 Corinthians 10:5 (NKJV) ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

Go Ahead

So we start to crave something:

- go ahead let that anger out, it feels so good to let that person have it,
- or make that call ohh the juicy-juicy of gossiping it feels so yummy,
- or take a look, just a peek, that is totally eye candy
- Bud Light and 12 of my old buddies are calling
- It's Columbian Gold, doesn't get better than that.
- Go ahead, just click-it!

Consumed by Their Own Lust – Paul Harvey

Radio personality Paul Harvey tells the story of how an Eskimo kills a wolf. The account is grisly, yet it offers fresh insight into the consuming, self-destructive nature of sin. First, the Eskimo coats his knife blade with animal blood and allows it to freeze. Then he adds another layer of

blood, and another, until the blade is completely concealed by frozen blood. Next, the hunter fixes his knife in the ground with the blade up. When a wolf follows his sensitive nose to the source of the scent and discovers the bait, he licks it, tasting the fresh frozen blood. He begins to lick faster, more and more vigorously, lapping the blade until the keen edge is bare. Feverishly now, harder and harder the wolf licks the blade in the arctic night. So great becomes his craving for blood that the wolf does not notice the razor-sharp sting of the naked blade on his own tongue, nor does he recognize the instant at which his insatiable thirst is being satisfied by his OWN warm blood. His carnivorous appetite just craves more—until the dawn finds him dead in the snow!”

Our Cravings will Consume Us

Our cravings eventually consume us, thus why we must take every thought captive before the cycle begins.

2 Corinthians 10:5 (NKJV) ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

Sow a Thought Quote

Sow a thought and you reap an action; sow an action and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny.

(Rom 6:13 NKJV) And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

(Rom 6:14 NKJV) For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Camden Presents

Verse 13 – present - I love it when my three-year old come to me with what he has found; he presents it to me, here daddy, or look daddy, or help daddy as he presents it, hands it to me. Simply, that is what the Lord is saying here for us – bring that thing, present that thing, hand that thing to Him, and He will take it. Dad, I need help with this, as we extend that thing to Him:

- Lord, this anger that is within me, I present it to You, help me!
- Lord this sexual lust, this craving, that is within me, I present it to You, help me!
- Lord, this lack of faith that I have in You, I present it to You, help me!
- Lord this tongue, I can't get it under control, I present it to You, help me!
- Lord this desire for alcohol, drugs, I present it to You, help me!

As Instruments / Only One set hands produce Melody of Righteousness

Verse 13 – as instruments – an instrument is something that is used in the hands of another. There are only one set of hands that can make us produce the song of righteousness, and that is the Lord. Into Thy hands I commit my Spirit (as Jesus said, so too should we). When we are fully in the hands of the Father, what a beautiful melody is produced. It is all dependant on whose hands we have presents, yielded, committed ourselves to. If I take this guitar and play it for you today, you will be greatly looking forward to when I stop; but take that same guitar and place it in the worship leader's hand, and you will rise to your feet and begin to worship the Lord. Same instrument, just different hands.

Luke 23:46 (NKJV) ⁴⁶ And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, "Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit.'" Having said this, He breathed His last.

Take that Thing & Present It / Commit the whole Instrument

Take that thing, those things, and present them to the Father and say take them, I commit them to You – and watch and enjoy the beautiful melody that is produced in your lives. Commit the whole instrument, not 95%, not even 99%, commit it all, give no foothold to even 1% for the Evil one or your flesh, be sold out for Jesus today. Is there something that needs to be present to the Father? Then let's present it right now before we move on from here in our study.

Prayer - Presenting

Under Grace – the Power is in the Grace / Access to the Throne / Help in time of Need

Verse 14 - For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace –

Notice here, the power for victory over sin is grace. Grace isn't the power to sin and be forgiven, grace is the power to overcome sin! Why? Because grace gives me access to the throne of God, to freely come, to freely present that thing or those things regardless of how yucky they may be, we can bring them and the Lord say wonderful – let me help you with them.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

(Rom 6:15 NKJV) What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!

(Rom 6:16 NKJV) Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?

People say I hate that Sin / I hate Brussels Sprouts – Love Oreos

People tell me all the time how they hate that sin that they keep doing, but that is a total lie. If they hated it they wouldn't do it. I hate Brussels sprouts, I utterly hate them – and guess what you'll never find me doing, that is right, eating Brussels sprouts. Now I hate what Oreo cookies do to my physique, this apple walking around on two sticks; now I hate what the Oreos do to my body, but I don't hate the Oreos, in fact I love them for the taste so good. A person may hate what the sin is doing to their life, but they don't hate the sin, in fact they love the sin.

FACT – that sin more Attractive to us than Jesus Christ

Here is a fact that is going on with a sin in our life that we won't let go of, and that is that the sin has become more attractive to us than Jesus Christ is.

Who you Slave to? / Most Attractive? / Presenting to?

Who are you a slave to today? What is the most attractive thing in your life? To whom are you presenting yourself to?

Major Misunderstanding – Power not Automatically Applied / Doesn't Overpower / Weak

Let me add here, you know one of the major mistakes, misapplication of the believer in Christ is? The thought that the power of God in our life is automatically applied and flowing in our lives we are saved. The Holy Spirit (the power of God) is received the moment we believe, but the Spirit only moves in power at our request (because the was going on within us, called freedom of choice), the Spirit is power, but the Spirit doesn't over-power us, but waits for us to "present" and say "help". Even being saved, we are just as weak as we ever were, the ability to defeat sin on our own, but now we have the power to help aid us, but we must call out to Him.

Galatians 5:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.* ¹⁷ *For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.* ¹⁸ *But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.*

We have to Cooperate / Take the trash to the Roadside

We have to cooperate with the Lord. Every Monday I have to take the trash to the roadside, for the waste management folks don't come into my kitchen to pick it up. They only take what I place out at the curb.

Power is in Grace – for it Provides Access

The power is in the grace, because it provides us the access to boldly come before the throne of God and present what needs to be dealt with:

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

(Rom 6:17 NKJV) But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.

New Testament / Delivered to Us – Delivered Us

Verse 17 – to which you were delivered – this doctrine (the New Testament Gospel) it was delivered unto us, and once received it delivered us;

1 Corinthians 15:3–4 (NKJV) ³ For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,

Word Picture – the Pouring of Steel / We being Formed into Image of Christ

Verse 17 -, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered -

Form – the word picture is that of steel that has been melted into a hot molten liquid and poured into a form so it will take the shape of the form. The doctrine spoken of is the doctrine of the New Testament, and it was shaping and forming them into the image of Christ. What is being formed in us, Christ!

Colossians 1:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

The Power! – Christ in You / Don't Spend Life trying not to Be – But Who you Are

Listen Christian, the power is Christ in you. The Christian life is not trying to become what you are not (I'm going to spend my time making sure I don't sin, trying to not do those old things and bad things) . The Christian life is experiencing what you are—in Christ, and the other things will come, hence why we spend so much time here studying who we are in Christ, knowing what He thinks of us, for “knowledge is power” as we studied last week. Knowing that Christ is coming to us in our time of need.

Hebrews 13:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” ⁶ So we may boldly say: “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?”

Genesis 28:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.”

Captain Ed Freeman

True story - you're a 19 year old kid. You're critically wounded and dying in the jungle somewhere in the Central Highlands of Viet Nam. It's November 11, 1967. LZ (landing zone) X-ray. Your unit is outnumbered 8-1 and the enemy fire is so intense, from 100 yards away, that your CO (commanding officer) has ordered the MedEvac helicopters to stop coming in. You're lying there, listening to the enemy machine guns and you know you're not getting out. Your family is half way around the world, 12,000 miles away, and you'll never see them again. As the world starts to fade in and out, you know this is the day. Then - over the machine gun noise - you faintly hear that sound of a helicopter. You look up to see a Huey coming in. But ... It doesn't seem real because no MedEvac markings are on it. BUT, Captain Ed Freeman is coming in for you. He's not MedEvac so it's not his job, but he heard the radio call and decided he's flying his Huey down into the machine gun fire anyway, even after the MedEvacs were ordered not to come, He's coming anyway. And he drops it in and sits there in the machine gun fire, as they load 3 of you at a time on board. Then he flies you up and out through the gunfire to the doctors and nurses and safety. And, he kept coming back!! 13 more times!! Until all the wounded were out. No one knew until the mission was over that the Captain had been hit 4 times in the legs and left arm. He took 29 of you and your buddies out that day. Some would not have made it without the Captain and his Huey. Medal of Honor Recipient, Captain Ed Freeman, United States Air Force, died last Wednesday at the age of 70, in Boise, Idaho .

Jesus wounded & Shot / He came & keeps Coming / He is getting us All Out!

If that story impresses you, then apply this, this illustration is only a glimpse of an application of Jesus Christ in your life. He was wounded for our transgression, he was shot for our iniquity, but He kept coming, and no commandments were going to keep us from Him, from Him rescuing us. And he didn't stop on one successful rescue, He keeps coming, and coming, every time we are in

need – and nothing will stop Him from coming. No battle need defeat us, for all we need to do is call for “our help in time of need”.

Becomes Slaves of Righteousness – Slaves to God!

(Rom 6:18 NKJV) And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

(Rom 6:19 NKJV) I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.

(Rom 6:20 NKJV) For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.

(Rom 6:21 NKJV) What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

(Rom 6:22 NKJV) But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

(Rom 6:23 NKJV) For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

It's a Gift – Grace is a Gift

Notice that it is not the wages of God, but the gift of God – because it is all about grace.

Paul uses Familiar Analogy / 120 million

Verse 19 - I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh - Paul is saying I am using this slave/master analogy as an illustration you can all understand. But oh what an analogy they could understand. History tells us there were 120 million citizens in the Roman Empire at the time of this writing, and 60 million of them were slaves.

Many became Free – Never want to be Slave Again

The history books account that many slaves became free. Paul is using the slave analogy that they were very familiar with, and that is every slave longed to be free, and those who became free never wanted to be a slave again.

We do well to Remember our Life as Slave / No Fruit

We would do well to remember where slavery had us, recognize that sin never produced any fruit in our lives, and only killed things. Closing application, let's apply the life of a true slave who was made free.

Application / Time & Distance

First, how far and how fast do you think they got from their cruel slave owners do you think they got when they finally got freedom? Do you think they just moved next door, across the street? You can be sure they put some time and distance between them and their former masters. The application is clear and easy for us, we must do the same. Christian, give no time to those former slave masters:

- Take every thought captive
- Don't give those thoughts time, crush them immediately. Your bed may be comfortable in the morning, but if you find your thoughts drifting into those old nature thoughts, you need to get up get moving.
- If that clicking starts the mind thinking, you need to get up and get moving.
- Think the slave went and visited his old taskmaster, had coffee with him? Should you?
- Think the slave spent time reliving the past? Oh woo is me? They went out and started living, enjoying their new found freedom. So to should we, quit living in the past.

Distance

Not just the time but the distance, and that means you will have change locations, and maybe routes.

- Not going to go to those places that enslaved me before. The power within me isn't on auto-pilot, and you and I both know it is hard to hear the Pilot in those places as His voice gets drowned-out by all the noise around us.
- You may have to change your usual route. You may have to quit getting your morning coffee at that certain place, or you may have to reroute the paths you take past that certain someone at work or school, you may even have to quit that thing you love so you no longer are taking that route.

Get out both Physically & Mentally / Flee to Savior / Some Good Places

Like the slave that was made free, get yourself out of that place both physically and mentally. Where am I to go you may ask, run into the arms of the Savior. Some good places to run to:

- Here at the Church is good
- Coffee with that beloved in the Lord is good (guys with guys – gals with gals)
- In the morning, run to your devotions
- Run to the Woman's & Men's Fellowship
- Run to the Tuesday Night Prayer Meeting
- Bottom line is get up, get out, and getting moving away from those places that enslave you.

Secondly – Slaves Freed by Master - Partnership / It is the Law of Sowing / Find Ministry

Secondly, we have a new master, and we are gladly enslaved to Him. How interesting it is as I researched the Roman Empire that some freed slaves went into partnership with their owner, and I think you can see the parallel I am making, and that is that we should be in partnership with the one who freed us, Jesus Christ (Satan would never let you free). It is the law of sowing and reaping, so start sowing with the Lord, find out what field the Lord is working in and come sow some seeds with Him. Christian, it is imperative that you find a ministry to get involved in (regardless of your age). First it will reduce the "extra" time you have on your hands that you spend going other places, secondly it will consume some of your "thought" time that may have been thinking of other things, and thirdly you

I know what you are Thinking

Christian, I know what you are thinking, I think it all the time – I will, but just not right now. I will when my kids are old enough (they are my ministry), true but I believe you need to minister in another man's field too, because someday you'll need someone to help you in your field, and it is a law of sowing and reaping. You may say I will, as soon as I get my work schedule in balance, or as soon as I get out of school, or.....

It's the Law of Sowing / Start Sowing godly Seeds

It's the law of sowing and reaping, so start sowing, sowing seeds, godly seeds, and apply this quote (not the negative) but this time in the positive to all that we looked at in this study – and watch Christ do a great and mighty work in your life.

Sow a Thought Quote

Sow a thought and you reap an action; sow an action and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny.

John 8:36 (NKJV) ³⁶ Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

Chapter 7

I know your struggle says the Lord

Romans 7:1-25

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (C12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

Recap / 1-5 Justified / 6 No Longer Slaves – Grace allows us to Boldly Come

In chapters 1-5 we saw that we are justified through the finished work of Jesus on the Cross, and in chapter 6 we saw that we are no longer slaves to the "old man", we need not be in bondage to our old sin nature, that the power over sin (every sin, every moment-by-moment sin) has been provided for us as we can now boldly come before the throne of grace in our time of need, and God will help us.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Chp 7 – by Divine Design – God Knew / Legalism & Self Condemnation

Well, chapter 7 is divinely and strategically placed here by the Lord, for all this great news, hey we've been justified of our sin (just-if-I-never-sinned), we've been cleansed from our wretched sinful past (gone and forgotten), we can boldly go to the throne of grace in our time of need (for grace provides us access to present our needs); with all that great news, God knew two things we would need to hear that we are free of, and that is the freedom from legalism, and the freedom from self-condemnation. You see invariably, because we've been made perfect, we will have the tendency to try to maintain this "perfection" by keeping all the rules, and thus we will place ourselves under the bondage of legalism (and most usually everyone else around us), and when we fail (which is a guarantee), we will then beat ourselves up, condemn ourselves, and say how could we do the things we do.

Galatians 3:3 (NKJV) ³ Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?

God knows it is Coming / He says – I understand your Struggle

Well, this is a beautiful chapter because God knows it is coming, and thus He says in this chapter (now listen clearly Christian), He says, "I understand your struggle, and I want you to KNOW that I understand it – you don't need to beat yourself up when you fail".

1st Up – Legalism / Not back under the Law

First up, legalism, with the death of the Law, came the death of legalism the Lord is telling us in verses in 1-14, we need not put ourselves back under the Law and beat ourselves up when we fall short of the Holy standard of the Law, the Lord is saying I understand your struggle, I understand how bad you feel when you fail, but come hear My heart on the matter.

We are Free from the Law (Illustration of Married woman whose husband Dies)

(Rom 7:1 NKJV) Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?

Brothers – written to Believers

Verse 1 - Or do you not know, brethren – Brethren (brothers), Paul is talking to believers all the way through this chapters, and that is important because want to try and place the context of all

of chapter 7 is speaking of unbelievers, but Paul says (brothers). This is vitally important when we get to the second half of this chapter and Paul is talking about the sinful struggle going on within him.

(Rom 7:2 NKJV) For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. (Rom 7:3 NKJV) So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. (Rom 7:4 NKJV) Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another; to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.

OT – Wife Couldn't Divorce

According to Old Testament law, a husband could divorce his wife, but a wife could never divorce her husband. Paul uses the analogy to say, "You were married to the law, and there's no way you could get away from it."

Applicable to Marriage

Now Paul isn't teaching on marriage here in this passage, but the illustration he is using concerning marriage are true and applicable to and for the doctrine of marriage.

We were Married to the Law – Judge by It – Till someone Died

We were married to the Law (10 Commandments), and we would have been judged according to the Law, until someone died. The Law did not die, the Law is still alive and applicable (Jesus did not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it), as every man is subject to the Law (10 Commandment). The person, who died, is us, and we are free from that marriage to the Law. **James 2:10 (NKJV)** ¹⁰ *For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.*

Matthew 5:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.*

(Rom 7:5 NKJV) For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death.

(Rom 7:6 NKJV) But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.

We are Dead to Performing – Free to Live Newness of Life (Chp 8) / Christian Life

God is saying we are dead to performing to the law, we are now free to live by the leading of His Spirit (which is the exciting topic of chapter 8). Now let it be known, I am not preaching freedom to sin (nor is Paul), but freedom from sin, the calling to live in the newness of the Spirit, the newness of life in Christ. The Christian life is not trying to become what you are not; The Christian life is experiencing who you are in Christ!

High School Football

When I played high school football, my favorite games (if you can believe it) were the games where we were getting blown-out. You know why? Because tight games, I played tight, I played cornerback and was always worried about getting burned for the long one. So I would play tight (maybe better said up-tight), I would play conservative, I was always afraid of making a mistake. But in the games where we were getting blown-out, I felt totally free, I was unhooked, I took chances, I went for interceptions instead knocking the ball down, I went for knock-out hits throwing my body into the runner, not the "plant your feet, square your shoulder, eyes on the waist". Let me tell you, if the way I played when we were getting blown out, was the way I played always, I would have made All-County, All State, and All American. Too bad for me, too bad for my team.

We can do the Same – Spend time focusing on NOT Failing / Good Morning Lord

Christian, we can do the same in our spiritual lives; we can spend so much time focusing on not failing, that we are no longer focusing on the “Unfailing One”. We live all bound-up, all uptight, robbing ourselves of enjoying the “newness of the Spirit, the newness of life”. The amazing thing about my football career was I played great football when I was more focused on playing the game, then when I was worried failing. We will live our best Christian life when we quit dwelling on the “not failing aspect”, and simply dwell and enjoy “the walk” with the Lord. When we live such as: “Good morning Lord, what is our plans for today, what shall we read today and You’ll teach me? Where are we going together, who will you bring along my way? Thanks for my salvation, thanks for holding me, thanks for loving me”. When we live off-the-hook, looking at Jesus, not looking at not failing, guess what? – because you are “hooked with Jesus”, you’ll find yourself enjoying and experiencing that victory over not failing that you so desperately desire.

Not becoming What Not – But who we Are In

The Christian life is not trying to become what you are not; The Christian life is experiencing who you are in Christ!

The Law is Good – The Law is Holy

(Rom 7:7 NKJV) What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet."

Paul thought Doing Good – Outwardly / Covetousness gets under the Skin

Paul thought he was doing pretty good, because he was so good “outwardly” as he tells us in Philippians, but he said when he finally came to the understanding what covetousness meant, he became guilty before the Holy God. A man can keep a great front up in the outward appearance, but covetousness gets under the sin, goes right to the heart.

Philippians 3:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Paul Reinforces – Purpose of the Law

Paul reinforces again what he has spoken consistently throughout this letter and that is that the purpose of the Law is to show man his guilt before the Holy God, and the need for a Savior. The Law shows God’s standard, and that is perfection.

Romans 3:19–20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. ²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Galatians 3:24 (NKJV) ²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Christ not Sweet until Sin made Bitter

The Law shows us the bitterness of sin, and thus Christ will not be made sweet, until sin is made bitter.

(Rom 7:8 NKJV) But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead.

(Rom 7:9 NKJV) I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.

Law written on Heart – Came to Surface

Paul is saying I thought I was pretty good until the Law of God (that was written on my heart) revealed to me what a sinner I really was (the covetous one dealt the death blow).

Romans 2:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them)

A Time sin didn't convict Paul / The Day – Road to Damascus / Coveting Prestige

Paul is saying that there was a time in his life when he didn't fully grasp the 10 commandments, that he could sin and have no ill feelings about it, if anything he is saying I felt good about it (alive – living it up). Paul's conscience did not sear him, did not convict him, but then there was a day when the understanding of the Commandments came. We saw that day come when he saw Jesus on the road to Damascus. Paul's covetous heart was enjoying the power, recognition, no doubt 'adornment' he was receiving from the Jewish leaders and community as went about persecuting the church. He was enjoying the praises of men, he coveted it, but then he met Jesus on the way. A man or woman can think a lot about themselves, until they truly see themselves in glorious light of Christ, and then all the things we thought of ourselves come into their true focus.

Acts 9:3–6 (NKJV) ³ As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. ⁴ Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" ⁵ And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads." ⁶ So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

The Law is Good – Does what Design to Do / However – not Performer – but Presenters

The Law is good, it does exactly what it was designed to do. However, it isn't meant to make us performers, but presenters, Lord I need help with this!

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

(Rom 7:10 NKJV) And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death.

Commandment never Compliments – Only Condemns / Pulled over by Police

The Commandments never compliment, all they ever do is condemn. When you are cruising down the motorway, enjoying the ride, then the red lights come flashing, and you immediately look at the speedometer, or the inspection sticker, or at the glove compartment wondering if your registration and insurance card are with you. Imagine, there you are sitting in your car waiting, then the police officer walks up to the car and says, I just had to pull you over and tell you what a great driver you are, I mean the way you accelerated and merged perfectly into the traffic as you came on the entrance ramp, and then I watched you use your blinker to change lanes, how you were right on the speed limit, I just had to pull you over and say you are an inspiration to us all. No, the Law condemns, it never compliments us.

Imagine being Married to Mr. Perfect

Imagine being married to Mr. Perfect. You wake up. Lying next to you is your husband, Mr. Perfect. His breath is mint-fresh and not a single hair is out of place. His pajamas are pressed, and even the sheet over him is unruffled. He's perfect, and he's your hubby! "Good morning," he says as he gives you a perfect peck on the cheek. Then, with amazing energy, he bounds out of bed with a smile on his face, goes to his closet, and takes out his perfectly tailored suit with his perfectly white starched shirt, and perfectly matched tie. He dresses himself impeccably, puts his belt around his perfect-sized waist, and goes into the kitchen to make his breakfast. He has no coffee, no sweet rolls, no eggs, and no cholesterol. He has granola with skim milk, and tomato juice to drink. Finished with breakfast, he picks up his bowl, rinses it out, puts it in the dishwasher, and sets the timer. Then he gives you another peck on the cheek, and out the door he goes to work. He drives perfectly—not one mile over the speed limit, nor one mile under, stopping for pedestrians along the way. At work, he fulfills his tasks to the letter. Then, at 5:00—not 4:59, not 5:01 he finishes cleaning up his spotless desk, walks to his car, and drives home. As you greet him at the door, you're again amazed that you had the good fortune to marry Mr. Perfect. But as he walks into the house, he stops and looks at you rather quizzically. You realize he's looking at your hair because there's a strand out of place. Then he goes into the kitchen, and, being a perfect six feet four inches tall, he notices dust on top of the refrigerator. "How can this be?" he wonders. Panic begins to fill your heart, and anguish begins to set in until you remember that you fixed a fabulous meal. As he sits down to dinner, you bring out the six-course meal you prepared, the aroma filling the room. But as you uncover the entree, you realize your husband, Mr. Perfect,

is staring at the parsley, which, to your dismay, looks a bit wilted. As he reaches for something to drink, your heart sinks as you see a spot on his glass. The evening goes downhill from there, and you go to bed, thinking, Yes, I'm married to Mr. Perfect—but he's driving me crazy. This goes on until you become filled with so much tension and anxiety that you decide it was a mistake to marry Mr. Perfect. "I want a divorce," you say. "On what grounds?" asks the judge. "My husband is perfect," you answer. "Request denied," declares the judge. "Perfection is not grounds for divorce." You go your way thinking you can't last a moment longer, when suddenly you'll just kill him. So the next day, as he's reading the paper, you pour a bottle of arsenic into your husband's celery juice. You wait with anticipation as he takes a sip and two and three. Your anticipation turns to amazement as he asks for seconds—until you remember that he's in perfect health. His kidneys filter out the poison totally.

Law pointed out Every Flaw / Now we are married to Mr. Love

We were married to Mr. Perfect, the Law, and that Law pointed out every flaw in our being, it was a cruel marriage, and the only way out of that marriage was that someone dies, Mr. Perfect can't die (because he is perfect), so the only way out of that marriage was that we died, and so we have as we have been crucified (dead and buried) with Christ, and PTL - we are free to remarry – and now we know better, and rather than marry a Mr. Perfect, we marry Mr. Love, the One who doesn't condemn us, but compliments us. He says "I understand your struggle, and rather than condemn you over your imperfections, I am here to compliment you and help you overcome.

(Rom 7:11 NKJV) For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me.

(Rom 7:12 NKJV) Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.

The Continual Balance / The Law is Good – Law is Heart of God

The Lord continually balances here, the Law may condemn, but it still is good. The Law of God is good, for the Law of God is the heart of God. Christian, God gives us His commands to protect us and to provide for us. The commands of God are to protect us from the harm that sin does to us, and also to provide us with a healthy and whole life. The Law of is good, for the Law of God is the heart of God, we see the Law in the Lord's Prayer:

Matthew 6:9–13 (NKJV) ⁹ In this manner, therefore, pray:

- **Our Father** (Ex 20:3 - "You shall have no other gods before Me)
- **in heaven**, (Ex 20:4 - "You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of *anything* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth)
- **Hallowed be Your name**. (Ex 20:7 "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold *him* guiltless who takes His name in vain.
- ¹⁰ **Your kingdom come**. (20:8 - "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy)
- **Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven**. (Ex 20:12 - "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you
- ¹¹ **Give us this day our daily bread**. (Ex 20:15 - You shall not steal & Ex 20:17 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that *is* your neighbor's."
- ¹² **And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors**. (Ex 20:13 "You shall not murder)

- **13 And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one.** (Ex 20:14 - "You shall not commit adultery & Ex 20:16 "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.)
- **For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

(Rom 7:13 NKJV) Has then what is good become death to me? Certainly not! But sin, that it might appear sin, was producing death in me through what is good, so that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful.

(Rom 7:14 NKJV) For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.

Verse 14 – Paul clearly proclaims – Still has Carnal Nature / Catch This – Paul saved 25yrs
Paul, in verse 14, clearly proclaims that he still has his carnal nature. In verses 15-25, Paul now is going to give a long and deep dissertation on the continual struggle that he has going on inside of him. Anyone here today that has been saved longer than 15 minutes can relate to that struggle. But catch this before we read these verses, the man Paul making these statements is the Apostle Paul, and he has been saved somewhere around 25 years. He had a dramatic conversion, meeting Jesus on the road to Damascus, he is the greatest apostle of all-time, the greatest evangelist of all-time, and the greatest author of all-time (writing 13 of the 27 books of the New Testament), and yet he is the one penning these words, telling all of us – that even he struggled greatly with the battle raging within his body.

If saved 1 Year – New Believer / Paul's Position of Prominence – I recognize your Struggle

If he had been saved 1 year and wrote this we would all be thinking, yep the struggle of a new believer, but the fact that he is writing these words some 25 years after his conversion, from the position of prominence that he has within the Church, makes these statements powerful. These words are placed here by the Divine design of God, they go beyond Paul relatable to us, this passage is the Lord screaming out to you today, "I recognize the struggle within you, I understand the struggle within you,

What I will to Do – I do not Do / But what I Hate – I Do

(Rom 7:15 NKJV) For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do.

What was I Thinking

Verse 15 - For what I am doing, I do not understand - Easy to relate this one with Paul. That constant struggle to control our thoughts and tongue, and we let them get on a roll and roll they do, and after they play out, that think we were craving, that thing that consumed our thoughts, consumed our actions, when it plays itself out, and we come back to our senses, we feel yucky, and we say – what was I thinking, how did I allow myself to get carried away with that. I must have been out of mind.

(Rom 7:16 NKJV) If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good.

(Rom 7:17 NKJV) But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

(Rom 7:18 NKJV) For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.

Can't Rehabilitate Flesh

The flesh can't be rehabilitated, it just needs to be burned up, for there is nothing good there, there is nothing to try to salvage.

(Rom 7:19 NKJV) For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice.

(Rom 7:20 NKJV) Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

Not my New Nature – but Old Nature

These things I do, they are not my new nature, it is my old nature, the old me.

(Rom 7:21 NKJV) I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.

(Rom 7:22 NKJV) For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.

(Rom 7:23 NKJV) But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

New Nature loves what Right – Delights in Law – Knows it is Good for Me

My new nature loves to what is right, I know that God's word is for me, and I delight in the Law of the Lord for it guides me so as to protect and provide for me, but this flesh keeps struggling against what I know is good.

Psalm 1:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; ² But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. ³ He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper.

O Wretched man that I am – Who can Deliver Me

(Rom 7:24 NKJV) O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

(Rom 7:25 NKJV) I thank God; through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

Wretched – Weary Soldier

This word here for wretched was used for a soldier who was fatigued from the battle. Paul says this continual struggle is exhausting. I say thank God Paul you are still in the battle, for dead men don't wrestle.

Convicted 1st Degree Murder

In Paul's day, the sentence of a man convicted of first-degree murder could be to be tied to the body of his victim. Often, the stench alone would kill the murderer. It is possibly this Roman practice to which Paul is referring when he cries, "Who will free me from the failures, shortcomings, and sinful tendencies I'm forced to drag behind me wherever I go?"

Jesus cuts the Cords

I thank God for Jesus Christ – who came and cut the cords of the dead corpse that we were tied to, as He sets us free.

Son and the rock

One day a father was out in the field with his young son, and came upon a large boulder, a hundred some pounds heavier than his son. He said son I want you to move this rock 10 feet, and the son began to push and heave, but the rock wouldn't move. The father said son are you doing all you can do to move that rock? The son said yes dad as he pushed and tugged. The dad asked again, son are you doing everything you could possibly do to move that rock, and the son in exasperation says yes dad I am. The dad says, no you are not son, you've done everything you can, except ask me to help you.

Grace provides Access – Knowledge is Power / I understand / Not Mr. Perfect – Mr. Love

In our last study we saw that power for the victory came through grace, because grace gives us access to the throne to present that "thing" that we need help with; and as we studied we saw that "knowledge is power", and these are the things God wants us to know, and He wants us to know – that He understands the struggle, so don't struggle with the struggle, don't think God is going to

say (again – are you kidding Me!), but come to me with that, present that to Me, and let me help you deal with it – for you are no longer married to Mr. Perfect, but Mr. Love.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

Chapter 8

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus (8:1-17)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (C12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Swiss Alps

Chapter 8 starts with a Swiss Alps statement, a pinnacle of God's love towards us as He states - *There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.*

Our Position allows this Verse to be Written / Justified – Sanctified - Glorified

Our positional position, is what allows this verse to be written (we are in Christ). Because of our position, the God who calls things which do not exist as though they do, means because we are in Christ He can say we are justified, sanctified, and glorified – even while we still live in this sinful mortal body.

Romans 4:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *(as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed—God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did;*

God sees Finished Work / Justified (1-5) – Sanctified (6-8) – Glorified (8:37-39)

God looks upon us, and sees Christ finished work on Calvary and sees our sins "passed over", justified, just-as-if-I-had never sinned (chapters 1-5). We are sanctified because of the continual work of Spirit setting us apart from this world (chapter 6-8). And we are glorified because He who began a good work in us will be faithful to complete it (chapter 8 – nothing (no one or nothing we have done) shall separate us from the love of God)

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) ⁶ *being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;*

Romans 8:37–39 (NKJV) ³⁷ *Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.* ³⁸ *For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Chp 7 – The Struggle / Wretched Man

Chapter 7 was all about the struggle within us, as we, like the Apostle Paul struggle with the flesh warring against our Spirit, the struggle of desiring to do what is right, but often times failing and falling so far short. Paul ends chapter 7 with

(Rom 7:24 NKJV) *O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?*

(Rom 7:25 NKJV) *I thank God; through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.*

8:1 (No Chapter Breaks) – No Condemnation / Here to Help your Struggle

And God says in verse 1 (remember no chapter breaks in the original manuscript) I know your struggle, and I don't condemn you over it, and in all of chapter 8 God will tell us, I am here to help you in your struggle that I know you struggle with. Let's start in verse one, and take a look at this tremendous passage of scripture.

[There is no Condemnation in Christ \(who walk not in Flesh – but Spirit\)](#)

(Rom 8:1 NKJV) There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

Therefore – Chapters 1-7 (Base Faith Alone) / Judicial Setting – Opp of Justification

The result or consequence of the truth just taught. Normally it marks the conclusion of the verses immediately preceding it. But here it introduces the staggering results of Paul's teaching in the first 7 chapters: that justification is by faith alone on the basis of God's overwhelming grace, no condemnation. Occurring only 3 times in the NT, all in Romans (5:16, 18), "condemnation" is used exclusively in judicial settings as the opposite of justification. It refers to a verdict of guilty and the penalty that verdict demands. No sin a believer can commit—past, present, or future—can be held against him, since the penalty was paid by Christ and righteousness was imputed to the believer. And no sin will ever reverse this divine legal decision

Not in Earliest Manuscripts

Verse 1 - who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. - (The words "who walk not according to the flesh ... etc." do not belong here according to the best manuscripts. There are no conditions for us to meet.) The basis for this wonderful assurance is the phrase "in Christ Jesus." In Adam, we were condemned. In Christ, there is no condemnation! Those two phrases (**who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit**) will be thoroughly expounded on in this chapter, but in the earliest manuscripts those two phrases were not there, and it was in the later manuscripts where the translators were trying to bring more clarity to the verse. It is not an error (it is just a difference – as a difference between the KJV and the NIV translations), nor is it a contradiction (for it is fully developed in the chapter).

Romans 8:1 (KJV) ¹ *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

Romans 8:1 (ESV) ¹ *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*

Romans 8:1 (NIV) ¹ *Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,*

Note; Chuck Missler: ["Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." was added in KJV from v.4. Not in any of the original reliable texts—all the oldest manuscripts agree. It first appears around the 6th century; not in manuscripts in the 3rd and 4th century. Added by either scribal error, or misguided attempt at smoothing the transition to v.2. Yet this would promote a contradiction to all that has gone before.]

I Struggled with this Verse / From Qualifier to Statement / I know Struggle – No Condemn

I agree with the earliest manuscripts. You see I struggled with this verse, continually, all the way up to this week as I continually (as reading it the KJV) saw this as a qualifying statement! If you don't walk in the flesh, but the Spirit, then there is no condemnation. Thus, I would continually put the burden on me – oh as long as I am not in the flesh, there is no condemnation, but then as soon as I would get in the flesh, then I had to say, I've brought condemnation upon myself, God has to pronounce a sentence upon me for my failure and/or rebellion. But based on this truth of the earliest manuscripts, I can rest that this is not an and/or qualifying statement, but just a clear declaration by the Gracious Loving God, as it flows from chapter 7, "I know your struggle, but I do not condemn you, I pass no sentence upon you for and when you fail – hear ye, hear ye - **There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.**

Correction versus Condemnation

Christian when you do fail, never confuse correction with condemnation. When we correct our children it is because we love them and want to develop and grow them into greater things, not because we want to have bitterness and wrath towards them.

Hebrews 12:5–6 (ESV) ⁵ *And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. ⁶ For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives."*

In Christ Jesus – Key to Verse

Verse 1 - in Christ Jesus - The key here to escape condemnation, and be in His arms of love is – “in Christ Jesus”. How do you get “in Christ Jesus”? By His grace, and our faith, by asking Him to become your Lord and Savior, as we have studied in depth in chapter 1-5.

Galatians 3:26 (KJV) ²⁶ For ye are all the children of God by faith *in Christ Jesus*.

Ephesians 2:4–6 (KJV) ⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, ⁵ Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;); ⁶ And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places *in Christ Jesus*:

Chapter 7 – No Self-Condensation – Yoke of Law / Doesn't say no Failing

Verse 1 - There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus – Chapter 7 told us not to put ourselves under self-condemnation for failing, not to put the yoke of the Law (perfection) around our neck. Verse 1 here says there is no condemnation, it does not say that there are no failings, no mess-ups, no sinning, but there is no condemnation. If God does not condemn us, then how be it that we should ever condemn ourselves or others.

Christian Huge for walking in Freedom / Feel Condemned (Flesh, World, Satan)

Listen Christian, this is huge for you daily walk, your victorious life, don't condemn yourself in your failings, lock these words into your mind (in the earliest manuscript), hear this declaration from the Most High God - ***There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus***. If you feel condemnation, then know it is either your flesh, the world, or Satan, but it is surely not Jesus Christ. Condemnation will keep us from running to the Savior in our time of need, even when we have failed miserable by our own willful sin, that is the time all the more that we need to run to the Savior, saying help me. We need verse 1 of chapter 8 locked into our hearts by faith, that even after we fail, God is yelling out to us – Come!

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Prayer – Father I know there are those here today who have and continually condemn themselves for their failings, for their short-comings, they fell You are upset or angry with them, they feel defeated and that things can't be sweet and freeing with You because of something they have done, Father I pray that You will speak to their heart right now, let them - ***There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus***. Amen!

(Rom 8:2 NKJV) For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

Chapter 8 – The Spirit Unleashed

The Spirit, who was mentioned only once in chaps. 1–7 (cf. 1:4), is referred to nearly 20 times in chap. 8. Chapter 8 is the unleashing of the Spirit in the believers life.

- The Spirit - Frees us from sin and death (2-3);
- The Spirit - Enables us to fulfill God's law (4);
- The Spirit - Changes our nature and grants us strength for victory over our flesh (5–13);
- The Spirit - Confirms our adoption as God's children (14–17);
- The Spirit - Guarantees our ultimate glory (18–30).

The Spirit - Frees us from sin and death (2-3);

(Rom 8:2 NKJV) For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

(Rom 8:3 NKJV) For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,

The Spirit frees us from sin and death.

Law of Spirit supersedes Law of Sin and Death / Gravity - Aerodynamics

The law of sin and death still exist even after we are saved, but the law of the Spirit supersedes the law of the sin nature. Something that might help us understand this is an airplane. Two principles operate when a plane flies: the law of gravity and the law of aerodynamics. A plane can get off the ground because the law of aerodynamics is stronger than the law of gravity. When the plane is in the air, gravity is still there, and if the engine stops the law of aerodynamics will not keep the plane from crashing. Although the law of sin and death is still present, the law of the Spirit supersedes it, and thus we as Christian can fly. Though our mortal bodies may die (the law of sin and death), we have eternal life through the law of the Spirit. Celebrate your salvation today, regardless how rotten your week has been, keep it in the context that you are saved, forgiven, and heaven bound!

1 Corinthians 15:54–55 (NKJV) ⁵⁴ So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."⁵⁵ "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"

The Spirit - Enables us to fulfill God's law (4):

(Rom 8:4 NKJV) that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

What we couldn't Do – Jesus Did / God sees us as Perfect in Law – In Christ Jesus

What we could not do in the flesh, Jesus did when He traded places with us. When God looks at us, He sees us as if we fulfilled the Law perfectly, never failing in one point, because when He looks at us He sees not us, but His Son who fulfilled the Law perfectly, because the key statement (we are in Christ Jesus).

Great Power Unlocking – See how Jesus did It / Jesus beat Devil as Man controlled Spirit

Now for us here today there is a great unlocking to this same power for victory over sin, and that is to see how did Jesus do it. Jesus beat the flesh, the world, and the Devil – as a man filled (under the control) of the Spirit. When Satan came to tempt Jesus in the wilderness, we see Jesus respond in the Spirit.

Do you want Victory? / Learn how to Respond in Spirit / How – we will Develop

Do you want victory, of course you do or you wouldn't come here week-in-and-week-out, then learn how to make every response to what comes before you every day, in the Spirit. Notice I say daily, we must walk in the Spirit daily, and we must make "every" response for each moment of the day, in the Spirit. How? We will develop that over the rest of our study, building brick upon brick.

Galatians 5:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

First – Set Minds Above

First, we are told to set our minds on things above (verses 5-13), and the Spirit will change our nature and give us strength for victory over sin. Notice I didn't say "give us victory", but give us "strength for victory", for we have to cooperate with the Spirit and what He desires to do in our lives.

Colossians 3:2–3 (NKJV) ² Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. ³ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

The Spirit - Changes our nature and grants us strength for victory over our flesh (5–13):

Not Carnal Christian versus Spiritual Christian

Listen to ten sermons on verses (5-13) and half if not more will say this is talking about the carnal Christian versus the spiritual Christian. It is not hard for me to see how they came to that application, but I do not believe that is the exact point; I believe when you read all of the versus together it reads as the unsaved person versus the saved. Paul is using the unsaved to draw out

the comparison/difference of the saved. You see verse 8 is going to say that those in the flesh cannot please God, verse 9 will say you are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if (or can be translated – since) the Spirit of God dwells in you.

I have Bias in my Teaching

But I do recognize that I have a very distinctive bias in my teaching and counseling ministry. I had decided long ago that the focus of my ministry was to lead Christian to higher ground, that I was always going to focus on how have life and that more abundant. I was never going to spend valuable time dissecting the Scriptures so as to determine from a theological position how close the Christian can get to the world, and still be saved.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

Are there Carnal Christians? / Examine Self

Are there carnal Christians, I think so, my counsel to any Christian who is living in habitual unrepentant sin – you need to examine yourself to see if you are really in the faith. I think Paul does a great job here in the next 9 verses of making people examine themselves and ask themselves if they are really in the faith.

2 Corinthians 13:5 (NKJV) ⁵ *Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.*

Set your Mind on Spiritual Things (not Carnal)

(Rom 8:5 NKJV) For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

(Rom 8:6 NKJV) For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

(Rom 8:7 NKJV) Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

(Rom 8:8 NKJV) So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

(Rom 8:9 NKJV) But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

Nothing more to Say about verse 8

Verse 8 - So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. - there is nothing more to comment on that verse, for to do so would diminish the sting of the statement, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

What are Works of Flesh

What are the works of the flesh

Galatians 5:19–21 (NKJV) ¹⁹ *Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹ envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

2 Timothy 3:1–5 (NKJV) ¹ *But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: ² For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, ⁴ traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!*

1 Corinthians 6:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ *Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.*

Dwells – to make at Home

Verse 9 - But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you -

Dwells - Refers to being in one's own home. The Spirit of God makes His home in every person who trusts in Jesus Christ.. When there is no evidence of His presence by the fruit He produces (Gal. 5:22, 23), a person has no legitimate claim to Christ as Savior and Lord.

The Linden Tree Story

This week I had to replace a tree in the front of my house, and to make it uniform with the rest of the neighborhood it had to be like the rest of the trees in the neighborhood. Now when I went to the nursery I could have described the tree. Imagine how that would have went? Well it has branches, bark, and green leaves. They would have been like ok that explain every tree in the world (oak, maple, pear). So what did I do, I brought one of the branches from the tree. When I gave it to the person in the nursery they looked at the leaf, and said oh a heart-shaped leaf with little jagged edges, this is a Linden Tree. Just as Jesus said of us:

Matthew 7:18–21 (NKJV) ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Therefore by their fruits you will know them. ²¹ “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.

Dead men Don’t Struggle

Remember, dead men don’t struggle, and God says I understand your struggle. But to those who don’t struggle, means they are clearly living for satisfying their flesh, and they cannot please God. So the application for victory is to set our minds on the things above.

1st Application for Victory - Set Your Mind on Things Above

To set our minds means to fix our minds, therefore we are called to fix our mind on the things above. Set our minds on the things spoken in the verses below. How do we do that, we will discuss that at the end of our study today.

Colossians 3:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. ² Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. ³ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

Philippians 4:8–10 (NKJV) ⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. ⁹ The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you. ¹⁰ But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity.

Galatians 5:22–26 (NKJV) ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. ²⁴ And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

(Rom 8:10 NKJV) And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

(Rom 8:11 NKJV) But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

(Rom 8:12 NKJV) Therefore, brethren, we are debtors; not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.

(Rom 8:13 NKJV) For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Not Debtors – Stop Excuses for Failures

We are not debtors (enslaved to the flesh) for the Spirit that raised Christ from the dead is alive and residing inside every believer. I say enough, stop the excuses, those people who say I tried to overcome this, stop doing that, but I can’t because see you don’t understand that when I was younger, or there is this chemical imbalance in me, or you just don’t know that person that causes me to react like this – STOP IT! There are no exclusions in the Bible for failing, there are no “special exceptions” of why everyone should walk in the Spirit but the person with that “special exception”.

Spurgeon

Charles Spurgeon said that if the grace we talk about is not enough to change us and transform us, it won’t be enough to take us to heaven either. People if the Holy Spirit we tell people about is

not powerful enough to save us from our sinful ways, then we don't have the Spirit that will raise us from the dead and take us to heaven either.

Only Exclusions for Victory

There are no special exceptions, no exclusions statements for failing, only exclusions for victory and power:

Verse 10 - And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

Verse 11 - But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Verse 12 - Therefore, brethren, we are debtors; not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.

The Spirit - Confirms our adoption as God's children (14–16):

The Spirit of Adoption – Abba Father

(Rom 8:14 NKJV) For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

(Rom 8:15 NKJV) For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "**Abba, Father.**"

(Rom 8:16 NKJV) The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

(Rom 8:17 NKJV) and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

Spirit Bears Witness of Our Adoption

The Spirit bears witness with our spirit. In Roman culture, for an adoption to be legally binding, 7 reputable witnesses had to be present, attesting to its validity. God's Holy Spirit confirms the validity of our adoption, not by some inner, mystical voice, but by the fruit He produces in us (Gal. 5:22, 23) and the power He provides for spiritual service (Acts 1:8).

Adoption - "to place as a Son" / Not naturally Belong – A Supernatural Event

ADOPTION - *huiothesia* (υιοθεσία, 5206), from *huios*, "a son," and *thesis*, "a placing," akin to *tithemi*, "to place," signifies the place and condition of a son given to one to whom it does not naturally belong. The word is used by the apostle Paul only. The work of salvation to make us sons and daughters is a supernatural event.

Can't be Disowned

And, in line with the start of our study that there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, under Roman Law (which is the law of the land at the time of this writing), no adopted child could be disowned by the family, regardless of what they did, and their inheritance could never be taken away. However, a naturally born child could be disowned and inheritance lost by the father of the family.

We are Heirs

heirs. - Every believer has been made an heir of God, our Father (Matt. 25:34; Gal. 3:29; Eph. 1:11; Col. 1:12; 3:24; Heb. 6:12; 9:15; 1 Pet. 1:4). We will inherit eternal salvation (Titus 3:7), God Himself (Lam. 3:24; cf. Ps. 73:25; Rev. 21:3), glory (5:2), and everything in the universe (Heb. 1:2). Unlike the Jewish practice of the primacy of the firstborn son, under Roman law the inheritance was divided equally between the children, where the law more carefully protected possessions that had been inherited. Joint heirs. God has appointed His Son to be heir of all things (Heb. 1:2). Every adopted child will receive by divine grace the full inheritance Christ receives by divine right (cf. Matt. 25:21; John 17:22; 2 Cor. 8:9).

He who takes the Son – Gets it All

A wealthy man and his son loved to collect rare works of art. They had everything in their collection, from Picasso to Raphael. They would often sit together and admire the great works of art. When the Viet Nam conflict broke out, the son went to war. He was very courageous and

died in battle while rescuing another soldier. The father was notified and grieved deeply for his only son. About a month later, just before Christmas, there was a knock at the door. A young man stood at the door with a large package in his hands. He said, "Sir, you don't know me, but I am the soldier for whom your son gave his life. He saved many lives that day, and he was carrying me to safety when a bullet struck him in the heart and he died instantly. He often talked about you, and your love for art. The young man held out his package. "I know this isn't much. I'm not really a great artist, but I think your son would have wanted you to have this." The father opened the package. It was a portrait of his son, painted by the young man. He stared in awe at the way the soldier had captured the personality of his son in the painting. The father was so drawn to the eyes that his own eyes welled up with tears. He thanked the young man and offered to pay him for the picture. "Oh, no sir, I could never repay what your son did for me. It's a gift." The father hung the portrait over his mantle. Every time visitors came to his home he took them to see the portrait of his son before he showed them any of the other great works he had collected. The man died a few months later. There was to be a great auction of his paintings. Many influential people gathered, excited over seeing the great paintings and having an opportunity to purchase one for their collection. On the platform sat the painting of the son. The auctioneer pounded his gavel. "We will start the bidding with this picture of the son. Who will bid for this picture?" There was silence. Then a voice in the back of the room shouted. "We want to see the famous paintings. Skip this one." But the auctioneer persisted. "Will someone bid for this painting? Who will start the bidding? \$100, \$200?" Another voice shouted angrily. "We didn't come to see this painting. We came to see the Van Goghs, the Rembrandts. Get on with the real bids!" But still the auctioneer continued. "The son! The son! Who'll take the son?" Finally, a voice came from the very back of the room. It was the longtime gardener of the man and his son. "I'll give \$10 for the painting." Being a poor man, it was all he could afford. "We have \$10, who will bid \$20?" "Give it to him for \$10. Let's see the masters." "\$10 is the bid, won't someone bid \$20?" The crowd was becoming angry. They didn't want the picture of the son. They wanted the more worthy investments for their collections. The auctioneer pounded the gavel. "Going once, twice, SOLD for \$10!" A man sitting on the second row shouted. "Now let's get on with the collection!" The auctioneer laid down his gavel. "I'm sorry, the auction is over." "What about the paintings?" "I am sorry. When I was called to conduct this auction, I was told of a secret stipulation in the will. I was not allowed to reveal that stipulation until this time. Only the painting of the son would be auctioned. Whoever bought that painting would inherit the entire estate, including the paintings. The man who took the son gets everything!" God gave his son 2,000 years ago to die on a cruel cross. Much like the auctioneer, His message today is, "The son, the son, who'll take the son?" Because you see, whoever takes the Son gets everything. We have been giving everything we need to live a life in the Spirit.

10 Practices for a Healthy Life

Let's close with application. How can I have victory in the Spirit, how do I apply all these wonderful things we have been studying for the last 8 chapters. Well here are ten things to apply to whatever it is that you want to have victory over, to live the abundant life promised by God. Is it adjustments with your marriage, and addiction, lust issues, a weak or nearly absent prayer and study life, then here are 10 things apply.

1. Believe it. Belief is the starting point. If you believe that you can live in victory because and through Him, you can. If you don't believe it's possible, then you are likely to fail. As Mark 9:23 tells us, nothing is impossible for him who believes.

2. Value it. We take care of whatever we value most. Most people treat their cars better than their own bodies. We also tend to value stuff over people. It's important to actually prioritize and place a high value on healthy relationships with God and others, as well as on our physical bodies.

3. Evaluate it. Assessing where you are when you begin and then measuring your progress is a must. Evaluate your current condition. If you don't know where you are, you'll never get where you want to go.

4. Plan it. Going through life without a plan is like driving a car without a steering wheel. Write down your plan, post it in plain view and revisit it every week. This leads to success more than 90 percent of the time.

5. Begin it. Like faith, a plan without action is dead, and procrastination is a guaranteed plan-killer. Take the first step and get started! Don't put it off until tomorrow; that always turns into next week or next month.

6. Fuel it. Give your body, your relationships, your mind and your spirit what they need for optimal performance. Bad food produces bad health. Your body and your spirit both need living water. Don't destroy your health with bad choices. So exercise it, everything needs exercise in order to get stronger. Your mind, your muscles and your faith all need to be trained, stretched and tested in order to grow. Laziness leads to atrophy and weakness.

7. Simplify it. Complexity and clutter bring confusion and drain energy. Making decisions that simplify your life will energize you and give you margin, focus and success.

8. Control it. Consistency is the key. Get a routine that works, set some boundaries and do the little things consistently. Avoid wild swings.

9. Connect it. If we want to succeed at living a victorious Christian life, we need encouragement from others, and it certainly helps if your core group of friends is pursuing a similar way of life. Engage with others. Tell them your goals and give them permission to keep you on track.

10. Do it. Intentions are like treadmills that become clothes hangers: they look good, but they are worthless and take up a lot of space. Like I said in No. 8, do the little things every day; they always become big things.

The Sufferings of this Present Time (8:17-27)

Part 1 - Romans 8:17-18

We are Groaning

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (C12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Swiss Alps

Chapter 8 starts with a Swiss Alps statement, a pinnacle of God's love towards us as he states - *There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.*

Chapter 8 – The Spirit Unleashed

The Spirit, who was mentioned only once in chaps. 1–7 (cf. 1:4), is referred to nearly 20 times in chap. 8. Chapter 8 is the unleashing of the Spirit in the believers life.

- The Spirit - Frees us from sin and death (2-3);
- The Spirit - Enables us to fulfill God's law (4);
- The Spirit - Changes our nature and grants us strength for victory over our flesh (5–13);
- The Spirit - Confirms our adoption as God's children (14–17);
- The Spirit - Guarantees our ultimate glory (18–30).

Study today – Spirit working on our Sanctification/Glorification / World not It – we Groan

In our study today we see the mighty work of the Spirit as He works in the realm of intercession. The Holy Spirit guarantees our ultimate glory (hence the past tense referencing of us being glorified as it is a done deal!), but the Holy Spirit at the same time is working in our sanctification, which ultimately results in our glorification. Well if you have been a believer longer than five minutes, you will be quick to agree, this world just doesn't cut it, for now we know what the promise of glorification looks like, and as we compare it to our present living in the world, we ultimately just groan realizing how far short we are of the promised glory.

(Rom 8:23 NKJV) *Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.*

Not Alone in Groaning / 3 Groaning Chapter 8

We are not alone in that groaning, as we will see in our passage today, for all creation and the Holy Spirit Himself are groaning with and for us.

The Universe is Groaning (8:17-27)

- The Groaning of Believers (17-18 & 23-25)
- The Groaning of Creation (19-22)
- The Groaning of the Spirit (26-27)

What means to You – God Understands our Struggles – Here to Help in time of Need

What does this mean to you today in this study? It means the theme we have been studying for the last 3 chapters, God understands our struggles, and He is here to help in our time of need, and he says come before the throne of grace, and I in My Spirit will help you get there because I live to make intercession for you.

Hebrews 4:16 (KJV) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

Suffering of Present Time – All Creation Waits

(Rom 8:16 NKJV) The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

(Rom 8:17 NKJV) and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

(Rom 8:18 NKJV) For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Suffering – Trials, Never Easy / But sure are Fruitful / In Trial – Don't Waste It

Sufferings, trials, hardships and heartaches, are never easy and joyous, but sure are fruitful if we will allow them to be. Christian if you are in a trial may I say, you are already there, so don't let it go to waste. God has allowed it, and if there is one thing that trial will do, it will free you from your grip on this world, as we say Lord this world isn't it. Glory means "weighty", and that is what suffering does, it brings to separate the wheat from the chaff, it separates the empty things from the weighty things, if we allow it – we will see the deep things of God.

Storms of Life

When you are in a storm, here are a few things to consider of what God may be doing:

- **Storms of Correction.** - Sometimes when I'm in a place of disobedience or rebellion, the Lord will allow a storm to get me on track again.
- **Storms of Perfection.** - Faith is not a pill we take, folks. It's a muscle we work. Therefore, the Lord will send me into a storm from time to time not for correction, but for perfection because the way I react to storms internally will tell me where I'm at spiritually. Storms provide unique opportunity for me to see where I'm at and to grow in my understanding that the Lord will come through at the right time, saying, "Be of good cheer. We're going to make it."
- **Storms of Direction.** Knowing there was a group of people on the island of Malta in need of ministry, the Lord said, "Before you go to Rome, Paul, I'm going to allow you to be blown off course because there is something I want you to do for Me—something you never would have thought of on your own, something that wasn't part of your agenda. I have some people to whom I want to minister, so I'll allow a storm to arise, which, although it looks like it's blowing you off course, will put you in the very place I want to use you."
- **Storms of Protection** – yes the storms of life can even be for protection, just ask Noah as God is judging and cleansing the world of carnality, He puts Noah in a storm on a safe boat. And so too we may never realize that the television breaking, that job loss, that issue with that person, are all storms that God puts in our lives to protect us from something bad that would have happened if we had stayed in that place.

Is the Trial getting Through to You

If you are in a storm today, a tremendous trial, may I ask you this? Is the trial getting through to you, or are you just getting through the trial? Precious Christian, you are already in the trial, you are there, so don't let it go to waste.

Inherit Suffering from being "In Him"

Inherited with Salvation / Not Greater than our Master

Verse 17 - if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together - Please notice verse 17, the main focus I want to put on our study today, and that is that "we suffer with Him". If indeed we suffer with Him – doubtful that this is preached on in very many churches on a Sunday, but a true fact, there comes an inherited suffering for the Believer when they choose to follow Christ. We are not greater than our Master as Jesus said, and if they hated Him then they

will hate us too. Why is that? Because the Light of a Christian blinds their eyes, makes them uncomfortable, they don't want to turn from their sin.

John 15:18–26 (NKJV) ¹⁸ "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. ²⁰ Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. ²¹ But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. ²² If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³ He who hates Me hates My Father also. ²⁴ If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. ²⁵ But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause.' ²⁶ "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.

Not the America we knew 20 Years Ago / Pray for Revival – Prepare for Persecution

Christian, accept that, and this isn't the America that we knew 20 years ago, no not even ten years ago, no not even 5 years ago. I can believe how much the spiritual environment has changed in this Country in just the last 5 years. It seems like people have less tolerance for a "living Christian" (someone who wears lives his/her Christianity on their sleeve for the whole world to see) than for someone with roots to terrorism. We should pray for revival, but prepare for persecution:

2 Timothy 3:12 (NKJV) ¹² Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

Consider

Just consider these recent events:

- Look at the attack on the National Day of Prayer, would you have ever thought someone would challenge prayer for the Nation. September 11th, Afghanistan, Iraq, and just days before in New York City a terrorist attempt and a judge would rule that the National Day of Prayer is unconstitutional. Here is my questions to the atheist, why don't you want people talking to the God you say doesn't exist? They aren't trying to get Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny removed from the schools or calendar, they don't attack those things because they know they don't exist. But, why attack the God they say doesn't exist?
- Look at the man in Europe who was street preaching, and thrown in prison and charged with hate speech. Hey, America has always followed right after Europe. When will our day come?
- All just a sliver compared to our brothers and sisters who are part of the persecuted church around the world. There are 60 Nations where the Gospel is forbidden to be preached; and of those 60 Nations it is said there are around 200 million believers – thus their life is in constant danger because of their faith in Christ. Although no one truly knows how many Christians are martyred for their faith each year, tens of thousands is a low estimate by those who research persecution, with some saying as high as 150,000 per year. We will never know the true number until we reach heaven and meet them there. One thing I am sure they (the martyred for Christ) will tell us today if we could hear them, "the sufferings of the world are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us".

Martyrs of Christ are never buried.. they are sown....

John 12:24–26 (NKJV) ²⁴ Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. ²⁵ He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.

Dying will be the Easy Part / Will get Hotter and Hotter / We must Train Today

Hey dying for Jesus isn't the hard part, it is the living part that is hard. The environment (apart from a revival) will grow hotter and hotter against the Believers. But I want to encourage you today to start building your spiritual muscles strong today; for the way you train in peace time is the way you will fight in war time (US Army Training Manual). Today is the closest we will get to

peace, and we still live in a Country where we can serve and proclaim Jesus Christ apart from imprisonment.

David Marks

Oh Christian, we have something to say, and nothing to fear. I am reminded of the story of fifteen-year-old David Marks, eyes blurred with tears, left home with a dollar in his pocket to preach the gospel. The “boy preacher” soon created a stir in the American northeast, and he kept going for the next 25 years. He rode one horse 19,000 miles, preached to thousands, organized churches throughout New England, published books, wrote articles, taught school, and worked diligently in opposition to slavery and in support of foreign missions. Then he died from sheer exhaustion at age 40.

Just before sunset on May 13, 1828, Marks rode into the little town of Ancaster, Ontario, announcing he would preach in seven minutes in the park. A small crowd gathered, and he asked if anyone had a text he would like to hear preached. A man mockingly said, “Nothing!” Marks immediately began preaching on “nothing.” God created the world from “nothing,” he said. God gave us laws in which there is “nothing” unjust. But, Marks continued, we have broken God’s law and there is “nothing” in us to justify us. There will be “nothing” to comfort sinners in death or hell. But, while Christians have “nothing” of their own in which to boast, we have Christ. And in him, we have “nothing” to cause us grief, “nothing” to disturb our peace, and “nothing” to fear in eternity.

Finishing his sermon, Marks mounted his horse and traveled to the next village. But some time later he returned to Ancaster. This time a larger group assembled, and the meeting house was opened to him. David preached “something” to them. He said there is “something” above all things. There is “something” in man designed to live forever, but there is also “something” in us that makes us unhappy. There is “something” about the gospel that reverses our unhappiness, “something” that gives us hope. There is “something” that will disturb the impenitent in death, but “something” resides in Christians that the world can’t understand, and “something” in eternity to give us everlasting joy.

All that from an uneducated young circuit rider, his mind filled with Scripture and his heart full of Christ, who had “something” to say—and “nothing” to fear.

Inherit Suffering from being In Him / Keep Living in Light

There is an inherited suffering that comes from being in Christ, because people don’t like the Light we shine. Be that as it may, we keep living in the Light regardless how it makes them feel, regardless of how they turn against us, for we have something to say, and nothing to fear. There is an inherited suffering that comes from being in Christ, but may we embrace it with full acceptance, yes and even joy, “for the sufferings of this present world are not worthy to be compared to the glory that will be revealed in us.

John 3:19–20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

Inherit Suffering from doing the Right Thing

Doing it According to His Word and Ways / Could Circumnavigate / I Commend You

Secondly, there is also a suffering that comes by wanting to do the right thing, and do it according to the Word and Ways of God. Some trials and suffering could be circumnavigated if we would do some things the way the world does it (a little lying here, a little cheating there, some selfishness, some disregard for other people) and our trial could be lightened or shortened, or maybe even completely escaped. I commend all of you who are going through a trial, suffering for His sake, there is a great reward to come, and I encourage – don’t quit, don’t faint, and don’t

give up for the suffering of the present time is not worthy to be compared to the glory that is to come.

The Rocket's Journey / Keep Pressing On

Did you know that on a rocket's journey, the most force is exerted at its lift-off? The amount of force that is needed to get that rocket off the ground is so fierce that it could easily blow the whole thing to pieces. Interestingly though, the further the rocket moves from the earth's gravitational pull, the less energy it needs to move farther along. Isn't it true with us as well? Whether it's breaking a habit, losing those first few pounds or learning something new, taking our first step into a new thing is the hardest part. That initial step always takes the most effort, the most energy. If we keep pressing on, however, it becomes easier and easier to move ahead! For the suffering of the present time is not worthy to be compared to the glory that is to come. Glory (weighty things) are being revealed in you – keeping pressing on, keep lifting off!

Philippians 3:12–14 (NKJV) ¹² Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. ¹³ Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, ¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Inherit Suffering from the World Pressing in on Us

Embrace Struggles / Push through Cares Distraction of World

Christian embrace the struggles of suffering as the world comes against you, for the sufferings of this present time are not worthy of the glory that will be revealed in us. When the struggles of sufferings come against you for doing the right thing, know that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy of the glory that will be revealed in us. And let me add, I know the struggle it is to set time apart from all the cares of the world, and to serve the Lord in some kind of ministry. We say, I just don't have enough time, I am so busy just trying to make it week-to-week. Listen, here is a major reason why you want to endure your sufferings for Christ sake, here is why you want to be involved (get involved – stay involved) in serving the Lord, and that is – Because there is a Millennial Kingdom Coming!

Mark 4:13–19 (NKJV) ¹³ And He said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?" ¹⁴ The sower sows the word. ¹⁵ And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts. ¹⁶ These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; ¹⁷ and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble. ¹⁸ Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, ¹⁹ and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

Millennial Kingdom we will Reign with Him / Determined Today / Skin of Teeth / Sweeping

In the Millennial Kingdom Jesus will set up His earthly kingdom, and we will rule and reign with Him. How we will rule, where we will rule, what we will be ruling is all being determined with the lives we are living today. People say I just want to make it to heaven, don't care if I'm just a doorkeeper at the house of the Lord, I'll just be glad to make it in (even if it is just by the skin of my teeth), well that may true for you about heaven, but you will be so-so sorry for the 1,000 years of the Millennial Kingdom, sweeping the streets, or directing the traffic, when a person realizes I got so wrapped up in the 70-80 years of the world, that I didn't invest one dime into the next 1,000 years I was to live next.

No Tears Heaven – Weeping for Investing in Wrong Stock

There will be no more tears and sorrow in heaven, but the Millennial Kingdom is not heaven, and I think there will be many tears as people realize they invested in the wrong stock.

Matthew 6:19–21 (NKJV) ¹⁹ "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Conversion of Lazarus – Parable of Talents / Today we Invest in Tomorrow / My 401K

Immediately after the conversion of Lazarus, the Scriptures go into the discourse of the “Parable of the Talents”. For each of the faithful servants, those two who were busy about the Kings business while He was away, the two who were faithful, they heard those words, “Well done, good servant, because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over....”. Christian listen closely, what you are doing today will determine what you will be doing for 1,000 years in the Millennial Kingdom. Don’t trade this fleeting and fading 70-80 years here on earth for what you will be doing for 1,000 years. Today is our opportunity to invest in tomorrow. Every month I contribute to my 401K because I really believe that someday I will be drawing from it. Yes it is less money for me to be spending today, but I am investing in my future - today. Today as we live, we are investing in the 1K, and there will be a day where we will be cashing in on today’s investment.

Luke 19:11–27 (NKJV) ¹¹ Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. ¹² Therefore He said: “A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. ¹³ So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, ‘Do business till I come.’ ¹⁴ But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We will not have this man to reign over us.’ ¹⁵ “And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. ¹⁶ Then came the first, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned ten minas.’ ¹⁷ And he said to him, ‘**Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.**’ ¹⁸ And the second came, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned five minas.’ ¹⁹ Likewise he said to him, ‘You also be over five cities.’ ²⁰ “Then another came, saying, ‘Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. ²¹ For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’ ²² And he said to him, ‘Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. ²³ Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?’ ²⁴ “And he said to those who stood by, ‘Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.’ ²⁵ (But they said to him, ‘Master, he has ten minas.’) ²⁶ ‘For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. ²⁷ But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.’”

Millennial Kingdom

Here is a quick overview of the Millennial Kingdom:

- The Rapture happens – Yea! – (1 Thess 4:16)
- Believers will go to enjoy the Marriage Supper of Lamb – (Rev 19:7)
- The 7-year Tribulation Period happening on Earth – (Rev 6-19)
- At the end of the Tribulation Period the Battle of Armageddon – (Rev 19:17-21)
- We will return with Jesus (at the height of the battle as both sides will turn against Jesus, but He will crush them with a Word) – (Rev 19:11)
- And then Jesus the victorious General and King will march in Jerusalem to establish His Millennial Kingdom - (Rev 19:11-16)
- Satan will be bound in the bottomless pit for 1,000 years and not be able to influence people with his evil ways. - (Rev 20:2)
- Judgment will happen for those who took mark during Tribulation – (Rev 20:4)
- Judgment will happen for those who mistreated the Jews and the Believers during the 7-year tribulation period (this is called the Judgment of the Nations - Matthew 25:31-46)
- Then will begin the most glorious period since before the fall as the earth will be as it was intended to be, a theocracy (under the rule of God). – (Rev 20:4)
- Jerusalem will be the capital of the millennial kingdom (Isa. 2:3).
- All kings bow down before Christ, and His rule extends from sea to sea. - (Psalm 72:11)
- People and animals will get along - no death from animals - (Ish 65:25, Ish 66:3, Ish 11:8)
- No more war, so no death from war - (Ish 2:4)
- People live hundreds of years Ish 65:22 – but people will die Ish 65:20 – but not us who return with Him.
- We will study the Word in Millennial Kingdom / we will worship in Jerusalem (Ish 2:2-4)
 - I am picturing us to have guest preachers, like Daniel teaching of the lion den, Peter on how to walk on water?
- The Temple will be rebuilt and sacrifices offered there (the ultimate communion celebration) – (Ezekiel 40-43)

- The Millennial Kingdom will be characterized by righteousness, peace, and tranquility, and there will be justice for all the oppressed (Isaiah 11:3–5).
- The Magog Invasion will still be cleaned up in the Millennial Kingdom (Ezekiel 39)
- People will still work and make livings, getting married, and having children.
- We will rule and reign with and for Jesus, overseeing the people of the Millennial Kingdom (Revelation 20:4)
- It will end with Satan being loosed and deceiving the people once again to rebel against the Lord Jesus. – (Revelation 20:7)
- Satan’s uprising will be devoured by Jesus, and Satan throne into Lake of Fire – (Revelation 20:9-10)
- Then the White Throne Judgment (The Final Judgment of Unbelievers) – (Revelation 20:11)
- Then the - New Heaven and New Earth – (Revelation 21:1)
- Jesus will wipe away every tear from our eye – (Revelation 21:4)
- Eternity

We will Reign with Him

We will reign with Him, the Scriptures are clear:

Revelation 3:20–21 (NKJV) ²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. ²¹ To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

Revelation 5:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.”

Revelation 20:4 (NKJV) ⁴ And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Revelation 20:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

Matthew 19:28–29 (NKJV) ²⁸ So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹ And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.

*The Apostle will be there ruling along with us.

Revelation 1:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, ⁶ and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

2 Timothy 2:10–13 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. ¹¹ This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him. ¹² If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. ¹³ If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.

Matthew 25:20–21 (NKJV) ²⁰ “So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’ ²¹ His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

1 Corinthians 6:2 (NKJV) ² Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

Matthew 16:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.

Bema Seat

We will all stand before the “Judgment Seat of Christ” (also known as the Bema Seat), and we will be rewarded for our faithfulness to what God called us to do. We will not be judged for our sins, for that has already been judged on the cross, but we will be judged on the talents/gifts that were given to us, and for whose benefit we used them for.

2 Corinthians 5:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

1 Corinthians 3:11–15 (NKJV) ¹¹ For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, ¹³ each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. ¹⁴ If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

Faithful – not Successful

The reward isn't based on our success, but faithfulness – “Well done they good and faithful Servant”

What will you be doing for 1000 Years / Determined Today / Embrace the Suffering

1,000 years – what is it that you will be doing for 1,000 years, you are determining that today.

Christian, embrace the suffering, embrace:

- Inherit Suffering from being “In Him”
- Inherit Suffering from doing the Right Thing
- Inherit Suffering from the World Pressing in on Us

(Rom 8:18 NKJV) *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

The Sufferings of this Present Time (8:17-27)

Part 2 - Romans 8:19-25

All Creation is Groaning

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (C12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Swiss Alps

Chapter 8 starts with a Swiss Alps statement, a pinnacle of God's love towards us as he states - *There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.*

Chapter 8 – The Spirit Unleashed

The Spirit, who was mentioned only once in chaps. 1–7 (cf. 1:4), is referred to nearly 20 times in chap. 8. Chapter 8 is the unleashing of the Spirit in the believers life.

- The Spirit - Frees us from sin and death (2-3);
- The Spirit - Enables us to fulfill God's law (4);
- The Spirit - Changes our nature and grants us strength for victory over our flesh (5–13);
- The Spirit - Confirms our adoption as God's children (14–17);
- The Spirit - Guarantees our ultimate glory (18–30).

Study today – Spirit working on our Sanctification/Glorification / World not It – we Groan

In our study today we see the mighty work of the Spirit as He works in the realm of intercession. The Holy Spirit guarantees our ultimate glory (hence the past tense referencing of us being glorified as it is a done deal!), but the Holy Spirit at the same time is working in our sanctification, which ultimately results in our glorification. Well if you have been a believer longer than five minutes, you will be quick to agree, this world just doesn't cut it, for now we know what the promise of glorification looks like, and as we compare it to our present living in the world, we ultimately just groan realizing how far short we are of the promised glory.

(Rom 8:23 NKJV) *Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.*

Not Alone in Groaning / 3 Groaning Chapter 8

We are not alone in that groaning, as we will see in our passage today, for all creation and the Holy Spirit Himself are groaning with and for us.

The Universe is Groaning (8:17-27)

- The Groaning of Believers (17-18 & 23-25)
- The Groaning of Creation (19-22)
- The Groaning of the Spirit (26-27)

What means to You – God Understands our Struggles – Here to Help in time of Need

What does this mean to you today in this study? It means the theme we have been studying for the last 3 chapters, God understands our struggles, and He is here to help in our time of need, and he says come before the throne of grace, and I in My Spirit will help you get there because I live to make intercession for you.

Hebrews 4:16 (KJV) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

The Groaning of Believers (17-18 & 23-25)

Part 1 Study

In our last study we had started looking at “The Groaning of Believers”, and we saw that our suffering is in inherit (comes with the territory of being a Christian) for the following three reasons:

- Inherit Suffering from being “In Him”
- Inherit Suffering from doing the Right Thing
- Inherit Suffering from the World Pressing in on Us

(Rom 8:17 NKJV) *and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.*

(Rom 8:18 NKJV) *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

It’s Worth It – See Him Face-to-Face / Millennial Kingdom

And I encourage you and commend you again, it is worth it, for someday we will see Him face to face and give an account for our faithfulness, and we will receive our reward for staying and being faithful. We also studied in depth how what we are investing in today will determine what we will be doing for the 1,000 years of the Millennial Kingdom:

Luke 19:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *And he said to him, ‘Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.’*

Pick Up – Groaning of Creation

Let’s pick up where we left off and take a look at “The Groaning of Creation”.

The Groaning of Creation (19-22)

(Rom 8:19 NKJV) *For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.*

(Rom 8:20 NKJV) *For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope;*

(Rom 8:21 NKJV) *because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.*

(Rom 8:22 NKJV) *For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.*

(Rom 8:19 NKJV) *For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.*

Creation – Man’s inter-relationship with Physical Creation / Affected by Fall (Gen 3)

The OKJV version says “Creature”, compared to “Creation” as used in NKJV. The word “creation” is more accurate, as this word means anything that was created, thus that would include the earth and mankind. The interrelationship of man with the physical creation of which he is a part was established in God’s sentence of judgment on Adam after the Fall (Gen 3:15-19). Now, verses 19-22 are more specifically speaking about the “earth & universe” because we see in verse 19 that they are looking to the revealing of the son’s of God (the body of believers), so therefore we see these verses are about the fallen earth and universe.

Genesis 3:17–19 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’: “Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. ¹⁸ Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. ¹⁹ In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.”*

Son’s of God – Simply That

“Sons of God”: direct creation of God Himself (Gen 6; Jn 1:12). Some people try to twist this into some weird and strange doctrine based on the phrase “sons of God”, but it simply means what it says, we are sons/daughters of God.

John 1:12 (NKJV) ¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

Expectation – Outstretched Necks

Verse 19 - Earnest Expectation – Made up of (kára and dékomai, = apokaradokía) denotes stretching the head, to spy on, or to pay close attention. Like a little child at a parade standing on the tippy-toes with excited expectation trying to see the coming parade

Phillips Translation

Phillips translation of verse 19: “The whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of the sons of God coming into their own.” Creation longs for the day of liberation.

Eagerly Waits – Verb used all 7 times referring to Jesus’ Return

Verse 19 - eagerly waits - The creation is also involved in the curse. This is a future aspect of redemption. The Creation keeps on “eagerly awaiting” (Rom 8:19); the verb for “eagerly awaits” (apekdechomai) is used 7X in NT, each time refers to Christ’s return (Rom 8:23, 25; 1 Cor 1:7; Gal 5:5; Phil 3:20; Heb 9:28). We’ll see it again in verses 23 and 25 of our study today – so this word sets a tone for this passage, and that is that the earth and believers are anxiously awaiting the return of Christ, and thus is groaning because anything less than His physical presence – is less.

1 Corinthians 1:7 (NKJV) ⁷ so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Galatians 5:5 (NKJV) ⁵ For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

Philippians 3:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

Hebrews 9:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.

The sons of God revealed at His Return / Nature Waits

The revealing of the sons of God will occur when Christ returns for His own. We will share His glory (Rom 8:18; Col 1:27; 3:4; Heb 2:10) and will be transformed (Rom 8:23). All of nature (inanimate and animate) is personified as waiting eagerly for that time.

Colossians 3:4 (NKJV) ⁴ When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

Hebrews 2:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Fullness of the Gentiles

This will happen when the last Gentile gets saved, there is a one last person that will close out this period of grace (which is from the cross up to the start of the Tribulation period). Creation knows it, and creation has outstretched necks, standing on tippy-toes, looking for that day when the last Gentile gets saved. Creation knows every salvation may be the last, but if not, one more salvation closer to their redemption. We would do well to be a people who do the same.

Romans 11:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

(Rom 8:20 NKJV) For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope;

(Rom 8:21 NKJV) because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Creation subjected to Decay / But the curse came with a Promise

Verse 20 - creation was subjected to futility - “Vanity” (mataiotes), futility, frailty, purposelessness, failure, decay, perishable (Eph 4:17; 2 Pet 2:18). Vanity describes the change and decay that pervades all created things (Rom 8:21). God judged the totality of His Creation along with people for their sin (Gen. 3:14, 17-19); yet, the curse was instituted with a future hope (Rom 8:24), that a Savior would come to set things right again (Gen 3:15).

(Rom 8:24 NKJV) *For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees?*

Genesis 3:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ *And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."*

Bondage of Decay – 2nd Law Thermodynamics

Verse 21 - "Bondage of Corruption" - means "Bondage of decay:" the 2nd law of thermodynamics, the law of entropy. It's all winding down. (Who wound it up in the first place?). The Second Law of Thermodynamics is known as the "Law of Energy Decay." Which says that every system left to itself will move from order to disorder. The Second Law of Thermodynamics, also called the "Arrow of Time," asserts that as time advances, the universe progresses from a state of order to a state of greater disorder (entropy). This also declares that the energy available to do work continually decreases. The universe appears to run "downhill," to an eventual heat death when no temperature differences exist, no energy is available, in uniform randomness.

Science confirms the Bible - Again

This verse written 2,000 years has been proven by science in the last 150 years. It is a proven law now, not a theory (like the theory of evolution is). Go online and look at some of these math formulas used to prove this Second Law of Thermodynamics – wow, they should have just read Romans 8:21 ☺. All joking aside, I love it when science confirms the bible.

(Rom 8:22 NKJV) *For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.*

Beautiful Planet / Was in Harmony with God before Fall

What a beautiful planet we live on, some of the most breathtaking and awe inspiring sites we see as we look at this marvelous planet we live on; but we need not look far to see why creation itself is groaning, crying out, come quickly Lord Jesus and set things right. Creation was in beautiful harmony in the Garden of Eden until Adam subjected it into the fall along with himself when he chose sin. Imagine this, the beauty you currently see is in its fallen state; I wonder how much more beautiful this world was before the fall. The colors aren't as vibrant, nor our eyes that look upon this creation, We surely see glimmers of it in some of the beautiful places around the world such as Hawaii.

See Photos of the beautiful planet.

Headlines

How about these headline news in the last few months! I think the birthing contractions are getting closer together, for no doubt the water has broke!

- Tsunami leaves 1,000 homeless on Solomons – Jan 5th
- 7.0 earthquake hits Haiti sparking tsunami watch – Jan 12th
- Chile's quake 500 times more powerful than Haiti's – Feb 27
- Dozens dead from earthquake in Turkey – March 8th
- Indonesia hit by 6.4-magnitude earthquake – March 14th
- Magnitude 6.6 Quake Sways Buildings in Tokyo – March 14
- Major Earthquake Strikes Sumatra, Indonesia – April 6
- Official: China quake deaths near 400 – April 14th
- Volcanic ash cloud grounds 16,000 flights Saturday – April 17th
- Tornado hits Mississippi – April 25
- At least 5 dead in Tennessee flooding; tornado warnings in Arkansas – May 1
- Tornadoes strike central Plains – May 10
- Let's not forget the manmade massive oil spill off the Gulf Coast – April 2010

Destiny Linked to Us – Not Tree Huggers

The destiny of Creation is linked to us, not the tree huggers (and I am all for being good stewards of this earth). Creation is looking at us saying whoever is the last person to get saved, get saved, hey Ray get out there and help speed this thing along would ya! Tree Huggers think they are saving the planet, but many totally miss getting saved. Creation isn't looking for Green Peace, Creation is looking for the Prince of Peace.

Note: I reject the Kingdom Theology teaching that says Christ return is based on the Church fulfilling the Great Commission, and it is up to the Church to usher in the Kingdom of God; God chooses to use us, but isn't limited by us.

Earth Longing to be Restored / Comes in 2 Stages

The earth is longing to be restored back to its original state, free from this bondage of decay. This will take place in two stages. Stage 1: The renovation of the present cosmos in conjunction with the return to earth of the Lord Jesus and the establishment of the messianic kingdom on earth (Isa 11:5-9; 35:1-2, 5-7; 65:20, 25; Amos 9:13). Stage 2: The creation of "a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev 21:1; cf. 2 Pet 3:7-13).

Stage 1 (Millennial Kingdom)

Isaiah 2:2-4 (NKJV) ² Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. ³ Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ⁴ He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.

Isaiah 2:2-4 (NKJV) ² Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. ³ Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ⁴ He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.

Isaiah 11:5-9 (NKJV) ⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, And faithfulness the belt of His waist. ⁶ "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them. ⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸ The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. ⁹ They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah 35:1-2 (NKJV) ¹ The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, And the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; ² It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice, Even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, The excellence of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, The excellency of our God.

Isaiah 65:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ "No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, Nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; For the child shall die one hundred years old, But the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed.

Isaiah 65:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, The lion shall eat straw like the ox, And dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain," Says the LORD.

Amos 9:13 (NKJV) ¹³ "Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "When the plowman shall overtake the reaper, And the treader of grapes him who sows seed; The mountains shall drip with sweet wine, And all the hills shall flow with it.

Stage 2 (New Heaven & New Earth)

Revelation 21:1-4 (NKJV) ¹ Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ² Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

2 Peter 3:10-13 (NKJV) ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. ¹¹ Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, ¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? ¹³ Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Creation knows the Prophetic Signs

Creation is standing on tippy-toes waiting to be redeemed. Creation knows it is soon because creation sees the prophetic signs

Matthew 24:7-8 (NKJV) ⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ All these are the beginning of sorrows.

Christians – Look at the Prophetic Signs

Hey Christian, if creation sees the prophetic signs by looking within it's won, then so too should we, and when we will, we will get on the tippy-toes because we know soon and very soon, we are going to see the King of glory. Just look at this one sign and tell me if this is not the world that our own is living:

2 Timothy 3:1-5 (NKJV) ¹ But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: ² For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, ⁴ traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

Not dumber than Rocks

Creation knows it's Creator, and creation is longing, groaning for Him to return. May we not be dumber than a rock.

Luke 19:39-40 (NKJV) ³⁹ And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." ⁴⁰ But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."

The Groaning of Believers (17-18 & 23-25)

(Rom 8:23 NKJV) Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.

Eagerly Waits

Notice "eagerly waiting" for the second time in our passage. Come quickly the earth and the believer groan.

We have Firstfruits – Down Payment

We have the firstfruit, the down payment of the Spirit in our lives.

Ephesians 1:13-14 (NKJV) ¹³ In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

The Signet Ring

In the times of this writing when an owner was sending a shipment of his possession from one place to another, he would bring his possession to the dock and then melt wax on to it, and then take his signet ring and press it into the hot wax to leave his impression, he sealed it. His signet impression was one of a kind, unlike any others, and thus when the shipment made it to the next destination and was being unloaded, the servant or the person himself would be on the other end with the signet ring (or authorized letter bearing the impression) and hold it next to each create and make claim – that one is mine, proved by the seal. So is the same word picture here in Ephesians 1:13-14, God has put His seal upon us, it is unlike any other, for it is the Holy Spirit Himself in us, saying – this one is mine!

We Groan – Present Continual Tense / Because we have Taste of Perfection

Because of being sealed we groan. "Groan": present tense; "keep on groaning." We continually groan because we know there is better, this world isn't it, and that there is perfection beyond this last breath on earth. The Spirit within us continually testifies to us that Dad is waiting to call us home, out of this earth that is groaning. We are in transit to our heavenly calling, and when we make that final destination He will put His finger on each of us and say, "that one is Mine!". Our Spirit testifies that this is going to be so, and thus we groan, for we know there is better than this world.

(Rom 8:24 NKJV) For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees?

(Rom 8:25 NKJV) But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.

Eagerly Waits

Notice “eagerly waiting” for the third time in our passage. Come quickly the earth and the believer groan.

Our Bodies Groan – Put off these Tents

Our body’s groan, ready to put off these earthly tents and to be clothed in our perfect heavenly bodies, apart from these earthly struggles.

2 Corinthians 5:1–8 (NKJV) For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ² For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, ³ if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. ⁴ For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. ⁵ Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. ⁶ So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. ⁷ For we walk by faith, not by sight. ⁸ We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

I Look in Mirror and Groan / Needs of People – Heart Breaks

I look in the mirror these days and I groan, I look at my finances and I groan, I look at the stuff I own breaking, and then I look at my finances again and I groan. But none of that compares to when I look at the needs of the people; as I look at marriages struggling – I groan, when parents speak about their prodigal children – I groan, when a family loses a loved one – I groan, when I look at a little child with cancer – I groan, when I read one more story of some evil that wants to attack this Nation – I groan, when I read an article that another son or another daughter has been lost in the war zone – I groan, it seems everywhere I turn I see things breaking my heart – and I groan.

Conversation at Work – Find Self Crying Out – Come Jesus

I had a conversation at work, from time to time people come up and ask me how Camden is, and we talk, I explain a little of what it is like to live as we have to, the struggles, the continual fatigue, the thought of future and what will it bring, and believer or not, I find myself coming to a place in the conversation where I am talking more about Jesus than I am myself or family, and I find myself saying (no regard to political correctness) “Come Quickly Lord Jesus”, because my heart begins to groan, and I just want to be home.

We are Ruined for this World / We know World not It! / Subtle Message in Here

What God has put into me, this firstfruit, has now ruined me for this world, for I know (with a hope that is sure) there is a perfection yet to come, for I know this world ain’t it. God allows these struggles, these sufferings, these groaning, so we will be looking forward to getting out of this world. But, I think there is a subtle message woven in this passage, and that is for the believer who isn’t groaning, or thinks we are not to groan, and that is that they need to examine their doctrine, for this passage is clear that we will suffer, we will groan, and we will because the Spirit in us speaks of future glory, not present gratification. We will suffer because we are “In Him”, and the world is against Him; we will groan as we see the birthing signs of the earth quaking, and we will groan as we allow ourselves to become vulnerable because we attach ourselves to other people and their hurts; and of course we groan because we personally aren’t living to satisfy our every want, but seeking first the Kingdom of God. If we aren’t groaning on all those points, time for a self-assessment.

We Free at Rapture

We groan while in these tents, but we will be free at the Rapture of the church when believers will be raised and transformed with glorious bodies (1 Cor 15:42-54; 2 Cor 5:1-5; Phil 3:20-21; 1 Thess 4:13-18). Paul called that day “the day of redemption” (Eph 4:30).

1 Thessalonians 4:17–18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Philippians 3:20–21 (NKJV) ²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

We Groan – Come Quickly Jesus

My body is groaning, saying come quickly Lord Jesus!

Revelation 22:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

Hope Sure – Wait with Perseverance (Endurance)

Verse 25 - we eagerly wait for it with perseverance - Our hope is sure, and we are told to wait for it with perseverance (which means endurance) even in the present sufferings of this life and world.

Perseverance - in the NT the characteristic of a man who is not swerved from his deliberate purpose and his loyalty to faith and godliness by even the greatest trials and sufferings

Not Forget – Down payment all we Need Victory

Hope, we are waiting for it to be accomplished, but let us not forget that though we wait for it to come in fullness, the down payment gives us all we need to live victorious Christians lives today.

2 Corinthians 1:20–22 (NKJV) ²⁰ For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us. ²¹ Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, ²² who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

Hope Too Little – Hope too Much

Christian claim your victory in Christ, live your victory in Christ. Too often with this hope we claim too little, because we are not perfected living in the fallen world we can think we will never have victory, always doomed to our depressions, failings, poor relationships, and so we don't claim all the power (the Spirit of God unleashed in us). Now, for some people they claim too much, because they don't know the Word of God and thus the Will of God; they claim too much thinking we are to never be sick, always prosperous, always happy, and that teaching and belief system can't stand in the light of this passage of Scripture that says the earth groans, and so does our body, for we will have suffering in this world. The faith teachers never take their teaching out far enough, in that if we should never be sick, then that means we should never die; if we should be able to heal the body by faith, then we should be able to heal the earth by the same faith, but the earth keeps quaking doesn't it. The earth is looking to be redeemed from the curse, and it knows the redemption is linked to the last person getting saved. Some claim too much, woe to them for at some point their name-it-claim-it will fail them, but for you here today – don't claim too little, seize and release the Holy Spirit that is in you!

Napoleon

A story is told of Napoleon Bonaparte. As he was busy conquering Europe in the 1800's during one of his military campaigns, Napoleon accidentally let the bridle of his horse slip while he was looking through some papers. The horse reared itself and the Emperor lost his balance. One corporal quickly leaped forward and caught the bridle just in the nick of time, bringing the horse under control and saving Napoleon from what might have been serious injury or even death. Napoleon saluted the corporal (knowing full well his rank) and said, "Thank you, Captain!" "Of what company, Sire?" asked the corporal. "Of my guards," replied Napoleon. The young corporal took his musket and hurled it aside, and walked across the field toward the Emperor's staff, tearing off his corporal's stripes as he went. When he took his place among the officers, they asked him what he was doing. I am the captain of the Emperor's Guards, he replied. "By whose order?" they asked. "By the order of the Emperor himself" he replied. A man of less faith might have been happy returning back to his ranks as a corporal and boasting for the rest of his life about how the Emperor once called him Captain. But no, He took the Emperor at his word. And He knew his potential. May we do the same!

Romans 4:20–22 (NKJV) ²⁰ He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, ²¹ and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. ²² And therefore “it was accounted to him for righteousness.”

Hope

So recap of this hope we have been studying in this glorious chapter 8.

HOPE

- H – Help in Time of Need
- O - Our Sufferings can't compare to Glory to be revealed
- P – Power unleashed by Holy Spirit in us
- E – Eternity is Near (well done good & faithful servant)

H - God knows our struggle, and says it is ok, it is not a sign of weakness or failure, but a sign of living as a believer in a fallen world (dead men don't wrestle), and I am here to help you in your time of need (boldly come to the throne of grace).

O – God says for us to compare (measure) our present sufferings and see how they compare to our glory to come. Every suffering, we need to step back and look at it the big picture of what God is doing. Step out of the moment, and into the eternal picture.

P – Chapter 8, the unleashing of the Holy Spirit in our lives. All the power we need to live and overcome has been supplied to us by and through the Holy Spirit.

E – Eternity is near, and what we are doing today will determine the depth of these words – well done thy good and faithful servant.

Endure Beloved

Endure precious people, we are almost there, and when we get there we will be glad we invested wisely.

Next Study – Our Help

Next week, the third groaning, and the power of it:

(Rom 8:26 NKJV) Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

(Rom 8:27 NKJV) Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

The Sufferings of this Present Time (8:17-27)

Part 3 - Romans 8:26-27

The Spirit is Groaning

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (C12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Swiss Alps

Chapter 8 starts with a Swiss Alps statement, a pinnacle of God's love towards us as he states - *There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.*

Chapter 8 – The Spirit Unleashed

The Spirit, who was mentioned only once in chaps. 1–7 (cf. 1:4), is referred to nearly 20 times in chap. 8. Chapter 8 is the unleashing of the Spirit in the believers life.

- The Spirit - Frees us from sin and death (2-3);
- The Spirit - Enables us to fulfill God's law (4);
- The Spirit - Changes our nature and grants us strength for victory over our flesh (5–13);
- The Spirit - Confirms our adoption as God's children (14–17);
- The Spirit - Guarantees our ultimate glory (18–30).

Study today – Spirit working on our Sanctification/Glorification / World not It – we Groan

In our study today we see the mighty work of the Spirit as He works in the realm of intercession. The Holy Spirit guarantees our ultimate glory (hence the past tense referencing of us being glorified as it is a done deal!), but the Holy Spirit at the same time is working in our sanctification, which ultimately results in our glorification. Well if you have been a believer longer than five minutes, you will be quick to agree, this world just doesn't cut it, for now we know what the promise of glorification looks like, and as we compare it to our present living in the world, we ultimately just groan realizing how far short we are of the promised glory.

(Rom 8:23 NKJV) *Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.*

Not Alone in Groaning / 3 Groaning Chapter 8

We are not alone in that groaning, as we will see in our passage today, for all creation and the Holy Spirit Himself are groaning with and for us.

The Universe is Groaning (8:17-27)

- The Groaning of Believers (17-18 & 23-25)
- The Groaning of Creation (19-22)
- The Groaning of the Spirit (26-27)

What means to You – God Understands our Struggles – Here to Help in time of Need

What does this mean to you today in this study? It means the theme we have been studying for the last 3 chapters, God understands our struggles, and He is here to help in our time of need, and he says come before the throne of grace, and I in My Spirit will help you get there because I live to make intercession for you.

Hebrews 4:16 (KJV) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

The Spirit makes Intercession for Us

(Rom 8:26 NKJV) Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

(Rom 8:27 NKJV) Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Likewise takes us Back

The likewise takes us back to where we have come from, and that is that creation and us are groaning.

The Spirit Cares

In Midst of Affliction – God Renewing the Inner Man

In the midst of our afflictions, God is renewing the inner man, day by day, for we need this renewing. The context is living for eternity, and looking past the temporal things which will all fade.

2 Corinthians 4:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, ¹⁸ while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Helps – Present Perfect

The Spirit helps us in our weakness – the verb tense is “present perfect”, meaning currently and continually the Spirit helps; not on occasion, whether I’ve been faithful or not, but the Spirit helps us continually.

God Groans – feels our Burden / Because we still in this Fallen World

The Holy Spirit groans - God is concerned about the trials of His people. When He was ministering on earth, Jesus groaned when He saw what sin was doing to mankind (Mark 7:34; John 11:33, 38). Today the Holy Spirit groans with us and feels the burdens of our weaknesses and suffering because we are still here in this fallen world. But the Spirit does more than groan. He prays for us in His groaning so that we might be led into the will of God. We do not always know God’s will. We do not always know how to pray, but the Spirit intercedes so that we might live in the will of God in spite of suffering. The Spirit “shares the burden.”

God will Perfect and Glorify – Because He is working

The believer never need faint in times of suffering and trial because

- he knows that God is at work in the world (Rom. 8:28),
- and that He has a perfect plan (Rom. 8:29).
- God has two purposes in that plan: our good and His glory.
- Ultimately, He will make us like Jesus Christ!
- Best of all, God’s plan is going to succeed! It started in eternity past when He chose us in Christ (Eph. 1:4–5).
- He predetermined that one day we would be like His Son.
- Those whom He chose, He called (see 2 Thes. 2:13–14);
- when they responded to His call, He justified them, and He also glorified them.
- This means that the believer has already been glorified in Christ (John 17:22); the revelation of this glory awaits the coming of the Lord (Rom. 8:21–23).

Romans 8:28–30 (NKJV) ²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. ²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰ Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

We not Discouraged with that News / But we can – Thus God wants us to Know This

How can we Christians ever be discouraged and frustrated when we already share the glory of God? Our suffering today only guarantees that much more glory when Jesus Christ returns! But we can get discouraged, we do get discouraged, sometimes (many times) we feel overwhelmed and all alone, hopeless and helpless, and the Lord wants us to know we are not alone and that He is groaning with us.

Intimacy - Abba Father / Go to Israel Today / Endearment

We have this intimacy with Him, we are His kids, we call Him “abba”, Daddy. Go to Israel today and you’ll hear the little kids running around calling out to their dad “abba, abba”; they don’t run around saying “father, father”. Abba is more than a term of a title, but a word of endearment, it has emotions tied to it, it has an attachment not to the mind but to the heart. You don’t hear kids today saying “father, father”, no they say “hey dad, hey dad”. When you pray, add the endearment into your prayer, Father for the Holy God you approach, and Abba, for the intimate loving God who has been waiting for you to come to Him as a child. This word “abba” is only used three times in the scriptures; here in chapter 8 of Romans where we are. The word “abba” speaks of intimacy and endearment. Jesus spoke the very word to the Father in heaven there in the Garden of Gethsemane, and we get to call Him “Abba Father” because our sonship.

Mark 14:36 (NKJV) ³⁶ And He said, “Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.”

Romans 8:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.”

Galatians 4:6 (NKJV) ⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!”

God groans for His Kids

God is groaning because His kids are still here, because we are not at home, and we are living in this fallen world. I groan when my sons are ill, how I wish I could take their pain, how I wish I could trade places, anything but have to watch them suffer. Hence, why God is groaning, because it pains Him to see us in pain. When He hears us cry out, “daddy oh I hurt” – oh it pierces His heart.

Only other place Word Used – Acts 7 / God Sees – It Pains His Heart / He Prays

The Spirit is groaning for us, and the only other place this exact Greek word is used in the NT is back in Acts, when Stephen is recounting the story of the Children of Israel, the great bondage they were in, the tremendous oppression that was upon them, and God spoke and said “I have heard their groaning”. Oh precious saint, God sees the pain we suffer and live through in this fallen world, and not only does He hear our groaning, He groans Himself with and for us.

Acts 7:31–34 (NKJV) ³¹ When Moses saw it, he marveled at the sight; and as he drew near to observe, the voice of the Lord came to him, ³² saying, ‘I am the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ And Moses trembled and dared not look. ³³ Then the LORD said to him, “Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground. ³⁴ I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt; I have heard their **groaning** and have come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send you to Egypt.”’

The Spirit Helps

Ever not know what to Pray / Spirit knows the Things of God

Have you gone to God sometimes in prayer when you actually did not know what to pray for? All you could do was just go to Him and say, “Father.” You could not ask anything because you didn’t know what to ask for. At times like this the Spirit “helpeth our infirmities.” How wonderful that is!

1 Corinthians 2:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.

Help – Action by Taking Load / Mary & Martha / Doesn’t take Load – But Helps with Load

(8:26, 27) “Helpeth” is sunantilambanō (συναντιλαμβάνω), made up of sun (συν), “together with,” anti (ἀντι) “over against,” and lambanō (λαμβάνω), “to take.” The word speaks of the action of a

person coming to another's aid by taking hold over against that person, of the load he is carrying. The person helping does not take the entire load, but helps the other person in his endeavor. The word is used where Martha says to the Lord Jesus concerning Mary, "Bid her therefore that she help me" (Luke 10:40). One could translate, "Bid her lend me a helping hand," the idea being that Martha would continue preparing the meal but needed Mary to help her. Just so, the Holy Spirit indwelling the saint, comes to the aid of that saint in his spiritual problems and difficulties, not by taking over the responsibility for them and giving the saint an automatic deliverance without any effort on his part, but by lending a helping hand, allowing him to work out his problems and overcome his difficulties, with His help. The word "infirmities (weakness)" is *astheneia* (ἀσθενεία), "want of strength, weakness." The weakness spoken of here is defined by the context which speaks of prayer, one of the things in the spiritual realm in which our weakness needs His power. The infirmities here therefore are, not physical, but spiritual.

Luke 10:40 (NKJV) ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."

200 Bale of Cotton / You got a Problem / Spirit says let Me Help – Lift Together

Now just suppose that you are traveling down the road. You come upon a man who struggles with a 200-pound bale of cotton, trying to lift it on his wagon. You say, "Friend, you have a problem, don't you." He replies, "Yes, I do. Early this morning this bale of cotton fell off my wagon. And I have struggled all day trying to reload it. But I can't! It's too large for me to get a hold of it. Even if I could, it is too heavy for me to lift it! Oh, I do have a problem!" So you say, "Well, I can help you. You get on the other side of the bale of cotton, and I will get on this side. We will stand face to face. Then we will stoop down and take hold of the bale. Together we will lift it onto the wagon." "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities" (Rom. 8:26). He comes to you, and says, "My child, you have a problem, don't you?" You say, "O blessed Holy Spirit, yes, I do have a problem! I've tried to pray about it. But it is so heavy, so deep, that I cannot put it into words. I just can't pray anymore!" Notice that the Spirit does not tell you to get out of the way and He will do it for you. He involves you in it. Instead, He says, "I can help you. You get on that side of your problem, and I will get on this side of it. We will stand face to face. Then we will stoop down and take hold of your problem. Then together we will lift it up to the throne of grace."

I Groan – Not sure make it Another Day

I groan, sometimes I am not sure I can take one day as I look upon all the ills of the world and people I have life with on a daily basis; my heart grieves, can't take hearing one more story of cancer, childhood diseases, people hurting and suffering – it is only the peace that God gives me that allows me to go on, for how much I just want to say enough, I can't hear or take any more. God, through the intercession says, I know it is hard, I groan with you, but together we will make it through, and all these things are working themselves together for good (and that is what He will convince us of if we will listen in to the conversation of the Father, Son, and Spirit.

(Rom 8:28 NKJV) *And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.*

Context of 8:28 is 8:26-27 / All things do Work Together for Good

I once grew concerned that I was leaning on a verse from Romans too much and claiming it too often. But the thought came to me that Romans 8:28 is indestructible. We can never wear it out. My appreciation of Romans 8:28 then increased further as I studied its context. Verse 26 tells of the Holy Spirit's assistance in our weakness. Not knowing the future, we often don't know exactly what to pray. But the Holy Spirit, who does know both the future and the mind of God, prays for us "with groanings which cannot be uttered." The Heavenly Father both hears and answers the Spirit's intercessions, and as a result the unfolding events of our lives work out for our good.

This was the truth that sustained Barnard Gilpin when he was in deep political danger. Gilpin was called the "Apostle of the North" due to his powerful ministry in the north of England during the sixteenth century. He dearly loved Romans 8:28, and became famous for quoting it on all occasions. But when Bloody Queen Mary ascended the throne, his life was in danger. He was summoned to London to be tried and executed, but along the way he broke his leg. Some mockingly asked him if he imagined that his accident would work out for his good. "Yes," he said,

“all things.” And it did work out for his good. His journey was delayed while he recovered at an inn, and before he reached London and its ominous prison and its cruel stake, word came that Queen Mary had died. He returned home to Houghton-le-Spring and labored for the Lord for another quarter of a century.

Spurgeon Quote

“From threatening clouds we get refreshing showers,” said Charles Spurgeon. “In dark mines are found bright jewels; and so from our worst troubles come our best blessings.”

You Never Pray Alone

You never pray alone; there are time where I feel my prayers are bouncing off the ceiling, totally impotent, but this verse tells us – NEVER! All prayers make final destination because they are empowered, boosted, hand-delivered on our behalf.

I know when My Prayers have Made It

I know when my prayers have made it, because I feel the peace of God come over me. I know He will crush the enemy who is against me. One of the reasons God has written us this Book of Romans is so that we might have peace (it is how the book starts) in this fallen world from hence we all groan living in it. Christian, tarry until the peace comes; don't rush out of your prayer room until you have your peace.

Romans 15:13 (NKJV) ¹³ Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 16:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

Romans 1:7 (NKJV) ⁷ To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus Interceding

So we have Jesus at the right-hand of God making intercession for us, and we have the Spirit within in us making intercession. That is a great system for us, Amen!

Hebrews 7:24–25 (NKJV) ²⁴ But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. ²⁵ Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

The Spirit is in Continual Conversation with the Father and Son

Ever Wish could Listen in Conversation of Heaven

Have you ever wished that you could listen in on the conversations of heaven? Now one of them we couldn't have listened in on because man wasn't even created yet, and that was God (the Trinity) speaking

Genesis 1:26–27 (NKJV) ²⁶ Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” ²⁷ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Ocean of Trinity / But Trinity Continually Talks about You

Now I have to agree with Augustine who said, “trying to explain the Trinity is like pouring the Ocean into a bucket”. It makes my head swim trying to think through all the aspects of the Trinity, but what I see from the scriptures is that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit speak amongst themselves, and it is a dialogue not a monologue.

Genesis 3:22 (NKJV) ²² Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever”—

Luke 6:12 (NKJV) ¹² Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

Matthew 26:42 (NKJV) ⁴² Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done."

They Continually talk about You / Seeking what Best for You

Well what I would like for you to know is that the Father, Son and Spirit are continually having conversation about you, and we know that the conversation is always about what is best for you, and their desire to see you grow and prosper in the things of the God.

John 10:10–11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. ¹¹ "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

They want you to Listen In

The Father, Son, and Spirit are having a continual conversation amongst themselves about you, and they want you to hear their conversation;

- What They Think about You Personally
- What Their Will is for Your Life
- What They are thinking about others around You.

God will not Violate your Free-Will

God will not violate your free will. If God violate your free-will, then we would never sin again, because God hates sin and what it does to our lives and those around us. Anyone here today still sin? My point is made!

God wants us to Know His will for Us

But God wants you to know what His will is for your life, and a wise man or woman of God, knows His will for us is a perfect will. So God says listen in to our conversation about you, listen to what we think is the perfect will for your life, and watch the abundant life flow. So as the Spirit intercedes on our behalf, He lets us listen in so we can understand why certain things are happening in our lives, and by understanding we will have peace, and power!

What They Think about You Personally

To know how Precious we Are to Him

God wants us to hear the conversation of how precious we are in His sight, and just knowing that brings great power, because we know God is for us, and what He has allowed to happen in my life, He is uses for good.

Jeremiah 29:11–13 (NKJV) ¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. ¹² Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.

What Their Will is for Your Life

Know His Will – be Convinced

God wants to help us know what to do. Sometimes things are real easy for us because the Word clearly tells us what we are to be doing, but God wants us to listen in on their conversation so we can be convinced it is the best thing for our lives.

John 15:14–16 (NKJV) ¹⁴ You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

Some afraid to Hear / Chp8 – Unleashing of Spirit

Sometimes people don't want to meet with me in counseling because they don't want to hear the will of the Lord, they know what I will say, and they just don't want to do it. Sometimes that is why we don't pray, because we know God is going to tell us to do something that is outside our

comfort zone, or just something we plain ole don't want to do (like forgive, love, give, go, serve, stay, die to self). All I can say to us is, chapter 8 is all about the unleashing of the Spirit.

God wants to bring us into His Will

God wants to bring us into His will for our lives

Colossians 1:9 (NKJV) ⁹ For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

Romans 12:2 (NKJV) ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Ephesians 5:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Philippians 2:12–13 (NKJV) ¹² Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³ for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

Pray for His Will to be Done

God wants us to know what His will is, because His will is the perfect will for our lives. Hence why we are told to ask in prayer that His will be done. When we listen in to the conversation of intercession, we will hear His will, and enact His will.

Matthew 6:9–13 (NKJV) ⁹ In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰ Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread. ¹² And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. ¹³ And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

When Suffering - See what God is Doing

When I am suffering in a trial, I need to know the will of God. Is this trial because I need correcting about a sin or rebellion in my life, is this trial for perfecting me, is it a trial to change my direction to get me to a place He wants me to be, is it just a full-on attack from Satan, is it because I live in a fallen world. In either the case, God will reveal His will to us, because He will not keep anything from us.

Amos 3:7 (NKJV) ⁷ Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.

Not Figure it out Alone / Should I do this or That

I don't have to figure this life out on my own, and I surely don't have to do it alone. Should I take this job, move to this place, marry this person, go on that mission trip.

What They are thinking about others around You.

God want to Engage Us

We have seen examples in the Bible where God is having conversation, and He wanted His people to hear so that they may respond by their free-will, and get involved.

Isaiah 6:8–9 (NKJV) ⁸ Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: "Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I! Send me." ⁹ And He said, "Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.'

Genesis 18:17–23 (NKJV) ¹⁷ And the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, ¹⁸ since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? ¹⁹ For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him." ²⁰ And the LORD said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, ²¹ I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know." ²² Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the LORD. ²³ And Abraham came near and said, "Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?"

Let me Out

I think sometimes the Spirit is groaning because He wants out! Oh let me loose, unleash My power, don't keep me all caged up.

Sudden Urge to Pray

Ever have that time where you just have an overwhelming burden to pray? Seems like out of the blue I feel a need to pray for “Billy”, and later I find out Billy had a major event happening at the very moment I prayed. That is the Holy Spirit who knows all things.

Prayer Leads to Action

Prayer always leads to action. You can't pray about something and not do something about it. If I pray for missionaries I find myself writing a check or sending them a letter of encouragement. If I pray for my brother or sister in the Lord I find myself calling them or writing them to see how they are doing, and often find they needed a call because they were going through a tough time.

Here is a story where before you do it, you want to be sure you are in God's will ☺

The Ax of the Apostle

He is called the apostle to the Germans and was perhaps the greatest missionary of the Dark Ages. Boniface was an Englishman, born in 680. He entered a monastery and at age 30 was ordained. His abilities guaranteed a rising career in the English church, but Boniface had a missions call on his life that would not be denied. About 716, he sailed to Holland on his first missionary endeavor, but he met strong political opposition and returned to England discouraged. He recovered and left again for the Continent, going to Rome in 718, then, with the Pope's sanction, to Germany. For the next 12 years he worked there (with occasional forays back to Holland), and he soon began seeing great numbers of pagans converted. His boldness knew no bounds. In one village he could win no converts because the local populace was convinced that a massive tree, the sacred oak of Thundergod, held supernatural powers over them. Boniface took an ax and felled it in full view of the horrified citizens. He then proceeded to build a church with the wood. News spread across Central Europe, and thousands confessed Christ as Lord.

The Spirit knows our Praying is Hard

Clarify - Not gift of Tongue

Let me clarify here, this passage is not about the gift of tongues. The gift of tongues is man speaking to God, here in Romans 8 it is God speaking to tongues. Gifts are just that, a gift, and God chooses what gifts each person gets. But here, this passage, the intercession is for everyone. God is at work for you! If this passage was about gifts, then it would blow-up the whole chapter, because you could never confidently claim all the promises (including all things work together for good) unless you spoke in tongues. This chapter, this intercession, is for each and every believer.

1 Corinthians 14:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. ² For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.

Prayer is War / There is a war within Us

Prayer is hard because it is the Spirit warring against the flesh. Paul struggled with it himself, as too we. Below is spoken by the great apostle Paul who has been saved some 25 years when he makes this statement:

Romans 7:16–19 (NKJV) ¹⁶ If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. ¹⁷ But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. ¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. ¹⁹ For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice.

Romans 7:22–25 (NKJV) ²² For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. ²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. ²⁴ O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

God is Sweating for You

The Spirit groans, that signifies a struggle, a burden. God is sweating and burdened for you!

I'm Tired / Need Rest – we become like the Rest

Prayer is a battle, the Spirit wars against the flesh and vice-versa, that is why we don't want to pray, because we are tired and we want rest – but the rest of the world will make us like the rest of the world, and no prayer means no unleashing of the Spirit.

Key to Prayer – Pray / As Pray - Spirit is Unleashed

I am going to give you the key to becoming a man and woman of prayer – ready, PRAY! Pray whether you feel like it or not, because once you start to pray you will find that the Spirit has already been praying for you and you will now be join God in prayer, and anywhere God is moving, power is unleashing.

Zechariah 4:6 (NKJV) ⁶ So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts.

The Spirit is Conforming us into God's Image

Strength & Stability

The Temple in Jerusalem in the Old Testament times was the place where the High Priest would go into and meet with God, make intercession on behalf of the people. Going into the Temple were two large pillars, one they names Jachin, the other Boaz, and one meant "strength", the other meant "stability". Is that your desire in your life today, strength and stability? Then you will find it at the "house of prayer".

1 Kings 7:21 (NKJV) ²¹ Then he set up the pillars by the vestibule of the temple; he set up the pillar on the right and called its name Jachin, and he set up the pillar on the left and called its name Boaz.

Matthew 21:13 (NKJV) ¹³ And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'"

Maybe Say I've tried to Pray

Maybe you say, I've tried to pray, it just isn't my thing, I just can't get into it. Prayer is all about faith, and faith is believing something we can't see. Prayer is all about faith, and we have to believe that God actually hears, and that prayer actually makes a difference. I pray the word spoken here today by the Lord has increased your faith, drawn you heart to want to invest in prayer. For once we are convinced in our minds that prayer matters, that prayer changes and makes a difference both in heaven and on earth, both in us and the people we pray for, we then will be drawn into prayer, and thirst for it as Living Water.

Romans 10:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

John 7:37–39 (NKJV) ³⁷ On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸ He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." ³⁹ But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

God's will Greater than anything you Could Will / 1 Cor 2:9-13

God's will for you is greater than anything you will ever will for yourself, and oh what the Lord does when we come in line with His will. Read this passage; let it sink deep into your heart:

1 Corinthians 2:9–13 (NKJV) ⁹ But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." ¹⁰ But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. ¹¹ For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. ¹² Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. ¹³ These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

Precious Saints, God is unfolding a Rose, and you are that Rose.

The Unfolding of the Rose

A young, new saint was walking with an older, more seasoned saint in the garden one day and feeling a bit insecure about what God had for him to do, he was inquiring of the older saint. The

older saint walked up to a rosebush and handed the young saint a rosebud and told him to open it without tearing off any petals. The young saint looked in disbelief at the older saint and was trying to figure out what a rosebud could possibly have to do with his wanting to know the WILL OF GOD for his life and for his ministry. Because of his high respect for the older saint, he proceeded to TRY to unfold the rose, while keeping every petal intact...It wasn't long before he realized how impossible it was to do so. Noticing the younger saint's inability to unfold the rosebud while keeping it intact, the older saint began to recite the following poem...

*"It is only a tiny rosebud,
A flower of God's design;
But I cannot unfold the petals
With these clumsy hands of mine.*

*The secret of unfolding flowers
Is not known to such as I.
GOD opens this flower so sweetly,
When in my hands they fade and die.*

*If I cannot unfold a rosebud,
This flower of God's design,
Then how can I think I have wisdom
To unfold this life of mine?*

*So I'll trust in Him for His leading
Each moment of every day.
I will look to him for His guidance
Each step of the pilgrim way.*

*The pathway that lies before me,
Only my Heavenly Father knows.
I'll trust Him to unfold the moments,
Just as He unfolds the rose."*

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And so the Spirit makes intercession for us!

Slow down Christian, leave the court of the world behind, go past the voice of the people, get into the Holy Place, spend time there with the Lord, speak, but wait to hear. God will speak His will for your life, but you have to be still to hear Him speak. Make it to the house of prayer, you won't believe what you will hear:

1 Kings 19:11-12 (NKJV) ¹¹ Then He said, "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the LORD." And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; ¹² and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.

Rightly Dividing the Word

A Study on the “Dispensations of God”

Past few Studies – Mind Blowing / Dispensations

Over the past few weeks I have been talking about things that well, really, are mind blowing; we have been talking about the Millennial Kingdom, the Dispensation of Grace and the fullness of the Gentiles, the 7-year Tribulation Period, and of course heaven.

We live in most Amazing Period of History

We are a people who live in a most amazing time in the history of the world, for we currently live in this period, the Dispensation of Grace (the fullness of the Gentiles), and based on all the prophetic signs we will be the body of believers who are raptured, see but endure the 7-year Tribulation Period (as we are enjoying the Marriage Supper of the Lamb), and then after we will return with Christ and actually get to help Him establish and rule the Millennial Kingdom.

People can think we out of our Mind / That’s just Crazy Talk

Well, all these things spoken individually as separate units can be kind of mind blowing, especially when we share our faith as people are like “what are you talking about”; Millennial Kingdoms, Tribulation Period, Fullness of Gentiles, they say to themselves, their friends when you are not around, maybe even to you – you are out there, that is just crazy talk!

Total of 8 / For Evangelism and Counseling / Equipping of the Saints

These Dispensations (scholars have grouped them from as low as 3 to as high as 10, but all say the same thing in the end), I have them grouped into 8 for our study today. Now part of our ministry charter is to equip the saints for the work of the ministry. These Dispensations are powerful for us as we evangelize and counsel. These 8 Dispensations remove every excuse (we use them as apologetics) for a person for not coming to Christ (oh if I see it I’d believe it, how could a God of love allow all this suffering, if only I wasn’t raised in such a messed up home, etc), and these same 8 Dispensations at the same time show there is only one hope in this world, man’s efforts will always leave us short, will always leave left in bondage, left in depression, left in defeat, and only by Jesus Christ will we have “life and that more abundant”.

Ephesians 4:11–16 (NKJV) ¹¹ And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴ that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, ¹⁵ but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV) ¹⁵ Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Today we Equip / But God will not leave us Lacking

Today we study for the equipping of the saints so that we might do the work of the ministry, but I assure you that God never leaves us lacking, and as we glean for others, God nourishes us first.

Found in Ephesians

The word “dispensation” is found in Ephesians:

Ephesians 1:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him.

Ephesians 3:2 (NKJV) ² if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you,

Dictionary Definitions

Here are some dictionaries definitions for this word “dispensation” to help us understand what the word means, and what God is doing through the dispensations we will study today.

DISPENSATION (Easton's Bible dictionary) — (Gr. *oikonomia*, "management," "economy"). (1.) The method or scheme according to which God carries out his purposes towards men is called a dispensation.

DISPENSATIONS (Unger's Bible Dictionary) (Gk. *oikonomia*, "management of a household," hence English "economy"). A dispensation is an era of time during which man is tested in respect to obedience to some definite revelation of God's will.

DISPENSATION (Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary) — a period of time under which mankind is answerable to God for how it has obeyed the revelation of God that it has received.

The Dispensations of God:

- 1.) *The Dispensation of Innocence* (from Adam to the Fall)
- 2.) *The Dispensation of Conscience* (from the Fall to the Flood)
- 3.) *The Dispensation of Government* (from Flood to Tower of Babel)
- 4.) *The Dispensation of Promise* (from Tower of Babel through the Exodus)
- 5.) *The Dispensation of the Law* (from Mt. Sinai to the Cross)
- 6.) *The Dispensation of Grace* (from the Cross to the Rapture)
- 7.) *The Dispensation of the Tribulation* (from the Rapture to the 2nd Coming of Christ)
- 8.) *The Dispensation of the Kingdom Age* (From Second Coming through the Millennial Kingdom)

Our Romans Study

By the way, you'll see a form or fashion of all these Dispensations in the Book of Romans, and you'll see how we have studied them all over the last few months.

1) The Dispensation of Innocence (from Adam to the Fall)

The age of innocence, the perfect Garden of Eden. But then came the Adam-Bomb
Romans 5:12 (NKJV) ¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

Psychologist B. F. Skinner voiced the belief of many when he said, "If you can change the external environment of a group of people, they will live at peace." Scripture, however, says otherwise, for when God placed man in the perfect environment in the Garden of Eden, what did man do? He chose to rebel in the one and only way possible. He chose to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that was placed in the Garden as a way for him to choose for or against God's love.

People say.....

- **Perfect Environment** – if only I didn't live where I live I wouldn't be who I am, and I wouldn't do the things that I do – well Adam lived in the perfect environment and he still chose sin, it isn't our environment, it is our nature.
- **Perfect Parent (Family)** – if only I didn't live in the home that I do and have the parents that I have, I would be all sold out for God – well Adam had the perfect parent and the perfect family, and he still chose sin, it isn't our parents, it is our nature.
- **Perfect Church** – man if only I could find an on-fire church, a better pastor, cooler Christians, then I would be all on-fire for the Lord and would be doing the things that I am doing. Well Adam had the perfect church and the perfect pastor, he had the most awesome fellowship hall in the universe (the Garden) and he still chose sin. It isn't our church, it is our nature.
- **Perfect Government** – If it wasn't for this government upsetting me with all their foolishness and wastefulness I would have peace and security, and wouldn't be so fired-up all the time, and I could spend more time with the Lord. Well Adam had the perfect government and the perfect president/king, yet he still chose sin. It isn't our government, it is our nature.
- **Perfect Job (with Perfect Boss)** – perfect job, perfect boss – need I say more, Adam tended to the Garden, and God was his boss. It isn't our jobs that shape us, it is our nature.

- **Perfect Mate** – perfect mate, ah it is my spouse that keeps me from seeking the Lord, always causing me problems. Adam had the perfect wife (and she was perfect because she was the one God picked her out just for him), yet Adam still chose sin. It isn't our spouse, it is our nature.
- **Perfect Health** – if I wasn't me, if I was more beautiful, more fit, younger or older, healthier, not struggling with this health issue, I could focus solely on the Lord. Adam had perfect health, yet he chose sin. It is not our health, it is our nature.

B. F. Skinner was wrong, for it was only during the age of innocence that God declared that which He had made to be good. But because the first dispensation came to a close when man fell, the Bible says at that point, all of creation entered into a fallen condition—groaning, aching, and longing for the day of restoration (Romans 8:22)

Romans 8:22 (NKJV) ²² *For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.*

2) The Dispensation of Conscience (from the Fall to the Flood)

Many think that if everyone simply followed their conscience, the world would be right. So in the period between Adam and Eve's fall in the Garden of Eden and the Flood that covered the earth, God declared "If you do well, you'll be accepted" (see Genesis 4:7). But it didn't work, for the dispensation began with Cain killing Abel and ended with the imagination of man being evil continually (Genesis 6:5).

Genesis 4:7 (NKJV) ⁷ *If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it."*

Genesis 6:5 (NKJV) ⁵ *Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

People today say if everyone would just stay out of my business and leave me alone I'd be fine. People all say or think that they are a "good person", but the Dispensation of Conscience proved that man left to himself will be devoured by his evil imagination and desires. Paul said:

Romans 1:21–23 (NKJV) ²¹ *because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Professing to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.*

Romans 3:12 (NKJV) ¹² *They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one."*

3) The Dispensation of Government (from Flood to Tower of Babel)

Mankind still has a tendency to think that if we could only elect good leaders, the problems of the world would be solved. Following the Flood, based upon the right and responsibility of capital punishment given to Noah, mankind was to govern himself. Yet the "Dispensation of Government" began and ended dismally. No sooner had God given Noah responsibility to govern the world than, unable to govern even himself, Noah ended up drunk in his tent, fathering two peoples who would be problematic to the people of God throughout their history. The end of the dispensation is typified by the Tower of Babel—a government project constructed of mud and slime whose end result was total confusion.

Men can't judge/rule other men, because in the nature of every man is their own desire to practice what is evil, wrong, contrary to seeking the best of others first. Paul said:

Romans 2:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ *Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. ² But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things. ³ And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God?*

Man spends so much time and energy seeking leaders and helpers on earth, rather than seeking the Lord, and thus will always fall short (just like the Tower of Babel couldn't reach the heavens).

4) The Dispensation of Promise (from Tower of Babel through the Exodus)

"We need a promise, a hope that good is coming," says man. God gave Abraham such a promise when He said He would make of Abraham a great nation (Genesis 12:2). He gave him and his descendants the sign of circumcision (you are special – you are my special people), yet when famine hit, Abraham's descendants lost hope, disobeyed God, and headed for Egypt (Genesis 26:2). They looked at the promise, but totally missed the Promiser of the promise.

Genesis 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. ² I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing.

Romans 4:12–13 (NKJV) ¹² and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of the faith which our father Abraham had while still uncircumcised. ¹³ For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

Man is always thinking that tomorrow is the answer, and thus never faces that today, is today, and today's issues need to be dealt with today.

Man says I am nothing, if I just knew that I was special to God, that He really cared about me, gave me some kind of sign, then my life wouldn't be this bondage and slavery that I am in. The children of Israel knew they were special, had a sign (circumcision), but when it came down to believing God was able to do all that He promised, they didn't exercise faith and **chose to take things into their own hands**, and the resultant was 400 years of slavery.

Today God has given the ultimate sign to all men everywhere that they are special, that sign is the Cross.

Romans 5:8 (NKJV) ⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

5) The Dispensation of the Law (from Mt. Sinai to the Cross)

Man today says if I just had some rules to live by, some guides to stay within, I would do well. Well God gave the 10 Commands, just 10, and man failed them miserably. Jesus boiled them down to just two, and in Galatians it is boiled down to one – love!

Matthew 22:35–40 (NKJV) ³⁵ Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, ³⁶ "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" ³⁷ Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." ³⁸ This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Galatians 5:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

The Law leaves every man guilty before the Holy God. The Law doesn't help us, it just leaves us helpless. It doesn't justify us, it just leaves us guilty before the standard of the Holy God.

(Rom 3:20 NKJV) Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

It is not 12-Steps, nor 7 principles to be highly effective, nor 40 days to find your purpose, it is One (the Great One – Jesus Christ).

6) The Dispensation of Grace (from the Cross to the Rapture)

"You tried a perfect environment. You tried to live by your conscience. You've given human government a whirl. You tried rules and regulations. Now," says God, "try this: For by grace are you saved, not of works. It's a gift of God" (see Ephesians 2:8, 9).

Ephesians 2:8–10 (NKJV) ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Romans 3:23–25 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to

demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,

All of the previous dispensations lead to the one we are in right now—grace. We admit that government isn't the answer, that environment won't solve the problem, that our consciences are corrupt and seared. We admit we're sinners in desperate need of a Savior.

But some sadly, many today confuse God's grace for weakness, for a winking at sin, and they abuse His grace, and thus the next Dispensation sends a real clear message about God's holiness.

7) The Dispensation of the Tribulation (from the Rapture to the 2nd Coming of Christ)

After the church is taken to heaven, God will begin to make Himself known powerfully and visibly to those who don't believe on Him, to those who want nothing to do with Him. Hundred-pound hailstones will pelt the earth, and blood will fill valleys two hundred miles long as God employs terrible tragedy in a wake-up call to earth. Many people confuse God's grace as a license to sin and live selfishly, they say a gracious God would never punish me for my sin, He understands my weaknesses, and how I can't break these bondages and addictions.

The Tribulation Period clearly declares God's Holiness, and His call for every man to live Holy lives, that He does not condone sin, nor wink at sin, and He is dead serious that every man must repent of His sin.

Revelation 6:15–17 (NKJV) ¹⁵ *And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains,* ¹⁶ *and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!"* ¹⁷ *For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"*

One of the other things God will be doing in the Tribulation is waking up the Nation Israel, and drawing them to Himself.

As we study the Tribulation in chapters 6-19, we will see God doing 3 very specific things:

- To Shake-up the Heathen
- To Wake-up a Nation (Israel)
- To Make-up the Kingdom

Romans 11:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ *For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.*

God calls every man everywhere to repent:

Acts 3:19–21 (NKJV) ¹⁹ *Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,* ²⁰ *and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before,* ²¹ *whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.*

8) The Dispensation of the Kingdom Age (from the 2nd Coming through the Millennial Kingdom)

At the end of the Tribulation, Jesus Christ will come back to rule and reign in Jerusalem for one thousand years. It seems all would be well at last. But in Revelation 20, we read an amazing thing: After one thousand years of such peace that the lion will lie down by the lamb, after one thousand years of such health that those who are one hundred years of age are considered children, after one thousand years of perfect conditions for humanity, guess what happens? Man rebels against God once again. Not you and me—but many of those who are on the earth in a human state will turn away from Jesus, ushering in the creation of a new heaven and earth.

There are those who say, if I could see Him, then I would believe in Him, but this final Dispensation dispels that for even after seeing Him, sitting under His perfect environment and perfect leadership, many a men will chose to rebel against Him, because many a men want to rule and reign over their own lives without say or correction from the Lord.

Luke 19:12–14 (NKJV) ¹² Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return." ¹³ So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.' ¹⁴ But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.'

That mentality always ends in destruction.

Luke 19:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.' "

The Dispensations of God:

- 1.) *The Dispensation of Innocence* (from Adam to the Fall)
- 2.) *The Dispensation of Conscience* (from the Fall to the Flood)
- 3.) *The Dispensation of Government* (from Flood to Tower of Babel)
- 4.) *The Dispensation of Promise* (from Tower of Babel through the Exodus)
- 5.) *The Dispensation of the Law* (from Mt. Sinai to the Cross)
- 6.) *The Dispensation of Grace* (from the Cross to the Rapture)
- 7.) *The Dispensation of the Tribulation* (from the Rapture to the 2nd Coming of Christ)
- 8.) *The Dispensation of the Kingdom Age* (From Second Coming through the Millennial Kingdom)

As Counselors & Evangelist – OT Nugget – Bring them into the Inner Sanctuary

As counselors and evangelist, there is a little golden nugget in the OT that should be central and paramount to our counseling and evangelist, and that is we need to get the person into the inner sanctuary of God, and we do that through the Word of God.

1 Kings 6:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ And he prepared the inner sanctuary inside the temple, to set the ark of the covenant of the LORD there.

Inner Sanctuary – Holy of Holies – Presence of God / Throne of Yahweh – The Back Room

The "inner sanctuary" was referring to the Holy of Holies, where the presence of God dwelt in the Temple. I like the definition one dictionary gives, "the Throne Room of Yahweh". And I love the simplest definitions given, "the back room". Our ultimate goal in all our evangelism and counseling is to bring people to the throne room of God, get them out of the clouded confusion of the world and bring them into the "back room", where it is just a private audience between them and God. We do that through the Word of God.

OKJV – Oracle / The Word brings them into Inner Room

I like the OKJV translation, as it uses the word "oracle" instead of "inner sanctuary" – and the fact is, both translations are good and right. We bring a person to the "inner room" through the Word of God. Share with them this word, these things we have just studied, and the other 31,102 verses.

1 Kings 6:19 (KJV) ¹⁹ And the oracle he prepared in the house within, to set there the ark of the covenant of the LORD.

Back Room – Find Grace

For it is in the "back room", the throne of Yahweh, that they may find grace to help in the time of need. If we want to truly help someone, give them this word!

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

God is for Us!

Romans 8:28-39

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (C12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Swiss Alps

Chapter 8 starts with a Swiss Alps statement, a pinnacle of God's love towards us as he states - *There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.* This is important to grab hold of here in our study today because we will be talking about all things working together for good, but many times when we are in a trial or suffering we can start to think that God is against us, angry and upset with us. God does not condemn us, therefore let us not either (or one another).

Chapter 8 – The Spirit Unleashed

The Spirit, who was mentioned only once in chaps. 1–7 (cf. 1:4), is referred to nearly 20 times in chap. 8. Chapter 8 is the unleashing of the Spirit in the believers life.

- The Spirit - Frees us from sin and death (2-3);
- The Spirit - Enables us to fulfill God's law (4);
- The Spirit - Changes our nature and grants us strength for victory over our flesh (5–13);
- The Spirit - Confirms our adoption as God's children (14–17);
- The Spirit - Guarantees our ultimate glory (18–30).

Study today – Spirit working on our Sanctification/Glorification / World not It – we Groan

In our study today we see the mighty work of the Spirit as He works in the realm of intercession. The Holy Spirit guarantees our ultimate glory (hence the past tense referencing of us being glorified as it is a done deal!), but the Holy Spirit at the same time is working in our sanctification, which ultimately results in our glorification. Well if you have been a believer longer than five minutes, you will be quick to agree, this world just doesn't cut it, for now we know what the promise of glorification looks like, and as we compare it to our present living in the world, we ultimately just groan realizing how far short we are of the promised glory.

(Rom 8:23 NKJV) *Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.*

Not Alone in Groaning / 3 Groaning Chapter 8

We are not alone in that groaning, as we will see in our passage today, for all creation and the Holy Spirit Himself are groaning with and for us.

The Universe is Groaning (8:17-27)

- The Groaning of Believers (17-18 & 23-25)
- The Groaning of Creation (19-22)
- The Groaning of the Spirit (26-27)

What means to You – God Understands our Struggles – Here to Help in time of Need

What does this mean to you today in this study? It means the theme we have been studying for the last 3 chapters, God understands our struggles, and He is here to help in our time of need,

and he says come before the throne of grace, and I in My Spirit will help you get there because I live to make intercession for you – and in all things I am working good, and ultimately GLORY!
Hebrews 4:16 (KJV) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

The Greek

The Greek language is a wonderfully rich language, and we can glean many golden nuggets as we look into the language in its original form. One such nugget is the ability to see emphasis the writer put on certain words to make them stand out, and so let's read our passage to gain it context for our study, and as we do, we will add the emphasis (bold) as we read it out loud.

- SENTENCE ²⁸ And we know that for those who love God **all things** work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.
- SUB-POINT ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son,
- SUB-POINT in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.
- SENTENCE ³⁰ And those whom he predestined • **he also called,**
- SENTENCE and those whom he called • **he also justified,**
- SENTENCE and those whom he justified • **he also glorified.**
- PRINCIPLE ³¹ **What** then shall we say to these things?
- SENTENCE If God is for us, **who** can be against us?
- SENTENCE ³² He who **did** not **spare** his own Son
- SENTENCE but gave him up for us all,
- SENTENCE how will he not **also with him** graciously give us all things?
- SENTENCE ³³ **Who** shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is
- SENTENCE **God** who justifies.
- SENTENCE ³⁴ **Who** is to condemn?
- SENTENCE **Christ Jesus** is the one who died—
- SENTENCE more than that, who was raised—
- SENTENCE who • is at the right hand of God,
- SENTENCE who indeed is interceding for us.
- SENTENCE ³⁵ **Who** shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall
- BULLET tribulation,
- BULLET or distress,
- BULLET or persecution,
- BULLET or famine,
- BULLET or nakedness,
- BULLET or danger,
- BULLET or sword?
- SENTENCE ³⁶ As it is written, “
- SENTENCE **For your sake** we are being killed all the day long;
- SENTENCE we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”
- SENTENCE ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.
- COMPLEX ³⁸ For I am sure that
- BULLET neither **death** nor **life,**

BULLET nor angels nor rulers,
BULLET nor things present nor things to come,
BULLET nor powers,³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all
creation,
SUPPORT will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our
Lord.

God is Working All things together for Good

(Rom 8:28 NKJV) And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

Not a Qualifying Statement – but Identifier

Verse 28 – Is not a qualifying statement, meaning that if you love God and are following His calling, that He will work all things together for good; no not at all. It is an identifier that all who are His, He is working intimately in their lives.

He is Working: People, Places, Situations

He is working through the people that are in our lives (maybe even rubbing us the wrong way – living stones), He is working in the places He has us (our jobs, church, city, sports club, school), and He is working in all the situations that we are in so as to conform us into His image and that we will learn to respond in the Spirit and not the flesh. God will even take our failures (yes sins and turn them into good!

Sometimes feel He doesn't Care – Look at the Context / When doubt it – Look at Context

Well sometimes it doesn't feel like He is working, sometimes it feels like He has forgotten me, or He doesn't even care about the pain that I am in. Look down a few verses to verses 31-32, for verse 28 must be read in its context - "God spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for you and me." If He loved you enough to send His Son to be slaughtered in your stead to pay the price for your sin, don't you know God will do what's good for you continually? When I begin to doubt the love of God, or wonder if things are really working together for good, all I need to do is look to Calvary and see Jesus there dying for me.

(Rom 8:31 NKJV) What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

(Rom 8:32 NKJV) He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

Camden – I need to climb the Cross

One morning after I had just done some thinking about the persecuted church, reading and hearing stories about people in America and Europe being arrested for sharing their faith (and to be honest I actually had bad dreams about it the night before); well my friend Tom had made me a beautiful 2 foot high cross, and as I was doing some rearranging in my house I decided I wanted the cross in my office so I could see every day as I studied and prayed and spent time with the Lord. So that particular morning, I had just hung the cross on my wall, right above the couch, the same time I was having all these thoughts about persecution racing through my head, and Camden my 3 year-old came into my office early that morning (like 6am), with that big smile on his face (he is always so happy in the morning), he says hi daddy, and he sees the cross on the wall (which is now something new to him since it was there the day before – so it really stands out to him), and he gets on the couch, stands on the arm of the couch, then puts his hands on the cross (outstretched horizontally) and says, "I need to climb the cross". Oh, to see my own son stretched out upon the cross! I thought what it would be like as a father if I had to watch him die upon the cross. To die, and I could actually do something about it, I could stop it. Can I ask you moms and dads, could you do it? My baby, your baby, so sweet and innocence, what have they ever done that could deserve such pain. As my Camden, climbed the cross I said "Father how could you – for me – the selfish person I am!"

Look at Cross

When I look at the cross, my vision that had become clouded through my trials and hardship comes back into clear focus – God you are for me, and thus I know that you are working all things together for good, You are intimately and lovingly involved in every aspect of my life.

Communion Service

(Rom 8:29 NKJV) For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

(Rom 8:30 NKJV) Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Foreknew – Marriage Prophecy

Foreknew – Now if I was to tell you I have a prophetic statement to make today, and that is that Renee is going to be my wife, you would say ah yea you are married. In fact this month is our 8 year anniversary so I have 8 years of proof that she is my wife. My statement is known as fact to all in this room because we are now all in the time domain of past (it has happened). This is an easy statement for God to make, it is as easy a statement for me to make that Renee is going to be wife, because He lives outside of our time domain, so what has happened is fact.

Church fighting 2K Years – God’s Sovereignty vs. Free-will

The church has been fighting over these words for 2,000 years, God’s sovereignty versus man’s free-will. Can man resist God’s calling – or is it irresistible grace, does man have a choice in the matter, is it once saved, always saved? And the debates and the divisions within the Body of Christ goes on and on

Not Fighting Words – Freeing Words

These aren’t fighting words here in verse 29-30, but freeing words! In the Greek the emphasis isn’t put on verses 29-30, but they are meant to be sup-points to convince us the verse 28 is true – which is God is working **all things** together for good!

SENTENCE ²⁸ And we know that for those who love God **all things** work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

SUB-POINT ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son,

SUB-POINT in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

SENTENCE ³⁰ And those whom he predestined • **he also called,**

SENTENCE and those whom he called • **he also justified,**

SENTENCE and those whom he justified • **he also glorified.**

Why Battle Rage – don’t Study Verse-by-Verse / Context – I know your Struggle / Promise

The battle has raged for 2,000 years, and one reason I’ll tell why is because they don’t study their bible verse-by-verse, and chapter-by-chapter, because when you do we see the context of these two verses are in the context of what the theme is that we have been studying! God saying “I know your struggle, I know how hard it is to live in this fallen world, I hear your groaning, and I am here to help you, and I am promising you that I am going to get you through this life and into the next, and it is so sure – I can call you glorified in the past tense as if it already happened.”

Promises / Outline

Take it as a promise, and all we are reading today are promises.

The outline of verses 18-39 is:

- Perspective Hope (18-25)
- Present Help (26-27)
- Precious Promises (28-39)

Romans 8:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Romans 8:26 (NKJV) ²⁶ Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Romans 8:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

However – I must Address / Not Complicated – Illustration of Marriage / Makes Diff of Chp8

However, while we are here I must answer this argument that has been going on for 2,000 years because these are some of the key verses in the argument of - God's sovereignty versus man's free-will. Can man resist God's calling – or is it irresistible grace, does man have a choice in the matter, is it once saved, always saved? And the debates and the divisions within the Body of Christ goes on and on. I don't see why people view it as something complicate, for God gave us a living illustration that we are familiar with, and most every person experiences – marriage. And understanding the illustration of marriage, and then applying it to the context of Romans 8 makes all the difference in the world as to whether you will believe – that God is for you, and is working all things together for good.

We are Bride – Altar First

We are called the Bride of Christ, and every bride has to go to the altar and say “I do” before they are called a bride.

Ephesians 5:25–27 (NKJV) ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

Revelation 19:7–8 (NKJV) ⁷ Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” ⁸ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

God uses Illustration – Our Marriage to Him / Flow of Relationship

God uses the illustration of human marriage to illustrated a person's marriage to Him. Each marriage relationship starts deep within a person's heart that there is a desire to have a close and intimate relationship with someone. Someone to share and experience life and love together with. Then an interest is sparked when that certain someone catches their attention, a courting begins, a learning of one another, and understanding of who the other one is, and when the interest is deepened then a wooing (a drawing) is exercised. It reaches a point where a demonstration of love is continually being made with words and actions, and then a profession of love is made, and repeated over and over again. Then, a proposal is made, will you marry me, will you make a covenant with me, that we will spend our lives together?

Marriage – Coming together of 2 Wills

Marriage is the coming together of two wills. Two wills saying this is my will, this is what I choose, and I choose you. On June 28th, 2002 – mine and Renee's wills came together and we made a covenant agreement to marry one another.

Be Clear – 31,102 Verses – Desires You

Let me make this clear, 31,102 verses all declare, God's will is that He desires you. He is wooing you, He is doing everything he can to get your attention, to reveal His nature, personality, character to you, and He has demonstrated His love for you as great as anyone can – I love you to death!

Love for ALL who will Receive It / Wishes that none Perish

His love is for all who will receive it. For God so loved the world – that would mean the people of America, Central America, Canada, European, Russian, Africa, India, Australia, Chinese, Middle Eastern, and Israeli – the whole world! He wishes that none should perish but that all should seek repentance, He cries out to all people to come to Him.

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV) ⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Matthew 11:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Revelation 3:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

Consider This – Every Marriage a Decision as to Accept All that Comes with that Person

Now consider this, as in every marriage, each person is making the decision if they accept all of the other person. Do I except them as they are, do I accept the boundaries that come with marrying them (faithfulness, purity, honor, respect). For some they say I am just not ready or have no desire to be bound to just one person, or they say their lifestyle doesn't line-up with mine, I want to do these things while they want to do other things. So it is with any person's relationship with the Lord, do they accept His conditions for marriage (faithfulness and purity), do they accept His boundaries, do they desire to go where He is going. The Lord does everything to convince a person that His way will be the greatest way, and the most wonderful marriage, but in the end He accepts it when a person says – No, I don't want to make a covenant with You, I don't love You.

Oh the Beauty when Couples come Together / First Glance

But oh the beauty of when a couple comes together. That first catching of the eye, the tug in the heart, hey what just happened in my heart. I am reminded of me and Renee, that first look, wow look at those looks, and the intelligence, what a catch, the total package deal. Then there is of course what I thought when I first saw her! Oh that coming together, that relationship that grows, then develops into love, a love that wants to spend the rest of life together. How beautiful.

Not sure how became Fighting Words / I'll enjoy I am His

Not sure how we go from here, to fighting over God's sovereignty and man's free-will. Let them fight, I'll be over here enjoying that I am His, and tell all who will hear how awesome He is and His desire to have a relationship with them too – AMEN!

God is for Us – Gave us ALL things Freely (His own Son Jesus)

(Rom 8:31 NKJV) What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

(Rom 8:32 NKJV) He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

Title: I Look To The Cross - Artist: Mark Altrogge

Verse 1:

How do I know You love me I look around and see
The sunshine, the rain and the wind in the trees
But should these gracious tokens
all fade from my sight

I won't doubt Your love for I fix my eyes
I look to the Cross where I most clearly see
Your awesome love displayed for me
For even when I was dead in sin
You died for me
Oh I look to the cross

I look to the cross of Christ

Verse 2:

How do I know You love me at times I'm so aware

I sense Your Holy Spirit I see You everywhere
But when I leave the mountain and
Your face is hid from sight

I won't doubt Your love for I fix my eyes
I look to the Cross where I most clearly see
Your awesome love displayed for me
For even when I was dead in sin
You died for me
Oh I look to the cross

College in Daytona Beach

Verse 31 – when I went to college in Daytona Beach Florida (before I was saved) I had a job working in security in a rather rough establishment. Never seemed to be a lack of the need for security as people would feel a need to start trouble in this fine dining and spirits establishment. Well when trouble began all I had to do was stand up and the people who were thinking of starting trouble quickly sat down as they changed their mind. Was it my awesome presence, or my intimidating look, that changed their mind – not really! It was because when I stood up, John and Enrique stood up also. John was the 1985 Orlando Badman champion, and the following year John training Enrique and he was the 1986 champion. Now John and Enrique didn't even work at this place, but for some reason they took a liking to me, and we became friends (thank God), and to them, for someone to touch me, became very personal to them. Let me tell you Christian, no one stands against you without the Lord standing beside you because anyone who comes against you, God is going to take it personally.

Isaiah 52:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ Break forth into joy, sing together, You waste places of Jerusalem! For the LORD has comforted His people, He has redeemed Jerusalem. ¹⁰ The LORD has made bare His holy arm In the eyes of all the nations; And all the ends of the earth shall see The salvation of our God.

Why still Suffer – He working something Far Greater / He is For Us / Stand not Alone

Why do we still suffer, because God is working something far greater than we can currently see, but if we allow Him to work, the resultants will be amazing – GLORY. But God wants it to be made known, you never stand alone in your battle!

Who can Charge God's Elect

(Rom 8:33 NKJV) Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

(Rom 8:34 NKJV) Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

Judicial Term / Satan the Accuser – Jesus the Excuser

Verse 33 – Justify is a judicial term used in legal proceedings, and it meant to dismiss a sentence that was laid upon a person. God is saying the past is past. Satan is the accuser of the brethren, but Jesus is the excuser – case dismissed, you are free no go live like it.

Jesus our High Priest

Verse 34 – Jesus is our High Priest and He lives to make intercessor continually on our behalf. So with Jesus and the Spirit interceding for us, we are doing pretty good.

Hebrews 7:24–25 (NKJV) ²⁴ But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. ²⁵ Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Nothing can Separate us from God's Love (we are Conquerors)

(Rom 8:35 NKJV) Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Paul speaking from Experience Here

Verse 35 – Paul is speaking from experience here, notice how this verses correlate to Paul's actual life. When he wrote these words, he lived them too.

2 Corinthians 11:23–28 (NKJV) ²³ *Are they ministers of Christ?—I speak as a fool—I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. ²⁴ From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. ²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; ²⁶ in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; ²⁷ in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—²⁸ besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.*

Two-Way Relationship

Like all marriage relationships, it is two-ways. We have just read that from God's position nothing will separate Him from us, He loves us and gives us all things freely (to the point of His own son); but now it is what do we believe (based on everything we have been told). When these trials and hardships come, we will say, "although these things have come against me, the world is hard, I groan, - I will not allow the afflictions of the world to separate me from Him." Many a people check-out, say good-bye to the Lord when the hardships come, because they feel He has failed them, abandoned them. Those who do have forgotten this glorious passage of chapter 8. When a person is convinced of He is for them, then they will be convinced that all things work together for good!

(Rom 8:36 NKJV) As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

Quoting Psalm 44 / God not done with Israel

Verse 36 – is quoting Psalm 44:22, and it is a very specific promise to the people of the nation of Israel, so this sets up our study of chapters 9-11 here, and the summation is that God is not done with the Nation Israel and the Jewish people, so what you are watching on the nightly news happening in Israel is prophecy unfolding before your very eyes. The application for you here today in this context is that God is saying just how I have sustained Israel through 2,000 years of struggle and hardship, so too will I sustain you. You are as precious to me as they are.

Sometimes we feel we being Slaughtered / God says I know it is Hard / History Timeline

Verse 36 – I know sometimes this is what life feels like, we are being slaughtered; and God says I know it is hard, so many things coming against you. But Christian, our suffering is but for a moment, Paul calls it a light affliction (and consider all he had been through). Christian life seems so long until we consider it in the balance of history. Mankind has been on this planet for 60 centuries, and the average human lives less than 1 century, 1/60th of history. Consider our one century is only 1/10th of what we will be doing in the Millennial Kingdom (oh Christian invest wisely into the things of God – don't get taken by the bobbins and trinkets of this world), and consider what one century looks like in relationship to 25,000 years, and consider that eternity has only just begun at 25,000. Yes I know it is hard, but put it in light of these things, they are but a scratch.

2 Corinthians 4:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, ¹⁸ while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

Romans 8:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

Psalms 90:12 (NKJV) ¹² *So teach us to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom.*

(Rom 8:37 NKJV) Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

Name-it-Claim-It

Paul is not saying we won't face trials and tribulations, rather he is saying we can overcome them through Christ. The faith teachers and the easy-believism teachers are amiss in their teaching.

We Conquer through Him / We Super-Conquerors

Verse 37-39: How do we conquer, through Him! We are more than conquerors Paul says, in put another way, we are super-conquerors. We are super-conquerors because all that we have studied in chapters 6-8.

(Rom 8:38 NKJV) For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come,

(Rom 8:39 NKJV) nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Persuaded – Through Reasoning

Verse 38 – Persuaded – means to do something through reasoning or argument. Paul is saying he has laid our facts not theory, and thus he can say the things that he is saying.

Nothing Separates – All Promises ours to Claim

Nothing can separate us from the love of the Lord – therefore every one of these precious promises are ours to claim.

Summation – God is for Us

The summation of the 8 chapters we have been studying for the last six months is:

God is For Us!

Conclusion / 3 Words – And we Know

Verse 28 the three key words are “we know that” – and we know because we study this book, chapter-by-chapter, verse-by-verse, and these words become life to us and we know – God is for us, who can be against, therefore whatever is happening in my life God is working for GOOD, AMEN!

(Rom 8:28 NKJV) *And we know* that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

Chapter 9

God's Righteousness & Grace – concerning Israel (Chapters 9-11)

Loving and Praying (Romans 9:1-3)

Paul would be Accursed for the Jews

Boiling Point

- A few weeks back as I sat across the table at the hearing for my son's educational needs, I felt my blood begin to boil as they made statements such as, "the school system isn't responsible to provide your son a Cadillac education, just what is acceptable (a Chevy education). What a cold and heartless statement made to parents whose hearts are already hurting. I wanted justice (which sounds so righteous), but if I was to be honest I really wanted "revenge". I wanted to counter-attack and make them feel pain; an eye-for-an-eye (but clearly not what Jesus meant).
- This week I was so excited to see my employer was encouraging volunteering in the community, they even had grants available. I was excited to think about getting some money to help out with the feeding ministry there at Garrett Park, but I found my blood boiling as I read the fine print, "Religious groups are excluded from applying". As my blood boiled, I found myself wanting justice, wanting revenge.
- This week as our insurance company refuses to answer my emails and phone calls as I challenge them for saying they will not insure any clubs we establish for "children with special needs", my blood boils, anger begins to well up within me, as I want justice, I want revenge.
- This may surprise you (hahaha) but there have been people who have come here into this ministry and shortly thereafter start making phone calls, sending emails, having conversations with others of how terrible a pastor I am, and how terrible a church this is and they try to start drawing people away. My blood begins boil, my anger begins to rise up, I want justice, I want revenge.

How different Paul Reacted

How very different was my reaction to these situations than was the apostle Paul's. You see, as he traveled throughout Europe, sharing the gospel and communicating grace and love, a group of his countrymen awaited him—men of Israel who arrived in every city in order that they might lie about him and either greet him with stones (Acts 14:19), or arrange to have him thrown in prison (Acts 21:27). So serious were Paul's enemies that they took an oath, saying, "We will not eat another meal until Paul is dead" (see Acts 23:12).

Acts 14:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead.

Acts 21:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ Now when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews from Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him,

Acts 23:12 (NKJV) ¹² And when it was day, some of the Jews banded together and bound themselves under an oath, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.

Wow! / And – He would write Rom 9:1-3

Wow, Paul! People were lying about him, throwing rocks at him, grabbing hold of him, determined to do away with him. Paul really had a tough time at the hands of his countrymen. But what was his reaction concerning those who were out to do him in? It blows my mind, and teaches me a lot.

(Rom 9:1 NKJV) I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit,

(Rom 9:2 NKJV) that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart.

(Rom 9:3 NKJV) For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh,

I would go to Hell for Them / Would you Say That?

The Holy Spirit testifying to the truth of his words, Paul said, “I would go to hell for these guys if only they could be saved.” Would you say that concerning the person who’s coming down on you, regarding the person who wants to do you in? It might be a teacher, a parent, a neighbor, a co-worker, or an old girlfriend. It might be someone who’s done you wrong, lied about you, hurled insulting stones at you, wanted to grab hold of you, and if possible would annihilate and destroy you. Think about the person who is most difficult for you to deal with. How do you honestly feel about him? Would you go to hell eternally if that person could go to heaven?

Totally Amazing / Philippians 1:20 – for Believers / Romans 9:1 for his Enemies

Paul’s words absolutely amaze me. To the Philippian believers, Paul said, “I’m craving heaven, but for your sakes, it’s needful for me to stick around here on earth” (see Philippians 1:20–24). Commendable indeed! But to me how much more powerful is his statement to the very ones who were out to get him when he said not only, “I won’t go to heaven,” but “I would go to hell for you if it were possible.”

*Philippians 1:20–25 (NKJV)*²⁰ according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death.²¹ For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.²² But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell.²³ For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.²⁴ Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you.²⁵ And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith,

How did he Develop such a Love for his Enemies / How can We?

How did Paul develop such love for people who wanted only to do him in? And how can we develop the same love? How can we overcome our bitterness and disappointment, our anger and hostility toward people who come against us, disappoint us, or hurt us?

Romans 10:1

Turn the page to Romans 10, for I believe that is where the answer lies.

*Romans 10:1 (NKJV)*¹ Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.

Greek Rendering – Continual Prayer

The Greek rendering of this verse is: “Brethren, my heart’s desire and continual prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved.” In other words, “My heart’s desire and continual prayer for Israel—the country that misunderstands me, the people who are out to destroy me, the nation which has totally rejected me—is, Lord, save them.”

Pure Power – Grab It / Prayer is Proof – Prayer Produces / Matthew 5:44

Here is pure power Christian, make sure you grab on to this today

Paul not only proved his love by praying for his countrymen,

but his prayer for his countrymen actually produced that kind of love in Paul.

This is why Jesus specifically told us we are to pray for our enemies (Matthew 5:44).

*Matthew 5:44 (NKJV)*⁴⁴ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,

Here is what Happens – as I pray my Heart Changes

You see, here’s what happens: Something begins to take place in me when I pray for people—particularly for my enemies. My heart toward them begins to change.

When Moses came down from Mount – The Golden Calf

When Moses came down from Mount Sinai after meeting with God on behalf of the children of Israel (for 40 days), Moses saw them dancing naked around a golden calf. What was his reaction? He was so mad he threw the tablets he was carrying to the ground. But then he said something familiar to our study today: “Lord, if You don’t forgive these, Your people, blot my name out of Your book” (see Exodus 32:32). In other words, “If You don’t forgive these people, I’ll go to hell with them.”

Exodus 32:32 (NKJV) ³² Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written.”

How Moses have that Heart – 40 days In Presence / Tabernacle / Knew Like in Presence

How could Moses have that kind of love, particularly when earlier in the chapter, the Lord said, “These are a stiffnecked people you’re leading, Moses. Let Me wipe them out and make from you a new nation” (see Exodus 32:10)? I suggest to you had Moses not spent forty days with the Lord prior to this occurrence, he would not have had the heart he did. In those forty days God gave Moses the blueprint for the Tabernacle (a shadow of heavenly things), Moses spent forty days in the presence of the Living God. Moses knew what it was like to be in the presence of God, and thus he knew what it was like to “not” be in the presence of God, and thus his heart broke for people who were living outside the presence of God (by actions or salvation).

Exodus 32:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Now therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation.”

Exodus 24:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

Dangle over Hell

I remember talking to my missionary friend, I said imagine if we could take the unsaved and dangle them over hell for 24 hours, that would change their mind; he said more so, let them experience heaven for 24 hours, and then say this is what you will miss!

So – Thinking on those who Hurt Me

So, as I reflected on those who have hurt me, attacked me, and slighted me – I began to pray for them.

- For the School System: Lord I know many in the system are pouring their heart out for these children’s, Lord would you give them energy and stamina for I know how tiring it is. Lord, I know many in leadership are saying these things because they are fearful of losing their jobs, the money will run out, and job cuts will come, or promotions will be denied, and they are fearful because they don’t know how to trust in you.
- For my Employer: I prayed for those who made the decision, because I see they don’t realize they are offending the Holy God by excluding Him from their program.
- Our Insurance Company: I prayed for them to see the children, not the bottom line of the their financial statement, to see that God loves these children,
- The Church: I pray for those who make their charges, that they will love, that they will see the very charges they lay, they themselves are, how sad their spiritual state is and how far they are from God and they don’t even realize it.

Eventually Something Happens in My Heart

And, eventually, something began to happen, for as I prayed, I found my heart being filled with love toward anyone and everyone for whom I took the time to pray. Paul said, “I continually pray for my brethren.” That’s why he had such a deep love for them and was willing to go to hell on their behalf. And I myself found myself going from anger and hatred, to love and compassion, for I saw the state that they were in – outside the sweet presence of God because of their fleshly actions.

3 Reason – Pray for People don’t see Eye-to-Eye

I suggest to you three reasons why you need to pray for people with whom you’re having a hard time, for people with whom you don’t see eye to eye, for people who bug you...

Pray for Your Own Sake

Candle – so World doesn't Change Me

During the Vietnam War, A.J. Muste stood night after night holding a candle in front of the White House. One night a reporter asked him, "Mr. Muste, do you really think you are going to change the policies of this country by standing out here alone at night with a candle?" Muste replied, "Oh, I don't do it to change the country, I do it so the country won't change me."

Affect my Attitude (Cynicism – Critical – Bitterness)

Good point! You see, when I pray for people who bug me, I realize my praying will not only affect them, but it will affect my own attitude, my own tendency toward cynicism, my own critical spirit, my own bitterness. In other words, prayer will change me. I won't become like them.

Why Pray? – Keep us Tender / Make us Loving – Not Lashing

So why should you pray for the person who's bugging you, who's letting you down or trying to do you in? Because it will make you a better person. It will keep you soft and tender. It will make you a loving man or woman, not a lashing man or woman.

Jesus says Pray – not Analyze or Argue / Big Difference Praying for – Praying About

That's why Jesus said, "Don't preach at, argue with, or analyze your enemies. By the way, recognize in your prayers the difference between praying for someone, and praying about someone. We can talk to God and tell them all the wrong that person has done, and be no better off than when we first sat down with the Lord; but when we pray and intercede for them, recognizing how far they are falling short, then our hearts start to change for them. Just pray and bless them." And if we'll take Jesus seriously, we will find prayer changing us in the process.

Matthew 5:44 (NKJV) ⁴⁴ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,

Pray for Thier Sake

We Intercede – to Stay God's Judgment

I believe God wants us to intercede for them, because in His Holiness He must judge, so God raises up intercessors to stand in the gap for them. God initiates all prayer, and that is what we saw Him doing with Moses as the Lord initiated in Moses heart the desire to intercede for the people of Israel. God said get out of the way Moses for in my holiness I must wipe them out; but the gracious loving God was just looking for a reason to show grace and mercy, and Moses provided the opportunity by interceding for them.

Ezekiel 22:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one.

God reveals His will to Us – Romans 8:26-27

God shows us His will for the people, desiring they be saved, desiring they walk in His ways, desiring they love others; and God reveals His will for them (as the Spirit reveals God's will to us – Romans 8:26-27), so that we might intercede for them, and they have another day to change their ways, to call to Him to be their Lord and Savior, and to grow in spiritual maturity.

Romans 8:26–27 (NKJV) ²⁶ Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. ²⁷ Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Someday we see all who Interceded for Us

Someday we will fully see and understand all who interceded for us. We will owe them a great thank you.

Before you want to see Judgment

Before you may think, I won't intercede for them because I want God's judgment against them for how they hurt me, please consider this last point.

Pray for Christ's Sake

Jesus was Beaten by Me / Remember – when People Strike Me – I struck Him

Jesus was done in, beaten up by you and me. Isaiah tells us He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him. By His stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53:5). Therefore, when somebody beats up on me and I think it's unfair, I need to remember that I beat up on Jesus. My sin and stupidity were what caused Him to be pinned to the tree. He was beaten up for me.

Isaiah 53:5 (NKJV) ⁵ But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

What did Jesus Do – Father Forgive Them / Never be More Like Jesus - Forgive

And what did He do even as He was being beaten up? He prayed, "Father, forgive them. They don't know what they're doing" (see Luke 23:34). You will never be more like Jesus, than when you forgive others.

Luke 23:34 (NKJV) ³⁴ Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." And they divided His garments and cast lots.

Not only Beaten Up by Me – Continually Let down by Me / Not doing Right / He Intercedes

Not only was He beaten up by me, He continues to be let down constantly, for I am not doing the things I know I could do. I am not the man I know I should be. And yet what does He do? He who was pinned to the tree rose again and went to heaven, where He lives to ever make intercession—to pray for me (Hebrews 7:25). Now if Jesus—beaten up by me, let down because of me—prays for me, I need to do what He says.

Hebrews 7:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

If Love Me – Keep my Commands / Love the Lord – Love thy Neighbor

"If you love Me," He says, "keep My commandments" (see John 14:15). And what are His commandments? Simply these: to love God with all your heart and soul and mind and strength—and to love the person who's around you, who works beside you, who lives next to you, who bugs you (Matthew 22:37–40).

John 14:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ "If you love Me, keep My commandments.

Matthew 22:37–40 (NKJV) ³⁷ Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

If we Don't have Love – have Nothing / How Love? – Spend Time with Him – Pray Enemies

If we don't have love, we don't have anything (1 Corinthians 13:2). "But, Lord, how can I have love?" "Very simple," He says. "By spending time with Me and by praying for your enemies." Pray for others and your own heart will change. You'll find the flight will be a whole lot smoother than if you're justifying your position. Right now the Lord can set you free if you'll just do what Paul did, what Moses did, what Jesus did. Pray. Pray for people continually.

1 Corinthians 13:2 (NKJV) ² And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

Samuel / Prayer Proof of Love – Love Produced by Prayer

Even after the people of Israel said give us a king, so we may be like the other nations (an utter slap in God's face) "God forbid," said Samuel, "that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you" (1 Samuel 12:23). Prayer is the proof of love. And love is produced by prayer. Pray—both for your sake and for the sake of the One who continually prays for you.

1 Samuel 12:19–24 (NKJV) ¹⁹ And all the people said to Samuel, "Pray for your servants to the LORD your God, that we may not die; for we have added to all our sins the evil of asking a king for ourselves." ²⁰ Then Samuel said to the people, "Do not fear. You have done all this wickedness; yet do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all

your heart. ²¹ And do not turn aside; for then you would go after empty things which cannot profit or deliver, for they are nothing. ²² For the LORD will not forsake His people, for His great name's sake, because it has pleased the LORD to make you His people. ²³ Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you; but I will teach you the good and the right way. ²⁴ Only fear the LORD, and serve Him in truth with all your heart; for consider what great things He has done for you.

10 Things to Remember

(Romans 9:4-5)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (C12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "*The just shall live by faith.*"

Paul getting Excited as finish Chp 8 / God is For Us

Well Paul was preaching the Word in chapter 8, you can feel it as you read it; he was getting more and more excited about all that he was saying as he heard himself say it. The more he spoke the more he heard himself how awesome our God, how He is always for us, always desiring a personal and intimate relationship with His creation, how nothing can separate us from His great and awesome love! Read verses 32-39 for a little reminder of where we ended.

Romans 8:32–39 (NKJV) ³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? ³³ Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? *It is* God who justifies. ³⁴ Who *is* he who condemns? *It is* Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written:

*"For Your sake we are killed all day long;
We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."*

³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Side Note – Find Place to Let it Out / Hear It – Believe It / Street Ministry

Christian just a little side note here, find a place to let it out, find a place where you are releasing the word that God has implanted in you. Speak it, and as you hear it, you will experience what Paul experienced, and that is the sweet release of the Spirit of God. As we speak it, we hear it, and as we hear it, we get excited because we are reminding ourselves of God's greatness as much as we are telling others. So teach your children, teach in the Sunday school, go to the prison, counsel someone, tell you co-workers. I love the street ministry, the homeless park, and I tell you regardless how they responded, I always leave lifted –up because I got to enjoy the Word of God being released from within me. I start talking about God's forgiveness to them and I am reminded of His forgiveness to me, and I start talking about His power to free them from bondages and addictions and I am reminded of how He has freed me; and talk about His love for them, His passion for them, His desire for intimacy with them, and I am reminded of all those things. Christian, find a place to let it out, and as you hear yourself talking you (like Paul) will find yourself overflowing, rivers of living water gushing from your inner being, and you will be refreshed and exhilarated.

Proverbs 23:7 (NKJV) *For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.*

Paul off the Hook / Then Remembers his Countryman / Thinking City, Friends, Fathers

Paul is flowing, Paul is off-the-hook, and then it is as if light goes on, and he remembers his countryman (faces and places), childhood friends, aunts and uncles, cousins and nephews, mom and dad, his fellow Sanhedrin that he was once so close to. Maybe thinking on the "golden city", the streets he walked, the street merchants he bought from each day, that person that made his "latte" every morning. Maybe remembering back to the great heritage of the nation, the forefathers (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), the Kings (Saul, David, and Solomon), and his heart begins to break.

Willing to go to hell / So they could Experience all 8 Chapters

So much so that he says he would go to hell for them if it meant they could be saved, if they could come into God's presence and experience all these things he has just spoke of in the last 8 chapters (justification, sanctification, and glorification) – to experience the love of the Lord, the God who is always for us.

(Rom 9:1 NKJV) I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit,

(Rom 9:2 NKJV) that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart.

(Rom 9:3 NKJV) For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh,

God Initiates Burden / Question asked – what about Israel / God Done? – Absolutely Not!

No doubt God lays the burden on Paul's heart because anyone would read chapters 1-8, the question would be asked, "what about Israel, they rejected Jesus, when asked what should I do with this man they cried out crucify Him, and when Jesus hung on the cross they mocked Him and said You saved others now save Yourself". The question would be asked, "is God done with Israel since they rejected the Messiah, are they eternally condemned, totally excluded from all the promises of chapters 1-8?" Paul will spend the next three chapters saying "absolutely not!".

Paul covers – Israel (Individually / Corporately)

Paul (through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit) will cover this question over next three chapters:

- Israel as Individuals
- Israel as a Nation (corporately)

Individually – all who Receives / Paul Prays, Proclaims, call to Evangelize

Individually, this gospel (good news) is for all who will receive it. Paul prays that they will get saved today (10:1), and all that an individual has to do is repent of their sin and receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior (10:9), in fact Paul (really the Lord) gives the call to go preach the gospel so that they might hear and believe (10:14-15).

Romans 10:1 (NKJV) ¹ Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.

Romans 10:9 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 10:14–15 (NKJV) ¹⁴ How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵ And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "*How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!*"

Corporately (missed 1st Coming – all see the 2nd)

Then corporately (Israel as a Nation) missed Jesus on His First Coming, but will clearly see Him on His Second Coming.

Romans 11:25–26 (NKJV) ²⁵ For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶ And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "*The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;*

Israel is Picture & Proof God never Gives Up on You

Israel is a picture and proof of every individual that God is not done with you, that God will never give up on you, and that God will never forget you.

Outline of Israel

- **Romans 9 – Israel's Past (speaking of their history)**
- **Romans 10 – Israel's Present (speaking of their blindness to Jesus)**
- **Romans 11 – Israel's Future (speaking that all will be saved)**

Change read Newspaper

These 3 chapters will change the way you read the newspaper. Many teachers and churches skim through these three chapters because they don't think they are relevant to the Church today, but oh what they miss out on by doing so!

First the History / The Rich Heritage / How sad to see Same with our Kids / Pray

So first Paul gives us the history of Israel as he will review the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), and what a rich past it is. It is a sad story at the same time as you consider the rich heritage they had with the One True and Living God, but then missed Him when He stood right in front of them 2,000 years ago. How sad it is when children today, steeped and rich in a Christian heritage, raised in godly homes by godly parents, taught the Word of God, and yet turn away from the Savior at some point in their lives. How heart breaking for any parent! Parents if that is you, then come out to Tuesday Night Prayer and let's join together and pray for them to open their eyes and see the Lord that was taught to them in their youth.

Let's pray for them right now, let's remember this passage of Scriptures that Israel is a picture of and proof of, that God is not done with them, that He never forgets them, and He never gives up on them!

BUT – Paul's finish Empowers Me / Finishes like Chp 8 – On a High

I tell you this, and I am empowered by it, and that is I love how he finishes this trilogy on Israel; he finishes it the same way he finishes chapters 1-8, on a high pinnacle!

Romans 11:33–36 (NKJV) ³³ Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! ³⁴ "For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?" ³⁵ "Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?" ³⁶ For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Starts off Accursed – Ends on Pinnacle / As he Spoke He Remembered

Paul starts off this trilogy saying he wishes he could trade place with Israel so that they might be saved, he would count himself accursed if he could; then he ends with verses 33-36. Why, how? Because as he spoke the words of God, the words of God ministered to him, and he remembered all the promises of God, and knew that they were sure, and that God was not done with his fellow countrymen, that He hadn't given up on them, nor had He forgotten them. I take that to heart for myself, and it empowers me in knowing that God is not done with any ones wayward children.

2 Corinthians 1:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.

Proverbs 23:7 (NKJV) ⁷ For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.

Let's Read

Let's read our verses for our study.

Israel given the Promise of God

(Rom 9:4 NKJV) who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises;

(Rom 9:5 NKJV) of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.

List 8 = 2 Advantages / Israel = Governed by God / Pertain to us Also

Paul lists eight blessings, advantages, that the people of Israel have, add to that the two he had already spoken about back in chapter three, and we have a list of ten wonderful advantages the people of Israel have. However, may I remind you that Israel means "governed by God", and thus there is a wonderful application for us also. We can read these verses as they pertain to Israel, but also as they pertain to us. We will read them from a sorrowful position as we can see all that Israel was given, yet so-so many of them, twisted them into self righteousness, lost the faith to believe them, or simply just plain ole forgot them (thus why Paul's heart is broken).

Romans 3:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? ² Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.

Today – Let us remember to treasure these 10 Things

For us today, I want to take the time remember them for ourselves, ten things we need to remember, we should protect and treasure, guard with all our hearts, never take for granted, and

recall daily in our lives. As Israel was chosen, so too are we, and here are ten advantages of being chosen

Advantage #1 of being Chosen – Given the Word of God

Verse 3:1 – given the Word of God – Israel was entrusted with the word of God, entrusted with the word that changes lives, and will outlast heaven and earth. The word of God, the sure foundation, regardless of how things are going internally and externally, the word of God is steadfast and sure, and by this word we can seize and claim all the other blessings and advantages spoken today. Sadly for the people of Israel, when they forgot the word, they missed the “Word that became flesh”. So here we are today going verse-by-verse so we don’t make the same mistake. How sad for any Christian when they drift out of the word, for they rob themselves just as the Nation Israel had. We give you thanks Lord, we thank you for the 31,102 verses that You give us, for they are truly a treasure. Christian cherish this Word!

Matthew 24:35 (NKJV) ³⁵ *Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.*

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

John 1:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

Advantage #2 of being Chosen – Sign of Baptism

Verse 3:1 – given circumcision – as a sign, a seal, a covenant between them and God. Sadly the people of Israel turned it into an outward ritual, rather than an inward regeneration. But we are blessed to have the sign of baptism, the public profession to identify ourselves with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

Romans 6:3–4 (NKJV) ³ *Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

Advantage #3 of being Chosen – We are Adopted

Verse 4 - to whom pertain the adoption – They were chosen not because they were more righteous than others, for God called them a stiffnecked and hard-hearted people (Deuteronomy 7:6–8). No, He chose them to be trophies of His grace. We have a tendency to think, You were wise when You picked me, Lord. You saw my dedication, my determination. Good choice. Truly You’re a wise God—proven by the way You chose me and adopted me into Your family. But that’s not what the Bible teaches. It says you were chosen not to the glory of His wisdom, but to the glory of His grace in order that throughout the ages, the angels will be perpetually amazed by God’s mercy and kindness when they see you in heaven (Ephesians 1).

Deuteronomy 7:6–9 (NKJV) ⁶ *“For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. ⁷ The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; ⁸ but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*

Exodus 32:9 (NKJV) ⁹ *And the LORD said to Moses, “I have seen this people, and indeed it is a stiff-necked people!*

Ephesians 1:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ *having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.*

Israel forgot / May we Not

Sadly for the people of Israel they reached a point where they forgot that they were adopted to display God’s grace, of what a nation can be like whose God is the Lord, and they considered themselves chosen and above others. We today remember that we are adopted as trophies of grace, and sit in amazement of God’s grace and love that He would chose us to be His own.

Romans 8:14–17 (NKJV) ¹⁴ *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” ¹⁶ The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.*

New Mother

A new mother stayed with her parents for several days after the birth of her first child. One afternoon she remarked to her mother that it was surprising the baby had dark hair, since both her husband and she were fair. The grandmother said, "Well, your daddy has black hair." To which the daughter replied, "But, Mama, that doesn't matter, because I'm adopted." With an embarrassed smile, that mother said the most wonderful words her daughter had ever heard: "I always forget." All Christians are adopted children of God who are accepted by God with the same unconditional love that this mother had for her daughter.

My Friend

I remember my friend Kelly from the Space Center who had two girls the same age, one was adopted and one born to him and his wife. I asked him what was that like, and he said "well when I come home from work, both run and jump into my arms, both cover me with kisses, both are equally as excited that I am home, and you know what – it doesn't even cross my mind that one is natural born, and the other is adopted". Christian, if you play this through in reverse, the Heavenly Father looks at you and me the same way He looks at Jesus.

Galatians 4:6 (NKJV) ⁶ *And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"*

Revelation 21:6–7 (NKJV) ⁶ *And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. ⁷ He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.*

Advantage #4 of being Chosen – See His Glory

Verse 4 - the glory - "Glory" refers to the Hebrew word *chabod*—which means weight, substance, heaviness. The *chabod* was the cloud over the Jews as they traveled through the wilderness by day. The *chabod* was also the pillar of fire that went before them by night. It was the glory that filled the tabernacle as well as the glory that filled the temple. It was the visible, tangible presence of God, the substance people still crave in their hearts. The *chabod* is what every man is looking for when he searches for something weighty, something substantial, something real.

His Presence became Common / Christian Slow Down – Treasure It

Sadly for the nation Israel the presence of God became common to them, to the point they didn't even realize it anymore, to the point that when the Spirit of God departed from Israel, most did not even recognize it. May we fellowship with the Lord every day, may we never forget, but celebrate the joy of His presence everyday in our lives. Christian, slow down, skip the movie, not your devotion, tune into worship rather than the top 40, open your Bible not your internet browser – it is in His presence where we will find the weighty things of life.

Exodus 40:34–35 (NKJV) ³⁴ *Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. ³⁵ And Moses was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting, because the cloud rested above it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.*

Ezekiel 10:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ *Then the glory of the LORD departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim.*

Advantage #5 of being Chosen – Have an Everlasting Covenant

Verse 4 - the covenants – God made several covenants with Israel, and we will be talking about them in a future study because they are a key to understanding the Romans 9-11 correctly. But for our verses today, the people of Israel forget the agreement that God made with them, and thus they entered into despair and unrest. Oh for anyone here today, may you not forget the everlasting covenant God has made with you who have received Him as Lord and Savior, that you are His, He is for you, and nothing can separate you from His Love. This covenant is sure and true because it is written and signed with the blood of Christ.

Revelation 21:3–4 (NKJV) ³ *And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."*

Romans 8:37–39 (NKJV) ³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:31–32 (NKJV) ³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

Luke 22:15–20 (NKJV) ¹⁵ Then He said to them, “With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; ¹⁶ for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” ¹⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, “Take this and divide it among yourselves; ¹⁸ for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” ¹⁹ And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” ²⁰ Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.

Advantage #6 of being Chosen – Given the Law

Verse 4 - the giving of the law, - the people of Israel were given the Law to lead and guide them, to keep them from harm's way, but rather than it being a place of freedom and power, they turned it into a yoke of bondage. Praise God that He has given an instruction manual to lead us and guide us, to give us warning of the things that will harm and even destroy us. I'm reminded of the woman who was pulled over by the police officer for speeding; as he handed her the ticket, in shock she said don't you guys give warnings first? The Officer said yes we do ma'am, they are posted up and down the highway and they say “speed limit – 55”.

Galatians 3:24 (NKJV) ²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Advantage #7 of being Chosen – Given to the Service of God

Verse 4 - the service of God, - the people of Israel were given the gift and treasure of serving God in the temple, but unfortunately it turned into a ritual for them and they missed the power behind service. Oh Christian, take this as a reminder, find yourself somewhere to serve, it will make your walk come alive in wonderful and powerful ways. Service is a gift, a treasure, an advantage, that God gives us. Get into serving and you will see His presence in a great and clear way also. Serving will help you keep Matthew 6:33 in focus. As one missionary put it, “If you take care of the things that are important to God, He will take care of the things that are important to you.” Speak the word of God, and you will believe the word of God.

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV) ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Proverbs 23:7 (NKJV) ⁷ For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. “.....”

Advantage #8 of being Chosen – Given the Promises of God

Verse 4 - and the promises – Israel was promised to be the seed of the Messiah, to be God's chosen Nation to be a light unto the world; but when hard times came they forgot the promises of God, or thought God forgot His promise. Christian, every promise of God (every promise in these 8 chapters of us being justified, sanctified, and glorified) are true. Speak them, and you'll believe them.

2 Corinthians 1:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.

Proverbs 23:7 (NKJV) ⁷ For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. “.....”

Advantage #9 of being Chosen – A Rich Family Heritage

Verse 5 - of whom are the fathers - Israel was also blessed with great men—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and David; they had a tremendous heritage, but sadly forgot the God who is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Hey, remember your spiritual mothers and fathers, give thanks for them. Above, remember all they taught you about God, and make their God, your God, and then go make spiritual children yourself.

Advantage #10 of being Chosen – Given the Messiah

Verse 5 - and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.

Clearly Jesus is God

Notice, very clearly said – Jesus Christ is God. Highlight this and mark it next time someone knocks on your door and says that Jesus isn't God.

Best Gift

The best gift of all was that Jesus Christ was born to a Jewish mother, grew up in a Jewish home, went to a Jewish school, sat in a Jewish synagogue, ministered to the Jewish people, and said, "I have come to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (see Matthew 15:24). What an unspeakable gift was given to the Jews.

May we Remember – Celebrate – Everlasting Covenant

But we remember, and today we celebrate that with communion, partake and enjoy this everlasting covenant.

Luke 22:15–20 (NKJV) ¹⁵ Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; ¹⁶ for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." ¹⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; ¹⁸ for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." ¹⁹ And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁰ Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you."

Video – I Fought for You

No Greater Love / Freely Gave

Jesus has fought for you, God freely gave His only begotten Son for you, and for me, for no greater love has he than this, to lay down his life for a friend.

John 15:13 (NKJV) ¹³ *Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.*

Romans 8:32 (NKJV) ³² *He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?*

God is not Done with Israel

God is by no means done with the people of Israel, God has not forgotten them, forsaken them, nor given up in them – why? Because He says so! And is all His promises to us, all these things are ours, may we never forget them. God is not done with you, He will complete His work in you (Phil 1:6), and God has not given up on that loved one in your life, He continues to fight on for them, and may we join Him in that fight.

Ten things may we never forget!

10 Advantages of being Chosen:

- Advantage #1 of being Chosen – Given the Word of God
- Advantage #2 of being Chosen – Sign of Baptism
- Advantage #3 of being Chosen – We are Adopted
- Advantage #4 of being Chosen – See His Glory
- Advantage #5 of being Chosen – Have an Everlasting Covenant
- Advantage #6 of being Chosen – Given the Law
- Advantage #7 of being Chosen – Given to the Service of God
- Advantage #8 of being Chosen – Given the Promises of God
- Advantage #9 of being Chosen – A Rich Family Heritage
- Advantage #10 of being Chosen – Given the Messiah

Drawing a Bride for Himself

(Romans 9:6-33)

The Homemade Rope

What an amazing privilege we have today, and that is that we get to open this Bible and hear from the Living God. Not everyone enjoys this privilege as we do, and there are men and woman who would risk life and limb so that others may enjoy the life transforming message this Bible gives.

In his book What in the World Is God Doing? Dr. Ted Engstrom relates a story told him by a veteran Korean Christian. In the early 1880s three Korean workmen, laboring in China, heard the gospel and embraced the Lord Jesus. The three soon conspired about getting the message of Christ into their own country, an action forbidden by the government. Since the Korean and Chinese alphabets were similar, they decided to smuggle in a copy of the Chinese Bible. They drew straws to see who would have the privilege of bringing the gospel into Korea.

The first man buried the Bible in his belongings and headed toward the border, a journey of many days by footpath. There he was searched, found out, and killed. Word reached the others that their friend was dead. The second man tore pages from his Bible and hid the separate pages throughout his luggage. He, too, made the long trip to the border only to be searched and beheaded.

The third man grew more determined than ever to succeed. He ingeniously tore his Bible apart page by page, folding each page into a tiny strip. He wove the strips into a rope and wrapped his baggage in his homemade rope. When he came to the border, the guards asked him to unwrap his belongings. Finding nothing amiss, they admitted him.

The man arrived home, untied the rope, and ironed out each page. He reassembled his Bible and began to preach Christ wherever he went. And when the missionaries of the 1880s fanned into the country, they found the seed already sown and the firstfruits appearing.

What a Privilege

Let's get into the Word, and may the Word get into us, this beautiful and precious word of God – what a privilege we have today before us.

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (C12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Paul getting Excited as finish Chp 8 / God is For Us

Well Paul was preaching the Word in chapter 8, you can feel it as you read it; he was getting more and more excited about all that he was saying as he heard himself say it. The more he spoke the more he heard himself how awesome our God, how He is always for us, always desiring a personal and intimate relationship with His creation, how nothing can separate us from His great and awesome love! Read verses 32-39 for a little reminder of where we ended.

Romans 8:32–39 (NKJV) ³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? ³³ Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? *It is* God who justifies. ³⁴ Who *is* he who condemns? *It is* Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes

intercession for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written:

*"For Your sake we are killed all day long;
We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."*

³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Paul off the Hook / Then Remembers his Countryman / Thinking City, Friends, Fathers

Paul is flowing, Paul is off-the-hook, and then it is as if light goes on, and he remembers his countryman (faces and places), childhood friends, aunts and uncles, cousins and nephews, mom and dad, his fellow Sanhedrin that he was once so close to. Maybe thinking on the "golden city", the streets he walked, the street merchants he bought from each day, that person that made his "latte" every morning. Maybe remembering back to the great heritage of the nation, the forefathers (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), the Kings (Saul, David, and Solomon), and his heart begins to break.

Willing to go to hell / So they could Experience all 8 Chapters

So much so that he says he would go to hell for them if it meant they could be saved, if they could come into God's presence and experience all these things he has just spoke of in the last 8 chapters (justification, sanctification, and glorification) – to experience the love of the Lord, the God who is always for us.

(Rom 9:1 NKJV) I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit,

(Rom 9:2 NKJV) that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart.

(Rom 9:3 NKJV) For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh,

Verses 4-5 All the Blessings of Being Chosen Nation / Sadly they Missed the Messiah

In verses 4-5 Paul refreshed us on all the special privileges the Jewish Nation has received, and yet how sad it is that they still missed Jesus the Savior that was promised them (HOW SAD). We spent our study remembering the great privilege and blessings that we have as God's children, and how we should cherish and guard the blessings given to us.

(Rom 9:4 NKJV) who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises;

(Rom 9:5 NKJV) of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.

10 Advantages of being Chosen:

- Advantage #1 of being Chosen – Given the Word of God
- Advantage #2 of being Chosen – Sign of Baptism
- Advantage #3 of being Chosen – We are Adopted
- Advantage #4 of being Chosen – See His Glory
- Advantage #5 of being Chosen – Have an Everlasting Covenant
- Advantage #6 of being Chosen – Given the Law
- Advantage #7 of being Chosen – Given to the Service of God
- Advantage #8 of being Chosen – Given the Promises of God
- Advantage #9 of being Chosen – A Rich Family Heritage
- Advantage #10 of being Chosen – Given the Messiah

What is Your Value? / Jesus Fought for You

As we closed that study I remind you of that question posed, what is your value and worth? So much that Jesus fought for you, and He does it again and again as He lives to make intercession for you and I. You are precious and priceless to Him, never devalue your worth my loved ones, and never let your flesh, the world, or the Devil tell you that you are anything less than the value of the Blood of God's only begotten Son. You are priceless, and I love to every Christian that good news, and please tell others yourself, starting with yourself.

I Must Tell You – Tough Passage

Now I must tell you, today we will be studying one of the most difficult passages in all the scriptures, verses that say things such as:

- Jacob I have loved, Esau I have hated (wow you mean God hates some people).
- God “chose” one, but not another even before they were born (wow you mean God chooses who will be his even before they are born, and then that also means He chooses who will not be His even before they are born).
- God saying He will have mercy on who He chooses and bring wrath on who He chooses (wow you mean God then chooses some people for destruction and they have no choice about it)

Key Word: Chapters!

Surely one of the hardest chapters to understand in the entire Bible, but the key word there is “chapters”.

When the books of the Bible were originally written, they did not contain chapter or verse references. The Bible was divided into chapters and verses to help us find Scriptures more quickly and easily. It is much easier to find "John chapter 3, verse 16" than it is to find "for God so loved the world..." In a few places, chapter breaks are poorly placed and as a result divide content that should flow together. Overall, though, the chapter and verse divisions are very helpful.

The chapter divisions commonly used today were developed by Stephen Langton, an Archbishop of Canterbury. Langton put the modern chapter divisions into place in around A.D. 1227. The Wycliffe English Bible of 1382 was the first Bible to use this chapter pattern. Since the Wycliffe Bible, nearly all Bible translations have followed Langton's chapter divisions.

The Hebrew Old Testament was divided into verses by a Jewish rabbi by the name of Nathan in A.D. 1448. Robert Estienne, who was also known as Stephanus, was the first to divide the New Testament into standard numbered verses, in 1555. Stephanus essentially used Nathan's verse divisions for the Old Testament. Since that time, beginning with the Geneva Bible, the chapter and verse divisions employed by Stephanus have been accepted into nearly all the Bible versions.

Great for Reference / Lousy for Context

Chapters and verses are great for referencing, but lousy for context for they can take away from the context as people can read a chapter by itself, rather than in the context of the other chapters that surround it. So it is with our Romans 9; read by it, you have great challenges that God loves everyone, and that His love is available for everyone, and that His forgiveness is extended back to us even after we fail greatly. However, read chapter 9 in its context (that is chapter 8 to the left, and 10 to the right) and we have no problems, we see an awesome loving God extending His offer of forgiveness and salvation to all who would take His hands and say, “save me Lord Jesus”. So as we study today, may we start with these verses to keep the context (and I always have to add 2 Peter while I am on this subject):

(Rom 10:8 NKJV) *But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach):*

(Rom 10:9 NKJV) *that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*

(Rom 10:10 NKJV) *For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

(Rom 10:11 NKJV) *For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."*

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV) ⁹ *The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

Remember the Context / Some Christians Bent out Shape / Self-Right or Condemning

So, remember that context as we go through our verses today, and we won't get all wrapped up and bent out of shape like many Christians today have. You see when take a chapter like this and read things like God chooses some people, while rejecting others, a person can become conceited and puffed-up and have a self-righteous attitude of “see God chose me because He knew how wonderful I am” (no you're not – you're a wretched sinner whose sin offends the Holy God as much as the person you snub your nose at). Secondly, when a person shapes their belief system around the principle that God creates some people solely for the purpose of destruction,

then you now have a God who isn't love, isn't forgiving, isn't all approachable, and that defies the heart and soul of this "letter of love" that He has written to HIS CREATION!

See Today – God choose a Nation to (Point – Prepare – Proclaim) / 1 Thing – Draw Bride

What we will see in our text today is that God choose one nation (Israel) to point, prepare, proclaim the Savior (Messiah) that would come and take the sins of the sinner (you and I); the Nation Israel did just that, even though many of their own still missed Him. God choose the Nation Israel to point, prepare, and proclaim the Savior Jesus Christ! For God was and still is doing one thing, and that is to draw to Him a Bride for Himself. All of human history, all of human time, all of the universe created, all of the events in play today (from Israel, to Africa, to North America) are all designed to deliver one thing, a Bride for Himself.

A Bride is the Story – God not leave it Hands of Sinful Man / God Orchestrates its Path

A Bride for Himself is the story, and so divine, so holy, and so sacred is it, that God will not leave it in the hands of sinful man to come to pass, God would not let man set its direction, or be dependent on man for its success, rather we will read and see how God orchestrated its path and success as He did things such as choose Abraham, choose Isaac choose Jacob, moved all the pieces in place, that the Savior would come into the world for all to see (and very importantly – understand the reason of His coming) so that after 4,000 years of human history (and now for the last 2,000 years) – men woman, you and I today, would have the opportunity receive Him, to walk with Him, to love Him and be loved by Him. Oh what a glorious story! Let's read it together.

God's Elect & Election

(Rom 9:6 NKJV) But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel,

(Rom 9:7 NKJV) nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called."

(Rom 9:8 NKJV) That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed.

(Rom 9:9 NKJV) For this is the word of promise: "At this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son."

Made Clear – Not all Missed Jesus / Keep Casting Seeds

Paul immediately makes it clear, although most of the Nation Israel missed the Messiah, not all did, in fact many had, and thus the word of God that was entrusted to them, bloomed in the hearts of many and salvation came. We so often feel defeated when our witness seems to bear little fruit, but take heart in verse six, God is blessed beyond measure when one person responds (so keep on casting seeds my brethren).

Luke 15:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ *Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."*

Isaiah 55:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ *So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth;
It shall not return to Me void,
But it shall accomplish what I please,
And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.*

God Rehearses History – 1st Up – Abraham / The starting seed / To Draw a Bride

So as God rehearses the history of the Nation of Israel He speaks of Abraham. No Abraham was clueless on the spiritual things for when God first called Abraham he was in the Ur of Chaldeans worshipping the moon and the stars; but God reached out to him, revealed Himself to him, and Abraham responded and followed God. God chose Abraham, as a seed, to start a nation, which would be His path to the Messiah for the entire world to see and receive, and that He might draw a Bride to Himself.

Next Up – Isaac / But Abe and Sarah thought God needed some Help

Verses 7-9 God makes the point to us that Isaac was the path God had chosen. Well Abraham and his wife Sarah after a few years of waiting and still no child thought God needed a little help,

so Sarah said Abe, take my handmaiden Hagar and bear a child with here. So he did and Ishmael was born, but God doesn't recognize the work of the flesh, and in His timing He delivers a miracle through Sarah (at age 86) and Abraham (99), so there is no doubt, it was all the Lord.

Christian – Wait for the Promise / Don't try to Help God / Ishmael no spiritual Desire

Listen Christen, if what you feel the Lord has promised you has still yet to come to pass, please take this example and apply it to your life – WAIT ON THE LORD. God will bring it to pass in His timing. You singles, Wait! You budding ministers, WAIT! You (fill in the blank), WAIT! Don't try to help God out, lest you have Ishmael's in your life you will have to deal with; for history details how the descendants of Ishmael had no spiritual desires, and were continually a thorn in the side of the Nation Israel.

Psalm 27:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴Wait on the LORD; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!

Psalm 39:7 (NKJV) ⁷And now, Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in You.

No Man –Gov't – Pgm / Lest you have Ishmael's in your Life

No Man, Government, or Program can stop the work of God, only you can by your disobedience to His word. Yet even in that, He will still work in your life, but you'll have Ishmael's to deal with in your life.

(Rom 9:10 NKJV) And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac

(Rom 9:11 NKJV) (for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls),

(Rom 9:12 NKJV) it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger."

(Rom 9:13 NKJV) As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated."

Abe to Isaac to Jacob / The string Continues – as God prepares Provision / Bride

From Abraham, to Isaac, now to Jacob the string continues to the Messiah, the provision that God may make for Himself a Bride to love and cherish for all eternity.

Lots have Problem with this Verse / Jacob not Perfect either / Esau no Spiritual Desire

Lots of people have problems with this verse, that God would actually "hate" someone. Some teachers try to tone this done by saying that it actually means that God doesn't really hate Esau, he just loves him less than Jacob. Well let me tell you, read the life of Jacob and he isn't the most loveable himself (he was a conniver and a cheat); but what you find with Jacob was that he did seek after the spiritual things, he was a "wrestler with God", and became a follower of God. Read the life of Esau, and you will read a man who had no desire after the things of God, and chose things of the world (a bowl of beans, and ungodly woman – Genesis 27-28), rather than the things of God.

Genesis 32:24–28 (NKJV) ²⁴ Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. ²⁵ Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him. ²⁶ And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks."

But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!"

²⁷ So He said to him, "What is your name?"

He said, "Jacob."

²⁸ And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed."

Hard to Grasp – Know this – God hates Carnality

This may be hard for some to grasp, but God hates carnality. Esau was a carnal man who never repented of his carnality and sin, and God hated that lifestyle. For anyone here today, you are greatly mistaken if you think you can live in carnality and still live in holiness. You deceive yourself, and your salvation is not secure. Jacob have I loved, but Esau I have hated!

John 12:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

Romans 8:6-8 (NKJV) ⁶ For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. ⁷ Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. ⁸ So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Men try to be Spiritual – but God sees Through It

Esau as we studied his life says spiritual things, but they were mere words, those words never connected to his heart or actions. Men have often tried to appear holy and righteous before other men – but God is seeking those who will worship Him in "spirit and in truth". This reminds me of a story of Francois Fenelon. In the 17th century, Fenelon was the court preacher for King Louis XIV of France. On one particular Sunday when the King and his attendants arrived at the chapel for the regular service, there was no one else present except the preacher, himself. "What does this mean?", King Louis demanded. "I had published that you would not come to church today, in order that your Majesty might see who serves God in truth and who flatters the King," Fenelon replied.

God's Foreknowledge / God allows people Play out their Choice / Use It – Draw Bride

God in His foreknowledge knows who will seek after Him, and who will not. God will allow every man and woman to play out their choice, and as they do, He will use it for His purposes to draw others to Himself as all of history is about God preparing a Bride for Himself to love and cherish for all eternity.

(Rom 9:14 NKJV) What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not!

(Rom 9:15 NKJV) For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion."

(Rom 9:16 NKJV) So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.

Hardest Verse for Me

This is probably the hardest verse for me, and that is God would love me. God said this to Moses (Exodus 33:19) after the children of Israel were dancing around the golden calf they had created to worship because Moses had delayed from his return from the mountain top meeting with the Lord. I look at all the golden calves I have made in my life, those things that I've done that are utterly offensive to the Lord, and yet He would still love me and want me, it blows me away.

Important see when Said / Not of Us – All of Him / Israel not Chosen cause Goodness

God was showing us one thing, and that is that salvation is all grace, is all mercy, and nothing that we have done in and of ourselves, but everything that God has done. God didn't choose Israel because of their wisdom and goodness, but because of they would prove out that God is merciful and longsuffering.

Exodus 33:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."

Christian feeling Down – Another Failing / God's Grace enough to Cover You

Christian are you feeling down on yourself this week, another failing, another fault revealed? Take heed, be encouraged, God's grace and mercy is enough, and He is far from done with you.

Rom 9:17 NKJV) For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth."

(Rom 9:18 NKJV) Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.

(Rom 9:19 NKJV) You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?"

(Rom 9:20 NKJV) But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, "Why have you made me like this?"

(Rom 9:21 NKJV) Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?

(Rom 9:22 NKJV) What if God, wanting to show His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction,

(Rom 9:23 NKJV) and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory,

No Man-Govt-Pgm can Stop Work of God / Pharaoh – Army – Work’s Pgm

No Man, Government, or Program can stop the work of God. Pharaoh tried to stop the work of God, the mighty Egyptian Government and Army, the grueling Egyptian “works program” tried to destroy the nation Israel, but they all failed. No Man, Government, or Program can stop the work of God.

Pharaoh like Ishmael & Esau – Given great Privilege – Still Rejected / Hell & Heaven

Pharaoh, like Ishmael and Esau, was giving the privilege and opportunity to see the mighty hand of God, yet still chose “self”, and rejected to bow his knee to the Holy God. God in His sovereignty knew the heart of Pharaoh, and gave him what he wanted, God allowed Pharaoh to exercise his free-will, and did not force him into a love relationship with Him. For the first five plagues we read Pharaoh hardened his heart against God, then from there on we read God hardened Pharaoh’s heart, as Pharaoh reached the point where God’s offer of grace and mercy was no longer presented to him (it is an OT account of blaspheme of the Holy Spirit – the unpardonable sin). Pharaoh has no one to blame but himself. People in hell will know they earned it, people in heaven will know it was all God’s mercy.

God used the Hard heart of Pharaoh / Malnourished slaves walk Past Great Army

God did however use Pharaoh’s hard heart, and mean spirit to display His glory to His chosen people Israel, and to all the world around as they heard the story of how mighty God was, and how a bunch weak malnourished overworked slaves walked right out of Egypt, right past the greatest and mightiest army the world had ever seen up to the point.

God Endured Pharaoh’s Antics / Christian your Difficulty

God endured Pharaoh and his antics and used them for His glory. Christian that difficult person, the impossible situation, those overwhelming odds that seem to be against you, remember they are allowed by God into your life for the purpose of seeing His glory. You can take the hard time and say, “I have lived to tell”, or you can wallow in it and say “this is a literal hell”. I say, you are in it, God allowed, so seize it so you can tell people, here is a story I love to tell, “My God is Awesome”, let me tell you what He has done in my life!

No Man-Govt-Pgm can Stop Work of God / God Drawing a Bride

No Man, Government, or Program can stop the work of God. God is proving that out to us in this chapter as He continues to tell the story of how all human history is for the one great purpose, and that is God preparing Himself a Bride that He can love and cherish for all of eternity.

Verse 24-29 / God grafting in the Gentiles

The next verses God makes it clear that although the people of Israel in majority rejected Jesus and His marriage proposal to be His Bride, and even though God goes on to work amongst the Gentiles (non-Jewish people), He is not casting out the people of Israel, but He is patiently waiting (and preserving them) for the day where they will all see – wow, Jesus is the Messiah.

(Rom 9:24 NKJV) even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

(Rom 9:25 NKJV) As He says also in Hosea: "I will call them My people, who were not My people, And her beloved, who was not beloved."

(Rom 9:26 NKJV) "And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' There they shall be called sons of the living God."

Gentiles Prophesied / Spurgeon

The Gentiles coming to Jesus was clearly prophesied in the Old Testament. Israel was meant to point, prepare, and proclaim for the whole world that the Messiah was coming. I like what Spurgeon said, we are not afterthoughts, we are forethoughts, for God sovereignty planned that we would be part of His plan for salvation, the drawing of being His Bride.

(Rom 9:27 NKJV) Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel: "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, The remnant will be saved.

(Rom 9:28 NKJV) For He will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness, Because the LORD will make a short work upon the earth."

(Rom 9:29 NKJV) And as Isaiah said before: "Unless the LORD of Sabaoth had left us a seed, We would have become like Sodom, And we would have been made like Gomorrah."

God left Remnant / Rapture then Israel / Haman- Herod – Hitler / 2000 Years

God has left a remnant, He is far from done with Israel, and there will come a day (in the very near future I believe) where God will rapture the Church out of this world, and then turn the page to the next prophetic event, the awakening of the Jewish people. However, had God not miraculously preserved the Jewish people they would have been wiped off the planet by people such as Haman, Herod, and Hitler. Amazingly for 2,000 years they have survived against all odds, without a homeland, but before our very eyes regathered.

(Rom 11:25 NKJV) For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

(Rom 11:26 NKJV) And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

Philippians 1:6

Just as God has seen Israel through, so too will He see you through.

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) ⁶ being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

God not Done – Has Remnant / Door Frame

God is not done with Israel, He has left His remnant. A coworker was telling me about how he went back home to the Gulf Coast to visit with his mother, and as they were on a drive they were close to his childhood home which his mother had sold only a few years back. Mom had lived in that house for some 60 years, and she said lets drive by the house. So Steve (now 57) and his younger brother (in his 50's) took her there, and they stopped and got out to take some pictures, and Steve said next thing you know the new owners are out back doing some yard work and his mother is on the way to the backyard. The owners are like oh please come in and see what we have been doing with the house. And every room has been fixed up, new paint, the place looked great. But there was one door frame that was not painted, it was the one going into the kitchen, even though the kitchen and hallway had been painted. You see on that door frame was all the markings of the children (Steve and his brothers and sisters) as they were growing up. Steve age 6, brother age 4, Sister age 2, etc – all the way up the frame. Steve finished out somewhere around 6 foot 2. They said why did you leave that, and the new family, so precious, said oh no we couldn't paint over that, that is someone's life story, it is the part of this home. Oh and what a picture of Israel, God isn't painting over the door frame of the history of Israel, they are part of the family history, even though the Gentiles have moved into the house also.

Israel strives by Work – not Faith

(Rom 9:30 NKJV) What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith;

(Rom 9:31 NKJV) but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.

(Rom 9:32 NKJV) Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.

(Rom 9:33 NKJV) As it is written: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, And whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

All About Faith

It is all about faith, it is all the Lord. Not our works, but the works of Christ on the cross (Ephesian 2:8-10). The Jews thought it was their heritage and their works, but they missed that it all pointed to the "Provision", the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world (John 1:29).

Ephesians 2:8-10 (NKJV) ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

But Jesus is a Stumbling Block

But Jesus is a stumbling to many, and not just Israel. At the name of Jesus, everything changes.

Wall Street Journal – Religious Words in Business

The Wall Street Journal had an interesting article recently: *Religious Words in Business*. The sub-title was even more enticing: *Religious Words—the key to success and intimidation*.

The article promised that if properly used, biblical words can influence and control others. And then it proceeded to give several examples, such as:

- Using the name of **God** peppers a speech with authority. It serves as a "closer and final word in the throes of debate. It's the lion's roar in the impressionable jungle."
- The word **Angels**—or Angelic—imparts a sense of safety, freedom and good will, as do the words **heaven, paradise, prayer** and **blessings**.
- **Satan, demonic, and hell**, not surprisingly, generate the reverse effect.
- **Revelation** may be used to announce new technology. "iPod's apps are a revelation!"
- **Bible** helps to identify a definitive document, such as an employee handbook.
- An **Exodus** company is one born through a hostile spin-off.
- The phrase **cross to bear** is effective in demanding job completion.
- **Solomonic** is synonymous for wise decision making.
- To be **Adamical** is to be entrepreneurial.
- To be **Noahian** is to be task oriented.

However, *The Wall Street Journal* drew the line at one biblical word. The paper strongly cautioned against its use in any business situation. The word is **Jesus**. Apparently, it's the corporate counterpart to fingernails on a chalkboard, a fog horn in the concert hall. "For whatever reason," *The Journal* argued, "using Jesus' name excites some and angers others." The writer concluded, "There's something about that name."

Indeed there is. No doubt, far more than *The Wall Street Journal* realizes.

The name of Jesus is unlike any other. It's the name that's above every name, the only name under heaven by which we must be saved. It's at this name that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. And it's the name that you and I are privileged to proclaim.

What a name it is!

At this name angels worship, devils shudder, kings bow, armies march, heathen run, saints adore, and creation exists. And mankind's final judgment will be determined on the employment of this name.

*Jesus, the name that charms our fears, that bids our sorrows cease,
'Tis music in the sinners' ears, 'tis life and health and peace.*

The birth of this name lit the heavens. We saw God in this name, it even silenced sin. As the skin-splitting spikes were driven into this name, our staggering debt was paid in full. And at the gravesite of this name, God's greatest power was exposed.

*He breaks the power of canceled sin; He sets the prisoner free,
His blood can make the foulest clean, His blood availed for me.*

At His return, the name of this Lamb-turned-Lion will be no less impressive. KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS will be emblazoned upon His battle fatigues as the righteous King reclaims His throne. And, His precious name will reign forever.

*My gracious Master and my God assist me to proclaim,
To spread through all the earth abroad the honors of thy name.*

Yeah, *The Journal* was right; there really is something about that name!

Conclusion

Chapter 9, what a glorious chapter of God's Word. We see God is far from done with Israel, He hasn't forgotten them nor cast them aside; and we can apply the same for us today. It's all grace, it's all faith, and God will do the work He desires in your life – may we yield to the Potter's hand as He shapes and forms us into His image. God is preparing a Bride, a spotless Bride, to love and to cherish – all of human history, yesterday, today, and tomorrow is for that purpose. Oh Christian, may you hear those beautiful words today, "come away with me".

Song of Solomon 2:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ My beloved spoke, and said to me:
"Rise up, my love, my fair one,
And come away.

If you are here today and have yet to make that commitment to Christ, asking Him to forgive your sins, to tell Him you will repent (turn) from your sins, and asking Him to come into your life to be your Savior, to be the Lord over your life – then today is the day to do so.

2 Corinthians 6:2 (NKJV)

² For He says:

*"In an acceptable time I have heard you,
And in the day of salvation I have helped you."*

Behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.

Chapter 10

Man's Responsibility to God's Sovereignty (10:1-21)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Ch 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Israel (Ch 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (C12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

This Section 9-11

In this section of Romans (chapters 9-11) we are studying God's righteousness and grace concerning the nation Israel; but of course we see tremendous application for us personally as what was spoken to and about Israel is very much the same applicable to us (concerning salvation – for salvation comes by only one way, Jesus Christ the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world), and state of Israel as a Nation is very applicable to us for Israel (Jerusalem) is God's prophetic time piece, and we know what time it is on God's watch by watching what is going on in Israel.

Outline of Israel

- **Romans 9 – Israel's Past (speaking of their history)**
- **Romans 10 – Israel's Present (speaking of their blindness to Jesus)**
- **Romans 11 – Israel's Future (speaking that all will be saved)**

Why Important to You

I had made a decision when we first started Sundays as a church, and that was that we were going to have a Bible Study, not a "typical sermon". Typical sermon on Sunday is to speak on "marital issues", how to have a better marriage, or a topical message on forgiving, guarding your tongue, giving your money to the Lord (heard plenty of those), or freedom from fear, etc, etc – hey all good stuff, but what I found is they usually were "Jesus Light" in that they all are geared towards making people feel good about themselves and how much God loves them. Those churches feel they will teach the deep stuff during the midweek service; but guess what, on the average, only 20% of the people make it back for the mid-week "deep-stuff". Sunday morning is the largest population, and that is the best time as far as I am concerned to bring the "whole counsel of God". So here today, last week, last month, we study the Bible. In this week we study the Bible about God's dealing with Israel, and why do I make such a big deal about the fact that God is not done with the Nation Israel, so that when you read your Bible you have proper context concerning the Last Days prophecies. When you read Revelation and read about Israel, you aren't confused like some churches who think that God is done with Israel, therefore when you read about the Israel in the Book of Revelation that it must mean the Church (that is called replacement theology and that is bad theology). That is bad theology because that puts the Church (you and me) in the Tribulation Period, get hailstones poured on us, boils on our skin, experiencing famine and drought. That theology has us missing the "Marriage Supper of the Lamb" because we missed the Rapture. In Revelation, Israel is Israel, and we are the Church, and we know it to be so because we understand Romans chapters 9-11, and that is that God hasn't forsaken or cast Israel off, but is waiting for them to open their eyes and see that they missed their promised Messiah. Understand that, and when you read about Israel today in the Middle-East, you will read your newspaper with a whole new appreciation and understanding – WOW, Israel is in the news, after 2000 years of virtual silence, you can't make it a day with seeing them mentioned in the news, and a people and a land that plays a pivotal and vital role in the Last Days has made it on the stage to play out the final act (the Book of Revelation if you will) of the human race.

God's Watch / Little time Left for Evangelism

God's watch in heaven is fast approaching the "midnight hour". Although we don't normally put the two together, in this passage not only are we talking about God dealing with Israel, and how He is not done with them, but we also talk about evangelism (how beautiful the feet are of those who preach the gospel), and when we put the two together (God's watch and Evangelism) we see we have little time left to share this word. In John 4 where Jesus said that the fields are white, in agricultural terms, white fields meant that if the farmer waited any longer he would lose the crops to rot because he had waited too long to harvest. The Scriptures tell us that God will start His dealing with the Nation Israel when the fullness of the Gentiles has come (Romans 11:25), and thus the fact that we see Israel on the scene today in such a prominent way, tells us that God is moments away from starting His dealing with them as described in Revelation, thus the fullness of the Gentiles (see study on Dispensation – you'll find it in the table of contents) is imminent.

Matthew 9:37–38 (NKJV) ³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, *"The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. ³⁸ Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."*

John 4:35 (NKJV) ³⁵ Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!

Romans 11:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

Outline Today's Chapter

So, in this chapter 10 (Israel the Nation's present condition with the Lord), we will see

- Christ revealed as Savior to all of Israel (verses 1–7),
- Christ received as Savior by some of Israel (verses 8–15),
- Christ rejected as Savior by most of Israel (verses 16–21).

Christ revealed as Savior to all of Israel (verses 1-7),

Paul wishes all Israel would be Saved

(Rom 10:1 NKJV) Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.

3 Statements

Now notice the three great features in His statement:

1. Israel, with all they possessed (see Rom. 9:4–5) of religion, were not saved. J. Vernon McGee said that probably 75 percent of church members are not saved. They are just members of a religious club. They are in rebellion against God in that they will not accept the righteousness God offers in Christ. You can be religious and lost. Israel had a God-given religion, but they needed to be saved. They had religion but not righteousness. They had more than any other nation, but they were lost. Paul's desire was that Israel might be saved.

2. Israel was savable, and they were not cast off and forgotten for - "Paul would not have prayed had they been altogether reprobate."

3. They are on the same plane before God today as Gentiles and should be evangelized as any other people without Christ. There is no difference today. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). On the flip side of that let me tell you there are errant teachers today who say that the Jews are saved because they are Jews (the chosen Nation); Paul makes that clear that that is not the case. Just as that is not so, then so is it that my children won't be saved because they are my children, but they have to choose to have their own personal relationship with God, based on what they choose to do with Jesus Christ (will they bow their knee and receive Him as their "personal" Lord and Savior). Some errant teachers also teach that

the Jews can be saved under the Jewish (Old Testament) religious system. That is errant because that would make any ole lamb off any ole farm equal with Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. The Cross, was the flow of the blood of God's only Son – that is a crazy theology. Besides that, their theology is so bad in that they no longer are making animal sacrifices in Jerusalem (no Temple), nor any synagogue. It comes down to the one same denominator for every person – what will you do with this man, Jesus Christ?

Matthew 27:22 (NKJV) ²² Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!"

Paul's Heart Desire

Paul's heart desire was that his countryman might be saved. It wasn't just something he prayed, but what "burned" upon His heart. Christian, what is your heart's desire? Not just what do you pray for, but what burns in your heart? If you do not have love for the lost, if I do not have love for the lost, it is not because it is not my calling, for the calling is for all, "go therefore", it is because we have become self-consumed with other things, we have become distracted, we have forgotten that people who perish without Christ will suffer eternity in a place where there is weeping and gnashing of the teeth, where the worm dies not. Oh may we have the heart of Paul.

2 Timothy 4:5 (NKJV) ⁵ But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Matthew 28:18–20 (NKJV) ¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Isaiah 66:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ "And they shall go forth and look
Upon the corpses of the men
Who have transgressed against Me.
For their worm does not die,
And their fire is not quenched.
They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.

How get that Heart

Pray for the lost; make it a part of your prayer life like Paul, and you cannot pray without becoming "Like God". The lost is the heart of God, it is why He came, to seek and save the lost, oh to have the heart of Paul, who had the heart of God.

Luke 19:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Israel seeks to Establish their own Righteousness – apart from God

(Rom 10:2 NKJV) For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

(Rom 10:3 NKJV) For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.

(Rom 10:4 NKJV) For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

Self-Righteous

We have covered this in-depth in past studies of how Israel was zealous (which means hot – boiling over) about religious things (like keeping the Law) and doing good works, but they were all about being self-righteous, hey God and you on the street, look how holy I am, aren't I wonderful. They thought they could earn their way to heaven. They totally missed that man could do anything to cover the offense of their sin before the Holy God, and it could only be the "Perfect Sacrifice" Jesus Christ, coming to trade places with sinful man, taking his sin, and receiving the full wrath of God for breaking God's Holy commandments there upon the cross – Behold the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Ephesians 2:8–10 (NKJV) ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

Coupling Zeal

But zeal, boiling over, can be a great thing when it is coupled and tempered with wisdom. When I first got saved I had great zeal for the things of the Lord, serving Him, teaching His word, and evangelism; the problem was that I lacked wisdom and knowledge. So often when a person first gets saved, the church tells them to go sit down over there over on the pew and just sit there until you mature a little. In essence what really happens, they go over and sit there until you become a fat and lazy sheep like the rest of us. What a missed opportunity when the church puts zeal on the "back burner" and turn the heat down to simmer. What I want to do here is couple the zealous new believer with the simmering Christian, and have the two fuel each other. Their zeal will fuel our coolness, and our knowledge will deepen their knowledge. Hence, the body of Christ. Older believers find some younger believers and invest your life into them. Any younger believers come see me and we will make a plan together for you.

Zeal isn't Bad

Zeal isn't bad, to be boiling over isn't a bad when it is boiling over with the right things. Zeal with knowledge, look out for the world is ready to be changed. I need to be around zeal, especially now that I am older. I remember when I was boiling over with zeal, and had knowledge, it was exciting. I was crazy, I remembering when I was in Southern California walking right into a circle of some dozen gang bangers and saying, "gentleman I have great news for you, let me tell you about Jesus Christ", now they thought I must have been crazy to walk into their circle, crazier than them probably, so they let me speak. I use to sit outside an abandoned psychic's house (now used as a crack house and prostitution) and tell people as they walked up that I could tell their future (and then I would quote Jeremiah 29:11) and present the gospel. I was zealous with knowledge, now today I seem to be much knowledge with simmering zeal. Yesterday I gave the clerk at 7/11 a tract and felt I was "on-fire for Jesus", my how far I have come from gangster bangers and drug dealers. I, we, older Christians need to get coupled with the Christians who have zeal so we can catch on-fire again.

(Rom 10:5 NKJV) For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them."

(Rom 10:6 NKJV) But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' " (that is, to bring Christ down from above)

(Rom 10:7 NKJV) or, " 'Who will descend into the abyss?' " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).

The Standard of the Law

The Law of Moses was the standard, and the standard was perfection, if a man wanted to approach God based on the Law, then he needed to be perfect in every point of the Law, for every day he lived. To fail once was to fail totally.

James 2:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

The Salvation Message is not Complicated

And these statements here about who shall go up and who shall go down, trying to ascend into heaven or descend into hell! Simply put, this message of salvation is not complicated; it is not lofty and unattainable, man needs to look at Jesus and believe by faith that there is no other way to approach the Holy God except through Jesus Christ's finished work upon the cross. God is not mysterious, not hidden, not confusing, He is very clear and precise on how man is to approach Him. This passage is quoting Deuteronomy 30, and we could go there and study that through word by word, breaking the Hebrew down, and do all those things, but the whole point that is being made here is that the salvation message is not complicated, and man need not ascend to some mountain top and contemplate on his naval the meaning of life, nor beat himself with whips to try to understand the evils of the hear, rather the salvation message is clear – Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Men like to and try to insert these "going up and going down" things so that they

can somehow insert themselves into the formula, that they did something in and of themselves in salvation; others want to do these things so they can find some loophole that excuses them from repentance and receiving Jesus, for they feel they are a good person, and will be received based on their goodness. The Bible says there is none good, no not one. When a person really sees themselves in light of Christ, we will no longer ask, why does bad things happen to good people, but why does anything good happen to bad people (us sinners who have offended the Holy God). Oh the Lord is so good to us!

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 (NKJV) ³ For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,

Romans 3:10-12 (NKJV) ¹⁰ As it is written:

"There is none righteous, no, not one;

¹¹ *There is none who understands;*

There is none who seeks after God.

¹² *They have all turned aside;*

They have together become unprofitable;

There is none who does good, no, not one."

Christ received as Savior by some of Israel (verses 8-15),

Not all of Israel rejected the Word, and the same is applied for us – those people who will think will never come to the Lord, can and may, so let us not stop praying or proclaiming to and for them.

Confess & Believe – and you will be Saved

(Rom 10:8 NKJV) But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach):

How Close is Salvation – Open Your Mouth

How close is salvation, how complicated is it to be forgiven and received by God? It is so close, all a man or woman has to do is open their mouth. Verse 9

(Rom 10:9 NKJV) that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

(Rom 10:10 NKJV) For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Confession

Confession means to agree with, and the person agrees with the salvation message, they are a sinner, Christ is the only way for their sin to be cleansed.

Raised from the Dead

And that Jesus Christ rose from the dead, is proof that God accepted the trade, and that Jesus was and is all sufficient to wipe away a man's sin. Had Jesus not been sufficient, He would be rotting in the tomb (just as we would have), but God accepted His sacrifice, and delivered Him from the grave, as too He will for all who will receive. Other religions, they are still in the tomb, they are dead and lifeless, and only Jesus rose from the dead.

Saved

What is a man saved from? Hell, where the worm dies not.

Isaiah 66:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ *"And they shall go forth and look*

Upon the corpses of the men

Who have transgressed against Me.

For their worm does not die,

And their fire is not quenched.

They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.

From the Heart – the Very Core of who we Are / Law written on our Heart

Confession is made from the heart. In the Scriptures the heart represents the deepest part of the human person, it is the very core of who they are. The confession is made from mouth, for it reflects what the condition of the heart is (Matthew 15:15-20). I understand people wanting to research anthropology and evolution, research other religions, and they sound very spiritual and intellectual – but at the very end of the day, the Holy God speaks to a man's heart and says, what will you do with My Son, and your sin? God skips the intellectual debates, goes right to the Law that is written on a man's heart, and says "you are guilty before Me the Holy God – what will you do about it?"

Matthew 15:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ *But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart.....*

Romans 2:15–16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ *who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them)* ¹⁶ *in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.*

(Rom 10:11 NKJV) For the Scripture says, "**Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.**"

(Rom 10:12 NKJV) For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.

(Rom 10:13 NKJV) For "**whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.**"

God's Sovereignty vs Man's Free Will

He again let me point out the dynamic, and that is that chapter 9 was about God's Sovereignty, and chapter 10 here is about man's responsibility. We clearly see man's role in salvation, and that is to call upon the Lord, to make a profession with their mouth that Jesus is their Lord and rose from the dead. People like to spend a lot of time trying to reason out God's Sovereignty, but what man needs to focus on more so is – what is my responsibility before the Holy "Sovereign" God, what is He calling me to do.

No One can Say God sends People to Hell

Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame, whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved – it is all inclusive, but it is very exclusive – salvation only comes through Jesus Christ, but it is available for all who will call. All roads do not lead to heaven, only the way of the cross leads to heaven. No one can say God sends anyone to hell, for man makes his own decision. No one can say "how can a God of love send somebody to hell", and the answer is He doesn't, man chooses for himself.

It is a Marriage Proposal / Henry Ironside

So we see the balance between God's sovereignty and man's responsibility. As we have studied, it is a marriage proposal, and God extends His hand and asks will you marry Me, enter into a marriage relationship with Me, and every person freely chooses if they will. God in His sovereignty, who lives outside out time dimension, sees the end and the beginning at the same time, knows who will and who won't, but He still offers the marriage offer to everyone. I like what Henry Ironside said, when we get to heaven and enter the pearly gates, they will read on the entrance – "whosoever will", and as we pass through hem and turn to look back, the backside will read "chosen before the foundation of the world".

Ephesians 1:4 (NKJV) ⁴ *just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,*

You Today – Say I Do

Is God calling you, do you hear His marriage proposal to you today? Respond today, accept Him, say "I do".

[How beautiful are those who Preach the Gospel](#)

(Rom 10:14 NKJV) How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

(Rom 10:15 NKJV) And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!"

You will say Nothing more Beautiful

Listen Christian, there is nothing more beautiful you will ever say to anyone that is greater than the gospel. To tell a person in bondage, a death sentence, that Jesus Christ has come and traded places with you, has taken your sin, and that you may have eternal life by believing on Him, repenting (turning) from your sin, and walking with Him. To tell people that God is making a marriage proposal to them.

Will You Be a Conduit for the King's Message

On January 21, 1930, the name of Harold Vidian became synonymous with heroism. On that day, England's King George V was scheduled to give the opening address at the London Arms Conference. The king's message was to be sent by radio all around the world. Donald McCullough, in his book *The Trivialization of God* (NavPress, 1995), tells us that a few minutes before the king was to speak, a member of the CBS staff tripped over an electrical wire and broke it, cutting off the whole American audience. With no hesitation, chief control operator Harold Vidian grasped one end of the broken wire in his right hand and the other in his left, thus restoring the circuit. Electricity surged through his body. Ignoring the pain, Vidian held on until the king had finished his address. I see in this a challenge for Christians. The message of the King of kings must go to the whole world. But only as we allow God's power to pass through us can the Lord's saving gospel be transmitted. Paul wrote, "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" (Rom. 10:14-15). If we are willing to serve as conduits, regardless of the cost to us, the good news will be proclaimed around the world. Will you be a conduit for the King's message?

Why Evangelize / Many People Unnecessarily Depressed

Why are we called to evangelize, after all God is sovereign, He is more than able to do it without us, and He does when He chooses (no one lead me to Christ – I got saved reading my Bible in my bedroom). First, because the King commands it. His commandments are never burdensome by the way. He is offering us an opportunity to be a part of what He is doing on this earth, and that amazes me the He would. Secondly, not sure if you ever notices this before, but proclaiming the gospel is part of the "Armor of God". Do you know why that is? Because as a man thinks therefore he is (Proverbs 23:7) – and every time you share the gospel you are reinforcing in your heart what you believe, and that is pure power in your life. A lot of people are unnecessarily depressed and discouraged. The reason? They're not sharing the gospel. Thus, they end up self-absorbed and self-focused. Another translation renders this verse, "How lively are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace. When we share the gospel, the Living God flows through us, that is power for life. When we share the gospel we reinforce what we believe and it becomes real, and that is power for life. When we share the gospel, we have power, we have a focal thought that we must live a pure and undefiled life lest we become disqualified, and that is power for life. When we share the gospel, the world is put into its perspective, loses its grip that it has on us, and that is power for us. Beloved, share your faith, and you will have power in your life.

Matthew 28:18–20 (NKJV) ¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Proverbs 23:7 (NKJV)⁷ For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.

Ephesians 6:10–18 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; ¹⁸ praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—

Christ rejected as Savior by most of Israel (verses 16–21).

Faith comes by Hearing – Hearing by the Word of God

(Rom 10:16 NKJV) But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?"

Quoting Isaiah 53

Verse 16 is a quote from Isaiah 53, it is one of the most defining prophetic chapters in the Old Testament about Jesus Christ, and how He would trade places for man's sin, and how He would die, and yet still many Jews rejected Paul's witness he was giving them:

Isaiah 53 (NKJV)

- 53 *Who has believed our report?
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?*
- 2 *For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant,
And as a root out of dry ground.
He has no form or comeliness;
And when we see Him,
There is no beauty that we should desire Him.*
- 3 *He is despised and rejected by men,
A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.
And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him;
He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.*
- 4 *Surely He has borne our griefs
And carried our sorrows;
Yet we esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten by God, and afflicted.*
- 5 *But He was wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace was upon Him,
And by His stripes we are healed.*
- 6 *All we like sheep have gone astray;
We have turned, every one, to his own way;
And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*
- 7 *He was oppressed and He was afflicted,
Yet He opened not His mouth;
He was led as a lamb to the slaughter,
And as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
So He opened not His mouth.*
- 8 *He was taken from prison and from judgment,
And who will declare His generation?
For He was cut off from the land of the living;
For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.*
- 9 *And they made His grave with the wicked—
But with the rich at His death,
Because He had done no violence,
Nor was any deceit in His mouth.*
- 10 *Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him;
He has put Him to grief.
When You make His soul an offering for sin,
He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days,
And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.*
- 11 *He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied.
By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many,
For He shall bear their iniquities.*
- 12 *Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great,
And He shall divide the spoil with the strong,
Because He poured out His soul unto death,
And He was numbered with the transgressors,
And He bore the sin of many,
And made intercession for the transgressors.*

(Rom 10:17 NKJV) So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Faith comes by Hearing

Faith comes by hearing, this Word is alive, for this Word is God Himself.

Thirsting for the Word of God

When Hezekiah heard the Assyrians were coming, he commanded a tunnel be dug from the spring of Gihon to the pool of Siloam inside the city in order that the Assyrians would be unable to cut off their water source. To accomplish this monumental feat, a 1,777-foot tunnel was dug thirty feet underground through solid rock. Man can live weeks without food, but only days without water. Water in Scripture refers both to the written word (Ephesians 5:26) and the living Word, Jesus Christ (John 7:37). How deep are we willing to dig? How many obstacles are we willing to tunnel through in order to spend time in the written Word with the living Word in order to keep our souls from dehydrating?

2 Kings 20:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah—all his might, and how he made a pool and a tunnel and brought water into the city—are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?

Ephesians 5:26 (NKJV) ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,

John 7:37 (NKJV) ³⁷ On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, *"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink."*

My Failings – I was Immature

I remember when I had been saved about 18 months or so and I had blown it big time. I went back to the Lord humbled and repentant, I said Lord how did this happen where did I go wrong. I did a review of my life and saw that I was going to church, I was reading, I serving, I was praying, I was doing all the things that I should have done but still failed. I was trying to find a point where I had veered off, and then I could say ok I'll never let that happen again, but I couldn't find a specific point. And the Lord spoke to me ever so kind and gentle, and He said, "Ray, you are still immature". Although I was doing all the right things, I still had to grow and mature. Keep on in the Word my brethren, keep on in the things of the Lord, and your faith will grow, but recognize there is a growing process. May we recognize that in others too, that they can be doing all the right things, but they can still be immature in their faith, so let us be gentle and understanding with them.

Bible Going Through Us

Hey, it doesn't have to be that every time (or anytime) that we meet that we feel the earth shake, or our hearts are gripped, for it to be that was a powerful message. No, it is that the Word went forth, and thus our faith grew (here a little there a little). It isn't just that we are going through the Bible, but that the Bible is going through us.

Seed Preprogrammed

This word is genetically preprogrammed to produced fruit, so it be planted in your heart and in due season it will produce fruit.

Isaiah 55:10–11 (NKJV)

¹⁰ *"For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven,
And do not return there,
But water the earth,
And make it bring forth and bud,
That it may give seed to the sower
And bread to the eater,*

¹¹ *So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth;
It shall not return to Me void,
But it shall accomplish what I please,
And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.*

(Rom 10:18 NKJV) But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed: "Their sound has gone out to all the earth, And their words to the ends of the world."

(Rom 10:19 NKJV) But I say, did Israel not know? First Moses says: "I will provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation, I will move you to anger by a foolish nation."

(Rom 10:20 NKJV) But Isaiah is very bold and says: "I was found by those who did not seek Me; I was made manifest to those who did not ask for Me."

(Rom 10:21 NKJV) But to Israel he says: "All day long I have stretched out My hands To a disobedient and contrary people."

How Sad for Israel / You Today – Say I Do

How sad for Israel, the Messiah standing right before them, yet they missed Him, I pray no one lets this same thing happen to them today. Is God calling you, do you hear His marriage proposal to you today? Respond today, accept Him, say "I do".

Conclusion

The Violinist

Fritz Kreisler (1875-1962), the world-famous violinist, earned a fortune with his concerts and compositions, but he generously gave most of it away. So, when he discovered an exquisite violin on one of his trips, he wasn't able to buy it. Later, having raised enough money to meet the asking price, he returned to the seller, hoping to purchase the beautiful instrument. But to his great dismay it had been sold to a collector. Kreisler made his way to the new owner's home and offered to buy the violin. The collector said it had become his prized possession and he would not sell it. Keenly disappointed, Kreisler was about to leave when he had an idea. "Could I play the instrument once more before it is consigned to silence?" he asked. Permission was granted, and the great virtuoso filled the room with such heart-moving music that the collector's emotions were deeply stirred. "I have no right to keep that to myself," he exclaimed. "It's yours, Mr. Kreisler. Take it into the world, and let people hear it."

May this Gospel not be Consigned to Silence

May we take this good news into the world for all to hear, let it not be consigned to silence in our hearts.

Chapter 11

Abiding in the Vine – Part 1 (11:1-16)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Chapters 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Israel (Chapters 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Final Chapter of Trilogy / 8 Glorious Chapters / Then – what about Israel / God not Done

Chapter eleven is the final chapter of the trilogy (9-11) that speaks of the Nation Israel. For eight glorious chapters God through the Apostle Paul has described how God can make a sinner justified, sanctified, and glorified – and it is all through Jesus Christ the Lamb of God of who takes away the sin of the world. So, the natural question would arise, well what about Israel (the Jewish people) who rejected Jesus as the Messiah, has God cast them out, is He done with His (chosen people), is He now only dealing with the Gentile (non-Jewish) people? Paul makes it real clear right here in verse 1 of chapter 11 – CERTAINLY NOT.

Why Important to You

In this week we study the Bible about God's dealing with Israel, and why do I make such a big deal about the fact that God is not done with the Nation Israel, so that when you read your Bible you have proper context concerning the Last Days prophecies. When you read Revelation and read about Israel, you aren't confused like some churches who think that God is done with Israel, therefore when you read about the Israel in the Book of Revelation that it must mean the Church (that is called replacement theology and that is bad theology). That is bad theology because that puts the Church (you and me) in the Tribulation Period, get hailstones poured on us, boils on our skin, experiencing famine and drought. That theology has us missing the "Marriage Supper of the Lamb" because we missed the Rapture. In Revelation, Israel is Israel, and we are the Church, and we know it to be so because we understand Romans chapters 9-11, and that is that God hasn't forsaken or cast Israel off, but is waiting for them to open their eyes and see that they missed their promised Messiah. Understand that, and when you read about Israel today in the Middle-East, you will read your newspaper with a whole new appreciation and understanding – WOW, Israel is in the news, after 2000 years of virtual silence, you can't make it a day with seeing them mentioned in the news, and a people and a land that plays a pivotal and vital role in the Last Days has made it on the stage to play out the final act (the Book of Revelation if you will) of the human race.

Old Commentaries – Israel Non-Existent / We Saw May 14 1948 / Born in a Day

Read old commentaries and they totally have Israel as non-existent, that God has cast them out and totally done away with them, and I don't come down on those old Bible teachers because after 2,000 years of Israel being "nearly" non-existent, living without a homeland for almost 2,000 years I may have come to the same conclusion. But we, what an amazing day we live in, that we live in the day that sees Israel revived. On May 14, 1948, Israel became a nation again, in one day (just Isaiah said), and we live as the group of Believers who have been given the clear statement, Israel is alive. We are watching Ezekiel 36-37 (the re-gathering of Israel) right before our very eyes, after 2000 years without a homeland. I ask the question, how many Assyrian do you know, how many Babylonians do you know, how many Edomites, how many Philistines, and the answer is zero because once their homeland was conquered they eventually lost their national identify and became absorbed as people into other nations. We watched a miracle

before our eyes, so if you are ever asked if you believe in miracles or have ever seen a miracle you can emphatically say “YES”. In 1948 the Jewish population of Israel was 800,000, and today it has exceeded 5 million and rising daily.

Isaiah 66:8 (NKJV)

⁸ *Who has heard such a thing?
Who has seen such things?
Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day?
Or shall a nation be born at once?
For as soon as Zion was in labor,
She gave birth to her children.*

(Ezekiel 36:24 NKJV) *"For I will take you from among the nations, **gather you out of all countries**, and bring you into your own land.*

Luke 12:47–48 (NKJV) ⁴⁷ *And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.* ⁴⁸ *But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.*

No Problem for Us – We See It

We shouldn't have any problem reading Romans 9-11 and understanding that God is not done with Israel, nor read the Book of Revelation and understand that God is talking about Israel and not the Church.

Outline of Israel

- **Romans 9 – Israel's Past (speaking of their history)**
- **Romans 10 – Israel's Present (speaking of their blindness to Jesus)**
- **Romans 11 – Israel's Future (speaking that all will be saved)**

Chp 11 – Israel Future

Chapter 11 we will talk about what Israel's future is.

God is not done with Israel

(Rom 11:1 NKJV) **I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.**

Paul uses Self as Example

Paul is making his point that Israel is not cast away because Paul himself a Jew and Israelite was met by God after the cross and crucifixion of Christ. If God was done with Israel and the Jews, Paul wouldn't be writing this letter.

People Ask – Is God done with Me

Hey, along the same line, there is a world of people all around us asking a similar question themselves, and that is – “is God done with me?”. They wonder if God could ever love them, if they have gone too far in the things they have done or said. We can point to Paul (a murder and blasphemer) that is a good one, but you know what, point a little closer to them, point to yourself, tell them how God's grace found you, covered you, and how His grace is enough for them too.

Not Only Paul – Plenty Jews Today / God has a Remnant

Not only is Paul an example that God isn't done with Israel and the Jewish people, Paul will go on to point that there are plenty of Israelites who are saved just like him. He will use the illustration of Elijah and how he was on the run from Jezebel and Ahab (1 Kings 19), how he thought he was all alone, but God meet him and made the point, the He had a remnant that although Elijah couldn't see them, they existed. So Paul is making the same point in these next verse, that although you may not see them, there are plenty of Jewish people who believe Jesus is the Messiah, and got saved into the Body of Christ.

1 Kings 19:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ *Yet I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him."*

God still has a Remnant TODAY!

(Rom 11:2 NKJV) God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel, saying, **(Rom 11:3 NKJV)** "LORD, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life"?

(Rom 11:4 NKJV) But what does the divine response say to him? "I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal."

(Rom 11:5 NKJV) Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

Still Remnant

Just as there was a remnant in Elijah's day, so, too, Paul says, there will always be a remnant in Israel. There always has been, presently is, and always will be a believing minority in Israel. And the believing minority in Israel is wonderfully radical for Jesus Christ.

Jews for Jesus

If you have some time, check out the ministry of Jews for Jesus and you'll see former Jews who have turned to Jesus for salvation.

Paul Can't Help But Break out in Praise

Election of Grace – Paul can't just say that without breaking out into a little sermon in verse 6, for he can't talk about grace without getting all excited about it.

(Rom 11:6 NKJV) And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.

It is All Grace – Rest in His Grace

It is all grace; Christian rest in His grace

Ephesians 2:8–10 (NKJV) ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

God has Blinded their Eyes

(Rom 11:7 NKJV) What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded.

Jews Seeking Righteousness / Others found the Lamb of Grace

The Jews (speaking majority) were seeking after righteousness, but didn't receive it because they tried to obtain it through their own efforts. But those that got saved found it simply by and through grace, through the Lamb of Grace – God's Riches at Christ's Expense.

Romans 10:3 (NKJV) ³ For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.

Paul will now Explain – Jews Blinded by Self-Righteousness

Now Paul will go to explain that the majority of the Jews (minus the remnant) are blinded to the gospel because of their self-righteousness which hardens and blinds their heart from seeing the Lamb of Grace.

(Rom 11:8 NKJV) Just as it is written: "God has given them a spirit of stupor, Eyes that they should not see And ears that they should not hear, To this very day."

(Rom 11:9 NKJV) And David says: "Let their table become a snare and a trap, A stumbling block and a recompense to them.

(Rom 11:10 NKJV) Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see, and bow down their back always."

Quoting Isaiah 29 – No Prophets / Jesus is Enough

Verse 8a is quoting Isaiah 29:10. How interesting to see, notice the verse is referencing the blindness of the prophets. It was 400 years from Malachi to John the Baptist, and John the Baptist powerfully proclaimed, prepared, and pointed at Jesus the Messiah, the final sacrificial Lamb who would take away the sins of the world. But since then, there has not been a prophet of that kind in Israel. The history of Israel was God always gave them a prophet to call them back to Himself, but Israel has not had a prophet (of the type like John and Jesus) since Jesus. Israel was always looking to hear from a prophet sent from God, and they have had no prophet now for 2,000 years, thus a major factor in them not having eyes to see and ears to hear. Jesus is enough my friends, and if you can't see the Father through Jesus, nothing else will open your eyes, your ears, and most specifically your heart, for Jesus is "enough". If Jesus isn't enough for you, then nothing will be enough!

Isaiah 29:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ For the LORD has poured out on you
The spirit of deep sleep,
And has closed your eyes, namely, the prophets;
And He has covered your heads, namely, the seers.

Jews example of Human Heart – Heart grows Hard

The Jews are an example of the human heart, and that is that every time a person rejects the word of the Lord that was spoken to them (saved or unsaved I might add), every time they discount a mighty work of God they have seen with their very eyes, their heart gets hard. Here a little, there a little, and without realization their heart becomes totally hardened, and the Word and Witness of God can no longer penetrate their heart.

Hebrews 5:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, ¹⁰ called by God as High Priest "according to the order of Melchizedek," ¹¹ of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, *since you have become dull of hearing.*

Romans 2 – Callousness

In Romans 2, it speaks of having a hard heart, and the root word there for hard heart means "callousness". When I was a mechanic working with my hands I use to have very hard and callous hands because day after day they were handling harsh things like steel and bricks, so much so that I lost sensitivity in my hands because they were so callous. It didn't happen in one day, but day-after-day, month-after-month. So is the picture for the person who continually rejects the hearing the word of God, their heart becomes so hard, they lose the sensitivity to the spiritual things.

Romans 2:5 (NKJV) ⁵ But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,

Now Paul – Speak Gentiles Grafted In

Now Paul will go on to speak about us (the Gentiles) having been grafted in, provoke the Jews to jealousy, and causes some of them to get saved.

The Gentiles provoke Israel to Jealousy

(Rom 11:11 NKJV) I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles.

(Rom 11:12 NKJV) Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!

(Rom 11:13 NKJV) For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry,

(Rom 11:14 NKJV) if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them.

(Rom 11:15 NKJV) For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

(Rom 11:16 NKJV) For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches.

Gentiles always part of the Plan / Not an Afterthought

The Gentiles were always part of the plan; it is not like God made the offer to the Jews and when they rejected God said ok then I'll make a plan B and go to the non-Jews (the Gentiles). The Gentiles have always been part of the plan, you are not some after-thought of God; rather the Jews were chosen to point, prepare, and proclaim the Messiah that would bridge the gap between the Holy God and sinful man.

Isaiah 49:6 (NKJV)

⁶ *Indeed He says,
'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant
To raise up the tribes of Jacob,
And to restore the preserved ones of Israel;
I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles,
That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.'*”

Isaiah 42:6-7 (NKJV)

⁶ *"I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness,
And will hold Your hand;
I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people,
As a light to the Gentiles,
⁷ To open blind eyes,
To bring out prisoners from the prison,
Those who sit in darkness from the prison house.*

Acts 13:46-47 (NKJV)

⁴⁶ *Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. ⁴⁷ For so the Lord has commanded us:*

*'I have set you as a light to the Gentiles,
That you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.'*”

Provoked to Jealously / Fear of Losing what is Thiers

Verse 14 – provoke to jealousy: Paul is hoping that the Gentiles will provoke the Jews and “SOME” of the Jews would get saved. The word provoke means to, “stir up”, and the word jealousy means “the fear that something we possess will be taken away by another”.

Jews Thought they were Exclusive

This provoking to jealousy would sting the Jews for they thought they were exclusive, that only they were chosen of God. Most of them had long forgotten that they were to be a light unto the Gentiles, that they were chosen to point, prepare, and proclaim the coming Messiah. Instead they became self-righteous, that they were chosen because there was something wonderful about them, and God just had to choose them because they were so wise and wonderful. They became exclusive, they reached a point that they considered the Gentiles were only created by God for the purpose of fueling the flames of hell with their bodies. When a Gentile entered the city they would scream out and point at them saying, “unclean, unclean”. When they would pass a Gentile on the street they would cross over to the other side so as not to accidentally brush up against them, and if they did they went home and burned their clothes and bathed, and then went to the Temple to sacrifice. Many Jews today still have that “exclusive” mentality, where they think the God of Judaism is only for them. Have you ever had a Jew try to witness to you? No, me neither. Every see a Jewish evangelistic outreach? No, me neither. They just don't think like that, Judaism to them is exclusive, a person is born into it, you can't ask to join.

Jews saw Gentiles Lives Radically Changed / Remember 60 Million were Slaves

However, as in the context of this passage, when the Gentiles started to get saved, turn to the Lord, some of the Jews eyes were opened and they realized, they couldn't deny what God was doing amongst the Gentiles (radical life transformations, they would see marriages being healed, addictions being broken, depressions being lifted, on and on) and they would realize only God could do that. Mind you, this letter to the Romans, sent to Rome, and the Roman Empire had some 60 million slaves in it, and many of the Gentiles getting saved were Roman slaves. The Jews rejected that Jesus could be the Messiah because He didn't deliver them from the Roman occupation of the land (although they were still freeman). They missed that the Messiah's

mission was to be the final sacrifice, not to overthrow the government. Amazingly, what the Jews were seeking though the Messiah (liberation) is exactly what He brought (but it was liberation from sin and death). Most of the Jews missed that point, but many of the Gentiles seized it. They then would also realize, if God is working among the Gentiles, then we aren't an all-exclusive people, and thus everything would change for them, they would see it wasn't self-righteousness, but the need to be made righteous, it wasn't their works, it was His works (just as the Gentiles were coming to God not by works but simply by faith through grace). As some of the Jews watched God working among the Gentiles, their eyes were opened and they came and got saved.

Same Applies to You

Same applies today for you. There are people around you who were raised in a religious system, had to go through all their religious rules and rituals, yet their religion leaves them empty, brings them no joy, if anything (if they were honest) it just adds burden to their life of just one more thing they need to do. Then you come around, not steeped in religion as they would view you, and you get saved and they see fullness of life (yes my sin has been forgiven), they see life (as you speak of this personal and intimate relationship you have with God), they see love as it overflows from you, and they say wait a minute, no way – you were never interested in the things of God and church and now you want to tell me you have a intimate relationship with God – I don't think so they say. So many are offended, yet there are many that finally open their eyes and see, "you mean it isn't rules and rituals, but it is all about Jesus?" – Yes they say, I finally see and understand it, and I see it because and through your relationship with Christ. Oh the world is watching Beloved, let them see, let them see!

Abiding in the Vine – Part 2 (11:17-22)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Chapters 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Israel (Chapters 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "*The just shall live by faith.*"

Final Chapter of Trilogy / 8 Glorious Chapters / Then – what about Israel / God not Done

Chapter eleven is the final chapter of the trilogy (9-11) that speaks of the Nation Israel. For eight glorious chapters God through the Apostle Paul has described how God can make a sinner justified, sanctified, and glorified – and it is all through Jesus Christ the Lamb of God of who takes away the sin of the world. So, the natural question would arise, well what about Israel (the Jewish people) who rejected Jesus as the Messiah, has God cast them out, is He done with His (chosen people), is He now only dealing with the Gentile (non-Jewish) people? Paul makes it real clear right here in verse 1 of chapter 11 – CERTAINLY NOT.

(Rom 11:1 NKJV) I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

Outline of Israel

- **Romans 9 – Israel's Past (speaking of their history)**
- **Romans 10 – Israel's Present (speaking of their blindness to Jesus)**
- **Romans 11 – Israel's Future (speaking that all will be saved)**

Wow – All Israel Saved / Imagine All America / Missed Messiah – but not Cast Off

So we looked at Israel's past (Chapter 9), and Israel's present (Chapter 10), we come to this glorious chapter here in Chapter 11 which deals with Israel's future, and how God declares in verse 25 that all of Israel will one day be saved. Wow what a statement; imagine if God would say that one day all of America would be saved, we would be blown away! Well to say that would be less of a statement than to say all of Israel would be saved, because as we have studied, they survived 2,000 years without a homeland (while no other nationality ever made it longer than a couple generations). And, not to mention they are a hard-hearted people because they missed the Messiah (but I will also suggest to you that anyone today that misses the Messiah is likewise as hard-hearted). Missed the Messiah, rejected the Messiah, and crucified the Messiah, but has God cast them off, never to look upon them again, absolutely not (as Paul would say). God never has, and never will, and proof of that is that He has always had a remnant of Jews that did receive Jesus. Paul's first example of proof was himself; the second example God likened to the time when Elijah was hiding in the cave from Jezebel and Ahab thinking he was the last prophet left, but God said I got 7,000 who not bowed their knee to Baal. We talked about even today we see a remnant right there in Israel as testified by the missionaries called "Jews for Jesus" who are Jews who got saved, and now witness to other Jews.

Romans 11:26 (NKJV)²⁶ And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:

"The Deliverer will come out of Zion,

And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

Romans 11:1 (NKJV) I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

Romans 11:4–5 (NKJV)⁴ But what does the divine response say to him? "*I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.*"⁵ Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

Video – Jews for Jesus

Jews thought they were Exclusive / But Provoked / Now go on to say - Don't Get Puffed Up

So after talking about the remnant we looked at how Israel thought they were exclusive, they were all-inclusive, and the rest of the world was all-excluded. But then when the Gentiles started getting saved all over the place and their lives were radically being changed, many of the Jews eyes opened and they realized, wait a minute we need to reconsider this position we think is so sure. And thus the remnant was saved. So the Gentiles being saved provoked some of the Jews to salvation as they saw how God was working amongst the Gentiles, but Paul will now go on to say to the Gentile Church, don't get puffed-up yourself, and don't you start thinking you are exclusive and something greater than the Jews.

Romans 11:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles.

The Gentiles have been Grafted In

(Rom 11:17 NKJV) And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree,

(Rom 11:18 NKJV) do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you.

(Rom 11:19 NKJV) You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in."

(Rom 11:20 NKJV) Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear.

Dangerous Place to be – Forgetting Grace

The root is Jesus Christ (He is the Vine and we are the branches). It is always a dangerous place after being saved for some time (a few months, a few years) that we can forget "GRACE", and start to think it was something to do with us. It is a funny dichotomy, in that He who began a good work in you will be faithful to complete it (Philippians 1:6), and as He does, and we start having victories and triumphs (because He is growing and maturing us), we can begin to see how "good" we are doing, and start thinking, we really are something.

John 15:5-7 (NKJV) ⁵ I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷ If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

Lost Conception of what Cross Means / Contemplate the Cross

The only thing that is good in any of us, is Jesus! Hence why we must go back to the cross regularly; I wonder sometimes if we have any conception in our day of what the cross meant when Paul wrote these words. Cicero says, "The cross, it speaks of that which is so shameful, so horrible, it should never be mentioned in polite society," and yet you find Paul exclaiming, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. 6:14). The cross meant far worse than the gallows or the electric chair means today, because it declared that the one who was hanging there was guilty of the vilest, the most awful crimes, and was utterly unfit to live, that he was rejected of man and accursed of God. And this cross bore our Lord Jesus Christ! What does it mean? It means that man's heart was so wicked, so sinful, that there was no other way by which he could be saved than through the Eternal Son of God becoming Man and suffering the most horrible death for his redemption. But it means too that in the most complete way man's heart has been fully exposed, for when God thus sent His Son, man cried, "Away with Him! Crucify Him, crucify Him!" There at the cross man told out the very worst of his nature, but God told out the infinite love of His heart. Peter said to the men of his day, "Him being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and with wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23). If you want to know how wicked you are by nature, if you want to get an understanding of the awfulness of the sins of which your heart is capable, stand in faith before that cross and contemplate again God's holy, spotless Son hanging on that tree suffering unspeakable anguish, the very expression of man's attitude to God, the word of the cross.

What did it take to Redeem Man

What did it take to redeem man? A hammer and three nails. Leaves nothing left to boast does it.

Strong-Strong Warning

In verses 21 and 22, we will now read some of the strongest warnings in all the Bible of people who make professions with their mouth that Jesus is their Lord, but then don't go to live according to the calling.

(Rom 11:21 NKJV) For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either.

(Rom 11:22 NKJV) Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

The Offense of Sin / The Nails and Hammer / Only thing good in any of us is Jesus

Again, how offensive is sin? Just look at the hammer and nails piercing the body of Christ. The only thing good in any of us is Jesus

What – How Cut-off / Romans 8 – Nothing shall Separate Us / Man's Responsibility

Verse 22 - Otherwise you also will be cut off - Cut-off, how can that be so, we just studied chapter 8 that said nothing shall separate us from the love of the Lord. Here is the key, for all who were grafted in, you are eternally secure if you "abide" in the vine. In chapter 9 the heart of the passage was God's Sovereignty, chapter 10 the heart of the passage was Man's Responsibility, and chapter 11 is the crossing of the two. I will leave God's Sovereignty up to Him, and for me (a man), I will preach on Man's Responsibility, trusting and knowing that the two merge perfectly together somewhere outside my limited mind.

Romans 8:38–39 (NKJV) ³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 15:5–7 (NKJV) ⁵ "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷ If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

We Live in a Day

We live in a day probably more so than ever, of "easy believism" – that if a person simply says a prayer, they are saved and sealed for eternity, regardless of how they live after that prayer. This easy believism is being propagated and supported by even so-called evangelical churches, who proclaim a message of ease and comfort, love and acceptance, a God who doesn't demand holiness, and they preach a message of happiness, not holiness. Verse 21 and 22 defies that message. John 15 says that anyone who doesn't abide in Him will be cast out and put into the fire.

This is a Marriage Relationship Adam gave part of Self / Jesus gave all of Self / For a Bride

This relationship is a marriage relationship. Adam had to give part of himself in order to get a bride, but Christ gave all of Himself to purchase His bride at the cross. God opened Adam's side, but sinful men pierced Christ's side. This is a marriage relationship and we are the Bride; we have been building off that for the last two chapters. When a person says "I do" in a marriage, they are saying "I do the dishes, I do the laundry, I do the hard things, I do all that comes with being married, all that it takes to make the marriage work". As the Bride, we are to follow the lead of our husband (see Ephesians 5). When divorce happens in a marriage, it is because one or both of the parties involved have broken their covenant promise. God is faithful; His yes is always yes, so that only leaves one other person.

Ephesians 5:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

Ephesians 5:22–24 (NKJV) ²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. ²⁴ Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

Marriage a Public Thing

By the way, marriages are a public thing, any marriage that is hidden that no one is to know, has serious marriage issues. Imagine a marriage that says I don't want anyone to know we are married. We say that is ridiculous if it was to happen to people we know; how then can we think it should be any different for people who say they don't want people to know they are Christian's because that is personal. A person who says that, is saying I am not proud of the person I married, thus why I don't want people to know I am married. Nor would anyone get married and stick their bride in a corner, no they go out and they do things together, they have an intimate relationship together.

Believe / Recognize – Repent - Receive

John 3:16, says that whosoever believes on Him will be saved. What does believe mean theologically? It means to (Recognize, Repent, and Receive).

- **Recognize** you're a sinner, your sin is an offense to the Holy God, and the only way to have you sin cleansed is through the finished work of Christ on the cross.
- **Repent**, means to turn away, and a person must turn away from a habitual lifestyle of sin.
- **Receive** Jesus Christ as Lord, profess with the mouth, and believe in the heart that God raised Him from the dead.

Reject any one of those three, and you don't believe, it is that simple.

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Romans 10:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

Recognize

Recognize – some people may start at "it is all Jesus" for the forgiveness of sin, but then somewhere along the lines come and say it is Jesus Christ, "AND" (then they add something on to the cross like keep the Sabbath, Joseph Smith, knock on so many doors). They no longer believe (or never have), and they no longer are abiding (or never were). It is no longer faith, it is no longer grace, somehow the person has now worked themselves or something else into the equation. Some even come to a place where they say their sin isn't that bad (as they compare themselves to others).

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Timothy 2:5 (NKJV) ⁵ For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,

Ephesians 2:8–10 (NKJV) ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Repent

No repentance, no believe. John's first message, Jesus' first public message, Peter's first public message. God wishes that none should perish but that all should seek repentance (2 Peter 3:9). God tells five of the seven churches in Revelation that they need to repent. Without repentance there is no forgiveness of sin, and repentance is not a one-time thing, it is a lifestyle, it is part of the sap that keeps us grafted into the True Vine, is part of Abiding. Hey, in the balance of 31,102 verses, there is no salvation apart from repentance. Repent - I taught a similar passage of Scripture that dealt with the same topic, and after I was done someone came and challenged me on whether I believed in eternal security. After a few volleys I said, "if you think I am going to teach eternal security to the person who lives in habitual sin, and refuses to repent, no I won't do it". That person left the church.

Mark 1:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

Matthew 4:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, *“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”*

Acts 2:38 (NKJV) ³⁸ Then Peter said to them, *“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”*

2 Peter 3:9 (NKJV) ⁹ The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Romans 6:1–3 (NKJV) *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ² Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?*

You who have Professed – but no Fruit

For any person who made a profession with their mouth, but have no works to prove that God has made a change in your life, I hope you are extremely uncomfortable right now. If you think you can live in fornication, pornography, drugs and drunkenness, cruel to your spouse, lie, cheat, steal, have hatred in your heart, break the 10 Commandments – be warned, for he who does not bear fruit will be cast off into the fire.

Titus 1:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.

Revelation 21:7–8 (NKJV) ⁷ He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. ⁸ But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

John 15:5–7 (NKJV) ⁵ “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷ If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

Receive / Some getting De-Baptized

Receive – there are people who once received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who at some point later in their lives say I reject Him, I reject the Holy Spirit (there is a website where you can do), and then last week I saw on television people getting “debaptized” – yea some guy mockingly holds a hair dryer up to them and says I debaptize you from the foolish of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They no longer believe.

Romans 10:9 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

Matthew 10:32–33 (NKJV) ³² “Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. ³³ But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.

Show Debaptize Video

Charles Templeton

I know the question, they never were saved, they are just fools. Well I think one of the most shocking things that I’ve come across in recent times is this book that has been written by Charles Templeton (My Farewell to God), who was once a close associate with Billy Graham, who once was a tremendous evangelist, who was used of God in big campaigns in Canada. He was very active in the Youth for Christ movement. He was a brilliant man. He turned many people to Jesus Christ. But he recently has written a book, in which he denounces the belief in God. He denounces the Bible. He denounces, as folly, the faith he once had in Jesus Christ. He said he has developed intellectually beyond the ability to any longer, accept the myths and the fallacies of the Bible!

Unpardonable – hmmm / I continue preaching Man’s Responsibility

When does a person’s actions become “the unpardonable sin”, I do not know, they are pushing the limit for sure. Is God still seeking them and drawing them, I say yes because He is so awesome and loving. But here is the point, chapter 9 was all about God’s sovereignty, chapter 10 was all about man’s responsibility; therefore I am going to let God work on the sovereignty

part, and as a minister (man) of the Gospel of Christ, I will continual to work on the “man’s responsibility” part.

Believe / Recognize – Repent - Receive

John 3:16, says that whosoever believes on Him will be saved. What does believe mean theologically? It means to (Recognize, Repent, and Receive).

- **Recognize** you’re a sinner, your sin is an offense to the Holy God, and the only way to have you sin cleansed is through the finished work of Christ on the cross.
- **Repent**, means to turn away, and a person must turn away from a habitual lifestyle of sin.
- **Receive** Jesus Christ as Lord, profess with the mouth, and believe in the heart that God raised Him from the dead.

Reject any one of those three, and you don’t believe, it is that simple. You are on slippery ground, you need to get on to solid ground before you slip away.

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Romans 10:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ For the Scripture says, “Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.”

Those Struggling / Romans 7

But for those of you who seek the Lord, are trying to be obedient, but you find yourself failing and you are sickened by it, you want to do good but find yourself struggling, I take you back to Chapter 7, spoken by the greatest apostle who had been saved some 20 years. God knows your struggle and He is working in you, and He will see you through to maturity, all you need to do – IS KEEP ABIDING! He who began a good work will be faithful to complete, because you keep abiding, you are still attached, you are desiring to please Him, and because you are attached and abiding, fruit will come.

Romans 7:18–25 (NKJV) ¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. ¹⁹ For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. ²⁰ Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. ²¹ I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. ²² For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. ²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. ²⁴ O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) ⁶ being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

Keep Abiding – We are Almost There / 1 Cor 1:18

Keep abiding Christian soldier, don’t falter now, we are almost there; the finish line is right before us. The reward is not only future, it is now, for it pays to obey, His word is perfect for us. I know we are living in times where not only is the cross foolishness to the unsaved, but even now in some so-called evangelical churches the cross is a one-time message, and after you have seen the cross, now it is all about you, it is all about “your best life today”, and there no longer a call to holiness. Let’s Read 1 Corinthians 1:18; it is the second part of that verse I want to make a point about, but I can’t go there before I make a point about the first part about “message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing”. The word for “message” is the word “logos”, and it is the same word used in John 1:1, that in the beginning was the “Word – logos”, and the “Word – logos” was with God, and the “Word – logos” was God. And then down in verses fourteen of that same chapter is says that the “Word – logos” became flesh and dwelt among us. The “Word – Logos” is Jesus. So back to 1 Corinthians 1:18, you can read that also as “the Jesus of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing”. Lots of people don’t have a problem with the cross, in fact it makes for some beautiful jewelry, it is the Jesus of the cross where things start to divide, because the Jesus of the Cross puts a name and face on the cross, and when that happens it can no longer be some intangible, some lofty ideal, some whatever it means to you; but when the name and face goes with the cross, then the cross becomes very personal, very specific, and very clear – “a life for a life”, innocent blood shed for the guilty, God in the flesh, taking mans sin. People in their pride and arrogance, oh that is just crazy talk, I’m not a sinner, I haven’t offended

God, I'm a good person, in fact I'm always helping people, me and God are just fine. They won't admit that their sin offends the Holy God, that their sin is personal.

1 Corinthians 1:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

John 1:1 (NKJV) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Deny Self – Pick Up Cross

To those who are perishing just don't get it because to deny one's self and take up the Cross seems totally foolish to them, but to us who are being saved, it is life, and that more abundant when we take up our cross and follow Him (TOTALLY).

Matthew 16:24–27 (NKJV) ²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? ²⁷ For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.

Salvation is Progressive / Penalty – Power - Presence

Back to 1 Corinthians 1:18b now, a more literal rendering of this verse would be "...but unto us which are being saved (for the verb tense in this sentence structure is "present imperative, meaning it is a continual verb (covering past, present, and future), it is the power of God."

Salvation is, in a sense, progressive. When you opened your heart to Jesus Christ, you were saved from the penalty of sin. Day by day, we're saved from the power of sin. And when Jesus comes to take us to heaven, we'll be saved from the presence of sin.

1 Corinthians 1:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Hope – Fail / Direction on the Way / Deny Self – Find Life / Sozo

The Jesus of the Cross gives hope when I have failed because Jesus' blood cleanses me from all sin. It also gives direction to the way I live, for it is only when I deny myself and take up the Cross that I find life. The word for "saved" in 1 Corinthians 1:18 is "sozo" and means to deliver from destruction, to heal, to protect, to free from disease, to thrive, to prosper – I summarize it to mean "the full orb of God's blessings". Salvation is much more than just past tense, it is the power for today, and the promise of tomorrow.

Conclusion

Never Given Life to Christ

If you are here today and have never given your life to Christ, then look and see, here are the hammer and nails, that is how offensive sin is before the Holy God. What will you do today with the Jesus of the Cross who took the nails, endured the cross, for your sin?

Have Been Doing Own Thing

If you are here today and you know you have drifted far away from where you once were in your relationship with Him, have been sloppy with His grace, loose with sin, and you have heard God's voice today, then repent and come back to your first love. He is waiting for you, and He is ready to receive you back. This week one of the computers at home got infected with a virus, things weren't working as they should. Not good, but not the end of the computer, as I went back and got the recovery disk, inserted it into the computer, and reformatted the hard drive. Cleared the virus out, restored the computer to its original manufacturer condition. And so it is when a person rededicates their life back to Him.

1 John 1:9 (NKJV) ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Those Abiding

For you who have been abiding, you have made another week; and we are one week closer to seeing Him face to face, and enjoy being totally free from the presence of sin.

John 15:5 (NKJV) ⁵ *"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.*

Abiding in the Vine – Part 3 (11:23-24)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Chapters 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Israel (Chapters 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Final Chapter of Trilogy / 8 Glorious Chapters / Then – what about Israel / God not Done

Chapter eleven is the final chapter of the trilogy (9-11) that speaks of the Nation Israel. For eight glorious chapters God through the Apostle Paul has described how God can make a sinner justified, sanctified, and glorified – and it is all through Jesus Christ the Lamb of God of who takes away the sin of the world. So, the natural question would arise, well what about Israel (the Jewish people) who rejected Jesus as the Messiah, has God cast them out, is He done with His (chosen people), is He now only dealing with the Gentile (non-Jewish) people? Paul makes it real clear right here in verse 1 of chapter 11 – CERTAINLY NOT.

(Rom 11:1 NKJV) *I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.*

Outline of Israel

- **Romans 9 – Israel's Past (speaking of their history)**
- **Romans 10 – Israel's Present (speaking of their blindness to Jesus)**
- **Romans 11 – Israel's Future (speaking that all will be saved)**

Recap / Paul – Remnant – Gentiles Grafted – Gentiles Provoke – Gentiles Warned - Abide

To recap where we have been in chapter eleven:

- Verses 1-5 Paul makes the point that God is working amongst the Jews even though the majority of them had/have rejected Jesus as the Messiah. Paul uses himself as an example (as he was a Jew who had received Jesus as Savior); and Paul uses the illustration of God preserving 7,000 prophets in the day when Ahab and Jezebel were killing the prophets, and just as there was a small remnant then, so there is and always has been since Paul's writing. We looked at our modern day remnant, as we looked at the ministry of "Jews for Jesus", and Jews who are recognizing Jesus is the Messiah, and coming to salvation through Him.
- Verses 6-20 Paul speaks about how while the Jews were in majority were rejecting Jesus, many of the Gentiles were receiving Him, and how God was grafting in the Gentiles to Him the True Vine
- Paul also makes the point that as some of the Jews were watching God graft the Gentiles into His body, they were provoked, came to the realization that they were not the all-inclusive people, and many of them came to faith by watching God working His grace amongst the Gentiles. See God's grace, made them realize that it is all grace, and not of works.
- Verses 20-22, God says to us the Gentiles not to get ourselves all puffed-up as if we are something special, we are better than the Jews, but that we see it is all grace, HIS GRACE, and that we must continue to abide in Him, for without Him (totally Him) we can do nothing.

John 15:5 (NKJV) ⁵ *"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."*

Verse 23 – Israel Cut-off / Will be grafted back In

So picking back up in verse 23, as we finish this chapter, Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit will tell us that although the majority of Israel is “cut-off”, there will come a day where all of Israel will be grafted back in again. Just as God has grafted us in (the Gentiles), so too will He be grafting Israel in again.

(Rom 11:23 NKJV) And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.

(Rom 11:24 NKJV) For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

God is in Grafting Mode / Gentiles – Don’t get Haughty

God has a plan for Israel. Although they are “cut off” presently, He is in the grafting mode. And to again make the point to us to not get puffed-up in ourselves Paul uses this illustration of the olive tree and speaks the language of the day (something familiar to them, but not us city-slickers). Paul calls the Gentiles “wild olive branches”, now the fruit of the olive in its wild state is small and worthless and to become prolific the olive must be grafted. In that day, and still today, agriculturally new olive trees are grown by grafting an olive branch from a productive tree to a wild olive tree. The wild olive tree (not pruned and left to itself) did not produce fruit (or worthless fruit) it was just a tree with leaves. Although alive, it was fruitless, and so they took a fruit bearing branch from the cultivated tree and grafted it unto the wild olive tree, and that fruit bearing branch would grow and continue to produce fruit. So what Paul has just said is contrary to nature. They would never take a wild branch and graft it into a cultivated tree in fears that the wild branch would corrupt the cultivated, healthy, fruit producing tree. So seeking to humble his Gentile readers, the apostle Paul compares them to a shoot taken from a wild olive tree (Gk. agriélaios) and grafted onto a cultivated olive tree (kalliélaios; Rom. 11:17, 24); the graft is “contrary to nature” because it does not follow the usual procedure of grafting a good branch to a wild tree.

Sermon in a Word

Before moving on to verse 25 and the culmination of this whole chapter, I love to look at what I call “sermons in a word”, and we have a beautiful sermon in a word, that word “olive tree”.

Jesus is the Olive Tree / Most Valuable Tree / King of the Trees

We are grafted into Jesus, thus Jesus is the Olive Tree. In the Mid-East the olive tree is considered one of the most valuable *TREES in all that land. The peoples regarded the olive as a symbol of beauty, strength, divine blessing and prosperity. It was deemed worthy of being called the king of the trees (Jdg. 9:8), and at coronations its oil was employed as an emblem of sovereignty.

Judges 9:8 (NKJV) ^{8a}*The trees once went forth to anoint a king over them.*
And they said to the olive tree, ‘Reign over us!’

Closer Look – Great Blessing

I believe a closer look at this olive tree and branches reveal a message (sermon) to us today.

Cut Down / Jesus was Cut Down / We Shoot Up / Abide – Sap flows Through Us

The olive tree, if cut down, new shoots spring up from the root. I like that picture as I see the Holy One was cut down, attacked and attacked for the sins of the world, but though chopped down, He was still rooted and able to produce offspring’s. And as we abide in Him, we take on His attributes as His sap flows into us.

John 15:5 (NKJV) ⁵*“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”*

Lived for Hundreds Years / We are Slow to Develop – But Produce Fruit Long Time

The olive tree lives for several hundred years (there are even claims of one tree being 5,000 years old). The olive tree develops slowly, and doesn’t immediately produce fruit (and thus oil). Christian, feeling like you should be producing more fruit, further along in your walk than you

should be, just keep abiding and the fruit will come. Like the olive tree, it is slow to develop, but once it does, it produces fruit for a long-long time, and so too will you.

Best Ground – Rocky & Mountainous / We not Getting Best of World / Jesus Root

I might also add that since the best ground is usually reserved for wheat, olive trees—which can take root in very shallow soil—are planted in particularly rocky soil or on mountain slopes (cf. “Mount of Olives”; e.g., 2 Sam. 15:30; Matt. 21:1). We might feel that we aren’t getting the best of the world because we chose to follow Jesus, stuck on the rocky soil, outcast and misunderstood, all alone on the mountain – that’s ok, for we will grow there, our root system is designed in such a way that we can break through rocky ground, we don’t need all the “soil” (things of the world) to thrive – for Jesus is the Vine and He can break through all things; we need only to abide in Him.

Fruit Gleaned by Beating / Eaten Green – Heated / Oil by Crushing / Foreign Matter

Interesting to see how the fruit was gleaned from the tree, and that was by beating. Olives are harvested along with the grapes in the early fall (Isa. 32:10); the olives are gathered by beating the trees with sticks (Deut. 24:20). Also very interesting, the olives can be eaten while still green, if first heated in lye and soaked in brine to remove the bitterness. The oil was usually extracted from the berries by placing them in a shallow rock cistern and crushing them with a large upright millstone. After being allowed to stand for a time the oil separated itself from foreign matter, and was then stored in jars or rock cisterns. Christian, does that describe your life right now, being whacked with sticks, poked with prongs, heated up, crushed, then set aside? It is all the process of separating from the foreign matter, so as to produce the oil of the Holy Spirit that desires to be released from you.

Tree is Drought and Fire Resistant

An olive tree is highly drought and fire resistant, so you can trust in the One you abide in, regardless of how hot the fire is in your life, nor how dry the desert you may be going through, Jesus is resistant to all of them.

Oil (Fuel – Medicine – Food) / Realize the Power of Your Life to Others

The oil constituted the base of many things as we see in the Scriptures, as it served as a fuel (Mt. 25:3), a medicine (Lk. 10:34; Jas. 5:14) and a food (2 Ch. 2:10). What a picture of who we are to be, what we can and shall be as we abide in Him. We can be a fuel to power each other on as the Holy Spirit flows through us. We can be a fruit that others pick, that provides nourishment and refreshment as they partake of us, as we are abiding in the Vine drawing off of Him. And Christian, not sure if you realize the power of your life (one that is attached to the Vine, abiding in the Vine) and that is that we have a healing power. God will use us to heal broken marriages, to lift people out of depression, to free them from the bonds of sin, to heal them from the ills of this world. The oil used in the Temple was “olive oil” (Zech 4:11), and we tap into that Oil simply by abiding in Him the Vine:

Zechariah 4:6 (NKJV)

⁶ So he answered and said to me:

*“This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel:
‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’
Says the LORD of hosts.*

Temple doors made from Olive Wood

Speaking of the Temple, the doors leading into the Inner Sanctuary of the Solomonic Temple were fashioned from olive wood (1 Ki. 6:23). So we see a dual picture in that Jesus (the Vine of the Olive Tree) it is through entering through Him one may come into the presence of the Father; and secondly as we are attached to Him, branches, we too are to be a place where people can (if you will), enter through and see the presence of God. Oh simply by abiding people will see the presence of God right here, right now, today on this earth. This olive wood is a beautiful wood once it is cut, once it is sanded, and once it is conditioned with oil. Olive wood doesn’t need to be stained, it merely needs its own oil applied to made the beauty and luster come forth. Another interesting point is that the olive tree doesn’t grow that high, for it mostly grows outward with all its branches; thus to make large fixtures (such as doors) they would glue many pieces of the smaller

wood together, then sand them so perfectly they looked like one, then anointed the with oil to bring out its luster and shine of the natural wood. Hence we see a beautiful picture of the Body of Christ as we are being knit and joined together.

1 Kings 6:31–32 (NKJV) ³¹ For the entrance of the inner sanctuary he made doors of olive wood; the lintel and doorposts were one-fifth of the wall. ³² The two doors were of olive wood; and he carved on them figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold; and he spread gold on the cherubim and on the palm trees.

Symbolic – Righteous Man -

The olive-tree enjoyed other symbolic usage among the Hebrews that I think worth mentioning. The virility and fruitfulness of the tree suggested the ideal righteous man (Ps. 52:8; Ho. 14:6), whose offspring was described as ‘olive branches’ (Ps. 128:3). Oh that we would desire to be righteous, totally set apart from this world, to be that piece of wood that is joined together to make His body. May we not let the foreign matter of this world blemish or blotch what God is desiring to do with us. Parents, may we pour every last drop we have into our kids. Parents waver not at call to “settle for less” because “kids will be kids”. No, may we pour all into them, that they too will be a beautiful olive plant, someday growing into maturity, and will have a luster and shine bringing glory to God. I am not living so that I live my children a piece of paper at the end of my life saying “here, it is all yours”; I am living so as to say, “I’ll be waiting, and until then, live for His glory”. Parents, what will be your last word to them!

Psalm 52:6–8 (NKJV)

⁶ The righteous also shall see and fear,
And shall laugh at him, saying,
⁷ “Here is the man who did not make God his strength,
But trusted in the abundance of his riches,
And strengthened himself in his wickedness.”
⁸ But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God;
I trust in the mercy of God forever and ever.

Psalm 128:1–3 (NKJV)

¹ Blessed is every one who fears the LORD,
Who walks in His ways.
² When you eat the labor of your hands,
You shall be happy, and it shall be well with you.
³ Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine
In the very heart of your house,
Your children like olive plants
All around your table.

Feast of Tabernacles / Hang in There / But Until Then / Hold up each Other

Finally, Olive branches were used to construct booths during the Feast of Tabernacles (Ne. 8:15). The Feast of Tabernacles (also called Feast of Booths, and/or the Feast of Ingathering) occurred on the (15th of Tishri) and was the Jewish celebration of God’s deliverance from Egypt and their survival in the 40 year wandering of the wilderness. To celebrate they would for 7 days build temporary houses outside their home, and live in them to remember the wilderness wandering and God’s great provision and protection upon them, and then bringing them into the Promised Land. This Feast was mandatory for attendance. The Feast of Tabernacles is a prophetic picture of the bringing us out of these temporary dwellings in this temporary land, and taking us into our new bodies in our permanent home – heaven, and establishing of His Kingdom. Hang in there beloved, we are almost out of here, but until then, live for His glory. As I look at you, as we look at each other, we see a bunch of olive branches, temporary dwellings, and we are reminded we are joust sojourners who are looking for city not made with hands, but whose builder and maker is God, and may we uphold each other’s branches until we see Him face to face – for we are almost there, and until then may we live for His glory. No retreats, no regrets!

Nehemiah 8:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ and that they should announce and proclaim in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, “Go out to the mountain, and bring olive branches, branches of oil trees, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of leafy trees, to make booths, as it is written.”

Hebrews 11:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; ¹⁰ for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Jesus – Picture of Abiding

A word on abiding, how to abide, Jesus gave us a great picture as we read of how He lived a Spirit-filled life while here on earth, as He abided in the Father. Olive groves were chiefly valued for their potential *OIL resources, although they were also highly esteemed as a shelter from the burning sun and as a place where one could meditate (Lk. 22:39). We saw it was the place that Jesus would go and be with the Heavenly Father. Notice in Luke 22 it says as He was accustomed (which means “a habit, a reoccurrence, a pattern”) and Jesus retreating to the Mount of Olives to pray was His pattern, His habit, His continual reoccurrence, of His life. Oh what a picture as we see the Mount of Olives, and Jesus entering into the Mount of Olives, and settling in for a time of prayer, worship, and fellowship with the Heavenly Father. This picture is for us believers, for us today, come away with Me and Abide with Me the Great I Am says to us today. As Jesus retreated to the Mount of Olives, do the same, head to the High Ground, get away from the world and sit under the Olive Tree, be refreshed, be refocused, be still and know that I am the Lord.

Luke 22:39 (NKJV) ³⁹ *Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him.*

Psalm 46:10–11 (NKJV)

¹⁰ *Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth!*

¹¹ *The LORD of hosts is with us;
The God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah*

Make the Hike / See what Jesus Did

Make the hike, take the trek, you'll be glad you did, we will find what Jesus did, drawing strength for the day, light to see in the darkness, and the understanding of the perfect will of God. How will we fulfill verses one and two of Romans 12, by abiding.

(Rom 12:1 NKJV) *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

(Rom 12:2 NKJV) *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

John 15:5 (NKJV) ⁵ *I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.*

God is in Grafting Mode

God has a plan for Israel. Although they are “cut off” presently, He is in the grafting mode, and blessed we are to be grafted in, and grafted in as olive branches at that.

Abiding in the Vine – Part 4 (11:25-36)

Washington Post Article

Maybe you saw the article in the Washington Post in which the Barna Survey group reported that 53% of the Christians surveyed believe the Bible teaches this statement (and most believe it is actually in the Bible), and that is “that God helps those who help themselves.” Well that is a large number of “believers” who show they do not have a good handle on the Scriptures; but such is not the case with you here today, as I again commend you for your diligence in searching the Scriptures to find what they say, to apply to your life, and the lives of your children. God will greatly reward you as you do, just as He promises us in His infallible and perfect word.

Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV) ⁶ *But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

Beautiful Word / Thomas Watson 1662 – Farewell Sermon

How beautiful this word is, and I am reminded of this story - When the British monarchy was reinstated in 1660, a series of new laws stifled religious liberty. The Act of Uniformity, for example, required all ministers to use The Book of Common Prayer as a format for worship. Many non-Anglicans refused, and in August, 1662, over 2,000 of England’s finest ministers were ejected from their pulpits. Among them, Thomas Watson of Cambridge, who preached his “Farewell Sermon” on August 17, 1662:

I have exercised my ministry among you for sixteen years and have received many demonstrations of love from you. I have observed your reverent attentions to the word preached. I have observed your zeal against error; and as much as could be expected in a critical time, your unity. Though I should not be permitted to preach to you, yet shall I not cease to love and pray for you; but why should there be any interruption made? Where is the crime? Some say that we are disloyal and seditious. Beloved, what my actions and sufferings for his majesty have been is known. I desire to be guided by the silver thread of God’s word and of God’s providence. And if I must die, let me leave some legacy with you before I go from you, some counsel.

First, keep your constant hours every day with God. Begin the day with God, visit God in the morning before you make any other visit; wind up your hearts towards heaven in the morning and they will go the better all the day after! Oh turn your closets into temples; read the scriptures. The two Testaments are the two lips by which God speaks to us; this will make you wise unto salvation. Besiege heaven every day with your prayer, thus perfume your houses.

Watson proceeded to give his listeners 19 more “directions” then he ended, saying: I have many things yet to say to you, but I know not whether God will give me another opportunity. My strength is almost gone. Consider what hath been said, and the Lord will give you understanding in all things.

The Two Lips of God / Perfume this Place

And so it is with great joy and honor that we get to hear today from the precious lips of God; and may He perfume this place as we ask Him to speak to our hearts.

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God’s Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Chapters 1-8)
- God’s Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Israel (Chapters 9-11)
- God’s Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”*

Final Chapter of Trilogy / 8 Glorious Chapters / Then – what about Israel / God not Done

Chapter eleven is the final chapter of the trilogy (9-11) that speaks of the Nation Israel. For eight glorious chapters God through the Apostle Paul has described how God can make a sinner justified, sanctified, and glorified – and it is all through Jesus Christ the Lamb of God of who takes away the sin of the world. So, the natural question would arise, well what about Israel (the

Jewish people) who rejected Jesus as the Messiah, has God cast them out, is He done with His (chosen people), is He now only dealing with the Gentile (non-Jewish) people? Paul makes it real clear right here in verse 1 of chapter 11 – CERTAINLY NOT.

(Rom 11:1 NKJV) I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.

Outline of Israel

- **Romans 9 – Israel’s Past (speaking of their history)**
- **Romans 10 – Israel’s Present (speaking of their blindness to Jesus)**
- **Romans 11 – Israel’s Future (speaking that all will be saved)**

Recap / Paul – Remnant – Gentiles Grafted – Gentiles Provoke – Gentiles Warned - Abide

To recap where we have been in chapter eleven:

- Verses 1-5 Paul makes the point that God is working amongst the Jews even though the majority of them had/have rejected Jesus as the Messiah. Paul uses himself as an example (as he was a Jew who had received Jesus as Savior); and Paul uses the illustration of God preserving 7,000 prophets in the day when Ahab and Jezebel were killing the prophets, and just as there was a small remnant then, so there is and always has been since Paul’s writing. We looked at our modern day remnant, as we looked at the ministry of “Jews for Jesus”, and Jews who are recognizing Jesus is the Messiah, and coming to salvation through Him.
- Verses 6-20 Paul speaks about how while the Jews were in majority were rejecting Jesus, many of the Gentiles were receiving Him, and how God was grafting in the Gentiles to Him the True Vine
- Paul also makes the point that as some of the Jews were watching God graft the Gentiles into His body, they were provoked, came to the realization that they were not the all-inclusive people, and many of them came to faith by watching God working His grace amongst the Gentiles. See God’s grace, made them realize that it is all grace, and not of works.
- Verses 20-24, God says to us the Gentiles not to get ourselves all puffed-up as if we are something special, we are better than the Jews, but that we see it is all grace, HIS GRACE, and that we must continue to abide in Him, for without Him (totally Him) we can do nothing. Last study we looked at the lessons from the Olive Tree.

John 15:5 (NKJV) ⁵ “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

Verse 23 – Israel Cut-off / Will be grafted back In

So picking back up in verse 25, as we finish this chapter, Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit will tell us that although the majority of Israel is “cut-off”, there will come a day where all of Israel will be grafted back in again. Just as God has grafted us in (the Gentiles), so too will He be grafting Israel in again.

Why Important to You? / Plain – Proof - Promise

And why is this important to you?

1. **To make Plain** - First it will make the newspaper and the world events come into a plain and clear understanding as we read about the Middle East.
2. **To Prove Out** - Secondly, the regathering of Israel is possible the most conclusive proof we can share with people that this Bible was written outside of our time domain, and is truly the Inspired Word of God.
3. **To Amplify the Promises** - Thirdly (although I could give 20 more), what God promises to do for Israel by His word, is proof to you and I that God is a God of His Word, and each and every promise he has made to us, He will bring to pass in us.

Israel Blinded in Part – Until the Fullness of the Gentiles Complete

(Rom 11:25 NKJV) For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

In Part – some Being Saved

Verse 25 - In Part – Notice the “in part” for there are still Jews being saved then and for the last 2,000 years just as we have studied in the past few weeks.

Not Ignorant

There are four things we are not to be ignorant of:

- Spiritual Gifts – 1 Corinthians 12
- Spiritual Warfare – 2 Corinthians 2:11 / Ephesians 6
- Eschatology (Future things) – 1 Thessalonians 4 / Revelation
- The Plan of God for Israel – Romans 11

1 Corinthians 12:1 (NKJV) *Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant:*

2 Corinthians 2:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ *lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.*

1 Thessalonians 4:13 (NKJV) ¹³ *But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.*

Romans 16 – Explains what Mystery Is / God saying – I want you to Know This / 2 Lips

Paul tells believing Jews and Gentiles alike that he does not want them to be uninformed of a marvelous mystery. At the end of the epistle Paul defines mystery as being a revelation “which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God” (Rom. 16:26; cf. Eph. 3:5–7). The purest translation (as I read it), God is saying “listen Christian I want you to know these things about Israel, I want you to understand them to a point that they affect the way you live, not just interesting prophecy, but profitable for living – living a life that sees beyond what the world sees and understands. The two lips of God speaking to you and I, telling us His plan, and he tells us His plan so we might come in line with what He is doing in this world. I don’t know if you realize this, but a bunch of just good-ole folks from Maryland know and see things clearer than a bunch of brass and brains do 60 miles from here at a place called the pentagon. I watch and read many military interviews (of Generals and Commander-in-Chief) and as I hear them discuss the Middle East, the various alliances that are being formed, the plans for peace in Israel, I sit in amazement and say wow Lord, they have no clue of what is happening there, their plans are destined for failure, and here we are a bunch of nobodies who see things more clear than the chiefs 60 miles down the road. Ohh, the two-lips of God, speaking to us, showing us things that few can see.

Romans 16:25–27 (NKJV) ²⁵ *Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began ²⁶ but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith—²⁷ to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.*

Much is Given / So we Might Point-Prepare-Proclaim

For whom much is given, much is required, and the Lord wants us to understand these things so they will affect the way we live in this short sojourn on this planet. What is the reason for prophecy, I think this will sound familiar, so that we might “point, prepare, and proclaim” the coming Messiah – Jesus Christ.

Luke 12:48 (NKJV) ⁴⁸ *For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.*

When is Fullness Over

Verse 25 - that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in – What is the fullness of the Gentiles? It’s when the full number of Gentiles are saved. In other words, there is a Gentile somewhere on the earth who is the last one to be saved. When that person acknowledges Jesus Christ as Savior, the fullness of the Gentiles will be complete,

and at that moment, we'll be raptured. So if you're not yet saved—get saved. You could do us all a great favor because you might be the last one!

The Lord will wait until all one hundred are in the flock. He'll leave the ninety-nine and search out the one, and when that last one is brought into the fold, the fullness of the Gentiles concludes and up we go. The times of the Gentiles deals with Jerusalem; the fullness of the Gentiles deals with the last individual coming into the fold and accepting Jesus Christ—which will usher in the Rapture and the completion of the Gentile Age.

Matthew 18:11–12 (NKJV) ¹¹ For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost. ¹² "What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying?"

Times Gentiles Fulfilled – Oliver Discourse

But, let's tie this together with what Jesus said in His Olivet Discourse there in Luke 21. Jesus said Jerusalem would be trodden down until the "times of the Gentiles" are fulfilled. Well in June 1967 Jerusalem was recaptured by Israel during the Six-Day War (June 5-10). Thus, I believe the "times of the Gentiles" were fulfilled in 1967. We are simply in overtime right now, due to God's goodness and patience. If you got saved after 1967, aren't you glad He took us into overtime?

Luke 21:20 - 24 (NKJV) ²⁰ "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near.

²¹ Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her.

²² For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

²³ But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people.

²⁴ And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. **And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.**

All of Israel will be Saved

(Rom 11:26 NKJV) And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

(Rom 11:27 NKJV) For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins."

(Rom 11:28 NKJV) Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers.

Order of Events

So the order of events leading up to "all of Israel being saved" is:

- **Rapture** - First the Church is Raptured, (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)
- **Peace in the Land** - Then the Anti-Christ comes on the scene and brokers a peace agreement with Israel and its enemies (thus why everyone will think the Anti-Christ is God, because only God could bring that to pass). (Daniel 9:27)
- **Earth in Upheaval** - Although there is peace in the Jerusalem, the earth is still suffering tremendous upheavals such as earthquakes, famines, drought (Revelation chapters 6-19), During the great tribulation, the population of the world will be almost decimated. As you read in the book of Revelation, concerning the great tribulation, during the opening of the seals and the judgment that comes as a result of the opening of the seven seals of the scroll, we are told that one-fourth of the earth's population will be destroyed by the plagues that come forth from the four horsemen of the Apocalypse. Later on as further judgment comes, we are told that one-third of the remaining population of the world will be destroyed during that period which comes out to about one-half being destroyed and only a small remnant of the inhabitants of the earth actually surviving the great tribulation. As far as the nation of Israel is concerned. Only one out of three will survive through the great tribulation (Zechariah 13) but that is pretty much a general average concerning the whole earth as far as the book of Revelation as it speaks of the judgments of God so that the population of the earth will be greatly reduced. Only one or less than one in three surviving. So things are not good for the Jews either, even though they have a peace pact going for them in the first 3 ½ years.
- **Mid Point Abomination** - Then at the midway point of the seven-year Tribulation the Anti-Christ will come into the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem and clearly declare himself God and demand the world (and the Jews) worship Him as God. (Dan 9:27 , Matt 24:15)

- **All of Israel Saved** - At the point the light will finally go on in Jerusalem, and they will realize they missed the Messiah, and that Jesus was the Promised the Messiah, and all of Israel will get saved (Romans 11, Zechariah 12)
- **Israel Tucked Away** - God will then tuck them (Israel) away in safety for the remaining 3.5 years of the Tribulation period (Revelation 12:14)

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 (NKJV) ¹³ But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. ¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Daniel 9:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."

(Zechariah 13:8 NKJV) And it shall come to pass in all the land," Says the LORD, "That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, But one- third shall be left in it:

(Zechariah 13:9 NKJV) I will bring the one-third through the fire, Will refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; And each one will say, 'The LORD is my God.'"

Matthew 24:15–16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ "Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), ¹⁶ "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

(Zechariah 12:10 NKJV) "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

(Zechariah 12:11 NKJV) "In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.

(Revelation 12:14 NKJV) But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.

First had to be Regathered

But before all this could happen, Israel had to be regathered back into the land, and she was, just as Ezekiel said she would be. Israel was born in a day (May 14th 1948) just like Isaiah prophesied she would be.

(Ezekiel 36:24 NKJV) "For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land.

Isaiah 66:8 (NKJV)

⁸ Who has heard such a thing?
Who has seen such things?
Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day?
Or shall a nation be born at once?
For as soon as Zion was in labor,
She gave birth to her children.

Regathering of Israel - Greatest Proof Bible Inspired

The regathering of Israel is proof that this Bible was written outside of our time domain. No nation in the history of the world survived longer than 300 – 400 years without a homeland (and kept their national identity. In 70 AD Israel was utterly destroyed by Titus and the 10th Roman Legion, and for 2,000 years (until 1948) Israel kept their national identity even without a homeland, and then in a day, God shouted out to the world, I am the Lord there is none like Me. God said you will know I am God because I can speak things before they happen. Next time someone challenges you that this Bible is a bunch of stories written by man, bring them to the story of regathering of Israel. When they challenge the creation of the world, the plagues of Egypt, Jonah and the great fish, the walls of Jericho – bring them to Israel and say if this is true, then so is the rest.

*Isaiah 46:9-10 (NKJV)*⁹ Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me,¹⁰ Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure.'

Magog Invasion

Very Important note - now somewhere in that timeline I just gave, something called the Magog Invasion happens. In Ezekial 38-39 God says that in the Last Days Magog (Russia), Iran, Libya, Ethiopia, and Turkey will invade Israel during a time they have peace (Ezk 38:11). But, God will preserve them – without any help from other nations. This will happen in a time of Peace in Israel. This battle could happen anytime up to the Mid-Trib (for Israel goes to desert in second half of Trib). Most likely: Peace will only come to Israel after Anti-Christ brokers it for them. Russia (and Allies) comes down sometime during first 3 ½ years. God saves Israel miraculously. Ezk 39:12 the house of Israel will clean up dead bodies for 7months. The ultimate result of this battle is Ezk 39:22 says all Israel will know I am the Lord – revival begins among Jews. This won't happen before the Anti-christ, because it say's Israel will know I am Lord, therefore they wouldn't fall for the Anti-christ. How amazing as we watch the newspaper and see Russia building alliances with these nations, and even just this week bringing the nuclear fuel to start up the Iranian nuclear reactor. Oh the clock is ticking, and tachometer is pegging out, we are watching the Bible unfold before our very eyes (right on the headline news).

*Ezekiel 39:21–23 (NKJV)*²¹ "I will set My glory among the nations; all the nations shall see My judgment which I have executed, and My hand which I have laid on them."²² *So the house of Israel shall know that I am the LORD their God from that day forward.*²³ *The Gentiles shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity; because they were unfaithful to Me, therefore I hid My face from them. I gave them into the hand of their enemies, and they all fell by the sword.*

What about Israel's Nukes?

Very interesting to me is that Israel has nuclear arms (although they don't acknowledge that they do), but it appears won't use them (else they would think it was the nukes that saved them, not God), so I wonder what happens that either would make them be willing to lay down their nukes (is this a condition for the peace treaty), or possible is their some type of commando strike on their nuclear facility, and nuclear submarine. When the Magog Invasion happens, only God will save them, and they will clearly see it.

Who is the Elect

Who is "the election"? When people read Matthew 24, they say, "In the Tribulation God calls the elect from every corner of the earth. Therefore, the church must be in the Tribulation." Wrong. Israel is also called the elect (Isaiah 45:4). The election of God deals both with the church and with the nation of Israel. So in Matthew 24, when God says He's going to bring the elect from all corners, it means He's going to gather His people, the Jewish nation together.

God not done with Israel / Don't buy the Lie – Bless Israel

God is not done with Israel, and neither should we. Christian, don't fall for the lies of the modern day media, the bias slant against Israel. God said I will bless those who bless Israel, and that promise is still true today

*Genesis 12:3 (NKJV)*³ *I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*

(Rom 11:29 NKJV) For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

Not Done Israel / Now with You

God is not done with Israel, nor is He done with the person over there who has fallen, nor is He done with you – for His gifts and calling are irrevocable.

Frederic Handel

He was a has-been, a fossil, a relic, an old fogey ... but as a child, George Frideric Handel had accompanied his father to the court of Duke Johann Adolf. Idly wandering into the chapel, the boy found the organ and started improvising, causing Duke Adolf to exclaim, "Who is this remarkable child?" This "remarkable child" soon began composing operas, first in Italy, then

in London. By his 20s he was the talk of England and the best paid composer on earth. He opened the Royal Academy of Music. Londoners fought for seats at his every performance, and his fame soared around the world.

But the glory passed. Audiences dwindled. His music became outdated. The academy went bankrupt, and newer artists eclipsed the aging composer. One project after another failed, and Handel grew depressed. The stress brought on a case of palsy that crippled some of his fingers. "Handel's great days are over," wrote Frederick the Great, "his inspiration is exhausted." Yet his troubles also matured him, softening his sharp tongue. His temper mellowed, and his music became more heartfelt. One morning Handel received by post a script from Charles Jennens. It was a word-for-word collection of various biblical texts about Christ. The opening words from Isaiah 40 moved Handel: *Comfort ye my people*. ...

On August 22, 1741 he shut the door of his London home and started composing music for the words. Twenty-three days later, the world had Messiah. "Whether I was in the body or out of the body when I wrote it, I know not," Handel later said, trying to describe the experience. Messiah opened in London to enormous crowds on March 23, 1743. Handel led from his harpsichord, and King George II, who was present that night, surprised everyone by leaping to his feet during the Hallelujah Chorus. No one knows why. Some believe the king, being hard of hearing, thought it the national anthem. No matter—from that day audiences everywhere have stood in reverence during the stirring words: Hallelujah! For He shall reign forever and ever.

Nor Done with You

God is not done with Israel nationally, nor is He ever done with one of His children individually. Maybe you feel your days have passed to be used by God, to meet with Him intimately as you once did, that God has put you on a shelf. It is not true, for God's gifts and calling are irrevocable – and thus, you keep abiding, let God be God, and be ready for what He is going to do next in your life.

(Rom 11:30 NKJV) For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience,

(Rom 11:31 NKJV) even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy.

(Rom 11:32 NKJV) For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.

Paul can't contain Himself

Paul can't contain himself, as he started with the question back in chapter 9, he remembers all these things (chapters 9-11) and he is assured and ensured, that all the promises of God are yes and amen – and he goes off in a praise and adulation for the King of Glory, and just how good He is.

(Rom 11:33 NKJV) Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

(Rom 11:34 NKJV) "For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?"

(Rom 11:35 NKJV) "Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?"

(Rom 11:36 NKJV) For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Jeremiah 33

Jeremiah 33 says if you can break my covenant from making morning and night from happening, then you can say that I have broken My covenant with Israel. So when morning and night stop happening, then that is when has stopped God happening with Israel..... thus, it ain't going to happen.

Jeremiah 33:20–21 (NKJV) ²⁰ "Thus says the LORD: 'If you can break My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night, so that there will not be day and night in their season, ²¹ then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levites, the priests, My ministers."

I Taught this in 100% Confidence / Nails Secured It / Now Abide

Oh how I taught this passage in pure confidence, total assuredly, with absolutely no doubt that God is not done with Israel, that He will accomplish all He said He would regarding her, and I can say with 100% that no government, no man, no enemy will be able to overthrow this nation of 5 million who is outnumbered by 300 million Muslim bent on their destruction – No Way, No How! But how often I catch myself saying, why don't I have that same confidence and assuredly in my own life – God's Word, is His Word, sure and true to all He speaks it too. His word to you, His word to me, is:

- He is For Us!
- Nothing shall separate us from the Love of God
- He who began a good work will be faithful to complete it

As true as His word is to Israel, so too is it true to you and to me – Believe it, now live it! His words declare it, the hammer and the nails secured it, now ABIDE in Him!

What has God Spoken about You?

What is it that God has spoken to you, specifically about you? Know that it will come to pass, you just keep abiding. Even if that thing looks totally dead, totally impossible, totally beyond human mind comprehension, believe that God will bring it to pass. Every time you see Israel on the news, remember all the promises of God are yes and amen. So you, just keep abiding!

2 Corinthians 1:20–22 (NKJV) ²⁰ For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us. ²¹ Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, ²² who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

John 15:5 (NKJV) ⁵ *"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.*

Chapter 12

Living Sacrifices (12:1-2)

God's Righteousness & Grace – concerning Practical Christian Living (Chapters 12-16)

Doctrine then Duty / Not Legalism / Result – God You are Awesome – I'll Live for You

Paul began his Epistles dealing with the position we have as believers; that is, he addressed doctrine (what God has done for us) before he dealt with duty (how we are to respond to what He has done for us). Sad to say, the church usually gets that backwards, and the result? A legalistic guilt trip that is very foreign to the nature and message of Jesus Christ. When, however, the concepts of doctrine precede the call to duty, we understand that the work is done, that we are righteous in Christ, we justified, sanctified, and glorified, and that there is nothing more to do to get close to the Lord, or to enjoy the blessing of the Lord. The result? We find ourselves saying, "Awesome! Lord, in light of what You did for me, I want to live sold-out for You." And that is why, after spending eleven chapters talking about man's ruined condition and God's rich salvation, in chapter 12, Paul begins to encourage us to totally set ourselves apart and live for Him.

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Chapters 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Israel (Chapters 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

Present your Body a Living Sacrifice

(Rom 12:1 NKJV) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

(Rom 12:2 NKJV) And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Bold Call / A Call for All

This is as bold a call to total commitment as there is anywhere in the sacred writings. It applies equally to all—to the professor, to the preacher, to the pianist, to high schoolers—to everyone! It is for the entire Church. We must put away any thinking that makes a distinction between clergy and laity—the idea that ministers and missionaries should have 100 percent commitment, but the laity is permitted 75 percent, or 30, or ... The truth is, all believers are called to be totally committed to Christ. It is the everyday Christian living it out every day.

(Rom 12:1 NKJV) I beseech you therefore,

Beseech – I Beg You / Knows from Experience / I have no Problem telling People

Verse 1 - I beseech you therefore brethren - Paul says, "I beseech you." The word is *parakaleō* (παρακαλέω), "I beg of you, please." Paul is speaking from experience; he is speaking from being a person who has presented his body a living sacrifice, and he is saying to all who will hear it – please, please do it, for you will find nothing greater in this world, that dedicating your life fully to the Lord. Yesterday I went to my son's football game, and the whole school is under construction and was a total maze to get through to get to the stadium. We had all kinds of people pointing to us to say go that way, or go this way, each time 100 yards ending in a dead-end. After four times of that I realized everyone who was giving me directions had never actually been to the stadium,

they just thought they knew the way. May I tell you this, I have absolutely no problem sharing this message with anyone. I don't feel uncomfortable telling people to give their life to Christ, nor to tell the believer to live your life for Christ – because I know I am telling them the most freeing and most life fulfilling truth they will ever hear. AND, I am telling them something that I have personally experienced, I have not only been there, I am there, and what I tell them I tell out of personal and wonderful experience. And when I look at the person lost in the maze of this world, I have no problem pouring my heart out to them and pleading for them to follow me to the place I am. Christian, what is it that you are willing to beg someone to do?

Therefore – What is it there For? / The past 11 Chapters – 315 Verses

Verse 1 - I beseech you therefore brethren - Whenever you come to the word “therefore,” stop and ask, what it's there for. It's as if Paul is saying, “In light of the previous eleven chapters, in light of the previous three hundred and fifteen verses, in light of who you are in Christ and what you enjoy because of Christ, I beseech you.”

Recap on the Therefore

Love looking at all the therefore in this book; they are a great recap of where we have been through this glorious book:

Romans 1:24 (NKJV) ²⁴ Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves,

Romans 2:1 (NKJV) Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things.

Romans 2:21 (NKJV) ²¹ You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal?

Romans 2:26 (NKJV) ²⁶ Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision?

Romans 3:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Romans 3:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.

Romans 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all

Romans 4:22 (NKJV) ²² And therefore “it was accounted to him for righteousness.”

Romans 5:1 (NKJV) Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Romans 5:12 (NKJV) ¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

Romans 5:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life.

Romans 6:4 (NKJV) ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Romans 6:12 (NKJV) ¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.

Romans 7:4 (NKJV) ⁴ Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.

Romans 7:12 (NKJV) ¹² Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.

Romans 8:1 (NKJV) There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

Romans 8:12 (NKJV) ¹² Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.

Romans 9:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.

Romans 9:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.

Romans 11:22 (NKJV) ²² Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.

3 Verse Recap

Let me give you a three-verse recap on all these therefore: **Therefore** by the deeds of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight (3:20), but **therefore** we have peace with God through Jesus Christ (5:1), and thus there is **therefore** now no condemnation upon us (8:1). Which leads us to the next words of this 12:1, “therefore by the mercies of God present your bodies as living sacrifices”.

Mercies of God / It is Radical / That Theology the Foundation for Living - Doxology

Verse 1 - by the mercies of God - The basis of this commitment is the mercies of God, as Paul so clearly states in the opening phrase of verse 1: “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy ...” Specifically, Paul is talking about the mercy of God as spelled out in the eleven preceding chapters—God’s mercy to the terribly fallen human race through the provision of his Son. Radically sinful man was radically lost. But God provided a radical righteousness through the radical person of his Son, which made a radical new life and view of history possible. In view of this mercy God calls us to commitment. Remember the massive theology of Romans 1–11 which burst into consummate doxology in the final verse of chapter 11: “For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen”? That very theology is the foundation for committed living. Want to preach a great sermon to an unsaved loved one, here is a four-verse sermon. Want to minister words of comfort to someone who is fearful of current circumstances they are facing in their life, here is a great four-verse message for them.

(Rom 11:33 NKJV) *Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!*

(Rom 11:34 NKJV) *"For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?"*

(Rom 11:35 NKJV) *"Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?"*

(Rom 11:36 NKJV) *For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.*

Verse 1 - that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

Present – Snapshot / Living does jump Off / Need that Photo to Glance At

Verse 1 - that you present your bodies a living sacrifice - The aorist verb tense is used by the writer to present the action of a verb as a “snapshot” event. The verb’s action is portrayed simply and in summary fashion without respect to any process. However, since the sacrifice is living, that leaves plenty of opportunities for the sacrifice to jump off the altar. What I like here is the word-picture of every day here is a “snapshot” photo of me standing in front of the altar saying “today Lord I offer myself to You”. How I need to glance at that picture throughout the day, remind myself of the commitment I made to Him earlier in the day “I will be a living sacrifice”.

Commitment seen in Language / Technical Term – Ritual of Sacrifice / Totally Consumed

Verse 1 - that you present your bodies a living sacrifice - The totality of the commitment comes dramatically to us through the language of sacrifice. The Greek translated “to offer” is a technical term used for the ritual presentation of a sacrifice. “Your bodies,” referring to more than skin and bones, signifies everything we are—our totality. “Sacrifices” refers to the offering is totally consumed. Old Testament sacrifices pervade the picture—total sacrifice.

Holy – Set Apart / Acceptable – Well Pleasing

Verse 1 - holy, acceptable to God – Holy means to be set-apart, not to be common, not to be like everything else (talk more about that in verse 2), and acceptable means “to be well pleasing”, and thus this verse is saying set yourself aside and apart for God, be well pleasing to Him, a sweet aroma, for this is what is reasonable.

Reasonable – Logical / After 11 Chapters of Doctrine – Nothing Else makes Sense

Verse 1 - which is your reasonable service - Not only is commitment to be total, it is also logical. I am glad I first memorized this in the King James Version which more accurately represents the last phrase of verse 1, "... which is your reasonable service," rather than the NIV's "which is your spiritual worship." It is correct in maintaining that the Greek root idea of the word logikos is "logical." For Paul, true worship in offering ourselves to God is reasonable or logical because it is consistent with a proper understanding of the truth of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. Total commitment is the only rational course to take when you really see who God is. Nothing else makes any sense.

Back Verse 1 – I Beg / Not Command – Free Will – Totally Given Over / Bought Price

Back to verse 1, Paul says I beseech you, I beg of you, do this. It is not a command, it is your free will choice, but oh when you make it your free-will choice to be totally given over to Christ what a life you will live. To not live in sin has been more than covered in our prior chapters, but this goes way above that, it is about laying our whole lives down and saying Lord do with me as you will

1 Corinthians 6:19–20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Summation 11 Chapters – God is For Us / Has our Best Interest in Mind

I can summarize 11 chapters for us as believers (in 5 verses – 8:29-33), that God is for us, nothing shall separate us from His love, and therefore we can totally entrust our lives to Him and say, here is my life, not my will, but your will be done.

Romans 8:29–33 (NKJV) ²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰ Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. ³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? ³³ Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

He knows End from Beginning / Why Want anything Else / He Died – He is the Husband

He is the God who knows the end from the beginning, why would we want to do anything else but put our life into His hands. He died for us, laid His life down for us; Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the Church, as He gave His life for her. Well then if Jesus is the Husband, and we are the Bride, then wives submit to their husband. See here is the thing husbands, let your wife know she is loved and secure, and she will follow you to the ends of the earth (she'll even let you lead – she may even say my husband isn't the sharpest tool in the shed, but he loves me this I am sure, and therefore I'll follow him to the ends of the earth). Let a woman become insecure in the husbands love, and she will continual question the surety, the security, the foundation of the marriage, and she will feel that she has to help lead (or take the lead) because she questions how committed you are to her, and fears you won't lead according to looking out for her best interest (and that of the family). But again, oh when she sees and knows the husband makes his decisions on his love for her, his desire to see she receives the best, she will follow to the ends of the earth. I've sat through plenty of marriage counseling issues, and not once has the wife ever said I'm really struggling in this marriage because he "loves me like Christ loves the church". Now, should not this be the same for us? Have we seen, have we recognized, have we fully comprehended His great love for us? If so, then we should have no problems following Him to the end of the earth. Oh Lord you died for me, you poured out Your last drop of blood for me, I will follow You to the ends of the earth trusting you every step of the way, even in the times where I can't see the path, but I continue on because I can feel the warmth of your hand holding mine.

Ephesians 5:22–28 (NKJV) ²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. ²⁴ Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. ²⁸ So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.

Presenting our Bodies / Verb Tense – Snapshot / My Day – Liquid Love

We said the word present in its verb tense was a snapshot of an event, but as living sacrifices, we can climb off the altar as our free-will always us, and I have done so many a times in my life; but I want to tell you that I believe there is a place where we make that first stance, commitment, offer to the Lord. Everything needs a beginning, and I believe presenting ourselves as living sacrifices is such a place, a place where we say “Lord I’ve never really have done this before, but I today, fully submit my life to You, give you the free-reign in my life, to do with me as You will”. I am beyond “thanks for saving me, today I am saying Lord Your will is my will”. I remember my moment, close to 20 years ago. I had been saved several months at the most, and I was enjoying the knowledge of salvation, that I was saved from my sin, washed in the blood, adopted into the family, and heaven bound when life expired. However I wasn’t totally in agreement with all the “words” of God, I thought some were a little narrow, maybe outdated, a little extreme, and thus for several months I tried to live a double life, and as I have said before that for those several months that only people who knew I was saved was me and the Lord. But the Lord was wearing me down, He kept watering me with His word, revealing His love and glory to me daily, and I was reaching a point that I knew I had to make a definitive statement to Him about who was going to lead my life. And I remember it like it was yesterday, for what a moment what a moment it was, not sure I had anything like since, but I remember laying in my bed in Cocoa Beach Florida, wrestling through this issue, and I finally said – “Lord, that is it, Your Word is now my way, I desire to follow you completely”. And the best I can describe that moment was, it was like liquid love just washing over me, and over me. It was the

Christian have you had that Moment

Christian, if you have never had a moment where you say “Lord I am totally yours, your ways are my ways, lead me and I will follow”, then you need a time where you completely and entirely “present yourself to the Lord”. Now you may or may not have a moment as I did, whether you or don’t won’t diminish or solidify the fact that you have.

(Rom 12:2 NKJV) And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Don’t be Conformed / NIV / the Big 3 / Believers are the Minority in this World

Verse 2 - And do not be conformed to this world – I like the NIV translation of this verse. What does this negative command, “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world,” mean? “Pattern” comes from the root word schema, from which we derive “scheme,” and “world” should be translated “age,” referring to the passing age (cf. 1 Corinthians 7:31; Galatians 1:4; and 1 John 2:17), which is dominated by Satan. Thus Paul’s words can be paraphrased, “Don’t be conformed to the schemes of this passing evil age.” Satan has all kinds of tricks, he is the master of his trade (deception), and the world is blindly following along because it is truly what they want (the Big 3 – Lust of Flesh, Lust of Eyes, Pride of Life). The believer is the minority, and thus needs to continually be realizing all that we see the world following after is being driven by the master deceiver.

Romans 12:2 (NIV) ² Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

2 Corinthians 4:4 (NIV) ⁴ The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

1 Corinthians 7:31 (NKJV) ³¹ and those who use this world as not misusing it. For the form of this world is passing away.

Ephesians 2:2 (NKJV) ² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,

1 John 2:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.

That Deception made it into Church

Those deceptions have made their way into the church, as many churches are conforming to the world, rather than trying to transform it. Many churches trying to be culturally relevant in order to attract people and that is utterly ridiculous because we are clearly told here not to do it. Hey Christian, doesn't matter what this Christianity is doing over here, it is what God is calling you to – which is totally set apart for Him, not like anything this world has to offer – rather.....(part b).

Positive Command / Metamorphosis / Jesus Transformed – Inner Essence

Verse 2 - but be transformed by the renewing of your mind - Then comes the positive command: "... but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." Again the language is graphic.

"Transformed" is "metamorphosed" in the original Greek, and is the word from which we get metamorphosis, the change from one form to another, as in the transformation of the caterpillar to the butterfly. But the full meaning is even richer, as the other three uses of the word in the New Testament indicate. In Matthew 17:2 and Mark 9:2 it is used to describe the transfiguration of Christ—when the Lord's glorious inner essence was allowed to show through his body so that his face radiated like the sun and his clothing was white with light. We experience such transfiguration in Christ. As Paul says in 2 Corinthians 3:18 (using the very same word). When we are transformed, our mind thinks as Christ's, and not the ways of the world, and that is pure power for living.

Matthew 17:2 (NKJV) ² and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Philippians 2:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

Transformation – from inside Out (what is already inside)

The transformation is from the inside out, like the cocoon breaking forth into the butterfly. Grasp this, what breaks forth from us is what is already in us, and it just needs to be let out, broken through, and that is "Christ in Us", the Spirit of the Living God,

Prove – to Know Intimately

Verse 2 - that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God - The word translated "prove" in Romans 12:2 is a word not of academics, but of intimacy—as in Genesis 4:1, where Scripture records that Adam "knew" Eve. This doesn't mean Adam knew about Eve intellectually. It means he knew her intimately. And this is what Paul is declaring to us. You can know God's will intimately.

Good-Acceptable-Perfect / Cumulative

Verse 2 - that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God – Some think that there are three levels a Christian can be at concerning God's will for their life, the "it is good", you aren't in sin, but there is better; there is "it is acceptable", but it is not perfect! Hey go for the perfect they will say. I really don't think so, because the word "and" is there in the original, and it is an "adding, cumulative" word (meaning 1 plus 1 plus 1 equals 3). It is not being one of three things, but being all three things.

- **Good** – means, this good, it is profitable, it is beneficial.
- **Acceptable** – means well pleasing. The Father is well pleased with what you are doing, it warms His heart, brings pleasure to His being – that's my boy (or girl).
- **Perfect** – means mature, complete. The Lord wants us to be mature, complete in Him, not looking to the world to bring us any satisfaction, but finding it all in Him, for that is the only place a person ever can, because this world will always leave us lacking and wanting more.

Want to Know God's Will for your Life? / This is It

Want to know what God's will is for your life, know it intimately and personally without a doubt of what God desires for your life? This is God's will for your life, that you be transformed and the

inner beauty of Christ breaks forth from you. Everything, is just details (of where you work, live, marry, minister, etc).

Conclusion

How do we apply this, how do we do such things and not conforming to this world, and having our mind transformed, I believe we can have a good outline for that found in the 5 sacrificial offerings prescribed for the Nation Israel. Mind you, although this letter was written to the “people in Rome”, the majority of those people were actually Jewish people who got saved, thus we the word “living sacrifice” spoken, visualization would have been flashing through their minds of the 5 sacrifices they would have been making through their life before receiving the Messiah.

For every sacrifice three parties were involved, the offerer (the person), the priest, and God. All a picture of man only able to approach God through an intercessor (the priest who was a picture of Christ). So it still applies today as our connection to the Father is through Jesus Christ who we abide in.

1.) Burnt Offering

In the Burnt Offering the sacrifice was totally consumed, nothing was left, it was a sign of total dedication and consecration to the Lord. The person, who so desired, could bring the offering in the morning and then again in the evening. I like the picture of this, that every morning we say Lord I am totally dedicated to you this day (for the whole day), and then again in the evening we say it again. The whole body, not just portions, but the whole body! Lord today I totally give you my mind (thoughts), my eyes (look at), ears (hear), tongue (say), hands (do), feet (go), heart (desire), soul (worship). Every day to the altar presenting our whole being, and then having that snapshots for the day, to remember back on. We kind of live two segments of life don't we? We have that day activity (work, child rearing, etc), and then the evening when have our free time. How important it is that we dedicate and consecrate both segments of our life. That who we are in the day, is who we are in the evening (especially when no one is looking – click, click). Take that snapshot in the morning, and again in the evening before the sun goes down.

(1) **Burnt Offering** (olah, Heb.): a. Sweet aroma; b. Voluntary.

Scripture References

Lev. 1:3–17; 6:8–13.

Purpose

(1) To propitiate for sin in general (1:4).

(2) To signify complete dedication and consecration to God; hence it is called the “whole burnt offering.”

Consisted of

According to wealth:

(1) Bull without blemish (1:3–9);

(2) Male sheep or goat without blemish (1:10–13);

(3) Turtledoves or young pigeons (1:14–17).

God's Portion

Entirety burned on the altar of burnt offering (1:9), except the skin (7:8).

Priests' Portion

Skin only (7:8).

Offerer's Portion

None.

Prophetic Significance

Signifies complete dedication of life to God:

(1) On the part of Christ (Matt. 26:39–44; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42; Phil. 2:5–11).

(2) On the part of the believer (Rom. 12:1, 2; Heb. 13:15).

2.) Grain/Meal Offering

The Meal Offering always came with the Burnt Offering, and it signified one's thanksgiving to the Lord for His goodness and provision to them. The person would give portions back to God from what He had provided for them from their labors of the land. This offering accompanied their tithes unto the Lord. Yes Christian, your giving unto the Lord will reveal to you how much you have dedicated yourself to the Lord, and how much you trust that He is able to provide for you. I am not just giving you my body Lord, but my possessions too, I give all to You, and trust fully in You.

(2) **Grain Offering** (minhah, Heb.): a. Sweet aroma; b. Voluntary.

Scripture References

Lev. 2:1–16; 6:14–18; 7:12, 13.

Purpose

The grain offering accompanied all the burnt offerings; it signified one's homage and thanksgiving to God.

Consisted of

Three types:

(1) Fine flour mixed with oil and frankincense (2:1–3);

(2) Cakes made of fine flour mixed with oil and baked in an oven (2:4), in a pan (2:5), or in a covered pan (2:7);

(3) Green heads of roasted grain mixed with oil and frankincense (2:14, 15).

God's Portion

Memorial portion burned on the altar of burnt offering (2:2, 9, 16).

Priests' Portion

Remainder to be eaten in the court of the tabernacle (2:3, 10; 6:16–18; 7:14, 15).

Offerer's Portion

None.

Prophetic Significance

Signifies the perfect humanity of Christ:

(1) The absence of the leaven typifies the sinlessness of Christ (Heb. 4:15; 1 John 3:5).

(2) The presence of oil is emblematic of the Holy Spirit (Luke 4:18; 1 John 2:20, 27).

3.) Sin Offering

The Sin offering was brought when a person sinned against God. How important for us as living sacrifices to always remember what He has done for us. Eleven chapters of Doctrine, of His greatness and great love for us, the washing away of our sin through the blood of the innocent Lamb. We need to daily come and remember that price that was paid. I'll tell you what it will do for you, it will keep in the forefront of your mind the offense that sin is (even if you have been forgiven) and it will keep you from sin throughout the day. 1 John 1:9

1 John 1:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

(3) **Sin Offering** (hattat, Heb.): a. Non-sweet aroma; b. Compulsory.

Scripture References

Lev. 4:1–5:13; 6:24–30.

Purpose

To atone for sins committed unknowingly, especially where no restitution was possible.

Note: Num. 15:30, 31: The sin offering was of no avail in cases of defiant rebellion against God.

Consisted of

- (1) For the high priest, a bull without blemish (4:3–12).
- (2) For the congregation, a bull without blemish (4:13–21)
- (3) For a ruler, a male goat without blemish (4:22–26).
- (4) For a commoner, a female goat or female lamb without blemish (4:27–35).
- (5) In cases of poverty, two turtledoves or two young pigeons (one for a sin offering, the other for a burnt offering) could be substituted (5:7–10).
- (6) In cases of extreme poverty, fine flour could be substituted (5:11–13; cf. Heb. 9:22).

God's Portion

- (1) Fatty portions to be burned on the altar of burnt offering (4:8–10, 19, 26, 31, 35).
- (2) When the sin offering was for the high priest or congregation, the remainder of the bull was to be burned outside the camp (4:11, 12, 20, 21).

Priests' Portion

When the sin offering was for a ruler or commoner, the remainder of the goat or lamb was to be eaten in the tabernacle court (6:26)

Offerer's Portion

None.

Prophetic Significance

Prefigures the fact that in His death:

- (1) Christ was made sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21);
- (2) Christ suffered outside the gates of Jerusalem (Heb. 13:11–13).

4.) Trespass Offering

The Trespass Offering was offered to cover unintentional sins against the Lord, but secondly when a person sinned against another person. To be a living sacrifice God is calling us to make peace, reconciliation within the body, and when we do He is well pleased, and it is a good thing to have unity in the body.

Psalm 133:1–3 (NKJV)

- ¹ Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
For brethren to dwell together in unity!
- ² It is like the precious oil upon the head,
Running down on the beard,
The beard of Aaron,
Running down on the edge of his garments.
- ³ It is like the dew of Hermon,
Descending upon the mountains of Zion;
For there the LORD commanded the blessing—
Life forevermore.

Matthew 5:23–24 (NKJV) ²³ Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

- (4) **Trespass Offering** ('asham, Heb.): a. Non-sweet aroma; b. Compulsory.

Scripture References

Lev. 5:14–6:7; 7:1–7.

Purpose

To atone for sins committed unknowingly, especially where restitution was possible.

Consisted of

(1) If the offense were against the Lord (tithes, offerings, etc.), a ram without blemish was to be brought; restitution was reckoned according to the priest's estimate of the value of the trespass, plus one-fifth (5:15, 16).

(2) If the offense were against man, a ram without blemish was to be brought; restitution was reckoned according to the value plus one-fifth (6:4–6).

God's Portion

Fatty portions to be burned on the altar of burnt offering (7:3–5).

Priests' Portion

Remainder to be eaten in a holy place (7:6, 7).

Offerer's Portion

None.

Prophetic Significance

Foreshadows the fact that Christ is also our trespass offering (Col. 2:13).

5.)Peace Offering

And then fifthly there was the Peace Offering, also called the Fellowship Offering. It was of total free-will, it was simply the pouring out of one's heart of saying I just come here to be with You, to meet with You, to give you thanks and praise. There was nothing else to it, not about getting, but giving. Oh, Christian, may we make it to the Peace Offering daily, not anything about I have to have this morning devotion, I have to read this Bible and so many chapters, I have to come to Church, simply saying Lord I love, You are so good to me, I just want to sit at your feet and hang around with You in the quietness of this moment, without interruption, without having to run out somewhere, just simply having sweet fellowship with You. I'll tell you what I like to do, I like to fast for a day (or maybe a meal), and then break my fast by going out to lunch with the Lord. Lord, let's go grab a burger together, open your word and read it together, to just talk and enjoy each other. I like going for walks with the Lord, sometimes that is on my treadmill, where I am just listen to worship, chewing on a promise, just simply enjoying Him – not out of obligation, but thanks. Hey Living Sacrifices, make time for the Peace Offering.

(5) **Peace Offering** (shelem, Heb.): a. Sweet aroma; b. Voluntary.

Scripture References

Lev. 3:1–17; 7:11–21, 28–34.

Purpose

The peace offering generally expressed peace and fellowship between the offerer and God; hence it culminated in a communal meal.

There were three types:

(1) Thank Offering: to express gratitude for an unexpected blessing or deliverance.

(2) Votive Offering: to express gratitude for a blessing or deliverance granted when a vow had accompanied the petition.

(3) Freewill Offering: to express gratitude to God without regard to any specific blessing or deliverance.

Consisted of

According to wealth:

- (1) From the herd, a male or female without blemish (3:1–5);
- (2) From the flock, a male or female without blemish (3:6–11);
- (3) From the goats (3:12–17).

Note: Minor imperfections were permitted when the peace offering was a freewill offering of a bull or a lamb (22:23).

God's Portion

Fatty portions burned on the altar of burnt offering (3:3–5).

Priests' Portion

Breast (wave offering) and right thigh (heave offering; 7:30–34).

Offerer's Portion

Remainder to be eaten in the court by the offerer and his family:

- a. Thank offering—to be eaten the same day (7:15).
- b. Votive and freewill offerings—to be eaten the first and second day (7:16–18).

Note: This is the only offering in which the offerer shared.

Prophetic Significance

Foreshadows the peace which the believer has with God through Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:1; Col. 1:20)

In Summary:

The five sacrifices and offerings were symbolic. Their design was to allow the truly penitent and thankful worshiper to express faith in and love for God by the observance of these rituals. When the heart was not penitent and thankful, God was not pleased with the ritual (cf. Amos 5:21–27). The offerings were burnt, symbolizing the worshiper's desire to be purged of sin and sending up the fragrant smoke (sweet aroma) of true worship to God. The countless small details required within the rituals was to teach exactness and precision that would extend to the way the people obeyed the moral and spiritual laws of God and the way they revered every facet of His Word. A life totally dedicate, set apart, for Him!

The 5 Offerings

- The Burnt Offering
- The Meal offering
- The Sin Offering
- The Trespass Offering
- The Peace Offering

God – Building Himself a Body

Romans 12:3-8

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Chapters 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Israel (Chapters 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Doctrine – Duty / Present our Bodies – Knowing He is For Us

After eleven glorious chapters of doctrine (all that God has done for us: justification, sanctification, and glorification) we come to duty (what is our logical responses to all that He has done for us), and that is (verses 1-2), that we present our bodies as living sacrifices to Him. Where we say God you are utterly and amazingly in love with me, you have nothing but the best for me because You are for me, and therefore who can come against, therefore Lord I know Your will is the best for me, and I present myself to You, I give you my life as a living sacrifice.

(Rom 12:1 NKJV) *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

(Rom 12:2 NKJV) *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

What is God Doing with Living Sacrifices? – Making Himself a Body

Well what is God doing with all these living sacrifices; He is making himself a body, creating Himself a family. These living sacrifices are being fitted together to make up the spiritual body of Christ.

Ephesians 2:21 (NKJV) ²¹ *in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,*

1 Peter 2:5 (NKJV) ⁵ *you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

God desires a Strong – Healthy – Vibrant Body / Carry Dbl Load – go the 2nd Mile

Well as it is your desire, so too is it God's desire, to have a strong body, a healthy body, a vibrant body. The Lord doesn't just want a body to get through life with, but He wants a body that can go the extra mile, carry double the load and then some, and leap buildings in a single bound.

God gives Gifts to the Body / YOU ARE THE GIFT / I Give you as a Gift

To do that, God gives gifts to the body (the Church), and listen very carefully Christian, YOU ARE THE GIFT! People are often confused by saying/thinking, I have this gift or that gift, and that is true, but the whole and sole intention of the Lord is that "YOU ARE THE GIFT". God says to you and He says to me, "I give you a gift, I give you as a Gift to My people".

Every Person in this room has a Gift

I will say it often through this study, every person in this room has a gift (at least one, most likely more), and every person in this room is a gift. So let's start hearing what the Lord has to say to us today.

Our Gifts according to Grace

(Rom 12:3 NKJV) *For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.*

All is a Gift From God – Even our Faith / Continually weaves – Stay Humble

It is all a gift from God, and even faith is a gift, for without God giving that too us we would have never have received Jesus for ourselves. Paul continually weaves through this Book the word that we are to be and stay humble, staying thankful, not being puffed-up, but recognizing that apart from Him not only can we not do anything, we are nothing. Humility will keep us abiding, and it is all about abiding in Him. The immediate gift quencher, is pride.

John 15:5-7 (NKJV) ⁵ "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷ If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

A Measure of Faith – A Standard of Faith / Compare Our self to Christ

Verse 3 - as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith – A very misquoted and passage based on the modern translations (saying a measure) but as the great linguist Dr. Cranfield has shown from his research of classical sources, "measure" should really be translated "standard." The idea is that God has allotted to each believer a standard of faith by which to measure himself—and that standard is Christ. Once we compare ourselves to the standard "Christ" we see ourselves, and others, in the correct perspective.

Cranfield explains:... to estimate oneself according to the standard which consists of one's faith in Christ is really to recognize that Christ Himself in whom God's judgment and mercy are revealed is the One by whom alone one must measure oneself and also one's fellow-men.

(Rom 12:4 NKJV) For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,

(Rom 12:5 NKJV) so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

1st Place Manifested (this Life Laid Down – Living Sacrifices) / In the Body of Christ

The first place we should be manifesting this "laid down" life, this "living sacrifices" should be in the Body of Christ. Our body offered up entirely; my hands, my feet, my ears, my eyes, my tongue, my heart, mind and soul – should manifest itself in the Body of Christ.

80% Time – Church is Local Body / Change way Read this Passage / CC Merritt Island

Although I haven't done an extensive study on this, it appears to me that 80% of the times that the word "church" is used in the scriptures, it is referring to a local congregation. Put in that context, that changes greatly as I read this passage, as I see the calling for us is to be using our gifts here within our body (this local church) and ministering one to another. I remember when I moved up to this area some 10 years ago and I was attending a local Calvary Chapel (I was there about 5 years before I stepped out to start the work here in Anne Arundel County). Well I had spent the majority of my Christian life at CC Merritt Island; I had a huge heart connection there. I had done like 2 mission trips with them just in the first 12 months after I had moved here. Well the CC in Baltimore was going to Ireland, and they were talking about the trip one Sunday from the pulpit, and the Lord spoke to my heart so clearly, He said something along the lines of "Ray, support this ministry". The Lord need not say more for that statement came with all the application, as I understood what He was saying in that He wanted me to minister and invest in the church I was now calling home, to plug my heart into that church and the people of that church, for it was there that I could directly impact lives the most effectively, for they lived near me, I saw them at church on Sunday, during the midweek, I could meet with them immediately if needed. Well I can tell you that when you respond to God's prompting, He will not leave you lacking. After service I went up to the pastor and said, hey I just wanted to let you know that I am signing up for this mission trip; he then responded and said great, I want you to organize and lead the whole trip for me. And that I did for the next 6 years as I was that church's mission's coordinator. Christian, look around you, there is a room of people all in need of a gift, and you are that gift, will you give yourself to them, will you be the gift they need so that they may grow and mature deeper and deeper in the Lord? God has given you gifts, you are the gift!

Greatness is within Your Reach

Greatness is within reach of everyone, just start giving yourself as a gift to others. He who wants to be great in the kingdom, becomes the servant of all. You have a gift, you are a gift.

Mark 9:35 (NKJV) ³⁵ And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, *"If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."*

Not all have Same Gift / So we may Appreciate Each Other / I appreciate Set-up Crew

Verse 4 - but all the members do not have the same function – now we don't all have the same gifts, and I thank the Lord for that. God has designed it as such so we all have to rely on someone else, so we can then have a great appreciation for them. I so greatly appreciate the people that have the gifts of helps, because every week we come in here there are chairs for us to sit in, coffee for us to drink, a projector set-up to aid us in our study. I am ever so appreciative of those with the gift of worship, for I love coming here and having our time of worship. I am ever so thankful for those with the gift of encouraging for don't we all need that, and those with the gift of giving, children's church, administration, and the list goes on and on. And that is only in the walls of the church, how we could go on and talk of the gifts that happen when we leave here, and how the body ministers one to another. It is not only to make the body move forward, but the differing gifts are so we appreciate one another, and see how much we all need each other.

Master Tool Convention / Appreciate each other when Recognize Uniqueness of Gift

I am reminded of the story of the Master Tool Convention. Brother Hammer had been appointed to preside over the "Master Tool Convention".

- Brother Screwdriver objected saying "Brother Hammer you are always too loud to preside over this meeting, you are always driving home your point, and continually nailing people; and I call for your resignation immediately".
- Brother Hammer says well Brother Screwdriver all you ever do is go around and around in circles.
- Maybe so said Brother Screwdriver but at least I am not like Brother Plane whose work is so surface and shallow, in fact what right does he have even being here.
- Brother Plane said well if you are going to kick me out, then what about Brother Ruler who always thinks he is right, and measuring everyone to his standard.
- Well Brother Ruler objected and said what about Brother Pliers, he needs to get a grip.
- Well at least I don't rub people the wrong way said Brother Pliers as his pointed at Brother Sandpaper.

Just then the Master Craftsman walked in, and as He used each tool at the perfect time, He made an object of great beauty. How often the Body of Christ misses out how the Master Craftsman has created each tool for a specific job, so that He might create objects of beauty. How appreciative we become when we step back and see the big picture, the work the Lord is doing, and we see how that person over there with that gift (that I don't have) that if it wasn't for him, if it wasn't for her, the project would never come together, and would never have the beauty it does without them. I am ever so appreciative of the diversity of gifts each of us has.

(Rom 12:6 NKJV) Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;

(Rom 12:7 NKJV) or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching;

(Rom 12:8 NKJV) he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Gift of Prophecy / Forth-telling / Edification – Exhortation – Comfort / Prophetess Merritt

Verse 6 – Prophecy (if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith) - Prophecy primarily means "forth-telling"—expounding the Word, declaring truth. The Word burns within the heart of those with the gift of prophecy. They know what should be shared and feel a pressing need to speak out. The gift of prophecy (is described for us in 1 Cor 14:3) is that of edification (the building up of another), exhortation (means "a calling to one's side". The Greek word is "*paraklesis*" it is the same word referring to the Holy Spirit coming along side of us – so what a wonderful gift to have in that a person is exercising in the same realm as the Holy Spirit is), and

comfort (of calming and consoling). I think there is that “set apart” ministry (the office of the prophet – Ephesians 4) where a person has this unique and special gifting of the Holy Spirit upon them and they stand up and speak the word of God through a special and unique anointing at a special and unique time. I knew a prophetess down at Merritt Island, and it was pretty wild. During times of worship (always at the proper time – never disrupting the service or causing confusing) she would speak the word of the Lord at it was beautiful. She spoke words that would minister to everyone who had an ear to really listen to what was being said. But I believe that each and every believer has this gift of prophecy at the individual level, because this is so much at the heart and core Jesus, and Jesus lives in us. But God raises up a person or persons who have an overflowing of this gift to minister in the local body.

1 Corinthians 14:3 (NKJV) ³ But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.

Ministry – Serving / They are always Looking/Asking what Needs to be Done

Verse 7 – Ministry (ministry, let us use it in our ministering) – Ministering simply means serving, helper. That is the person who is always looking around and asking themselves, what needs to be done. Ahh, I see a spill over there I’m going to go get the mop before someone falls. Oh, that light bulb is out, people won’t be able to see their Bibles clearly and could miss out during this Bible study. They are always on the lookout for needs to be done so that others may benefit.

Teaching – Defining Truth / Makes Word Understandable & Applicable / Quote - Meal

Verse 7 – Teaching (he who teaches, in teaching) - A teacher defines truth. A prophet might share sporadically; but a teacher shares systematically. A teacher takes truths and breaks them down into understandable pieces, and how to apply them to a person’s life. Lots of people can quote the Scripture, but a teacher turns it into a meal.

Exhortation – Come on Brother You can Do It

Verse 8 – Exhortation (he who exhorts, in exhortation) – Come on now brother, sister, keep going don’t quit now! Or, hey brother, I just need to tell you, what you are doing is not of the Lord. Giving a perfect word at a perfect time. How often a person gives a word of exhortation and you say that came right at the perfect moment, it was right on for what I needed to hear in my life’s situation.

Giving / Tithe – Skimp / Keeps the Church afloat / Refer back to 90% time Church is Local

Verse 8 – Giving (he who gives, with liberality) – Some people tithe, some people skimp, so to balance that out God gives the gift of giving to a person, who then become the gift, so that the church/body can keep moving. Without finances the rent doesn’t get paid, missionaries don’t get sent, those with needs within the body aren’t supplied. I refer you back to my statement that 80% of the time God is speaking about the Church, He speaks about the local body.

Leadership / People want to Serve – Just looking for someone to Show them How

Verse 8 – Leadership (he who leads, with diligence) – I always say, the major majority of people want to serve, but just don’t know where to begin, how to get involved. So God gives to the church people with the gift of leadership, and they then become the gift, and they say to the people “all you who want to do this follow me!”

Mercy / Tremendous Gift / Hospital – Traumatic – Heartbreak / Jesus in the Flesh

Verse 8 – Showing Mercy (he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness) – what a tremendous gift to have. The gift of mercy, those who care for people in the hospital, those who sympathize with those going through a traumatic relational experience, or those who cry with those experiencing the heartbreak of divorce have the gift of mercy. The people with this gift are Jesus in the Flesh; I know God is here a person says, but I still want someone to hug me, to hold my hand, for I am hurting. When I am hurting, these are the people I want around me.

Again – We all have these “spirituals” / God gives some Abundance / Supply - Example

Again, I believe we all have each of these “spirituals” within us (for they are all wrapped up in Jesus who lives in us), and we should all exercise these as believers in our church, in our homes,

in other ministries; but God gives an extra supply (as a gift) to certain people so that He might fully supply His body, so that it grows, matures, is healthy, is able to carry loads and burdens, and continually is in motion (not stagnate), and always moving forward. I also believe God gives some this extra supply (abundance) so we can look at them as living examples and go, “ok, now I see how I am to exercise that in my life”. Living Examples they are for us to see!

Each Gift – Told how to Use It – Told to Use It / Given the Gift – To Become the Gift / Use

Notice in each mention of the gift, the person is told how to use the gift, and really at the same time they are being told – use the gift! I’ve given you a gift so that you might become the gift, now use the gift. Don’t wait until later to use it, use it and use it now! As God says I love you so much I gave you “Chris” so that you might express your heart in worship, I gave you “Phil” so that you might grow in your understanding of me, and now I give “You” to do the same in their life, as I give you as a gift to them.

What is Your Gift? / Not Complicated / What are You Doing – What do You Desire

What is my gift you may ask, which one of these is mine you may ask? It is not as complicated as you may think it is. Ask yourself two things, what am I currently doing, and what is continually on my heart? Many times the very thing you are currently doing is what your gift is, we just haven’t realized it. What do you do at work, in your home, in the community? I’m a coach – then it sounds like the gift of teaching and exhortation. I’m a mechanic, a pipe fitter – then it sounds like the gift of help. I’m a parent – sounds like leadership. I’m a manager – sounds like leadership too. And then, what is on your heart (Psalm 37:4). You’ve presented yourself a living sacrifice to the Lord, you just love being with Him, following Him, dedicating yourself to Him, you delight yourself in Him, and when that happens God puts desires in your heart. You say to yourself, I want people to understand how good the Lord is just as I understand how good He is, Lord I want to teach (and the Lord finds you a place to teach – hey there is an opening in Sunday School you hear in the morning announcements and you say – that’s all me). You have a burden for the lost in India, the hurting in Haiti, and you say my circumstances do not allow me to go, but I can support those who do go, and you cheerfully and happily write a check. You look and see a need, hey those chairs need set-up, and you find your feet following your heart (where the desire is burning), and you find you have the gift of ministry (help). Many times it is what you already are doing, and always what is on your heart, for God places the desire in your heart so the serving is never burdensome, but always joyful (as long as we keep it in the proper perspective). Well what if nothing is on my heart you may ask; then I would say to you, “have you made yourself a living sacrifice, have you said Lord you’ve given me Your life, now I give You mine.” *Psalm 37:4–5 (NKJV)* ⁴Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart. ⁵Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.

Not to be Ignorant

May I remind you that gifts are one of the four things we are not to be ignorant (not understanding). If you look at them in the context of the other three, I see God screaming out, “I give you gifts, you are the gift, because spiritual warfare is everywhere, it is a constant bombardment, and the body needs to be strengthened and encouraged to withstand the wiles of this word and Satan, and.....look up Christian, you got to use your gifts because time is short, My return is near, just look at Israel and you’ll know the clock is ready to strike midnight (the rapture is near)! Christian, use your gift, use your gift.

There are four things we are not to be ignorant of:

- Spiritual Gifts – 1 Corinthians 12
- Spiritual Warfare – 2 Corinthians 2:11 / Ephesians 6
- Eschatology (Future things) – 1 Thessalonians 4 / Revelation
- The Plan of God for Israel – Romans 11

1 Corinthians 12:1 (NKJV) Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant:

2 Corinthians 2:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 (NKJV) ¹³ But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.

(Rom 11:25 NKJV) For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

G-I-F-T

Why does God make us gifts to others, it is for them, but just as much for us.

- **God** – Using our gifts, makes us centered on God, because....
- **Involvement** – we are involved in what God is doing, and our minds become transformed because our minds focus on Him and what we are doing with Him so much so that the world can't conform us, because we aren't involved in the things of the world but the things of the Lord.
- **Filling** – Each gift comes with the filling of the Holy Spirit, for without Him we can do nothing. So as the Spirit of God flows through us, just by default the things that are not of Him are getting flushed out along the way because
- **Thanksgiving** – Oh when we are used by God, nothing on this earth can compare! God you are so good to me, to allow me to be a part of what You are doing, changing lives, literally changing the world for every person we impact goes on to impact another, and so-on-and-so-on. When I played high school football I hated watching the game from the sidelines. I just wanted to be in the game, that was where the action was. I started defense and special teams, but didn't start in the offensive backfield. So I always just stood behind the coach when we were on offense. And when the coach needed someone in a pinch he always turned around and screamed I need a fullback, or I need a wide out, and I would run out on to the field saying I got it coach. Then I'd get in the huddle and say "what am I suppose to do?". I am so thankful to be in God's game plan, to be involved in what He is doing, to experience His Holy Spirit flowing through me. There is nothing that this world could offer me that could make me put my gift on a shelf for later use, because my mind has been transformed, this world cannot conform me.

The Ultimate Gift

You are the gift, and today I want to thank God for the ultimate gift, His only Begotten Son given to you, given to me. God the Father saying here, I give you My heart, for my love in wrapped up in My Son (He takes my breath away I am so deeply in love with Him). I give Him to you wrapped in swaddling clothes, born in a dirty ole manger in a dot on the map called Bethlehem, born from a 14 year old virgin named Mary. He walked this earth for 33.5 years, showing the way. Then on a horrific Friday, on a hill outside Palestine, and a blood soaked cross, He became the Way. He became the way for man to escape the wrath of sin (justification), the bondage of sin (sanctification), and the then for all of eternity the presence of sin (glorification). The Father says here, I give Him to you, this precious and perfect gift, to you, because I love you that much – I give you the very best that I have. Then for all who will receive Him the gift, God then says, now you go do the same – Give the very best you have to other.

Acting & Reacting (Romans 12:9-21)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Chapters 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Israel (Chapters 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Doctrine – Duty / Present our Bodies – Knowing He is For Us

After eleven glorious chapters of doctrine (all that God has done for us: justification, sanctification, and glorification) we come to duty (what is our logical responses to all that He has done for us), and that is (verses 1-2), that we present our bodies as living sacrifices to Him. Where we say God you are utterly and amazingly in love with me, you have nothing but the best for me because You are for me, and therefore who can come against, therefore Lord I know Your will is the best for me, and I present myself to You, I give you my life as a living sacrifice.

(Rom 12:1 NKJV) *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

(Rom 12:2 NKJV) *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

God's Desire – Acting & Reacting

Well in these verses today (9-21) we will see God's desire on how we as believers (the living sacrifices) are to be acting and reacting. It is the reacting part that I find myself getting in trouble with the most. The whole heart and soul of this passage is "love in action".

Prove – to Know Intimately

Verse 2 - that you *may prove* what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God - The word translated "prove" in Romans 12:2 is a word not of academics, but of intimacy—as in Genesis 4:1, where Scripture records that Adam "knew" Eve. This doesn't mean Adam knew about Eve intellectually. It means he knew her intimately. And this is what Paul is declaring to us. You can know God's will intimately.

Good-Acceptable-Perfect / Cumulative

Verse 2 - that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God – Some think that there are three levels a Christian can be at concerning God's will for their life, the "it is good", you aren't in sin, but there is better; there is "it is acceptable", but it is not perfect! Hey go for the perfect they will say. I really don't think so, because the word "and" is there in the original, and it is an "adding, cumulative" word (meaning 1 plus 1 plus 1 equals 3). It is not being one of three things, but being all three things.

- **Good** – means, this good, it is profitable, it is beneficial.
- **Acceptable** – means well pleasing. The Father is well pleased with what you are doing, it warms His heart, brings pleasure to His being – that's my boy (or girl).
- **Perfect** – means mature, complete. The Lord wants us to be mature, complete in Him, not looking to the world to bring us any satisfaction, but finding it all in Him, for that is the only place a person ever can, because this world will always leave us lacking and wanting more.

Want to Know God's Will for your Life? / This is It

Want to know what God's will is for your life; know it intimately and personally without a doubt of what God desires for your life? This is God's will for your life, that you be transformed and the inner beauty of Christ breaks forth from you. Everything, is just details (of where you work, live, marry, minister, etc). God's will for your life is "love in action", love pouring out unto your fellow brother and sister, and to this lost and dying world.

**(Rom 12:9 NKJV) Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.
(Rom 12:10 NKJV) Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;**

Tall Order – We can go Auto-Pilot / Here is a way to Change how Read Bible

That is a tall order to fill, I can almost just read it in auto-pilot, reading along saying this is good stuff. But I am reminded of a story, that I hope will change the way we read our Bible, especially our passages before us today.

Find a Verse and Put Your Name in It

Educating missionary children is exciting and exacting. On one hand, few people are more fortunate than missionary kids. They grow up as internationals with the world their home. They roam across Europe or explore Africa as easily as other children go around the block. On the other hand, many missions settings do not offer adequate schooling or needed interaction with other youth.

Ruth Bell Graham vividly remembers September 2, 1933. She was 13. Her father, a missionary surgeon in China, and her mother were sending her to boarding school in what is now Pyongyang, North Korea. For Ruth it was a brutal parting, and she earnestly prayed she would die before morning. But dawn came, her prayers unanswered, she gripped her bags and trudged toward the riverfront. She was leaving all that was loved and familiar: her parents, her Chinese friends, the missionaries, her home, her memories. The Nagasaki Maru carried her down the Whangpoo River into the Yangtze River and on to the East China Sea.

A week later waves of homesickness pounded her like a churning surf. Ruth kept busy by day, but evenings were harder, and she would bury her head in her pillow and cry herself to sleep, night after night, week after week. She fell ill, and in the infirmary she read through the Psalms, finding comfort in Psalm 27:10—Even if my father and mother should desert me, you will take care of me.

Still, the hurt and fear and doubt persisted. Finally, she went to her sister Rosa, also enrolled in Pyongyang. "I don't know what to tell you to do," Rosa replied matter-of-factly, "unless you take some verse and put your own name in it. See if that helps." Ruth picked up her Bible and turned to a favorite chapter, Isaiah 53, and put her name in it: "He was wounded and crushed because of Ruth's sins; by taking Ruth's punishment, he made Ruth completely well." Her heart leaped, and the healing began.

(Rom 12:9 NKJV) (Ray) Let love be without hypocrisy. (Ray) Abhor what is evil. (Ray) Cling to what is good.

(Rom 12:10 NKJV) (Ray) Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, (Ray) in honor giving preference to one another;

(Rom 12:11 NKJV) (Ray) do not be lagging in diligence, (Ray) be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;

(Rom 12:12 NKJV) (Ray) be rejoicing in hope, (Ray) be patient in tribulation, (Ray) be continuing steadfastly in prayer;

(Rom 12:13 NKJV) (Ray) be distributing to the needs of the saints, (Ray) be given to hospitality.

(Rom 12:14 NKJV) (Ray) Bless those who persecute you; (Ray) bless and do not curse.

(Rom 12:15 NKJV) (Ray) Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

(Rom 12:17 NKJV) (Ray) Repay no one evil for evil. (Ray) Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.

(Rom 12:18 NKJV) **(Ray)** If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

(Rom 12:19 NKJV) **(Ray)** Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.

(Rom 12:20 NKJV) **(Ray)** Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head."

(Rom 12:21 NKJV) **(Ray)** Do not be overcome by evil, **(Ray)** but overcome evil with good.

Put Your Name in Verses / Promises – Commands – Call to Action

Put your name in the verses, not just the promises, but the commands, and not just the promises and the commands, but the calls to action, for the call to action is personal and specific (specifically a call for you to do it).

(Rom 12:9 NKJV) Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.

Agape Love – Foundational for Church / Opposite the World / Love loves / John 13:35

Verse 9 - Let love be without hypocrisy – Hypocrisy is saying one thing, acting one way, but what is in your heart is totally the opposite. Paul begins with an all-important statement about the quality of the love which is to be in the Church: "Love must be sincere" (v. 9). The word for "love" here is agape, which to this point had been used in Romans only for divine love (5:5; 8:35, 39), except in 8:28 where it is used for man's love for God. But here the word is used to indicate the kind of love Christians are to show to others—a Godlike love that loves regardless of the circumstances, a deliberate love that decides it will keep loving even if it is rebuffed. We are challenged to live out the highest love and to do so with the highest sincerity. Our love is to be genuine, not counterfeit. This little statement, so simple and so straightforward—"Love must be sincere"—is foundational to Christian conduct. But despite its simplicity, it is not easy to put into practice because much of our lives is shot through with hypocrisy. Our culture encourages us to live an image. The media repeatedly present us with people pretending to be something they are not, and so tempt us to take up masks ourselves, to counterfeit a love we do not possess. We even deceive ourselves into thinking we have love for people we neglect and, in fact, do not even like. **Love, Loves!** Paul tells us that we must get beyond pretense—we must sincerely love. If we claim the commitment of Romans 12:1, 2, we must love without hypocrisy. This is not optional! The Scripture repeatedly sets this requirement before us. "Above all, love each other deeply" (1 Peter 4:8). "The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith" (1 Timothy 1:5). "All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another" (John 13:35). This is a call to honestly examine our own hearts, asking the question, "Do I love others, especially those in the Church, without hypocrisy?" If the answer is uncertain, we must go to God in prayer, because the Holy Spirit is the only One who can pour love into and through our hearts (5:5).

1 Peter 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."

John 13:35 (NKJV) ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Abhor – have Horror Of / Separation From

Verse 9 - Abhor what is evil - "Abhor" is apostugeō (ἀποστύγω), "to dislike, abhor, have a horror of." Miseō (μισέω) speaks of a concealed and cherished hatred, stugeō (στύγω), of a hatred which is expressed. The prefixed preposition apo (ἀπο) which means "off, away from," shows separation. The Christian is to express his hatred of evil by a withdrawal from it and a loathing of it. "Evil" is ponēros (πονηρός), not kakos (κακός) here, the latter speaking of evil in the abstract, the former, of evil in active opposition to the good.

1 Thessalonians 5:21–22 (NKJV) ²¹ Test all things; hold fast what is good. ²² Abstain from every form of evil.

Psalms 119:104 (NKJV) ¹⁰⁴ Through Your precepts I get understanding; Therefore I hate every false way.

Psalms 101:3 (NKJV) ³ I will set nothing wicked before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not cling to me.

Evil – Hurtful Influence

Evil - GK4190. πονηρός **pōnērōs**, *pon-ay-ros* ; from a derivative of 4192; *hurtful*, i.e. *evil* (in effect or influence, and thus differing from 2556, which refers rather to *essential* character (so it doesn't mean I am to hate evil people). We are being told to hate the influence of evil. That really changes things now doesn't? No problem being terrified of that evil person, or evil places – but when we see it means to hate anything that has an evil (hurtful, damaging, destroying) influence, that changes everything. God says anything that has the potential to influence you into things that are not of the Lord, then utterly hate them, abhor them, be terrified of them.

Be terrified of what it can Do / Choosing Battles / Pg13 – R / Don't let world lower Bar

Abhor – be terrified of it, be horrified at what it can do to you. Parents, be terrified of what evil any evil influence can do to your kids, don't allow even a hint of it in your home. No one needs to stay current on evil, I don't need to go check our certain websites, see certain movies, or watch certain shows in order to stay up to speed on what is going on in the world of evil (Romans 16:19). Parents when I say choose your battles wisely, I surely do not mean as in ranking sins. The saying of well as long as they aren't drinking, I can let them cruise those websites or watch those shows, I can't have zero policy on everything or else they will totally rebel against me (lie from the pit of hell). We must hate all evil, because evil is vile, and it will defile your child. And, don't let the world determine what the level is that is suitable; I could care less if they rate it PG-13, if it has themes and contents that are not pleasing to the Lord, then the answer is “no” in my home. In fact teens let me tell you that your PG-13 was rated “R” when I was your age. The world has slowly “lowered the bar” and too many parents have bought into it. Parents, are you really going to let Hollywood decide what is appropriate for your child, did you hear me, YOUR CHILD!.

Romans 16:19–20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ For your obedience has become known to all. Therefore I am glad on your behalf; but I want you to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil. ²⁰ And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

Cling & Evil will become Detestable / Cleave – Superglue / Jesus is Beautiful

Verse 9 - Cling to what is good – How do we hate evil, God make it real easy, cling to what is good and evil will become detestable to you. Cling to what is evil, and nothing good is going to stick to you. “Cleave to that which is good.” Cleave means to stick like adhesive tape, to be welded or cemented together with the good things. The believer should always be identified with good things rather than shady or questionable practices. Nothing more beautiful and good than Jesus, stick close to Him, and beauty will be the natural by-product of your life. The fallen human nature seems to have a tendency to dwell on bad things, so be drawn to drama; change your mind-set on that, and choose to dwell on what is lovely, and watch your life change ever so greatly, for when we dwell on the lovely, love is the natural by-product.

Philippians 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

Present – Decision / IS there something that has to Go

We are to present ourselves living sacrifices. We studied that the word “present” is an event, it was a conscious decision made (at a moment in time). Lord, I present myself to You, take me and have your way with me. As living sacrifices we have a tendency of jumping off the altar from time-to-time, and have to present ourselves over and over again. We that same attitude needs to be taken when we come to these decisions in our lives; I can't just hear what is good and what is evil, I have to make a determination of what I allow into my life, and what doesn't, and.....what has to go. Christian, is there something in your life right now that you know is wrong, not pleasing to the Lord, not good, but evil. If something is not good before the Lord, then it is evil, don't kid yourself any other way. Oh it might not be good, but it isn't bad. If it is not pleasing to the Lord, then it is evil, abhor it, hate it, detest it, for what it's influences are doing to you or your child. Eventually those influences will play out into actions, thus you must crush them before they can.

(Rom 12:10 NKJV) Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;

Philadelphia – Brotherly Love / We are Family / Big Brother / Worth the Purchase Price

This love is (phileo – and it is where we get our term “brotherly love”). The message being sent here that we are all family. Now granted every family has their problems, but at the end of the day, they are still family. A family has mutual camaraderie, and a family is safe with each other. We should all be living and acting like the big brother or the big sister, and always be looking out for our siblings to ensure they are well-off; we are to honor our family members and continually be thinking how wonderful and beautiful they are, and think of their well-being. May we see each other for what we are (so precious we were worth the purchase price – the blood of Jesus). Along that line of let our love be sincere, the world just loves to criticize, cut down others, may we not be conformed to this world, but transformed, act differently, and continually build one another up. I thank God for my church family, I thank God for you.

*1 Corinthians 10:24 (NKJV)*²⁴ *Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being.*

(Rom 12:11 NKJV) not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;

Cooking on the Fire / Don't let Lukewarm Christians cool you Off

fervent in spirit – fervent means boiling over, and oh how it is good for us to always having something cooking in the Lord, just boiling over for Him in all that we do and say. Christian don't let the lukewarm Christian cool you off, there is an abundance of cool Christians who thing the whole purpose of life is to arrive at death safely. May we ask the Lord to stir us up, get us fired up. Get involved in things outside you comfort zone to stir you up, find like-minded believers and fuel each other's fire. Be on fire in everything you do.

Work unto the Lord / Every area of Life / Come home to Ministry

Verse 1 - not lagging in diligence - God giving us the command to work as unto the Lord wherever we are working. What we do in the workplace may we see that we work for Jesus and not the bossman. This serving the Lord goes into every area of our lives, and may we see that everything we do is serving the Lord. We serve the Lord at work, in school, we serve the Lord in our personal ministries, we serve the Lord in our homes. Can I make a point for all to apply, when you are on your way home at the end of the day, be that school, work at the plant, or even work in the home, would you/we fix our mind that we are coming home to serve, coming home to ministry, if you do you whole marriage and family will change. So often after a day of work we fix our minds that we are coming home to rest, to be served, to do our own thing. But ohh if you come home to do ministry, your family will be blessed and built up, your marriage will be experience sweetness and intimacy you have never known, when you come home to minister, rather than be ministered to.

*Colossians 3:23–24 (NKJV)*²³ *And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men,*²⁴ *knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.*

Sweeping for God

Back to the work place, work as unto the Lord. I believe if Christians went to work to serve Jesus rather than get the check, employers would be asking us, hey any of your friends at church looking for jobs. Christians should be the best workers in the work place. Mike Rozelle told the story of a Christian man he had met. The man was visiting a large corporation. The manager said I'd like you to meet our employee of the year, five years running. As they walked the man envisioned he was going to meet the Vice President, or maybe the lead research and design engineer, or maybe their computer expert. As they entered the room, there he was, a man, mentally and physically handicapped, sweeping the floor. He tried not to act surprised, and greeted him. He said so you're the employee of the year. The man answered (somewhat unclear speech due to his handicap) yes I am, I sweep the floor around. I sweep from the top to bottom, I sweep from corner to corner, then I sweep again. Then he said you know why I sweep so well? The man answered "No" He said, "because I sweep for Jesus, then he paused, and he said, "who do you sweep for." The man left there never to be the same.

Brethren, the question is, whom do you sweep for?

(Rom 12:12 NKJV) rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;

Rejoice – He is Coming Soon / Perseverance – Hanging on To

Rejoice in the hope that He is coming soon, and it will change the way we live at home and work. Be steadfast in prayer, and you will naturally find yourself rejoicing in hope, because you have just spent time beholding His glory. And, when trials and tribulations come, you will endure tribulation. As I always say, perseverance is not getting on through, but hanging on to – hang on to Jesus and you will endure all things, and then find yourself walking over trials not through them, just as Jesus walked over the waves of the storms, not rowed through them.

*Matthew 14:24–25 (NKJV)*²⁴ *But the boat was now in the middle of the sea, tossed by the waves, for the wind was contrary.*²⁵ *Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea.*

Praise – Patient - Prayer

Here is a great key to overcoming trials in our life. Do these three and you will be walking over the storm, not trying to row through the storm.

- Praise – rejoicing in hope.
- Patient – patient in tribulation.
- Prayer – steadfastly in prayer.

(Rom 12:13 NKJV) distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.

To Pursue – Go look for them

“Given to hospitality” means actually to pursue hospitality. That is, we are to seek out other believers to whom we can extend hospitality. There may be a person in your neighborhood or even in your church who is introverted and retiring yet longs for Christian fellowship. We are to look him up and extend our fellowship to him.

[Live Peaceably with all Men](#)

Acting & Reacting

Well we just went through some great reminders on how we are to be acting as Christians, and now we take a look at how we are to be reacting as Christians.

(Rom 12:14 NKJV) Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

Ray Bless them / Eulogy / Something is Dying

We will talk more about this in a couple verses, but remember this verse, (Ray) bless those who persecute you, (Ray) bless and do not curse. The word here for “bless” is “eulogeo”, it where we get our “eulogy”, and it means to speak well of another. Not saying to lie about them, but to speak well is to not tear them down, chew them up. Hey, it also doesn’t mean to say nice things while you roll your eyes either (Proverbs 6:13). We give eulogies at funerals and how fitting it is that the word is used here for bless, because when people (Christian and non-Christian) persecute and curse another, something is dying; joy is surely put to death, spiritual growth is killed, and if the person who curses is not a believer either, then they are spiritually dead. You as a Christian have the opportunity to show them life, show them something different then they find in the world, and by doing so – you may just bring them life!

Proverbs 10:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ *He who winks with the eye causes trouble,
But a prating fool will fall.*

Proverbs 6:13 (NKJV)

¹³ *He winks with his eyes,
He shuffles his feet,
He points with his fingers;*

Tough One / believe his Word has Reason / If we speak Bad – we Kill Ourselves

This is a tough one for all of us, it is so hard to speak well (be nice) to someone who is attacking us, but may we believe the words of God are always for us, and we will be the better for obeying His word (2 Tim 3:16-17). I will tell you why God says what He says here, and that is because when we talk bad about people who hurt us and use us, as we speak destructive words, something dies, and for us that is something spiritually. We are feeding our body hatred and anger, and those two things will kill you. God knows what is best for our spiritual, mental, and physical well-being and thus He says to eulogize them, and don't become like them.

2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

(Rom 12:15 NKJV) Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

Radical Love

The call to love is radical indeed! “Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn” Put another way:

A sorrow shared is - But half a trouble.

A joy that's shared is - A joy made double.

Thursday I was driving home and there was an elderly man in front of me as we were going through Glen Burnie, and thus a lot of stop lights. And at every light I would see him hold up an x-ray (I could tell it was an x-ray of the head), and every time he held it up he shook his head, and then put down. Every light he would do that (the 3 I was behind him). I wondered, was it his x-ray, was it his wife's, his child's. Oh my heart broke, I hoped to pull along side of him, but the opportunity didn't happen as he turned left and I turned right. I regret I didn't follow him; how I wanted to share his sorrow, extend my love to him which is the love of the Savior. Like hospitality, let's go pursue other's sorrows and joys. Rejoice with others, be glad when good things are happening in their lives, even if you life isn't going so great, and.....even if you think that person doesn't deserve it. Let love be without hypocrisy.

(Rom 12:16 NKJV) Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

If you are the Wiser – then Prove It

If you are the wiser, then be the wiser, be the mature one. If you really believe you are the wiser, your actions should prove it. If you act just like the so-called immature Christian, then guess what?

World Conforms – Christians Transform / World basis it on Social Status

The conforming world sets their mind on themselves and all their needs, but the Christian looks at how He can serve and bless others. The world also has its ranking, who they will or will not associate with, and it most always based on social status. There are executives that won't respond to my hello when I pass them in the hallways. We as those who have been born-again need to guard ourselves against that mentality because it is so easy to fall into that trap (it seems so wise). We are to esteem others better than ourselves. Let that mindset be here in this church especially.

Philippians 2:3 (NKJV) ³ Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

Jesus man of Low Social Status / Story of Church Elder

Our Savior Jesus came as a poor man, as a man without power, as a man of low social status. He was born in a stable among the farm animals—no silver spoon in his mouth. He came as the child of a working man and a country girl—no influential family to give him the fast track to the top

The story is told of a well-to-do church with a well-to-do pastor in a well-to-do suburb. Each Sunday they gathered for worship, and each Sunday they gave thanks to the Lord with their

offerings, some of which were used to support a food bank down in the city. By and large, however, they were never confronted with anyone of lower social status. One day, however, a young man wandered into the church during the sermon. His green, spiked hair drew the attention of most worshipers immediately, and they then noticed the nose ring and the various piercings. His t-shirt was dirty and tattered, and his shoes were visibly worn. The young man slowly made his way toward the front of the church, oblivious to the staring people. When he reached the front, eyes focused on the preaching pastor, he sat down on the floor. The people then noticed the old man, and elder and an usher, limping toward the front of the church, hand heavy on his expensive, ornate cane. "It's too bad," they thought, "but it's got to be done." The preacher continued preaching, although only the young man with green hair was listening. The old man continued toward the front. The people continued wondering how the young man with green hair would respond when the old man did what he had to do. The old man reached the front, and he bent down toward the young man, and then he sat down there on the floor next to the young man, and he turned his eyes to the pulpit. And there they sat, the young man with green hair, and the distinguished old man with an ornate cane, and they listened to the word of God together.

(Rom 12:17 NKJV) Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.

(Rom 12:18 NKJV) If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

Bound to have Problems if You are Godly

If you live godly in Christ, you are bound to have enemies.

Matthew 5:10–12 (NKJV)

¹⁰ *Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

¹¹ *"Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. ¹²
Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

2 Timothy 3:12 (NKJV) ¹² *Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.*

Some People just Mean / Don't Agitate or be Aggressor / Apply Romans 12

And then, there are some people that are just hard to get along with regardless, they are just mean and unhappy people. Well if you can't have peace with them, at least don't be an aggressor towards them or agitate the situation. Don't react to them according to the world, but according to the things we have studied through this whole chapter.

(Rom 12:19 NKJV) Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.

(Rom 12:20 NKJV) Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head."

(Rom 12:21 NKJV) Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Hard to Accept – But let God have His way

I know this is a hard thing for us to accept, but let the Lord have His ways, and He will actually use your enemies to grow and mature you to be like Him. He will use your enemies to bring to pass showing you Romans 12:1-2; proving to you what is good, what is pleasing to Him, and to bring you into maturity.

(Rom 12:1 NKJV) *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

(Rom 12:2 NKJV) *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

Never more like Christ than when Forgive

You will never be more like Christ than when you forgive.

Luke 23:34 (NKJV) ³⁴ Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." And they divided His garments and cast lots.

Chp 13 will talk about the Law

Chapter 13 we will talk about people breaking the law, and how they are to be brought to justice. I by no means am saying let the law breaker go free to hurt or destroy again. But here we are talking about letting the governing authority deal with the law breaker, and how we are to react to them spiritually.

Once we Defend – It becomes a Lifetime Job / haven't they Taken Enough Already

Listen Christian, here is why the Lord says let Him do the revenge and justice part. God wants to be our defender and avenger; but once we start to be the defender and avenger, it will become our whole life, it will become a consuming part of our life. God says let me handle it, or it will devour you. Bitterness and revenge will own you as long as your heart is bound in them. Listen, that person who has hurt you, have they not taken enough from you already? Don't give them one bit more, don't allow them to rob anything more from you!

Man In California

I was street ministering in California one night and I saw a man sleeping on the curb of the street close to the grate trying to get warm. He was totally beat up, totally worn out. I went up and offered him food and we chatted. Turns out he was a believer, turns out he knew the word and we talked on and on about the Lord. I asked him how he got to this place in his life, and he told me the story of how he was once successful, had his own business, a beautiful home, making 6 figures, all was well. But then his wife ran off with another man. He said he sold and spent everything he had tracking them down (as they literally just vanished when they ran off together). He said I lost everything seeking revenge. He said when I finally came to the place where he said vengeance is yours Lord, he had lost it all. He did find them, and he allowed God to be God. I will see him in heaven I am sure, but his story rings true in my ears, as much as my eyes.

Hard to Accept – But let God have His way

They have taken enough from you beloved, don't allow them to take any more. I know this is a hard thing for us to accept, but let the Lord have His ways, and He will actually use your enemies to grow and mature you to be like Him.

(Rom 12:1 NKJV) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

(Rom 12:2 NKJV) And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

CONCLUSION Chapter 12

Christian, we only get one shot at this life, let us do it well. Let us live with no regrets, let us make it to the finish line and hear those words "Well Done they good and faithful servant". Live with no Regrets!

Billy Borden

In 1904 William Borden graduated from a Chicago high school. As heir to the Borden Dairy estate, he was already a millionaire. For his high school graduation present, his parents gave 16-year-old Borden a trip around the world. As the young man traveled through Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, he felt a growing burden for the world's hurting people. Finally, Bill Borden wrote home to say, "I'm going to give my life to prepare for the mission field." One friend expressed surprise that he was "throwing himself away as a missionary." In response, Bill wrote two words in the back of his Bible: "No reserves." He went to Yale and Princeton to study, and while there started a morning prayer group that started with 3 people his freshman year and ended with 1,500 his senior year. After school he turned down many lucrative and prestigious job offers and left for China to preach the gospel. He wrote two more words in his Bible before he left, "No retreats." While there in China, he contracted spinal meningitis. Within a month, 25-year-

old William Borden was dead. The world questioned if Borden's untimely death was a waste. The answer is not in God's plan. Prior to his death, Borden had written two more words in his Bible. Underneath the words "No reserves" and "No retreats," he had written: "No regrets."

No Reserves, Retreats, Regrets / May we Never – Ever - Quit

Oh precious saints, may we have no reserves, may we hold nothing back in these few short years we live on this earth, may we not retreat when the tribulations come upon us, and may we have no regrets, may we live a life that was spent on Him. And Christian, may we never, ever, Quit!

May we present our bodies living sacrifices to Him.

 May we not be conformed to this world.

 But be transformed by the renewing of our minds.

Chapter 13

Be Subject to the Governing Authority (Romans 13:1-7)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Chapters 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Israel (Chapters 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Doctrine – Duty / Present our Bodies – Knowing He is For Us

After eleven glorious chapters of doctrine (all that God has done for us: justification, sanctification, and glorification) we come to duty (what is our logical responses to all that He has done for us), and that is (verses 1-2 of chapter 12), that we present our bodies as living sacrifices to Him; where we say God You are utterly and amazingly in love with me, You have nothing but the best for me because You are for me, and therefore who can come against me, therefore Lord I know Your will is the best for me, and I present myself to You, I give You my life as a living sacrifice.

(Rom 12:1 NKJV) *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

(Rom 12:2 NKJV) *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

Chp12 – Function in Body / Chp 13 – Function in Society / 3 Institutions

Well, after discussing the believer's function in the body of Christ in chapter 12, Paul opens chapter 13 addressing the believer's function in society. What role do we as believers have in the society in which we live? Chapter 13 is devoted to this question, telling us how we, as believers, are to be engaged in our culture. Scripturally, we see three divinely ordained institutions:

- the family (Genesis 2),
- government (Genesis 9),
- and the church (Acts 2).

Those are the only three divinely inspired institutions. There are no others. And here in chapter 13, Paul speaks with specific regard to the second one—namely, government and authority.

Quite Different Study Today

Today's study will be quite different from our usual study, as we will be looking at some hot topics as we come to this place in the Scriptures about us as believers living under a government. We will cover such topics as:

- Qualifications and voting for Political Candidate
- The war in Afghanistan right?
- Is the War in Afghanistan a war on Islam?
- Is it right to burn the Koran?
- Is the Constitution of America based in the Bible?

Let's Read for Context

Let's read our seven verses together for context and then start looking verse-by-verse.

Be Subject to the Governing Authorities

(Rom 13:1 NKJV) *Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.*

(Rom 13:2 NKJV) Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

(Rom 13:3 NKJV) For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same.

(Rom 13:4 NKJV) For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.

(Rom 13:5 NKJV) Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake.

(Rom 13:6 NKJV) For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing.

(Rom 13:7 NKJV) Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

Remember we Flowed from Chp12

Just a reminder that we are flowing in from chapter 12, and we ended that chapter with God telling us not to seek vengeance, and we discussed how revenge and bitterness will eat you alive, and how those things will rob you of living, and how that person who hurt you has taken away so much already, and so do not give them one drop more of your life. Well chapter 13 discusses how those who have hurt you by breaking the law, God will judge. So we see that although we forgive a person, they still have to answer to the law of the land.

(Rom 12:19 NKJV) Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.

(Rom 13:1 NKJV) Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.

Subject – Obey / Story of Mike / Parents be Blameless / Wayne Drivers License

Subject means to obey, to be put under. Hence we see that as believers by the commandment of God we are to obey the laws of this land. I once talked to a fugitive from the law, and there was no way the authorities were going to catch him for he was training by the military on covert operations. But I spoke to him to and agreed with him that the charges against him were unreasonable. He said then give me one reason why I should turn myself in, and I took him to this passage. I told him that he will never have his life back again until he turns himself in, and that he will live a life of looking over his shoulder for the rest of his life. I told him to not obey the governing authorities was to not obey God Himself. So he turned himself in and after a time he got his life back. To disobey the laws of this land are to disobey God himself Christian. When God speaks of "well done good and faithful servant", He is including us keeping the laws of the land. Cheat on your taxes, and you break the laws of the land. Bring home office supplies from work and you are stealing. Parents, be blameless in this area, let your kids see that you are serious about even the little things. Here is what happens when you don't; you send a message to your kids that there are levels of obedience. You need to obey not lying, but stealing little things is ok. No, no – show your kids to obey God in every way, for He is holy and His ways are perfect. Wayne just got his driver's license and the law says he can't drive anyone under 18 (except household members) for the first 151 days. I told him that we will obey that rule to perfection, and that if that law is broken, privileges will be taken away. Quite a shock to Wayne for he drives to school every day seeing his friends breaking that law. My point to him, your obedience to the law will be a more powerful message you will ever preach to your classmates, greater than any message you preach at the Fellowship of Christian Athletes he leads. Break the law, and you send the message to your classmates that you can pick and chose which words of God you desire to follow, and from there you now judge the Bible rather than the Bible judging you. Be faithful in the little things, if you ever want to be used by God in any other way, and simply be faithful because He is God!

Matthew 25:23 (NKJV) ²³ His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

God Appoints Leaders / Police Graduation Class / Be thankful – No Anarchy / Fire Rescue

God raises up and appoints keeper of the law. When I have had the blessed opportunity to do the blessings at the Police and Fire Graduation Ceremony, I always quote this verse to them, and tell them today is not only graduation day, but it is also for them ordination day. Pray the public servants God has given us, be thankful to them for upholding order in your neighborhood. Be kind and tell them how you appreciate them even after they give you the ticket for speeding. Our neighborhood (and Country) would be in total anarchy if it be not for these governing servants. It brings me great peace that someone has made laws to protect me on the roads. Imagine no law of having to stop at a stop light. I am thankful for the law that says my possessions are mine, and that for the most part I can have peace knowing that no one can just walk into my home and take my possessions or harm my wife and children. I am thankful for the government that has put in place the ambulance that will come and take me to the hospital if I am in need, and the fire department that will come and fight the fire for me if my house catches on fire. I am thankful for the government that plans our roads systems for me to travel and a currency system so I can buy food and products, and a government that puts a military in place to protect my freedom.

Military a Governing Authority / Political Authority

The same is true for our military people; you are God's governing authority. The same is true for all of our elected officials; they are God's governing authority.

One way Appt by Electoral Process / Sadly – appt by what Ask For / Voice - Choice

One of the ways God appoints is through the electoral process, ie, He gives the people what they ask for. Sadly, as it was for Israel, so can it be for a Nation when they call out for a leader who is not for the things of God. American is an amazing country that we get to voice our choice. Not every country gives that same opportunity.

1 Samuel 8:5-8 (NKJV) ⁵ and said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations." ⁶ But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." So Samuel prayed to the LORD. ⁷ And the LORD said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them." ⁸ According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even to this day—with which they have forsaken Me and served other gods—so they are doing to you also.

Qualifications for Political Candidate

Now, first thing I will say is that some people will only vote for someone who is a Christian, they fill if the person is not saved they are not lead of God and cannot lead politically. To that I say follow your conscience; you will never hear a challenge from me on that. To others, they believe that man is created in God's image and that there are moral men and woman (although not saved) they have very much the same moral values. The Bible doesn't give much instruction how the follower of God is to vote. The Old Testament was Kings appointed by God, and the New Testament (which is all first century) was the Roman Empire and the Emperors weren't chosen on ability but by the family they were born into. I believe the bible doesn't leave us in the dark on this, for I believe the qualifications for an elder in the church are the same for a politician (1 Timothy 3). Although these qualifications are for men (elders in the church) I see no prohibition of a woman holding leadership office within the Government (we have seen woman of the Bible as leaders, such Deborah who was a prophet-judge). I might also add here that if a person professes to be a Believer, and want your vote, they need to meet these standards.

1 Timothy 3:1-8 (NKJV) This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. ² A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; ³ not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; ⁴ one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence ⁵ (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); ⁶ not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. ⁷ Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Paul begins by asserting that the man who desires the office desires a good work (v. 1). But no one should ever be placed into church leadership based on desire alone.

“BLAMELESS”—HE IS A MAN OF UNQUESTIONABLE CHARACTER

Paul began, “A bishop [or elder] ... must be blameless” (v. 2). The Greek word translated “must” emphasizes an absolute necessity: blamelessness is mandatory for overseers. It is a fundamental, universal requirement. In fact, the other qualifications listed by Paul in verses 2–7 define and illustrate what he meant by “blameless.” The Greek text indicates this is referring to a present state of blamelessness. It doesn’t refer to sins that the man committed before he matured as a Christian—unless such sins remain as a blight on his life. (No one is blameless in that sense.) The idea is that he has sustained a reputation for blamelessness. “Blameless” (v. 2) means “not able to be held.” A blameless man cannot be taken hold of as if he were a criminal in need of detention for his actions. There’s nothing to accuse him of. He is irreproachable. I like to sum it up as saying if “60 Minutes” did an investigation on the person they would find nothing.

“THE HUSBAND OF ONE WIFE”—HE IS SEXUALLY PURE

“The husband of one wife” is not the best rendering according to my studies of the Greek text. I believe the words translated “wife” (gunaikos) and “husband” (anēr) are better translated “woman” and “man.” The Greek construction places emphasis on the word one, thereby communicating the idea of a one–woman man. It is appropriate that sexual fidelity is first on Paul’s list of moral qualifications because that seems to be the area that most often disqualifies a man from ministry. It is therefore a matter of grave concern.

“TEMPERATE”—HE IS NOT GIVEN TO EXCESS

The Greek word translated “temperate” (nēphalios) means without wine or not mixed with wine. It speaks of sobriety—the opposite of intoxication. Maybe not so applicable here in the USA for the most part, but very applicable in other Nations where many leaders are heavy drinkers.

“SOBER-MINDED”—HE IS SELF-DISCIPLINED

The Greek word translated “sober-minded” (sōphrōn) speaks of discipline or self-control. It’s the result of being temperate (v. 6). The temperate man avoids excess so that he can see things clearly, and that clarity of thought leads to an orderly, disciplined life. He knows how to order his priorities.

“GOOD BEHAVIOUR”—HE IS WELL-ORGANIZED

The Greek word translated “good behavior” is kosmos. It comes from the root word kosmos, which in its general sense refers to the interplay between human, divine, and satanic values. A man of “good behavior” approaches all the aspects of his life in a systematic, orderly manner.

“GIVEN TO HOSPITALITY”—HE IS HOSPITABLE

The Greek word translated “given to hospitality” is composed of the words xenos (“stranger”) and phileō (“to love” or “show affection”). It means to love strangers, has a heart for the needy.

“APT TO TEACH”—HE IS SKILLED IN TEACHING

The Greek word translated “apt to teach” (didaktikon) is used only two times in the New Testament (here and in 2 Tim. 2:24). It means “skilled in teaching.” It’s the only qualification listed here that relates to the function of an elder and sets the elder apart from the deacon. Paul repeatedly reminded Timothy of the priority of teaching (1 Tim. 5:17; 2 Tim. 2:2, 15). Elders must be skilled in teaching. They must have the ability to communicate God’s Word and the integrity to make their teaching believable. The most powerful impetus to effective teaching is credibility. A skilled teacher will practice what he preaches. If you teach one thing and live another, you are contradicting and undermining your teaching.

“NOT GIVEN TO WINE”—HE IS NOT A DRINKER (and who he associates with)

The Greek word translated “given to wine” (paroinos) means “one who drinks.” It doesn’t refer to a drunkard—that’s an obvious disqualification. The issue here is the man’s reputation: Is he known as a drinker? We saw that the Greek word translated “temperate” (v. 2) refers in its literal sense to one who is not intoxicated. Paroinos, on the other hand, refers to one’s associations. Such a person doesn’t frequent bars, taverns, and inns. He is not at home in the noisy scenes

associated with drinking. His lifestyle is not that of a drinker. Very important in that this person isn't influenced by people who lead immoral lifestyles.

“NOT VIOLENT”—HE IS NOT A FIGHTER

You can't be an elder if you settle disputes with your fists or in other violent ways. The Greek word translated “violent” (plēktēs) means “a giver of blows” or “a striker.” An elder isn't quick-tempered and doesn't resort to unnecessary physical violence. That qualification is closely related to “not given to wine” because such violence is usually connected with people who drink excessively. A spiritual leader must be able to handle things with a cool mind and a gentle spirit. Paul said, “The servant of the Lord must not strive” (2 Tim. 2:24).

“PATIENT”—HE EASILY PARDONS HUMAN FAILURE

We skipped “not greedy of filthy lucre,” which appears in the King James Version but not in the better Greek manuscripts. That qualification is identical in meaning to “not covetous” (v. 3), which we will soon cover. The Greek word translated “patient” (epieikēs) means “to be considerate, genial, forbearing, gracious, or gentle.”

“NOT A BRAWLER”—HE IS NOT QUARRELSOME

The Greek word translated “not a brawler” (amachos) is similar in meaning to mē plēktēs (“not violent,” v. 3). The difference is that the latter refers to not being physically violent, whereas the former refers to not being quarrelsome. When you have a plurality of church/political leaders attempting to make decisions, you can't get very far if any of them are quarrelsome. That's why Paul said, “The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men ... patient” (2 Tim. 2:24). He must be a peacemaker.

“NOT COVETOUS”—HE IS FREE FROM THE LOVE OF MONEY

The Greek word translated “not covetous” (aphilarguros) is a negation of the Greek words for “love” and “silver.” It speaks of someone who doesn't love money. Love of money can corrupt a man's ministry because it tempts him to view people as a means by which he can get more money

“ONE THAT RULETH WELL”—HE MAINTAINS A GODLY FAMILY

First Timothy 3:4–5 says that an overseer must be “one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity. (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?).” An elder's home life is an essential consideration. Before he can lead in the church he must demonstrate his spiritual leadership within the context of his family.

“NOT A NOVICE”—HE IS A MATURE CHRISTIAN

First Timothy 3:6 says an elder must not be “a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.” Although Paul didn't specifically mention humility in this passage, it is the obvious point of contrast in his caution against spiritual pride. The Greek word translated “novice” (neophutos) means “newly planted.” The idea is that an elder should not be a new convert or newly baptized. This is the only use of neophutos in the New Testament. It is used in its literal sense outside the New Testament to speak of planting trees in the ground .

“A GOOD REPORT OF THEM WHO ARE OUTSIDE”—HE IS WELL-RESPECTED BY NON-CHRISTIANS

The Greek word translated “good” (kalōs) embraces the ideas of internal and external goodness. An elder must have a good internal character and a good external reputation or testimony. The Greek word translated “report” (martureō) is the word from which we get martyr, but its basic meaning is “a certifying testimony.” An elder's character must be certified by the testimony of other people.

Romans 13 / Sanctity of Marriage – Sanctity of Life

Romans 13:8-10 gives some good points too, as it speaks loving (serving) our neighbor which is truly what the role of a politician should be (a servant to the public/neighbor).

- *You not commit Adultery* (the leader recognizes the sanctity of marriage). Genesis 2 and Ephesians 5 clearly shows marriage is between a man and a woman. Therefore any person who promotes homosexuality is not to have our vote. I would add on to this, if there is any candidate that promotes fornication (sex outside of marriage, a licentious lifestyle) they should not receive our vote.
- *You shall not Murder* (the leader recognizes the sanctity of life). When was the earth created, when God started forming it. When is life created, when God starts forming (Psalm 139 – I formed you in your mother's womb). In the Old Testament if a man hurt a child in the womb and the baby died, the man was to be put to death (Exodus 21). I believe the Scriptures are clear, life begins in the womb, not at birthing.
- I believe a vote for either of above is a vote against God, and God will not honor a Nation who promotes and endorses such things.

(Rom 13:8 NKJV) *Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.*

(Rom 13:9 NKJV) *For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."*

(Rom 13:10 NKJV) *Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.*

Genesis 2:21–25 (NKJV) ²¹ *And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. ²² Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. ²³ And Adam said:*

*"This is now bone of my bones
And flesh of my flesh;
She shall be called Woman,
Because she was taken out of Man."*

²⁴ *Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. ²⁵ And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.*

Psalms 139:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ *For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well.*

Exodus 21:22–25 (NKJV) ²² *"If men fight, and hurt a woman with child, so that she gives birth prematurely, yet no harm follows, he shall surely be punished accordingly as the woman's husband imposes on him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. ²³ But if any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, ²⁴ eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, ²⁵ burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.*

What if no one Meets the Requirements / It is a Vote against God / Rom 1:28

What if no one meets the requirements, are we to vote for the lesser of two evils (aka – well both promote abortion but at least this person is good for the economy). I believe to vote for anyone that promotes abortion, homosexuality, etc is the fulfilling of Romans 1, and God is offended and will not bless our vote. I went in to vote this Tuesday, and left much of my ballot blank, and I asked the Lord raise up godly leaders for the next election. However, what a joy it was for me to cast my ballot for three Christians (two that I personally know), and know they will champion the standards of Christ. Was I tired that day, yes! Was I extremely busy that day, yes! But for me I went to vote for them because I felt I was making a statement to the County, that there are still plenty here in this County that live and stand for God's moral standards.

Romans 1:28–32 (NKJV) ²⁸ *And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; ²⁹ being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, ³⁰ backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, ³¹ undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; ³² who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.*

What if a Follower of False Religion

What if there is a candidate who meets all these requirements, they are blameless, but they are open about their religion they follow, and that religion is contrary to the Gospel of Jesus (salvation alone through the finished works of Christ at Calvary)? I say to that, anyone who we can clearly

see is under the influence of Satan (for that is what a cult or false religion is) we should not cast our vote for them because Satan has an agenda (destruction of this Country and the Believers), and these people as good as they may seem, are under his influence and will lead the people where Satan is leading them.

2 Corinthians 11:12–15 (NKJV) ¹² But what I do, I will also continue to do, that I may cut off the opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the things of which they boast. ¹³ For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. ¹⁵ Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.

(Rom 13:2 NKJV) Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

(Rom 13:3 NKJV) For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same.

(Rom 13:4 NKJV) For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.

God has Authority to maintain Order

Again, God establishes governing authorities to maintain the proper balance of order in society. The authorities ensure that people are not free to do whatever they want. People who break the law, will have to answer to the law.

War in Afghanistan

What about the war in Afghanistan, should the United States be there? I wish and desire we weren't. I hate war and its destruction. However, what we are witnessing is God's ministers (the US Military) carrying out verse 4. After the attacks on September 11th, all intelligence lead back to one place; Osama Bin Laden (the founder of the Islamic extremist organization al-Qaeda). His organization was being sheltered in the County of Afghanistan by the Taliban Government (a Wahhabi Islamist political movement that governed Afghanistan from 1996 until it was overthrown in late 2001). The then President of the United States (George Bush) told Bin Laden "you can come to justice, or justice will come to you". He then told the Taliban government that it will be held accountable also anyone that harbors and protects al-Qaeda and Bin Laden. So here we are nine years later. The war in Afghanistan is still the war that was started on September 11, 2001 at 8:45 a.m. (EDT) when a hijacked passenger jet, American Airlines Flight 11 out of Boston, Massachusetts, crashes into the north tower of the World Trade Center, tearing a gaping hole in the building and setting it afire. Nine years has a way of making us forget what all this is about, and people can let it be lost in cloud of time, but may we remember today. May we not forget the 2819 killed on that day, nor may we forget the 2075 soldiers that have been killed serving in the role of God's ministering agents, who wielded not the sword in vain. As the message is clear, the ministering agents will seek you, and will not stop until they find you, for man will be held accountable for their actions.

Is War in Afghanistan a war on Islam?

Is War in Afghanistan a war on Islam? No, it is Romans 13:4. Started at 8:45am on September 11th, 2001.

What about the building of a mosque at Ground Zero

What about the building of a mosque at Ground Zero, as we speak of September 11th, 2001? Well the Imam who heads this effort says that it for the purpose of inter-faith dialog, an opportunity for healing and unity among the different faiths. Here is the word on that. Look at any religion (including Christianity) and you will pretty much see them broken into two groups (Worldly, also called secular, and Fundamental). For example the Worldly so-called Christian is mostly Christian in name only (whether saved is beyond me – I'll leave that up to God), but they profess Christ as Savior, but after that you don't see much more. They kind of cruise through their faith as something they do on Christmas and Easter, and they apply God's word as it fits their likes and dislikes. However, the Fundamental Christian, now that person literally believes the Bible is

the Word of God, and believes they are called to live out their faith as it is called out in the Bible. Since the Bible says don't commit adultery, they believe that is exactly what it means and they live faithful lives to their spouse. Since the Bible says go therefore and make disciples, they are busy about evangelism, teaching their children, serving in the church to raise up disciples. Well that same application you will find applies to every religion. Some are just professing it with words, but not living it out; while others are fundamentals and say if this is what the world says, then this is what I am to do.

Same with Islam

So you have worldly (secular) Muslims, and fundamental Muslims. They say, I was raised in a Muslim home, and I am following the practices of my parents, and I believe some parts of the Koran, and others I don't, I don't make pilgrimages to Mecca, nor do I pray five times a day, but I do go to the mosque when I'm not too tired, and I pray in the car on the way to work, and really I just want to live a peaceable life and don't want to argue with people about religion and politics. However there are fundamental Muslims and they believe the Koran is the word of god, and therefore must be adhered to in every aspect. So here are some verses the fundamental Muslim believes is god inspired, and god's command to carry live:

Fight and slay the pagans (infidels) wherever ye find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem of war. (Sura 9:5)

Prophet, make war on unbelievers and hypocrites, and deal rigorously with them. (Sura 9:73)

Let not the unbelievers think they will ever get away. They have not the power to do so. Muster against them all the men and cavalry at your command, so that you may strike terror into the enemy of God and your enemy... Prophet, (Muhammed) rouse the faithful to arms! If they (the non-Muslims) incline to peace (accept Islam) make peace with them. (Sura 8:59)

If they reject your judgment, know that it is Allah's wish to scourge them for their sins. (Sura 5:49)

Believers (Muslims), take neither Jews nor Christians to be your friends: they are friends with one another. Whoever of you seeks their friendship shall become one of their number, and God does not guide (those Jewish and Christian) wrong-doers. (Sura 5:51-5:74)

Iman either Worldly or Tricky – Time will Tell

So, is this Imam a worldly Muslim (who rejects the verses above), or is he a fundamental Muslim who is wise as a serpent speaking what is necessary to further his cause. Time will tell.

Is it right to burn the Koran / Wrestle not against Flesh and Blood / Specifics blur Objective

Is it right to burn the Koran? Why would you want to I ask? It will only incite and incense the fundamental Muslim. I say you might as well burn the Webster's Dictionary too for most every word in the English Koran you will find in the Webster's Dictionary. And here is the heart of the matter I want to get to in discussing these things (Mosque at Ground Zero – Burning the Koran). We wrestle not against flesh and blood, ink and paper, brick and mortar; we wrestle against principalities and powers. Satan is doing a wonderful deceptive tactic in that he is getting people wrapped up in the specifics, and totally missing the objective (the big picture), that there is a spiritual war going on and boycotts, demonstrations, and the likes will not overthrow or stop the progression of these things in our land.

Ephesians 6:10–13 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

The deception Greater – How about Hindu, Buddhist, Atheist / Specifics blur Objective

Let me even add this deception, are we against Islam because that small number of them are terrorizing us, or is it because our heart breaks for the 1.5 billion of them that don't know Jesus Christ. Are we not upset about the 1 billion Hindu, are they not in our minds because they are not on the front page? How about the 500 million Buddhist and the 1 billion people that identify themselves as atheist or non-religious. May we not be caught up in the specifics, but see the objective, and that is there is a lost and dying world that needs Jesus and we will only reach them

through the move of the Spirit of God coupled with our willingness to love them. It is our greatest commandment, to love!

(Rom 13:8 NKJV) Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.

All these Things – God screaming a Wake up Call

All these things we are discussing, war in Afghanistan, Ground Zero Mosque, Rise in Islam, a United States that is drifting from God, elected Governing Officials who promote homosexuality and abortion, all scream out – “WAKE UP CHURCH”, His return is near and we must be ready, and readily doing what He has called us to do.

(Rom 13:11 NKJV) And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.

Government will Fail Us

Yes I am ever so thankful for the government, however they are not the answer, and the Tea Party will not save us, only King Jesus reigning on the throne of our Country will. We need to be Looking for Jesus. Voting and Voicing is important, but may we not fool ourselves and think they will be our deliverance. It is just one more deception, one more specific that distracts us from the Objective, we need to repent as a Nation and call out to the Lord.

Church – Get on Knees – Repent – Ask Forgiveness – MAYBE Heal our Land

Oh Church, we must get back on our knees, repent of our sins, call out for His forgiveness, and maybe, just maybe it is not too late, and we can see a mighty revival in the land. But the revival must start in the House of God first.

2 Chronicles 7:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

(Rom 13:5 NKJV) Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake.

I Love America / Sleep with My Plane Ticket

My conscience is clear, this is a great Country and how easy it is to teach this message being a citizen of the USA, and not trying to teach this if I was pasturing a church in China or Pakistan. I love this Country, what a great Country is it. When I was in Russia in 1993 I slept with my passport and airline ticket on me, for you could rob me of my money while I slept, but there was no way I was going to miss my flight back to America. I've been to Russia, Ukraine, Nicaragua, Mexico, Israel, and several parts of Europe, and there is no place like the United States of America.

Television Show – Law will not Cease / America a Republic – Not Popular Vote

Me and Renee were watching one of those crime shows, we are fascinated by forensic science. And the show we were watching last week a man was murdered who was of what the world would consider a very-very low social status. He was sporadically employed, a drug user, drug provider, immoral lifestyle, low to no income, few to none friends – yet as we watched this show I tracked through it some 50 people who were involved in the investigation of his murder. I said to Renee, what a Country we live in, a country where no one is forgotten or considered not worth the effort. All these investigators poured day after day into the investigation, and in the end they caught and imprisoned the guilty murderer. I'll tell from watching the show, those investigators had a heart for seeing justice served; and secondly I will tell you why the system works as well as it does, and it is because the United States of America is not a democracy but a Republic. You see a democracy is based on popular opinion, majority rule, but a republic (which the USA is) is based on Law, the Laws of the land determine how the land is to be run. Popular vote (the democratic way) may elect officials, but those officials are not above the Law, they are only appointed to represent and uphold the Law.

Is the Constitution of America based in the Bible

I love this Country, what a great Country is it. What a great Country to be a Christian in with all the religious freedoms we have. I will tell you this, I will never vote yes for any constitutional

amendment that is ever posed in the election ballot, because I believe the founder fathers based our Constitution on Law, not what was the popular opinion of the day; but I fear today that man in order to be favored (and re-elected) will change the Constitution based on popular opinion. The Laws of this land were based off Biblical principles. The nay-sayers will say that is a lie, prove it, show me one verse of the Bible in those documents, and I would have to say you are right you will not find one. But I can say, let me share the heart of the men who formed/signed the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights (which is an addendum to the Constitution). After hearing their hearts I think it is hard to say that the United States was not based on Biblical and Christian principals. Sadly, these things are no longer taught in our public schools, or reported by our media.

Quotes By Our Forefathers (all signers and/or creators of these American Documents)

Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other

John Adams

It is impossible to rightly govern a nation without God and the Bible.

George Washington

God who gave us life, gave us liberty. Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed a conviction that these liberties are a gift from God? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just and that His justice cannot sleep forever.

Thomas Jefferson

I consider it an indispensable duty to close this last solemn act of my official life, to commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God and those who have the superintendence of them into His holy keeping.

George Washington

Before any man can be considered as a member of civil society he must be considered a subject of the Governor of the Universe.

James Madison

We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writings that except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. I firmly believe this. I also believe that without His concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel

Ben Franklin

The Sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for among old parchments or musty records. They are written as with a sunbeam, in the whole volume of human nature by the hand of the Divinity itself, and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power.

Alexander Hamilton

Almighty and Eternal Lord God, the Great Creator of heaven and earth, and the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, look down from heaven in the pity and compassion upon me thy servant, who humbly prostrate myself before thee.

George Washington

To the distinguished character of a patriot, it should be our highest glory to add the more distinguished character of a Christian.

George Washington

I wish I could leave you my most cherished possession, my faith in Jesus Christ. For with him you have everything; without him you have nothing.

Patrick Henry

We have staked the whole of our political institution on the capacity of mankind to govern themselves according to the ten Commandments of God.

James Madison

It cannot be emphasized too strongly not too often that this great nation was founded, not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religions, but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Patrick Henry

My Favorite Quote – Alexis Tocqueville

Here is one of my favorite quotes ever made about this great Nation. It was made in 1831, a young Frenchman by the name of Alexis Tocqueville and a friend toured the United States. Later he is credited with writing these prophetic words concerning what he had learned in America.

“I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her com-modious harbors and her ample rivers, and it was not there. I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her fertile fields and boundless forest, and it was not there. I sought for the great-ness and genius of America in her rich mines and her vast world commerce, and it was not there. I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her public school system and her institu-tions of learning, and it was not there. I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her democratic congress and her match-less constitution, and it was not there. Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits flame with righteous-ness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because America is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.”

Obedience to Law – is Obedience to God / Mind you – written during time of Nero

Verse 5 - but also for conscience' sake - For conscience sake, for I know when I am obedient to the laws of the land, it is the same as being obedient to God. Mind you, who is Paul writing to? A group of believers under the Roman Empire and at the time of this writing Caesar Nero was on the throne, and in just a few years he is going to unleash a fervor of hatred and wrath upon the church.

Story of Rock Creek Plaza Building

Speaking of conscience sake, I am reminded when we had our own building and we went through every little painful and expensive wicket the County had for building and zoning regulations. But I must say, God gave us tremendous favor every time we did (largely because the County was pleased to see a church going through the due process). For conscience sake I didn't want to be in the middle of a Sunday service and have the authorities come and say we are shutting you down because you failed to follow the law. You see, at the time we were going through our process we had found out that a large number of churches were not following the building codes, and were getting away with it. I wanted to be a witness that we were a blameless church, and I wanted a good conscience. I remember talking to another pastor at another church going through the same process, and I told him all the laws and he said we are God's servants, we don't answer to man. I quoted Romans 13, and we each took our own paths. A month later the County came in and closed his church down, fined him, and it took him several months to clear the legal issues before he could start back up. Besides it is the word of God, besides you will have a good conscience, obeying the laws of the land is just good business.

There is a time to Disobey Governing Authorities / Acts 5

Does this verse mean we're never to disobey those who are in authority over us? No. In Acts 5, the Pharisees forbade Peter to speak any more of Jesus. “We ought to obey God rather than man,” Peter replied. But the issue was spiritual—not political. So, yes, there is a time when we are not to be subject to those in authority. Yes, wives, there is a time when you are not to be submitted to your husband. Yes, children, there is a time to disobey your parents. When? When they tell you to do something that is directly contrary to the written Word of God. But make sure that if you follow such a course, you have Scripture in context and rightly divided—not just a feeling—to back you up.

*Acts 5:29–30 (NKJV)*²⁹ But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men."³⁰ The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree.

Daniel Lion Den / Meshach - Shadrach - Abednego / Don't Claim Rom 13 because Weak

Who can forget the story of Daniel ending up in the lion's den for refusing to obey the law of the land that you could not bow down and pray to anyone other than the Babylonian King. How about Meshach, Shadrach, and Abednego refusing to bow down to the golden statue of the king, bit God not only delivered them from the fire, He met them in the fire. The illustration of God is that be faithful to Him, and He will be faithful to you, and that you will see Him in a way you never would had you taken the easy escape route. If or when that day ever comes (we can't have Bibles, or speak His Name, or witness for Him) I pray not one of us will claim Romans 13 (to obey authorities over God) because we are looking for an escape route, to live a comfortable and peaceful life, rather we remember the examples of Peter, Daniel, the boys, and I pray we will obey God over man. For if we do, if you do, you will see God in a way like never before, but more so, to hear those words – well done my good and faithful servant.

*Daniel 3:16–18 (NKJV)*¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter."¹⁷ If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king."¹⁸ But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up."

(Rom 13:6 NKJV) For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing.

(Rom 13:7 NKJV) Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

Yes IRS is Agent of God / Jesus said Give to Caesar

It might come as a big surprise to hear that IRS agents are actually ministers of God. "We're not paying our taxes," some say. "We're part of the God, Gun, and Gold movement." Their reason? "Tax money goes to all kinds of ungodly stuff." And money sent to Caesar Nero was going to establish Christian schools and hospitals? Listen, gang, tax money in Paul's day was used for every kind of evil beyond our imagination. Yet Paul said, "Pay your taxes,"—just as Jesus did before him (Matthew 22:21). Poor Jesus was so poor, he wouldn't make in today's faith movement would He?

Steal from IRS – Steal from God

To cheat on our taxes is to steal from God, because He has told us that we are to pay our taxes, and to violate His word is to violate Him.

Conscience Fund

Verse 6 - for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing - And how they do attend continually! The IRS has a conscience fund wherein it receives fifty to one hundred million dollars annually from people who feel bad about cheating on their taxes in years past. God's law is truly written on every man's heart (Romans 2:15). One note said, "Dear Sirs, enclosed are one hundred seventy-five dollars that I owed from taxes ten years ago. P.S. If my conscience is still bothering me, I'll send the rest later."

Tribute=Income / Custom=Sales Tax

"Tribute" speaks of that which was paid annually, comparable to our income tax. "Custom" speaks of that which was paid upon purchases, comparable to a sales tax. Thus, those to whom Paul wrote were perhaps financially stretched in the same way many of us are.

Be Thankful don't Live in Europe

If you hate your taxes, be thankful that you don't live in Europe or Israel, as their tax rates or far-far worse than ours.

Honor the Position – Even if Don't Honor the Person

Honor to whom honor is due – means even if you don't respect the person, respect the position. That goes with the government, our bosses, our teachers, and our coaches.

The USA needs the Lord!

The USA needs the Lord, and I love reflecting on all the compound names of God for they are as beautiful as they are powerful. Oh how He wants to be on the throne of the USA, to be our leader. He wants to place His banner (**Jehovah Nissi**) over this Country and say here is an example to the world to see a Country whose God is the Lord. To see how I have set them apart (**Jehovah Maccaddeshcem**) unlike any other Country in the world. How I am ever present in this Country (**Jehovah Shammah**). How I will fight for them in their time of need (**Jehovah-Sabbaoth**). And, how I am their Shepherd (**Jehovah Ra**) and how I lead them and how they follow after Me.

- Jehovah Nissi - (Exodus 17:15 - The Lord God our Banner
- Jehovah Maccaddeshcem - (Leviticus 20:8) - The Lord thy Sanctifier
- Jehovah Shammah - (Ezekiel 48:35) - The Lord God our Ever Present One
- Jehovah-Sabbaoth - (1 Samuel 1:3) - The Lord of Hosts/Army/Power
- Jehovah Ra - (Psalm 23:1) - The Lord God our Shepherd

4 Words in Isaiah 53

There are four other compound names, and they deal directly with salvation, and how interesting to me that all four of these words are found in Isaiah 53, which is a prophetic passage that points to Jesus Christ. God **saw** the need for a Savior because we could have no **peace** with the holy God because of our sins (**John 3:16**), He became the Savior because only He was pure enough and **righteous** enough to be the sacrifice (**2 Cor 5:21**), and it is through His sacrifice upon the cross that we are **healed** of our sins (**John 3:16**).

- Jehovah Jireh - (Genesis 22:14) - The Lord God our Provider / The Lord that Sees
- Jehovah Shalom - (Judges 6:24) - The Lord God our Peace
- Jehovah Tsidgenuw - (Jeremiah 23:6) - The Lord God our Righteousness
- Jehovah Raphah - (Exodus 15:26) - The Lord God our Healer

Isaiah 53:1–12 (NKJV)

- ¹ *Who has believed our report?
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?*
- ² *For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant,
And as a root out of dry ground.
He has no form or comeliness;
And when we see Him,
There is no beauty that we should desire Him.*
- ³ *He is despised and rejected by men,
A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.
And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him;
He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.*
- ⁴ *Surely He has borne our griefs
And carried our sorrows;
Yet we esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten by God, and afflicted.*
- ⁵ *But He was wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities;
The chastisement for our peace (**shalom**) was upon Him,
And by His stripes we are healed (**raphah**).*
- ⁶ *All we like sheep have gone astray;
We have turned, every one, to his own way;
And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*
- ⁷ *He was oppressed and He was afflicted,
Yet He opened not His mouth;
He was led as a lamb to the slaughter,
And as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
So He opened not His mouth.*
- ⁸ *He was taken from prison and from judgment,
And who will declare His generation?
For He was cut off from the land of the living;
For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.*

- ⁹ And they made His grave with the wicked—
But with the rich at His death,
Because He had done no violence,
Nor was any deceit in His mouth.
- ¹⁰ Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him;
He has put Him to grief.
When You make His soul an offering for sin,
He shall see (*Jireh*) His seed, He shall prolong His days,
And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.
- ¹¹ He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied.
By His knowledge My righteous (*tsidqenuw*) Servant shall justify many,
For He shall bear their iniquities.
- ¹² Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great,
And He shall divide the spoil with the strong,
Because He poured out His soul unto death,
And He was numbered with the transgressors,
And He bore the sin of many,
And made intercession for the transgressors.

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV)

²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Give to Caesar – Give to God

Jesus said to give to Cesar what is Cesar and give to God what is God's. What is God's? You are (1 Cor 6) for you have been bought with a price, therefore give yourself wholly to Him, be the living sacrifice.

Matthew 22:20–22 (NKJV) ²⁰ And He said to them, "Whose image and inscription is this?" ²¹ They said to Him, "Caesar's." And He said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." ²² When they had heard these words, they marveled, and left Him and went their way.

1 Corinthians 6:19–20 (NKJV)

¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

The Ups of the Christian Life

(Romans 13:8-14)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Chapters 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Israel (Chapters 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "*The just shall live by faith.*"

Doctrine – Duty / Present our Bodies – Knowing He is For Us

After eleven glorious chapters of doctrine (all that God has done for us: justification, sanctification, and glorification) we come to duty (what is our logical responses to all that He has done for us), and that is (verses 1-2 of chapter 12), that we present our bodies as living sacrifices to Him; where we say God You are utterly and amazingly in love with me, You have nothing but the best for me because You are for me, and therefore who can come against me, therefore Lord I know Your will is the best for me, and I present myself to You, I give You my life as a living sacrifice.

(Rom 12:1 NKJV) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

(Rom 12:2 NKJV) And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Title / Outline

The title of today's message is "The Ups of the Christian Life", and we will see in our study today that we are called to:

- Pay Up (13:8)
- Fill Up (13:9-10)
- Wake Up (13:11)
- Gear Up (13:12)
- Clean Up (13:13)
- Dress Up (13:13)

Pay Up (13:8)

Fulfill the Law – Love One Another

(Rom 13:8 NKJV) Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.

Paul was just speaking of Taxes (v6-7)

Paul has just been speaking of paying taxes (vv. 6–7), so paying taxes to the government is reinforced in verse 8.

Romans 13:6–7 (NKJV) ⁶ For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. ⁷ Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

When Practice Love – No need for other Laws

But love is the heart of the matter that God wants to amplify. To "Love one another" is the basic principle of the Christian life. It is the "new commandment" that Christ gave to us (John 13:34). When we practice love, there is no need for any other laws, because love covers it all! If we love others, we will not sin against them. This explained why the Ten Commandments were not referred too often in the New Testament. In fact, the Sabbath commandment is not quoted at all

in any of the epistles. As believers, we do not live under the Law; we live under grace. Our motive for obeying God and helping others is the love of Christ in our hearts.

Love must be Key – or Else become Small and Frustrated

Love must be the key because without it, if I'm saying, "Okay, I gotta obey these laws, pay these taxes, and submit to those in authority," I will find myself becoming small, frustrated, bitter, cynical and cantankerous, confrontational and argumentative. As interesting and entertaining as some radio and television commentators who point out all the politicians who come against God's moral standards, or even pastors and evangelists who are off on their own interpretation of the word of God, if you listen to very much of them, you will find your love diminishing. Be careful. Be careful about ministries that their sole existence is to go around pointing out all the faults in all the other ministries, because if you listen to them long enough you will find yourself being critical of other Christians, but sadly (and you won't even know it) you will start becoming prideful about how great you are as a Christian. Be careful.

Owe means Financial / Hudson Taylor – Spurgeon / Bible doesn't Forbid Borrowing

Now does "Owe no man anything" refer also to the Christian's financial practices? Some people believe that it does, and that it is a sin to have a debt. J. Hudson Taylor, the godly missionary to China, would never incur a debt, basing his conviction on this verse. Charles Spurgeon, the great Baptist preacher, had the same conviction, and if that is your personal conviction you will never receive a challenge on that from me. However, the Bible does not forbid borrowing or legal financial transactions that involve interest. What the Bible does forbid is the charging of high interest, robbing the brethren, and failing to pay honest debts (see Ex. 22:25–27; Neh. 5:1–11). **Exodus 22:25–27 (NKJV)** ²⁵ "If you lend money to any of My people who are poor among you, you shall not be like a moneylender to him; you shall not charge him interest. ²⁶ If you ever take your neighbor's garment as a pledge, you shall return it to him before the sun goes down. ²⁷ For that is his only covering, it is his garment for his skin. What will he sleep in? And it will be that when he cries to Me, I will hear, for I am gracious.

Jesus approved Borrowing in Business / Farmers – Crops / Business - Equipment

In the realm of business, apart from the needy, Jesus approved of financial borrowing for the purpose of investment. In the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14–30), the master highly commended the two servants who had wisely invested his money, but he strongly rebuked the unfaithful servant who merely buried the money entrusted to him: "You ought to have put my money in the bank, and on my arrival I would have received my money back with interest" (v. 27). Many businesses could not operate without borrowing money to invest in such things as buildings, equipment, and raw materials. Many farmers could not plant new crops without borrowing money for seed and fertilizer. Most families could never afford to buy a home without taking out a mortgage. When borrowing is truly necessary, the money should be repaid as agreed upon with the lender, promptly and fully. But Scripture nowhere justifies borrowing for the purpose of buying unnecessary things, especially luxuries, that cannot be afforded. And whatever is owed must be paid on time and in full. Those financial principles are the essence of Paul's admonition to owe nothing to anyone.

Can I challenge You – Live within your Debt

Again, if your conscience or interpretation is that you should not have any type of debt, then I say go with your conscience my friend; you will never hear a challenge from me on that. But can I say to those who are alright with debt, I will challenge you on this, live within your debt. There are way too many Christians who are so buried in debt, that they are treading water ready to drown. If you notice all the "ups" I gave for us, one them wasn't "charge up", we don't need to be burying ourselves in credit card debt.

Credit Card Stats

America is 300 million people. Want to hear how many credit cards are flowing through the USA?

- Average credit card debt per household with credit card debt: \$15,788*
- 609.8 million Credit cards held by U.S. consumers. (Source: "The Survey of Consumer Payment Choice," Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, January 2010)

- Average number of credit cards held by cardholders: 3.5, as of yearend 2008 (Source: "The Survey of Consumer Payment Choice," Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, January 2010)
- Average APR on new credit card offer: 14.35 percent (Source: CreditCards.com Weekly Rate Report, Aug. 25, 2010.)
- Average APR on credit card with a balance on it: 14.48 percent, as of May, 2010 (Source: Federal Reserve's G.19 report on consumer credit, August 2010)
- Total U.S. revolving debt (98 percent of which is made up of credit card debt): \$852.6 billion, as of March 2010 (Source: Federal Reserve's G.19 report on consumer credit, March 2010)
- Total U.S. consumer debt: \$2.42 trillion, as of June 2010 (Source: Federal Reserve's G.19 report on consumer credit, August 2010)
- U.S. credit card 60-day delinquency rate: 4.27 percent. (Source: Fitch Ratings, April 2010)
- U.S. credit card default rate: 13.01 percent. (Source: Fitch Ratings, April 2010)

Money is a Marriage Killer

Let me tell you something I have recognized in the ministry, and I make it a very direct topic in pre-marriage counseling, and that is that money is often a marriage killer. One study reported that 57% of all the divorces, money was the reason. You see money, leads to some many other areas. Money causes stress which decreases intimacy, money cause arguments which decreases communication (and intimacy), money spent on stuff can cause distancing because now you have to maintain your stuff, and you don't have time for each other. Money is a marriage killer, so make sure you keep your money in balance.

Financial Tips / Envelope System / Credit Card in Freezer

If you have a never ending problem of charging with your credit card money you don't have, then may I suggest to you about going to the envelope system for a year. First get your mortgage and car payment on the auto-deduct from your checking account. Then figure out based on what you have left, what the budget is for the other things like food, energy, entertainment. Then what you do is make envelopes with your monthly spending like groceries, entertainment, eating out, etc into envelopes titled the same, and you allocate how much you can spend in each of those areas each month, and when the money is gone, it is gone until next month. You may want to cut up your credit cards until you get your discipline down, or if you can't have peace without knowing you have the credit card in case of an emergency, I recommend freezing your credit cards in a block of ice, and thus it will at least make you have to wait for the ice to melt to use it, and maybe the emergency won't be as urgent as you think it is by the time it melts. Now if you defrost the ice in the microwave to speed up the process, and you melt your credit card in the process, please let us know so we can all have a laugh.

Charge only what Pay

My personal rule is that I never charge anything that I can't payoff that month. I got my first credit card in 1986, and have never paid a penny on interest as I pay it off every month. The discipline keeps me from compulsive buying, and secondly it makes me really think about what I am willing to drain out of my savings account.

6-12 Month Reserve

These are tough economic times, and so I recommend that you have at least a 6 month, if not 12 month, cash reserve on hand (not credit limit, or your 401K, or pension plan), but 12 month cash reserve on hand in case you get laid off. That will give you 12 months to find a job without losing your home, your car, and other things. This exercise will force you to see and realize how much money you spend every month, and how much of it may be wasteful, and it may show you how overextended you are in areas that you really shouldn't be. If you have 15,000 in credit debt, you have a double whammy, in that you have to get your credit card debt down while at the same getting your cash reserve built up. It is a tough battle.

15\$ times equals 180 / Times 20 equals 3600

Hey it's only 15 dollars more a month (for that thing) equals is 180 dollars a year. Only 15 dollars more a month times 20 things times 12 months is 3,600 dollars.

Must Tithe

Hey this isn't a money plea, but God's Biblical model on tithing has a powerful dynamic behind it. Not only does it teach you to trust God, releases you from the grip of this world, but it also supernaturally teaches you financial wisdom (any anyone who is there knows what I mean, and for those who don't, you'll only know by taking step one – tithe). God says "test me on this", and when you do, you will see His power!

Malachi 3:8–10 (NKJV)

- ⁸ "Will a man rob God?
Yet you have robbed Me!
But you say,
'In what way have we robbed You?'
In tithes and offerings.
- ⁹ You are cursed with a curse,
For you have robbed Me,
Even this whole nation.
- ¹⁰ Bring all the tithes into the storehouse,
That there may be food in My house,
And try Me now in this,"
Says the LORD of hosts,
"If I will not open for you the windows of heaven
And pour out for you *such* blessing
That *there will not be room* enough to receive it.

Fill Up (13:9-10)

(Rom 13:9 NKJV) For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

(Rom 13:10 NKJV) Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

613 Laws – Summed up in 1

All of the laws God has given—six hundred thirteen according to the Rabbis—are summed up in a singular word: love. Love is the fulfillment of the Law, and we are called to "fill up". Our debt is to God, and our payment is to man.

Not Prioritized – They all Support the Greatest / Adultery – Murder – Steal – Truth - Covet

These commands aren't prioritized that loving your neighbor is the greatest, and the others are lesser, but what is being said when we read passages like this is that other commandments all support this great commandment of loving your neighbor. Who is your neighbor? Your spouse, be faithful to them (and the spouse of the other who you would be unfaithful with). Value the sanctity of marriage. Who is your neighbor? The person across the street who steals your parking space. Don't hate them (for Jesus says if you have hatred in your heart you are guilty of murder). Value the sanctity of Life, that every person is God's creation. May I say it again, that child in the womb is your neighbor. We see the sacredness of truth, as we are not to bear false witness against who, our neighbor. All the commandments of God are based on truth, all of order is based on truth, and we will never love God or our neighbor if we don't hold truth as sacred. Coveting is saying "more", it is dissatisfaction with what we have in life. At the very base of it all, it is us saying God You have left me lacking, for You have not supplied all my desires. You will never enter into that place of growth with God, and it will never translate into a life of loving your neighbor, when we are a coveting person, because we will always be looking for more (for ourselves) and thus we will always be consumed with ourselves, and thus never able to go on to the mature things of the Lord.

Good Samaritan / Priest – Levite – Recognizes his Neighbor Stops

Jesus tells the story of the Good Samaritan, and it is interesting to see who doesn't help.

- First it is the priest, the spiritual one, and to touch the man would make him ceremonially unclean for 7 days and thus he would not be able to serve in the Temple. Hey I don't have time to help because I got to get to church, I got to get to the prayer meeting, I got to get to my small group, I don't have time to actually help people.
- Then there is the Levite, and they were not in the lineage of Aaron to be priests, but they were of the family of Levi and they served in the maintenance of the Temple. This Jericho road was twenty miles long, dropping thirty-six hundred feet in elevation, the road from Jerusalem to Jericho was widely known as "the Bloody Way" due to the great number of thieves who lay in wait thereupon to ambush unsuspecting travelers. This being the case, maybe the Levite said why was this man traveling that road alone? It was his foolishness, He brought this upon himself. And, maybe he said I just don't have time to help for I got to get to work, I got to be a good worker.
- The person who recognizes his neighbor is the one who stops and gets involved in their neighbors life. Is involved in their trials and their triumphs, they rejoice with their rejoicing and weep with their weeping. They come and get involved in their lives even when they made a mistake.

Luke 10:25–37 (NKJV) ²⁵ And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" ²⁶ He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" ²⁷ So he answered and said, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'" ²⁸ And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." ²⁹ But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" ³⁰ Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. ³¹ Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³² Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. ³³ But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. ³⁴ So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵ On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' ³⁶ So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" ³⁷ And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Get Involved – may mean to Dis-Involve

To get involved many times means we have to become dis-involved in something of our own.

Pearls before Breakfast – Article in Washington Times - Sunday, April 8, 2007

HE EMERGED FROM THE METRO AT THE L'ENFANT PLAZA STATION AND POSITIONED HIMSELF AGAINST A WALL BESIDE A TRASH BASKET. By most measures, he was nondescript: a youngish white man in jeans, a long-sleeved T-shirt and a Washington Nationals baseball cap. From a small case, he removed a violin. Placing the open case at his feet, he shrewdly threw in a few dollars and pocket change as seed money, swiveled it to face pedestrian traffic, and began to play. It was 7:51 a.m. on Friday, January 12, the middle of the morning rush hour. In the next 43 minutes, as the violinist performed six classical pieces, 1,097 people passed by. Almost all of them were on the way to work, which meant, for almost all of them, a government job. L'Enfant Plaza is at the nucleus of federal Washington, and these were mostly mid-level bureaucrats with those indeterminate, oddly fungible titles: policy analyst, project manager, budget officer, specialist, facilitator, consultant. Each passerby had a quick choice to make, one familiar to commuters in any urban area where the occasional street performer is part of the cityscape: Do you stop and listen? Do you hurry past with a blend of guilt and irritation, aware of your cupidity but annoyed by the unbidden demand on your time and your wallet? Do you throw in a buck, just to be polite? Does your decision change if he's really bad? What if he's really good? Do you have time for beauty? Shouldn't you? What's the moral mathematics of the moment? On that Friday in January, those private questions would be answered in an unusually public way. No one knew it, but the fiddler standing against a bare wall outside the Metro in an indoor arcade at the top of the escalators was one of the finest classical musicians in the world, playing some of the most elegant music ever written on one of the most valuable violins ever made. His performance was arranged by The Washington Post as an experiment in context, perception and priorities -- as well as an unblinking assessment of public taste: In a banal setting at an inconvenient time, would beauty transcend? The musician did not play popular tunes whose familiarity alone might have drawn interest. That was not the test. These were masterpieces that have endured for centuries on their brilliance alone, soaring music befitting the grandeur of cathedrals and concert halls. The acoustics proved surprisingly kind. Though the arcade is of utilitarian design, a buffer between the Metro escalator and the outdoors, it somehow caught the sound and bounced it back round and resonant. The violin is an instrument that is said to be much like the human voice, and in this musician's masterly hands, it sobbed and laughed and sang -- ecstatic, sorrowful, importuning, adoring, flirtatious, castigating, playful, romancing, merry, triumphal, sumptuous. So, what do you think happened? "Well, who was the musician?" Joshua Bell. A onetime child prodigy, at 39 Joshua Bell has arrived as an internationally acclaimed virtuoso. Three days before he appeared at the Metro station, Bell had filled

the house at Boston's stately Symphony Hall, where merely pretty good seats went for \$100. Two weeks later, at the Music Center at Strathmore, in North Bethesda, he would play to a standing-room-only audience so respectful of his artistry that they stifled their coughs until the silence between movements. But on that Friday in January, Joshua Bell was just another mendicant, competing for the attention of busy people on their way to work. Bell always performs on the same instrument, and he ruled out using another for this gig. Called the Gibson ex Huberman, it was handcrafted in 1713 by Antonio Stradivari during the Italian master's "golden period," toward the end of his career, when he had access to the finest spruce, maple and willow, and when his technique had been refined to perfection. "Our knowledge of acoustics is still incomplete," Bell said, "but he, he just . . . knew." Bell doesn't mention Stradivari by name. Just "he." When the violinist shows his Strad to people, he holds the instrument gingerly by its neck, resting it on a knee. "He made this to perfect thickness at all parts," Bell says, pivoting it. "If you shaved off a millimeter of wood at any point, it would totally imbalance the sound." No violins sound as wonderful as Strads from the 1710s, still. The front of Bell's violin is in nearly perfect condition, with a deep, rich grain and luster. The back is a mess, its dark reddish finish bleeding away into a flatter, lighter shade and finally, in one section, to bare wood. "This has never been refinished," Bell said. "That's his original varnish. People attribute aspects of the sound to the varnish. Each maker had his own secret formula." Stradivari is thought to have made his from an ingeniously balanced cocktail of honey, egg whites and gum arabic from sub-Saharan trees. Like the instrument in "The Red Violin," this one has a past filled with mystery and malice. Twice, it was stolen from its illustrious prior owner, the Polish virtuoso Bronislaw Huberman. The first time, in 1919, it disappeared from Huberman's hotel room in Vienna but was quickly returned. The second time, nearly 20 years later, it was pinched from his dressing room in Carnegie Hall. He never got it back. It was not until 1985 that the thief -- a minor New York violinist -- made a deathbed confession to his wife, and produced the instrument. Bell bought it a few years ago. He had to sell his own Strad and borrow much of the rest. The price tag was reported to be about \$3.5 million. In the three-quarters of an hour that Joshua Bell played, seven people stopped what they were doing to hang around and take in the performance, at least for a minute. Twenty-seven gave money, most of them on the run -- for a total of \$32 and change. That leaves the 1,070 people who hurried by, oblivious, many only three feet away, few even turning to look.

Masterpieces Before Us

Christian, there are masterpieces before us every day, they are God's masterpiece, they are in our work place, they are at the grocery store, across the street, in our schools, at the kids soccer games.....they are there if only we slow down to take a look and see them. May we live beyond ourselves, may we live outside of ourselves, may we get involved in the lives of the masterpieces around us.

Wake Up (13:11)

Walk Properly – Awake out of Sleep

(Rom 13:11 NKJV) And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.

Speaks of a Season

Time, this word speaks of a season (like winter, spring, summer, fall). The cool mornings this week, and green leaves starting to turn yellow or red, tells us that fall will soon be upon us.

We are Closer than Paul Was

We are closer to the coming of the Lord than any other generation in the history of the Church.

Yes because we are 2,000 years beyond when Paul wrote this

1 Thessalonians 4:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Listening to Study from 10 Years Ago

I was listening to a bible study from ten years ago and the pastor was all fired up taking about Jesus is going to return at any moment. He said there is talk about a company that says they think they can make a chip that can go inside the body (haha – DONE!). He didn't even mention (because it wasn't even a thought) Babylon reborn, European Union being formed, a cry for reform to have a one-world financial system. Oh, we more than any church period should be wide-awake, for the season is before us, I see the leaves changing colors, I know fall is upon us.

Gear Up (13:12)

(Rom 13:12 NKJV) The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

Armor Protects the Body / Go on Offensive while Protected

Armor – that which is used in warfare to protect the body from harm. That which is used in warfare so the soldier can aggressively go on the offensive and be protected from blows delivered from the enemy.

What is Armor – Romans 12:1-2

What is the armor of light? It is not being conformed to this world (and all it says it good), but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds (as the Lord says here is what is good, well pleasing to me, and what mature followers are to be and do). This verse is Romans 12:1-2 rephrased for us.

Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Get Dressed for War / Night Far Spent / No PJ's / Not Playground / Follow Captain

The Bible speaks of armor in several places, and armor is associated with war. May I translate this verse for us, and it is God saying, “get dressed for war”. The night is far spent, means get out of your pajamas and battle on your battle gear, for we are at war. Christian, the earth is not a playground, it is a battleground, it is a war zone, it is a Hot LZ (hot landing zone), and Jesus Christ is coming soon, and Satan knows it, and the landing zone is under intense fire as the Evil one is doing all he can do to seek and destroy (saved and unsaved alike). If you have been enjoying the sleeping in, the “I’ll have another latte please”, the flannel pj’s, the Lord is saying get up, get it on, drink your coffee black, for we are at war. The Captain of our salvation is calling out to us to follow Him, and He is not leading us to victory, but from victory (the cross), and we are now called to go and possess the land. We need not make any excuse for defeat, we have no case to say I can’t overcome this or I’ll never defeat that, for we fight not to victory but from victory, and if the Captain of our Salvation is leading the charge, who could possible defeat us – for if God is for us who can be against us.

Hebrews 2:10 (NKJV)¹⁰ For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Romans 8:31–32 (NKJV)³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

Live in Way – Think all is Seen / Work – Internet - Cable

Christian live in such a way that you believe you are always being seen, that people are watching you. I try to always remind myself at work that somewhere along the way I am going to get to have a personal conversation with the people I work with, and when we do and they find out I am a sold-out Christian, they won’t reflect back on past meetings and go “really?”. Me personally, I cruise the internet like some day, someone, is going to publish all the websites I visited (by the way, your internet provider has all your history). I cruise the cable like at any given moment my wife or son is going to walk into the room. I want to be found blameless.

Days are Darker – Your Light is Brighter

For all you who are walking in the Light, have put off the works of the flesh, oh double blessing to you, God is so pleased with you. Now you may feel that you aren’t a Light though, that although you are living a life for the Lord your witness is weak, you may even feel somewhat defeated, Good news Christian, we live in dark days, therefore it isn’t hard to be the light of the world. As the days get darker, your light gets brighter and brighter, so you just keep on keeping on, and God’s glory will be seen emanating from you.

Matthew 5:14–16 (NKJV)¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.¹⁵ Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Indeed Far Spent – Live in Dark Days – we Headed for Sunrise

Indeed, the night is far spent. We live in dark days. But we're headed for sunrise—the coming of the risen Son!

Live – So people see where Jesus Lives

May we live in such a way, that all who look upon us, sees where Jesus lives. I am reminded of a wonderful story:

Unfavorable winds blow the ship off course, and when they do, the sailors spot uncharted islands. They see half a dozen mounds rising out of the blue South Seas waters. The captain orders the men to drop anchor and goes ashore. He is a robust man with a barrel chest, full beard, and curious soul. On the first island he sees nothing but sadness. Underfed children. Tribes in conflict. No farming or food development, no treatment for the sick, and no schools. Just simple, needy people. The second and following islands reveal more of the same. The captain sighs at what he sees. "This is no life for these people." But what can he do?

Then he steps onto the last and largest island. The people are healthy and well fed. Irrigation systems nourish their fields, and roads connect the villages. The children have bright eyes and strong bodies. The captain asks the chief for an explanation. How has this island moved so far ahead of the others? The chief, who is smaller than the captain but every bit his equal in confidence, gives a quick response: "Father Benjamin. He educated us in everything from agriculture to health. He built schools and clinics and dug wells." The captain asks, "Can you take me to see him, take me to where he lives?" The chief nods and signals for two tribesmen to join him.

They guide the captain over a jungle ridge to a simple, expansive medical clinic. It is equipped with clean beds and staffed with trained caretakers. They show the captain the shelves of medicine and introduce him to the staff. The captain, though impressed, sees nothing of Father Benjamin. He repeats his request. "I would like to see Father Benjamin. Can you take me to where he lives?"

The three natives look puzzled. They confer among themselves. After several minutes the chief invites, "Follow us to the other side of the island." They walk along the shoreline until they reach a series of fishponds. Canals connect the ponds to the ocean. As the tide rises, fish pass from the ocean into the ponds. The islanders then lower canal gates and trap the fish for harvest. Again the captain is amazed. He meets fishermen and workers, gatekeepers and net casters. But he sees nothing of Father Benjamin. He wonders if he is making himself clear. "I don't see Father Benjamin. Please take me to where he lives."

The trio talks alone again. After some discussion the chief offers, "Let's go up the mountain." They lead the captain up a steep, narrow path. After many twists and turns the path deposits them in front of a grass-roofed chapel. The voice of the chief is soft and earnest. "He has taught us about God." He escorts the captain inside and shows him the altar, a large wooden cross, several rows of benches, and a Bible. "Is this where Father Benjamin lives?" the captain asks. The men nod and smile. "May I talk to him?" Their faces grow suddenly serious. "Oh, that would be impossible." "Why?" "He died many years ago." The bewildered captain stares at the men. "I asked to see him, and you showed me a clinic, some fish farms, and this chapel. You said nothing of his death." "You didn't ask about his death," the chief explains. "You asked to see where he lives. We showed you."

May world See – Jesus is Alive and Well – Living Amongst Us

Oh may the world see where Jesus is living, and that see that He is living in us, and our Light clearly displays that, that the world sees that Jesus is alive and well and is living amongst His people.

Clean Up (13:13)

(Rom 13:13 NKJV) Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.

Saint Augustine

"Take up and read," said the voice. He did; he found a verse in Romans; and it changed both his life and all of subsequent Christian history.

He was St. Augustine of Hippo, born in A.D. 354 in North Africa to a pagan father and a devout mother. Patricius, the father, was described as a man of "fiery temper and dissolute habits," and Augustine followed robustly in his path. The young man was full of revelry and drunkenness, lewdness and lust. He enjoyed life with all its vices, and his mother Monica's warnings against fornication and false religions fell on deaf ears. By young adulthood, he had fathered a child, joined a cult, and become a professor of rhetoric and philosophy.

Years passed, but Augustine's mother Monica never stopped praying for her wayward son. Few men have been so assaulted by a mother's prayers. She followed him across the Mediterranean, praying for him and pleading with him to give his life to Christ. She nipped at his heels like the hound of heaven. In Milan she finally persuaded him to listen to the great Bishop Ambrose, and gradually the prodigal began contemplating Christianity. One day as Augustine sat in a friend's garden, he overheard a child chanting, "Take up and read!"

Restraining a rush of tears, I got up, concluding that I should open the Bible and read the first chapter I came to. I seized it, opened it and immediately read in silence the paragraph on which my eyes first fell: "... not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts." Instantly at the end of that sentence, as if a light had streamed into my heart, all the darkness of my doubt fled away.

Augustine went quickly to tell his overjoyed mother of his conversion. Monica died contentedly soon afterward, her prayers answered, her work done. But her illustrious son went on to become one of the greatest thinkers in church history.

Living in this Hope – Purifies Us / Clean-Up

Living in the light of His soon return will make us live Holy lives, as we are called to "clean up".
1 John 3:2-3 (NKJV) ² *Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.* ³ *And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*

People are Depressed

Can I share a powerful point with you, and that is that many people (saved and unsaved) are living in lives of depression because they don't live in the light of His soon return, thus they get caught up in this world (which will always leave you lacking), and secondly – people are living in depression because they are living in rebellion to the word of God.

Cain's Depression

His offering rejected, Cain became angry and bitter. The phrase, "his countenance fell," constitutes the first mention of depression in the Bible. Thus, according to the Principle of First Mention which holds that the first place a subject appears in Scripture contains foundational principles regarding said subject—Cain's depression holds truths for us... In other words, "If you choose to do well, your countenance will be lifted up as it was previously."

Genesis 4:1-7 (NKJV) *Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have acquired a man from the LORD."* ² *Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.* ³ *And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD.* ⁴ *Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering,* ⁵ *but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.* ⁶ *So the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?"* ⁷ *If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it."*

First Step – Repentance

The first step for the lifting of depression is "repentance". Acts 3:19 tells us that times of refreshing comes with repentance. The word there for "refreshing" means "to cool again, to cool off, recover from the effects of heat, to refresh (one's spirit), to recover breath, take the air, cool off, revive, refresh one's self."

Acts 3:19-20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ *Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,* ²⁰ *and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before,*

It is a Choice

If you choose not to do well, Cain, sin lies at the door like a lion ready to attack. You will either be lifted up, or you will be attacked. It's your choice." Although I feel like a prophet crying in the wilderness as I go against the flow of what our culture says about depression, I remain biblically persuaded that many people today are seeking medical help for depression when in reality it is often a spiritual issue. Interestingly, even the research done by the pharmaceutical companies who manufacture antidepressants corroborate this, for their studies indicate that, due to the reduction of serotonin—a chemical in the brain which governs emotional stability, it is impossible

for those who are clinically depressed to simply will themselves out of depression. I believe this is what Scripture has indicated all along, for bitterness and anger, sin and resentment affect the chemistry of one's brain. Thus, the pharmacist and the pastor differ not in the diagnosis of depression, but in the cure. The pharmacist says, "Take a pill." The pastor says, "Make a choice." Gang, we can choose to put on the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness (Isaiah 61:3). We can choose to rejoice in the Lord (1 Thessalonians 5:16). We can choose to pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17). We can choose to give thanks in everything (1 Thessalonians 5:18). We can choose to think on whatever is pure and lovely and praiseworthy (Philippians 4:8). "If you choose right," God said to Cain, "you'll be lifted up. But if you don't, the lion of depression will eat you for lunch." I am not suggesting that we should never use medication. But as a pastor, I am concerned and saddened by how many Christians in our country are popping pills. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" David asked when he faced depression like ours. What was his prescription? "Hope thou in God" (Psalm 42:11). "My bones ache. My eyes weep. I feel as though there's gravel in my teeth," cried Jeremiah in his own deep, dark depression. His cure? "I will lift up my heart with my hands unto the heavens" (Lamentations 3:41). Although I am increasingly convinced that there are people who, because of difficulties in life, can benefit from wise and prudent medical help in this arena, such is not the norm because as you read the Bible from cover to cover, it becomes clear that the issue regarding depression is primarily an issue of choice. God didn't say, "I know you're sad, Cain. Here, drink this; swallow that; and you'll be better in the morning." No, He said, "Your bitterness is causing your countenance to fall. If you choose to do well—to obey My Word—you'll be lifted up. If you don't choose well, you'll be eaten up."

Isaiah 61:1-3 (NKJV)

*"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me,
Because the LORD has anointed Me
To preach good tidings to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives,
And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD,
And the day of vengeance of our God;
To comfort all who mourn,
3 To console those who mourn in Zion,
To give them beauty for ashes,
The oil of joy for mourning,
The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;
That they may be called trees of righteousness,
The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."*

1 Thessalonians 5:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Rejoice always,

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ pray without ceasing,

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Philippians 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

Psalms 42:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ *Why are you cast down, O my soul?
And why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God;
For I shall yet praise Him,
The help of my countenance and my God.*

Lamentations 3:41 (NKJV)

⁴¹ *Let us lift our hearts and hands
To God in heaven.*

Dress Up (13:14)

(Rom 13:14 NKJV) But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

Put Off - Got to Put On

When you put something off (the provision for the flesh), then you have to put something on. People continually try to take things off (I'm going to curb my tongue, quit drinking or drugging, going to be nicer to people), hey that is all great but eventually you will find yourself falling back into those things again because you didn't replace it with the power source – Jesus Christ. There are all kinds of self-help books and programs out there, but they all eventually fade, because the person didn't put on the Lord Jesus Christ, they didn't say Lord live in me, live through, Lord teach me, Lord lead me, Lord I don't want You to just be the center of my life, I want you to be my life.

Nothing Moves Him – He is Mighty / What Moves His Heart – Is You!

Oh how mighty and awesome our God. He sits upon the throne and nothing can move Him, nothing can overcome Him, and it is He that is for us, deeply in love with us. No evil can move Him, no government can overthrow Him, but I will tell you what moves His heart, and that is you. He is so deeply in love with you. I always seek the Lord before I start my studying for the next message, and this week I asked the Lord what is it that you want your people to hear, and immediately my heart was flooded with how pleased He is with you, and how deeply you move His heart. He is deeply and completely in Love with You! You are well-pleasing to Him!

***Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV)** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

Title / Outline

“The Ups of the Christian Life”:

- Pay Up (13:8)
- Fill Up (13:9-10)
- Wake Up (13:11)
- Gear Up (13:12)
- Clean Up (13:13)
- Dress Up (13:13)

Chapter 14

Unity amongst the Differences (Romans 14:1-23)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Chapters 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Israel (Chapters 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Doctrine – Duty / Present our Bodies – Knowing He is For Us

After eleven glorious chapters of doctrine (all that God has done for us: justification, sanctification, and glorification) we come to duty (what is our logical responses to all that He has done for us), and that is (verses 1-2 of chapter 12), that we present our bodies as living sacrifices to Him; where we say God You are utterly and amazingly in love with me, You have nothing but the best for me because You are for me, and therefore who can come against me, therefore Lord I know Your will is the best for me, and I present myself to You, I give You my life as a living sacrifice.

(Rom 12:1 NKJV) *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

(Rom 12:2 NKJV) *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

Cp12 – Functioning in Body / Chp 13 – in Society / Chp 14 – in Controversy

Here, in the final five chapters of the Book of Romans, Professor Paul takes us to class: Applied Christianity 101. Chapter 12 deals primarily with functioning in the body. Chapter 13 deals with functioning in society. As we are about to see, chapter 14 deals with functioning in controversy, particularly controversies within the church family.

Jesus Prayer – That we may be One

Jesus, in his High Priestly prayer, prayed for unity not only for his disciples, but for us, and may we lay down our lives for the sake of unity. Chapter 14 can almost seem like a light chapter, a break in the intense word we have been studying, but I suggest to you that God put chapter 14 all the way back here so we would grow and mature through 13 chapters and be mature enough spiritually to heed and apply this word. Christians judging one another, is a great (if not the greatest) hindrance to spiritual growth of individuals, and the greatest destruction within the church, all the while the world looks on at the division within the church and says, no thank you. Jesus said the world will know we are his by our love one for another. So chapter 14, a vital passage for every Christian.

John 17:20–21 (NKJV) ²⁰ *"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; ²¹ that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.*

John 13:35 (NKJV) ³⁵ *By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."*

Non-Negotiable / Grey Areas

Now there are those areas that are non-negotiable; the gospel of grace, the virgin birth, the resurrection, Jesus is God, and then the areas such adultery, fornication, drunkardness – all non-negotiable because the Word is black and white regarding them. But there are many areas that are somewhat grey, and the church is continually divided over them. Here are a few I thought of:

- **Movies:** Some Christians think they should never patronize a commercial theater. Others think they can, but that they should be selective, just as they are with the literature they

read. Some think anything to do with Walt Disney should be boycotted because they are promoted New Age philosophies.

- **Cosmetics:** This is not the issue it used to be, but it is controversial in certain parts of the world. I know churches where they consider it a sin for woman to wear any makeup.
- **Alcohol:** Alcohol is a major issue among American Christians today. Ironically, while there is growing medical evidence of its harmful physical and social effects, more Christians are exercising their freedom to partake. Hence rising tension.
- **Tobacco:** Traditionally, the Mason and Dixon Line has been the dividing line for the use and non-use of tobacco among many evangelical Christians.
- **Card playing/Lotto/Casinos:** Because of its association with gambling, Christians are ambivalent about the use of traditional cards. The controversy can also include similar games, as was mentioned above.
- **Dancing:** For some Christians this is a litmus test, especially among youth.
- **Fashion:** Trendiness is viewed by some Christians as worldliness. Withering judgments are sometimes made both ways on the basis of clothing and hair style, how high the neckline should be, and how low the skirt should be below the knee.
- **Bible translation used:** In some Christian circles your translation can be a quick ticket for acceptance or rejection.
- **Sports:** I know of young Christians who consider competitive sports sinful and ego-exalting.
- **Music:** Today a heated controversy goes on regarding appropriate Christian music, and if a Christian is in sin if they listen to any type of secular music, not just the raunchy music.
- **Material wealth:** This tension is manifested in such forms as: “Stop me if I’m wrong, George, but haven’t you—uh, been spending a lot of money on a car?” “Nope.” “No? You don’t think the money could be better used, say, in the leprosy fund?”
- **Christmas and Easter:** Then there is the Christmas and Easter debate, Satan Claus as some call him, and the Christmas tree.

Title / Outline

The title of today’s message is “Unity amongst the Differences”, and the outline is as follows:

- **Unity amongst the Differences**
 - May we Receive (14:1-4)
 - May we Perceive (14:5-6)
 - May we Conceive (14:7-9)
 - May we not be Deceived (14:10-23)

That they may be One

John 17:20–21 (NKJV) ²⁰ “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; ²¹ that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

John 13:35 (NKJV) ³⁵ “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

1.) Unity amongst the Differences - May we Receive (14:1-4)

Right from the Start – Receive others as God has

Right from the start God calls us to receive that brother or sister in the Lord just as they are.....just as He has done. Just as He has received you (with flaw and all), we receive the call/command to do the same with our brother and sister (flaws and all).

Let’s be Honest / Lord search Me

Christian, let us start our study with total honesty, and total reality, and that is that we are not in our glorified bodies (saved yes – perfected no), and we must be honest with ourselves and admit that in our fallen state we still have to battle that critical and judgmental attitude that is still always there ready to lift its ugly head. Let’s be honest with ourselves today, we need this study badly,

and we need to go to higher ground, saying Lord search me and try me, show me my true thoughts:

Psalm 139:23 (ESV) ²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!

Pray

Receive the one who is Weak – Don't Judge another mans Servant

(Rom 14:1 NKJV) Receive one who is weak in the faith, but not to disputes over doubtful things.

(Rom 14:2 NKJV) For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables.

(Rom 14:3 NKJV) Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him.

God has received Them / If You are being Judged

Verse 3 - for God has received him – God has received him is the foundational statement of the whole chapter, the whole point, and that is that man is not to reject or judge, whom God has received, who God has purchased with His blood. If you are being judged yourself, know this, God receives you as you are with your personal convictions, and He does not judge you.

Woman applies for Church Membership

The story is told of a poor, simple woman who visited an upper class, sophisticated church.... After attending for some time, she applied for church membership. Her application was rejected. She sent a second one a few months later, which was also returned. After a third and a fourth, she went to the chairman of the membership committee and said, "Why are my applications being rejected?" "You need to go home and pray," answered the chairman. "And I think the Lord will show you what the real issues are." A few years later, the chairman saw her scrubbing floors in a hotel lobby and said to her, "You haven't made application for membership lately. In fact, I don't think I've seen you in church at all. Tell me, when I sent you home to pray, did God speak to you?" "Why, yes," answered the woman, "He did. He told me not to feel bad about being rejected because He tried to join your church for twenty years before He finally gave up."

Enjoy the weak – Don't Pass Judgment / The Strong – are the Weak / Christian - Anything?

Verses 1 - but not to disputes over doubtful things - The phrase "but not to doubtful disputations" means "without passing judgment on disputable material." In other words, Paul's injunction is to receive those who are weak in the faith. Embrace and enjoy them without passing judgment on the areas in which you don't see eye to eye. Who is the one who is weak in faith? The answer, to me, is quite revealing, as we will see that the person who thinks they are the spiritual one because of all their spiritual-convictions, are really the ones that are spiritual immature. Christian, is there anything that the Holy Spirit may be trying to say to you right now?

Weak – Most Morally Upright

The weak brother, as we are going to see as the chapter unfolds, is the one who seems to be the most morally upright, the one who is most rigid in discipline, the one who appears to have the highest standards of conduct.

Rome at the Time / Idols & Religion

In Paul's day, the controversy in the church at Rome centered on meat. Those who didn't eat meat were uptight and upset with those who did because the meat had been sacrificed to idols before being sold in open-air markets at a discount. "How can you eat meat that has been offered to idols?" asked the vegetarian believers. "It's a bargain," answered the carnivores. Perhaps the controversy arose because Jewish legalists were trying to burden Gentile believers with Jewish dietary laws. Whatever the reason, the vegetarians looked down their noses on the meat-eaters. But in reality, the vegetarians were the weaker brothers. Amazing. The more legalistic and uptight a man is, the weaker he is. It's not those who walk around as though they've been baptized in lemon juice, looking down their noses and reciting a list of do's and don'ts that

are the stronger Christians. Quite the opposite. "Receive the weaker brother," Paul says. "Receive the one who is religious, the one who's uptight, the one who's always looking down on others. Don't engage in controversy with him—just understand he's a weaker brother."

Receive him as he is

Receive him as he is, receive him just as Christ did.

Father's Agenda Different than Ours

Do you realize God doesn't care about a lot of things we get upset about, fight over, and debate? The Father's agenda is a whole lot different from ours. Sad to say, the things that shock us most are insignificant when compared to the bigger issues of eternity. We become so engaged in miniscule rules and regulations, political discussions and theological hairsplitting that we miss the big picture entirely. I'm convinced God doesn't care about most of the things we discuss endlessly. He's concerned about people being saved, brought into the kingdom, walking in the Spirit, and growing in grace.

3,000 an Hour going to Hell

People are often shocked and appalled at how someone else could do something other than what they themselves have liberty to do. Trips are laid on people. Fights start. Churches split. Sadly, based on the statistic produced by a large evangelistic organization, 3,000 people die every hour, rejecting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and enter into the fires of hell, and the Church is arguing and dividing over the non-essentials.

(Rom 14:4 NKJV) Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.

Memory Verse

This is one of my life memory verses, as the Lord calls it to my mind anytime I am going to lay a charge against another man, especially in terms of judging another man's ministry (that pastor, that church). God says don't be judging another man's ministry, He will take care of that.

People put Down Another – Not Realizing God Holds him Up / God is Faithful

Verses 4 - he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand - I like that! God makes to stand the person I can't understand. The person I want to put down, God Himself holds up. Others may think, you're not going to make it. But what they fail to factor in is God's grace and mercy and His faithfulness to see us through.

We judge – Because think we are so Right

You know why we judge others? It is because we think we are so right, but what if we are not as right as we think we are, or..... what if it is we who are wrong.

Conductor on Train

A conductor on the train from Basil, Switzerland, to Germany looked out the window and noticed unfamiliar scenery. "Leave immediately!" he said to everyone in the car. "You are all on the wrong train!" The passengers looked at one another quizzically and confused. Questioning the conductor, they learned that it was he who was on the wrong train. Those who judge others essentially tell everyone else they are on the wrong train.

Woman goes to Doctor

A young woman went to her doctor complaining of pain. "Where are you hurting?" asked the doctor. "You have to help me, I hurt all over", said the woman. "What do you mean, all over?" asked the doctor, "be a little more specific." The woman touched her right knee with her index finger and yelled, "Owe, that hurts." Then she touched her left cheek and again yelled, "Ouch! That hurts, too." Then she touched her right earlobe, "Ouch, even THAT hurts", she cried. The doctor checked her thoughtfully for a moment and told her his diagnosis; "Here is your problem

the doctor says, you have a broken finger." Christian, maybe it is us who are broken, and not that other person.

Let God Judge – We Love / Receive them as Christ Has

Let God be the judge, and we love. Receive that brother and sister just as they are, just as Christ has, and we will have unity, we will be one as the Lord desires for His Church and churches.

Remember this – You did not need the Blood any Less

Remember this Christian; you did not need the blood of Jesus any less than the person you may be judging.

2.) Unity amongst the Differences - May we Perceive (14:5-6)

What they Perceive is Reality

What a person perceives (identifies with, applies to their life), is their reality – whether it is our reality or not.

(Rom 14:5 NKJV) One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind.

Not just Diet – but Days / 7 Day Adventist (Dogma – Cult)

This controversy was not only about diets but also about days. There were some who suggested the proper day to worship was on Saturday, the traditional Sabbath (as the Jews may have struggled with). Others said worship should take place on the first day of the week—Resurrection day, Sunday (as they heard that is when the apostles gathered – later written in the Book of Acts). This debate still rages today, as many Seventh Day Adventists who embrace the older traditions believe that those who worship on Sunday are in danger of losing their salvation. Now the Seventh Day Adventists are split into two camps; one group believes you should worship on Saturday because that is the OT Sabbath. The other group believes that to worship on Sunday is the Mark of the Beast, and that those who worship on Sunday are going to hell; for this group they are a cult because they add something on to salvation, they say that the blood of Jesus is not enough for salvation, that man has to do certain works to be saved. That is a cult.

Best Advice – Good Person Test

The first group I've met plenty of them, and they are just sweet wonderful people, who I consider our brothers and sisters in the Lord. Now for the second group, let me give you the best advice I got, don't get bogged down with them over endless debates. You may have success in trying to show them scripturally that their doctrine is in error, but usually what happens is they just wear you out with a continually debate that ends with you just having cast your pearls to swine, taking you away from being fruitful in other areas. What are you to do, take them to the Law they believe so much in, give them the "Good Person Test", show them their guilt before the Holy God, and then take them to the cross. After that, go find another person to share the same with.

As for Me – Every day was Devils Day

As for me and the Sabbath, before I was saved, every day was the Devil's day, I was tossed to and fro wherever he chose to blow. Now that I am saved, you think every day won't be the Lord's days? I remember the rock He pulled me out of, and every day I give Him praise and adulation.

People with Ridge "Grey" Rules are usually Miserable / Let us see you Live it Out

The Seventh Day Adventists who are in the cult side I just find they are miserable, all bond up in rules and regulations, all legalistic, and simply just miserable people. I find that the same for the majority of "Christians" also who have their set of legal code, rules and regulations (for the grey areas), and they are so miserable they just want to make everyone as miserable as they are, so they go and want to recruit people into their juice club (the lemon juice club), so they have someone else to be bitter with and have someone to talk with about how spiritually weak everyone else. Paul says, "let every man be persuaded in his own mind", with the key word being

“own”. You might have a conviction or persuasion. Terrific. But you needn’t force that conviction on anyone else. Rather, let us see you live it through and work it out. Let us observe the benefits and the fruit. Then we will come and ask you counsel. Let every man be persuaded in his own mind concerning what he should do without laying a burden on anyone else in controversial matters. The vast majority of the issues that cause division in the body are those that are not clearly spelled out in the Word. They’re opinions. They’re perspectives. They can be solid and excellent. But we must always be mindful to give our brothers and sisters great latitude and to allow them the freedom to be persuaded in their own minds.

Side Bar – Gayle Erwin

I am kind of side barring here, but I remember a guy coming to Gayle Erwin and totally serious saying he was going to start a new religion because he was so wise he knew his way was the best way. He asked Gale what he thought and Gayle said great, and I tell you what when you die and rise from dead, I’ll follow you. I apply the same for people who want to lay legalistic trips on my, show us your power, why your way is so great, and after we watch you for awhile we will follow your way.

(Rom 14:6 NKJV) He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks.

But – Both can be Blessed / Bless for the Steak – Thanks for the Health

Now not all those with their own set of personal rules and regulations are miserable, in fact for some having their own structures blesses them (which is fine as long as they don’t try to conform everyone to their way). Paul show the two blessings of those with opposite convictions. “Oh, Lord, thanks,” says the stronger brother as he sits down to the filet mignon he bought in the open-air market and sinks his teeth into the slab of beef. “Thank You, Lord, that I don’t have to clog my system with dead cow, that I have been given the ability to say ‘No,’” says the weaker brother as he sits down to a fresh green salad. And Paul says both are right.

I have some Personal “Grey” Convictions / Good for me – Not for You / I support Yours

There are many personal convictions I have, all of them falling in the grey area, and I take great care to ensure that they do not enter into my teachings from the pulpit, because although they are good for me, I know they may not be what God is calling for you to do. These convictions I will tell you, I know are from the Lord, I know I have heard directly from the Lord and they are for me. I am thankful for them, because God uses them to mold and shape me, to strengthen and grow me. So, when another brother shares their personal conviction, and they aren’t laying a trip on me, just sharing what they believe God has called them to do, then I don’t try to correct them in any way because I know God may be doing for them, what He is doing for me, and I by no means want to get in the way of what God is trying to do in their life.

3.) Unity amongst the Differences - May we Conceive (14:7-9)

Lord birthing something through Differences / Speaks to World / Expands us

The Lord is birthing something through the difference and diversity within the Church. The diversity in the church speaks to the world, there is a place for you, there is someone just like you in the church. And, the Lord uses our differences to open and expand our thoughts and understanding, taking us beyond our preconceived ideas of how things should be, and seeing their latitude and longitude to take us to deeper depths, and higher highs as God shapes us and grows us.

(Rom 14:7 NKJV) For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself.

(Rom 14:8 NKJV) For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

(Rom 14:9 NKJV) For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

Blessings from watching Others

This is a key component in the equation of liberty and responsibility. There are those who say, "Jesus was right when He said, 'I have come that you might have life and life abundantly,'" as they eat their beef and live it up in the Lord. Others say, "Didn't Jesus say if any man come after Him let him deny himself, take up the cross and follow Him?" as they enter a monastery and give everything up for the Lord. We are so blessed! We can learn from, be enriched by, and rejoice with those who are contemplative in their piety, as well as from those who are carefree in their joviality. What great latitude the Lord has given us and those sitting next to us in our relationship with Him. For whether we live it up in the Lord or give it up for the Lord, we can glorify Him, and we can see as we look at each other the fruit that comes from each aspect, and then start to apply their fruit to our lives and vice-versa.

Wow – Your Passion for Lost / Coffee House / Beauty in Conservative /

Wow we may say, I may not have the same passion for the lost as you do, but you do stir me on to share my faith more. As we look at another we may say, I thought Christian coffee houses were a waste of my time, but hearing you speak makes me want that same fellowship you enjoy. Another may see a living example of beauty dressed conservatively, another the power in this thing or that thing.

Lord is Birthing and Expanding

The Lord is birthing, expanding our mind as we look at Him working in each other's lives. When there is unity in the differences, there life in the unity.

Again – Some things are Non-Negotiable

Again let me say, there are those areas that are non-negotiable, and by no means is this passage of chapter 14 saying we are to be loose with sin, and be acceptable of those living in sin. Judge – no, Inspect – Yes! Unrepentant sin does not produce life, but like all sin, sin kills. Even if a person is saved, unrepentant sin will kill spiritual growth, rob a person of joy, and eventually take them places of bondage and destruction.

Matthew 7:18–23 (NKJV) ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Therefore by their fruits you will know them. ²¹ "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' ²³ And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

4.) Unity amongst the Differences - May we not be Deceived (14:10-23)

Don't be Deceived / God sees our Judging – and Our Stumbling if Others

May we not be deceived when we exercise our liberties and think that others will not be affected. God will now give a strong warning about stumbling our brother either because we try to lay our personal convictions on them, or flaunt our liberties that cause them to falter and fail.

(Rom 14:10 NKJV) But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

(Rom 14:11 NKJV) For it is written: "As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God."

(Rom 14:12 NKJV) So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.

God see our Judging

First the Lord says don't think your judging will not go un-judged by me,

Only God knows the Heart

Only God knows the heart, and thus it is not for us to judge another man's heart.

Don't write off Your Brother / We don't know their Motives

Paul says here, "Why do you write off the brother who doesn't see things the way you do, or who has regulations you don't?" Every Christian will one day stand before the judgment seat of Christ not to be judged for sin, but to be given awards for that which was done for the Lord's glory in obedience to Him (1 Corinthians 3:13–15). But until that day, we can't know what the motives of men are. That's why Paul says we are not to judge.

1 Corinthians 3:13–15 (NKJV) ¹³ each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. ¹⁴ If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

Be Like Me / Not looking at them – But Ourselves

You know what is really happening when we want people to see things our way, make our list their list, and become upset when they don't? We are really saying I want you to be like me. We are really no longer looking at them, but we are looking more at ourselves.

Pastor 50 Years Ago

About fifty years ago, a preacher was riding a train, studying for his Sunday sermon. Across the aisle from him, a two-year-old girl was being obnoxiously loud, throwing a temper tantrum, and crying. Finally, in his frustration, the preacher said to the woman with the baby, "Madam, please control your child." "She's not my child, sir," the woman answered. "Well, is her mother on board?" "Yes. She's on board," answered the woman. "She's in the next car, in the cargo department—in a casket." Feeling totally humiliated, the preacher spent the rest of the journey tending the crying baby as best he could. So, too, those who judge you don't know the full story. Be patient with them. They don't know what you've gone through. They don't know where you've been. Earthly judgment is based upon limited information, but Paul says the day is coming when judgment will be perfect and righteous.

Judgment seat is where Judging Happens

Every Christian—every brother, every sister, every one of us, those who have been judged, those who are judging—will stand before the judgment seat of Christ where all of our works will be tried by fire (1 Corinthians 3:13). Everything we've done in the name of the Lord will be put through fire. And only that which is gold, silver, and precious stones—only that which was done sincerely—will remain. This means that there are people who are doing seemingly spiritual things, leading seemingly disciplined lives, doing seemingly wonderful works—but for the wrong reasons. Truly, we do not know what motivates people. Jesus told us some would do their works only to be seen of men (Matthew 6:2). But their true motives will be revealed at the bema, or judgment seat of Christ. Folks, we don't know as much as we think we do. Because the heart is deceitfully and desperately wicked (Jeremiah 17:9), it's hard enough to figure out why I do what I do, much less try to figure out why another does what he does.

Give them Time to Grow

Back in the time of this writing Gentiles were getting saved out of Pagan religious systems, and Jews were getting saved out of Legalistic religious systems, and the two of them were merging into one. Neither truly understood where the other was coming from because they were coming from two totally opposite sides. Not much has changed in 2,000 years either; some people are getting saved out of the bars, while others are getting saved out of dogmatic religions (so called Christian). We need to give them time to grow, and we need to be patient as they do.

God gave me Time to Grow

God put me through a very crushing time several years, and when it was over all that I had left was Jesus. I had no job, no money, no respect, and little possessions. My self-sufficiency was crushed, my arrogance, and self-righteousness too! You know what I found, so was my judgmental attitude towards others. I found myself much more accepting of others personal convictions, and much less pushing of mine.

I can sense when I'm being Judgmental / Not Worshipping or at Communion Table

I can sense it in myself when I am being overly judgmental and critical of another. It is then that I know I need to get to the communion table, and I need to get into worship. In variable anytime I am being overly critical and judgmental I can see a direct link to the fact that I have not been sitting at His feet simply enjoying my salvation and worshipping Him for His goodness. I find that I was all wrapped up with the things of the world and/or even things of "ministry", that I left no time to simply worship Him.

Don't Stumble another with your Freedoms

(Rom 14:13 NKJV) Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way.

(Rom 14:14 NKJV) I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

Spurgeon & Parker

Charles Haddon Spurgeon could not understand how Joseph Parker could go to the theatre and watch plays. Parker, on the other hand, came down on Spurgeon, saying he couldn't understand how Spurgeon could smoke cigars. Both of these men were powerful preachers who were greatly used by the Lord, and yet they had a public fight.

Spurgeon did Quit / World is Watching

By the way, Spurgeon finally gave up smoking in his later years when one day he opened the London Times and saw a full-page cigar ad under the headline, "The Cigar that Charles Spurgeon Smokes." Christian the world is watching us, may we never forget that.

People shocked by Others / 3,000 will Perish

People are often shocked and appalled at how someone else could do something other than what they themselves have liberty to do. Trips are laid on people. Fights start. Churches split. Sadly, based on the statistic produced by a large evangelistic organization, 3,000 people die every hour, rejecting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and enter into the fires of hell, and the Church is arguing and dividing over the non-essentials.

Last Week – Wake Up / Satan loves to Bog us Down

Last week's word from God before He divinely inspired to put chapter 14 after chapter 13, and that is that the time is far spent, His return is soon, and we are called to WAKE UP! As we have spoken so often before, Satan loves to get us bogged down into the specifics, so that we totally miss the objective, and that is that Jesus is coming soon, and we need to be all about the Father's Business, and the Father's Business is loving one another, and loving and reaching out to the lost and dying world.

(Rom 13:11 NKJV) And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.

(Rom 14:15 NKJV) Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died.

(Rom 14:16 NKJV) Therefore do not let your good be spoken of as evil;

(Rom 14:17 NKJV) for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

(Rom 14:18 NKJV) For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by men.

(Rom 14:19 NKJV) Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.

(Rom 14:20 NKJV) Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are pure, but it is evil for the man who eats with offense.

(Rom 14:21 NKJV) It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak.

Well that is their Problem – What are you going to do About It

The comment is often made, “well that is their problem if they don’t think I should be doing that, I am free in Christ”. That may be true, but the question for you today is, what are you going to do about their problem? In our last study we read the call of God:

(Rom 13:8 NKJV) Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.

German U-Boats / You may be Stronger – But we Linked Together

In the early days of World War II, German U-boats attacked Allied ships traveling from the East Coast to Europe. To remedy this, they traveled in large convoys. But the convoys could go only as fast as the slowest boat. So the faster boats slowed down to the speed of the slowest boat in order that they all might be protected from attack. The same holds true in spiritual life. You might be freer and faster and stronger than your brothers and sisters in Christ—but keep in mind with whom you are traveling. We’re linked together. Don’t do something that will cause a slower boat to be exposed to the underwater attacks of the Enemy, to be torpedoed by Satan. Slow it down. We’re in this together.

Focus on Unity and Growth

You will be acceptable to both God and approved in the eyes of men if you focus not on meat or drink, controversies or confrontations, but on the righteousness, peace, and joy imputed to us and bestowed upon us by the grace and goodness of God through Jesus Christ.

Be Sensitive with Liberties

Be sensitive with your liberties, especially when you know it goes against someone else’s personal conviction or want to overcome it. If you know someone wants to quit smoking, has a personal conviction against it, then don’t smoke in front of them, don’t let the fragrance of the smoke blow over their nostrils. Alcohol is very sensitive, and if you feel it is your liberty that is fine, but if you invite people over your house, make sure you put it out of sight. If you don’t know where a person is at, then error on the side of caution and grace. Stay away from anything that would cause someone in the convoy to stumble. Be careful with the liberty you enjoy.

As for Me – I Only get 1 Shot

As for me, I only get one shot at this life, and I want to live in such a way that I can lead as many people into the arms of Jesus. Whether that be leading them into salvation, or leading them into Christian maturity, I want to lead as many as I possibly can in this short one-shot life I get, and that liberty I may have to me just isn’t worth it if it means even one person is stumbled.

1 Corinthians 6:12 (NKJV) ¹² All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

When I look into His Eyes – I was a Living Sacrifice

When I look into His eyes on that day, I want to say I gave you everything, I was a living sacrifice. We have already spoken about the non-negotiable. But is this a liberty pass? Let me just put it in the context we are in, and that is all this duty spins off of two verses (Romans 12:1-2).

(Rom 12:1 NKJV) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

(Rom 12:2 NKJV) And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Christian – Pray about your Liberties

Christian, is there a certain liberty you are enjoying that you know is stumbling others in your life? I pray you will consider them today and ask yourself just how much are they worth it to you, as compared to how much it costs another.

(Rom 14:22 NKJV) Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.

(Rom 14:23 NKJV) But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin.

Christian – Pray about your Liberties

Christian, is there a certain liberty you are enjoying that you know is stumbling others in your life? I pray you will consider them today and ask yourself just how much are they worth it to you, as compared to how much it costs another.

Unity – it is beautiful:

Psalm 133:1–3 (NKJV)

- ¹ *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
For brethren to dwell together in unity!*
- ² *It is like the precious oil upon the head,
Running down on the beard,
The beard of Aaron,
Running down on the edge of his garments.*
- ³ *It is like the dew of Hermon,
Descending upon the mountains of Zion;
For there the LORD commanded the blessing—
Life forevermore.*

We are all in this together!

Chapter 15

Divine Love – the Jesus Example (Romans 15:1-13)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Chapters 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Israel (Chapters 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Doctrine – Duty / Present our Bodies – Knowing He is For Us

After eleven glorious chapters of doctrine (all that God has done for us: justification, sanctification, and glorification) we come to duty (what is our logical responses to all that He has done for us), and that is (verses 1-2 of chapter 12), that we present our bodies as living sacrifices to Him; where we say God You are utterly and amazingly in love with me, You have nothing but the best for me because You are for me, and therefore who can come against me, therefore Lord I know Your will is the best for me, and I present myself to You, I give You my life as a living sacrifice.

(Rom 12:1 NKJV) *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

(Rom 12:2 NKJV) *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

Telling us How to be Living Sacrifices

So the Lord has been telling us how we practically become "living sacrifices":

- Using our Gifts (12:3-8)
- Acting and Reacting amongst One Another (12:9-21)
- Being Subject to the Governing Authorities (13:1-7)
- Fulfilling the Law - Loving thy Neighbor (13:8-14)
- Having Unity amongst our Differences (14:1-23)
- Having Divine Love – the Jesus Example (15:1-13)

Chp 15 – Additional Principle – Follow Example of Jesus

In Chapter 15 he will introduce an additional principle to observe when dealing with fellow Christians: he is to follow the example of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus was supremely the Person who ministered on behalf of others, not for Himself. So, it is fitting that those who take the name of Jesus should imitate Him by serving others.

Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill, the revival minded preacher and author from Britain responded to a comment made that the church is growing and expanding, by saying "yes it is ten miles wide now, and a quarter-inch deep".

Deep Stuff – Needed 14 chapters to Build to It / To Love as God Loves

What is being asked of in this passage is deep-deep stuff. What is being spoken of in these 13 verses is "Divine Love", loving as God does. These verses had to be place in chapter 15, because we needed the 14 chapters to build us and mature us to this point – to have Divine Love as God does.

Men Going to Leprosy Colony – Let the Lamb that was Slain Receive the Offering

There is a true story of two men who felt the call of God to go minister Jesus at a leprosy colony overseas. To go would be a death sentencing to them, and it also meant that once they went, they could never return again to their family and friends, to touch their loved ones ever again, yet they went. That day as the ship departed loved ones called out to them, please return before you can never return, and their answer to their cries was, “Let the Lamb that was Slain receive the offering”. We may not go to a leprosy colony, but the call is still the same - Let the Lamb that Slain receive the offering”. Divine Love can only be had and expressed when a person presents themselves “Living Sacrifices” unto Him.

(Rom 12:1 NKJV) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

(Rom 12:2 NKJV) And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

I speak to Myself – we live in Selfish World / Lord finishing the Book with High Calling

I speak to myself as much as I speak to you, and that is that we live in a selfish world. 99.99% of every television commercial (same with billboards, periodicals, newspapers) appeals to the flesh, to self, the lower nature of man. The Lord is finishing these chapters of this magnificent book with the heart of the call, and that is a call to die to ourselves, and live unto the Lord and others. The Lord is calling us to Divine Love!

Outline: Divine Love (Romans 15:1-13)

- Divine Love – Bears with the Weak (15:1)
- Divine Love – Seeks to Edify the Other (15:2)
- Divine Love – Endures the Attacks of Others (15:3)
- Divine Love – Looks to follow the Examples of Jesus (15:4)
- Divine Love – Seeks to Glorify God Always (15:5-6)
- Divine Love – Receives others as Christ has Received Them (15:7-12)
- Divine Love – Only comes through the Holy Spirit (15:13)

Divine Love – Bears with the Weak (15:1)

[The Strong should bear the Weak – Receive one Another as Christ Received Us](#)

(Rom 15:1 NKJV) We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

Scruples

Scruples means “weakness or failings”, and in some contexts it means “impossible”. I like that later meaning, because sometimes that is exactly what it seems you are dealing with when you deal with some people. They think they are so right, but they aren’t even on the same page, and that page being the Scriptures, in that they add some application to the Scriptures that is totally errant. You try to point that out to them and they treat you like you are weaker, the legalist, and they are the giants of faith. You reach a point of feeling they are totally impossible to reason with – and the Lord says “bear with them – for unity sake”.

When Correct – Jesus Example / I’m Confused you Say / Walk with Lord – by Moment

The hard part is, when do I correct, and when do I just leave it alone. As always Jesus is the perfect example of how Divine Love is to be applied in each situation. While Jesus was healing on the Sabbath Day, the Pharisees began to reproach Him. Did He stop healing? No. He corrected their misunderstanding and then continued healing (Luke 14:1–4). On the other hand, there were times when Jesus laid aside His liberty. “Does your Master pay taxes in the temple?” the Pharisees asked Peter. “Of course,” Peter responded. But when Peter asked this same question of Jesus, Jesus said, “Do kings charge their own kids taxes? Of course not. But, in order that we don’t offend, go fishing—and the first fish you catch will have a coin in his mouth to cover the taxes” (see Matthew 17:24–27). “I’m confused,” you say. “Do I bear my neighbor’s infirmity—or do I correct him for edification?” Just do what the Lord tells you to do at any given moment.

Sometimes, He will tell you to bear with those who are weak. Other times, He'll tell you to love them enough to give them a word of correction—even if it means you will suffer reproach. Christianity is not rules, principles, or regulations. It's walking with the Lord moment by moment, saying constantly, "Lord, how do I deal with this situation? Is it a time for backing away and bearing weakness—or is it a time for loving exhortation and confrontation? What do I do?" It's as though the Lord gives us broad principles in the Word and then says, "See Me for further instructions. Talk to Me about specific application." If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth to all men generously (James 1:5).

James 1:5 (NKJV) ⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

Paul Summarizes – We who are Stronger / Wiser – be Wiser / Stronger – be Stronger

Paul summarized the previous discussion in chapter 14 by saying, "We who are strong" (obviously in convictions and conscience – not in the essentials like the gospel and blatant sin) "ought" (pres.tense, emphasizing continuing obligation; its first position in the sentence underscores its importance) "to bear with the infirmities of the weak (lit., "non-strong"): The strong ought not despise the weak; they ought to bear with them. Our liberty in Christ is constrained by love for others. If you are the wiser, then be the wiser; if you are the stronger, then be the stronger.

Give Grace – Bear with Them / Remember when first in Love

Give them grace and bear with and overlook their weakness and immaturity. The best example I can give you – remember when you first fell in love with that person? Do you remember how nothing they did was a big deal to you, because you were just happy to be together. It truly was "love covers a multitude of sin", because you were so love-struck you couldn't see any flaw in them. When asked by others what is their weaknesses or their shortcomings, and you responded nothing – oh she/he is perfect, I can't believe we are together. But as the years go on, you find yourself complaining about caps left off the toothpaste, socks on the floor, and the likes.

1 Peter 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."

Stages of Marriage

You see those stages in marriage.

- Year one the wife has a cough, and the husband makes her chicken soup and covers her in a blanket, and watches a Hallmark movie with her.
- Year two the wife has a cough the husband makes her chicken soup and covers her in a blanket.
- Year three the wife has a cough and the husband says that sounds pretty bad you might want to take work off tomorrow and go see the doctor.
- Year four the wife has a cough and the husband says you might want to go see the doctor after you get off work tomorrow.
- Year five the wife has a cough and the husband says, honey, could you go sleep in the other room, we both have long days of work tomorrow.

Oh when Love First Blooms / Glad to have Fellow Believers / Petty Diff - Toothpaste

Oh how beautiful it is when love first blooms, and so many faults are blinded by love. When we first get saved we are just happy we are saved and then to find other people who believe Jesus is the Lord – oh love is grand. But then we can age, and we start finding faults in others that have no bearing on eternity, and it starts to bother us. Christian, all they are, are just toothpaste caps and socks on the floor. May we go back to that joyous place where are just glad they are saved, excited we are marching to the same place (heaven) together, and we have another friend in our life that see Jesus as the King of Glory!

Divine Love – Seeks to Edify the Other (15:2)

(Rom 15:2 NKJV) Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification.

Everything we Do – Directed for Growth of Neighbor

Everything we do should be directed to the spiritual growth (edification) of our neighbor. A Christian should not be self-centered, but should be concerned about the spiritual welfare of others. Pleasing others, however, is not an end in itself, but is for their good, to build them up (Rom 14:19).

Romans 14:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ *Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.*

Grizzly Story / How Long since Encouraged a Brother

You've heard the story about the two guys in the woods found themselves eye to eye with a grizzly. Stunned, they sat stock still—until one of them began to slowly put on his tennis shoes. "What are you doing?" said the other guy. "Don't you know you can't outrun a grizzly bear?" "Yes," said his friend. "But all I've got to do is outrun you!" Too often amongst Christians the mindset is "as long as I'm doing well is all that matters – the other guy is on his own." How long has it been since you have encouraged a brother? May we not be a people who just want to make sure that we make it, but that our brother/sister's problem become our problem too.

Divine Love – Endures the Attacks of Others (15:3)

(Rom 15:3 NKJV) For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "[The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.](#)"

Quoting: Psalm 69:9

Definition of Reproach / Cast in one's Teeth

Reproach means "to be reviled, attacked, to be defamed", it was also used in sentences "to be cast in one's teeth's". So you can see the context is to be chewed-up by another's attacks and insults. The Lord is asking the mature, to be like Him, to endure the weak one's insults, even though all you are doing is loving them. I think that is one of the hardest places to love, and that is when all you are doing is loving that person, giving yourself to them, and they (because of their immaturity and weakness) turn on you and speak ill to you or about you. They did it to the Lord who completely gave Himself for them, and so too

Divine Love – will bring Reproach / People think Wasting Life

This is also a word of encouragement to those whose family may think you have gone off the deep end with this whole Jesus thing. Paul is inserting this statement "[The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.](#)" for us to know that loving others (especially divine Love) will bring reproach from others because few people see this calling to love others as Christ did, and so they think you are throwing your life and time away by wasting it going to the soup kitchen, serving in the children's church, praying for that person who is so wayward, etc, etc – they think you should be grabbing all life has to offer, because life is short. You may hear that from your family members who can't understand why you "waste" all that time on "church" stuff. People reproached Christ, and people will reproach you also.

Disunity – Because Manifestation of Self / Contrary to World / Convicts People

The problems with unity among the Body is the "manifestation of self", and self wanting their own way. This Divine Love, the call for us to rise to this Divine Love, is so contrary to the world. Many people hate this Divine Love you display because it convicts them of their selfishness, and they have no desire to live, think, or love anyone but themselves. Many of the people who reproach you are Christians and they like the salvation part of Christianity, but not the Discipleship part, and thus they will come against you because they don't like the challenge and conviction you present to them. It's ok, for you are in good company.

First Time – It is Written / Scriptures – Give Example how to Model Divine Love

Verse 3 - but as it is written - This is the first time we have seen “As it is written” and we will see it several more times to amplify and exemplify how and what we are to model this Divine Love, and it is through the examples we see in the Scriptures.

Divine Love – Looks to follow the Examples of Jesus (15:4)

(Rom 15:4 NKJV) For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

Hope is Faith about the Future / No Hope outside the Scriptures /

“Hope” = faith about the future. [He who has no hope of eternity has no purpose in time – Thomas Carlyle.] Where is there hope outside of the Word of God? The antidote for fear is Christ’s Love: “I will be with you, for that’s who I am . . .” If I did not have the word of God, I would have no hope to give you for your wayward child, your struggling marriage, your terminal illness, your evaporating finances, and your deathbed. But, we do have hope – as the Bible shows us triumphs in each and every area we ever face.

Every Detail of Scriptures – by Deliberate Design / Ordinary People / No Cover-ups

Every detail in Scripture is there by deliberate design. The heroes and failures of the Old Testament are there for our instruction! Ordinary men doing extraordinary things. No cover-ups here; we see their warts and all...

As for Laying Aside Differences / Abraham, Jonathan, David, Moses

As for laying aside our differences for the sake of others, the Scripture account is filled with men who laid aside their liberty and rights for the sake of their weaker brothers. Abraham (Genesis 13:8, 9), Jonathan (1 Samuel 19:4), David (1 Samuel 24:10), and Moses (Hebrews 11:24) are all examples of men who willingly let go of their rightful possessions or positions. They didn’t demand their own way—and they prospered as a result. “Learn from their example,” said Paul.

When Romans Written – No NT / We have Double Blessings / Best – Example of Christ

When the Book of Romans was written there was no New Testament written yet; we have the blessings of double-blessings, because we get to see the examples of not only the Old Testament heroes, but the New Testament too. All the examples in the Gospel’s and Book of Acts, but most importantly the examples of Christ Himself.

Can I challenge you on This / Read it – Study it – Till it Speaks to You

Can I challenge you on this, whether it be a struggle with taking the lower ground and applying Divine Love, or that problem or issue in your life, I would challenge you today to get in a quiet place, and flip through this Bible until you find an example that fits your situation, and then read and study that passage for a whole week, and then come back and tell us how God spoke to you through that time you spent. I’ve had weeks of my life where I read the same passage of Scripture every morning for a week, for it just kept feeding and feeding, ministering and ministering, to me a fresh and new every day, and that issue was put it in its proper perspective and I was able to walk through the situation, and not have the situation walk over me.

You will Find Hope in the Scriptures

You got family issues, marriage issues, temptation issue, financial issues? You will find the example in the Word – and you will find “HOPE” in the situation.

Divine Love – Seeks to Glorify God Always (15:5-6)

(Rom 15:5 NKJV) Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus,

(Rom 15:6 NKJV) that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Ultimate Purpose of Unity – Glorifying God / Individually & Corporately

The ultimate purpose of this unity was that with one mind and mouth (a unity of inward feeling and outward expression) they would glorify (pres. tense, “keep on glorifying”) “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (cf. 2 Cor 1:3; Eph 1:3; 1 Peter 1:3). This is the final purpose of Christians individually and of the church corporately (cf. Rom 15:7; 1 Cor 6:20; 2 Thess 1:12).

Literally – God who Gives (Bearing up Under Pressure) / Jesus Ex. / Love is Choice

Verses 5 - Now may the God of patience - “God of” = objective genitive: “God who gives.” “Patience” = u`pomoh, hupomone: perseverance; continually bearing up under a burden, as a slave carrying a heavy burden. Enduring forever; steadfastness in the face of adversities. Jesus is not only the example of how we are to bear with others who may rub us the wrong way, but Jesus is also the power to exercise this Divine Love. Love is always a choice, but the moment we chose to love, God gives us all we need to love.

Applies to Spouse Too

This application isn’t just for that Christian you know over there or over here, but it is for that person you lay next to every night you go to bed.

One Mouth – Prayer and Praise

Verse 6 - and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ – I believe one mouth refers to both corporate prayer and praise.

Something Happens when Study Together / People Stop Coming – Stop being One

You know Christian, something happens when we hear the Scriptures and study the Word together, pray together, and worship together. There’s a oneness of mind that takes place—even if we differ on certain interpretations or certain applications. That’s why you will notice that when a person stops coming to Bible study and worship, slowly but surely, they no longer have one mind and one heart. It’s not that they don’t love the Lord. It’s not that they’re not saved. But, as they become isolated, they become vulnerable. “Don’t divide. Don’t pull away,” said Paul. “Be of one mind.”

To his Point – Two Sources Spiritual Power / Church must Stay Focused on the 3

So what we have seen to this point is Paul shared the two sources of spiritual power from which we must draw if we are to live to please others: the Word of God (Rom. 15:4) and prayer (Rom. 15:5–6). This suggests to us that the local church must major in the Word of God and prayer. The first real danger to the unity of the church came because the Apostles were too busy to minister God’s Word and pray (Acts 6:1–7). When they found others to share their burdens, they returned to their proper ministry, and the church experienced harmony and growth.

Divine Love – Receives others as Christ has Received Them (15:7-12)

(Rom 15:7 NKJV) Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.

Present Tense – Keep on Receiving / When did Jesus Accept Us (powerless, ungodly, etc)

Present tense, imperative mood: “keep on accepting or receiving one another.” Significantly, the same command Paul gave the strong Christians when he opened this entire discussion (Rom 14:1). What did Jesus have to accept in us? The model of acceptance for Christians is, however, the Lord Jesus, who accepted us, when we were:

- “powerless” (Rom 5:6);
- “ungodly” (Rom 5:6);
- “sinners” (Rom 5:8);

- “enemies” (Rom 5:10).

Certainly Christians can receive others who differ with them on nonessential matters. We can learn to love anybody if we are at the foot of the cross.

Romans 5:6 (NKJV) ⁶ *For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*

Romans 5:8 (NKJV) ⁸ *But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

Romans 5:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ *For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.*

Another Challenge – Go look for Someone to Receive / Meet & Greet - Meet & Reach

Can I give you another challenge today, will you go out and find some people to receive every time you come here to church. After service will you find someone to say hello to. Oh the heartbreak for me is that anyone would ever walk in and out of this church and not feel as though they were received. Yes, “meet and greet” is great, but how about “meet and reach” – find someone to reach every time you come to church. You know there may be weeks that I don’t “hit the mark”, and you can feel kind of let down as you leave and drive home, but oh I will tell you, reach someone every time you come here, before you leave, and you will never feel let down when you drive on your way home.

Remember – it’s called Sunday Service

Remember it is called “Sunday Service” – seek to serve others, receive them.

[That the Gentiles might Glorify God](#)

(Rom 15:8 NKJV) Now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers,

Supreme Example – is Jesus

Again, the supreme example of ministry must always be Jesus Christ. “But I am among you as he that serveth” (Luke 22:27). He came first of all to minister to the Jews, that through Israel He might be able to minister to the Gentiles. “To the Jew first” is a principle that was followed in the earthly ministry of Christ and in the early ministry of the church.

God’s Formula for Life – Much Better than Ours & World / Cain – First Mention Depression

God’s formula for life is so much better than ours or what the world formulates, because both of the later are so “self” based. The world says “get all you can”, while the Lord says “give all you got”. I spoke a few weeks ago about the first mention of depression (Cain), and we saw Cain was depressed because he was in rebellion to God’s word and God’s ways. Cain said I’m going to do things my way, I hear what God says but I am not going to do it that way. What a picture and continual way people continually live and battle depression. But here, God is giving us a word and a way we are to live, and that is to follow the example of Christ, and to become a servant of all. Live God’s way, and you will well be on your way from the bounds of depression – I know it is true, because His word is sure and true.

Genesis 4:4-5 (NKJV) ⁴ *Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, ⁵ but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.*

Next Quotations (Law, Prophets, Psalms) / Jew & Gentile Equal – Unity & Love

These next quotations are taken from all three divisions of the Old Testament: “Law of Moses, Prophets, and the Psalms” (Lk 24:44) and from three Jewish heroes: Moses, David, and Isaiah. The Lord is going to lay to rest any doubts or disputes that the Gentiles are more spiritual than the Jews or the Jews are more spiritual than the Gentiles; God is making it real clear that His salvation is for and has come to both, and neither is better than the other, and thus they should be living in unity and love together. Divine Love at that.

(Rom 15:9 NKJV) and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy, as it is written: **"For this reason I will confess to You among the Gentiles, And sing to Your name."**

Quoting: 2 Samuel 22:50 / Psalm 18:49

(Rom 15:10 NKJV) And again he says: "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people!"

Quoting: Deuteronomy 32:43

(Rom 15:11 NKJV) And again: "Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples!"

Quoting: Psalm 117:1

(Rom 15:12 NKJV) And again, Isaiah says: "There shall be a root of Jesse; And He who shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, In Him the Gentiles shall hope."

Quoting: Isaiah 11:1 & 10

Paul quotes 3 Categories of Jewish Scriptures / Jesus came for both Jew & Gentile

Paul quoted from the Psalms in verse 9, from Deuteronomy in verse 10, and from Isaiah in verse 12. Thus, the three categories of the Jewish Bible—the Psalms, the law, and the prophets—are all represented in this brief section as Paul continues to drive home the fact that Jesus came for the Gentiles as well as the Jews.

- "The Gentiles?" the Jew would say. "They're so trite and shallow. They're unschooled in theology and have such a limited background in biblical history."
- "Aha!" Paul would answer. "Guess who's singing in their midst!"
- And the Gentile would say, "Those Jews are so bound in legalism and tradition. They're so stuffy."
- "Wait a minute," Paul would interject, "Jesus Christ was a Minister of the circumcision."

Same Today / Radical Salvation – Saved since 5

Nothing is new under the sun, and we can see that same thought today as people radically saved from a life of drugs and alcohol, and God appearing to them in some miraculous way can feel they have some special calling over that person who was saved since they were five and live a quiet and sober life. Whereas the person saved since they were five and have lived a quiet and sober life can look at the person saved from drugs and alcohol as though they are soiled, and less pure than they.

Message Clear – both saved through Grace & Mercy / DNA of Jesus / Same Bloodline

The message is clear – both are saved by grace and mercy, the DNA code of the Blood of Jesus is grace and mercy, thus we with the same bloodline should live in unity together.

Divine Love – Only comes through the Holy Spirit (15:13)

Abound in Hope

(Rom 15:13 NKJV) Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Power through Holy Spirit / Power to be Living Sacrifices

Verse 13 - by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Power – the Greek word "dunamis where we get the word "dynamite"). The power to do all that we are called to do as Living Sacrifices is through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus is our example.

Philippians 2 – Insight into Jesus’ Power

Philippians 2 gives us a most powerful insight into this power of Jesus:

(Philippians 2:5 NKJV) Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

(Philippians 2:6 NKJV) who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,

(Philippians 2:7 NKJV) but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

(Philippians 2:8 NKJV) And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Verse 7 – Emptied - Kenoo

Verse 7 - but made Himself of no reputation - The word used here for reputation is “kenoo” it means to make empty. Jesus emptied Himself.

Profound Scriptures / Emptied not His Deity

Here we stand on Holy Ground. This is one of the most profound, most important theological Scriptures in the Bible. We know that Jesus is God (verse 6), so what did He empty Himself of, not His Deity (for we know He is the God-Man).

Became Servant – Not CEO – President - Emperor

He obviously stepped down from the throne and the recognition He deserves, and took the role of a servant, to do the will of the Father. He didn’t come and assume the title President, CEO, or Emperor.

3 Things Only God can Be / Present – Knowing - Powerful

Look at the three things that only God can be. Be Omnipresent (all present), Omniscient (all knowing), and Omnipotent (all-powerful). Jesus did not exercise these freely when He became a man, He allowed Himself to be limited, just as man is.

(John 19:5 KJV) Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!

How He Limited Self

Let’s look at how He limited Himself:

Omnipresent / 1 Place

Omnipresent (all present): Jesus was flesh and blood, He bled, and He could only be one place at any given time.

(John 11:21 KJV) Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

Omniscient / Sought Father for Guidance

Omniscient (all knowing): As God, He still knew all, yet He would seek the Father in prayer for guidance and strength. He stayed in contact with the Father, so He would do the will of the Father, not His will.

Notice Jesus had to be told that Lazarus was sick:

(John 11:5 NKJV) Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

(John 11:6 NKJV) So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was.

(John 11:7 NKJV) Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again."

Jesus said He didn’t even know when the earth would pass away.

(Mark 13:31 KJV) Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

(Mark 13:32 KJV) But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

He sought the Father in prayer.

(Matthew 26:36 KJV) Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

(Luke 3:21 KJV) Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

(Mark 6:46 KJV) And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray.

Omnipotent / Never use Power on Self

Omnipotent (all-powerful): Jesus never would use His divine power for His own needs. I can't explain it, but even though He had the power of the universe coursing through His veins, He would not use it:

(Matthew 4:3 NKJV) Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."

(Matthew 4:4 NKJV) But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

Emptied Self to Relate to Us / Tempted in Every Way

If He didn't empty Himself of these things, then He could not relate to us in terms of temptation, cause if He had all this power to use freely, then these things in His fleshly body would truly not be temptations, would they? The remembrance of his own sorrows and temptations makes Christ mindful of the trials of his people, and ready to help them. He is ready and willing to help those who are tempted, and seek him. He became man, and was tempted, that he might be every way qualified to help his people, seeing that he had passed through the same temptations himself, but continued perfectly free from sin:

(Matthew 4:1 KJV) Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

(Matthew 4:2 KJV) And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered.

(Matthew 4:3 KJV) And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

(Matthew 4:4 KJV) But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

(Hebrews 2:16 NKJV) For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham.

(Hebrews 2:17 NKJV) Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

(Hebrews 2:18 NKJV) For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

(James 1:13 KJV) Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

(James 1:14 KJV) But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

Everything Jesus Did was directed by Father - Empowered by Spirit

Secondly, and more for our application in this study, everything Jesus did, He did as directed by the Father and Empowered by the Holy Spirit. He walked closely to the Father, praying to Him daily, and believing in the Father's directives.

(John 5:16 NKJV) For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath.

(John 5:17 NKJV) But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."

(John 5:18 NKJV) Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.

(John 5:19 NKJV) Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.

(John 5:20 NKJV) "For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel.

No Miracles till after Baptism / To Do will of Father / Returned in Power

Jesus did no miracles until after He was baptized and filled with the Spirit for the work of the ministry, to do the will of the Father. If you want a summation of the definition of the ministry it is this – To Do The Will Of The Father. Reminder He was filled with the Spirit since birth:

(Mark 1:9 KJV) And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

(Mark 1:10 KJV) And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him:

(Luke 4:13 KJV) And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

(Luke 4:14 KJV) And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

Feeding of 5000 / Looked to Heaven

When Jesus performed miracles, he looked to heaven and did so by the empowering of the Holy Spirit.

(Mark 6:41 KJV) And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

Why Important – Everything did through Power of Spirit / Theology of Kenosis – Ex to Us

Why is this so important, cause it means everything Jesus did (the feeding of the 5000, walking on water, water to wine) He did not do them because of His own power, but through the power of the Holy Spirit. We can read the miracles and so what, that Jesus – He's God. But when we know the theology of Kenosis here in Philippians 2, His miracles take on a whole new meaning. It means that everything Jesus did as a man was through His personal contact with the Father, and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. The miracles and strengths of Jesus now become examples to me.

Conclusion

The Greatest Pinnacle of all Studied – Wait / Much – Learning, Discipleship, Ability

Now, here is the greatest pinnacle of all that we studied today Christian, and that is there are times where we are to wait! Jesus says wait (Acts 1:4), for no matter how much learning you have it is not sufficient, no matter how much you have been disciple it is not sufficient, no matter how much determination you have it is not sufficient, no matter how much natural ability and intellect you have it is not sufficient, all that needs to be ignited by the Holy Spirit. These things must be ignited so that we may be witnesses, from Jerusalem, to Judea, to the outer parts of the earth.

Acts 1:4 (NKJV) ⁴ And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me;

Acts 1:8 (NKJV) ⁸ But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Not Go – Be a Witness / Living Examples = Living Sacrifices / See Gospel has Power

It doesn't say to "go witnessing" (although we are to do that – go make disciples), but it says to be witnesses of Him. Our lives are to be Living Examples (aka – Living Sacrifices); the greatest witness to the world will be marriages that glorify God, children walking the way of the Lord not the way of the world, a Church that is unified, a Body that lives to edify one another. When the world sees that witness, they will know the Gospel is true, it comes with the power to change lives. If the Gospel doesn't have the power to change a life, then it must be questioned by the unbeliever if it has the power to raise the dead.

When told to Wait

When did Jesus tell His disciples to wait?

- When they were solid in their theology – for they were eyewitnesses to the resurrection.
- After they had walked with Him for 40 days – post resurrection, imagine those Bible studies.
- After they had walked with Him for some 3 years watching His works and His ways.
- When they were not in sin, when they were in full belief that the Kingdom of Heaven was imminent.
- When they were living in the Word, Worship, Purity, Expectation, Full Assuredly – yet Jesus still said to them wait!

Our Vision becomes Clouded / We become Downtrodden / Lord Rekindle – Blaze again

Verse 13 - May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace; how clouded our vision can become, how down our hearts can be as we look around at the world and all that is transpiring before us, a Nation pushing God out of the Government, the trinkets and bob bets of the world drawing our children away, the repercussions of the fallen world on the human body (cancer, death, childhood diseases) – we can become so downtrodden, and we must daily meet with the

Lord and say rekindle that flame, ignite that fire, give me a fresh anointing of your Spirit (for the old filling is stale now – give me fresh wind and fresh fire). And oh, when He does, when we do call, He will respond, and He will fill us afresh and new, and passion will blaze again, and again, and again.

Jeremiah 33:3 (NKJV) ³ *‘Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.’*

Luke 11:9–13 (NKJV) ⁹ *“So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ¹¹ If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? ¹² Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”*

Closing – Leaky Vessels – Need Refilling / Acts 2 & 4

We need to be continually filled and refilled with the Holy Spirit, because we are leaky vessels, and we need to be re-filled. When we are empty we need to go back and “wait”, and call out asking to be filled again. The Scriptures prove that out clearly. In Acts 2 the disciples are filled with the Holy Spirit, then only a few chapters later, which are only several days later, we read of them being filled again:

Acts 2:4 (NKJV) ⁴ *And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

Acts 4:31 (NKJV) ³¹ *And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.*

When Recognize – Ask Again / Free Refills / Eph 5 – a Continual Filling

And when you recognize that you need it again, you ask for it again, go back to step 1 and work your way through it again, why? Because we are leaky vessels and we need to continually be re-filled, and the Scriptures clearly support that. In chapter 4 of Acts we read of the same guys who had previously been filled with the Holy Spirit, being filled again (I love it, free re-fills). Be filled (it says in Ephesians 5) with the Holy Spirit, the verb tense is a “continual filling”.

Ephesians 5:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ *And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,*

I have Found how to be Filled – when become Passionless / Expect - Perimeno

Here is the greatest key I have found to being filled with the Holy Spirit, for oh how I have recognized when I am empty, for I become dry, passionless, worst of all mechanical in all my spiritual actions (reading, praying, teaching, witnessing – they become a to-do list for me), and that is to sit and set the time aside to say Lord I need a fresh filling.....AND actually expecting that it is going to happen. By faith I know that He is going to give me a fresh filling (Luke 11). The word in Acts 1:4 for wait is “perimeno”, with the root of the word being “meno”, which means “to expect someone”. That is the Christian, when we sit down, get alone, we are expecting Him to show up. When I met Renee for lunch sometimes and she is running late, I continue to wait at the restaurant because I know she is coming, I am sure she is on the way. So too it is for us when we see it is time to be re-filled, wait – expecting with full assurance that He is coming to meet with you. I settle my heart, I settle my mind, I set aside all the things that are consuming my mind, and I say Lord – meet with me, and He does, and He will for you too.

Acts 1:4 (NKJV) ⁴ *And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” He said, “you have heard from Me;*

Make a Lunch Date

Christian, make a lunch date with the Holy Spirit, be assured He will come.

I Know when I am Filled

I know when I have been filled, and it is not that I speak in tongues, or have visions, but I know that I have been filled with the Holy Spirit because I come to a place where I have complete peace. My mind stops racing, the essentials become the essentials, and the non-essentials become the non-essentials, I am filled with love towards others. The world comes into focus, and God becomes the forefront of my thoughts.

Not called to be 10 by ¼ Inch

We are not called to be a people ten miles wide and a quarter inch deep, the Lord wants to take us to depth and heights we have never imagined, and because we study this Bible chapter-by-chapter, verse-by-verse, we can go to these depth and reach these heights as exemplified by our Lord Jesus Christ and the many examples of the men and woman in the Bible who had done so themselves.

Deep Stuff – Needed 14 chapters to Build to It / To Love as God Loves

What is being asked of in this passage is deep-deep stuff. What is being spoken of in these 13 verses is “Divine Love”, loving as God does, the laying down of our lives for His glory. These verses had to be place in chapter 15, because we needed the 14 chapters to build us and mature us to this point – to have Divine Love as God does.

Then Need Holy Spirit

Then we need the Holy Spirit to do all that we are called to do in Divine Love.

Let the Lamb Receive the Sacrifice

“Let the Lamb that was Slain receive the offering”, may we present our bodies as “Living Sacrifices” unto Him.

(Rom 12:1 NKJV) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

(Rom 12:2 NKJV) And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Divine Love – through the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Chapters 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Israel (Chapters 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.*

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

Doctrine – Duty / Present our Bodies – Knowing He is For Us

After eleven glorious chapters of doctrine (all that God has done for us: justification, sanctification, and glorification) we come to duty (what is our logical responses to all that He has done for us), and that is (verses 1-2 of chapter 12), that we present our bodies as living sacrifices to Him; where we say God You are utterly and amazingly in love with me, You have nothing but the best for me because You are for me, and therefore who can come against me, therefore Lord I know Your will is the best for me, and I present myself to You, I give You my life as a living sacrifice.

(Rom 12:1 NKJV) *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

(Rom 12:2 NKJV) *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

As Living Sacrifices – Lay our lives down / Contrary to Natural Man / Receive Offering

As living sacrifices we have seen how we are to lay our lives down for others, as our Great Example – Jesus did. That is a tall order, a high calling, as we see the depth this would entail us to go, a depth that is so contrary to our natural man, our lower nature, our self-centered mind. The outline we studied last time was a call to death, a call to climbing on that altar, a call to die to self so that others may experience the life laid down we enjoy. We say to the King of Glory, “may the Lamb that was slain – receive thy offering”. We are being asked as living sacrifices to love as God does, we are being called to Divine Love.

Outline: Divine Love (Romans 15:1-13)

- Divine Love – Bears with the Weak (15:1)
- Divine Love – Seeks to Edify the Other (15:2)
- Divine Love – Endures the Attacks of Others (15:3)
- Divine Love – Looks to follow the Examples of Jesus (15:4)
- Divine Love – Seeks to Glorify God Always (15:5-6)
- Divine Love – Receives others as Christ has Received Them (15:7-12)
- Divine Love – Only comes through the Holy Spirit (15:13)

Whole Key – Verse 12 / At best we Nice People / Nice won't change Lives / Don't Settle

The whole key to Divine Love is that last point, through the power of the Holy Spirit (Read 15:13), for we in and of ourselves, are not capable of this type of love. At best I can be a nice person, but nice will never change that marriage that is struggling, nor call that child back home that is wayward, nor reconcile that relationship that is strained, nor make the weak strong, nor open the eyes of the person that sits in darkness – only through the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives can and will these things happen. Christian don't settle for being nice people, nice won't change the world, settle for nothing less than being like Jesus – full of the Spirit, full of power.

(Rom 15:13 NKJV) *Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

Need Power to Live Divine Love / Fruit of Spirit – the Produce / Ultimate (unity & glory)

We need the empowering, the baptism, the overflowing of the Holy Spirit in our lives if we are to live a life of Divine Love, a life of power. Listen to what the fruit (the produce) of the Spirit is (read Galatians 5:22-23); Christian are these things you want in your life? Are they not the answer to everything we are called to do and be as living sacrifices? To love those who come against us, to have peace in difficult circumstances, to bear with the weak, to control our emotions, to be gentle – for in those things two things happen, unity and glory (as we have unity amongst others, and that Divine Love we have brings glory to God).

Galatians 5:22–23 (NKJV) ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

How Filled? / First what it Means – to be Controlled / Flesh Controlled – God Himself Move

Oh but how, how, how, do I become filled with the Holy Spirit you may ask? Before I answer that let me give you a real simple definition of what that means to be “filled” and quite simply it means to be “controlled” by the Spirit of God. It means that we are in such a living relationship with the Lord that our carnal nature is subdued, and the Spirit of God is supreme in our lives, and we are in such intimate contact with Him that He has the freedom to move in us (controlling our flesh), and move through us (pouring Himself out upon others – it is as we speak and interact with others, it is God Himself speaking and interacting with them).

How? / Let’s turn to Genesis 8 – for a Picture Example

But how can that happen, how do I become filled (controlled) by the Holy Spirit of God in my life. Most of us need pictures and stories to understand theology. I know I do. The text of example for us today (Genesis 8) provides just such a picture, for it pointedly and powerfully portrays what it means to be empowered by the Spirit...

Genesis 8:6–11 (NKJV) ⁶ So it came to pass, at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made. ⁷ Then he sent out a raven, which kept going to and fro until the waters had dried up from the earth. ⁸ He also sent out from himself a dove, to see if the waters had receded from the face of the ground. ⁹ But the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, and she returned into the ark to him, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her, and drew her into the ark to himself. ¹⁰ And he waited yet another seven days, and again he sent the dove out from the ark. ¹¹ Then the dove came to him in the evening, and behold, a freshly plucked olive leaf was in her mouth; and Noah knew that the waters had receded from the earth.

First to Leave – Raven / Eats dead Carcasses / Satan goes to and fro / Romans 8

The first animal to leave the ark was a raven—a black bird that goes “to and fro” eating the carcasses of dead animals. When Satan came before the Lord one day in heaven, the Lord said, “Where have you been?” “I’ve been going to and fro,” said Satan—cruising around just like the raven (Job 1:6, 7). Peter tells us Satan is always on the lookout for those whom he may devour (1 Peter 5:8). I also see the raven representing our flesh, and Romans 8 told us to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Carnally minded, always focusing and eating up the fleshly things, always looking to bring satisfaction to one’s flesh. The person who continually seeks to satisfy their flesh will be miserable (for to do so is death), but to be spiritually minded is life!

Romans 8:6–8 (NKJV) ⁶ For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. ⁷ Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. ⁸ So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Spiritually Minded – Life and More Abundant / Galatians 5

The spiritually minded person has life and that more abundant, for they are filled with all kinds of life giving, love filling, attributes. So if these are the things you want in your life, then this study is for you.

Galatians 5:22–23 (NKJV) ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

As Raven Circled – Dove Released / Picture of Holy Spirit / Jesus’ Baptism

So the good news is that as the raven circled, Noah released a dove—which, throughout Scripture, speaks of the Holy Spirit. Why? When Jesus was baptized that day in the Jordan, what do we read, that the Spirit came upon Him “like” a dove. Jesus comes out of the water and the Spirit comes upon Him like a dove.

Matthew 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. ¹⁷ And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Dove is Purest of all Birds / Oil on Feathers – Mates for Life – Peaceful / Sum of 12-13

The dove is the purest of all birds, for not only is it white in color—but it secretes more dirt-repelling oil on its feathers than any other flying bird. How interesting because oil in the Scriptures is a type (picture) of the Holy Spirit also. The dove is also sensitive, a bird of love, because it is one of few animals who mates for life. The dove is also a symbol of peace because, unlike vultures or buzzards, doves vacate places where there is frenzy or fighting. Have I not just summed up chapters 12-14 of Romans? Purity, faithfulness, and a peacemaker.

God shut the Door / Noah opens the Window / Illumination – Light Fresh Air / You?

Now mind you, the Ark, God shut the door (and no man could open it), but the Ark also had a window (made of wood) and Noah had the ability to open and close the window and determine how much light and illumination would come into the Ark, and determined how much fresh wind, fresh air was to come in. Noah could have kept the window closed and said I choose to continue to sit in darkness, stuffed in and stuffed up with the smell of the animals, or he could choose to open the window and allow a fresh move of air in his life. And so with us, we can say we are on the Ark (yea I'm saved) the door is shut which no man can open, but it is we who decide how much illumination of God's light in our lives we want, and how much of His fresh wind (Holy Spirit) floods upon us.

Dove found no Resting Place – Can He land on You

Verse 9 – But the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, and she returned into the ark to him – does that sound familiar to you? For we know the scriptures say that the eyes of God move across the earth looking for those who are loyal, whom he can show Himself strong to. The question for us is, can God find a place to set Himself upon in our lives, a place where He can rest His Spirit so that He may show Himself strong? His eyes today still run to and fro on this whole earth, in this State, in this County, and in this room – looking for, desiring to, rest His Spirit upon someone so that He might show Himself strong in this day and time.

2 Chronicles 16:9 (NKJV) ⁹ For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.....

Watch Noah as Dove Circles / Noah Reaches Out / Noah could have Said I'm Open

Verse 9 - But the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, and she returned into the ark to him, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth. So he put out his hand and took her, and drew her into the ark to himself. – Now watch what Noah does as the dove circles with no place to rest her feet, as Noah saw the dove circling overhead, he could have said, "If the dove wants to land on me, he can. I'm open." But that's not what he did. Noah extended his hand, grabbed the dove, and brought it in. So often, with regard to the power and presence of the Spirit, people say, "If the Holy Spirit wants to bless me and empower me, I'm open." But that kind of passivity will never bring the potency of the Spirit in its greatest possible degree. If you want to be empowered by the Spirit, you cannot be passive about the work of the Spirit any more than you were passive about the work of salvation. We can't be watching the football game and in a passing (or passive) thought say Lord if you want to, I'm open to it, oh great play, nice throw, go team; yes fill me Holy Spirit.

Can't be Passive / God wants us to Partner with Him

We cannot be passive; we must be reaching for it, asking for it, participating in the process. God wants us to be a partner with Him, desiring to be involved in what He is doing, what He desires to do, and where He desires to work. You've heard the saying (and it is very much true to a degree) – without Him I can't, without me He won't. We can't be passive, we like Noah must reach out. The dove (the Holy Spirit) is looking to land, and the dove (the Holy Spirit) looks for the hand that is extended. Not only individually I believe, but a whole congregation – may CCAAC reach forth and say come!

Many People Error – Being Passive / Wait you may Say – I am Filled – I'm Saved – Rom 8

This is where so many people err. You see, God is looking for those who will partner with Him rather than merely being passive about Him. Noah didn't simply fold his arms and watch. He stretched forth his hand and reached. "Wait a minute," you might be saying. "I'm born again, therefore I already have the Spirit" (Romans 8:9). That's true. The moment you were born again; the Spirit came in you. **You've got the Spirit. The question is: Does the Spirit have you?**

Jesus taught us there are three different relationships a person can have with the Holy Spirit...

Romans 8:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ *But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.* ¹⁰ *And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.*

The Spirit with You

John 14:17a (with you)

John 14:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.*

Para – alongside of / Spirit whispers – You need Jesus / You here today – Have You

The first relationship a person has with the Spirit is "with" you. The Greek word translated "with" is "para", which means "alongside of." You wouldn't be here today, you would never have opened your heart to Jesus had not the Holy Spirit come alongside you and whispered in your heart, "You need to become a Christian. You need to open your heart to Jesus." Every person has the Spirit with them at some point in their life. If you are here today, and have never made that commitment to give your life to Christ, to ask for the forgiveness of your sin (for your sin offends the Holy God), it is the Holy Spirit that has drawn you here, it is the Holy Spirit that has been speaking to you and drawing you to the things of God you have been seeking, but at some point you must reach out and "receive", and say come into my life Lord, forgive me of my sins, I give my life to you. The Holy Spirit will not always strive with man, and there is a day and a time which no one knows, but the Spirit will depart from a man, and no longer be calling that man, and that person will be separated from God for eternity (hell). If that is you today, reach forth your hand, say Lord come into my life, I repent of my sins and ask you to be my Lord and Savior – and when you do, He will come into your heart and take up residence.

Genesis 6:3 (NKJV) ³ *And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."*

The Spirit in You

John 14:17b (in you)

John 14:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.*

En – In / Happened to Disciples when Jesus breathed on Them

Once you become a believer, the Holy Spirit comes in you. The Greek word translated "in" is "en", which means "in". When did this happen to the disciples? After Jesus had risen from the dead, He breathed on His disciples and said, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22). At that point, they were born again, and the Spirit came in them. The Spirit could not have come into them, taken up residence within their heart, until their sin was cleansed, and that happened after the resurrection (which is proof that God accepted the substitute – Jesus trading places with a person – Jesus taking the punishment for sin (death) and man getting to become sons and daughters of God). For you here today, He cannot and will not come into your heart until the sin issue has been settled and wiped clear (and clean).

John 20:19–23 (NKJV) ¹⁹ *Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you."* ²⁰ *When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.* ²¹ *So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."* ²² *And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."* ²³ *If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."*

Wait Jesus would then Say to Them

But then Jesus would say to them, wait! Although the Spirit of God lives you (the down payment, the promise that He has redeemed you – Ephesians 1:13), you will need an overflowing (baptism) of God's Spirit so you can do the mighty works that I have done. What were the mighty works of Jesus that we see Him do in the Scriptures? Galatians 5 would sum up the life and ministry (fruits of His ministry) of Jesus (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithful, gentleness and self control). I want to give you the same says the Lord, so wait for it.

Ephesians 1:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ *In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.*

Acts 1:4 (NKJV) ⁴ *And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me;*

Galatians 5:22–23 (NKJV) ²² *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.*

The Spirit upon You

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you... Acts 1:8 (a)

Acts 1:8 (NKJV) ⁸ *But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

Receive Power – be My Witness / Have Holy Spirit – but Holy Spirit doesn't have You

You shall receive power, and then you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria – you have the Holy Spirit Jesus is saying, but the Holy Spirit doesn't have you yet. Go to Jerusalem and wait for the Holy Spirit.

epi – Upon / Overflowing / Always for Service

People refer to the baptism in the Spirit, the fullness of the Spirit, or the empowering of the Spirit. The Bible calls this the "coming upon" of the Spirit. The Greek word translated "upon" is "epi", which means "upon, overflowing". Whenever the Spirit of God came upon a man in both the Old and New Testaments, it was always to empower him for service, to dynamically impact him for ministry. Do you want your life dynamically impacted? To be radically used, to have His love flowing through you, to have His power upon you, to have your life count for the eternal things, to have your family affected, your life brought into a greater sense of joy, and greater awareness of God, to have a life of love, joy, and peace.

How does this Happen – By reaching Out

How does this happen? By reaching out, just as Noah did...

Reach Out in Faith

Without Faith – Impossible to Please God

The scripture is clear, and that is that without faith it is impossible to please God. By faith we stretch forth our hand and say fill me Lord. By faith we reach, even though I will be the first to admit it, I fully don't understand this whole dynamic, this whole concept of having the Spirit live in me, yet still need the Spirit to overflow me, but by faith I say Lord fill me to overflowing now so that I might be your witness, not go witnessing, but be your witness, a life of the Spirit flowing through me and unto others.

Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV) ⁶ *But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

Blessed are they that Hunger & Thirst

But it is not a passive faith, it is an active faith. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Matthew 5:6 (NKJV) ⁶ *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.*

Have You Hungered? / Not Satisfied with Simply being Saved / Not Passive

As we are called to hunger and thirst for righteousness, so too are we to hunger and thirst for the “coming upon” of the Spirit? Thirsting for it like you do on that hot summer, or hungering for it like you do when you haven’t eaten in a day or two. Lord, I want to be filled with all that You want and have for me, Lord I simply want more of You – I am not satisfied with simply being saved, but want a deeper work of You in my life, I don’t want to live a passive Christian life but one of actively participating with the Lord.

Young Student held under Water / Don’t be Content

A young student went to his teacher and says I want to grow in wisdom, teacher please tell me how to have great wisdom. So the teacher took him down to the water and held his head under until the student fought and struggled almost to the point of drowning him, and finally releasing the student who when he came to the surface sucked and sucked air trying to recover. The teacher then said when you desire to seek wisdom the same way you sought the breath of air – then you will be on your way to finding wisdom. So too for us, a deep desire to hunger and thirst for the righteousness of God, to be filled to overflowing, to not be content to just being saved but to live a life such as the apostles lived, who turned the world upside down. Oh may we turn our homes upside down, may we turn our extended families upside down, may we turn all who come in contact with us, upside down.

Acts 17:6 (NKJV) ⁶ *But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, “These who have turned the world upside down have come here too.*

Jesus said to Ask – so Ask

By faith I believe the Word of God which says, Jesus said if we being evil know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more will the Heavenly Father give the Holy Ghost to them that ask (Luke 11). If you want to be filled with the Spirit, reach out with a faith that’s based upon God’s promises.

Luke 11:9–13 (NKJV) ⁹ *“So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ¹¹ If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? ¹² Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”*

By Faith – Like Noah – Stretch forth Hand

By faith we stretch forth our hands and say come Spirit come.

Reach Out with Hope

Hope – Biblical Definition

The biblical definition of hope is *“the absolute expectation of coming good.”* What does this mean practically? It means I reach out in faith, with hope, expecting the Lord will answer. It might take some time. After all, the disciples sought the Lord for ten days before the mighty rushing wind of the Spirit filled their upper room (Acts 2:2).

Acts 2:1–2 (NKJV) *When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ² And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.*

Wait – Perimeno

By faith, with hope, I believe that You God will give me this baptism, this overflowing, and so I wait for it just as you said to, not hoping that it may happen, but certain that it will happen. As we had spoken in our last study, the word in Acts 1:4 for wait is “perimeno”, with the root of the word being “meno”, which means “to expect someone to come”. By faith I believe He will come.

Acts 1:4 (NKJV) ⁴ *And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” He said, “you have heard from Me;*

Wait 10 Days? / No Longer Wait For – BUT wait On

Am I saying we have to wait for ten days? No. *We no longer have to wait for the Spirit*, because the Spirit was given on the Day of Pentecost. *But we do wait on the Spirit*. Isaiah said those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength (Isaiah 40:31).

Isaiah 40:31 (NKJV)

³¹ *But those who wait on the LORD
Shall renew their strength;
They shall mount up with wings like eagles,
They shall run and not be weary,
They shall walk and not faint.*

Why Wait? / Empty Self - Sin - Adjustment

Why would He have us wait on Him? I suggest one reason is that although many of us want to be filled, the real issue is that we first must be emptied—of sin. You see, if the Lord filled me with His Spirit in my sinful condition, it would be detrimental because it would justify my carnality. Consequently, the Lord often says, “I want you to wait on Me and allow Me to search your heart, to show you that which needs to be adjusted. It might take ten days, ten weeks, or ten months. Wait on Me.”

Prayer is the Greater Work

You see Christian, prayer does not fit us for the greater work, prayer is the greater work. Prayer is where God works on you, and you work on people.

People Wait for all Kinds of Stuff / But only Moments for the Holy Spirit

People wait for days to get last gadget, or that coveted concert ticket, or long lines and times to get into that football game, but when it comes to the empowering of the Holy Ghost, we say, “Okay, Lord, I’m going to ask You for it. You’ve got fifteen seconds, and if it doesn’t happen, then I guess it’s not for me.” How little we know of waiting on the Lord. We will be the wiser and better to wait upon the Lord, to see what He may show us for our betterment, for our well-being.

Hope – Biblical Definition

The biblical definition of hope is *“the absolute expectation of coming good.”* We reach out in faith, with hope!

Reach Out for Love

Lastly (but mostly) – Love / Christianity Summed Up – Love / Baptism to live Divine Love

And lastly (but mostly), we reach out in love. It is all about love folks, that is Christianity summed up into a word – love. This baptism of the Holy Spirit is all about Divine Love, God Love flowing through us into everything we do. When we reach out in faith, with hope, for this baptism it is not so that we may speak in tongues (although you may), or prophecy (that may happen too), but so that we may have Divine Love, God’s love, flowing and moving in our lives.

God Manifests Himself in Agape Love

God, whether it be the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit manifests Himself in love (agape – unconditional love).

1 John 4:7–11 (NKJV) ⁷ *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.* ⁸ *He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.* ⁹ *In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.* ¹⁰ *In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* ¹¹ *Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*

Chp 13 – Definition of Love

First Corinthians 12 and 14 deal with the gifts and workings of the Holy Spirit. First Corinthians 13—the definition of love—appears right in the middle of Paul’s discussion of the Spirit because love is the center of it all. Love is the key.

1 Corinthians 13

We reach out in faith, with hope, for love. May those three words are singing in your mind right now (Faith – Hope – Love).

1 Corinthians 13:13 (NKJV) ¹³ And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Get This – Jesus said to go to Jerusalem /

Now get this, watch this, see this amazing application for us today; Jesus said, “The Spirit is in you. Now go to Jerusalem and wait for the Spirit to come upon you,” (see Acts 1:4). Did you catch that Christian, do we comprehend what is being said - Jerusalem? The place where the collective cry of Jerusalem had been, “Away with Him. Let His blood be upon our heads. Crucify Him.” For Jesus to pour out His Spirit at Jerusalem doesn’t make sense. For Him to pour out His wrath at Jerusalem—that makes sense. For Him to pour out His judgment at Jerusalem—that’s understandable. But to pour out His Spirit in the place that wanted nothing to do with Him, that turned its back on Him, that killed Him? I would have thought Jesus would have said now head to Capernaum boys and wait, stay away from Jerusalem until you see the smoke settle. The Book of Acts will begin with fire alright, and what I do to Jerusalem will make Sodom look like children’s sparklers. I would have thought the Lord would blast Jerusalem. Instead He blessed Jerusalem.

If want to be Filled – Bless your Jerusalem’s

Listen Christian, here is immediate application, and immediate moving, if you want to be filled with the Holy Ghost, reach out in faith, with hope, for love – to the person who really messed up, who let you down, who treated you unfairly. Who is your Jerusalem? Who has wronged you, hurt you, offended you? Do good to him, bless her, love them. And as you do, you’ll find that the Spirit of God will begin to flow through you. You’ll be filled and anointed and empowered whenever you choose to love your Jerusalem. When you choose to love the wife who left you, the child who rejected you, the boss who hurt you, you will be empowered with the Spirit of God. I guarantee it. It all starts in Jerusalem.

When you Can – you will have Divine Love

When you can love the person who hurt you, then you truly will have Divine Love (truly agape love – that loves unconditionally – like God does).

Need Faith to Believe God will / Hope – listen for Adjustments / If love Them – World Next

You will need to believe by faith that God can give you love for them; you will need to wait on the Lord and listen to His word on the matter and make some adjustments in your life in response to what He says, and I would say to you today, the first place you go from there is to your Jerusalem. If you can love in Jerusalem (the place that hurt you the most), you will easily have love that flows out to Judea, Samaria, and the outer parts of the world.

God made a Statement – Forgive / 2nd Chances / My Flesh Can’t do This – God Control

When God poured His Spirit out in the upper room there in Jerusalem, He was making a statement to all of Jerusalem (forgive them they know not what they do), He was making the statement to them that God is not done with them, has not forsaken them, and is the giver of second chances. Can we, will we do the same? I don’t know about your flesh, but I know that is not in me to do, unless..... I allow God to step in and take control.

Be Specific

When you are waiting on the Lord to go to your Jerusalem, get specific with Him.

- Give a list of names; be honest with Him for He already knows who you have resentment towards.
- Seek Him for specific actions of how you go to your Jerusalem:
 - He will say I am sure, I want you to pray for them (not about them) – because no one else will because they aren’t just mean to you.
 - He will say – forgive them, for they truly don’t know what they are doing, they are nowhere near your maturity.

- He may say write them a letter of encouragement (nothing specific about how they hurt you, just a note saying you were on my heart to today and I wanted to give you a word from the Lord - leave them a verse on God's love, not God's wrath is coming ☺)
- He may say drop off a dessert (it could even be anonymous).
- He may say don't avoid them (as you know where they are), and purposely plan to cross their path so you can impart a smile, a hello, a handshake or hug.
- Give them a soft answer, rather than what they truly deserve.
- And, here is a biggie – to actually talk good about them to people, rather negatively.
- In all these things, even if the person does not know what you are doing, and/or doesn't respond positively to all they do know you are doing, that is (too bad for them), but still good for you because Divine Love (agape love – unconditional love that expects nothing in return) is flowing through you.
- Do these things and watch, I guarantee you, you will see and experience the baptism (empowerment) of God's Holy Spirit flow through you. And you will be a Spirit filled believer.

If You can Love in Jerusalem – Judea and Samaria will be Next

If you can love in Jerusalem (the place that hurt you the most), you will easily have love that flows out to Judea, Samaria, and the outer parts of the world.

Reach out Faith / Hope / Love / The Greatest of these - Love

May we reach out in faith (like Noah did), reach out in hope (knowing that something absolutely good is coming if we wait on the Lord for it), and reach out for love (to our Jerusalem's) – faith, hope, and love; and the greatest of these – LOVE.

The Precious Heart (the Heart of Paul)

(Romans 15:14-33)

Simple Outline – The Book of Romans

- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed - concerning Salvation (Chapters 1-8)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Israel (Chapters 9-11)
- God's Righteousness & Grace Revealed – concerning Practical Christian Living (12-16)

Key Verse:

(Rom 1:16 NKJV) For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

(Rom 1:17 NKJV) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "*The just shall live by faith.*"

V13 – End of Duty / See the Heart of Paul / What an Opportunity

Verse 13 of chapter 15 was pretty much the end for the most part of Paul giving us the “duty” the response to the doctrine (all that Christ has done for us). For the most part what we will read in the remaining verses of chapter 15 and through 16 is Paul sharing his heart with us. What a tremendous blessing for us to be able to look into the heart of such a great man of God, to see what was in his heart and on his mind. We can glean much, and thus a wonderful opportunity for us to grow and abound in the Lord.

Outline

Outline: Paul's Precious Heart

- Paul's Pastoral Heart (15:14-15)
- Paul's Preaching Heart (15:16-21)
- Paul's Planning Heart (15:22-29)
- Paul's Praying Heart (15:30-33)

Paul's Pastoral Heart (15:14-15)

In these verses we see Paul's pastoral heart as he encourages the saints. We all need a Paul in our lives, someone to encourage us on, to root us on to continue on, to finish well. And, the beauty of it all, each and every one of us can be a Paul, have this pastoral heart and be an encourager of the brethren that God puts in our life. Consider yourself ordained today, now go and be an encourager of the Beloved.

Paul Preaches with Boldness

(Rom 15:14 NKJV) Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

Goodness

Verse 14 – full of goodness: They were filled with goodness (a fruit of the Spirit). Paul tells them the good things they are and are doing, and that is powerful. The tendency can be to always correct, tell people what they are doing wrong, but here we see Paul give a beautiful balance of

Knowledge

Verse 14 – filled with all knowledge: Perfect tense: “having been filled with all knowledge”: Not in the absolute sense (or he would not have written this lengthy epistle), but in the sense that they had an understanding of the full scope of Christian truth. They understood the big picture of living the Christian life (thus they were full of goodness), and Paul wrote them about specifics so they would grow even deeper.

Admonish / Correct – Warn – Exhort / Take from Infancy to Maturity /

Verse 14 – able to admonish one another: Paul considered the Roman Christians spiritually informed and spiritually mature. We, too, should be able to admonish one another. Admonish

doesn't necessarily only mean to correct, but it also means to warn, and it also means to exhort (encourage). So these people were mature enough to do all three of these things (correct, warn, and encourage) – and that is a sign of a mature believer, someone who can correct, warn, and encourage. The mature believer is able to take someone from infancy to maturity and as we do there will be days where we correct that young believer (hey that is not of the Lord what you are doing), or to warn (be careful beloved, you are heading into dangerous waters), and to encourage (hey beloved I have a word from the Lord for you that is going to bless your heart for the situation you are going through). Now to do these things, we must be mature, and to be mature we must be filled with the knowledge of the Scriptures, and we must be full of goodness (we live out personally what the scriptures say – for we can't lead anyone to a place we don't go ourselves).

God's Formula for Ministry / 2 Timothy 2

We see God's formula for ministry here in that Paul's precious heart has been passed on to these believers who then are doing the same as Paul. They are taking young believers and maturing them into strong believers. It is God's dynamic, and the formula we desire to follow here not only in the church, but in your homes:

2 Timothy 2:2 (NKJV) ² *And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*

(Rom 15:15 NKJV) Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on some points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God,

Paul can Speak Boldly because they Mature / Churches today- Pastor Afraid speak Boldly

Because of their maturity Paul can speak to them boldly, not have to cuddle them in fear of upsetting them, but to speak boldly. A pastor's ability to speak boldly to his congregation is a sign of a mature church. Sadly many churches, the Pastor is fearful of speaking boldly because he knows the people can't stomach the truth, and thus will leave and never come back. I consider it as much the pastor's fault because the pastor he obviously is not filling them with the knowledge of the scriptures which produces maturity, but rather tells them things that will make them feel good (Jesus Light I call it), rather than taking them to the weight room and training them up in the way they should go.

Interesting Dynamic / Paul speaks Basics to the Mature / Greatest Failings is the Basic

Here is an interesting dynamic in that Paul can speak boldly, because they are mature, but he continues to speak to them by reminding them of the things already spoken, the things they already know, therefore the things that would be considered elementary; so Paul reminds the mature of the simple truths. It is needful for all of us to be reminded. Hey I know there are times we hear a bible study and we say that is pure milk, I know this already, you are going over Christianity 101. That maybe so, but how I see that my greatest failing have come when I wasn't doing the base things, the 101 things. I know if I am doing the base things nothing can move me.

This Word will never Return Void / Camden's Baby Books

I will also tell you this, the Word of God is living and powerful, and it will never return void, and if I am open to hear, God will move! I tell you and it is the truth, I love reading Camden's picture Bible with Him because as I do I just see the word brought down to its simplest form (that a child can understand it), and I am blown away by how profoundly simple it is, yet simply profound. When my 4 year old repeats a scripture to me I don't think it is only cute, I believe it is God speaking back to me a word for me to hear.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

Isaiah 55:10–11 (NKJV)

¹⁰ *“For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven,
And do not return there,
But water the earth,
And make it bring forth and bud,
That it may give seed to the sower
And bread to the eater,*

¹¹ *So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth;
It shall not return to Me void,
But it shall accomplish what I please,
And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.*

I hope we never get Tired / Every time we feel God is Talking / Amazing – As Mature

I hope we never get tired of being reminded, that every time we hear the word that we believe it is God talking (not man) and that word is ready to do a work in our lives at that moment, and that we will have ears to hear. Peter said it is necessary to continually speak of the basic things. The amazing thing is that the more you mature, the more that things become the basic things. We invest a lot of time in prophecy here as a church, and thus prophecy has become an elementary thing to many of you. You go and start quoting scriptures about the last days and people sit there and go wow, how do you know all that stuff, and all the while you are thinking, hey I only know the basic stuff, I really don't feel like I know the deep-deep things.

2 Peter 1:12–13 (NKJV) ¹² *For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth.* ¹³ *Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you,*

Parents keep reminding your kids the basic things; yea they can be your typical teenager and say yea, yea I heard it before – but keep bringing it, for it is the base things that will keep them strong.

Christian – we made it 1 more Year / 52 weeks – 1 week at a time

Basic or not, as I was saying the other night at the prayer meeting, we have made it one more year, God has sustained us one more year. I can't remember the Bible study from January, not the one in June, nor the one just last month, but that did all they were meant to do – sustain us one more week. Week three comes after week two which comes after week one, but as we put them all together we find ourselves 52 weeks later still standing, still singing, still enjoying the joy of our salvation.

If you feel it is Total Reminder – Look to Admonish after Service / Thus – Sunday Service

And, let me say this, those days where you feel it is all a reminder when you sit in the Bible study, will you always have in your mind, that after the service is over there are people all around you needing to be ministered to. That Sunday you don't think to yourself you are coming to a Bible Study (and maybe the message may be homerun, or just a single, or even a total whiff), but you have a chance to hit one out of the park every time, as you will always (if you ask the Lord) to minister that brother or sister verse 14 of chapter 15. If you can't be taught something new, go find someone to teach them something new. That is why we call it the "Sunday Service", as it is an opportunity to serve as well as receive.

(Rom 15:14 NKJV) *Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.*

Now – Preaching Heart

So in verses 14-15 we see Paul's pastor heart, and now in verses 16-21 we will see Paul's preaching heart.

Paul's Preaching Heart (15:16-21)

Paul preached not out of obligation, but love.

(Rom 15:16 NKJV) **that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.**

Souls lead to Lord – an Offering / Camden brings me Flowers / It moves the Father's Heart

Paul considers the souls he leads to the Lord as an offering. Lord, my heart for you, all that you have done for me, my debt is to you, but my payment is to man. Paul wanted to offer the Lord more than himself (which he fully gave), but wanted to offer others too. When Camden brings me a flower outside when we are outside playing, I just want to kiss him all over and hug him. My heart is so moved that he wanted to give me something, to share something with me; after awhile

he knew that bringing me flowers moved my heart. When we bring people before the Lord (and you can apply this for salvation, or any other time and way we bring people to the Lord such as prayer, worship, teaching them the scriptures), it is like bringing God a flower, saying I know this moves your heart, here is a flower, and wait right here because I'm coming back with another. Oh may we put witnessing and evangelism in that context that we are bringing Him a flower.

Proverbs 11:30 (NKJV)

³⁰ *The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life,
And he who wins souls is wise.*

(Rom 15:17 NKJV) Therefore I have reason to glory in Christ Jesus in the things which pertain to God.

(Rom 15:18 NKJV) For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient;

Paul clear – He is just and Instrument

Verse 18 - For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me – Paul is being real clear that all the mighty works of his ministry are done by Christ, and that he is only an instrument in the hands of God.

Word and Deed must go Together

Verse 18 - in word and deed – how the two must always go together, as we speak the word of God it must be backed by actions.

James 2:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?* ¹⁷ *Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.*

I Lived It – before – I preached It

If I preach love, I must love. If I preach grace, I must be gracious. If I preach purity, I must be pure. If I preach endurance, I must endure. Paul said noting I have spoken about in 15 chapters is knowledge only, but that which God has accomplished in me first. I lived it, before I every preached it.

(Rom 15:19 NKJV) in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

Illyricum Note

Paul's visit to Illyricum is not mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament. This area, also known as Dalmatia, corresponds approximately to modern-day Yugoslavia. It was west and north of Greece. At one time Titus went to Dalmatia (2 Tim 4:10). A logical suggestion is that Paul went into Illyricum from Macedonia while waiting for a response to 2 Corinthians before going on to Corinth (Acts 20:1-3; 2 Cor. 13:1-2, 10). This visit may have been fresh in his mind since Corinth was the city where he wrote Romans.

Paul's Miracles

Luke referred to a miracle God performed through Paul at Cyprus (Acts 13:11, making Elymas blind), "signs and wonders" at Iconium (Acts 14:3; cf. Acts 15:12) and miracles at Lystra (Acts 14:8-10, 19-20), Ephesus (Acts 19:11-12), Troas (Acts 20:9-12), and Malta (Acts 28:1-8).

Signs confirm the Messenger and the Message

Signs: (shmei/on semeion) miracles by which God authenticates the men are sent by him, or by which men prove that the cause they are pleading is God's; miracles that signify theological truths; and wonders: (te,raj teras) miracles that produce awe and astonishment.

I haven't Seen firsthand Miracles / Vanity – Addiction - Marriages

Now have I ever seen someone raised from the dead? No. Have I ever seen a person I personally knew who was paralyzed arise and walk? No. But I will tell you some of the miracles I have seen. I've seen a 27 year old man with all that the world had to offer sitting in emptiness,

saying life is vanity – and then God reach out to him, and change his life forever more (I look at that man every morning in the mirror). I've watch my friends personally walk away from drug addictions, I've watch marriages I've know personally arise from the ashes, and the greatest of all miracles is that I continually see with my eyes God reaching out to sinful man and offering him new life. Watching the dead rise or the lame walk would be cool, but I wouldn't trade the daily miracles and signs I see for anything in the world, no matter (aka) how exciting some tout them to be.

You authenticate God's Message when you Live it

You see precious saint, you are God's sign and wonder to the world, you authenticate this message when you live it. You prove it is powerful (so powerful you can break addictions), you prove it is love (as you love people), you prove it is joy (as you live over your trials and not under them). You authenticate the message as you live it out – just as signs and wonders are meant to do.

2 Corinthians 3:2-3 (NKJV) ² You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; ³ clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

Important – God doesn't Leave us on Our Own / Gives us the Holy Spirit

How important for me to make note right now that as we break this book out into doctrine and duty, but as we see it here in this passage, and throughout the Scriptures, God does not leave us on our own, or leave it up to us, to apply the duty to the doctrine. He doesn't say here is what you are to do, now go do it on your own strength, but He says here is what I want you to do, and I am here to help you do it as I take up residence within you for personal inward application, and I am ready to overflow from you for the personal outward application (such as going forth and being ministers in My name). God ever so wants us to succeed in this duty, He doesn't leave us on our own, God gives us all we need to succeed, and we only need to choose – to choose Him to have His way in our lives.

(Rom 15:20 NKJV) And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation,

Better Coffee and Donuts

The way to plant a church is not to move across the street from the church they attended, and then invite everyone from that church by telling them the donuts and the coffee are better at their church. That is all just the flesh, and a man filled with pride. How ridiculous the pride of man is, that hundreds of thousands around them are perishing, yet they fight over the same 20 people. Go where no one has gone before, and there you will have to do one thing only, trust the Lord.

(Rom 15:21 NKJV) but as it is written: "To whom He was not announced, they shall see; And those who have not heard shall understand."

Is 52 & 65

Paraphrased from: Isa 52:15 and Isa 65:1.

Isaiah 52:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ So shall He sprinkle many nations.
Kings shall shut their mouths at Him;
For what had not been told them they shall see,
And what they had not heard they shall consider.

Isaiah 65:1 (NKJV)

"I was sought by those who did not ask for Me;
I was found by those who did not seek Me.
I said, 'Here I am, here I am,'
To a nation that was not called by My name.

Paul's aim to the Gentile / But anyone who sat next on Airplane

Paul's aim was to preach the gospel to all who would hear, he was specifically called to preach the gospel to the gentiles, but we see through a study of his life that if you sat next to him on the

airplane (if you would) he didn't care if you were Jew or Gentile, he was going to preach Christ to you. Paul's debt was to God, but his payment was to man, and Paul loved to bring flowers to the Lord. How about us?

Hypothetical Situation

Let me present to you a hypothetical situation, and ask you what you would do. The day is January 1st, 2001, and you are returning from a New Year's celebration in Boston. You settle in for a comfortable ride back home, you fall asleep only to be awoken by a bump in the flight. You then overhear two men behind you with foreign accents whispering to each other, "look the cockpit door is still left open, the whole flight now they have never shut the cockpit door, gaining entry and taking control of the plane will be no problem for us". And then you hear them say, "when we fly these planes into the World Trade Center later this year, thousands will perish, and we will be heroes." What would you do? You'd tell the airlines and they would say, that's not my department. You'd call the FBI, the CIA, NSA, and all of them would say – ah another "conspiracy theorist". In desperation you'd call the newspaper and say this is what I overheard on the airplane, and they would say – oh boy another crackpot calling in. What would you do? You'd have to go one-on-one, you'd write letters of warnings and stand outside the Twin Towers every chance you would get and hand them to people coming in and out. You'd engage whoever would listen, listen this is what I overheard on an airplane ride home this year, you need to quit working here, change your jobs and way of life. Some would say to you, I don't think so, I am the CEO – I have prestige and power in this building. Others would say, I can't disrupt my career path, I am upward mobile. Others might say, this is my whole social life in this building; my meaning and substance for living are here in this place. Every day you went you would be mocked and laughed at, you would be taking your life into harm's way because that day may be the day. Some people would hear you, they would see your passion, they would know that you really care for them, and some would heed. And on September 11th of that year, you would say to yourself – I saved some, I saved some, and those some would find you and say – thank you, thank you for caring enough about me, even though you were already safe back home in Maryland, you were willing to take the risk for me. We know the coming terror, it is called hell, and all who refuse and reject Jesus Christ will spend eternity there. We have overheard the conversations of the enemy, we know his desire to destroy our countryman and loved ones, we have 100% perfect and credible intelligence report, and the question is not "if", but the answer is "when".

We see Paul's Heart / Example for Us / Chance to Glean

God is giving us a chance to look into the precious heart of Paul, a man that was well pleasing to God. Paul is an example for us to glean from, and man just like us who blessed the heart of the Father, who brought Him flowers because he knew it blessed the heart of the Father.

Romans 15:4 (NKJV) ⁴ For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

Pastoral – Preaching - Planning

So in verses 14-15 we see Paul's pastor heart, verses 16-21 we will see Paul's preaching heart. Now we see Paul's plans (verse 22-29), and his plan is to see these loved ones of Rome. Paul loved people, we see it here in his heart (what a precious heart he has), he just loved people and wanted to be with them, not only for their sake, but his too as he took great joy in being with them.

Paul's Planning Heart (15:22-29)

Paul has his plan, the things he wanted to do, and we see that all he wanted to do was love and fellowship with the Beloved of God, and to make the name of God known to all who have never heard His glorious name and His great message of love and forgiveness.

Paul's Desire to come visit them Personally

(Rom 15:22 NKJV) For this reason I also have been much hindered from coming to you.

(Rom 15:23 NKJV) But now no longer having a place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come to you,

Paul preached the Places Out / Paul lays Foundation – moves On

Paul preached those places out, and now is ready to move on to new soil. Now Paul isn't saying that there was no more people to be saved, but as we study the life of Paul we see his calling was to lay a foundation by preaching evangelistically, establishing a church, and appointing a Pastor (and/or elders) to grow the church from there.

(Rom 15:24 NKJV) whenever I journey to Spain, I shall come to you. For I hope to see you on my journey, and to be helped on my way there by you, if first I may enjoy your company for a while.

Paul desires to go to Spain / Swing by see Them

And Paul goes on to say that he desires to go lay a foundation in Spain, and while on the way to Spain he will swing by Rome to see these beloved that he is writing to.

The Offering to the Church in Jerusalem First

(Rom 15:25 NKJV) But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints.

(Rom 15:26 NKJV) For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem.

Paul going back to Jerusalem

Paul going back to Jerusalem, the place that rejected him, ousted him, and hated him. If you missed last week's study, please get a copy of it. If you want to be filled with the Holy Spirit, you/we need to go back to our Jerusalem's, the place we have been hurt, the place where people have rejected us, mistreated us, and go back there and love them – and then Judea, Samaria, and the outer parts of the world will be nothing compared to being able to love in our Jerusalem's.

Paul want to bring Love Offering to Jerusalem / They fell on Hard Times

Paul's visit to Jerusalem was to deliver the voluntary offering (spoken more in detail in Acts 24:17; 1 Cor 16:1-4; 2 Cor 8:13-14; 9:12-13; Gal 2:10), as the church had fallen on hard times, quite possible due to the famine that Agabus prophesied would happen, and/or because the Jewish converts in Jerusalem would have been rejected by their countryman for following Jesus, and thus they would have been fired from their jobs, or Judaizers would have stopped frequenting their business, and they believers in Jerusalem fall on tough economic times.

Acts 11:27-28 (NKJV) ²⁷ And in these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸ Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar.

Love Offering - Koinonia

So Paul desires to bring them an offering from the Gentile churches, it was to be a love offering. Contribution" = koinwnia, n koinonian fellowship, participation, sharing in; partnership; contribution, gift. It is the same word we use for fellowshiping with each other physically. How sweet it is when we minister to people both physically and financially. When you give a financial love offering, either here at the church or to the person individually, you are having sweet "koinonia" with them.

(Rom 15:27 NKJV) It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things.

Gentiles owe a Debt to Believers in Jerusalem / They were the Kindle for the Fire

Paul is saying to these gentiles that they owe a debt to the believers in Jerusalem; for it was they that endured the persecution and rejection of their countryman so that the Gospel may go forth to the rest of the world (the world including Rome). The believers in Jerusalem were the kindle, the

first wood, for the fire of the Gospel that spread from Jerusalem to Judea and Samaria, and now to the outer parts of the world.

Additional Reading

(Rom 11:11-12, 17-18; 15:12; Gal 3:14; Eph 3:6)

Romans 11:11–12 (NKJV) ¹¹ I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles. ¹² Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!

You with Godly Parents

You with godly parents owe your parents greatly; they endured much to deliver you the Scriptures. Maybe today would be a good day to say thank you to them.

(Rom 15:28 NKJV) Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them this fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain.

Paul got to Rome – but not how he Planned / He came in Chains

Paul got to Rome, but not when or in the manner he anticipated! He came to Rome in chains as we had studied when he was falsely accused by his countryman for stirring up a revolt against Rome and had to stand before Agrippa and Festus, and He appealed to Caesar and to Caesar in Rome he went, an all expense paid trip by the government.

Acts 25:11–12 (NKJV) ¹¹ For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying; but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. I appeal to Caesar.”
¹² Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, “You have appealed to Caesar? To Caesar you shall go!”

Plan but be Flexible

Christians should plan ahead, but be flexible to the Lord’s leadings and ways:

Proverbs 16:9 (NKJV) ⁹A man’s heart plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.

Church Fathers – Paul did go to Spain

According to the early church fathers, Paul ultimately did go to Spain after being released

Christian – days Number / Satan says there is Time / Has God called you to Something

Christian, can I encourage you in this, the Lord says for us to number our days. The message is clear that there is wisdom in understanding that we are only here for a set time, a short time at that, and that we should plan on how we are going to be effective, make our life count, with the days that we have. I know one of the lies of Satan is always, “you have time”. You have time, don’t worry, you can always call that person later, or study that topic later, or get involved in the ministry later, have that sit down with your kids – well Satan always tells us we have time, but the fact is we don’t, as our most precious resource (above money or material) is time, for we can always get more money or material, but once the time is spent, it is gone for eternity. Christian, has God called you to something, has He laid something on your heart, then seek the Lord on bringing that plan into action – there may not be all the time left to do it that you think there is.

Psalm 90:12 (NKJV)

¹² So teach us to number our days,
That we may gain a heart of wisdom.

Psalm 37:4–5 (NKJV)

⁴ Delight yourself also in the LORD,
And He shall give you the desires of your heart.

⁵ Commit your way to the LORD,
Trust also in Him,
And He shall bring it to pass.

Paul’s Prayer Request

(Rom 15:29 NKJV) But I know that when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

Acts – Paul came in Fullness

As we read the Book of Acts, we see that is exactly how Paul came (mind you Romans was written before the Book of Acts while Paul was in Corinth), in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel.

Acts 28:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, ³¹ preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.

How do you wish to See People

How do you wish to see people, how do you wish to come to them? May we come to every person, every church gathering, every home gathering, with the heart of Paul, that we would come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel (good news) – so we may impart to others some spiritual fruit.

Romans 1:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established—

Pastoral – Preaching - Planning

So in verses 14-15 we see Paul's pastor heart, verses 16-21 we will see Paul's preaching heart. Now we see Paul's plans (verse 22-29), and his plan is to see these loved ones of Rome. And now we see Paul's prayer (30-33).

Paul's Praying Heart (15:30-33)

Paul was a man of prayer, and he was not too prideful to ask for personal prayers for himself and his ministry – and neither should we be.

(Rom 15:30 NKJV) Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me,

Paul recognized need for Prayer

The Apostle Paul recognized his need for intercessory prayer support from his readers and asked for it again and again (Eph 6:19-20; Col 4:3-4; 1 Thess 5:25; 2 Thess 3:1-2; Philemon 22).

We can Participate in Global Struggle – from Closet

You can participate in the global struggle for the Gospel in your own prayer closet.

Paul says to Strive / To fight along With

Paul says to strive with him, so we are not to strive in our flesh, but we are to strive in the spirit. Jesus said my yoke is easy and my burden is light, and He was referring to us trying to carry loads ourselves, in our own strength and means. But, there is a place where we join with Him, and fight the fight; the word strive literally means to “fight along with”. So Paul giving the call to the body in Rome, hey guys please come join me in the fight, let's stand side-by-side and fight the fight, let's partner with the Lord for the hearts and minds of the people.

Philippians 1:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,

Paul will make 3 Specific Requests / James 5:16

Paul is going to make three specific prayer requests. James says that effective and fervent prayer of the righteous man avails much. The idea here is that our prayers be specific (have a target to aim for).

James 5:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

Our loved ones Blinded by Satan – Oh I'll think About It

Is it not amazing how blinded the minds of our unsaved loved-one are? We say hey I got great news for you, we can have eternal life with God Himself, a future hope and glory where there is no more sorrow and no more tears, a place where all will be made whole. We will be gone and

done with this wretched fallen world, no more cancer, wars, childhood diseases, lost jobs, and the likes – we will live in the glorious paradise of heaven! And they say, well, I don't know, let me think about it for awhile – so how's the kids, are you going to watch the game today? We are like what is wrong with you, didn't you just hear what I said? They are blinded by the god of this world, who is specifically targeting them and blinded them, and therefore we must pray specifically that God binds the god of this world so our loved ones can hear and see the glorious gospel we are telling them.

2 Corinthians 4:4 (NKJV) ⁴ *whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*

James – Effective Prayers / Work

James says the “effective, fervent prayers of a righteous man avails much”. The words “effective and fervent” are just one Greek word in the original text, and it is the word “energeo”, and it is where we get our word – “work”. Yes, prayer is work! But just as work is work, work is also rewarding when we bring that paycheck home is it not? It does “avails – profit” much. Work brings profit to my home, and so does prayer. Pray Christian, pray! Bring the profit into your home. I even add that play on words in that you will be bring a prophet into your home because as you pray, the word of God is spoken back to you, and reveals God's desire for your life.

James 5:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.*

Have Efficient Prayers

But understand this, and we will see it in Paul's prayer, how concise it is. This word for effective means “to be active, and to be efficient”. There is much value in being concise with your prayer, use your words like a scalpel making precision cuts. When I go to work every day I make a list of what needs to be accomplished; I prioritize my list to make sure the most important things get done first, not the ones that the loudest manager wants (which can be the way our prayers go sometimes – as this is what is screams the loudest, but in the truest sense isn't that important).

Stay Focused – But not Impersonal

I have my prayer lists, and they keep me focused. Sometimes I have to pray out loud to stay focused, hey whatever it takes. The challenge is made, a list will turn your prayer mechanical (as you just work down the list), that would be true of anything we do. How do you know when it has become mechanical? When you do all the talking. Prayer is a two way conversation. Speak and listen, listen and speak. Have efficient prayers, but don't have impersonal prayers – enjoy your fellowship with the Lord; speak to Him, and let Him speak to you.

Prayer Work – but Profit worth It

Prayer is work, but the profit is worth the effort; God is calling us to partner with Him in the labor.

(Rom 15:31 NKJV) *that I may be delivered from those in Judea who do not believe, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints,*

First – protected by Unbelievers

Paul requested prayer in three specific areas. The first is seen here—that he might be protected from the unbelievers in Jerusalem who were out to do him in.

Second – Accepted by Beleivers

Second, Paul requested prayer that the believers in Jerusalem might accept him.

Still needed Today

These prayers are still specifically needed today as we try to minister to family, friends, and out on the streets.

(Rom 15:32 NKJV) *that I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed together with you.*

Third – Refreshed by coming to Rome

Thirdly, Paul requested prayer that he might come to see them in Rome and have fellowship with them. Paul is desiring to be refreshed by them and he refreshing them.

We Americans may miss this Gift

I'm not sure we Americans can truly appreciate this great gift that God gives us, that we can fellowship with each other at any given moment, freely without worry of imprisonment or persecution – sadly I think because it is so readily available we don't worry about seizing every opportunity to fellowship together because we always know, it will be there tomorrow. It is that Satan and time thing again.

Three Requests – the Results

Paul made three specific requests; how did they turn out?

- Was Paul protected? So severe was the stoning he received at the hands of unbelieving Jews that his life was spared only when he was taken into protective custody by Lycinius, a Roman centurion (Acts 21).
- Was he accepted by the believers? The believers themselves were the underlying reason for the stoning he received. Furthermore, they never thanked him for the offering he risked his life to deliver to them, nor does Scripture record any of them speaking with him or caring for him during the two years he was in protective custody.
- Did he come to Rome with joy? He traveled to Rome as a prisoner of the Roman Empire.

Or were They?

And so we wonder. It looks like the prayers of the Romans weren't answered—or were they?

- Was he protected? Yes. He didn't die. Bloodied? You bet—but he didn't die.
- Was he accepted by the believers? Oh, not initially—but eventually, for Peter himself instructed the believers to listen to what Paul had to say (2 Peter 3:15).
- Did he make it to Rome? While he didn't travel in the way he intended, at least his trip was all-expenses paid!

Sometimes our Prayers seem to be Answered the Opposite / Until we Step Back

Gang, like Paul, sometimes we say, "Pray for me. I'm going through this struggle, and here are three things I need to see happen...." And although we pray with fervency, sometimes initially it seems like just the opposite of what we hoped for happens. But wait. I have discovered that usually when I think prayers are not being answered, it's simply because I have not seen the unique and beautiful way God is working.

(Rom 15:33 NKJV) Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Paul the Preacher - Amen / Pastor and the Watch / 3 more Amen to Go

Paul, the preacher, he closes with an - amen, but he really isn't done. What does it mean when a pastor places his watch on the pulpit? Absolutely nothing! So next week we will finish this glorious book with Paul, who will say amen three more times – but for us, after 42 studies, that we started on October 4, 2009 – we will finish our study in this wonderful love letter from our Heavenly Father.

May we catch this Precious Heart of Paul / Have the Same Ourselves

May we catch the heart of Paul, see the heart of this man and ask the Lord through His Holy Spirit to give us a heart the same.

Outline: Paul's Precious Heart

- Paul's Pastoral Heart (15:14-15)
- Paul's Preaching Heart (15:16-21)
- Paul's Planning Heart (15:22-29)
- Paul's Praying Heart (15:30-33)

Chapter 16

The Treasures of the Heart

(Romans 16:1-27)

October 31 1517

In 1517 Pope Leo X, empty-pocketed and needing funds to rebuild St. Peter's basilica, issued a special "sale" of indulgences. The very word "indulgence" tends to convey dubious moral connotations, but these indulgences were particularly questionable. What was an "indulgence"? It was a special sort of forgiveness for sins issued by the pope in consideration of various acts of merit, in this case donations to Leo's treasury. Indulgences could even be "purchased" on behalf of loved ones in purgatory.

Dominican friar Johann Tetzel became the pontiff's peddler, a P. T. Barnum traveling around with a brass-bound chest, a bag of printed receipts, and an enormous cross draped with a papal banner. Whenever Tetzel came to a town, church bells pealed, crowds gathered, and street performers kicked up their heels. Tetzel would set up shop in the nave of the local church, open his bags, and shout, "I have here the passports to lead the human soul to the celestial joys of Paradise. As soon as the coin rings in the bowl, the soul for whom it is paid will fly from purgatory and straight to heaven." He usually exceeded his quota.

But many were troubled, and when the hard eyes of Martin Luther fell on the indulgences purchased by fellow villagers in Wittenberg, he studied them carefully and pronounced them frauds. At high noon on October 31, 1517, Luther, a 33-year-old university professor, walked to the door of Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany, and tacked to it a document. The door served as the town bulletin board, and Martin Luther had an announcement to post. He called for a "disputation on the power and efficacy of indulgences."

A few curious passersby drew near and scanned the words: "Out of love for the faith and the desire to bring it to light, the following propositions will be discussed at Wittenberg under the chairmanship of the Reverend Father Martin Luther, Master of Arts and Sacred Theology. ... " There followed a list of 95 items.

Luther did not yet know what mighty blows he had struck, but we do as we live in the full-blown explosion of the Protestant Reformation.

How fitting for Us Today – October 31 2010

How fitting for us to finish this book after a year of studying it, on this day (31 October 2010), as the heart of Luther's message was and is based off this Book, and the verse – "the just shall live by faith" (a reference to Habakkuk 2:4), nailed to those doors on this very day 493 years ago.

Romans 1:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

Luther Wrote

Martin Luther - Martin Luther wrote, "*Night and day I pondered Romans until I grasped the truth. I felt myself to be reborn. This passage of Paul became to me a gateway to heaven.*"

What a Gateway – Been all He Said it would Be / Living and Powerful

What a gateway it has been for us for this past year, these 43 some studies, these 16 chapters, these 433 verses. God's word has been bountiful and blessed to us, and it has been all that He said it would be (Living and Powerful):

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Ch16 – Beautiful Finish / Paul's Precious Heart / Greetings – the Friend Maker

And chapter 16 is such a beautiful finish to this book, so often overlooked for its richness, but we know better, because we know that every word is living and powerful. We again see the precious heart of Paul. We can often think of Paul as being "matter-of-fact", laying out doctrines, teaching theology, presenting a take-it-or-leave-it gospel, we can think those things of him because we are

reading him as a book, black and white ink on a page; but chapter 16 shows us the personal side of Paul, the intimate and friendly side of this great apostle Paul who was not only a soul-winner, but he was a friend-maker as well. And here in chapter 16, we see ample evidence of that fact. The chapter contains a list of thirty-three people to whom Paul is sending his greetings. The first list (verses 1–16) is comprised of those who Paul is greeting who live in Rome and will be part of receiving this letter. The second list (verses 21–23) is comprised of those who are with Paul in Corinth, some who are helping Paul send this letter.

Greet – 22 / Beloved – 4 / Warm Book – not Theology – but Love Letter

Paul uses the word “greet” 22 times, and it means to embrace with a kiss; he uses the word “beloved” 4 times and that means to be a son or daughter. Paul’s closing of this letter is very warm, it indicates to us the temperature of this whole letter, warmth and love. Paul did not send his friends a theological book, but a love letter. And so too it is for us, God didn’t write us a theological book here (although it is), He didn’t write us a list of do’s and don’ts (although they are here), He wrote us a love letter from His heart, He expressed His warm love towards all men everywhere, His heart’s desire to have an intimate and personal relationship with him, and the voice of a Father to a child telling us how to live a life that will be full and rich.

Paul expresses his Heart / Shares the Treasures of his Heart / Again – we can Glean

And so it is we close this book with such a warm and loving passage, with Paul expressing his heart, giving us an insight into such a warm and loving man, and Paul sharing the treasures of his heart. Last week we saw the precious heart of Paul (and we gleaned very much for ourselves), and this week we see what Paul considered treasures in his heart, and once again very much for us to glean again for our own personal lives.

Outline: The Treasures of the Heart (16:1-27)

- The Treasures of – The Beloved (16:1-16)
- The Treasures of – Unity (16:17-18)
- The Treasures of – Wisdom (16:19-20)
- The Treasures of – Right Now (16:21-24)
- The Treasures of – Him who keeps You (16:25-27)

The Treasures of – The Beloved (16:1-16)

26 co-laborers / Not all Paul’s – but Paul not Paul / Just a Whisper / Ones that Surround

Paul will first list 26 people who co-labored with him in the ministry. It is important to recognize that in that we can’t all be Paul’s, but Paul wouldn’t be Paul without these 26 people. This great ministry that was, may never have been more than a whisper had it not be for these 26 (and the many others in his life) that help up his arms in the many ways from simply being an encouragement to him, to financially supporting him, to materially supporting him with food, lodging, and clothing. So Paul is showing us that the power of the ministry isn’t just in the one, but also the one’s that surround and support the ministry. I take great joy and comfort in seeing this so that I know wherever I am, I can be part of God’s work just by joining in and doing the things such as those mentioned below.

Truly Treasures

They are truly treasures to and of Paul’s heart; and so too are the people in our lives, and so too are we in the lives of other. May I say this, each of you are a treasure to someone’s heart.

Phoebe – the Servant of the Church

(Rom 16:1 NKJV) I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea,

(Rom 16:2 NKJV) that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also.

Phoebe – Radiant / Our Phoebe in Kenya

Phoebe means radiant, and I can't help but picture our sister Phoebe in Kenya who if you were blessed to meet her when she visited us, was truly radiant, she radiated the love of Christ with her glowing face, and wonderful words.

Phoebe – Single / On Business – Acts 20

Phoebe is a Greek name, so most likely Phoebe was a Gentile (not Jew). She is most likely either single (unmarried) or a widow, for a married woman culturally in those days would not have been traveling alone. It is believed by most scholars that this letter (scroll) of Romans was hand-carried and delivered by this dear sister in the faith named Phoebe who it appears was going to Rome for business from Corinth where she had met Paul. We piece all this together based on Acts 20:2 Paul came to Greece (Corinth is in Greece). Acts 20:3 says Paul stayed in Corinth for 3 months, so she was probably talking with Paul in Corinth and she said well I'm heading to Rome next week on a business trip, and Paul said really, that is great, I've been wanting to write them a letter, and would you please deliver it for me – please make sure that it gets there. During these three months in Corinth, Paul penned the Epistle to the Romans (most likely). It would seem that Paul heard that Phoebe was on her way to Rome from Cenchreae, Romans 16:1-2, (which is the eastern most port in Corinth), and thus felt compelled to write it and have it sent with her.

(Acts 20:2 NKJV) Now when he had gone over that region and encouraged them with many words, he came to Greece (Acts 20:3 NKJV) and stayed three months. And when the Jews plotted against him as he was about to sail to Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia.

What seems so Common to You

Christian, what is it today that seems so ordinary and mundane to you, something you think is of little value for the Kingdom of God? I just teach Sunday School – really, you may just have the next Billy Graham in your classroom (and the kids that this church has – that isn't a far out there statement). I just carry the speakers – really, you may just have saved that marriage that was just one fight away from the final straw but they came here, entered into worship and the word, and God turned the tables. I just say hi to people as they come in – really you may just be the one that changes their mind that no church will ever accept them. I just do laundry pile after laundry pile, pray for my kids, teach them the word but it all seems so ordinary and mundane – and to that I say praise the Lord, for we want our kids to be established in the ordinary (that church, devotions, serving) are all everyday activities, not a big bang thing a couple times a month or year. But just as this letter was anything but mundane, neither is anything that has to do with the Lord.

Lord takes the ordinary – turns them into Living & Powerful – Not return Void

The Lord takes the ordinary things in life, the things that seem so mundane, and turns them into things that are living and powerful, and sharper than a two-edge sword; things that will not return void (Heb 4:12 / Isaiah 55:11).

Greetings to Others

(Rom 16:3 NKJV) Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, (Rom 16:4 NKJV) who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

So Dear to them – Risk their Lives

So dear to this husband and wife was Paul and the Gospel he proclaimed, that they were willing to risk their lives for him and the message he shared.

Corinth – Ephesus / Ephesus – Apollos / Ended up in Rome

When Paul first came to Corinth, he was introduced to Aquila and his wife, Priscilla—tentmakers, like himself. Evidently, Paul led them to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, for when Paul left Corinth for Ephesus, Aquila and Priscilla accompanied him as his companions and co-workers.

As Paul made his way yet farther north, Aquila and Priscilla remained in Ephesus, where they were influential in the salvation of Apollos, one of the most powerful preachers of the early church (Acts 18:26). As evidenced by this verse, Priscilla and Aquila ended up in Rome. Some have even suggested Paul sent them ahead to set the stage and do some groundwork for his own journey to Rome.

Wonderful Ministry Together / Pattern – Open Home / Consider a Ministry Together

Priscilla and Aquila had a wonderful and beautiful husband and wife ministry together. As you travel with Priscilla and Aquila, you see a pattern begin to unfold in their lives. That is, wherever they went, they started a fellowship group in their house. I like that. They not only worked together by day making tents, but they also opened their home at night. I know we live in such a fast paced life, and it seems there isn't a moment of time left for anything else, but I would like put out there for you husbands and wives to consider (if you don't already have one), but consider praying about a ministry you can do together as a team. Now I know raising your kids is a ministry together, but I mean something outside of that, something that the two of you do together for people outside your family (although of course you can get your kids involved in your ministry). Really so much of a husband and wife's life seems to be running the kids to this place or that place, you cover this and I'll cover that, that we can find ourselves hardly even being together any more (or when we are together everyone is just exhausted). Priscilla and Aquila show us there is power for a marriage that serves in the ministry together. The couple will naturally have to talk to plan out the ministry, they will share visions, passions, scriptures, be drawn to prayer together. Now I am not suggesting that you add something more to your plate if you are already overloaded, but maybe reducing something over here, so you can pick up a ministry together. God gives the promise that where two or more gathered in His name he will be in their midst, and Jesus in the middle of your marriage for a special time of service, will be nothing but profitable for your marriage.

Matthew 18:19–20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."

Invest in Married Couple / Young Believer / This Team Invested: Paul & Apollos

Here is something I'll throw out there for your consideration, and that is that as a married couple, investing yourself in a young married couple, or some young single believers. This one husband and wife team were instrumental in the ministry and sending of two great men of God, Apollos and Paul. It is 2 Timothy 2:2, as you invest in them, and they will in turn go and invest in others themselves. Don't spread yourself too thin, but do spread yourself deep. Our days are numbered, and may we make our life count for while we are here, and leave something for the church for after we depart this life into the next.

2 Timothy 2:2 (NKJV) ² And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

Family Altar

But speaking of the kids, Priscilla and Aquila, wherever they went, they started a fellowship group in their house. I like that. They not only worked together by day making tents, but they also opened their home at night. I hope that's true of you and me. I hope the church is meeting in our homes. How? Jesus said, "Wherever two or three are gathered together, I am in their midst" (see Matthew 18:20). Therefore, if you want your families altered, develop what the previous generation called "family altar"—times when your family gets together for a season of worship, prayer, and Bible study. Be warned, however. Nothing will be more difficult than having family altar. You can go on vacation, go bowling, have pizza, or watch baseball on TV without a hitch. But say the words, "It's time for family devotions"—and you'll be amazed by what happens. Dad will get a headache. Mom will suddenly remember the quiche bubbling over in the oven. Junior will get a phone call. Sis will have to leave. Baby will start crying. The dog will start barking. And the doorbell will ring. The Enemy will do everything possible to keep you as parents from getting your kids together and praying with them. I know the struggle. I know the battle. I know how difficult it is. But I would suggest to you who desire your family to be strengthened, that, more than "focusing on the family," working legislatively, or sharing in groups about child-rearing,

nothing in my opinion is more powerful or more effective than pulling your kids together for family altar. The church can be in your house. It doesn't take a lot of time. You don't have to teach fifteen chapters of Leviticus. Just share a simple story, make a simple application, and pray together.

(Rom 16:5 NKJV) Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Greet my beloved Epaphroditus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia to Christ.

Greatest Spiritual Period – No Church Building

Greatest spiritual period; yet no church “buildings . . .” Home Churches. Taught, prayed, worshiped, had accountability, fellowship . . . That's where the actions was back then . . . And still is!

God knows where Home Fellowships Are

This verse makes it clear to us that God knows where every home fellowship is, and He is there joining in with them. We've gone beyond corporate worship in large buildings, to mega-churches, but we see that in the greatest spiritual period of the church, they met in homes. They broke bread from house-to-house

Acts 2:46–47 (NKJV) ⁴⁶ So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

Nothing wrong in Mega-Churches / But see Great Fruit in Home Fellowship

Nothing wrong whatsoever about meeting in large buildings, and mega-churches, but we see the great fruit that comes from the home fellowships, as God does something special in the home fellowships

Epaphroditus - Firstfruits

Verse 5 - Greet my beloved Epaphroditus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia to Christ. - Epaphroditus was the first to get saved in this whole region called Achaia. Maybe you students at the local school feel you are all alone, out there by yourself, the only believer, remember Epaphroditus. God knows his name, was the firstfruit, not the only fruit, and you stay true to the Lord and He will stay true to you, and He will bring you other believers to fellowship with.

(Rom 16:6 NKJV) Greet Mary, who labored much for us.

(Rom 16:7 NKJV) Greet Andronicus and Junia, my countrymen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

No Mention in Acts – But well Known / Behind the Scenes – Whole Scene Changes

No mention of Andronicus and Junia in the Book of Acts, but they were known by all the apostles. Whatever these two did, they made a huge impact on the apostles that they all knew their name. Consider, 3,000 were added to the church on the Day of Pentecost, so that would make it real easy to be a face in the crowd amongst the early church, but these two were well known by the apostles. They obviously were the behind the scenes people, but without them, the whole scene would have been changed.

Harvest Crusades

I've had several opportunities to a part of the inside workings of the Harvest Crusades, and I can tell you as great and anointed Greg Laurie is, he would still be preaching on the beaches of California if it wasn't for all the great saints that join in the labors to put on the Crusade. One guy goes into a town months before the crusade and starts the logistically planning of renting facilities, securing lodging for the helpers, renting equipment. Another group comes monthly for almost 6 months teaching the local churches on follow-up counseling, another group comes in a week before and does street ministry for a week, and the list goes on and on. The Crusade is awesome, but remove the Andronicus' and Junia's from behind the scene and that scene would greatly change.

God bless the Andronicus' and Junia's

So too it is for every person behind the scene in this ministry and every other. God bless you, you Andronicus' and Junia's.

(Rom 16:8 NKJV) Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord.

(Rom 16:9 NKJV) Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved.

How be Approved – 2 Tim 2:15

How can we be approved in Christ? You're doing it! By studying the Scriptures, you are showing yourself as being approved of God (2 Timothy 2:15).

2 Timothy 2:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

(Rom 16:10 NKJV) Greet Apelles, approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus.

Aristobulus grandson of Herod / People who are in Dogma Religions

Historians tell us Aristobulus was the grandson of Herod the Great—the one who tried to annihilate Jesus by slaughtering all Jewish males under two years of age. Herod was the one who killed his sons and murdered his wife, butchering anyone who was a threat to his power. Yet here was his grandson, numbered among the household of faith. No one is too far, too unreachable for God to meet them and open their heart, nor is anyone's family's heritage so messed up that God can't break through. I need to be reminded of this because I know people who are so steeped and entrenched in dogmatic religions I can feel defeated that they are beyond hearing this truth, the Good News, but Aristobulus is a great reminder to me that God is able to break through the worse of family heritages.

Not the Dysfunctional Plea

Aristobulus got saved, and walked with Christ. He didn't say, "I'm dysfunctional." He didn't say, "I need to join Herodions Anonymous." He didn't say, "I need therapy because I'm related to Herod." I believe in this time in which we live—when everyone is claiming they have problems because of ancestors—we see in Aristobulus a refreshingly wonderful, practical model. "This one thing I do," "forgetting the things which lie behind, I press on toward the high mark of the calling of Christ" (see Philippians 3:13). Everyone has pain in their past. The key is to move on.

Philippians 3:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, ¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

(Rom 16:11 NKJV) Greet Herodion, my countryman. Greet those who are of the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord.

(Rom 16:12 NKJV) Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, who have labored in the Lord. Greet the beloved Persis, who labored much in the Lord.

Persis feminine Name / Not my beloved

Persis being a feminine name, Paul is speaking of yet another woman who put her all into serving the Lord. Compare his use of "the beloved" here in verse 12 with his use of "my beloved" in verses 8 and 9. Stachys and Amplias, the subjects of verses 8 and 9, were males. I believe Paul's use of the possessive pronoun only with men models an important principle of ministry. That is, he was very careful to relate to his brothers in a different way than he did to his sisters. Some might call this legalism or chauvinism. I call it wisdom.

(Rom 16:13 NKJV) Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

Rufus – Mark 15

Rufus, it seems, is the same Rufus spoken of in Mark 15:21. Rufus' father was Simon of Cyrene—the one who came up from Africa to Jerusalem to celebrate and observe the Passover

proceedings. When he lined up along the Via Dolorosa, the crowd gathered on that Good Friday, he watched the proceedings, no doubt straining his neck and squinting his eyes, trying to get a perspective of what was happening. Suddenly, a Man collapsed before him under the weight of a cross. Instead of forcing Him to carry the burden any further, a soldier on the scene placed the flat head of his spear upon the shoulder of Simon the Cyrene, saying, "You take the Cross." Simon must have thought, Oh no. What a catastrophe. I came to celebrate the Passover, and now I'm going to be defiled by associating with this criminal. But he discovered that the catastrophe was, in fact, a great opportunity because something happened to Simon when he took up the Cross. Could it be that he understood the prophecy of Isaiah 9:6, which says, "The government shall be upon His shoulder"? The government of what? The government of the Cross. As Simon carried the Cross of Christ, he was, in a sense, governed in a way he never would have anticipated or wanted. Yet carry the Cross he did, eventually becoming converted to the One whose Cross he carried. And not only did Simon get saved, but, as can be inferred from this verse, his wife and his sons did as well.

Mark 15:21 (NKJV) ²¹ Then they compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross.

Simon came to Celebrate the Passover

He came to celebrate the Passover, but now that he has touched blood he is defiled, and cannot enter the temple nor celebrate the Passover, little did he know at that very moment he was celebrating the Passover. I don't think he had to wait to the cross to see and know Jesus was the Passover Lamb, as the purpose of Jesus coming was to seek and save the lost, Jesus would have not missed the opportunity to reach Simon, as the cross was exchanged, Jesus would have looked into Simon eyes, and Simon would have never been the same.

Have you Picked up the Cross? / Do it – Never be the Same

Have you picked up His cross, have you looked into His eyes, do it and I will promise you that you will never be the same, nor will your family!

Rufus' Mother / Mother's Priceless – Pure Treasures / Paul acknowledges Mother

Rufus' mother was a mother to Paul. Mothers are precious and priceless, they are the diamonds in the rough. Here is Paul, the man who could and would stand before kings and presidents and boldly proclaim the gospel, a man that would take stoning, shipwrecks, and beatings, but keep on going. But we see Paul acknowledging the mother who mothered him, treated him like a son. Could you imagine that, Paul saying I am going into the wolves den to preach to those stiff-neck vipers, and Rufus's mother say Paul you better wear you cloak it cold out there, do you have lunch money, oh come here now let me fix your hair. In a cold and callous world, God put mothers, an extension of His gentleness and love.

Theodore Roosevelt

The mother is the one supreme asset of the national life. She is more important, by far, than the successful statesman, or businessman, or artist, or scientist. —Theodore Roosevelt

(Rom 16:14 NKJV) Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren who are with them.

(Rom 16:15 NKJV) Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.

Phillip - Lover of the Word

What a great name! It comes from "Philos Logos" or "Lover of the Word."

(Rom 16:16 NKJV) Greet one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ greet you.

Holy Hugs

Today we give holy hugs, and it is a sweet sign of affection one to another. Not everyone likes to be hugged, and nothing wrong with that, this wasn't a command – Paul is just saying, hey get out

and greet one another. There is just this natural drawing towards each other as Christians, we enjoy the embrace because we love that person, that is my brother, that is my sister, I miss them and haven't seen them in awhile. Sometimes the handshake isn't enough. I can remember in several places of my life where I've been part of something that was a mixture of both saved and unsaved brothers (softball, bowling, habitat for humanity type thing), and when we would show up to start all the brothers are giving each other a hug because we really did miss each other. When we came to the unbeliever we knew a hug would freak them out so we can them a fist to fist touch. But I noticed something every time, and that was that there were always a couple guys who would at first watch and get a smile on their face like what are they doing, but over time there were those few that they would open their arms and want to give and be hugged, They wanted the same comrade, the same "holy" love that they saw amongst us as brothers, they wanted to be called brother (as we called each other), and they wanted to call another brother (maybe even the brother they never had). The world is dying to be loved, people are wanting to be part of something that is bigger and better than themselves, and the Church of Jesus Christ is it.

The Church family is a Beautiful Thing

The church is a beautiful thing, it is a beauty place, it is a wonderful gift we have, and I thank God for our church family.

Your Treasure – Guard, Protect, Fight

The beloved, they are a treasure, guard your treasure, protect your treasure, and if need be – fight for your treasure.

The Treasures of – Unity (16:17-18)

Paul saying Protect Unity

Paul has just spoken 16 verses of beautiful love and intimacy amongst the body, and it seems his mind jumps towards.....they make sure no one gets in there and messes this beauty body up, the beauty of unity, the sweetness of oneness, so he says watch out for those who cause division.

Note those who Cause Division

(Rom 16:17 NKJV) Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.

(Rom 16:18 NKJV) For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

Protect Unity

Probably one of the hardest things to do as Christians, in the ministry, but left undone, it will be the undoing of the beauty of unity. Paul's precious heart here is the shepherd's heart to protect and nurture the flock of God. May we all have that shepherd's heart for each other, the loving and caring for each other's well being, the building up of the brothers and sisters in this family.

Your Treasure – Guard, Protect, Fight

Unity is a treasure, guard your treasure, protect your treasure, and if need be – fight for your treasure.

The Treasures of – Wisdom (16:19-20)

Invest

Our days are numbers, invest wisely, invest in wisdom

Psalm 90:12 (NKJV)

¹² *So teach us to number our days,
That we may gain a heart of wisdom.*

Be Excellent in what is Good – Simple in what is Evil

(Rom 16:19 NKJV) For your obedience has become known to all. Therefore I am glad on your behalf; but I want you to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil.

(Rom 16:20 NKJV) And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

Dwell on the Lovely

What a great treasure there is in wisdom, the wisdom of good things, and we are called to dwell on what is lovely, to be good and excellent (full of knowledge about them), and the opposite when it comes to evil.

Philippians 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

Don't need to stay Current on Evil

Saints, we do not need to be experts in all that is evil. I don't need to know all the details of drugs to minister to the addict, nor do I need to watch all the movies that are out there, or search those certain websites, or read those certain article so I can "stay abreast" with what the world is up to, or what my children are facing.

Friend study on Demons

I had a friend who tried to get me to study all about demons, she said I needed to know their names, their regions, their spiritual ranking (I'm like what is this Pokémon?). She said only then will I be able to defeat them in my life. My answer to her was, "I'm just calling Jesus I said; and she responded saying that it is not that simple, and I responded by saying, it is!" – Be excellent in what is good, and innocent of evil.

Ouija Boards

Christians we need not be exploring the paranormal, playing with Ouija Boards, Dungeons and Dragons, nor anything else that dabbles in the occultism. I would go to say any of those video games that have any immoral features such as fornication, or too much skin as some of today's video games are soft pornography.

Satan is Master

Listen beloved, Satan is a master, and as well meaning, or innocents you may think that thing is, Satan will maximize the opportunity to spoil and soil your Spirit, and he will embed those things into your being, and you will never reach the fullness that the Lord desires for you.

Dwell on Treasure – not Trash

Dwell on the treasure, not the trash beloved – Amen!

Tachos – Shortly / Satan will be Crushed

Verse 20 - And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly – That word for shortly there is "tachos" it is where we get the word tachometer, and we have tachometers in our cars to show how fast the engine is running, and if you hit the redline mark that means your engine is about to blow. Well it is the same word used in Revelation 1, and it means that as we watch what is happening around us from the prophetic point, the faster it happens, the closer it is the engine is going to blow, the Lord is returning, and if you have been watching the news folks, the engine is redlining. Satan will have a day, shortly, and it will be crushing (word means put under foot, broken to shivers, pulverized). All his pride, arrogance, hatred, bitterness, and deception will be crushed and pulverized. When Satan is crushed, pulverized, so too will all those things that he is the father of. When they are crushed and pulverized, we will see him and them no more. When? Shortly!

Revelation 1:1 (NKJV) The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,

Your Treasure – Guard, Protect, Fight

Wisdom is a treasure, guard your treasure, protect your treasure, and if need be – fight for your treasure.

The Treasures of – Right Now (16:21-24)

Those around Paul

Paul now writes the names of the people that are with him as he writes this letter from Corinth. Paul didn't have to go it alone, although he wasn't imprisoned at the time of this writing, he was surrounded by people that were brothers in the Lord.

Paul's Farewell

(Rom 16:21 NKJV) Timothy, my fellow worker, and Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my countrymen, greet you.

(Rom 16:22 NKJV) I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle, greet you in the Lord.

(Rom 16:23 NKJV) Gaius, my host and the host of the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the treasurer of the city, greets you, and Quartus, a brother.

Paul had someone Dictate / Slaves were Numbers – Unworthy of Names – Eternal Signif

Tertius was Paul's secretary, to whom Paul dictated this Epistle. His name means "Third." The last name in verse 23 is Quartus, whose name means "Fourth." These guys were slaves. In those days, slaves were referred to only by number. Consequently, it's interesting that these two, who were considered unworthy of names, became historically and eternally significant because they were brought into the kingdom. So, too, you might feel like a number, like no one cares about you, like no one takes notice of you. But the Lord has a plan for you. He's got your number. And as you give yourself to Him and walk with Him, you'll find significance. Ask Tertius and Quartus!

The Right Now

Paul was surrounded by brothers in the Lord; one help write the letter, another housed him, another was like a son (Timothy), and I am sure the others all had and played a special blessings in Paul's life while they were all together there in Corinth. Beloved, there is tremendous blessing in the "right now", that right now we are in each other's lives, and we should treasure every moment that we have together, "right now", because we never know what we will have tomorrow.

Your Treasure – Guard, Protect, Fight

Right now is a treasure, guard your treasure, protect your treasure, and if need be – fight for your treasure.

(Rom 16:24 NKJV) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

The Treasures of – Him who keeps You (16:25-27)

Oh – and 1 more Thing – God is Able!

(Rom 16:25 NKJV) Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began

(Rom 16:26 NKJV) but now has been made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures has been made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith;

(Rom 16:27 NKJV) to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.

Oh Yea – He is Able

Paul tried to close the letter out in verse 24, but he had to say, "oh yea, one more thing, He is able to keep you."

Saved – Faith – All Him

430 verses later Paul sums up this book in closing; He has come to save you, and it is by faith you shall live, and everything comes down to one thing – HIM!

Your Treasure – Guard, Protect, Fight

Him who keeps you is a treasure, guard your treasure, protect your treasure, and if need be – fight for your treasure.