

Practical Lessons From the New Testament: Romans

by Bill Burk

The treatise to the church at Rome has to be one of the grandest, deepest, and most spiritual pieces of literature to be found in the Holy writ. The greatness of the book is evident in every verse. One writer stated it this way, "If you get Romans, God gets you!"¹ That statement is true, I have no doubt. When one truly grasps the treasures found in Romans he cannot help but grow closer to God through a better understanding of His divine scheme.

This majestic, sixteen-chapter book can be summarized in the following fashion:

Chapter one: The Gospel, God's power to save (1:16), is needed to appease the wrath of God against the Gentiles (1:18) who are lost due to sin.

Chapter two: The Jews also are lost due to sin (2:1) and are in need of the Gospel.

Chapter three: Though the Jews enjoyed certain advantages (3:1, 2), they still stood lost and condemned as the Gentiles were (3:9). The Law could not save them (3:20), so they and the Gentiles both were in need of Christ, grace and the Gospel (3:21-31).

Chapter four: Abraham "the father of the Jews" (4:1) was not saved in the same fashion the Jews expected to be saved (4:2). Rather Abraham was saved through an obedient faith/grace system likened to Christianity (4:3-25).

Chapter five: God's love (5:5-8), grace (5:2, 15-16) is available to alleviate the effects of sin begun by Adam (5:14) and perpetuated by all men.

Chapter six: Living under a grace system does not mean that the Christian can freely sin without remorse and repentance (6:1). Such would make us a slave of sin (6:6) when our acceptance of Christ and the Gospel meant we

became dead to sin (6:7-11) and slaves to Christ and obedience (6:11, 17).

Chapter seven: Since we have been discharged from the law to embrace the Gospel, what good was the law? It heightened consciousness of sin and the inability of sinful man to save himself through law alone. He needed God to step in and provide Christ and the Gospel.

Chapter eight: Now that we can become Christians, we allow the Gospel to control our minds and guide us (through God's word) in life rather than allowing our fleshly desires to control us.

Chapter nine: The rejection of Judaism as the way to salvation does not make God unjust nor untrue to His promise. As God, He is free to work out His redemptive scheme however He chooses and the Jews can freely choose to obey and fit into that promise.

Chapter ten: But the Jews by and large chose to reject Christ (10:3), the focal point of God's Old Testament plans (10:4), by failing to obey the Gospel -- though it was presented to them (10:18) and they understood it (10:19).

Chapter eleven: Nevertheless, a remnant of Jews have obeyed the Gospel, thus fulfilling God's desire for Israel (11:5), and unbelieving Jews still have the opportunity to accept the Gospel (11:14) in the same way that Gentiles have the same opportunity (11:25, 26). God's deep wisdom and plans are unfathomable (11:33-36).

Chapter twelve: Therefore, Christians are urged to use their bodies for holy living (12:1); do not have a sense of superiority (12:3) but rather fulfill your function as part of the body (12:4, 5) in love (12:9, 10)--do not take the law into your own hands (12:17, 21).

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Romans, Cont.... Chapter thirteen: Allow civil government to take vengeance on criminals (13:14) while you remain submissive to it (13:5-7), love your neighbor (13:8-10), and don't give in to the flesh (13:14).

Chapter fourteen: Do not insist on engaging in optional matters if doing so tempts a weaker brother to go against his conscience.

Chapter fifteen: Instead, bear with each other (15:1), be unified (15:5), accept each other (15:7) since Gentiles are equal recipients of the Gospel (15:8-22).

Chapter sixteen: Give greetings to several saints (16:1-16), avoid divisive people (16:17-20) and remain established in the Gospel (16:25).

The practical lessons in the book of Romans are numerous. In fact, to numerous to list them all. We will now list several:

1. The Gospel is God's power to save (1:16, 17): May we never forget that nothing can save man but the Gospel of Christ, which is the message of the cross (1 Cor. 1:17). Only when one obeys the good news of Christ can he have hope of salvation (2 Thess. 1:7-9). With that in mind, preachers and teachers should always strive to teach and preach the word (1 Tim. 4:13, 16; 2 Tim. 4:2), the doctrine of Christ (2 Jn. 9), the faith once delivered (Jude 3) and nothing else!

2. All need the Gospel (3:23): The Bible emphatically teaches that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). All need the Gospel, and praise be to God, the Gospel is for all (1 Tim. 2:4-6). As we consider the seriousness of this truth, all of us ought to be compelled to take the saving message to everyone we can. Whether it be friends, neighbors, acquaintances, or those half way across the earth, we have the obligation to get the good news to them (Mt. 28:19, 20; Mk. 16:15, 16). The truth that all have sinned and thus are separated from God (Isa. 59:1, 2; Hab. 1:13) ought to give us the shock we need in taking the Great Commission seriously.

3. Sin is to be taken seriously (6:23): In our

society, sin is participated in by the majority without much thought. Sadly, many who are members of the precious body of Christ see nothing wrong with gambling, social drinking, immodesty, profanity, fornication, and the list could go on. However, sin must be taken seriously. Consider the words of Paul in 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death ..." We must never forget that we will reap what we sow (Gal. 6:7, 8), and that our sins will find us out (Num. 32:23). Therefore, those of us who are God's people, need to realize the importance of helping all of those who are in sin to get out through doing what the Lord would have them to do (Mt. 7:21).

4. God is on our side (8:28-39) The book of Romans, especially the eighth chapter, makes it clear to us that God is on our side. He provides no condemnation for those who are in Christ (Rom. 8:1). He, through His scheme of redemption, worked out, and continued to work out all things for our good (8:28). As long as we are obedient to the Gospel, walking in the light as God would have us to (1 John 1:7), nothing can separate us from His love (8:37-39). Therefore, as Paul says, "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? (8:31, ASV). 5. God is a God of Goodness and Severity (11:22): Today so many folk claim that God, being the God of love that He is (1 John 4:8), would never punish a single soul for any reason. However, we learn in 11:22 that, yes God is a God of goodness, but also He can be a God of severity and wrath.. We must remember always that "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb. 10:31)." Therefore, we must always revere the God of heaven. Because we love Him? Yes! But also because we fear facing the consequence of disobedience (Heb. 12:29).

6. Christians are to be living sacrifices (12:1, 2) Those who desire to follow Christ must "deny self ... daily" (Lk. 9:23). If we want to be disciples of the Savior we must sacrifice self

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Romans, Cont.... continually, putting the Lord and others before ourselves at all times (Mt. 6:33; Phil. 2:1-4). Romans 12 sets forth ways by which we demonstrate a sacrificial life. Those who have sacrificed self do not allow themselves to fit into the world's mold (12:2). They are humble (12:3). They strive for unity (12:8). They are genuine (12:9), loving (12:10), zealous (12:11), giving (12:13), meek (12:14), emphatic (12:15), gentle and patient (12:17, 18). They are subject to the authorities (13:1-7), lovers of men (12:8). They give up their own rights to do what is right when necessary (chapters 14, 15). In a world full of selfishness may we demonstrate a selfless, sacrificial life to the world (Mt. 5:16).

So many other things could be said about this great book. May we, as God's people, strive to incorporate into our lives the great truths found in the book of Romans. Remember, "When you get Romans, God gets you!"

Footnotes:

1. Larry Deason, "Romans, The Righteousness of God" (New York, Life Communications, 1985, revised 1989) pg. 1.
2. David Miller, Romans Chapter Summary, Review Guide For Final Examination, material presented in class on Romans, Brown Trail School of Preaching.

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usually accompanied with such characteristics as envy, jealousy, and resentment. This is what we see in this older brother as his envy, jealousy, and resentment boils over in bitter words and harsh deeds.

The older brother was showing forth a judgmental attitude. Verse 30 shows him as he tells the Father that the Prodigal had "devoured thy living with harlots!" First of all, it was no longer the Father's living, but the son's inheritance that was wasted. Secondly, we find no record of harlots mentioned as it tells about the way the younger son lived. The elder brother refused to take into consideration the prodigal's repentance. Perhaps he even thought the prodigal's repentance was only an act and if given a chance he would do the same thing again. But brothers and sisters, If God is willing to forgive a prodigal who has sinned against Him, can you see any reason why we should not also forgive and forget the sin of a prodigal? According to 1 John 3:15 and 1 John 4:20 we cannot really love the Father without really loving God's children!

The conclusion of this account in Luke 15:31-32 is one of the great, heart-warming statements of the Father's love and concern for His children. These two verses ought to be memorized by every Christian. They ought to be read often in our private study as well as in the assemblies. "Son, Thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad, for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again: and was lost, and is found!" The day the prodigal returned could have been one of the happiest days of the Father's life because it was a time when the family was back together again. But the older brother shatters the Father's happiness and brings sadness to His heart once again. You see, the Father gained one son only to lose another son! Don't break your Father's heart by refusing to Forgive one another!

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tl had been buried with him. This took them down among the dead. In being raised in baptism he had been raised with Christ . . . Hence, having come out from the dead, though still dead to sin, they were alive; and now, as being alive, they were to present themselves to God. According to this, we are not to present ourselves till risen with Christ alive from the dead. At this point the service of God begins; here the life devoted to him sets in." David Lipscomb, *Ibid*.

The entire chapter develops the theme of the purity of the life of God's people. The linking of the doctrine, the death, the deliverance, and the determination is clear. Then we were dead; Now we have been raised.

The apostles were God's chosen and anointed witnesses to Christ (Cf. Acts 1:8; 10:39-43). Their teaching, organically linked with the Old Testament, the fulfillment of which they announced was the truth from God, revealed and inspired by Christ's Spirit and set forth in His name and with His authority. As such it forms an authoritative standard of truth and criterion of error, not only for the apostles' own time, but for all time." J. I. Packer, *God Speaks To Man*, p. 80.

GOD'S ASSURANCES TO HIS PEOPLE (ROMANS 8:31-37)

Introduction

I. A fruitful way to consider Romans eight is to view it as assuring the victory of God's people over fear and danger because of God's love, provision, and care.

A. A summary of the immediately preceding chapters is:

1. Chapter 6: Freedom from the problem of sin when one obeys the gospel of Christ from the heart.
2. Chapter 7: Freedom from the power of the law of Moses by virtue of the death of Christ.

B. Now, Romans 8 discusses the theme of freedom from fear and spiritual danger in Christ by the love of God.

1. A paraphrase of v. 38-39 by J. B. Phillips states this thought most vividly.

I have become absolutely convinced that neither death nor life, neither messenger of Heaven nor monarch of earth, neither what happens today nor what may happen tomorrow, neither a power from on high nor a power from below, nor anything else in God's whole world has any power to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2. The assurances which lead to this conclusion are developed in this chapter.

II. A summary of these assurances provides the confidence which the Christian seeks and finds in Christ.

Discussion

I. The Assurance of Genuine Conversion

- A. The privilege of being "in" Christ is ours, v. 1.
- B. The guidance thereto was given by the "law of the Spirit," v. 2. Note: "the law of the Spirit brings the life which is in Christ Jesus, and that law has set me free." (Moffatt)

C. Cf. Roman 6:17-18; 1 John 2:2-3.

II. The Assurance of God's Guidance in Life

- A. The "aim" of God concerning righteousness is present and is to remain with us, v. 4.

1. Note: "... in order to secure the fulfillment of the Law's requirements in our lives." (Moffatt)

2. Consider: "... the gospel, in freeing us from sin and making us righteous, accomplished exactly what the law was unable to accomplish, but what it would have accomplished in us had there been no transgression of it." R. L. Whiteside, *Commentary on Romans*.

B. The continuing guidance, v. 14.

1. The verb is present tense.
2. Note: "The statement indicates a continuous process. . . The gospel was revealed by the Spirit. In that revelation the Spirit tells us how to live, and sets motives before us to induce us to follow his direction." Whiteside.

III. The Assurance of Strength in Trial

- A. No charge or accusation of men will turn God from us, v. 33. Cf. "to come forward as an accuser against, bring a charge against." Thayer, p. 166.

B. God proved his love and resolve in Christ, v. 32.

C. None of man's work can force God's love from us, v. 35. "Separate," from term meaning "making no use of, having no association with, apart from, aloof from, etc." Thayer, p. 657.

D. Ultimately, victory with Christ is sure, v. 37. "No, in all these things we win an overwhelming victory through him who has proved his love for us." Phillips.

IV. The Assurance of Present and Future confidence

LESSON THREE: THE THESIS STATEMENT



ROMANS - THE GOSPEL OF BELIEF

INTRODUCTION:

Rome was a proud city, and the gospel came from Jerusalem, the capital city of one of the little nations Rome had conquered. The Christians in that day were not among the elite of society. They were common people and even slaves. Rome had known many great philosophers and philosophies; why pay any attention to a fable about a Jew who arose from the dead? Christians looked on each other as brothers and sisters, all one in Christ, which went against the grain of Roman pride and dignity. To think of a little Jewish tentmaker going to Rome to preach such a message is almost humorous. But Paul was not ashamed of the gospel. He had confidence in his message, and he gave us several reasons that explain why he was not ashamed.

PAUL'S THESIS STATEMENT:

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: The righteous will live by faith.

Memorize this thesis statement.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Commit to memory Romans 1:16-17.
2. Be able to write from memory the **Seven Elements of Paul's Gospel**.
3. Answer all the questions at the end of this lesson.

TWO REASONS PAUL WAS NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL.

A. The Power of the Gospel.

1. The word is **DUNAMIS**. Our words **dynamite**, **dynamo** and **dynamic** are rooted in this word.

2. Read the following where the same word is found: Romans 1:4, 20; 15:13; 1 Corinthians 1:18, 24; 2:4, 5; 4:20; 2 Corinthians 4:7; 5:7; Ephesians 1:19, 21; 3:20; Philippians 3:10; 1 Thessalonians 1:5; 2 Timothy 1:7-8.

B. The Righteousness of the Gospel.

1. This word is used in some form over sixty times in this book.
2. God revealed His righteous character in this book by:
 - a. Punishing sin.
 - b. The death of Christ.
 - c. The resurrection of Christ.

Gentiles to the stand and found both guilty before God. Then he explained God's marvelous way of salvation - justification by faith. At this point, he answered his accusers and defended God's salvation. "This plan of salvation will encourage people to sin!" they cry, "It is against the very Law of God!" But Paul refuted them, and in so doing explained how the Christian can experience victory, liberty, and security.

B. Chapters 9 - 11 are not a parenthesis at all. They were justified by the activity of God's grace through the centuries. There were Jewish believers in the

Roman assemblies and they would naturally ask, "What about Israel? How does God's righteousness relate to them in this new age of the church?" In these three chapters, Paul justifies God's ability to save the sinner in any age.

C. Then he concluded with the practical outworking of God's righteousness in the life of the believer. This begins with dedication to God (12:1-2), continues with ministry in the church (12:3-21), and then obedience to the government (13:1-14). He also told Jews and Gentiles, strong and weak, how to live together in harmony and joy. Paul explained his plans and greeted his friends.

Now let's get into the book!

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON THREE:

1. Write from memory Romans 1:16-17 and the seven elements of the gospel as listed in the study guide book. _____

1) _____	5) _____
2) _____	6) _____
3) _____	7) _____
4) _____	
2. Give two reasons why Paul is not ashamed of the gospel. _____

3. How is the cross pictured to the Jews, Greeks, and Romans? _____

4. Discuss and explain the concept of "from faith to faith". (You may want to use the five phrases given in the Study Guide. _____

5. Is the *righteousness* of God in verse 17 His character or something that is imputed to man? _____

- b. What? Divine power and order (intelligence).
- c. When? From creation of the world.
- d. How? In His works (creation).

B. The Inevitable Consequence of Unbelief (1:21-23).

1. The degradation of religion (v. 21). Man was first a monotheist then developed into a polytheist. This is the law of reversion to type.
2. The corruption of intelligence (v. 22). Adam was able to give all the animals their biological names. He was a co-worker with God.
3. The debasing of deity (v. 23).
 - a. Pharaoh of Egypt.
 - b. Apollo of Greece.
 - c. Eagle of Rome.
 - d. Bull of India.
 - e. Serpent of Assyria.

C. The Divine Forsaking Because of Unbelief (1:24-32). God gave them up:

1. To idolatry (wrong loving) (vs. 24-25) for they:
 - a. Exchanged God's truth for lie.
 - b. Worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator.
2. To sensuality (wrong living) (vs. 26-27).
 - a. Lesbianism and homosexuality.
 - b. Sodomy (includes animals).
3. To depravity (wrong thinking) (vs. 28-32).
 - a. They refused to have God in their knowledge.
 - b. God gave them over to the things that were not fitting (Paul lists 21 of these sins).

CONSIDER THESE THINGS _____

1. The phrase *God gave them up* means that "God just turns one over to" - God removes all influence from one and lets him get after what he has chosen.
2. The word *reprobate* means *without good*.

3. In the list of twenty-one sins, Richard Rogers names four that are chiefly American problems:
 - a. Whisperers (gossipers).
 - b. Backbiters (deals with one's attitude toward authority).
 - c. Disobedient to parents - as a general rule children obey to the degree their parents cause them to obey and rebel to the degree their parents cause them to rebel.
 - d. Covenant-breakers.
4. The Gentiles - knew the ordinance of God that they who practice such things are worthy of death. They not only practiced them, but also consented with those who practiced them.

THE MORALIST STATE OF SIN (2:1-16). (The Jewish state of sin)

Note the ten principles of God's moral judgment:

A. It Considers *Personal Guilt* (v. 1).

The moralist is more often than not doing, to some degree, what he condemns in others.

B. Its Estimate Is *According to Reality* (v. 2).

In condemning others, the moralist declares himself to be without sin, thus condemning himself to be a liar.

C. It Is *Inescapable in its Effect* (v. 3).

That day cannot be averted (Hebrews 9:27). Without Jesus as our righteousness, judgment day is just that--judgment.

D. It Considers *God's Available Goodness*, (v. 4).

Weymouth renders it like this, "The goodness of God is gently drawing you." God is drawing us and not driving us. He is using a cross and not a club. The means is love and not force. The greatest sin is not righteousness violated but mercy despised.

I'm one of those, right or wrong, who denies that this is possible. I'm in agreement with those who insist that without special revelation we could establish none of the things mentioned. I have discussed this some in a book on apologetics called *IF GOD CAME*. Permit me to offer here some observations on this subject and then I'll move on.

1. It's a mistake to say the heavens don't declare the glory of God and bear witness to his omnipotence. Psalm 19:1 and this passage clearly say they do!
2. It's also a mistake to forget that Psalm 19:1 and Romans 1:20 are part of special revelation. So, in this case when we claim the heavens bear witness of God we are calling in special revelation and that is the very thing some of us say we can do without.
3. It is a mistake to underestimate the claim of David and Paul. They don't simply affirm that atheism is false nor do they make a general claim for theism. They both make a very specific claim for a single, personal God who is in fact (they claim), the true and only God.
4. Neither Paul nor David claim the heavens (creation) prove "there is something or someone behind all this!" David's claim (rightly understood) was that the heavens declared the glory of the God of Israel. Paul makes the very same claim. Neither of them leave a weak theism or polytheism as an option. NEITHER OF THEM IS MAKING A RATIONAL ARGUMENT, they are asserting (by) divine revelation.
5. Paul doesn't say that man's *unaided reason* was able to deduce the things we mentioned above (and which we'll enumerate from this section shortly). He affirmed (in a divine and special revelation) that these people knew and could discern things about God from the creation around them. These are not the same propositions.
6. If you were to be told by someone you could utterly rely on, that the watch you were wearing was the "creation" of John Jones who *alone* made the watch from start to finish, you would be able to learn things about John Jones just by observing the watch. Without such reliable information you would never be able to tell if one or many made the watch. There would be just as much design to the watch *before* the information as *after* it but it wouldn't help you to determine how many made the

watch. The same would be true if you walked into your office and saw a model solar system on your desk. Its design would tell you nothing as to *how many* worked to make it. Paul would never make the claim that people could logically establish by rational argument the case for MONotheism. Make no mistake about it, Paul wasn't affirming anything less (in Romans 1:20) than MONotheism.

7. Because of our experience with watches and model solar systems we could well guess at the *minimum* power or ability needed to construct a watch or solar system but we couldn't tell from the watch or model solar system the *maximum* power or ability of the maker (or makers) of these artifacts. So it is with the design argument with reference to God. One cannot rationally deduce from a *finite* universe *infinite* power (omnipotence).

8. One cannot by rational arguments (without the help of special revelation) deduce a single, all wise, all powerful, all benevolent and everywhere-present God. (Aristotle, who "gave" us these arguments was no monotheist.) Make no mistake about it, Paul wasn't saying in Romans 1:20 that the creation bore witness to some god or other about which we can only philosophize or rationalize. When he said "God" or "him" he didn't have any heathen conceptions or philosophical rationalizations in mind. He said the creation bore testimony to GOD'S ("him") everlasting power and deity!

9. But, you say, haven't you just said we cannot prove the one true God by rational argument without special revelation? Yes, I did! But read point 6 again. Our knowledge that the one true, omnipotent and everlasting God is borne witness to by the creation has been told to us by special revelation. And having been told that (and therefore *knowing* it) we can confirm the truth of it by observation and reason.

10. I think Alexander Campbell put it well in his debate with the atheist Robert Owen. Campbell said:

I know that the system of natural religion is founded upon the hypothesis, that man, by the exercise of his natural reason, is capable of arriving at the knowledge of God ... I affirm, first, that there is a God, all nature cries aloud

establish the Oneness of deity? Or his omnipotence? Or his eternal nature? Kant's moral argument is a shambles! What if one were to concede without argument that there is a moral law which transcends all of mankind? Would that establish monotheism?

18. The next time someone claims the creation proves ONE God ask him/her to frame the argument without going to the Bible. Give them your watch and ask them if they can, by the design evident in it, prove how many were involved in the making of the watch. If they say they can't, ask them why not. If design in a watch can't tell you how many made the watch on what principle does the design in the universe tell you ONE God made it? (I had one gentleman to tell me the unity in the universe proved ONE mind was behind it all. I asked him if it were impossible for two minds to work together to produce a unified work. He agreed that was possible and so conceded that he didn't have a good argument.) If many minds can invent a single unified watch or building or argument or law then many gods could have cooperated and made one universe. (Isn't it better just to go to the Bible and argue well rather than all this?!)

19. Like many others I'm committed fully to the position that there is one, true, almighty, omniscient, omnibenevolent God but I don't believe that we can establish this without the aid of special revelation. I believe that reason will show the bankruptcy of atheism which is founded on "almighty chance". But to expose the inadequacy of atheism isn't the same as establishing monotheism! Nor is it the same as establishing the monotheism of David, Paul and other Bible writers.

20. When we affirm less than: "The heavens declare the glory of the one, true, omniscient, omnipresent and omnibenevolent God and bear witness to his eternal power and godhood!" we are affirming less than Paul affirmed in Romans 1. Paul clearly is speaking from a perspective that already takes special revelation into consideration. The people of whom Paul speaks had already made contact with Paul's God who had given special revelation to his creatures *as well as* giving the

revelation of the creation

21. Come on, you know as well as I do that it is possible (ignoring special revelation) for the universe to be the product of more than one deity. If more than one mind can make a watch, a building or an argument, more than one deity could make a universe. You know as well as I do that we can't know (the Bible apart) if the Creator is ALL-powerful or only incredibly powerful. How much power is needed to make a universe? All power? How would you know that? How many universes have we had experience of that we know how much power is needed to make one? Did the making of the universe tax God's power to its limit? If it didn't, then it doesn't take ALL power to make a universe. If it did, how would we know that?

22. Yes, you say, but we can prove atheists have no good case. Christians claim more than "atheism is false!" They claim, the ONE who made the universe is the God of the Bible. *That's* what the Christian claims! Hindus believe atheism is false; but they're hardly monotheists. Look, let's suppose that design proves a designer (rather than designers) and let's further suppose that creation proves a creator (rather than creators) **WHAT PROVES THE CREATOR IS THE DESIGNER?**

23. We must stop giving our young people the impression we can establish monotheism (Biblical theism) without the Bible and when some crusty old agnostic or atheist makes them try to prove their case (which they fail to do!) they begin to think "God's existence can't be proved!" Let's send them back to the Bible *and* reason, rather than unaided reason!

And now back to the text. These Gentiles, who had more than enough knowledge of God, had the revelation of God's power all around them but they refused to live with it. Right from the very beginning God had made known his laws to Adam, Cain, Abel, Noah, Melchizedek, Abraham, Jethro, Balaam (a good prophet in the beginning), to name only a few. The nations knew about God as we can see from Rahab's comments to the spies, the queen of Sheba's words to Solomon and the Ninevite reaction to the preaching of Jonah. There was no shortage of prophets or "passed on revelation". The world had this information and they stifled it in their godlessness. But they couldn't stifle revelation!

GEMS FROM THE GREEK

OBEDIENCE OF FAITH

David P. Stevens, Associate Editor

Twice in the book of Romans a phrase appears that links faith with obedience in such a way as to indicate the necessity of including both as essential elements of salvation.

If one affirms that faith is essential to salvation, he is met with little resistance. However, if one affirms that faith and obedience are essential, he is immediately confronted and challenged.

Those who affirm "faith-only" state their case plainly. "Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort" (*Methodist Discipline*, 20). It is safe to affirm that the majority of our religious neighbors hold to this doctrine. Many of these individuals would claim that they learned their doctrine by studying the writings of Paul. This fact creates ironic situation. Paul never taught the doctrine of "faith only." Paul taught salvation by faith—a faith that renders obedience to the demands of the gospel.

In Romans 1:5 and 16:26, Paul wrote two identical phrases in the Greek. The phrases are: *eis hupakoen pisteos*. *Eis* is a preposition. It is always prospective. It is translated "for" or "unto" in each of these texts. *Hupakoen* is an accusative, singular, feminine noun and means "obedience." *Pisteos* is a genitive, singular, feminine, noun and means "faith." This construction is made up of a preposition with a noun followed by a noun modifier in the genitive case. The question naturally arises: what kind of genitive occurs in these passages? Dana and Mantey give the following helpful comments:

The Genitive with Nouns of Action. Sometimes the noun defined by the genitive signifies action. In this construction the noun in the genitive indicates the thing to which the action is referred, either as subject or object of the verbal idea.

a. The Subjective Genitive. We have the subjective genitive when the noun in the genitive produces the action, being therefore related as subject to the verbal idea of the noun modified.

b. The Objective Genitive. We have this construction when the noun in the genitive receives the action, being thus related as object to the verbal idea contained in the noun modified (*A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, 78).

The Genitive "of faith" could be either objective genitive or subjective genitive. Let us consider each of these possibilities. If it is an objective genitive, then the phrase "of faith" receives action of the noun obedience and would be translated: obedience to the faith. This would make "faith" objective and refer to the Word of God or gospel. While this translation is not impossible, it is improbable for the following reasons.

First, the definite article is not present in the construction.

Second, the word *pistis* in the New Testament is commonly used in the subjective sense (our own personal faith). Several examples of the use of *pistis* in the objective sense do occur: Acts 6:7; 2 Cor. 10:5; Gal. 1:23; 1 Peter 1:22 and Jude 3. These passages either have the definite article with *pistis* or else the context demands the objective sense. This is not the case in Romans 1:5 and 16:26. The context of each of these passages allows for the subjective genitive. The subjective genitive "of faith" means that the noun in the genitive (in this case *faith*) produces the action of the verbal noun obedience. Thus, faith renders obedience.

A brief survey of the comments made by various Greek scholars is in order. A. T. Robertson comments on Romans 1:5 as follows: "Subjective genitive as in 16:26, the obedience which springs from faith (the act of assent or surrender)" [*Word Pictures, Epistles of Paul*, IV:324].

Lenski states:

Paul has in mind the obedience that belongs to the very essence of faith. *Pisteos* is not the attributive genitive: obedience marked by faith; or the objective genitive: obedience to faith (the doctrine or the act of faith viewed objectively); or the epexegetical, appositional, definitional genitive: obedience which is faith—though this is not far wrong. The subjective genitive is still nearer to the real meaning: faith renders obedience (Interpretation of Romans, 46-47).

Balz and Schneider remark:

For Paul, faith is essentially a matter of obedience, just as lack of faith is understood as disobedience toward God and his message. This messenger of faith wants to move those he addresses with his gospel to "the obedience of faith," i.e. to subjection to the divine message (Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament, III:394-395).

M. R. Vincent states:

Rev., unto obedience of faith. Unto marks the object of the grace and apostleship: in order to bring about. Obedience of faith is the obedience which characterizes and proceeds from faith" (*Word Studies in the New Testament*, II:664).

Leon Morris writes:

In the opening to Romans Paul speaks of the "obedience of faith" (Rom. 1:5; 16:26). This has been understood in a number of ways. It is unlikely that it means "obedience to the faith" (Moffatt: surely the article would be used if this were his meaning). "obedience which consists in faith" or "obedience which springs from faith" are much more likely. For

- C. His is according to the deeds of every man (v. 6).
 - 1. "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality—eternal life" (v. 7).
 - 2. To those that worketh good—glory, honour and peace (v. 10).
 - 3. To those that are contentious, do not obey the truth, and obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath (v. 8).
 - 4. To those that do evil—tribulation and anguish (v. 9).
- D. His is without partiality (v. 11; cf. Acts 10:34-35).
- E. His is by Jesus Christ (v. 16; cf. Jn. 5:22; Acts 17:30-31).
- F. His is according to the gospel (v. 16; cf. John 12:48; Rev. 20:11-15).
- G. The justice of God's judgment is clearly revealed (vv. 12-15).
 - 1. The Jews and Gentiles both must be judged (v. 12).
 - a. The Jews will be judged by their written law (the law of Moses).
 - b. The Gentiles will be judged as those who have no written law like the Jews.
 - 2. "For as many as have sinned without law."
 - a. Gentiles—had no written law.
 - b. But they had a law.
 - 3. Type Romans 2:13-15 here—What others have said about these verses.
 - a. "A natural or inborn sense of right equivalent to the "law's work," or what it requires, I deem a very hazardous assumption" (Lard, p. 89).
 - b. "Now, the Gentiles have such a law, as appears from their general moral conduct; for when those who do not have the law of Moses, do, by their own inward, natural promptings, the things prescribed by the law of Moses, they are a law unto themselves, having in themselves the threefold workings of law, in that the guidance of their heart predisposes them to know the right, the testimony of their conscience bears witness with their heart that the right is preferable, and lastly, after the deed is done, their thoughts or inward reasonings accuse or excuse them according as their act has been wrong or right" (McGarvey, Standard Bible Com., p. 312).

Studying the Book of Romans

By David J. Riggs

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK

1. Author.
 1. The first word of the epistle gives the author.
 2. Notice that Paul, the inspired author, dictated this epistle to a scribe, Tertius. Rom. 16:22
 3. This insures accuracy in the writing.
2. Time and place of writing.
 1. There is strong indication that it was written in Corinth on the third missionary tour which was about 57 or 58 A.D. Reasons:
 1. Paul was taking the contribution of the churches of Macedonia and Achaia to the poor saints in Jerusalem. Rom. 15:25-26
 2. Paul and certain other brethren were in Corinth on the third missionary tour at this time and were on their way to Jerusalem with the offering for the poor saints. Acts 19:22; 20:3-4,16; 24:17-18
 3. It was probably written at Corinth because the names of two people associated with the city are mentioned as being present with Paul at the time of writing. Rom. 16:23; 1 Cor. 1:14; Acts 19:22; 2 Tim. 4:20
3. We know nothing of when the church at Rome was established and who laid the ground work for it's beginning.
 1. It was started probably by the "visitors from Rome." Acts 2:10
 2. It has existed for many years. Rom. 15:23
 3. Their faith was known throughout the world. Rom. 1:8
4. Here are some of the purposes of the book:
 1. To adjust the differences between Jew and Gentile Christians.
 2. To show that both are under sin and without excuse.
 3. To show that salvation is by faith and not by the law.
 4. To vindicate God's choices, especially of the Gentiles.
 5. To admonish in Christian living.
 6. To show correct use of Christian liberty.
5. A bird's eye view of the contents.
 1. The introduction. 1:1-7
 2. Paul's interest in them and desire to visit them. 1:8-15
 3. His theme for the book. 1:16-17
 4. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; thus, the universal need of salvation. 1:18-3:23
 5. The divine method of rescue; namely, justification of believers. 3:24-5:11
 6. Deliverance from the law of sin and death. 5:12-8:39
 7. Vindication of God's choices. 9:1-11:36
 8. Exhortations and practical instruction. 12:1-15:13
 9. Personal references and salutations. 15:14-16:27

Chapter 1

1. Paul's own introduction. Vs. 1-7
2. His thanksgiving and desire to visit the Roman brethren. Vs. 8-15
3. The gospel is the power of salvation to the believers. Vs. 16-17
4. The corruption of the Gentiles. Vs. 18-31

1. Paul begins and ends the book with its importance. 1:5; 16:26
2. Those who do not obey the truth will receive indignation and wrath. 2:8
3. We must walk in the steps of our father Abraham. 4:12

1:6 among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;

1. "Among whom" - Among the nations.
2. The terms, "called," "chosen," and "elect," are similar and are brought about by the same means. 2 Thess. 2:13-14
 1. The "called," "chosen," and "faithful" are used in one verse. Rev. 17:14
 2. By virtue of being called of Christ, they belong to Christ.

1:7 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.

1. Written to the Roman Christians.
2. "Beloved of God" - God loves all, but He loves his children in a special way. 1 John 3:1
3. "Called to be Saints" - "To be holy ones; people set apart to God."
 1. **Application:** We should not shy away from the term. We should day by day live up to the term.
4. "Grace to..." - No greater blessing could be wished or granted to the faithful.

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

1. "I thank..." - As in nine of his epistles.
 1. **Application:** We, too, need to give thanks for and appreciate our brethren.
2. Their reputation was excellent; their strong faith was making itself known around the world.
 1. **Application:** What can we do to cause people to speak favorably about us?

1:9 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,

1. "God is my witness" - God will give testimony and will bear it out.
 1. This is not a formal, judicial oath.
2. "With my spirit" - footnote, "Or, in" - With my heart, in all sincerity.
3. "In the gospel of His Son" - broad - includes all the things of Christianity.
4. "Without ceasing I make..."
 1. Continuously. Luke 18:1; 1 Thess. 5:17-18
 2. He earnestly wanted them to know of his gratitude and prayers for them.
 3. **Application:** We, too, should continually pray for our brethren. It's commanded in Eph. 6:18.

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

1. It would be accomplished only if it was the Lord's will.
 1. **Application:** We, too, need to acknowledge God's sovereignty in all things. James 4:13-15
 2. **Application:** God often answers our prayers in ways we don't expect.
 1. Paul finally arrived in Rome, but after being slapped in the face, shipwrecked, and bitten by a poisonous snake.
 2. He went to Rome at the government's expense.
 3. God will answer our prayers although at times with timing and ways we might not expect.

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

1. "Spiritual gift" - Miraculous is not inherent in the phrase.
 1. Some say this refers to any of the virtues resulting from Paul's ministry as shown by the "that is" in the next verse.
 2. However, it probably refers to those gifts given only by the laying on of the apostles' hands. Acts 8:14-20; 19:6; 2 Tim. 1:6
 1. This would increase Paul's purpose for going to Rome.
 2. The virtues are not something bestowed, but developed.
 3. If he meant only to refer to the virtues, it seems he would have used the normal words for them.
2. "Established" - Made firm or stable. 2 Pet. 1:12; Rom. 16:25

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

1. He is showing that he was not coming to Rome only for their benefit but for his as well.
2. **Application:** A person misses the comfort and encouragement afforded by assembling and associating with fellow saints.

1:13 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.

1. A "negation of the opposite" - Often used by Paul; e.g., "not a few" means "many."
2. "Often planned" - His interest and love for them was not born yesterday.
3. "Hindered until now" - This shows that he was not guided in the Holy Spirit in making plans.
4. "Fruit" - Converting people and spiritual growth among those converted.
5. "Other Gentiles" - Thus, the church was made up mainly of Gentiles.

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

1. He was under divine obligation.
 1. He was called for that purpose. Acts 26:16-17
 2. He had the responsibility. 1 Cor. 9:16
 3. He had a special duty to the Gentiles. Gal. 1:16; 2:9; Rom. 15:16
 4. **Application:** All of us are debtors. 2 Tim. 2:2; 1 Pet. 2:9; 3:15
 1. Responsibility is to extent of our ability and opportunity.
2. "Greeks" - Greek speaking people. "Barbarians" - Non-Greek speaking people. "Wise and unwise" - Both to the learned and unlearned, educated and uneducated.
 1. None were exempted, regardless of their nationality or status in life.

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

1. He was ready and willing to go the distance, to pay the price, and to make whatever sacrifices necessary to preach to them.
2. **Application:** We, too, need such eagerness and zeal in the teaching of the gospel.

1:16 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.

The Gospel Versus The Law

who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

1. "For" - He proceeds to show that all men are in sin and in need of this salvation.
2. "Wrath of God" - Displeasure or indignation of God.
3. "Revealed from heaven" - It has been revealed through His providence and His revealed Word by the prophets and inspired writings.
4. "Against all ungodliness and unrighteousness" - The wickedness and injustice of men.
5. "Who suppress the truth in unrighteousness" - They hold down, suppress, or hinder the spread of truth by their opposition to truth and by the wicked lives they live.

1:19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.

1. He proceeds to show how in the next verse.

1:20 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,

1. "Invisible things...are clearly seen" - A paradox, but means "are clearly understood."
2. "By the things that are made"
 1. Man understands that there is a God by looking at the things which He created.
 2. Experience and observation clearly tells us that every made thing has a maker.
 1. Every effect demands a cause. The thing made demands a maker. Design demands a designer. Every law demands a law giver. Writings demand an author. Life comes from life.
3. "Eternal power" - Man is coming to know more and more of the power of God.
 1. In the old days, he could look at what a seed can do. Now, with modern research tools, he looks at the genetic code of which all living things are made.
4. "Godhead" - Divinity, Deity. See Acts 17:29; Col. 2:9 - There are three different words in the original Greek, but all are from the root, "Theous."
5. "Without Excuse" - Thus, God declares they are without excuse when they don't accept the evidence.
 1. Their rejection of the evidence is inexcusable in God's sight.
 2. In these verses, Paul answers a common objection: "How could a loving God send anyone to hell, especially someone who has never heard about Christ?"
 1. God has revealed himself plainly in the creation to **all** people.

We list their steps in falling away. Rom. 1:21-32

1. They failed to glorify God and to give Him thanks for their blessings. Vs. 21a
2. They began to give themselves over to vain reasonings and foolish speculations. Vs. 21b
3. They cut themselves off from the source of light. Vs. 21c
4. They claimed superior wisdom; yet, they are the ones void of understanding. Vs. 22
5. They went into idolatry - worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator. Vs. 23-25
6. They went into gross immorality. Vs. 24-27
7. They became sinners in every conceivable way. Vs. 29-31
8. They knew that such crimes should be punishable by death. Vs. 32

1:21 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.

1. "When they knew God" - As revealed by the things which are made.
2. "Did not Glorify Him as God" - "Did not like to retain God in their knowledge" - 1:28; Mal. 1:6
3. "Nor were thankful" - They did not acknowledge God as the giver of all blessings.
4. "Futile in their thoughts" - "Vain in their reasonings" (ASV); "their thinking became futile" (NIV)

1. They chose their own vain imaginations instead of sound reasoning.
5. "Foolish hearts were darkened" - They cut themselves off from the source of light. God will send strong delusion to those who do not love the truth. 2 Thess. 2:10-12

1:22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,

1. To claim superior wisdom is the characteristic of modern Evolutionist and Atheists; yet, they are the ones truly void of understanding.
2. They are fools for turning away from the true source of wisdom and knowledge.

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

1. Thus, through the above steps, they lost the true conception of God.
 1. For the folly of idolatry, see Isa. 41:21-24; 44:9-20.
 2. Turning from God, people soon invent "gods" that are convenient projections of their own selfish plans and desires.
 1. For example, the gods people serve today (the four "s" words) are: Science, Sports, Sex, and Silver.
 3. **Application:** Does God take first place, or do we worship the gods of our own choosing?

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

1. "Therefore God also gave them up" - See also vs. 26 and 28.
 1. He abandoned them to reap the rewards of their own evil actions.
 2. This was their punishment for abandoning God.
2. "Uncleanness, in the lust of their own hearts" - To let them learn what lust would plunge them into.
3. "To dishonor their bodies among themselves" - He shows how they dishonored their own bodies in verses 26 and 27.

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

1. "Exchanged the truth of God for a lie" (ASV)
 1. To exchange the truth of God for a lie reaches the depths of folly.
 2. This is true anytime the truth is exchanged for the human, whether in faith or practice. Rom. 3:4
2. "Humanism" is worshiping and serving the creature (man) rather than the Creator.
 1. Modern man is wrapped up in serving himself rather than God. Rom. 16:18; Phil. 2:21; 3:18-19
3. He adds a doxology or benediction to glorify God.
4. "Amen" - A solemn affirmation of the eternal praise of God.

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

1. "To vial passions" - "Shameful lust" (NIV) When one rejects God, he engages in all kinds of degrading and shameful lusts.
2. They turned from the God-ordained relationship between husband and wife to lesbianism or female homosexuality.
 1. The Lesbian vice is so called because of a band of woman homosexuals in Lesbos, a Greek Island in the Aegean Sea.
3. We see from these verses that God wholly detests homosexuality.

1:27 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.

1. The men, too, abandoned God's sexual design and turned to homosexuality.
2. Our society seems to be wanting more and more to condone these sins. However, as shown here and elsewhere, God utterly hates those sins.
 1. Old Testament - Gen. 19:4-9; Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Deut. 23:17-18; Judges 19:22-24; 1 Kings 14:24; 15:12; 22:46; 2 Kings 23:7; Isa. 3:9
 2. New Testament - 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 1 Tim. 1:9-10; 2 Pet. 2:6-8; Jude 7
3. "The penalty of the error which was due" - The degeneracy, disease, and early death brought on those who practice such things. Gal. 6:7-8

Three times Paul mentions God's rejection of them:

1. God gave them up to uncleanness to dishonor their own bodies. Vs. 24
2. God gave them up to vile passions wherein they abandoned God's sexual design. Vs. 26
3. God gave them over to a debased mind to do those things which were not proper. Vs. 28

No darker picture can be drawn of sinful man, and no better proof can be given to show his need of salvation.

Rom 1:28 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;

1. They chose to suppress God in their minds. They refused to retain Him in their knowledge.
2. "Even as" - As they refused to retain God in their knowledge, He gave them over to a depraved mind.
3. "Things which are not fitting" - Their depraved minds led them to do many shameful and disgraceful things as shown in the next verses.

1:29-31 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful;

1. Man is not born totally depraved, but they become that way themselves.
2. I give here a brief definition of the words as found in the KJV.

Vs. 29

Unrighteousness - Injustice, unfair and dishonest dealings.

Fornication - Illicit sex relations.

Wickedness - Vicious disposition with evil habits.

Covetousness - A greedy desire and using evil means to get it.

Maliciousness - Hatred and ill-will, a disposition to do harm.

Full of envy - Begrudging the good fortune of others.

Murder - Taking human life by premeditated malice.

Debate - Strife and contention with anger.

Deceit - To get advantage by trickery and craftiness.

Malignity - Bad manner of life or character, evil, malignant.

Whisperers - Secretly peddling slander by insinuations.

Vs. 30

Backbiters - One who slanders another when he is not present.

Haters of God - God haters who defy God and His laws.

Despiteful - Insolent, contemptuous and grossly disrespectful.

Proud - Haughty, arrogant, thinking too highly of themselves.

Boastful - An empty pretender, vainglorious esteem verbalized.

Inventors of evil things - Old ways become dull - seek new ways to sin.

Disobedient to parents - Lack basic respect for authority from youth up.

Vs. 31

Without understanding - Without good sense, foolish.

Covenant breakers - Will not honor or stand up to their agreements.

Without natural affection - Without love for kindred, parents, or children.

Implacable - An unforgiving temperament, too stubborn to accept reconciliation.

Unmerciful - No sympathy or pity, without kindness or mercy.

1. **Application:** Today, more than ever, we need to be careful about the input of knowledge.
 1. With TV, music, movies, and the rest of the media often presenting sinful lifestyles and "what is falsely called knowledge" (1 Tim. 6:10), we find ourselves constantly bombarded by attitudes and beliefs that are totally opposed to the Bible.
 2. We need to be careful about what we allow to form our opinions. The Bible is the only standard of truth. We need to evaluate all knowledge and beliefs in light of its teachings.

1:32 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.

1. They knew that God punishes the low level of morality to which they had plunged.
 1. They knew that these crimes should be punishable by death.

2. They would know this not only from the limited revelation they had, but also by the guilt, suffering, sorrow, pain, and anguish their sins brought upon them.
2. They took pleasure in, and endorsed, others who did such things. It gives a sense of comfort to the evil to see others practice evil. Isa. 5:23; Micah 7:3
3. Thus, although they know the judgment of God (that God punishes such things by death), they not only continue to do them, but endorse those who did them.

Conclusion to chapter 1:

The Gentiles were great sinners because they had turned from the God, the source of Light, to their own futile reasonings. Their rejection of the knowledge of God lead them into the lowest state of immorality and vice. All people with like depraved hearts and lives are in great need of the gospel, God's power to save.

2:1 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.

1. Paul's purpose in the first three chapters is to show that both Jews and Gentiles are in sin and in need of the gospel of Christ.
 1. The gospel is God's power to save from sin and every soul stands in need of that power.
2. He now considers the Jews as shown in verse 17.
3. "Therefore" - Wherefore, you, too, are without excuse.
4. "Inexcusable" - Gr. "anapologetos." It means literally, "no apology, no defense."
 1. They had nothing to plead in their defense when they practiced the same evils.
5. "Judge" - This includes more than the mere act of judging. It means to pass sentence on, condemn.
6. "Condemn yourself" - If their judgment was good against the Gentiles, it was good against themselves, for they practiced the same things; thus, they stood self-condemned.

2:2 But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things.

1. The Jews might say, "So my judgment is wrong on the Gentiles, but what does that prove?"
 1. Paul's answers, "Yes, your judgment may be wrong, but God's is not."
2. "Is according to truth" - Is just and right - Not according to appearance.
3. "Practice such things" - Not just once, but constantly reoccurring.

2:3 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?

1. "Do you think you can condemn others for doing exactly what you are doing and still escape the wrath of God?"
 1. **Application:** Self-evaluation seems to be a hard endeavor for human beings. We need to be careful that the sins we condemn in others have not taken root in ourselves. It is very easy by our actions to be self-condemned before God.

2:4 Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

1. "Despise" - To look down on; hence, to show contempt for.
2. "Goodness" - Kindness. God had been exceedingly good to the Jews. He has been good toward all.
3. "Forbearance" - Patience; to bear with.
4. "Longsuffering" - To suffer long with; denotes a delay of punishment.
5. "Leads you to repentance?"

1. God's goodness appeals to the best in man and causes him to respond. 1 John 4:19
2. God is good in giving us time to repent. 2 Pet. 3:9
3. The Jews boasted that they were the objects of God's special favors, but by not repenting, they showed they despised God's goodness.
4. Modern man thinks that the goodness of God will cause God to overlook his wickedness.
5. **Application:** How about us? Do we appreciate God's goodness or despise it? We clearly despise it when we do not repent of our sins.

2:5 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,

1. "Hardness" - "Stubbornness" (NASV)
2. "Impenitent heart" - Typical of the Jews and many today.
3. "Treasuring up for yourself" - "Storing up wrath against yourself" (NIV)
 1. We can accumulate treasures in heaven by our good works or we accumulate wrath by our evil deeds.
4. "Day of wrath" - At the second coming of Christ when all the wicked will be punished with everlasting destruction. 2 Thess. 1:6-9
5. "Revelation of the righteous judgment" - The fairness and impartiality of God will be manifested.
 1. God will judge the world in righteousness. Acts 17:31
 2. The righteous judge will preside. 2 Tim. 4:8
6. **Application:** Our God is a consuming fire and some day we will stand before him to be judged. What an awesome thought! We need to ponder it well.

2:6 who "will render to each one according to his deeds":

1. The judgment will be on an individual basis.
2. The judgment will be in accord with our works. "And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books." Rev. 20:12
3. This, and the following verses, show that "faith alone" or "grace alone" cannot be true. Please notice these remarks on verse 7 from the **Life Application Bible**: "Paul says that those who patiently and persistently *do* God's will find eternal life. He is not contradicting his previous statement that salvation comes by faith alone (Romans 1:16-17). We are not saved by good deeds, but when we commit our lives fully to God, we want to please him and do his will. As such, our good deeds are a grateful *response* to what God has done, not a prerequisite to earning his grace."
 1. Believers of "faith alone" see the need in replying to Paul's words.
 2. Paul would be contradicting his previous statement if indeed he had taught "faith alone" in Rom. 1:16-17.
 3. Our good deeds are both a grateful response to what God has done (1 Pet. 2:24; Heb. 9:14) and a prerequisite to obtaining His grace (John 6:29; James 2:15).

2:7 eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality;

1. The phrase "eternal life" is at the end of the verse in the original Greek.
2. "Patient continuance" - They are persistent in practicing good deeds. It becomes a way of life to them.
3. "Seek for glory, honor, and immortality" - Their goal and objective is high. Phil. 3:14

2:8-9 but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness; indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek;

1. "Self-seeking" - A desire to put oneself forward, a factious, partisan spirit. This word is found before NT times only in Aristotle where it denotes a self-seeking pursuit of political office by unfair means. (Arndt & Gingrich)
 1. Paul exhorts us to not put self forward or to be selfish. Phil. 2:3
 2. James speaks against having self-seeking or self-promoting in our hearts. James 3:14
 3. Many people seek to serve and please themselves rather than God. Phil. 3:19
 4. A very simple basic of Christianity is to "deny self." Luke 9:23
2. "Do not obey the truth" - The truth must be obeyed.
3. "Obey unrighteousness" - They become servants to it.
4. "Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish" - This is what the wicked will receive.
 1. They will receive outward affliction and inward misery.
5. "Of the Jew first" - Because of his abuse of better opportunities.

2:10 but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 2:11 For there is no partiality with God.

1. "Glory, honor, and peace" - Refers to the eternal blessings.
 2. "Who works what is good" - Again, this shows the importance of works.
 3. "To the Jew first and also to the Greek" - None are excepted.
 1. The Jews should not have lost sight of the fact that they had been privileged far above the Gentiles.
 4. "No partiality" - Proof that God renders to everyone according to their deeds.
- 2:12-16 - Paul continues to show the Jews that they were no better than the Gentiles. All will be judged by the law under which they live.

2:12 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

1. "Also perish without law" - Whether one sins outside the law of Moses, as did the Gentiles, or under the law, as did the Jews, he is still a condemned sinner.
 1. We do not know much about the law under which the Gentiles lived, but we do know they were under law, for sin is transgression of law. 1 John 3:4
 2. All are under the law of Christ today. Matt. 28:18; Acts 17:30-31; 2 Thess. 1:7-9
2. "Judged by the law" - This answers the question, "By what will those who lived under the law be judged?"

2:13 (for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified;

1. Verses 13-15 are a parenthetical statement. Verse 16 follows verse 12.
2. "Not the hearers" - It is those who hear and do who are just in the sight of God.
3. The contrast in verses 13-15 is between those who had the law and did not obey it, and those who did not have the law (Gentiles) and yet kept its moral precepts.

2:14 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,

1. "By nature do" - There are fundamental principles of right and wrong inherit in our nature; e.g., we know it is wrong to kill because we don't want to be killed; it is wrong to steal, because we don't want to be robbed.

2. "Are a law to themselves" - This is explained in the next verse. They had a law written in their hearts.

2:15 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)

1. "The law written in their hearts" - They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts rather than tables of stone.
 1. They had learned it by reason and by limited indirect revelation.
2. "Conscience also bearing witness" - It testifies in agreement with the law written in their hearts.
3. "Their thoughts accusing or else excusing" - Their thoughts, coinciding with their conscience, either accused or acquitted in accord with the knowledge they had.
 1. **Application:** The conscience can be a powerful force in helping us to do right. If one continually goes against his conscience, it can become calloused. 1 Tim. 4:2; Eph. 4:19

2:16 in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

1. This short verse reveals a lot regarding the judgment.
 1. "In the day" - A great judgment day is coming.
 2. "When God will judge" - God wants a great day of reckoning.
 3. "The secrets of men" - God will judge the secrets of men. The hidden sins of passion, dishonesty, insincerity, lusts, ill-motives, and character will all be made manifest.
 4. "By Jesus Christ" - God will do it through His Son. We all must stand before the judgment seat of Christ. 2 Cor. 5:10
 5. "According to my gospel" - The gospel which Paul taught will judge us. Three other verses mention the standard but with different phrases. John 12:48; James 2:12; Rev. 20:12

2:17 Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God,

Paul continues to prove that all stand guilty before God. In verses 17-20, he mentions eleven things in which the Jews prided themselves.

1. "Called a Jew" - "Bear the name Jew" NASV. This was a mark of high distinction to the Jew.
2. "Rest on the law" - They rested in it as a ground of safety.
3. "Make your boast" - If it is only a boast, it is vain and empty.

2:18 and know His will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law,

1. "Know his will" - It is not "knowing" that counts, but "knowing and doing."
2. "Approve the things that are excellent" - "Or, doest distinguish the things that differ" (Footnote ASV)
 1. They could distinguish the better things because they had the better light. They also knew of the things the law condemned.
3. "Being instructed out of the law" - Most had been taught the law from childhood.

2:19 and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness,

1. "A guide to the blind" - They were convinced they were teachers and leaders of the spiritually blind.
2. "A light" - They considered themselves able to lead from darkness to light, from error to truth, from vice to virtue.

2:20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the law.

1. "Instructor of the foolish" - The Jew thought he was a "corrector" (ASV) of those void of

understanding.

2. "Teacher of babes" - He was a teacher of the young and unlearned.
3. "Form of knowledge and truth" - "Having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth" (NASV). The law foreshadowed the reality of knowledge and truth.
 1. The law revealed a superior way of life. The Jews, therefore, were teachers and instructors of the more excellent way of that old era.
 2. Their problem was that they totally failed to follow the superior law which they had.
 3. Their pride caused them to feel superior to all other peoples, but they were not superior in the way they lived.
 4. All this rendered their guilt and condemnation more intense.
 5. **Application:** We as Christians are the religiously privileged of today. Pride is an ever present, constant danger. Paul's condemnation, which follows in the next verses, applies to us if we do not live up to what we know and teach.

2:21 You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal?

1. In verses 21-24, Paul asks a series of questions for self-examination. When one makes a personal application of his questions, it renders much good.
2. "Do you not teach yourself?" - A teacher should be an example of his message.
 1. The worst hypocrites are those who continue to teach others, but will not practice what they are teaching.
 2. **Application:** Before we judge or accuse others, we must make a genuine examination of ourselves and see if that sin in any form exists in us.
3. "Do you steal?" - To teach against stealing, and then commit that very act, is the height of hypocrisy.
 1. The Jews were law violators, trying to teach respect and obedience to the law.
 2. Christians are law violators, trying to teach respect and obedience to the Lord.

2:22 You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?

1. "Adultery" - "Denotes one who has unlawful intercourse with the spouse of another." (Vine)
 1. It carried the death penalty under the law. Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:23-26
 2. It is a sin against God, against one's own marital companion, and against one's own body. 1 Cor. 6:18
 3. It destroys the sanctity of the home.
2. "Rob temples?" - "Commit sacrilege" (KJV). It means, literally, "rob temples" which was considered a sacrilege among the ancients.
 1. The thought is, "Do you abhor or hate idols, yet rob temples of idols? In other words, "Do you abhor idols, but carry off idols to serve them?"

2:23 You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law?

1. "Boast in the law" - The Jews regarded the law as a mark of his peculiar favor.
 1. They boasted in the fact that they had the law, and were lovers and teachers of it.
2. "Dishonor God through breaking" - This shows clearly that we dishonor God when we break His law. Breaking a law is to dishonor the one who gave it. Thus, to commit sin is to dishonor God.
 1. Consider those who belittle baptism.

2:24 For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," as it is written.

1. The Jews claimed Jehovah exclusively as their God, and since the Jews were corrupt in life, it caused the

Jews to speak disrespectfully of their God.

1. Thus, they not only caused their own ruin, but were injurious to others.
2. See Titus 2:5; 1 Tim. 5:14; 6:1
2. "As it is written" - As can be well illustrated in the O.T.
3. **Applications on verses 21-24:**
 1. It is much easier to advise others on how to live than living godly ourselves. It is easier to say the right words than to allow them to take root in our lives. We need to make sure that our actions match our words.
 2. When we disobey God, we dishonor Him, and cause people to speak disrespectfully of Him. What do people think about God by watching our lives? Do they think God is a wonderful Being who changes people for the better, or do they think God is a Being who is weak and produces evil in people?

2:25 For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.

1. Circumcision was first given to Abraham as a sign of the covenant (Gen. 17:11-14) and later made part of the law (Ex. 12:48-49).
 1. Circumcision was simply a sign of the covenant. Man's part of the covenant was that he would keep the law. Gal. 3:10
 2. Thus, circumcision was worthless unless they kept the agreement (requirement) of the covenant.
2. "Has become uncircumcision" - As one could keep the law and not be circumcised, so one could be circumcised and not keep the law.
 1. When one did not keep the law, he would be no better than uncircumcision which was precisely the case with these Jews.

2:26 Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision?

1. None but Jews had been commanded to be circumcised. None but Jews, therefore, violated the law when they were not circumcised.
2. "Righteous requirements of the law" - "Moral precepts of the law." His moral, upright life was exactly what the law required.
3. Paul's purpose is not primarily to justify the Gentile, but to condemn the Jew because of his wickedness.
4. Someone might ask, "If an unbaptized person lives right, would he not be considered as if he were baptized?"
 1. No, the law did not require the Gentile to be circumcised, but the N.T. law requires all to be baptized. Mark 16:15-16

2:27 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?

1. The Gentile's conduct (fulfilling the law by his right living), condemned the Jewish transgressor, just as Noah by his obedience condemned the world. Heb. 11:7

2:28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh;

1. The right living Gentile is under consideration here, but the same is true of Christians.
2. The N.T. system works on its subjects from within rather than from without.

2:29 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.

1. "Circumcision of the heart" - God wants us to remove everything from our hearts that is contrary to His will, that competes with a sincere devotion, and that hinders obedience.
 1. God wants inward trust instead of outward claims, a true heart instead of hypocritical ceremony.
2. "Not in the letter" - Not in accord with the external written law of the O.T. regarding circumcision.
3. "Whose praise is not from men" - The true Jew seeks to please God not man. When both his attitude and practice are right (John 4:24), God is pleased with him.
4. Chart:

Inwardly Outwardly

Circumcision of the heart Circumcision outward in the flesh

In the spirit In the letter

Praise of God Praise of men

Conclusion to Chapter 2

Even though the Jews had all their superior advantages, they had not lived up to the revelation they had received. They professed to be teachers, guides, and leaders, but they were guilty of the very things they condemned in the Gentiles. They stood condemned by the very law which they taught. The conclusion is evident: the Jews had sinned and stood equally with the Gentiles in need of the gospel.

3:1-2 What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.

Putting himself in the Jew's position - the Jews would argue:

1. No advantage of being a Jew. Vs. 1
 1. Were entrusted with oracles of God. Vs. 2
2. Unbelief would make the faith of God without effect. Vs. 3
 1. God is always just, man is not. Vs. 4
3. God would be unrighteous to inflict wrath. Vs. 5
 1. How would God judge the world? Vs. 6
4. The truth of God through my lie has increased His glory. Vs. 7a
 1. Why am I judged as a sinner? Vs. 7b
 2. Why not do as we have been slanderously reported? Vs. 8

Paul had demonstrated that the Jew was no better than the Gentile, and in 3:1-8, he answers some objections the Jews might raise.

1. The Jew would say, "Are you saying there is no advantage of being a Jew?"
2. His answer here is probably not what the Jews expected. They would expect him to answer, "None."
3. "Committed the oracles" - "God trusted the Jews with his teachings." (NCV) Rom. 9:3-5
 1. This was a great blessing to them and to all mankind. The O.T. is the only authentic record of the origin and early history of man.
4. Those who study ancient manuscripts know that the ancient Jews did an excellent job in handing down the O.T. to the present generation.

3:3 For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect?

1. Paul anticipates the Jew arguing that if his words are right (the Jews are lost), it would cast reflection on God.
 1. God gave the law to make the Jews believe, if they didn't believe, He didn't accomplish what He intended.
 2. God sent the law to make us a better people, if we are not a good people like you are saying, Paul, that casts reflection on God.
 3. If we, the Jews, are unfaithful and lost, God failed in His covenant with us.
 4. If we are lost, God failed to keep His promises to the nation.
2. The ways and truth of God does not depend upon the beliefs and actions of men.

3:4 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."

1. "Certainly not" - An emphatic negative. We might say "absolutely not." The KJV used "God forbid;" however, the word "God" is not in the original.
2. His answer:
 1. God is always true; man is not. It is absolutely wrong to think that the unbelief of men could prevent God from keeping His promises.
 2. He who dissents from God is a liar. We should never try to prove a thing by what men say.
3. He quotes Psalm 51:4
 1. David showed that he was repenting that God might be justified in His sayings. In other words, God says that we sin and we do; thus, our sins show Him to be right.
 1. David confessed his sin and acknowledged that God was right in condemning it.
 2. Like a jeweler who displays a diamond on black velvet to make the stone appear even more beautiful, so our sins all the more prove God to be just.
4. Some of God's promises were conditional, others unconditional.
 1. God always kept His unconditional promises, and the conditional ones were not effective until the conditions were met.
 2. Since the Jews had broken the covenant (had sinned), they themselves, not God, had nullified the conditional promises.

3:5 But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unjust who inflicts wrath? (I speak as a man.)

1. If we build up and display the righteousness of God by our unrighteousness, is God wrong to take vengeance on us for our unrighteousness?
 1. This is similar to Rom. 6:1,15.
2. "I speak as a man" - I am using human reasoning.

3:6 Certainly not! For then how will God judge the world?

1. How could He justly punish the world; i.e., others besides the Jews?
 1. If God could not condemn the Jews for their disobedience, how could he punish the Gentiles who were also guilty of the same disobedience?

3:7-8 For if the truth of God has increased through my lie to His glory, why am I also still judged as a sinner? 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.

1. It appears that Paul is still putting himself in the Jew's position and repeats verses 5 in different words.
2. The Jew would argue, "If the truth of God has abounded through my lie (Paul had already referred to

men as liars):

1. Why am I still judged as a sinner? (Although one's sins prove God to be just and thus bring glory to Him, he is not excused for his sins).
2. Why not do as we have been slanderously reported? (Do evil that good may come).
3. To be consistent, it was the Jew here who had been slanderously reported (Paul also since he was a Jew) as teaching that people can do evil that good may come.
4. Their condemnation is just; that is, when they condemn one for teaching "we can do evil that good may come."
 1. "Situation ethics" is based on "we can do evil that good may come."
5. **Application:** Some may think they don't have to worry about sin because: (1) It's God's job to forgive. (2) God is so loving that he won't judge us. (3) Sin isn't so bad; it teaches us valuable lessons. (4) We need to stay in touch with the culture around us. It is far too easy to take God's grace for granted. But God cannot and will not overlook sin. Sinners, no matter how many excuses they make, will answer to God for their sin.

3:9 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.

1. The "we" are the Jews and the "they" are the Gentiles. Thus, the "we" in verse 7, as well as verses 1-6, is referring to the Jews.
2. The Jews would naturally think themselves better. None lived a perfect life.
3. "All under sin" - All are lost because of sin and stand equally in need salvation offered only in the gospel.

Paul now shows from the Jew's own Scriptures (a miscellaneous selection from Psalms, Isa. and Eccl.) that they were guilty before God and were in need of a Savior as much as the Gentiles. Nine times he uses words such as "none" and "all" to show the universality of human sin and rebellion. In verse 19 the article "the" is in the original; thus, it refers to the law of Moses. The Jews might try to deny Paul's charges, but not their own Scriptures.

3:10 As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one;

1. Probably from Eccl. 7:20.
2. There were none righteous in the perfect sense. Man is universally evil.
3. Righteousness or justification is a relationship which none possess, then or now, without the benefits of the death of Christ.

3:11 There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God.

1. From Psalm 14:2; 53:2.
2. Man ignorance does not result from a lack of opportunity.
3. Man's natural tendency is to seek his own interest. His only hope, though, is to seek after God.
4. Today, not many seek after God to know and do His will.
 1. If they seek God at all, it is only to obtain some selfish blessing.

3:12 They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one."

1. From Psalm 14:3; 53:3.
2. "Turned aside" is from a word which means basically, "to turn out of the way, to go in the wrong direction."
 1. They have all "gone in the wrong direction" so far as faith and obedience is concerned.

3. "Become unprofitable" - They had a transition from a state of value to a useless, worthless state.
4. "None who does good" - There were none who followed God's law perfectly, who never sinned.
5. "Not one" - His point of emphasis in this section.

3:13 "Their throat is an open tomb; With their tongues they have practiced deceit"; "The poison of asps is under their lips";

1. From Psalm 5:9; 140:3.
2. "Open tomb" - They give offensive words as odors from an open tomb.
3. "Tongues...deceit" - In back of a deceptive tongue is a deceptive heart.
 1. They lead others astray by deceptive words.
4. "Asps" - This is a small, but very poisonous snake. Their speech is likewise very poisonous and ruinous in its effect. James 3:8

3:14 "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness."

1. From Psalm 10:7
2. This is true of many in our world today.

3:15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood;

1. Verses 15-17 are from Isa. 59:7-8
2. Violence and murder were eagerly committed.

3:16 Destruction and misery are in their ways;

1. The result of their wicked conduct.
2. Evil people damage and destroy, leaving a trail of pain and suffering in their wake.
 1. They destroy the reputations, health, property, and lives of others.
 2. They, in turn, receive the same treatment they have given.

3:17 And the way of peace they have not known."

1. They have not known peace because they have not wanted to know it.
2. God desires that we live a quiet and peaceful life. 1 Tim. 2:2
3. The highest expression of peace is reserved only for those who love God and do His will. Phil. 4:7

3:18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

1. From Psalm 36:1
2. This is the heart of the problem. They had no respect for God; therefore, the preceding sins resulted.
 1. If people have no reverence for God, they will have no regard for His law or their fellow men.
3. A fear of God causes one to depart from, and hate, evil. Prov. 16:6; 8:13.
 1. It is the beginning wisdom and knowledge. Psalm 111:10; Prov. 1:7; 9:10; 15:33
 2. It prolongs life. Prov. 10:27
 3. It brings satisfaction. Prov. 19:23
 4. It produces wealth, honor, and life. Prov. 22:4.
4. **Application:** Have you ever thought to yourself, "Well, I'm not too bad. I'm a pretty good person"? Look at these verses and see if any of them apply to you. Have you ever lied? Have you been bitter toward anyone, etc? In thought, word, and deed, we, like everyone else in the world, stand guilty before God. We must turn to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our only hope.

Humanity's Desperate Need of the Gospel - Rom. 1:18-3:20

1. The Gentiles were without excuse; they refused to have God in their knowledge. 1:18-23
 1. Their moral depravity. 1:24-32
2. The Jews were no better. 2:1-29
 1. He meets the Jews objections. 3:1-8
3. His conclusion - 3:9
4. In 10-18, Paul strings together one O.T. reference after another in a complete demonstration of universal human guilt.
5. Then in verses 19 and 20, he reaches the conclusion toward which he has been driving ever since the announcement of his theme in Rom. 1:16-17.

We all are guilty! How shall we be justified? What makes us "not guilty" in God's sight?

3:19 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.

In 3:19-31 Paul shows that justification is not by a system of law, but by faith in Jesus Christ.

1. Every one of the Jews were condemned by the very law they were under.
 1. The article ("the") is before law in this verse; thus, in this verse he is definitely speaking of the O.T. law.
 2. The principle would apply with equal force to any law. All laws are directed only to those who are under them.
 3. All are under law of some sort, and have sinned, either by commission or by omission.
2. "Every mouth may be stopped" - The word "stopped" is literally "fenced in, blocked in, stopped up." Thus, their mouths are silenced.
 1. None are able to answer back or make defense.
3. "All the world" - The law declaring evil deeds to be sins condemned the Jews and in effect condemned the Gentiles because they committed the same sins.
4. "May become guilty before God" - It thus becomes evident that all are guilty before God ("brought under the judgment of God" ASV).
 1. All were under the sentence of condemnation because of sin.
5. **Application:** We all stand guilty and accountable before Almighty God. There is no denial, argumentation, and defense we can make before Him. Once we admit our guilt, the following verses are truly good news for us.

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

1. There is no article "the" before "law" in either place in verse 20.
2. Law by itself will not justify anyone.
 1. Under law, any law, without the benefits of the death of Christ, lost man is utterly hopeless.
3. Law justifies only if one keeps it perfectly.
 1. The same is true of works. Works (works alone) justify only when one does all of the works perfectly and commits no sin. Of course, no one measures up to this, and is thus in need of a Savior.
4. "For by the law is the knowledge of sin" - The purpose of law is to reveal what sin is, and to convict one of sin.
 1. The O.T. law was excellent in accomplishing this.

3:21 But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

After all the revelation about our sinfulness and God's condemnation, Paul gives the wonderful news. He reveals the way to be declared "not guilty," or "justified" before God.

1. "But now" - In this present time.
2. "Righteousness of God"
 1. Righteousness is treated as something belonging to God. It is the essence of His character. It is His righteousness. It is He who makes one righteous on His terms.
 2. Righteousness is something that is revealed by God. It goes forth from God. It is made available to man by God.
 3. Salvation, righteousness, justification, redemption, and remissions of sins are all equivalent. When you have the one, you have the others. Psalm 98:1-3; 1 Cor. 1:30; Rom. 3:24; 4:6-8
3. "Apart from the law" - Again, the article "the" is not before law, but is before "witnessed by the Law and the prophets."
 1. Thus, God's approval apart from law is revealed.
 2. Any law, standing alone, will not justify. Law, by itself, only pronounces guilt upon the sinner.
4. "The law and the prophets" - equivalent to the writings of the O.T. The O.T. pointed to redemption in Christ.
 1. It was foretold by the promises (Gen. 3:15; 12:1-3; 22:18), prophecies (Isa 53), and types (Heb. 9:8-9; 10:1).

3:22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;

1. Paul plainly reveals that the only way for one to have a right standing (relationship) with God is through faith in Jesus Christ.
 1. He also adds that it is to all and on all who believe.
2. We would understand that he is referring to a living faith, a faith that will work and not a dead faith. Heb. 5:8-9

3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

1. There are no exceptions, and no exemptions. Eccl. 7:20; Rom. 3:9; 5:12; 11:32
 1. All men come short of the righteousness that God has, and the righteousness that God wants man to have.
2. The scheme of redemption makes its appeal to those who are convicted of their guilt. Mark 2:17; John 9:40-41; Luke 18:13-14; 1 John 1:8-10

3:24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

1. "Justified" - To be "justified" means to be declared "not guilty."
 1. When a judge in a court of law declares the defendant "not guilty," all the charges are removed from his record. Legally, it is as if the person had never been accused.
 2. When God forgives our sins, our record is wiped clean. From His perspective, it is as though we had never sinned. Heb. 8:12
2. "Freely by His grace" - It is given as a gift upon conditions.
 1. It is not an earned justification in the sense of its original offer.
 2. It was not through our goodness or works that caused God to offer justification to man.
3. "Redemption" - Deliverance by means of payment of ransom.

1. Redemption was secured by His life's blood and being redeemed from the bondage of sin, we are justified from sin's guilt.

3:25 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,

In verses 25 and 26, the justice of God is revealed.

1. "Whom God set forth" - Suggests determination by God. God set forth Jesus.
2. "Propitiation" - Appeased or made favorable to God.
3. "By His blood, through faith" - The order of the phrases in the original Greek is: "Through faith in his blood" (KJV & ASV).
 1. The thought is: "Believing that Christ's shed blood is God's means of taking away sin." Thus, believing in what the shed blood can do.
4. "To demonstrate His righteousness" - The plan of salvation declares or demonstrates the justice or righteousness of God.
5. Forbearance was exercised toward those who sinned until the fulness of time came. Heb. 9:15; 10:1-7
6. Nothing, absolutely nothing, can atone for sins or pay the debt for sins, but the blood of Christ. Those who trusted in God under the O.T. had the promise of forgiveness. It was in promise rather than in fact. Forgiveness was therefore as sure as God's promise. This can be illustrated by the following given by brother Howard Winters.
 1. "Once when I lived in a distant city (about 400 miles away) I paid a visit to my parents. While there, two tires burst on my car. There was no way to fix them. I would therefore have to purchase two new tires. But I neither had the money with me to do so nor did I have it in the bank back home. I revealed my dilemma to a nearby service station manager. He showed some sympathy with me. I then told him that if he would trust me, I would write him a check and the first thing on Monday after I got home, I would deposit enough in the bank to cover it. He agreed to this. I got my tires, gave him the check, and went on my way. He held my check until the next Monday, at which time I made the deposit. Now he had a check with no money in the bank to cover it, but he knew that it was just as good as my promise. If I kept my word, he would get his money, though he would not actually get it until a specified time. So it was with God and His people in the O.T."

3:26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

1. "At the present time" - As distinguished from time past. He has now demonstrated His righteousness through the offering of Christ.
2. Divine justice requires the condemnation and punishment of all who sin. On what basis, therefore, can the Divine justice be maintained, and the sinner be justified? Only through the sacrifice of Christ and faith in Him.
3. The sinner through faith in Christ, is freed from the penalty of his sins. Christ died in his stead. Death is paid for sin, but the sinner is not required to die. God remains just (the penalty is paid) and the sinner is justified when he accepts Christ's death as a substitute for his own.

3:27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith.

1. Under the system of faith (the N.T. plan of redemption as shown above), every reason for human boasting is excluded or shut out.
2. "Of works?" - The Old Law was a law primarily of works that included faith.
3. "But by the law of faith" - The N.T. system.

1. The article "the" is not in the original.
2. Under the N.T., men are justified by a system of faith that includes law.
3. It is the "law of faith" because it is a system of faith that includes law.
4. The right to brag has been ruled out under the system of faith. He must glory in the Lord.
5. Bear in mind that in context Paul is referring to the source or origin of the gospel system, and not to the conditions contained in the gospel.

3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.

1. In this verse Martin Luther added the word "only" to the word faith in his German translation. He is the first on record to teach "faith only."
2. "Without the deeds of the law" - Again, the article "the" is not in the original; thus, "apart from law works."
 1. This does not exclude "the law of faith" (3:27) or "obedience of faith" (1:5; 16:26).
 2. The system of faith is in contrast with a system of law.
 1. Law, any law standing alone, once violated knows nothing but penalty.
 2. Once law is violated, there is no way to lawfully escape the penalty. This is why the death of Christ is necessary. His death paid the penalty.
 3. Verse 31 says that faith establishes law.

3:29 Or is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also,

1. Paul asks a rhetorical question which demands a negative reply. God is not just a national or tribal God. All peoples are His offspring.

3:30 since there is one God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.

1. Since there is but one Maker of all, He will justify all alike.
2. "By faith...through faith" - I see no difference in the two expression. They are synonymous.
 1. There is one faith by which both are saved.

3:31 Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.

1. Our denominational friends would answer "Certainly" to Paul question.
2. Again, the article "the" before law is not in the original in either place.
 1. Faith makes firm the importance and usefulness of law.
3. "Establish the law" - Faith produces an understanding of its importance and produces the need for obedience to it.
 1. Without faith, man would never meet the conditions which God requires for justification.
 2. To comply with the conditions is not justification by works, but justification by faith at work.
 3. Faith empowers us to obey, work and live as the Lord has taught us.

Conclusion to Chapter Three:

All people sin and fall short of the glory of God. None can be justified by law (meaning by law alone apart from Christ). Once law is violated, there is no way to lawfully escape its penalty. Thus, without the death of Christ, there is no hope for sinful man.

Divine justice requires the condemnation and punishment of all who sin. God devised a plan (the gospel

system) whereby His divine justice is maintained (His hate and condemnation of sin) and the sinner can be justified. It is the death of Christ. Christ died in the sinner's stead. Thus, God remains just (the penalty for sin is paid) and the sinner is justified (when he has faith in Jesus). (3:26)

Paul concluded chapter three by saying, "Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law." (3:31). Faith produces an understanding of the importance of law, and produces the need and desire for obeying it. Without faith (the kind revealed in the N.T.), man would never meet the conditions which God requires for justification.

4:1 What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh?

1. Paul now gives the example of Abraham. He is answering the Jew who would be thinking that Abraham earned his justification.
2. Paul showed in chapter three that law by itself will not justify. The only way law would justify is when one keeps it perfectly.
 1. The same is true of works. Works (works alone) justify only when one does all of the works perfectly and commits no sin. Of course, no one measures up to this and is thus in need of a Savior.
3. "According to the flesh" - The arrangement of the phrases in the original Greek is: "Abraham our father by flesh."
 1. Thus, Paul is simply asking, "What has Abraham our father according to the flesh found regarding justification?"

4:2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.

1. "By works" - "By works (apart from faith) is what Paul is considering here. The only way for one to be justified by works (apart from faith) is by working perfectly.
2. "Has something to boast about" - He could boast because he obtained it himself, and not by God's grace.
 1. Paul has already shown that under the system of faith, every reason for human boasting is excluded. Rom. 3:27
3. "But not before God" - Under the system of faith, all glory belongs to God.

4:3 For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

1. Gen. 15:6; Gal. 3:6; James 2:23
2. How was Abraham justified "without works" according to Paul, and "by works" according to James?
 1. The works that Paul speaks of are works that "make faith void" (vs. 14); in other words, "works alone without faith."
 2. James mentions works which "make faith perfect."
 3. Paul is showing that **works alone** will not justify, and James is showing that **faith alone** will not justify.
 4. Paul included walking in the steps of faith which Abraham had. (See chart on obedience).

4:4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.

1. This would be true if one relied on works alone, that is, if he relied on "works without faith" or "works without Christ."
 1. The only way for one to be justified by works alone is by doing works perfectly.
 2. If he did works perfectly, justification would be owed to him as a debt.

4:5 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,

1. "Does not work" - The thought is: "To him who does not work perfectly."
 1. Man cannot be righteous (justified) by law or works alone.
2. "His faith is accounted" - This shows the blessing of being justified by faith. One is saved although his works are not perfect.
3. There is no reference whatsoever in these verses to "works of obedience" or "faith that works."
 1. Paul is simply revealing "justification by faith" as opposed to "justifications by works" or "justification by law."

4:6 just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:

1. "Imputes righteousness" - This can be translated, "counts justification."
 1. Faith is the thing counted; justification is the end for which it is counted.
2. "Apart from works" - Apart from or without perfect works.
 1. Under the gospel system we can be justified even though we have sinned.
3. What could David have done to make up for his adultery and murder? Micah 6:7-8
 1. Thus, he was truly blessed when he was forgiven.

4:7-8 "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered; Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin."

1. From Psalm 32:1-2.
2. The person to whom God counts justification without works is the person whose iniquities are forgiven.
 1. Forgiveness does not result from human works (as to the source of it), but from grace.
 2. He is forgiven even though his works are not perfect.
 3. Hence, to count justification without deeds is to forgive without perfect obedience.
3. "Shall not impute sin" - God imputes sin to the sinner so long as he is a sinner, but when forgiven, they are not imputed; the forgiven sinner is righteous.
4. Our justification is not by our own righteousness (works), but by the death of Christ.
 1. His death counts for our death, and we are righteous because of what He did for us, and not because of what we have done for ourselves. This is how God imputes righteousness to the sinner.
 2. In other words, God places the sinner in right standing with Him through means of the sacrificial death of Christ.

Conclusion to verses 1-8

Righteousness is not given on the basis of works (works alone, meritorious works), but on the basis of faith, a faith that takes God at His Word and follows it as did Abraham. If one can earn his salvation by works, he would have no need of Christ.

This does not mean that we have no obligation in our salvation (prior to becoming a Christian or after). The death of Christ substitutes for the sinner's death only when the sinner accepts and obeys Him as Lord. (Rom. 5:16-18; Heb. 5:8-9). While salvation cannot be on the basis of a debt paid for perfect service rendered, this is no way changes the fact that gospel obedience is mandatory in God's scheme of redemption.

Works of obedience (our duty as commanded by God) are therefore not under consideration here. It is the works apart from faith (works of merit, works alone) which are excluded. Justification (salvation) is always

viewed in the Bible as a matter of favor, never a matter of debt. (Luke 17:10). We need to do our best, and then cast ourselves on the mercy and grace of God.

4:9 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.

In verses 9-12, he now shows that this blessedness (justification by faith) is not confined to the Jews only.

1. "For we say that faith..." - This is the same as verse 3.

4:10 How then was it accounted? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised.

1. At what period in his life was it accounted to him?
 1. Gen. 12:4 - He was 75 years old when he was called. Sometime thereafter, the statement was made. Gen. 15:6 It was before Ishmael was born.
 2. Gen. 17:24 - He was 99 years old when he was circumcised. Ishmael was 13 years old at that time. Gen. 17:25

4:11 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,

1. Circumcision was not that which brought justification, but was only a seal or sign of it.
2. "That he might be the father of all those who believe" - This was a special honor.
 1. He was the first to be justified this way.
3. "Though they are uncircumcised" - The Gentiles.
4. "That righteousness might be imputed to them also" - If Abraham was counted righteous by his faith before circumcision (before it was commanded), Gentiles could also (it was never commanded of them).

4:12 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.

1. Abraham is the father, not to those who are merely circumcised, but to those who also walk in the steps of his faith.
 1. His fatherhood extends beyond the circumcision to all who imitate his faith.

4:13 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.

Verses 13-15 - The promise to Abraham was righteousness through faith, independent of the Law.

1. "Heir of the world" - This has reference to the spiritual part of the promise. Gen. 12:3; 18:18; 22:18
 1. Abraham and his seed were to become heirs of the world through Christ. The spiritual blessing which they were to inherit were in and through Christ.
2. "Or to his seed" - This refers to Abraham's offspring, descendants.
3. "Not...through the law"
 1. The article "the" is not before "law" here, but it is in verse 15.
 2. The promise was not made because or in consideration of law, but in consideration of justification by faith.

4:14 For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect,

1. Again, the article "the" is not before law.
 1. The Jews are under consideration in context. However, the same applies to any law.
 2. If law, any law, makes people heirs, there is no purpose for faith in Christ.
2. "And the promise made of no effect" - There would be no value if the blessings were already received.
 1. The promise was made before the law was given.
 2. The law was added because of transgressions until the promised seed should come.
 3. The law was not the promise, nor was it part of the fulfillment. See Gal. 3:17-19

4:15 because the law brings about wrath; for where there is no law there is no transgression.

1. The article "the" is before law here. Thus, it refers to the Law of Moses.
2. The law works wrath both from God and within man.
 1. It works wrath from God because man violates it.
 2. It works wrath within man because it condemns rather than saves him. Once the law is violated, it knows nothing but penalty.
 1. In 7:9-23, the great "I" passage, Paul describes his condition as a sinner under law and shows how the law works wrath and brings condemnation.
3. "Where there is no law there is no transgression" - In context, Abraham could not have been judged for not keeping the law of Moses because it had not yet been given.
 1. The argument seems to be: where there is no law, there is no transgression, and where there is no transgression there is no wrath (no condemnation for violating the law).
 2. The converse would also be true: where there is law there is transgression, and where there is transgression there is wrath or condemnation.
4. Thus, he is pointing man to a better system, the system of justification by faith in Christ.

4:16 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

1. When it is "by faith," grace is necessarily brought into play.
 1. If the inheritance depended merely on law, none could obtain it since none obey it perfectly.
 2. When it is by faith, it makes it a matter of grace, not of debt.
2. "The seed" - The spiritual seed.
3. "The law" - The article is before law. The phrase refers to the Jews.
4. "But also to those" - Thus, both Jews and Gentiles are included. It includes all of us who have faith like Abraham.
 1. Abraham was the first to be justified by faith; thus, he is our father in that sense.
5. The faith of Abraham is the faith that is counted for righteousness. It is the faith that takes God at His Word and follows His instructions.

4:17 (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;

1. Paul is here referring particularly to believers, but Abraham was the father of many nations both physically and spiritually.
2. "Who gives life to the dead" - See verse 19.
 1. Abraham knew that God could do anything.
3. "And calls..." - God spoke it as though it were already done. He spoke of those nations as existing, because He intended to bring them into existence.

4:18 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."

1. "Contrary to hope" - "Against hope" (KJV). Against adverse circumstances, against reason.
 1. The physical evidence was against hope.
2. "Believe in hope" - He believed in the hope of promise.
 1. He believe God when the promise (Abraham's hope) seemed impossible.
3. "According to what was spoken" - It rested on what God had said.
4. "Your descendants be" - They would be as numberless as the stars of heaven. Gen. 15:5

4:19 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.

1. "Not being weak in faith" - His confidence in God's fulfilling His promises was stronger than his view of any difficulties standing in the way.
2. "His own body, already dead" - The fact that he was at this advanced age didn't weaken his faith.
 1. Some who are getting old are wise enough to see that they are getting old; some are not. Hosea 7:9
3. "Deadness of Sarah's womb" - She had no child all her life and was now past the age of childbearing.
 1. **Application:** Abraham did not let adverse things affect his faith. He believed God even when it seemed against reason and nature. God had spoken it, and that was enough for him. It was this kind of strong, unwavering, active faith that was accounted for righteousness. So it will be with us.

4:20 He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God,

1. Unbelief did not create staggering doubt.
 1. He did not decide against God's promise through unbelief.
2. "Giving glory to God" - He honored God as one worthy to be believed and trusted, even when it seemed contrary to reason and nature.
 1. He believed God rather than his own human reasoning and judgment, and in so doing, glorified God.

4:21 and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.

1. He had faith that God had the absolute power to carry out His promises.
 1. He did not doubt that God would accomplish what He had promised.

4:22 And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness."

1. This was said about Abraham's faith on three occasions.
 1. Gen. 15:1-6 (as quoted in Rom. 4:3).
 2. Here, at the age of about 100 (Rom. 4:19-22).
 3. At the offering of Isaac (James 2:23).
2. Thus, his life was a life of faith from beginning to end.

4:23-24 Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead,

1. It was not written to just show how Abraham was benefitted.
 1. It was actually written many years after he had died.
2. "But also for us" - This shows the importance of studying the O.T., so that we, too, might be benefitted.

3. We want our faith to be imputed for righteousness just as it was for Abraham.
 1. To believe on God who raised up Christ from the dead is to believe that Christ was raised from the dead.

4:25 who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification.

1. "Delivered up" - He was delivered up only because God allowed and wanted it. Rom. 8:32
2. "Because of our offences" - "For our offences" (KJV), "for our trespasses" (ASV).
 1. He was delivered up: (1) because of our sins, and (2) as an offering for our sins.
 2. Christ, by His death, paid the sin debt in full, and thus made it possible for us to be justified.
3. "Was raised because of our justification" - "For our justification" (as in most versions).
 1. Christ arose to consummate this offering; thus, the resurrection is an important part of the atonement. 1 Cor. 15:3-5; 1 Pet. 3:21

Conclusion to chapter 4

Paul has shown that the gospel is God's power to save (Rom. 1:16-17), all have sinned and fall short of God's glory (Rom. 3:9,23). It is impossible to be justified by law (meaning law apart from Christ, 3:20). It is impossible to be saved by works (meaning works alone apart from Christ, 4:2-8). Abraham's faith was accounted to him for righteousness (4:3, 20-22). What the Scriptures said about Abraham was not said for him alone. We, too, can be justified by faith (4:23-25). It is truly sad that many pass up these blessings from God and continue to "enjoy" their sinful life.

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

Chapter 5 shows the blessings of justification.

1. "By faith" always involves an active, living faith, and never a death faith.
 1. "Faith" is put for the whole plan because it is the foundation regarding man's part in his salvation or justification.
2. "Peace with God" - The first result of justification.
 1. The sin that separated us has been forgiven. We are no longer enemies, but friends, no longer separated, but reconciled.
3. "Through our Lord Jesus Christ" - Christ bridged the gap between God and man and made peace possible.

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

1. The second result: "Access by faith into this grace in which we stand."
 1. Through Christ, we are recipients of God's grace. Eph. 2:18
 2. Christ paid our sin debt and thus cleared the way for our entrance (access) into God's favor.
 3. **Application:** As Christians, we stand in the place of highest privilege. Not only has God declared us "not guilty," but He has drawn us close to Himself. Instead of being enemies, we have become His friends; in fact, His own children (1 John 3:1).
2. The third result: "Rejoice in hope of glory of God." Heb. 3:6; 1 Pet. 1:8
 1. We rejoice in our hope now, but someday it will be realized.
 2. The "glory of God" includes the eternal salvation.

5:3 And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;

1. "Glory in tribulations" - We also rejoice ("glory" is the same word as "rejoice" in the original in verse 2) that we can suffer trials, afflictions, and persecutions for His name. Matt. 5:10-12; Acts 5:40-42
2. "Tribulation produces perseverance" - It produces steadfastness, endurance, patience.
 1. Perseverance is the trait that bears calmly all the ills of life, and tribulations are what forms this trait in us.
 2. Affliction or tribulation is a great teacher of patience. It is called, "The School of Hard Knocks." It is a great school indeed.

5:4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

1. "Character" - "Approvedness" (ASV). It produces approval from God, from man, and within ourselves.
2. "Hope" - Knowing that God approves gives us a firmer hope. James 1:3-4,12; 1 Pet. 1:6-7
 1. When we have patiently endured a trial, it strengthens our hope.

5:5 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.

1. Hope does not make us ashamed or disappointed now, nor will it ever.
 1. It will not shame us in the end by disappointing us.
 2. That which we hoped for will be realized and we will never be ashamed that we had hope.
2. "Love of God" - His love for us has been clearly demonstrated to us.
3. "By the Holy Spirit who was given to us" - He has been given in two ways:
 1. He has been given to mankind in the revealing of the gospel. He has not been given to us today directly or miraculously, but indirectly. He has revealed the gospel through holy writings.
 1. In the gospel He has revealed to us a loving God, a loving Savior, and reasons for loving in return.
 2. The Holy Spirit has been given as a pledge that every promise will be fulfilled. 2 Cor. 1:22-23
4. **Application:** Paul shows that afflictions start a chain of events which eventually ends with the love of God being poured out in our hearts. Thus, we should look for and rejoice in the ultimate results of tribulations rather than being discouraged by their present discomfort and heartache.

5:6 For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

Paul now reveals "reconciliation through Christ."

1. "When we were still without strength" - We were helpless and powerless to save ourselves.
 1. We had no power to save ourselves, had a law that only legally condemned us, and could do no works of merit to commend us to God.
 2. What we could not do, Christ accomplished.
2. "In due time" - It was the set time (not too early, not too late) according to God's timetable. Gal. 4:4-5
3. "Christ died for the ungodly" - He died for their benefit.
 1. Christ sacrificed Himself on the cruel cross to pay man's sin debt. God accepted His sacrifice. It is the only way to be forgiven of sin.
 2. God controls all history, and He controlled the timing, methods, and results of Jesus' death.

5:7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.

1. "Righteous man" - One who is just and fair in his dealings.
2. "Good man" - One who is more than just. He is also kind and generous.
 1. One might attempt to die for him, but it is unusual.

5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Paul continues to set forth the blessings of gospel justification. He explains the assurance of Salvation through the life and death of Christ.

1. "Demonstrates" - Present tense. He continues to exhibit, show, or demonstrate His love toward us by what He did.
2. "In that while we were still sinners" - The sign or demonstration of His love. We accept this great truth as fact, and in turn show our love for Him. 1 John 4:19

5:9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

1. Salvation is here presented both as a present reality and a future hope.
2. "Much more" - An argument stating the more difficult to prove the less difficult.
 1. Since we have now been justified (declared "not guilty" before God) by the death of Christ, how much more shall we be delivered from the wrath to come by remaining in Him.
 2. Thus, if the present reality is true (we are justified), most certainly the other will be true.

5:10 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.

1. We were sinners and enemies rather than righteous and friends.
2. We were reconciled to God, not God to us.
3. "By His life" - His "life-state" or "living state."
 1. His resurrection to life consummated salvation and He, in person, superintends the work.
4. As in verse 9, the argument is made from the more difficult (the reconciliation of His enemies by the death of Christ), to prove the less difficult (eternal life for those reconciled).

5:11 And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

1. Great joy comes to us as result of this relationship.
2. "In God through" - We rejoice in the greatest of Beings for the greatest of reasons.
3. "Received the reconciliation" - He has forgiven us and filled us with the hope of eternal life.
4. **Application:** We have good reason to rejoice. Our past sins have been forgiven. We stand justified before God. We have been reconciled to God. We shall be delivered from the wrath to come.

5:12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned;

He now gives a comparison between Adam and Christ. One introduced sin and death; the other righteousness and life. 1 Cor. 15:22-23

1. "By one man" - Adam introduced sin and its consequences.
2. "Thus death spread" - Physical death passed from Adam to all. Paul later adds "resulting in condemnation" (vs. 16, 18), which shows that "eternal death" was also introduced into the world by Adam.
3. "Because all sinned" - God decreed death upon the human race, not only for Adam's, but for all sin.
 1. When anyone sins, he stands where Adam stood in the beginning.

5:13 (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

Notice the parentheses beginning in verse 13 and closing in verse 17. Verse 12 is not a full sentence. Paul repeats verse 12 in different words in verse 18 and then closes his sentence. He wanted to expand on the universality of sin and that which Adam wrought in contrast to Christ before he continued his discussion.

1. In verses 13 and 14, Paul describes the universality of sin.
2. "For until the law" - or "Before the law"; thus, sin was in the world before the law of Moses was given.
 1. The article "the" is not before "law" here but he is referring to the law of Moses as is shown in the next verse.
3. "But sin is not imputed..." - the same as 4:15.
 1. Thus, there was law before the law of Moses. He is showing that sin has prevailed since the time of Adam.

5:14 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.

1. "Not sinned according to the likeness..." - Adam violated a positive law, others a moral law.
 1. Adam's sin introduced some things into the world (vs. 15-21) whereas the sin of others didn't.
 2. Also, they were different in the way each received instructions.
2. "Type of Him who was to come" - The word "type" is the Greek word "type" and means "a previous figure or shadow."
 1. He describes how Adam was a type or figure of Christ in the next verses.

5:15 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.

The Offense And The Gift

(Rom. 5:15-21)

vs. 15 - Many died-----Grace abounded to many

vs. 16 - Resulted in condemnation-----Resulted in justification

vs. 17 - Death reigned-----Life reigns

vs. 18 - One offense-----One righteous act

vs. 19 - Disobedience-made sinners-----Obedience-made righteous

vs. 20 - Sin abounded-----Grace more abounded

1. "The free gift is not like.." - Thus, he gives a contrast.
 1. "The word "free" is not in the original, only the word "charisma" - gift. Thus, this destroys the argument, "it is absolutely free and there is nothing one can do to receive it."
 2. The "gift" refers to God's gracious redemption through Christ.
2. "Many died" - Sin and death entered the world through Adam, but God holds each person responsible for his own sins.
3. "Much more" - The blessings we receive in Christ far outweigh the things we lost in Adam.
4. "The gift by the grace" - God and Christ were not obligated to restore the human race. They did so by

favor.

5. "Abounded to many" - Redemption for the human race is unlimited. Many have been wise enough to take advantage of the blessing.

5:16 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.

1. "The judgment...resulted in condemnation" - It brought death's penalty, spiritual death.
2. "But the free gift...resulted in justification" - It brought justifications to sinners.
 1. Condemnation (death's penalty, spiritual death) was brought upon us by Adam, but justification (salvation, the gift) was brought to us by Christ.
3. Man's response is not mentioned here. Condemnation comes to one when he violates the will of God; he obtains the gift (justification) when he obeys God's will.

5:17 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.)

1. "Death reigned through the one" - Adam committed the sin which introduced it.
2. "Much more" - Expresses a high degree of certainty.
3. "Abundance of grace" - They receive the favor in its abundant provisions.
4. "Gift of righteousness" - or "of justification. They receive remission of sins, not as due, but as a gift.
5. "Reign in life" - Much more shall the redeemed reign there, than death has reigned here.
 1. Notice that the verse speaks of salvation both present and future, and the "much more" is affirming the certainty of the future salvation.
6. "Through the One" - Through Him, it has been provided. Through Him we have hope, and through Him, eternal life shall be realized.

5:18 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.

1. "Resulting in condemnation" - Physical death and condemnation are the results of sin.
2. "The free gift" - The word "free," again, is not in the original.
3. "One Man's righteous act" - The obedience of Christ in dying for us. Phil. 2:8; Heb. 5:7-9
4. "Came to all men" - Again, we understand, "To all who obey; to all who take advantage of the blessings."
5. "Resulting in justification of life" - It has the promise of the life that now is, and of eternal life.
 1. The doctrine of imputed sin, like the doctrine of imputed righteousness, has no sanction either in reason or revelation. He that does righteousness, is righteous (1 John 3:7), not that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us.
 2. Condemnation (the penalty of sin) is no more unconditional than life (that which comes through Christ).

5:19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

1. "Were made sinners" - They were made liable to sin and punishment.
2. "Made righteous" - They were made liable to justification. Without Him there is no justification.
3. While all were made potential sinners in Adam, condemnation comes only by one's own disobedience.
 1. Charles Darwin made evolutionists, but this does not mean that the theory of evolution is an inherited trait. Likewise, Adam made sinners, but he made them by introducing sin into the world. Each one becomes a sinner when he transgresses God's law. 1 John 3:4

5:20 Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,

1. "That the offense might abound" - The circle of sin widened.
 1. Through the law, man's knowledge of sin increases (Rom. 3:20), and he begins to understand how terrible sin is (Rom. 7:7-13).
 2. Law was given that men might see their transgression, show them the seriousness of it, and cause them to turn to God for mercy and pardon. The law of Christ accomplishes the same today.
2. "Grace abounded much more" - The blessings far outweigh the losses.
 1. The word "abounded," used twice in the verse, is from two different Greek words. The first means "to fill" and the second means "to super abound or overflow."
 2. Hence, sin abounded, but grace has been extended beyond measure, far surpassing all the evil effects of sin.

5:21 so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1. "Sin reigned in death" - Personified, sin reigned unto death.
 1. Sin brought about physical **and** spiritual death.
2. "Grace might reign" - Personified, favor reigned through justification to eternal life.
 1. Grace brought about the present "life" in Christ and shall bring "eternal life."
3. "Through Jesus Christ our Lord" - He is the personal source of the favor who will fully carry out and execute all He has promoted and devised.

Conclusion to chapter 5

Adam introduced sin into the world. We suffer the consequences of Adam's sin, but not the guilt. When a father commits murder, the son does not stand trial for the crime; however, the son suffers the consequences of his father's sin: shame, no provider, etc. Ezek. 18:20

Some over press Paul's contrast in verses 18 and 19. However, notice that if all are made sinners because of Adam, all are made righteous because of Christ. Adam introduced certain things into the world and so did Christ. Adam introduced judgment to condemnation and we receive it by our own disobedience. Christ introduced justification to life and we receive it by our own obedience. Adam introduced disease into the world, but it does not mean that all are born with disease. It only means that all are subject to disease.

Our text is dealing with the blessings through Christ. Man's responsibilities for receiving the blessings are discussed in the next chapter.

6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

Paul, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, now gives encouragement and admonishment to help keep us from sinning. He shows that justification produces the fruit of holiness.

1. "What shall...?" - What can be deduced from the preceding regarding sin and grace?
2. "Shall we continue in sin...?" - A false conclusion drawn from above, e.g., verse 20b.
 1. Since Grace much more abounded where there was sin, should we continue to sin so that grace would continue to abound?

6:2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

In verses 2-11, Paul gives four reasons why the Christian should not sin. The first reason we shouldn't sin is because we have died to sin and cannot live in it any longer.

1. "Certainly not!" - Or, "Absolutely, not!" God would never encourage sin by blessing the committing of it.
2. "Died to sin" - We were once "dead in sin," but now "dead to sin."
 1. We have renounced our allegiance to the enticements of this sinful world.
 2. We are wholly disinclined in mind to commit sin.
3. "Live any longer in it?" - Being dead to sin, we could not live in it.
 1. We are separated from it. We cannot remain in the guilt and practice of it.

6:3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

The second reason we should not continue in sin is because we have been baptized.

1. "Baptized into Christ Jesus" - Gal. 3:26-27
 1. One is brought into a special relationship with Christ in baptism - into a state free from sin.
 2. "Into Christ" means the same as "into the name" (ASV) since the name stands for the person.
2. "Into His death?" - He realized they understood that they were baptized into Christ, but asks if they knew if their baptism was also into His death?
 1. Paul perhaps is simply showing that we are baptized in the likeness of His death.
 2. No doubt, he is also showing that we are brought into a special relationship with His death.
 1. He shed His blood in His death (John 19:33-35); thus, we are baptized into the benefits of His death.
 2. Members of the church have been accused of teaching, "One is saved by water." No, the blood of Christ saves, but it is by baptism that one reaches the benefits of His blood.

6:4 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.

1. "Buried with Him through baptism" - There are two Greek words here, both of which mean "buried, immersed." Thus, baptism is a burial.
2. "By the glory of the Father" - The glory of God necessitated it and the power of God brought it about.
3. "Even so we also should walk in newness of life" - Thus, we are raised to a new life.
 1. Chart #1:

Jesus Christian

Died Arose Died Arose (New Life)

was buried was buried

1. As Christ died, was buried, and was raised, we died to sin, are buried in baptism, and are raised to a new life.
2. Thus, one's baptism has a likeness of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.
3. A simple understanding of this truth overcomes many false ideas concerning baptism.
 1. Sprinkling or pouring has no likeness to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Other passages teach that baptism is a burial. Col. 2:12
 2. Many people have baptism in reverse order.
 1. They tell us when one believes, or "accepts Christ as his personal savior," he is saved

and has the new life. They tell us one is baptized to show that he is already saved; thus, "salvation before baptism."

2. But look what this does to the simple diagram. If a person is saved up here (New Life) before baptism, that means he is buried alive in baptism. Chart #2:

Arose

Buried

6:5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,

1. "For" - This shows the connection to verses 3 and 4.
2. "If we have been united together in the likeness of His death" - Thus, one is united with Christ in the likeness of His death when he is baptized into Him.
3. "Certainly we also shall be" - If through baptism we have been united in the likeness of His death, we shall be (future tense) in the likeness of His resurrection.
 1. Thus, from this verse we see the importance of the re-enactment of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

6:6 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.

Paul continues his reasons why we shouldn't sin. Thirdly, we shouldn't sin because we are dead to sin. If we have been united with Christ, we understand that several things have happened.

1. We know that our old self was crucified with Him. That old life of sin and corruption has been put to death.
2. "That the body of sin..." - The same as the "old man."
 1. When we were buried with Christ in baptism, we crucified, destroyed, and buried that old type of life.
3. "That we should no longer be slaves of sin" - He here personifies sin as a master who takes control; however, we are no longer bond-servants to sin.

6:7 For he who has died has been freed from sin.

1. Another reason we shouldn't commit sin is because we have been freed (Gr. justified) from sin. Thus, this shows what being "justified" means. It means to be freed from sin.
 1. **Application:** We are thankful that we can be freed from sin, even from the most gross, ugliest, darkest of sin. 1 Cor. 6:9-11. Christians have continual access to forgiveness through Christ. Acts 5:31; 1 John 1:9

6:8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

In verses 8-11, Paul gives the fourth reason we shouldn't sin - because we are looking forward to someday living with Him.

1. "Died with Christ" - When we were baptized and when the old man was crucified.
2. "We believe" - We believe we shall live with Him in eternity because we have been raised to the new life and are walking in it. 2 Tim. 2:10-12

6:9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has

dominion over Him.

1. "Dies no more" - Death will never come to Him again.
2. "Has dominion over Him" - Death will never lord over Him again.
 1. While He was in the flesh, He was subject to death as all human beings, but when He was raised, He broke the power of death forever.
 2. He conquered death and now lives to die no more. Rev. 1:18

6:10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

1. "He died to sin once for all" - He died to the state or sphere of sin, that is, death put Him beyond sin's power or reach.
 1. He died to a sinful world once for all. Heb. 7:27; 9:26-28; 10:10
2. He now lives in harmony with the Father's will. He now lives with God. He is now reigning in the presence of God. Heb. 1:3

6:11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1. "Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin" - We could no longer live in sin than Christ could live His former life over again.
 1. We must seek to be dead to the guilt, penalty, power, sphere, and relationship to sin.
2. "Alive to God" - We are to be walking in a new life of service to Him, trying to be well-pleasing and acceptable in His sight.
 1. **Application:** The Christian must strive to remain a new creature--being renewed day by day. Eph. 4:22-24 He has been raised to new life with God; he should remain in this new relationship. He should not let the newness wear off. He must not become old and stale in his service.

6:12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.

He now gives words of exhortation based on what he had already said. First, he gives three negatives - verses 12 and 13a.

1. "Let not sin reign in your mortal body" - We are not to allow sin to re-establish its reign in our bodies. We must overcome sinful habits.
2. "That you should obey it in its lusts" - We are not to obey evil desires and cravings. 1 Pet. 2:11; Gal. 5:24
 1. To commit sin is to obey sin. To obey sin is to become sin's slave. We must not, therefore, submit to sin's rule or mastery in any part of our bodies.

6:13 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.

1. He gives his third negative exhortation: "Do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin."
 1. We are not to use any part of our body to sin or as instruments (Gr. arms, weapons, or tools) to do wrong.
2. He now gives two positives:
 1. "But present...alive from the dead" - We present ourselves to God as alive from the dead.
 1. We are to act as alive from the dead, not half dead.
 2. "As instruments of righteousness to God" - We are to present the members of our bodies in service to God. Rom. 12:1

1. We are to use the various parts of our bodies as "tools" in doing right.
3. **Application:** Put off the old sinful man and put on the new person who is made after the image of Him who created him. Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:8-10

6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

He continues to show that justification produces the fruit of holiness.

1. "Dominion" - Sin has its rule, control, or mastery over us when (1) it leads us in the continual practice of sin and (2) it brings about our final destruction.
2. "For you are not under law but under grace" - You are not under a system mainly of law, but of grace.
 1. Paul uses a figure of speech in which the less is denied to emphasize the greater.
 2. If we were under law alone, we could never be forgiven; thus, sin would have its dominion over us.
3. Under the system of grace (a system which is based on grace, but contains law or requires obedience to the will of God) the means of forgiveness is provided (through the death of Christ).

6:15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!

Paul emphasizes that the system of grace requires obedience to God.

1. "Not under law" - This does not mean "wholly without law," but "not under a system mainly of law."
 1. Freedom from law means freedom from sin, its rule or dominion, not freedom to indulge in sin, or freedom from rules, standards, and restraints.
 2. Grace does not give liberty to sin; it only produces a way of escape.
2. Can one sin all he wants because God has provided forgiveness? No, his attitude is wrong and wholly unacceptable to God.
3. "Certainly not!" - A strong negative, showing that one cannot commit sin because he is under grace rather than law.
 1. To sin under grace is to turn grace into an occasion of lasciviousness. Jude 4

6:16 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?

1. When one submits to being someone's slave, and obeys him, he is the slave of the one whom he obeys. So it is with sin and obedience.
2. "Obedience leading to righteousness" - Obedience (doing the will of God as revealed in the gospel) brings one into right relationship with God.
3. Thus, it is a voluntary servitude. We choose which direction we will go.
 1. If one is born in sin (totally depraved), there is no voluntary serving.
 2. **Application:** "Choose you this day whom you will serve." (Joshua 24:15).

6:17 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.

1. "Were slaves of sin" - That sinful part of their lives was a thing of the past.
2. "You obeyed from the heart" - All acceptable obedience must come from the heart.
 1. Notice that one must obey. One is not set free from sin by an inward condition of the heart only.
3. "That form of doctrine" - In context, this refers back to one's obedience in baptism. See chart #1 at verse 4.
 1. One cannot obey the death, burial, and resurrection as such, but he can obey a form or mode of it by being baptized.

4. "To which you were delivered" - You were delivered from sin as your master to the doctrine of Christ as your master.

6:18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

1. You have been set free from sin as your master, and have become voluntarily bound to righteousness.
 1. They were freed from sin when they changed masters, when they obeyed the gospel from the heart, and now they should present their members as slaves of God, following His righteousness. (Vss. 19, 22).

6:19 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.

He continues with "the blessings of justification." Chapter 6 involves, "freedom from sin" and Chapter 7, "freedom from the law."

1. "Weakness of your flesh" - Weakness, feebleness with regard to man's physical makeup, including his intellect.
 1. He uses an illustration drawn from the common affairs of men because of their weakness to understand.
 2. He uses the well known (the servant-master relationship) to express the unknown (man's servitude to God).
2. "Slaves of uncleanness" - They were slaves to moral impurities. Eph. 2:2-3; 1 Pet. 4:2-3
3. "Lawlessness leading to more lawlessness" - Iniquity or lawlessness had become a way of life, and was increasing.
 1. They had in time past been the slaves of uncleanness and lawlessness.
4. "Slaves of righteousness for holiness" - He encourages them to now present themselves as slaves to right doing for holiness.
 1. They should now pursue holiness instead of uncleanness and lawlessness. Heb. 12:14

6:20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.

1. "Free in regard to righteousness" - Were away from righteousness and not under its influence.
 1. When you were slaves of sin, regarding the principles of servitude, you were free as to righteousness, but now being bound as servants to righteousness, you owe it your service.
 2. Before becoming slaves to righteousness, they were slaves to sin and followed it.

6:21 What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

1. "What Fruit...?" - What benefits did you receive? Any honest person would freely admit that a sinful life is empty and worthless.
2. "You are now ashamed?" - They could now see the disgracefulness of sin and the beauty of holiness.
 1. Every Christian is ashamed when he reflects on his past sins.
3. "Is death" - Is everlasting death, the second death, eternal separation from God.

6:22 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.

1. Through obedience, they had changed masters. He mentions "God" in this verse as their master as opposed to "righteousness" in the preceding verses.

2. "Fruit to holiness" - "Fruit to sanctification" (ASV)
 1. Sanctification is similar in nature to being a child of God. There is a definite time when one becomes a child of God, but as a child, he should grow daily in the likeness of His Father. Growth is therefore a continual process.
 2. So it is with sanctification. One is sanctified when he becomes a child of God (1 Cor. 6:9-11), but the process continues as he produces fruit in his life.
3. "End, everlasting life" - Contrasted with "the end of those things is death."
 1. They are opposites in quality, but each of the same duration.

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

1. Sin as its master pays its wages, and none will be underpaid.
 1. Christ died to redeem us from the wages of sin, eternal death.
2. God as a master gives eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
 1. He gives eternal life, not as wages, but as a gift upon conditions.
 1. One would naturally expect that since he has God as His master, he would receive the wages of eternal life, but the Scriptures nowhere teach it.
 2. The eternal life cannot be compared (in the terms of compensation) to the labor extended. 2 Cor. 4:17; Rom. 8:18
 1. It is similar to one working for one day and then being paid one hundred million dollars.

7:1 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?

In verses 1-4, Paul was not teaching a lesson on marriage, but was using that well-known relationship to show their relation to the law and to Christ.

1. "As long as he lives?" - When a man dies, the law governs him no longer. The law is bound only on the living.
 1. His point is, as he will show, that they were not under the law because they were dead to it. (Vs. 4,6).
2. As one would expect, the article "the" is in the original Greek in this verse and continues to be through 8:4.

7:2 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.

1. As it is a death that dissolves the marriage bond, so it is also a death that dissolves the legal bond, bondage to the law.
2. Are we to understand Paul to say there is no reason at all for divorce? No, the exceptions are not considered here. Matt. 5:32 and Matt. 19:9 gives an exception.
 1. It is intended that both parties be faithful to each other until the death of the one or the other.
3. It is easy to see why he refers to the wife rather than the husband. The law is depicted as being the first husband.
 1. Other descriptions of the Old Law are: "schoolmaster" (Gal. 3:23-29), "childhood" (Gal. 4:1-3); "bondage" (Gal. 4:21-30), "shadow" (Heb. 10:1), "yoke" (Acts 15:10).
4. "Released from the law of her husband" - The one that governs the relation of the wife to her husband.
 1. She thus no more has marital responsibilities to him and is free to marry another.

7:3 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.

1. "Called an adulteress" - "Called" is an unusual word in the N.T.; it is used nine times and appears from its other uses to refer to "divinely" proclaim, warn, speak (Matt. 2:12,22; Luke 2:26; Acts 10:22; 11:26; Heb. 8:5; 11:7; 12:25).
 1. Thus, when she has a living husband and is married to another, she is so proclaimed an adulteress by God.
2. This shows that a person can live in adultery.
 1. Some argue that a person cannot live in adultery but only commits it with each separate act. They do this in trying to prove that the adultery is forgiven when the adulterous couple are baptized.
 2. See also Col. 3:5-7; Heb. 12:15-17
3. The death of the mate frees one to marry again.
 1. A brother said to me that this verse teaches that if a woman is living in adultery and her first husband dies, she is no longer an adulteress.
 2. Illustrations (parables) in the Bible are designed to teach only one point. To press an illustration beyond that one point is to force it to teach something the writer never intended.
 3. Paul is simply speaking of the normal course of life; e.g., when one in the marriage dies, the other is free to remarry.

7:4 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.

1. He now makes application of his illustration. He used his comparison of marriage to convince the Jews, as well as all, that in obeying Christ they died to the law.
2. "Through the body of Christ" - By the death of His body on the cross.
 1. The death of Christ brought an end to the law. Eph. 2:13-17; Col. 2:14-17; 2 Cor. 3:5-18
3. Two purposes:
 1. "That you may be married to another"
 1. We are now under Christ and His headship.
 2. If we turn away from Him to another person or thing, it is spiritual adultery. Ezek. 23:37; Jer. 3:6-10
 2. "That we should bear fruit to God" - Gal. 2:19
 1. The gospel, God's plan of justification, produces fruit (godly living, faithful service) in the lives of people. Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 2:24

7:5 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.

In verses 5-13, Paul shows the purpose of the law in relation to sin. The law made one aware and conscious of sin and showed that the end result was death.

1. "Were in the flesh" - He is not referring to the human body because he adds by contrast verses 6.
 1. He means, "when we were governed by the flesh." Thus, he refers to their former unregenerate state.
2. "The sinful passions which were aroused by the law" - The thought here is probably that law revealed the nature of sinful passions, not that it produced them. By the law, they learned which desires were sinful.
 1. However, evil people often want to do the very thing that is forbidden, simply because it is forbidden.
3. "Were at work in our members" - Sinful passions express themselves through the members of the body.
4. "To bear fruit to death" - The end result was death because the law was unable to deliver from death.

7:6 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.

1. Sabbatarians say that the law which was done away did not include the ten commandments. The next verse shows them to be wrong.
2. "Newness of the Spirit" - In the new way of the Spirit. This will be described at length in chapter eight.
 1. The word "spirit" here no doubt is referring to the Holy Spirit (because of the contrast made in context) and not man's own spirit. The NKJV uses upper case "S" whereas the KJV uses lower case "s."
 2. Nonetheless, we should serve both in the new way of the Spirit and in accord with the newness of our own spirit.
3. "Oldness of the letter" - The "letter" refers to that which was written down; thus, the external writings of the law of Moses.
 1. In 2 Cor. 3:5-8, the Spirit that quickens is contrasted with the letter that kills. He adds in 2 Cor. 3:9-17 that the ministry of the Spirit is far more glorious than the letter which kills.
4. Notice in the verse that he is telling us that we should "serve." Let us do that very thing.

7:7 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."

To many, verses 7-25 are difficult to understand. I believe they have difficulty with it because they try to force the verses to teach something which is not revealed. It does not involve the internal conflict within the mind of a Christian, but rather with the state of mind of one under the law. Under the law, one stands condemned by the very law he loves and desires to keep. He desired to do right, but because he had violated the law, he was condemned under it. How could one be delivered from such a wretched conflict of mind? The answer is given in 7:24-8:4. Christ delivers one from that inward conflict. Thus, he has now been freed from it.

1. "Is the law sin?" - Did the law cause or create sin?
2. "I would not have known sin" - The law defined and condemned sin.
 1. The phrase is not the same as, "would not have sinned" or "would not have experienced sin."
3. "Not have known covetousness" - He uses the 10th commandment as an example.
 1. He would not have known covetousness if the law had not prohibited it.

7:8 But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead.

1. Sin is personified here. Sin, taking opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me coveting of every variety.
 1. The law furnished the opportunity for sin to take advantage.
 2. It works up in me the very thing the law forbids; thus, it is sin that causes the unlawful desires, not the law.
2. "For apart from the law sin was dead" - Without the law, sin was dormant and powerless.
 1. Without the law, he would not have known what sin was.
 2. The law did not cause the evil desires, but brought the light of truth upon them and thus revealed them as sin.
 3. This does not mean the ignorance of the law would have excused them, but only means that the law made that which is sinful vivid.

7:9 I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died.

1. "I was alive once without the law" - This refers to his childhood.
2. "When the commandment came" - For example, "when he learned of it."

3. "Sin revived" - "Sin sprang to life" (NIV). That is, sin woke up or sprang to life.
4. "And I died" - He spiritually died.
 1. When he was old enough to understand the law, he already saw that he was guilty of death. This would also be true of the convert to the law.
 2. Again, this shows that man is not born totally depraved or with "original sin."

7:10 And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death.

1. What was meant to lead him in the way of life, brought him under the curse and penalty of death.
2. Life came by keeping the law (Rom. 10:5; Lev. 18:5), but death came by violation of the law (Deut. 11:26-28; Gal. 3:10).

7:11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me.

1. Sin is personified as an enemy who had destroyed him.
2. Sin took advantage of the precept to deceive and kill.
 1. Consider the case of Eve. The devil used the commandment as an opportunity to deceive.
3. "And by it killed me" - The law showed him he was a condemned transgressor.
 1. The law did not provide justification to those under it.

7:12 Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.

1. "Holy" - The law is pure in its nature; without the taint of sin.
 1. It is holy because it was given by God and therefore is part of His divine nature.
2. "Commandment is holy" - The 10th commandment, to which he had just referred.
3. "Just" - It is righteous in its demands and penalties.
4. "Good" - It is beneficial in itself for mankind. It was good for the end to which it was given.
5. This answers verse 7, "Is the law sin?" The problem is therefore with the sinner, not the law.
6. This verse is a favorite of the 7th Day Adventist. However, in context it has nothing to do with the law as binding on us today. As a matter of fact, he goes on to show that he had been delivered as shown in verses 7:24-8:4.

7:13 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.

1. "Death to me?" - This refers back to the "killed me" in verse 11.
2. "But sin" - It was sin, not the law, that deceived and killed.
 1. "Let me illustrate: in the county where I live two men were cruelly murdered. They were pushed down an old abandoned mine shaft and, if they were not killed by the fall, left there to die. The guilty party was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to life in prison. Is the law against murder responsible for him being in prison? No. The law is good. But he violated the law and he is imprisoned because of that violation. It is his crime, not the law, that is responsible. The penalty of the law shows the seriousness of the crime. Thus it is with the law of God." (Commentary on Romans by Howard Winters, p. 82).
3. "Might become exceedingly sinful" - The law was excellent in revealing and condemning sin.
 1. It thus lead one to the Savior who would take away all sin.

7:14 For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.

1. In context, he is referring to a condition under the law.

1. Some take these verses to be referring to the inward struggle of the Christian.
2. Of course, there is an inward struggle, but not this severe.
2. "The law" - Thus, he is referring to his struggle under the law.
3. "Law is spiritual" - It was revealed by the Spirit, and it appeals to the inner man. Rom. 7:22,25; Deut. 6:5-6
4. "But I am carnal, sold under sin" - Using the present tense, he is transposing himself back to the time when he was a sinner under the law.
 1. This was true of everyone under the law. They could not obtain justification.
 2. The Christian is not "sold under sin" but has been redeemed by the blood of Christ.
 1. He does not stand condemned (Rom. 8:1) but justified by faith (Rom. 5:1), and has continual opportunity for forgiveness as he complies with the conditions (1 John 1:7-9).

7:15 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.

1. The demands of the law of sin were obeyed in his life in spite of his good intentions.
2. "I do not understand" - He did not understand the full nature and consequences of what he was doing.
3. "For what I will to do, that I do not practice" - Thus, he did the opposite of his intentions.
 1. The conflict was so strong under the law of Moses, he could not overcome it.
 2. He was under a yoke of bondage that he could not overcome. Acts 15:10
 3. Christians are freed from all yokes of bondage. Rom. 8:2; Gal. 5:1

7:16 If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good.

1. The law demanded a decent, upright life. He wished to live it and so agreed that the law was good.

7:17 But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

1. "No longer I who do it" - No more I **alone** who do it.
 1. This is a figure of speech often found in the Bible in which one part of a sentence is stated in the negative in order to emphasize the positive. For example, John 12:44.
2. "But sin that dwells in me" - This shows that he is referring to his condition under the law. The Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian.
3. Paul is not saying that he is not responsible for his sins, but that he is not the slave of sin by choice.
 1. Under the law, sin had conquered him.

7:18 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.

1. "In me...nothing good dwells" - As a condemned violator of the law, he was subject to sin. He was under its power and control.
2. "For to will is present" - The urge to do good was present.
3. "I do not find" - He had the desire, but could not find the way. Again, this cannot refer to when he was a Christian. The Christian has found the Way.
4. Paul was making a distinction between his better self and that part of him which acted contrary to it.

7:19 For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice.

1. This is the same as verse 15.
2. What he wished to do (obey the law as his master with being condemned), he was unable to do.
3. What he wished to not do (serve sin as his master), he did. He was unwilling to be a sinner, but yet was condemned and sold under sin.

7:20 Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

1. "Now if I do what I will not to do" - He willed to not serve sin, but sin was his master because he had become a transgressor under the law.
 1. He was a transgressor without the gospel or the blood of Christ to take away his sins.
2. "It is no longer I who do it" - The contrast is between the part of him who longed to be justified and his state of sin, and not as to who was ultimately accountable for his sin.
 1. He willed to do right but was sold under sin; thus, he was torn between two masters: the law (which he loved and wanted to serve) and sin (which he loathed and hated to serve).
 2. The law was his love, but sin was his master.
3. "Sin dwells in me" - Sin controlled his life.
 1. Sin is ever present in those who have not died to sin.

7:21 I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.

1. "I find then a law" - Literally, "the law." The definite article "the" is before law in the original Greek.
 1. The marginal reading of the ASV says, "I find then in regard to the law."
2. "That evil is present with me" - Again, this refers to his condition as a condemned sinner under the law.
 1. He could never absent himself from the fact that he was a sinner and condemned violator of the law.
3. "The one who wills to do good" - His desires and intentions to do good were ever present.

7:22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.

1. He delighted in the law of God which appealed to the inner man. Rom. 6:15
2. It could be translated, "For according to the inward man, I delight in the law of God."
 1. Thus, the inner man is pleased with the law of God.
 2. This is especially true under the New Testament law.

7:23 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.

1. "But I see" - He depicts himself as an observer of the conflict that was going on within him.
2. "Another law in my members" - He refers to another law besides the law of Moses, the law of sin as shown in context.
 1. In his flesh or in the members of his body dwells the law of sin.
3. "Warring against the law of my mind" - The law addressed to his mind, or his constant inclination to do right.
 1. The law of sin was warring against (Lit. "soldiering against") the law of his mind; thus, he again refers to that inward conflict.
4. "Bring me into captivity" - It made him a prisoner. He had established in chapter 6 that Christians are not the servants of sin.
5. "The law of sin which is in my members" - The rule of sin in his members.
6. Thus, again, he contrasts what he desired to be and what he was because of sin.
 1. A sinner under the law (without the benefits of Christ's death) is utterly hopeless, and this is precisely Paul's point.
 2. He was showing the Jews (or anyone else concerned) their miserable state without the gospel and how utterly impossible it was to be saved by the law.

7:24 O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

1. Under the dominion of sin he was helpless in his desire to free himself from the end result of death.
2. Who shall deliver me from this hopeless, miserable, and hopeless condition?
 1. Again, this whole text cannot be referring to the inward turmoil of a Christian.
 2. The Christian is freed from all sin by the blood of Christ, and should never be in such a hopeless state of despair.

7:25 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.

1. Thus, he answers his own question.
 1. Deliverance from his wretched condemned state comes through Jesus Christ, the Redeemer. Matt. 11:28-30
2. "So then" - This refers to the foregoing.
3. "With the mind I myself serve" - Referring back to his condition under the law, with the mind he served the law of God. In his mind, he wanted to do what the law required.
4. "But with the flesh the law of sin" - Example, under the law. Vs. 5
 1. Under the law, "when we were in the flesh," (Vs 5), we were slaves to the law of sin.
 2. Under the law, they were unwilling servants of sin, because sin controlled and condemned them.
5. He shows in 8:1-2 that in Christ he has been freed from the law of sin and death.
 1. Thus, the flesh loses the battle under Christ.
6. Thus, this whole section refers to his condition under the law.

8:1 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.

Chapter 7 involved the inward conflict he had when he lived under the law. He now shows that he was freed from that conflict.

1. "Now" - As distinguished from the time when he projected himself back under the law.
2. "No condemnation" - Freed from sin's guilt and enslaving power, the law of sin and death no longer has control. See 7:23.
3. Whether he may or may not again come into condemnation is not a matter of consideration here.
4. In verses 1-17, Paul divides people into two categories - those who let themselves be controlled by their fleshly desires, and those who follow after the Holy Spirit.
 1. He gives strong exhortation to cause us to choose the right path.

8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

1. "Law of the Spirit of life" - The law revealed by the Spirit which is capable of producing life.
 1. It is Christ's law as to the source, and the Spirit's as to the agent of making it known,
 2. It is the "law of life" because it is the principle or rule by which spiritual life is obtained.
2. "Made me free" - This shows, again, that he was not in chapter 7 talking about his conflict as a Christian because he would not say in one breath, "I am carnal, sold under sin...sin dwells in me...bringing me into captivity to the law of sin" (7:14,20,23, etc.), and in the same breath say, "I am free."
 1. His conflict was a thing of the past, not of the present.
3. "The law of sin and death" - The law of sin resulting in death which was in the members.
 1. From verse 3, the law could not do it. In other words, it could not deliver him from the conflict, but the other could.
 2. If the law of sin and death refers to the law of Moses, Paul would be saying that the law of Moses could not deliver us from the law of Moses.

8:3 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,

1. "The law could not do" - The law of Moses could not make one free from the law of sin and death. Any law by itself cannot provide redemption.
2. "It was weak through the flesh" - It was without strength because it was of carnal and fleshly things. Heb. 7:18-19; 8:6-8
3. "In the likeness of sinful flesh" - His Son was in the same flesh through which men sin.
 1. He was in the same kind of flesh as belonging to the rest of sinful mankind.
4. "And account of sin" - "Or, by a sacrifice for sin" (Footnote, KJV); "As an offering for sin" (Footnote, ASV).
5. "Condemned sin" - The fact that He was given for it was a condemnation of it.
 1. His death showed how wrong, terrible, and extremely evil sin is and thus condemns it.

8:4 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.

1. Christ was given as a sacrifice that the righteousness which the O.T. sought after might be accomplished in us.
 1. It fulfills in us exactly what the law was unable to accomplish.
2. "Who do not walk according to the flesh" - Who do not live a worldly life, devoted to the flesh.
 1. Their actions are not governed by fleshly dictates and appetites.
 2. Paul explains this more fully in the following verses.
3. "But according to the Spirit" - Their actions are governed by the teachings of the Holy Spirit.
4. **Application:** The flesh and Spirit both direct and cause behavior. Everyone is following one or the other. Only those who are directed and controlled by the Spirit have deliverance. Those who mind and walk after the flesh are under condemnation.

8:5 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.

1. Those who live according to the flesh have the wrong "mind set."
 1. The carnally minded have material, fleshly interest. Phil. 3:19; 1 Cor. 3:3
2. "The things of the Spirit" - Those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on those holy and right things revealed by the Spirit. They are spiritually minded.

8:6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

1. "Carnally minded is death" - To be fleshly minded, having one's mind ruled and controlled by the earthly, material things, results in death.
2. "Spiritually minded is life and peace" - Having one's mind ruled and controlled by the Spirit results in life and peace.
 1. Its end result is spiritual life (freedom from sin's penalty) and peace (tranquility of heart and mind) which comes to those who are in right relationship (justified) with God.

8:7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

1. "Carnal mind is enmity against God" - Is hostile toward God, shows hatred of God.
 1. The fleshly and spiritual mind are hostile to one another. Gal. 5:17
2. "Not subject to the law of God" - The carnal mind is not obedient to the will of God because it is

governed by the dictates of the flesh.

3. "Nor indeed can be" - That is, the carnal minded cannot be subject to the law of God while attending to the flesh.
 1. It cannot submit to or obey God and remain carnal. Once it chooses to obey God, it ceases to be fleshly and becomes spiritual.
4. **Application:** We must daily center our minds on spiritual things. Col. 3:1-2; 1 Pet. 1:13 The very best way to be spiritually minded (minding things of the Spirit) is by having our minds renewed by the Word of God. Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 4:16 We must pray that the Lord will give us our daily food (Luke 11:3) as well as our spiritual food (Matt. 4:4). The spiritual nourishment is far more important. John 6:27

8:8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

1. Their every interest and desire is against the will of God; thus, they are under the control of the flesh and not the Spirit.

8:9 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.

1. "Not in the flesh" - Not under the control of the flesh, but under the control of the Spirit.
2. "Spirit of God" - He either refers to the Spirit which inhabits the Father or the one sent by Him, the Holy Spirit. No one knows which.
3. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is a fact plainly taught in the New Testament. Acts 2:38; 5:32; Gal. 4:6; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor. 1:21-22; 5:5; Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30, etc.
 1. Thus, there is no difference among Christians as to the fact of the indwelling.
 2. There is, however, two different views regarding how the Spirit indwells.
 1. Does the Spirit dwell personally and literally inside of the body of the Christian?
 2. Or, does the Spirit dwell through means of His influence, word, blessings, appointments, etc.
 3. I believe the latter is correct. In other words, the Spirit does not personally or literally, but representatively or figuratively, dwell in the Christian.
 4. Those passages which are used to sustain the literal indwelling, in my judgment, state the fact, not the method, of the indwelling.
4. "Spirit of Christ" - Thus, this identifies in this verse, as well as the first part of the next verse, Christ's Spirit.
 1. Christ dwells in the Christian just as the Spirit does. His word, influence, blessings, and appointments are within the Christian.
5. "He is not His" - He is not a Christian.
 1. Without Christ's Spirit within one, he does not belong to, and is not in union with Christ.

8:10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

1. "The body is dead because of sin" - Because of sin the body is doomed to natural death and, hence, is accounted as already dead.
2. "But the Spirit is life because of righteousness"
 1. The life-imparting Spirit is dwelling within you because of justification.
 2. The Holy Spirit gives life through the gospel system (justification) to those who are indwelt by Christ.
3. The verse is showing that if Christ is in us, though our bodies must die because of sin, the life-imparting Spirit is dwelling in us because of our justification.
4. Using the Spirit (Holy Spirit, "S" in upper case) throughout this text is more consistent.

8:11 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.

1. "If" - Again, the rewards are conditioned on Deity indwelling.
2. "The Spirit of Him...through His Spirit" - There is no reason to change to the Holy Spirit in this verse.
 1. The Scriptures teach that the Spirit of the Father (as well as the Holy Spirit) dwells in us. 2 Cor. 6:16; 1 John 4:4,13,16; Eph. 4:6; Phil. 2:13
3. "Will also give life to your mortal bodies" - John 5:28-29; 1 Cor. 15:52-53
 1. We have faith that as God raised up Jesus, we will be as well. 1 Cor. 6:14; 2 Cor. 4:14

8:12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors; not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.

He now gives an exhortation drawn from what has been previously said.

1. "We are debtors, not to the flesh" - We do not owe the flesh anything.
2. "To live according to the flesh" - To live after the flesh is enmity against God and will end in everlasting death.
 1. We owe absolutely no allegiance to the fleshly rule.
3. We are debtors to the Spirit, to live after the Spirit.

8:13 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.

1. "Will die" - If you live according to the flesh, you must pay the consequence of eternal death.
2. "By the Spirit" - Through the instruction, enlightenment, and direction of the Spirit's revelation.
3. "You will live" - You will have eternal life.
 1. When you put to death the deeds of the body (those sinful things done in the body), you will receive eternal life.
4. **Application:** We must, through the instruction, enlightenment, and direction of the Spirit's revelation, put to death the deeds of the body (those sinful things done in the body), so that we can be blessed with eternal life. We must bring an end to those sinful deeds of the body. By all means, we must break all sinful habits, for the end of that way of life is eternal death.

8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

1. We are led by the Spirit through the Word of the Spirit.
 1. This simply states a fact (as with the indwelling) but the fact does not imply the method.
 2. Our denominational friends often jump to the conclusion that because the fact is stated, it means a direct leading, that the Spirit is affecting or nudging their minds in some way.
 3. However, the method, whether direct or indirect, must be learned from other passages.
 1. Everything that is attributed to the Spirit leading is also attributed to the Word. We conclude, therefore, that the Word is the agent through which the Spirit leads.

How The Holy Spirit Leads

THE SPIRIT

John 3:5,8
John 6:63
Titus 3:5
John 16:8

ACTION

Begets
Gives Life
Saves
Convicts

THE WORD

1 Pet. 1:23-25
Psalm 119:93
James 1:21
Titus 1:9

Rom. 8:16	Testifies	John 5:39
Rom. 15:13	Gives Power	Heb. 4:12
2 Thess. 2:13	Sanctifies	John 17:17
1 Cor. 6:11	Washes	Eph. 5:26
Acts 9:31	Comforts	Rom. 15:4

1. "These are sons of God" - The true sons of God are the ones lead by the Word of the Spirit.

8:15 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."

1. "Spirit of bondage again to fear" - You have not received the spirit of slavery to once more fill you with fear.
2. "Spirit of adoption" - We have not received the disposition of slaves serving out of fear, but that of adopted sons.
 1. It is called the "Spirit" of adoption because the Holy Spirit revealed the process, the means by which we become sons of God.
3. "By whom we cry out, "Abba, Father" - "Abba" is an Aramaic word which means "father" but expresses the love and trust a child has toward his father.
 1. The Greek word "father" expresses an intelligent understanding of the relationship.
 2. The two together express the love and intelligent confidence of the child.
 3. **Application:** We as adopted children cry out intimately and intelligently to our heavenly Father.

8:16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

1. Two witnesses are here involved, both bearing witness to the same fact: "we are children of God."
2. The Holy Spirit has given His testimony and our spirits testify that we have done those things. Thus, the two witnesses agree or bear witness together. 1 John 2:5; 5:13;
 1. One can know that he is a child of God when he has the testimony of both spirits - the Holy Spirit revealing what he must do, and his own spirit revealing that he has done it.
3. **Application:** The Holy Spirit has revealed the plan of salvation, and when our spirits testify that we have obeyed the plan, both spirits are testifying that we are children of God. Also, when the Spirit reveals the kind of character which constitutes a child of God, and our spirits reveal that we have that kind of character, both bear witness that we are children of God.

8:17 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.

1. "Then heirs" - Since we are sons, we are privileged to share in the favors and will be partakers of the inheritance.

2. "Joint heirs with Christ" - We are His brethren (Heb. 2:11) and shall inherit with Him (Rev. 3:21).
3. "If indeed we suffer with Him" - Thus, again, our glorification is conditional.
4. "That we may also be glorified together" - We must suffer with Him in this life so that we can glorified with Him in eternity.
 1. **Application:** When our faithfulness to Him leads to suffering, let us rejoice and patiently endure because, some day, we will be glorified together with Him. Acts 5:40-42; 1 Pet. 4:11-16; 2 Tim. 2:11-12; Matt. 5:10-12.

8:18 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.

The remainder of chapter 8 may be viewed as six reasons why Christians should endure suffering: (1) Because of the glorious reward, vs. 18. (2) The body will be redeemed, vs. 19-23. (3) We are saved by hope, vs. 24-25. (4) The Spirit helps in our weaknesses, vs. 26-27. (5) All things work together from good, vs 28-30. (6) God is for us, vs. 31-39. The book of Romans is much more than a explanation of God's redeeming grace. It is a letter of comfort, encouragement, and exhortation addressed to you and me.

1. "Are not worthy to be compared" - The duration and severity of the suffering when compared to the reward will be as nothing. 2 Cor. 4:17
2. "Revealed in us" - It will fill and overwhelm us. We will be part of that glory.

8:19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.

The second reason for enduring suffering is because Christians eagerly await the redemption of the body. This section is one of the most difficult in the book of Romans. There are many different interpretations on the meaning of "creature," "the whole creation," and "we ourselves." Paul is dealing with the present suffering and future glory. Suffering is temporary, but man is eternal. The suffering Christian will some day be delivered from this present state and transformed into a glorious state.

1. "Earnest expectation" - Eagerly watching with suspense.
2. "The creation" - We list four possibilities: (1) "The creation" - All created things including inanimate objects. (2) "The creation" - Intelligent beings; humanity. The same as "whole creation" in verse 22. (3) "The new creation" - The spiritual creation of God; the Christian. (4) "The creature" - The physical makeup of man; the body.
 1. As we will show, the second one seems to be the correct meaning in this text.
3. "Revealing of the sons of God" - "Waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed." (NIV)
 1. The emphasis is on man's hope of immortality.
 2. James MacKnight on this verse said: "...The earnest desire of mankind hath ever been to obtain that glorious endless life in the body, by which the sons of God shall be made known."

8:20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope;

1. "For the creation" - Humanity; rational beings.
2. "Subjected to futility" - "Subject to vanity" (KJV) Subject or liable to suffering (sickness, pain, sorrow, and death).
3. "Not willingly" - Not by their own choice or will.
4. "Because of Him" - God.
 1. In the beginning when man sinned, God pronounced curses upon him and thus brought him under futility.
5. "Subjected it in hope" - In hope of the ultimate deliverance from corruption.
 1. Even when God pronounced the curses upon man in the beginning, He gave him hope of

deliverance.

2. Man was thus subjected in hope.

8:21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

1. "The creation itself" - Several translations, including the ASV, NASV and the NIV connect the "in hope" of verse 20 with verse 21 giving them the following rendering: "For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God." (NASV)
2. "Bondage of corruption" - That which the body is in (mortality).
3. "Glorious liberty of the children of God" - Eternal life, characterized by glory, honor, and immortality.
 1. From the very beginning, sinful man was given hope that God would provide deliverance from the bondage of corruption (mortality) to a glorious liberty (immortality).

8:22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.

1. "The whole creation" - All human beings in general, the human family.
2. "Groans and labors with birth pangs together until now" - This can be attributed only to rational creatures. Inanimate objects do not groan and labor as a woman giving birth to a child.
3. The whole human family has suffered together from the results of the fall (sickness, pain, sorrow, and death), even up to this present moment of time.

8:23 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.

1. "Not only that" - "Not only they" (KJV); all of mankind.
2. "But we also" - Christians as well.
3. "Who have the firstfruits of the Spirit" - The first fruit was the first of the harvest. It promised more to come.
 1. So it is with Christians. They have received the first fruit of the Spirit with the promise of greater blessings yet to come. 2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Eph. 1:13-14
4. "Even we ourselves groan within ourselves" - Christians are not exempt from the groanings and travail that characterizes the whole human family.
 1. We cannot escape the consequences of the fall; but, as shown by the next verses, we have hope which causes us to patiently wait for our redemption.
5. "Eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body" - Thus, he defines the "adoption" here. It is the resurrection of our bodies from the grave. John 5:28-29; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Thess. 4:16-18
 1. **Application:** In view of the resurrection and the full rewards of the sons of God, "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Let us continue to be faithful to God regardless of whatever hardships, adversities, troubles, difficulties, or persecutions we might face.

8:24 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?

Paul gives the third reason why Christians should endure suffering: "hope."

1. "Saved in this hope" - We are saved by it because it influences us to obtain the glory.
 1. We desire and anticipate the rewards of the future (this is what hope is), and are thus sustained in trials, sufferings, and hardships.

2. When the object of hope is seen, hope ceases, and realization takes place.
 1. "Who hopes for what he already has?" (NIV)

8:25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.

1. "Eagerly wait" - Thus, we wish for that day to hasten its coming. 2 Pet. 3:12
 1. We not only want it to come, but we want it to come quickly. Rev. 22:20
2. "With perseverance" - In view of the coming reward, we continue to run the race with patience.
 1. Because of the coming glory, we patiently endure whatever suffering imposed upon us.

8:26 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.

Paul continues with the fourth encouragement to Christians to patiently endure suffering until the crown is won. The Holy Spirit helps us in our weaknesses.

1. "Likewise" - As our hope does. Thus, hope enables us to bear our ills.
2. "The Spirit also helps in our weaknesses" - The Holy Spirit likewise helps us in our infirmities and weaknesses.
3. We don't know how we should pray, but the Spirit does.
4. "With groanings which cannot be uttered" - The Holy Spirit intercedes in groanings which cannot be framed into human speech.
 1. We often lack the ability to use the correct words when we pray.
5. It is not that the Spirit is there working for us separate and apart from our wills, but the Spirit intercedes for us as we pray to the Father.
6. **Application:** In this verse we see: (1) The fact stated: "The Spirit also helps in our weaknesses." (2) The weakness revealed: "We do not know how to pray as we should" (NASV). (3) The help given: "The Spirit Himself makes intercession for us." (4) The means used: "With groanings too deep for words." (NASV) Let us take advantage of this blessing.

8:27 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.

1. The verse shows how the Spirit is able to make intercession for us. The Spirit appears before God in our behalf.
2. God the Father knows what is in the Holy Spirit's mind.
 1. This shows, as well as many other passages in the Bible, that the Spirit is a person.
3. The Greek word for "intercession" (the same as in verses 26 and 34) means "to go into the presence of another for the purpose of supplication."
 1. Thus, the Spirit is able to make intercession for us. He goes into the presence of the Father, and the Father knows what is in the Spirit's mind.
4. "Because...according to the will of God" - The Spirit makes intercession in accord with what God desires for His saints.

8:28 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.

We now have the fifth reason for enduring suffering. God is in control and will work all things, even pain and suffering, to the good of those who love Him.

1. "We know" - We know from God's promises in His Word, and from our own experience and observation.

2. "All things work together for good" - All things have some advantage to the saint.
 1. All things have some good in this life, but even more so in the final outcome.
 2. God does it through His providence, often in ways known only to Him.
3. "To those who love God" - God blesses, in a special way, those who love Him.
4. "Called according to His purpose" - His children. "Those who have been called" (NIV).
 1. This shows that God has a definite plan in calling. 2 Thess. 2:14; 2 Tim. 1:9
5. The word "purpose" is a key word in understanding the verses which follow.

8:29 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.

1. God foresaw that certain persons would, when the opportunity was presented, become His children.
 1. He foresaw that some, by their own choice, would obey.
2. "He also predestinated" - He predestinated that a certain group or class would be saved.
 1. He predestinated that these must be conformed to the image of His Son. Col. 3:10; 2 Cor. 3:18
 2. This is similar to Eph. 1:3-5. He predestinated this group to be the adopted.
3. "That He might be the firstborn" - The Son has first honor and distinction in all things pertaining to God.

8:30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

1. Paul is viewing the whole process of redemption.
 1. God has often spoken of things that were not, as thought they were.
 2. The called, justified, and glorified are all thus viewed in His purpose.
2. "He also glorified" - Paul is revealing it as an accomplished fact.
 1. What took place in purpose back in eternity, is viewed as having taken place.
 2. The final glorification for the righteous comes after the judgment. Matt. 25:31-34
3. Thus, Paul views the whole process of redemption from beginning to end. God foreknew His children (foreknew that some would become His), and predestined them to be conformed to the image of His Son. Those whom He predestined, He also called (called them by means of the gospel), and those whom he called, He also justified (set them free from sin by means of the death of Christ), and those He justified, He also glorified (gave them eternal life).
 1. Their present state of glory prepares them for the ultimate glory which is yet to be revealed.

8:31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

Verses 31-39 can be viewed as the sixth encouragement to endure suffering.

1. What shall we say in regard to these blessings to Christians?
2. "Who can be against us?" - Who can be against us to defeat our glorification?
 1. If God is for us, it matters little what men might try to do to us. Luke 12:3-4; Heb. 13:5-6
 2. If God justifies us, who or what can condemn us? If He unites us with Himself, who or what can separate us? If we are more than conquerors in Him, who can defeat us?
 3. The grand climax (vs. 38-39) is that nothing (no outside force) can separate us from the love of Christ.
 4. **Application:** We are safe from the storms and trials of life, not in the sense that we can escape them, but we have power on our side to overcome them.

8:32 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?

1. A logical argument from the greater to prove the lessor.

1. Certainly, if God has given us that great, most precious gift, He will not hold back any of the lesser things we might need.
2. "All things" - For example, He will freely give us all the things He intends for His children.
3. **Application:** The saddest part of being lost is the fact that one is lost for sins for which the penalty has already been paid.

8:33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

1. How could anyone lay a charge against, or condemn, God's elect?
2. "God's elect" - The **source** of the election is through God alone, the **means** of the election is through the gospel, and the **receiving** of the election (the obtaining of it) is through our obedience to the gospel.
3. "It is God who justifies." Thus, who has the right to say they are not justified?
 1. God has justified them, Jesus died for them, and the Holy Spirit intercedes for them; thus, what right does anyone have to speak against them?

8:34 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.

1. "Who is he who condemns?" - Again, when God justifies one, no one has a right to condemn him.
 1. If he does so, is he not opposing and fighting against God?
2. The elect have Him who died, was raised, and now reigns to intercede for them.
 1. In other words, who would dare to speak against those who have this Wonderful, Mighty One on their side?
3. The verses refer to the blessings and security of the obedient believer.
 1. They do not address whether or not the believer can, through his own choice, lose the blessings and security.
4. **Application:** Four things are said about Christ which one would need to remove or deny in order to charge or condemn the ones God has justified.
 1. He died - to pay man's sin debt. 1 Pet. 2:24; 1 John 2:2
 2. He rose from the dead - for our justification. Rom. 4:25; 1 Pet. 3:21
 3. He is now at the right hand of God - ruling on His throne. Heb. 10:11-14; 1 Pet. 3:22
 4. He makes intercession for us - He pleads our case before the Father (the same word used of the Spirit in verses 26 and 27). Heb. 4:14-16; 9:24
 5. Thus, no mortal man has a right to condemn us. Let us rejoice in the Lord.

8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

The purpose of this paragraph (vs. 35-39) is to show that no existing power in heaven or on earth can change or modify the love Christ (as well as the Father, vs. 39) has for us. This section refers to Christ's love toward us, not our love toward Him. The hard things which we suffer will not cause Him to stop loving us, but our love toward Him may stop as result of them. Matt. 24:11-12

1. "Tribulation" - Outward affliction.
2. "Distress" - Inward affliction.
3. "Persecution" - Lit. "to drive out, drive away, and then to pursue after."
4. "Famine" - Hunger.
5. "Nakedness" - In need of clothes.
6. "Peril" - Afflictions of any kind.
7. "Sword" - Danger of bodily harm, death.

When in terrible suffering, we should not think that Christ has forsaken us.

8:36 As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

1. He quotes Psalm 44:22 to show that there is nothing peculiar in God's people suffering.
 1. Psalm 44 is a long Psalm dealing with the sufferings Israel had faced.

8:37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

1. "More than conquerors" - We can abundantly and overwhelmingly conquer every obstacle.
2. "Him who loved us" - We conquer only because Christ loves us first.
 1. Through Christ who loves us, we can overcome all the trials and hardships of life.
 2. Paul himself is an example of such conquering. 2 Tim. 4:6-8
 3. **Application:** Rely on the Lord! Phil. 4:13

8:38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come,

1. "For I am persuaded" - He was totally convinced both by experience (2 Tim. 4:17) and revelation (2 Cor. 12:7-10) that nothing in heaven or on earth could separate us from divine love.
2. "Neither death nor life" - The two fundamental facts of our being.
3. "Angels" - Ex. if they attempted to do so.
4. "Principalities" - This word means, "beginning, government, rule."
 1. Here it refers to the wicked angels as in Eph. 6:12.
 2. It is also used of the holy angels. Eph. 3:10
5. "Powers" - Authorities of all kinds, heavenly or earthly.
6. "Nor things present, nor things to come" - Neither present difficulties nor future happenings.

8:39 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.

1. "Nor height nor depth" - Neither can anything within the dimensions of time or space.
2. "Nor any other created thing" - Any other created things which is not here mentioned; no person or thing whatsoever.
3. "Shall be able to separate us..." - Thus, the absolute security of the believer so far as God is concerned.
 1. No outside forces can separate us from the love of God; however, we ourselves can depart from His love. Thus, we must keep ourselves in His love. Jude 20-21
 2. This statement principle also refutes the doctrine of an infallible church. Christ will never depart from His church; however, His church can depart from Him.

Chapters 9-11 present the "Vindication of God's choices." Paul defends and maintains God's right to choose. It was offensive to the Jews that God had rejected fleshly Israel and accepted the Gentiles and, thus, Paul reveals the basics of God's rejection and acceptance.

Brief Outlines of Chapters 9-11 - Vindication of God's choices:

1. Paul's deep sympathy for the Jews, 9:1-5.
2. God's faithfulness vindicated although the Jews have been cut off, 9:6-29.
3. Israel's responsibility (Contrast between legal righteousness and that which is of faith) 10:1-17.
4. Israel's rejection is confirmed by the Scriptures, 10:18-21.
5. Israel is not wholly cast off, 11:1-10.
6. Principles that regulate the election of grace, 11:11-32.

7. Paul's praise, 11:33-36.

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

1. "I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying" - Paul gives a solemn affirmation that what he is about to say is the truth.
2. "In Christ" - As one in right relationship with Him.
3. "Conscience" - The judgment of the mind which instantly approves or condemns one's actions in accord with what he has been taught. 1 Tim. 1:5, 19; 3:9
 1. He has always been taught to tell the truth; thus, his conscience is a true witness to the truthfulness of that which follows.
4. "In the Holy Spirit" - In fellowship with, under the influence of, and in the presence of the Holy Spirit.
5. Thus, Paul did not want to leave any doubt in the mind of the Jew regarding his love for his people.

9:2 that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart.

1. This is the truth to which he referred in verse one.
2. The reason he had great anguish in his heart for his brethren (fellow Jews) is because they were lost.

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

1. This verses emphasize his great desire for Israel to be saved. Rom. 10:1-2
2. "I could wish myself were accursed from Christ" - This is given as proof of his deep interest for his fellow Jews.
 1. Not that he actually does so wish, but he could do so if such were allowed by God.
 2. Moses had the same desire, but God quickly replied by showing that it was impossible. Ex. 32:31-33
3. The verse shows that his kinsmen were separated from Christ and, hence, from God.
 1. Also, Paul shows his unselfish love for them. He was willing to be accursed from Christ (eternally lost) if it would save the Jews.

9:4 who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises;

Paul now lists nine great blessings the Jews had received.

1. "Israelites" - The angel changed the name when Jacob wrestled with him. Being an Israelite was a great heritage and honor to the Israelites.
2. "Adoption" - Sonship. It was national, in the flesh, and not in the Spirit.
3. "Glory" - Ex. tabernacle, Ex. 40:34; temple, 2 Chron. 7:1.
4. "Covenants" - Covenants of promise (Eph. 2:12), entered into with Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3; 13:14-18; 15:4-14), Isaac (Gen. 26:2-5, 23-25), Jacob (Gen. 35:9-12), and Israel (Ex. 12:18-26).
5. "Giving of the law" - The law of Moses was the best that mankind had up to that point. It contains the only reliable source of the origin of all things.
6. "Service of God" - All divine services, temple or otherwise, rendered to God. Israel's worship was the true worship for man up to its replacement. John 4:22-24
7. "Promises" - Ex. those made to Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3), Isaac (Gen. 26:5), Jacob (Gen. 35:11-12), David (2 Sam. 7:12-13), etc., which found their fulfillment in Christ (Gal. 3:16; 4:4-6).

9:5 of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen.

1. "Fathers" - Most of the Bible fathers were Israelites.
2. "From whom...Christ came" - Christ, too, was a Jew or Israelite.
3. "The eternal blessed God" - This refers to Christ as God.
 1. Some inferior translations make the phrase refer to the Father, e.g., "Let God be blessed forever." (RSV, NAB, and, of course, the NWT of the Jehovah's Witnesses).
 2. However, there is no justification for such rendering.
 3. It is only natural that Paul would say something about the Lord's Deity here.
 4. God the father is not under consideration in the verse.

9:6 But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel,

1. When Paul spoke of his grief for Israel, he didn't mean to imply that the word of God had failed.
2. "Not all Israel who are of Israel" - Not all Israel are the true Israel.
 1. The true Israel had accepted Christ.

9:7 nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called."

1. "Nor are they all children because..." - One is not proven to be an heir of promise simply because he is a descendant of Abraham.
 1. Abraham had other children besides Isaac.
2. Salvation is by God's choice as illustrated by His selection of Isaac.
 1. Abraham was the father of several children (Gen. 16:4,11; 25:1-2), but the promise was through Isaac alone.
 2. The point is that God's promise had not failed because some descendants of Abraham have been rejected.
 3. If the Jews could understand this, they could also see how God may now accept those who believe in Christ, and reject those who do not believe.

9:8 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.

1. Abraham's children are thus divided into two groups. Gal. 4:21-31
 1. The children of the flesh - Those born to Abraham naturally.
 2. The children of the promise - Those who were born by God's plans, promise, and intervention.
2. To prove that one is the seed of Abraham (physically) proves nothing concerning salvation.
 1. Sonship belongs to those who are the seed according to promise.
 2. Christians are true children of promise:
 1. The Israel of God - Gal. 6:16
 2. Abraham's Seed - Gal. 3:29
 3. The Circumcision - Phil. 3:3
 4. A Jew Inwardly - Rom. 2:28-29
 5. The Chosen - 1 Pet. 2:9
 6. Children of Abraham - Gal. 3:7
 3. **Application:** Fleshly descent means nothing, no matter what heritage we might have. Let us seek to be numbered with the true children of promise.

9:9 For this is the word of promise: "At this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son."

1. This shows how Isaac was a child of promise.
 1. The point is that God chose to limit His promise to Isaac.

2. Who could then object if God now chooses to limit His salvation to those who believe in Christ?
 1. Being Abraham's child was not sufficient. Abraham had other children. If the Jews could see this point, they could also understand how Christians are children of promise.

9:10 And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one man, even by our father Isaac

1. The Jews might say that Isaac was the only son of Abraham's real wife; however, it was different with God's selection of Jacob over Esau.
 1. Jacob and Esau had the same father and mother.

9:11 (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),

1. "For the children not yet being born" - God's choice of Jacob regarding the seed line, and His rejection of Esau, the firstborn, was made before the children were born.
 1. Of the two, God selected Jacob before they were born.
2. "Nor having done any good or evil" - The selection was therefore not made on the basis of their character or self worth.
3. "That the purpose of God according to election might stand" - Ex. "that the purpose of God in regard to election might stand" or "that God's purpose as to choosing might stand."
 1. That is, He has absolute right of choice not conditioned by human influence.
 2. The principle of election is the point here. The choice had nothing to do with their personal salvation.
4. "Not of works, but of Him who calls" - Not on the basis of works which men might devise.
 1. Meritorious works was neither the basis nor the cause of God's choice.
 2. The choice (concerning the origin of salvation) is therefore from God alone.
 3. The source and means of salvation (not the salvation or damnation of specific individuals), is determined by God alone.

9:12 it was said to her, "The older shall serve the younger."

1. This was said to Rebecca when she was pregnant. Gen. 25:23
 1. The two sons would become the fathers of two nations (Edom and Israel) and God was simply foretelling their place in His promise of the Messiah.
 2. The firstborn was the natural heir, yet God chose the younger.
 1. The promise was to be given and maintained through the younger, not the older.
 2. Edom, Esau's descendants, served Israel in the time of David. 2 Sam. 8:14

9:13 As it is written, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated."

1. From Mal. 1:2-3. This was said of the two nations long after the two boys were dead.
 1. "Love...hated" - To love or favor one more than the other. Luke 14:26-27; Matt. 10:37-38
 2. Jacob was favored when God selected him for the seed line.
2. Thus, the election concerns itself with the nations that came from the two sons and the part they were to play in the fulfillment of the promises.
 1. Paul is continuing to demonstrate by the selection of Jacob over Esau the principle of God's right to choose.
 2. It was not on the basis of man's work or merit that God decided to provide His grace.

Vindication (to defend or maintain a right) of God's choices.

1. Paul's deep sympathy for the Jews, 9:1-5.

2. God's righteousness vindicated although the Jews as a chosen nation had been cut off, 9:6-33.
 1. In this section Paul is showing God's right to choose believers in Christ and to reject fleshly Israel.
 2. This is shown by many illustrations: Isaac, Jacob, Pharaoh, the potter, by Hosea the prophet, and by Isaiah the prophet.

9:14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not!

1. It was no unjust selection that God had made.
2. If God selected Isaac and Jacob because they were the best instruments to work out His plans, it would not be out of harmony for God to reject the Jews because of unbelief and accept the Gentiles for their belief.

9:15 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."

1. A quote from Ex. 33:19. Notice that the pronoun "I" is emphasized.
2. God alone has the right to choose regarding the ones on whom He will have mercy.
 1. No one can keep God from showing mercy to whom He wills.
3. The Jews said that God's mercy should be to the Jews only; however, God thought differently. Luke 1:50; Acts 10:34-35

9:16 So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.

1. This refers to the **origin** of mercy.
2. "Not of him who wills" - Mercy was not bestowed because man originally wished or desired it.
 1. God is the original fountain of it.
3. "Nor of him who runs" - It did not result from any strenuous or intense effort on the part of man, but from God's own decision to bestow it.

9:17 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."

1. "The Scripture says" - In Ex. 9:16, it is God speaking; thus, "the Scriptures says" is the same as "God says."
2. "For this very purpose...that I may show My power in you" - Each time Pharaoh refused to let Israel go, the power of God was more clearly demonstrated in another plague.
3. All peoples began to hear of Jehovah God and the mighty power He demonstrated in delivering Israel.
4. The time had come for God to show mercy on Israel and Pharaoh could not stop Him.

9:18 Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens.

1. God hardened Pharaoh's heart by demanding something he didn't want to do.
 1. God didn't directly harden his heart separate from his will, but took advantage of his evil disposition to carry out His plans.
2. God shows favor to whom He wills, just as He favored Isaac, Jacob, and Moses.
 1. He rejects those whom He wills just as He did Ishmael, Esau, and Pharaoh.
 2. The means by which He shows mercy or rejects must be learned in other passages.
3. **Application:** An old proverb says, "The same sun that hardens the clay melts the wax." Through means of the gospel, God hardens the hearts of some and melts the hearts of others. Those who accept the offer and obey its requirements are saved, selected, favored. Those who reject it are lost, hardened, rejected. Let us strive to be of the favored.

prepared beforehand for glory,

1. He will demonstrate His wrath and make His power known upon sinners as in verse 22, but He will give the riches of His glory to those on whom He has had mercy (the obedient) vs. 23.
2. "Which He prepared beforehand for glory" - Thus, again, God so planned or purposed glory for a certain group or class before He made the world.

9:24 even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

1. "Even us" - Christians, the objects of God's mercy and vessels of honor.
2. "Whom He Called" - The call is to all (Rev. 22:17), and it is by the gospel (2 Thess. 2:14).
 1. Thus, all people have the opportunity to be vessels of mercy.
3. The verses are showing the Jews that God has a right to save Christians and destroy unbelievers.
4. **Application:** God makes the choice as to whom He will save. It is not by an arbitrary selection or rejection of each individual, but by giving the plan and letting each individual choose for himself as to whether he will accept and follow it. Those who accept (obey) His plan, He chooses to save. Those who reject His plan are thereby rejected. Let us be of those who choose to follow God's plan.

9:25 As He says also in Hosea: "I will call them My people, who were not My people, And her beloved, who was not beloved."

1. "As He says also in Hosea" - Thus, Paul is showing the Jews by their own prophets that the Gentiles would be called the people of God.
2. He quotes Hosea 2:23, though not quite to the letter, a passage relating directly, not to the Gentiles, but to the kingdom of the ten tribes.
 1. However, since they had sunk to the level of the Gentiles, who were "not God's people," and in that sense "not beloved," the apostle legitimately applies it to the Gentiles.
 2. His point is that the prophet prophesied that those who were not God's people would some day be His people.

9:26 "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."

1. He now quotes Hosea 1:10 which teaches the same as the preceding verse.
2. "In the place...There" - This expression seems to be designed to give greater emphasis to the gracious change, from divine exclusion to divine admission to the privileges of the people of God.
 1. Again, the point is that there would be a place (as well as a time) where those who were not His people would be His people.

9:27 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."

1. In this section Paul is showing God's right to choose the believers and to reject fleshly Israel. This is shown by many illustrations: Isaac, Jacob, Pharaoh, the potter, by Hosea the prophet, and now by Isaiah the prophet.
2. Paul quotes from Isa. 10:22-23 and also from the latter part of Isa. 28:21-22.
3. This should remind the Jews that even in the O.T. age, not all of Israel were saved. They shouldn't, therefore, complain that the greater part of Israel was not being rejected under the gospel system.

9:28 For He will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness, Because the LORD will make a short work upon the earth."

1. "For He will finish the work" - "For the Lord will execute his word upon the earth, finishing it and cutting it short." (ASV) "For the Lord will carry out his sentence on earth with speed and finality." (NIV)
 1. The Lord had spoken and it would be done. He will execute His work speedily.
 2. He cut short (consumed) many of them because of their wickedness. 2 Kings 10:32

9:29 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."

1. "As Isaiah said before" - As Isaiah foretold.
2. A farmer saves "seed," a small portion of harvest to continue the next crop.
 1. Here it refers to the few righteous individuals by which God, through His mercy, allowed the nation of Israel to continue.
3. This is the same lesson as taught in verse 27. The Jews should not think it so strange that God was now saving only a few of fleshly Israel.
 1. There were only a few saved in Isaiah's time and without the mercy of God, all would have been destroyed.

9:30 What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith;

1. "What shall we say then?" - What shall we conclude from all this?
2. "Even the righteousness of faith" - The "righteousness of faith" is the righteousness revealed and obtained through the gospel. Rom. 1:16-17
 1. While the Gentiles did not seek righteousness according to the law, they became righteous by their obedience to the gospel. Rom. 6:17-18

9:31 but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.

1. They failed to keep the law; thus, instead of being righteous, were sinners.
2. They sought justification by the law, but because of their own weaknesses, it was impossible.
 1. To be righteous "by law," one must never violate law in any way. This, no one has ever done, except Christ.

9:32 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.

1. "Of the law" - This is not in some ancient manuscripts.
2. The Jews were trying to attain to righteousness by the works, and instead of having faith in Christ when He came, rejected Him.
 1. Christ, therefore, became a stumbling-block to them, just as the Scriptures had said He would. 1 Cor. 1:23; 1 Pet. 2:6-8
 2. Because of their undue and misguided reliance on works, they rejected Christ.

9:33 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."

1. From Isaiah 28:16 which refers to the Messiah.
2. "Not put to shame" - "Not be ashamed" (Rom. 9:33 KJV), "Not make haste" (Isa. 2:16 KJV), "Not be confounded" (1 Pet. 2:6 KJV).
 1. He will never have fear, shame, or disappointment for having believed or trusted in Him.

2. One who puts his trust in a man most certainly will be ashamed and disappointed.
3. **Application:** We can also have an undue and misguided reliance on works. We could remove our hearts from the Lord (Matt. 15:8) all the while going through the motions of worship. We could pursue our own interest (Ezek. 33:31; Matt. 6:33) all the while thinking we are doing well since we are still attending services.

A brief outline of chapters 9-11 - The vindication of God's choices.

1. God's right to choose as shown by many illustrations: Isaac, Jacob, Pharaoh, the potter, by Hosea the prophet (those not His people would be called His people), and by Isaiah the prophet (not all of the Israelites were saved even in the O.T. age), 9:1-10.
2. The next section shows why they were rejected, 9:11-21.
 1. They were seeking it by the works of the law and stumbled, 9:30-33.
 2. They were ignorant of God's righteousness, 10:1-4
 3. He shows what true righteousness is, 10:5-15.
 4. Israel had heard and should have known, 10:16-20.
 5. Their rejection was because of their own rebellion, 10:21.
3. God had not cast away His people, 11:1-31.
 1. Paul was an Israelite, 11:1.
 2. Elijah was wrong when he thought none were faithful in Israel, 11:2-5.
 3. They were temporarily hardened to open the way for the Gentiles, 11:6-16.
 4. God could now graft them in if they did not continue to abide in unbelief, 11:7-31.
4. All of this worked out in accordance with God's plan, so He might have mercy on all and all glory belongs to Him, 11:32-36.

10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.

1. The Jews regarded Paul as an apostate and hater of their nation, but Paul clearly demonstrates otherwise.
2. "Heart's desire" - His desire was deeply implanted and fervent.
3. Though God had now rejected fleshly Israel as a nation, there was still a way for Jews as individuals to be saved.

10:2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

1. Zeal or enthusiasm is good. With zeal there is hope. Our Lord had zeal. John 2:17
2. Zeal without knowledge is no good, neither is knowledge without zeal.
 1. People in various denominations generally have zeal without knowledge; brethren often have knowledge without zeal.
 2. Other examples of misguided zeal: Matt. 13:15; Acts 26:11; Phil. 3:6.

10:3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.

1. They were ignorant of God's plan to make men righteous, and went about establishing their own.
 1. They thought that by their works they could earn salvation and would be in position to make demands of God.
 2. The end result was that they had not submitted to the righteousness of God.
2. Today men have their own theories of justification; e.g., "faith alone," "Holy Spirit religion," "revelations of Joseph Smith."
 1. The end result is that they are not obedient to the righteousness of God.

10:4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

1. "The end" - Christ is the final purpose of the law.
 1. Christ is the end purpose toward which the Mosaic system pointed.
 2. He is the object toward which it looked, the end it had in view, and the purpose for which it was given. Gal. 3:24-25
 3. The very thing the Jews sought after is now possible in Christ.
2. Seeking righteousness is over when one believes (includes obedience) in Christ.
 1. When righteousness (justification) is obtained, one has reached the purpose toward which the law was designed.
 2. The law has thus served its purpose when one attained the righteousness of God by faith. Gal. 3:21-29

10:5 For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them."

1. The law required perfect obedience. Lev. 18:5; Gal. 3:10-12
 1. A person had to live by it, do exactly as it said, in order to obtain righteousness.
 2. Since all had sinned and violated the law, and since the law had no means of pardon, it was impossible to be made righteous by the law.
 3. The design of the law was to bring men to Christ where they could be justified by faith.
2. Paul gave a quote from the law to describe what the law required.
 1. He will do the same regarding the word of faith which they preached.

10:6 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)

1. The righteousness of faith is personified.
2. In Deut. 30:12-13, Moses told the children of Israel that God's commandments were not in heaven, neither beyond the sea, but were at their disposal so that they could do them.
3. As Paul draws from Moses' words, he adds his own information and shows that the same is true regarding the righteousness of faith.

10:7 or, " 'Who will descend into the abyss?' " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).

1. The Jews expected their Messiah to remain forever. John 12:34
 1. The gospel system of "the righteousness by faith" does not demand that Christ be brought down from heaven, nor does it, as if he were yet in the tomb, demand that he be brought up from the dead.

10:8 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):

1. If it says neither of those things, what does it say?
2. There is no need to ascend into heaven or descend into the deep to learn the word of faith.
 1. It is as close as belief in one's heart or words in one's mouth.
 2. His word has been implanted on our minds. Heb. 8:10

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.

1. These verses reveal the accessibility of the word and the simplicity of that required, in contrast with the obedience necessary under the law.
2. "With the mouth" - Thus, here the "confession" does not refer to confessing Him by the way we live. We must go to other passages for that.
3. "The Lord Jesus" - "Jesus as Lord" (ASV, NASV) "Jesus is Lord" (RSV, NIV, NCV)
 1. "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:18). "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:37)
 2. All of these mean the same; that is, we confess our allegiance to Him.
 1. He is Lord of our lives; He is the Son of God (Deity) and therefore has the authority to command.
4. Both "Lord" and "Christ" is founded on His resurrection and glorification. Acts 2:36; 1 Pet. 3:22; Phil. 2:9-11
 1. The resurrection of Christ is a fundamental of the Christian system.
 2. The gospel is preached, the testimony is believed, the mouth confesses one's belief, and the results (when all other conditions are met) is salvation.

10:10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

1. People in their hearts exercise faith which leads to right standing before God.
 1. The mouth confesses what the heart believes to obtain salvation from past sins.
2. One does not believe to obtain one blessing and confess to obtain another; thus, "righteousness" and "salvation" are equal.
 1. "Righteousness" (justification) is having the death of Christ credited as payment for one's sins; thus, his sin debt is paid and he stands just (righteous) before God.
 2. These are not the only things required, e.g., repentance is also required. Luke 13:3; 2 Cor. 7:10

10:11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

1. From Isa. 28:16, a Messianic prophecy.
 1. The one who believes on Him will never be ashamed, confounded, or filled with regret.
 2. "Belief on Christ" or "faith in Christ" in Scriptures is often used as a "Synecdoche" (a figure of speech where a part is used for the whole).
 3. Thus, to the inspired writers a believer was one who both believes and obeys Christ.
2. "Whosoever" - Refers to all. This is proof that anyone (whether Jew or Gentile) who believes will receive the blessings.

10:12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.

1. Verse 11b supplements verse 12b.
 1. One will not be ashamed because the Lord is rich to all who call upon Him.
2. Some think that the Jews are still the object of God's special delight and has a glorious future in store for them. However, they are mistaken.
3. This was hard for the Jews to see, but it was the teaching of their own prophets.

10:13 For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

1. Quoted from Joel 2:32.
 1. Again, this is important information to the Jew.
 2. God's offer of salvation is universal (to both Jew and Gentile).

2. "Calls on the name of the Lord" - This means more than mere lip service (Matt. 7:21), or to pray to Him for salvation (John 9:31; Prov. 28:9).
 1. It includes obedience. Acts 22:16
 2. When one obeys in baptism, he calls or makes an appeal to God for forgiveness (1 Pet. 3:21, NASV).

10:14 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?

1. His comment about calling on the name of the Lord brought up several rhetorical questions.
2. The answer to these first three questions is implied: "they cannot."
 1. These questions show that believing on Christ is not a direct gift from God.
 2. They could believe in Him without hearing or without a preacher if the Holy Spirit operated directly on their hearts, saved them by an "experience," etc.

10:15 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!"

1. These verses refer primarily to the sending of inspired teachers.
 1. They taught (were sent, commissioned to do so) the Word which brings faith; thus, acceptable faith comes as result of the Word which they brought.
 2. A person today could believe without a preacher simply by reading. John 20:30-31
 3. Nonetheless, we need to do all we can in sending preachers because many will fail to believe without them.
2. "Beautiful are the feet" - Their message is precious and wonderful to those who accept it.
 1. Preaching of the gospel is the grandest, highest, noblest, holiest, most needed, and vital work known to this sinful world. 1 Tim. 4:16
 2. However, very few people think so.
3. "Tidings of good things!" - To name only a few: the tidings of God's love, benefits of Christ's death, peace with God, forgiveness of sins, a better life, joy that is full, hope of eternal life.

10:16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?"

1. In spite of the "good things" announced, many have rejected them.
 1. The verse plainly shows that one must obey the commands of the gospel to receive its rewards.
 2. Obedience was the aim and design of the preaching.
2. "Lord, who has believed our report?" - Again, he quotes Isaiah to confirm his point.
 1. Many prophets had been sent, but in spite of it, many did not obey.
 2. Likewise, today, many preachers have been sent bearing the glad tidings, but the great majority are not interested.
3. Paul is saying that the Israelites have not obeyed the gospel because, as was the case with Isaiah's report, they had not believed it.
 1. Again, this shows that the inspired writers always wrote with the understanding that acceptable faith included obedience.
4. God had afforded them the opportunity, but they had refused it. Some believed, but the majority remained disobedient.

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

1. Faith comes by hearing, that is, by hearing the Word of God.
 1. Without the hearing of the message, there is no faith.
 2. Also, whatever is not found in the Word of God is not properly a matter of faith.

10:18 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."

1. He used the words in Psalm 19:4 to describe the spread of the gospel and thus shows they had heard it.
Col. 1:23
 1. The Jews had no one to blame but themselves.

10:19 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."

1. "Did Israel not know?" - Israel should have known by their many prophecies.
2. "By those who are not a nation...a foolish nation" - This refers to the Gentiles who were thus regarded in the Jew's estimation.
3. They could not say they did not know about the gospel system, for Moses had spoken of a time when God would provoke Israel to jealousy by the Gentiles.
 1. Verse 19 is a key verse for understanding much of what is said in chapter 11. See 11:11, 14, 25-26

10:20 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."

1. This shows from the prophets that God would be made known to another nation.
 1. His point here is that it was prophesied that God had planned to save the Gentiles prior to their seeking and asking to be saved.
 2. It was thus God's choice to bring other nations into His new covenant.
2. Israel was ignorant of its rejection, though Moses and Isaiah plainly foretold of it.
 1. See also Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:8-12

10:21 But to Israel he says: "All day long I have stretched out My hands To a disobedient and contrary people."

1. This shows from the prophets why they were rejected.
 1. They had actively rejected God's invitations.
2. "All the day long" - This shows that He was meek, patient and longsuffering in His dealings with them.
3. "To disobedient and contrary people" - They were a rebellious people who refused to submit to God.
 1. Thus, they were not His chosen people, not because He had forsaken them, but they had continually rejected Him.

11:1 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.

Chapter 11 is a continuation of: "The Vindication of God's Choices."

1. "Cast away His people?" - Has God totally rejected those who were formerly His people?
 1. Only the unbelieving; hence, as a nation, God has rejected Israel for their disobedience to Christ.
 2. He cast them out, but left an open door behind them, and into it they had the liberty and duty to return.
2. Paul is arguing that God has not rejected all Israelites, otherwise, Paul himself would also be lost.
3. "Of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin" - This gives Paul a place of dignity and importance among the Jews.

11:2 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,

1. "Whom He foreknew" - God had not completely cast off those whom He before purposed or designed to be His people.
 1. National Israel had been rejected, but each individual Israelite is now invited to be a part of spiritual Israel.
 2. He can now be part of spiritual Israel by his own faith and choice. Rom. 11:32; Gal. 6:16
2. "Says of Elijah" - Paul speaks of what the Scripture says in the case of Elijah.

11:3 "LORD, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life"?

1. A quote from 1 Kings 19:10,14; the complete story is revealed in 1 Kings 18 and 19.
2. Elijah was discouraged and in despair when he was forced to flee from Jezebel who was seeking to kill him.
 1. He was all alone in the wilderness and supposed that all Israel had abandoned God for idols.

11:4 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."

1. From 1 Kings 19:18.
 1. God informed Elijah that He had 7,000 left in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal.
 2. Thus, Elijah was wrong when he thought there were none who were faithful in Israel and, likewise, it would be wrong to think there were none faithful in Israel now.
 3. God had not utterly cast away all Israelites now just because the greater majority of them were unbelieving.

11:5 Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

1. In this same way, there is a remnant now (at the time of Paul's writing, and likewise now).
 1. The remnant was positive proof that God had not totally cast off His ancient people.
2. "Election of grace" - The election which proceeds from God's grace, or the election made possible by God's grace.
 1. The choice came about as result of God's grace. This is what Paul is referring to in the next verse.

11:6 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.

1. The **source** of election is as result of the grace of God.
 1. It did not come as result of the works of men.
 2. So far as God's original plan of election is concerned, grace and the works of men are mutually exclusive.
 3. If it came about as result of the one, it could not be as result of the other. The same is taught in 9:11,16.
2. False teachers flock to this verse to teach that a man is not saved by works.
 1. However, not only are they pulling it out of context, but their interpretation contradicts many other plain passages. Matt. 7:24-26; Eph. 2:10; Titus 3:8,14; James 2:24; Phil. 2:12; Heb. 5:9

11:7 What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded.

1. Israel did not obtain it (the chosen of God, the election according to grace) because it sought it in the wrong way: (1) By blind adherence to the law, (2) Through the wrong view of the Messiah.
2. "The Elect have obtained it" - National Israel was rejected, but some individuals were of the chosen.
 1. They had believed and obeyed the gospel and thereby had become the elect.
3. "And the rest were blinded" - The vast majority of the Jews were blinded (dulled, hardened).
 1. Their wills were hardened and their understanding was dulled in accordance to that which was written by Isaiah.
 2. God never directly hardens individuals against their own wills.
 3. Just as Pharaoh had hardened his will against God's demands, most of the Jews chose to harden themselves against the gospel. Acts 13:46

11:8 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."

1. From Deut. 29:4 and Isa. 29:10.
2. God did not offer the Jews what they wanted; they therefore turned a deaf ear to His word.
 1. They did not see in Jesus anything they desired.
 2. They would not hear and would not see; therefore, they did not understand.
3. "To this very day" - Originally, to the time Moses wrote (Deut. 29:4), but the condition prevailed to the time Paul wrote, and has not improved even until now.
4. God gave them these things in punishment for their sin, not as taught in Calvinism, before they did anything.
5. **Application:** We should not have a stubborn and obstinate heart; otherwise, God will stand in opposition to us. 1 Pet. 3:15; Jer. 21:10; Ezek. 15:7

11:9 And David says: "Let their table become a snare and a trap, A stumbling block and a recompense to them."

1. From Psalm 69:22-23. David spoke these words by inspiration against those opposing God's will in his day.
2. "Let their table become a snare and a trap" - The Jews in Paul's time were trapped by their blind adherence to the law.
 1. Thus, they had been trapped by the very thing which was designed to lead them to Christ. Gal. 3:19-29
3. "A stumbling block" - Although the law was designed to lead them to Christ, when they chose it over Him, it became the cause of their fall.
4. "And a recompense to them" - Their table (their law) had become a retribution to them.

11:10 Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see, and bow down their back always."

1. Again, all this is punishment for their sin.
2. "Let their eyes be darkened" - The same words apply to the wicked at all times, in David's, Paul's and our day.
 1. Where men refuse the light, God will send them strong delusion. 2 Thess. 2:11-12
3. "Bow down their back always" - For example, let them bow down with the heavy burdens of trouble.
4. National Israel had rejected Christ and now was lost (9:1-3; 10:1-4); however, all was not hopeless because each individual was invited to repent and be converted. Acts 3:19

11:11 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.

1. Did they stumble so as to utterly fall?
 1. In other words, have they stumbled so as to remain fallen? Or, is their fall without remedy?
 2. God did not will their fall. Their final doom was not what God had in mind.
2. "Through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy" - Because of the unbelief of the Jews, the way was opened to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. Acts 13:46
 1. Becoming Jealous of the blessings the gospel brought to the Gentiles, some of the Jews began to reconsider the Word of truth.
 2. God can bring good out of evil.
 3. Rom. 11:5; 11:14 and 11:30-31 show that Paul was referring to events in his day.

11:12 Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness!

1. "If their fall" - This refers to their rejection because of unbelief. They stumbled over the stumbling stone.
2. "And their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness" - If Israel's fall resulted in riches for Gentiles, their fullness (acceptance of the gospel) will result in far greater blessings.
 1. Paul continues this thought in verse 15.

11:13 For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry,

1. "I speak to you Gentiles" - He speaks to the Gentile portion of the church.
2. "Apostle to the Gentiles" - Acts 9:15; 26:16-20; Gal. 2:7
3. "I magnify my ministry" - He glorified his ministry by giving himself wholly to it and making it the purpose and goal of his life.
 1. As shown in the next verse, he was diligent in saving more Gentiles in order to thus make more Israelites envious.

11:14 if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them.

1. "Provoke to jealousy" - Paul was trying to make the Jews desirous of the same blessings which the Gentiles had now received.
2. "Save some of them" - His burning desire was to save lost souls, especially his brethren in the flesh.
 1. This shows that verse 26 is not referring to all the Jews.
3. **Application:** Some become envious of the spiritual blessings others have, and thus seek to obtain them. Thus, "envy" (basically "desire" in the original; the context determines) can sometimes be a good thing. It is wise for us to be envious of the spiritual qualities and attainments.

11:15 For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

1. This verse is the same as verse 12.
2. "What will their acceptance be...?" - For example, what will the acceptance of the Jews be to the Gentiles?
3. "Life from the dead?" - That is, even greater blessings will be obtained; e.g., such as those to come (eternal life).
4. Prophetic speculators say that this teaches that after the Jews are converted, the resurrection (Second Coming) will occur.
 1. However, they are jerking Paul's statement completely out of context.

11:16 For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches.

1. "Firstfruit" - "First portion" - The first converts.
2. "Lump" - "The mass," the other Israelites, the whole nation.
3. "Root" - The first converts.
4. "Branches" - All other Israelites.
 1. Thus, Paul gives the same thought under different imagery.
 2. This shows that if God had accepted the first converts as holy, He would likewise on the same conditions accept all Israelites as holy.
 3. All Jews who are saved must be saved in exactly the same way as were the first converts, that is, by obedience to the gospel.
 1. God has no other plan to save either Jews or Gentiles.
 2. All who are saved must be saved by the gospel, not by the law or a restoration of national Israel.

11:17 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,

1. The Jews are called the "natural branches" in this text because they were at one time God's chosen people.
2. "Some of the branches were broken off" - These discarded branches are the Jews who could have been accepted as were the first converts to Christianity.
 1. They were broken off because they were sinners and refused God's offer of forgiveness through the gospel.
3. "And you, being a wild olive tree" - The Gentiles are called the "wild olive tree" because they have been left to grow up in a state of nature. Rom. 1:24, 28
4. "Were Grafted in among them" - Grafting is the process of inserting a scion or young shoot into a plant or tree.
 1. Nearly all fruit trees are put through this process today; e.g., an orange tree has a lemon tree's roots.
 2. The Gentiles had been grafted in with those Jews who had accepted the gospel.
5. "Became a partaker of the root and fatness" - All the new branches, made up of believing Jews and Gentiles, are partakers together of the fatness of the root, the blessings of the gospel.

11:18 do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you.

1. "Do not boast against the branches" - Do not glory over the broken off branches (the unbelieving Jews, vs. 20).
 1. The original reception of the Jews and neglect of Gentiles made Jews proud and gave them a feeling of superiority.
 2. Paul is admonishing the Gentiles to avoid this evil attitude toward the Jews.
2. "But the root supports you" - In other words, you did not give the spiritual blessings, but they came from them to you. John 4:22; Rom 15:27
 1. For example, it was by the Jews that Christ came; the apostles were Jews and taught the Gentiles.
3. **Application:** Let us avoid the wrong attitude toward unbelievers. Let us have no boasting among the branches. Let us avoid feelings of superiority among us.

11:19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in."

1. The Gentile Christians might conclude that the Jews were rejected for the sole purpose that the Gentiles might be received.
 1. Verse 20 explains why they were broken off.

11:20 Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear.

1. Hence, God does not unconditionally preordain one's rejection. Men have a choice between belief and unbelief.
2. "Stand by faith" - The Christian does not stand by perfect obedience or sinless perfection.
 1. Faith motivates us to obey; faith produces obedience.
 2. To "stand by faith" is a high and noble privilege granted by God through His grace.
3. "Be not haughty" - Since it is a blessing granted by God, no one has a right to personal pride or arrogance.
 1. Certainly, this was a problem among the Jews. Paul is admonishing the Gentiles to avoid it.
4. "But fear" - They, too, needed to fear lest they be broken off as were the Jews because of their unbelief.
 1. "Fear" is a little word which carries deep meaning. Luke 1:50; 12:4-5; Acts 10:34-35; Heb. 10:30-

31

11:21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either.

1. For if God did not spare the nature branches (the Jews), take heed lest He does not spare you either.
2. These are some of the strongest words in the Scriptures against "once saved, always saved."
 1. They offer positive proof (or else the warning is totally meaningless) that a Christian can so conduct himself as to be cut off and therefore be in the same lost state as the unbelieving Israelites.

11:22 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.

1. God is love (1 John 4:8), but God is also a consuming fire (Heb. 12:29).
 1. We are to fear His wrath.
 2. **Application:** Parents also must have a balance. It is wrong to have all discipline without appreciation, kindness, and love.
 3. Churches likewise must be severe against those who sin, yet have genuine love.
2. "If you continue in His goodness" - Thus, remaining in the favor of God (here, for the Gentiles) is conditional.
 1. They had to remain faithful to God in order to remain in His love.
 2. We, too, must continue in His service (praying, visiting, teaching, etc.), worshiping Him in spirit and trust, and living godly in order to remain in His goodness. Jude 21; Col. 1:23

11:23 And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.

1. Thus, the national concept is destroyed under the gospel system.
 1. The Jews had been rejected, not simply because they were Jews, but because they failed to believe in their Messiah.
 2. If they turned from their unbelief, God would readily accept them, not as a nation, but as Christian individuals.

11:24 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?

1. "For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature" - The Gentiles.

2. "Were grafted contrary to nature" - It was not a normal practice.
 1. Grafting is a delicate process; not many actually work.
 2. Many stems will not "take" and are rejected by the plant.
 3. It is easier to graft the natural branches than any others.
3. Just as it is easy to graft a natural branch into its own olive tree, God would readily accept the Jews if they turned to Him.
4. The Jew's covenant relationship with God had been broken off so that a new covenant could be established with new conditions and promises (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:6-13).

11:25 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.

1. "Mystery" - The word in the Greek does not mean "mysterious" but "once hidden, but now made known." Eph. 1:9; 3:4
 1. The "mystery" in this context is the Gentiles having opportunity to receive salvation because of the fall of the Jews. Rom. 11:11-12, 15, 18, 30
2. "Opinion" - "Conceits, estimation."
 1. This word means "excessive appreciation or estimation of one's own worth or virtue."
3. "Blindness in part" - Their hardening was not universal. There was a remnant who believed.
 1. The hardening of the Jews was favorable to the bringing in of the Gentiles. Rom. 11:7, 11
4. "Until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in" - This refers to the completion of that period of time in Paul's day when the Gentiles were having opportunity to receive salvation because of the blindness of the Jews. Rom. 11:11-12, 15, 28, 30

11:26 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;

1. Premillennialists teach that this verse refers to a future mass conversion of the Jews.
2. "So" - This word is an adverb of manner in the Greek and means; "in this way, in this manner."
 1. It does not mean and is never translated "so then," or "so when."
 2. Thus, in this manner shall all Israel would be saved, that is, all Israelites would be saved in precisely the same manner as Gentiles, by being grafted in by faith into covenant relationship with God.
3. "The Deliverer will come out of Zion" - This has reference to Christ's first coming, not His second.
 1. Paul is simply affirming that Israelites must be saved in the same way as the Gentiles; that is, by believing in Christ, the Redeemer.

11:27 For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins."

1. This verse, probably based on Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:8-12, means that God would make provisions by which sins could be forgiven.
 1. The verse does not refer to something yet to be fulfilled. It was fulfilled when God offered forgiveness through the gospel.

11:28 Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers.

1. "Concerning the gospel" - From the standpoint of the gospel system, God's plan to save.
2. "Enemies" - They (the Jews) were cast off by God because their unbelief.
3. "For your sake" - They were cast off in order to give you (Gentiles) opportunity to be saved.
 1. It turned out to the advantage of the Gentiles.

4. "But concerning the election" - "But with regard to the choice."
 1. For example, God made choice regarding the lineage of the Messiah.
5. "Are beloved for the sake of the fathers" - They are still loved on account of the fathers.
 1. They were enemies (as far as covenant relationship was concerned) but were still loved for the sake of their forefathers and the covenant God had made with them.

11:29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

1. "Irrevocable" - "Without change of mind or purpose."
 1. Some versions have "repentance," but it is not the same word for "repentance" elsewhere in the New Testament.
2. The gifts and calling of God are not reversible.
 1. God had not changed His mind regarding the calling of the fathers, or of His blessings toward them.
3. God's gifts and calling were conditioned upon obedience to His will (Ex. 19:5; 24:7; Lev. 26:3-13; Deut. 27). When the Jews rejected Christ, they rejected God's will (which included the gifts and calling). Thus, by their rejection they removed themselves from the blessings.
 1. Furthermore, God's dealings with them (which included the gifts and calling) made provision for a change in covenants (Deut. 18:18-19; Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:6-13). When they refused to accept the change, God had no choice but to reject them. Hence, the fault in all these matters lies with them, not God.

11:30 For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience,

1. "Yet have now" - Not in the future.
2. "Through their disobedience" - The preaching of the gospel was opened to the Gentiles through the unbelief of the Jews. Matt. 21:33-45; Acts 13:46; 28:25-36

11:31 even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy.

1. "These" - Again, this refers to the Jews.
2. "Have now been" - Thus, again, this refers to Paul's time.
3. "Through the mercy shown you" - Through the mercy you Gentiles received.
4. "They also may obtain mercy" - The Jews, being provoked to jealousy.
 1. Thus, the same source of mercy which provided salvation to the Gentiles can now result in salvation to the Jews.

11:32 For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.

1. This verse, in very precise form, makes a summation of all that Paul has contended up to this point.
2. God had shut all up (both Jews and Gentiles) in disobedience (sin) so that He might invite all to deliverance and forgiveness.
 1. God had declared and shown all to be sinners so that He could free them in His own way and time.
 2. This was God's plan and God's way.

11:33 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!

1. Paul now closes with praise to God for His profound wisdom and care toward men.

2. "Riches" - Inexhaustible resources.
3. "Both of the wisdom and knowledge" - God's ways are far too deep, vast, and incomprehensible for man.
4. "How unsearchable are His judgments" - They cannot be discovered or found out until revealed or executed.
5. "And His ways past finding out" - We know of them only through His revealed Word.

11:34 "For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?"

1. No one has ever enriched God by giving Him suggestions of wisdom.
2. His ways and thoughts are immeasurably above ours. Isa. 55:8-9

11:35 "Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?"

1. No one can ever put God under obligation to anyone.
 1. All receive from Him and He from none.
 2. God is not any more obligated to the Jews than the Gentiles.
2. **Application:** We should not try to bind God when we pray to Him.

11:36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

1. This is proof that no one has first given to Him.
 1. He is the source, accomplisher, and goal of our salvation as well as all things. Rev. 4:11
2. The supreme purpose of man's existence is to glorify His Creator and Benefactor which can only be done by doing His will.
3. This ends the predominantly doctrinal part of the book.

12:1 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.

With this verse, Paul begins the exhortation part of the book. He has presented the gospel as the basis of salvation, for the individual (ch. 1-8) and as part of God's overall purpose for all nations (ch. 9-11). He now shows the effect the gospel should have in the lives of all who accept it.

On the basis of what God has done, Paul calls for a response from the Christian. This same two-part method of teaching characterizes most of the epistles of the New Testament. First, the gospel is preached (an announcement is made of what God has accomplished through Christ) and, secondly, those who accept the gospel are instructed regarding how to live in view of the salvation brought by Christ.

1. "I beseech you therefore" - His exhortation is based on the foregoing chapters.
 1. Christian ethics is based on Christian doctrine.
 2. Those who are wrong in their doctrine, are often wrong in their ethics (practice).
2. "By the mercies of God" - God has manifested His mercy, and on this basis or because of this, he exhorts.
3. "Present your bodies" - Lest the law of sin reigns therein. Rom. 7:23-25
4. "A living sacrifice" - As active instruments.
 1. We present "living sacrifices" as opposed to the "dead sacrifices" of the O.T.
5. "Holy, acceptable to God" - Set apart and pleasing to God. 1 Thess. 4:1
6. "Reasonable service" - The KJV and NKJV is probably better here than the ASV and NASV which renders it "spiritual service."
 1. Vine - "...Pertaining to the reasoning facilities; the sacrifice is to be intelligent in contrast to those offered by ritual and compulsion."

2. The offering is an intelligent offering, not one that's forced, or as a ritual.

12:2 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.

1. Christians are constantly surrounded by the corrupt ways of the world and some want to copy those ways.
2. "Transformed" - "Metamorphoo" - "A transformation of one form into another."
 1. This word is rendered "transfigured" in Matt. 17:2 and "changed" in 2 Cor. 5:17.
 2. One is to put off the old man and put on the new. Eph. 4:20-24; Col. 3:8-10
3. "By the renewing" - For example, by renewing our minds on the Word of God on a daily basis. 2 Cor. 4:16
4. "That you may prove what..." - By exercising our minds on the Word of God, we can prove or ascertain what is good and acceptable.
 1. Thus, this is one of the best verses in the Bible showing the importance of Bible study.

12:3 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.

1. "Through the grace" - He thus speaks by the authority of his apostleship.
2. "To everyone who is among you" - It includes and applies to us as well.
3. "Not to think of himself more highly..." - He is not to be conceited or have an over-inflated opinion of himself.
 1. Do not consider yourself as Mr. BIG.
4. "But to think soberly" - "Sober minded, level headed, sensible."
 1. Each is to think soberly about his abilities and use them to benefit his fellow believers and glorify God.
5. "To each one a measure of faith" - God gives and develops faith through the Word.
 1. One should not over evaluate himself, but remember that God develops each person into what he is.

12:4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,

1. "Many members in one body" - Ex. as in the human body.
2. "Function" - "Office" (KJV).
 1. The same is mentioned in 1 Cor. 12:12-27. All the parts of the body do not have the same use or function.

12:5 so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

1. "Being many" - There are many individual members, yet they compose one spiritual body.
2. "And individually members of one another" - "Each member belongs to all the others" (NIV).
 1. Our relation should be so close that we are dependent on each other.

12:6 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;

1. See also 1 Pet. 4:10-11.
2. "Gifts" - Every talent is a blessing from God.
 1. This shows that the word "gift" does not always refer to the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit.
3. "Prophecy" - The "prophecy" was the spoken inspired message and "prophesy" is the speaking of the

inspired message.

1. This miraculous gift was to pass away. 1 Cor. 13:8
4. "Proportion to our faith" - The same as in the latter part of verse 3.
 1. One must prophesy in accord with what God had given him.
 2. By doing thus, one would remain true to Him who is the source of the gift.

12:7 or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching;

The remainder of the gifts mentioned are not miraculous.

1. "Or ministry, let us use it in our ministering" - "If it is serving, let him serve" (NIV).
 1. The word "ministry" is from the Greek "diakonia" which means "to deacon, serve, minister."
 2. It refers to practical service. Some are especially good in serving in physical ways.
2. "He who teaches, in teaching" - "If it is teaching, let him teach" (NIV).
 1. This refers to instructing in what was already revealed.
 2. This requires much work. Some want the praise of being a teacher, but don't want to do the work required for being a teacher.
 3. Thus, Paul gives exhortation to teachers to do their work.

12:8 he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

1. "He who exhorts, in exhortation" - This naturally follows teaching.
 1. It means to encourage or incite to duty. Some are especially good at this; they give great encouragement to all.
2. "He who gives, with liberality" - "Let him do it with simplicity" (KJV).
 1. The word "liberality" here has a dual meaning: (1) "With a single goal in mind, with singleness of heart" (without ulterior motive, free of pretense and hypocrisy) and (2) "Openness of heart manifesting itself by generosity" (liberally, generously, abundantly). 2 Cor. 9:6-7
 2. Some are particularly blessed financially, and can abundantly give. Paul is exhorting them to do so.
3. "He who leads, with diligence" - "He who ruleth" (KJV, ASV). The same word is used of overseers, elders. 1 Thess. 5:12; 1 Tim. 3:4; 5:17
 1. Elders must be diligent in their work. Many elders are sorely lacking in this.
4. "He who shows mercy, with cheerfulness" - To forgive the one who has sinned against you can be one of the hardest commandments. It must be from the heart. Matt. 18:35
 1. Also, let us cheerfully show sympathy and understanding (mercy) to those who are suffering.

12:9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.

1. "Let love be without hypocrisy" - We must have a pure, genuine, sincere love.
 1. It must not be faked or in pretense.
2. "Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good" - Amos 5:15; Isa. 5:20; Psalm 119:104
 1. To "abhor" means to "view with intense hate, dislike."
 1. If more Christians had this sentiment toward sin and error, fewer would become entrapped by the devil.
 2. To "cling" (the same word used of a man and wife, Matt. 19:5) means to be joined to as by gluing."
 1. We need stick as adhesive or glue to the things that are good.

12:10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;

1. "Kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love" - The Lord commanded us to love each other. John 13:34-35; 1 John 4:20-21
 1. As a close family, we should have tender devotion and understanding of one another.
 2. We are to love everyone, but there is a special, deep, tender bond existing between members of the body of Christ. By love, we serve one another. Gal. 5:13
2. "In honor giving preference to one another" - Regard others as better than yourself.
 1. Do not look for praise on yourself, but bestow praise on others.

12:11 not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;

1. "Not lagging in diligence" - "In diligence, not slothful" (ASV).
 1. We should not be slack or sagging in enthusiasm or zeal. Eccl. 9:10
 2. Diligence is a requirement in all the duties of the Christian life.
2. "Fervent in spirit" - "Fervent in spirit" is the opposite of "slothful in spirit."
 1. We live the Christian life with all urgency and fervency of mind.
3. "Serving the Lord" - Our service to the Lord should be with great diligence and deep earnest.

12:12 rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;

1. "Rejoicing in hope" - Our hope constitutes our richest area of rejoicing.
2. "Patient in tribulation" - We must persevere under pressures, hardships, and persecutions.
3. "Continuing steadfastly in prayer" - "Devoted to prayer" (NASV).
 1. Let us all develop good prayer habits.

12:13 distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.

1. "Distributing to the needs of the saints" - We are to provide aid to the saints who are in need.
 1. We need be people of action rather than talk.
2. "Given to hospitality" - This means literally "to love strangers." Heb. 13:1-2
 1. 1 Pet. 4:9 shows that we are to show hospitality (provide meals, lodging, etc.) to one another.
 2. A qualification for an elder. 1 Tim. 3:2

12:14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

Several verses in this section (14, 17, 19-21) show that we should not mistreat those who mistreat us.

1. "Bless those who persecute you" - Thus, the Christian does not retaliate with like persecution, but with blessing.
2. "Bless and do not curse" - The word "curse" here does not mean ordinary profanity (such as is condemned in other verses), but means to call calamity to befall a person.
 1. Thus, the Christian does not wish evil on those who are doing them evil.

12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

1. If a fellow Christian has a cause for rejoicing, we should rejoice with them. Heb. 13:3; Job 30:25; 16:2
 1. Too often we are filled with envy because of the good fortune of others.
2. We should enter into full sympathy with others in their sorrows.

12:16 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.

1. "Be of the same mind..." - Literally, "Be the same in one another's thinking."
 1. This means that we are to harmonize with others in our thinking.
 2. We all need to be of the same mind in:
 1. Doctrine - Rom. 15:5-6; 1 Cor. 1:10; 2 Cor. 13:11. I know of a "liberal" church who would not allow teaching on the issues. They thought this would keep them united; however, they were already divided because many were objecting to the unscriptural things that were being done.
 2. Practice - We all need to be minding the same things. Phil. 1:27
2. "Do not set you mind on high things" - Do not set your heart on high places, things, company, etc.
 1. We might fool or deceive others as to where our interest are, but not God.
3. "But associate with the humble" - The footnote in the KJV shows this can refer to "things as well as persons."
 1. Associate with those who are humble according to God's definition.
 2. Also, associate with those who are lowly in the world's eyes. Follow the example of Christ.
4. "Do not be wise in your own opinion" - "Do not claim to be wiser than you are" (NRSV). "Do not be wise in your own estimation." (NASV).
 1. Many people have deceived themselves about their own wisdom. In other words, they are not nearly as wise as they think they are.
 2. An old joke states: "Some people are educated far beyond their own intelligence."

12:17 Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.

1. "Repay no one evil for evil" - 1 Pet. 3:9 and other passages show what we are to return for evil.
2. "Have regard for good things" - "Take thought for things honorable" (ASV).
 1. The Christian uses forethought to determine his conduct.
 2. The good, honorable things are what are important to the Christian.

12:18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

1. "As much as depends on you" - "As much as lieth in you" (KJV). "To the very best of your ability"; "to your very utmost."
2. We need to pursue and follow after peace with everyone. 1 Pet. 3:11
 1. Sometimes it is impossible to have peace with others, but it should never be the Christian's fault.

12:19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.

1. "Avenge" - To take vengeance; it means to get even with others, to render evil for evil.
2. "But rather give place to wrath" - In this context it means to give place to the wrath of God; leave it to Him.
3. "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay" - Thus, to the Christian the right of vengeance belongs solely to God.
 1. Also, the phrase implies that God most certainly will do it.

12:20 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."

1. Thus, not only are we to refrain from vengeance, but are to take a positive action for the good welfare of our enemies; thus, returning good for evil.
2. "Will heap coals of fire on his head" - From Prov. 25:21-22. A figure of speech showing strong, positive results
 1. It will fill them with shame and remorse and melt down their enmity.

2. An old saying: "The best way to get rid of enemies is to make friends out of them."

12:21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

1. This is the Christian way. He always does right, and never permits the actions of others to determine his own actions.
 1. If the Christian seeks with his own hands to take vengeance, he, himself, becomes evil (it is disobedience to God).
 2. However, if he does good to his enemy, it is the greatest of all ways to overcome evil (it is obeying God).
2. The Christian does not overcome evil by doing evil.
 1. The principle of doing good for evil is the basic principle by which we live.
 2. It is the fundamental virtue of a follower of Christ.

Exhortations & Practical Instructions, 12-16.

1. Duties of general nature, 12:1-8.
2. Exhortations to love, 12:9-21.
3. Duties to civil government, 13:1-7.
4. Law is fulfilled by love, 13:8-10.
5. Exhortations to holiness based on the nearness of eternity, 13:13-14.
6. Matters of personal conviction, 14:1-23
7. Exhortation to love by the example of Christ, 15:1-13.
8. Paul's salutation or farewell remarks, 15:14-16:27

13:1 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.

This section refers to the normal functioning of governments, not evil ones. It was given, no doubt, to answer the question, "What about hardened criminals? Can we render evil for their evil?"

1. Paul has just shown that Christians are to love their enemies, return good for evil, and leave vengeance in the hands of God (12:17-21). Now he shows how God's vengeance is carried out on earth.
2. It is not the Christian's place to execute God's wrath.
 1. He is rather to demonstrate God's love - by word (teaching the gospel), and by life (doing good to all, blessing enemies, etc).
 2. God has established civil government to carry out His wrath on earth.
 3. These verses deal with the divine "order" or "arrangement" of civil justice.
3. "Be subject to the governing authorities" - "Be obedient to the government, local, state, and national, under which one lives." 1 Pet. 2:13-14; Titus 3:1
4. "The authorities that exist are appointed by God" - They have been established (NIV), or instituted by God (RSV).
 1. They are a part of a civil arrangement instituted by God.
 2. They exist to serve His purpose and are constantly under His watchful eye.
5. The fact or principle of civil government is from God, but it is up to man to choose whatever form (democratic, monarchical, socialistic) which best serves the divine purpose at a given time and under present circumstances.
6. Not all authorities (and probably none in every instance) serve the purpose for which they were ordained.
 1. The Christian may therefore find himself being commanded by the ruling officials to do that which is contrary to the will of God.
 2. In such cases, the Christian must obey God rather than man. Acts 4:18-15; 5:28-29

7. When civil government tries to force its citizens to do wrong, or when it permits and encourages that which is evil, it has transgressed its divine right.

13:2 Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

1. "Resists the authority" - For example, refuse to obey it, rebel against it, or set himself in opposition to it.
2. The Christian has no right to resist government as such.
 1. It has always been is a common sin to rebel against civil government.
 2. Even if a government is exceedingly wicked, the Christian has no right to forcibly overthrow it, (e.g., go to war against it).
 3. Consider the government existing during Paul's time.
 4. God is still in charge, and He will punish the wicked in His own time and manner. Dan. 2:20-22; Rev. 1:5
3. "Bring judgment on themselves" - They bring the condemnation of God upon themselves.

13:3 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.

1. "For rulers are not a terror to good works" - Those in power are not a terror to those who do good, but to those who do evil.
2. This verse shows the proper purpose and function of civil government as ordained by God:
 1. To protect and encourage the good.
 2. To restrain and punish the wicked.
3. The person who does what is right has no need to fear the government which functions properly.
 1. Rulers should be a terror to law breakers. There can be no government without laws. There can be no law without penalty. There can be no terror of law without the enforcement of the penalty.
 2. Thus, it is the duty of government to bring criminals to trial swiftly and punish them justly.
4. Paul's own application is: "Do what is good (what is lawful and right), and you will have praise from the rulers."

13:4 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.

1. God's arrangement regarding civil government is for the good of the Christian. 1 Tim. 2:1-3
 1. God's order provides for the lawful authority to be a revenger and to execute wrath on those who do evil.
 2. In this sense, the ruler is a minister of God.
 3. In praising the well doer and punishing the evil doer, it is exercising its God-ordained function, and is to be viewed by the Christian as God's appointed servant.
2. "He does not bear the sword in vain" - "Bearing the sword" is connected with the idea of putting to death. Luke 21:24; Acts 12:2; Rev. 13:10; Heb. 11:34
 1. The government has an obligation to enforce the laws which are designed to protect the innocent.
 2. To fail to inflict just punishment upon the wicked would be to fail in the very purpose for which God appointed it.

13:5 Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake.

1. "Therefore" - A conclusion drawn from verses 3 and 4.
2. We must be subject, not only so that the rulers's anger will not be executed upon us, but for conscience sake (because God has told us to do it; in order to have a clear conscience before Him).
 1. One who can disobey the laws of his government without having any remorse of conscience is

lacking in respect for God's commands.

13:6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing.

1. "For because of this you also pay taxes" - You pay taxes in order to escape the wrath of the ruler and to have a clear conscience before God.
2. Our Lord taught his disciples, as well as all, to pay taxes. Matt. 17:27; 22:15-22
 1. Government needs funds in order to function, and no Christian should try to avoid paying his just share of government expenses.
3. "God's ministers" - They are God's servants carrying out a divinely ordained service.
4. "Attending continually to this very things" - Rewarding the good and punishing the guilty.

13:7 Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

1. "Taxes" - Charges laid on a person and his property.
2. "Customs" - Charges levied on imports and exports.
3. "Fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor" - Fear and honor here refer to that which is due regarding rulers.
 1. Honor should be given, not only to rulers, but to all those who deserve it. 1 Tim. 5:17; 1 Pet. 2:17
 2. If no honor is due, it should not be given. Job 22:21-22

13:8 Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.

Law is fulfilled by love, 13:8-10.

1. "Owe no one anything" - This can be translated, "pay to all what you owe," and obviously is not a prohibition of a credit system.
 1. We should seek to not be overburdened with indebtedness so that one can be free to give. Eph. 4:28
2. "Except to love one another" - Love is what we always owe to everyone. Matt. 5:43-45; John 13:34-35; 1 Pet. 1:22; Luke 6:27-35; 14:12-14
 1. Love is a debt which can never be paid in full. We must continue to love as long as we live.
3. "For he who loves another has fulfilled the law" - There is no definite article ("the") here before law.
 1. Thus, literally, "He who loves another has fulfilled law." However, in context he is referring to the Old Law.
4. Since love demands doing good to others, it fulfills law.
 1. When one loves, he has reached the end for which the law was given.
 2. One who loves others, would not do to them any of those things mentioned in verse 9.

13:9 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."

1. "You shall not commit adultery" - The seventh commandment (Ex. 20:14). It is the breaking of the marital bond.
 1. "You shall not murder" - The sixth (Ex. 20:13). The unlawful taking of human life.
 2. "You shall not steal" - The eighth (Ex. 20:15). The unlawful taking of that which belongs to another.
 3. "You shall not bear false witness" - The ninth (Ex. 20:16). Testifying falsely. It prohibits all lying.
 4. "You shall not covet" - The tenth (Ex. 20:17). All unlawful desire for that which belongs to

another.

5. "And if there is any other commandment" - Any others not named here.
2. "Are all summed up in this saying..." - Quoted from Lev. 19:18.
 1. Thus, all the commandments are briefly comprehended in the command to love one's neighbor as himself.
 2. When one loves his neighbor, he will not sin against him by violating his marriage, by destroying his life, by taking his property, by misrepresenting him falsely, or by desiring his property or possessions.
 3. Love defined, 1 Cor. 13:4-7. Such love is not of human origin, but is derived from and developed by God.

13:10 Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

1. The definite article "the" is before law here in the original.
2. Since the one who loves would do no harm to his neighbor, but greatly benefits his neighbor, love fulfills the law.
 1. Love establishes the kind of relationship the law demanded.

13:11 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.

Exhortations to holiness based on the nearness of eternity, 13:13-14.

1. "And do this, knowing the time" - And do this especially because you know how critical the time is.
 1. In one sense or another, everyone lives in critical times; hence, the admonition here applies with equal force to all, regardless of when or where they live.
2. "That now it is high time" - "That already it is time" (ASV).
3. "To awake out of sleep" - Figurative of their indifference and inactivity.
 1. Few Christians are as wide awake as they should be. Eph. 5:14; Heb. 12:12-13; 1 Cor. 15:34; 1 Thess. 5:6
 2. All Christians should be diligent in preparing themselves and others for eternity.
4. "For now our salvation is nearer" - As time passes, eternity comes nearer.
 1. Each passing second brings us closer to meeting our Maker.
5. "Than when we first believed" - Certainly this is true for every Christian. The end of all things is nearer than when we first believed.

13:12 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.

1. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand" - The "night" no doubt refers to our life period on this earth, and the "day" refers to the next period. John 9:4
 1. It perhaps refers to the existence of the present age, as opposed to the one to come.
2. "Cast off the works of darkness" - Let us cast off works of the flesh, ignorance, false doctrines, etc. Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:11; 1 Thess. 5:4-7; John 3:19-21
3. "Put on the armor of light" - The panoply of the Christian. Eph. 6:13-17; 5:7-10; 1 Thess. 5:8; 1 John 1:5-7
 1. Let us cast off the works of the flesh, and put on the fruit of the Spirit. Let us leave the old sinful way of life, and put on the new Christian way.

13:13 Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.

1. "Let us walk properly" - "Let us walk becomingly" (ASV)
 1. Let us walk in such a way that brings honor to our Lord and Savior.
2. "As in the day" - Let us walk properly as in the light of day, doing everything honorably and openly.
3. Paul lists six practices which must be avoided. He lists three sets of sins which accompany each other.
 1. "Not in revelry and drunkenness" - Reveling, tumults, disorders, and drunkenness (drinking and the conduct of those drink).
 2. "Not in lewdness and lust" - Lewd, immodest behavior, and lasciviousness (anything tending to promote or fulfill fleshly lusts). 2 Cor. 12:21
 3. "Strife and envy" - Contentions, wrangling, fighting with words, and evil desire to obtain what another has.
 1. "Envy" is stronger than "jealousy" in that it actively opposes the one who is envied. Matt. 27:18; Prov. 27:4

13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

1. We must clothe ourselves with the character of our Lord. Col. 3:10; 2 Cor. 3:18
 1. We must put ourselves completely under Him, and follow what He taught.
2. We must make no provision to fulfill evil fleshly desires.
 1. We must be pure as was our Lord.
 2. Let us move onward and upward, and never backward to the world.

14:1 Receive one who is weak in the faith, but not to disputes over doubtful things.

~~This chapter deals with matters of personal conviction which are indifferent; that is, matters which are neither right or wrong within themselves. This chapter has been used to try to justify everything from adulterous marriages to instrumental music in worship.~~ However, the principles must be applied to things which are neither right nor wrong in and of themselves. For example, it is neither right nor wrong to eat meat or to refrain from eating it. Paul is showing us in this chapter how to receive those who might differ from us in such matters.

1. "Receive one who is weak in faith" - Receive him into full fellowship.
 1. He uses in this chapter the examples of eating certain things, and keeping of certain days.
 2. It is wrong to force one's opinion (in matters of personal conviction) on others.
 3. It is wrong to force others to change their convictions before fellowship can be extended.
2. "But not to disputes over doubtful things" - "Not for the purpose of passing judgment upon his scruples" (Vincent Word Studies).
 1. The weak should not be received for the purpose of judging their doubtful thoughts.
 2. Some brethren thrive on controversy, and it causes a lot of problems and heartache in the Lord's church.

14:2 For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables.

Please consider the following chart:

Matters of Personal Conviction

(Things not wrong in and of themselves).

Paul's examples in Romans 14:

1. Eating of meats - (One eats all things; another eats only vegetables).

2. Observing of days - (One personally observes a day; another esteems every day alike).

Examples in our time:

1. Wearing the covering - (Out of conviction from 1 Cor. 11:1-16, one lady wears it during worship; another does not).
2. A woman speaking during the Bible class - (1 Cor. 14:34-35; one speaks during Bible class; another does not).
3. Killing for the government - (All agree that the government has a right to do it. One in good conscience does it for the government; another, because of conscience does not do it).
4. Doing work on Sunday - (One is convicted that honoring the Lord's day forbids it; another is not).
5. Putting up a tree at Christmas time - (One is convinced that it sets a bad example; another is not).

14:3 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.

1. "Let not him who eats despise him" - Let not the one who eats all things view with contempt the one who does not eat.
2. "And let not him who does not eat judge him who eats" - The non-meat eater would be apt to judge the other as sinning when he ate meat which had previously been offered to idols.
3. "For God has received him" - God has received the strong as well as the weak.
 1. When God approves, no one has the right to disapprove.

14:4 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.

1. "Judge" - In the sense of condemning; i.e, the weak or the strong condemning the other.
2. "Another's servant" - We should not judge (condemn) one another in these matters of personal conviction.
 1. In many things, one's personal convictions are between him and God.
3. "To his own master..." - In all matters of personal conviction, each one of us stand approved or disapproved only to the Lord.
 1. One may stand or fall, but it will be by the judgment of Christ and not by the judgment of others.
4. "For God is able to make him stand" - By His grace we are what we are. 1 Cor. 15:10

14:5 One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind.

1. "One person esteems one day above another" - To personally regard a day is alright. In other words, if a brother wanted to set aside a special day for prayer and devotion, it is his prerogative.
 1. However, it is wrong to bind it on others (Gal. 4:10-11; Col. 2:16) as do some denominational churches.
2. "Another esteems every day alike" - The whole Jewish system which had a multitude of special days has been nailed to the cross.
 1. The only day with special significance under the gospel system is the first day of every week. Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2
3. "Let each be fully convinced in his own mind." - Each one must study for himself.
 1. It would be wrong to think that we should not Scripturally determine the truth on matters of personal conviction.
 2. Remember, sinful practices and doctrinal error are not under consideration here. For example, "If one is fully persuaded that he can (insert any sin for doctrinal error) with no pang of conscience, would God accept him?" Certainly not!

14:6 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.

1. Each in good conscience does so in honor to God. Both are honestly trying to serve and honor God.
 1. While one or the other is mistaken in his convictions, both are doing what, in the final analysis, is permitted either way and, thus, neither have sinned by their actions.
2. We ask again, Can a person get drunk, "to the Lord?" Can one commit adultery "to the Lord"? Can one preach error "to the Lord?" Of course, the answer is, "Absolutely not!"
 1. I ask such questions because many brethren try to use Rom. 14 to find a loophole for their sin or error. Also, they often attempt to use Rom. 14 to find a way to maintain fellowship with a brother who insists on teaching error.

14:7 For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself.

1. "For none of us lives to himself" - The Christian does not live a self-centered or self-seeking life.
2. "And no one dies to himself" - At death, the spirit returns to God who gave it. Eccl. 12:7
 1. The Christian lives and dies to the Lord (as shown in the next verses); that is, in every way he promotes the Lord's honor and glory.

14:8 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.

1. Whether living or dead, we are the Lord's property. We belong to Him, and whatever we do in life or in death, we do to His honor and majesty.

14:9 For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

1. Christ died on the cross, arose from the dead, and now lives at the right hand of the Father (Mark 16:19; Acts 7:56; Heb. 1:3)
2. Through His death and resurrection, He became Lord of all.
 1. By His death and resurrection, He secured the right to exercise Lordship over both the dead and the living.

14:10 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.

1. "By why do you judge your brother?" - This cannot be applied to all matters of judging.
 1. It cannot refer to sinful practices or doctrinal differences, for it would contradict Jesus, John, and Paul himself. John 7:24; 2 John 9-11; 1 Cor. 5:10-12.
2. "Or why do you show contempt for your brother?" - Why do you look down on your brother as someone unworthy of fellowship?
3. "For we shall all stand..." - John 5:22; Matt. 25:31-46; 2 Cor. 5:10
 1. The reason we cannot judge our brethren in such matters is because Christ Himself is the judge.

14:11 For it is written: "As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God."

1. From Isa. 45:23. See also Phil. 2:9-11.
 1. "As I live, says the Lord" - "As surely as I live, says the Lord" (NIV).

1. Thus, as certain as God is alive, every one shall bow and confess to Him.
2. We can either willingly bow and confess to Him now, or we will be forced to do so at the judgment.

14:12 So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.

1. Hence, we will not be judged as a church or as a family.
 1. Also, no one will get lost in the crowd and not be judged. Psalm 33:13-15
2. Christ Himself will judge everyone. If we judge (in the sense of justifying or condemning), we usurp the prerogative of Christ.

14:13 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.

1. "Therefore let us not judge one another anymore" - As we mentioned, this is limited within the bounds of the things under consideration in this context.
 1. Leave all judgment to Christ in matters of personal conviction.
2. "Not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall" - These two expressions are very similar in meaning; the last one was probably given to explain the first.
 1. We should be careful not to influence a brother to go against his conscience or to drive him away.

14:14 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.

1. "There is nothing unclean of itself" - The Mosical distinctions were done away in Christ. Col. 2:14-17
 1. Under the gospel system, there are no foods which are unclean. 1 Tim. 4:1-5
2. "But to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean" - Something clean can become unclean in the eyes of the one who so regards it, and if he violates his conscience in the matter, he thus condemns himself.
 1. Our conception can convert right into wrong, but never wrong into right.
 2. One's own conception of sin or error, cannot change it into purity or truth.

14:15 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.

1. "Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food" - He is injured by your action because he sees you doing something he thinks is wrong.
2. "You are no longer walking in love" - Your behavior is not regulated by the principle of love.
3. "Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died."
 1. How could the eating of certain foods by the strong destroy another?
 1. It does so when it influences one to go against his conscience.
 2. It does so when it forces him from fellowship with God's people.
4. We should not nullify the death of Christ by destroying a brother over indifferent matters.

14:16 Therefore do not let your good be spoken of as evil;

1. Use your liberty so as to prove beneficial for all, and it will not be evil spoken of.
2. The act of eating various foods is not wrong (Paul here calls it good), but if others believe it to be wrong, they could speak of it as evil.
 1. It would thus destroy the influence of the strong, and be an occasion of reproach both to him and the cause of truth.
 2. It thus behooves the strong to carefully consider his actions in the presence of the weak.

14:17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

1. The kingdom of God is not made up of restrictions and non-restrictions on food and drink.
 1. What one eats or drinks does not affect (except in circumstances where the eating might lead another astray), his standing or relation to God.
2. "Righteousness" - Attaining a state of justification and living righteously.
3. "Peace" - It is a kingdom of peace; its citizens have peace within their hearts. Its citizens endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
4. "Joy in the Holy Spirit" - A happiness instilled and nourished by the Holy Spirit. It is a joy inexpressible and full of glory. 1 Pet. 1:8

14:18 For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by men.

1. This verse shows the importance of application of things mentioned in this chapter.
 1. We serve Christ as we are instructed in His Word. This is the only way we can know we are acceptable to God.
2. When we secure acceptance with God, the approval of men (i.e., of our brethren) will follow.
 1. We should never, like the Pharisees, reverse the order.

14:19 Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.

1. They were to thus avoid strife (which results from disputes over doubtful things), and follow after things which promote peace and edification.
 1. They were to be constructive, not destructive, in the dealings with each other and thus working together toward peace and mutual upbuilding.
 2. However, we dare not espouse a false doctrine in order to have peace and unity.

14:20 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.

1. "Do not destroy..." - Do not cause him to stumble (to go against his conscience) or drive him away.
 1. The word "destroy" here is not the same word for "destroy" in verse 15. Here it means to "loosen down, or weaken."
 2. Hence, do not for the sake of food tear down or weaken the work of God (a brother in Christ), which would be the opposite of edifying or building up.
2. "All things indeed are pure" - Again, he is referring to the things under consideration in this context. He is not referring to sin or error.
3. "But it is evil for the man who eats with offense" - It becomes evil for the one who in eating violates his conscience.
 1. Also, perhaps this refers to the strong who influences the weak to do wrong. In other words, it is evil for the one, who in eating gives offense.

14:21 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.

14:21-23 - Always pursue the safe course, the course of faith.

1. "By which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak" - Under any of these conditions, it is wrong to engage in things which are indifferent in and of themselves.

1. Even though one does not see anything wrong in a given practice (congregational or otherwise), when it becomes an occasion of offense (a falling into sin) to others, he must abstain from it.
2. We should abstain from things which might weaken or cause a brother to go against his conscience.
2. One needs to be willing to surrender his rights for another's good.

14:22 Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.

1. "Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God." - Some things are between us and God.
 1. In matters of eating and drinking, let it be a matter between you and God, and not between you and your brother.
2. "Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves" - We are happy when we do what is right. Unhappy when we don't.
 1. One is happy indeed when he does not bring condemnation on himself (or others) in the things he judges commendable before God.

14:23 But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin.

1. "But he who doubts is condemned if he eats" - The one who has questions (doubts) as to the lawfulness of a practice should follow the safe course and not engage in something which he feels might be wrong.
2. "Because he does not eat from faith" - If he engages in something which he questions (as to its right or wrong), he violates his own conscience and thus condemns himself. 1 John 3:20
3. "For whatever is not from faith is sin" - Every act that does not spring from faith is sin, and every act that does spring from "the faith" cannot properly be a matter of one's faith. Rom. 10:17
 1. To live in peace with God and himself, one must always do what he has determined to be lawful and right (his own faith) from the Word of God (the faith).
 2. When one engages in something he does not believe to be right (matters of indifference or otherwise), he sins.
 3. Furthermore, when one engages in something he has doubts and questions about (matters of indifference or otherwise), he sins.
4. Application of the principles in Rom. 14 to instrumental music in worship (as well as many other practices):
 1. It should not be used:
 1. When it has not been proven to be lawful.
 2. When it causes a brother to go against his conscience.
 3. When it disrupts peace and severs fellowship.
 4. When there are questions and doubts in the minds of those engaging in it.

15:1 We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

1. "We then who are strong" - Verses 1-7 are linked to the thoughts in chapter 14.
2. "Ought to bear with the scruples of the weak" - "Ought to bear the infirmities of the weak" (KJV)
 1. "To bear" - Literally, "to put one's shoulder under"; hence, to carry, to bear.
 2. It means more than "bearing with or tolerating," but involves shouldering their burdens along with them.
3. "And not to please ourselves" - We should not be concerned only with our own interest, but with the interest of others. Phil. 2:4; 1 Cor. 10:24
 1. The pleasing of ourselves above and beyond any regard for how it affects others is what is condemned here.

15:2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification.

1. "Please his neighbor for his good" - In context, it refers to a brother; however, application can be made to everyone.
 1. Jesus in the story of the good Samaritan said, "Go, and do thou likewise." (Luke 10:30-37)
2. "Leading to edification" - To lead others toward spiritual edification is what's important in this life. Eph. 4:29; 1 Cor. 10:33; 14:12,26

Rom 15:3 For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me."

1. "Christ did not please Himself" - 2 Cor. 8:9
 1. He lived and died for the benefit of all mankind. John 15:13
2. "The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me." - From Psalm 69:9. Psalm 69 is one of the six Psalms often quoted in the N.T. The others are: 2, 22, 89, 110, and 118.
 1. "The reproaches of those who reproached You (the Father) fell on Me (Christ)."
 2. This shows that Christ pleased not Himself, otherwise, He would have let those reproaches fall on the Father.
 3. Those evil Jews hated both Jesus and the Father (John 15:24); however, their abuses and vengeance fell on Jesus.

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

1. "For" - This shows that the above Scripture, as well as all, are applicable to us as well.
2. "Whatever things were written before" - The Old Testament Scriptures.
3. "Were written for our learning" - Thus, a study of the Old Testament is good. 1 Cor. 10:6, 11
 1. The Old Testament Scriptures are there, not only for the benefit of the people who lived under them, but for us as well.
 2. The Old Testament Scriptures teach us by example, principle, type, prophecy, etc.
4. "That we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures" - The Scriptures produce patience (perseverance) and give comfort (encouragement).
5. "Might have hope" - Without the Scriptures (those who do not study and rely on them), there is no hope of being saved eternally.
 1. The holy Scriptures have the solution for every emergency and problem from the cradle to the grave.

Rom 15:5 Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus,

Paul now makes a request (prayer) to God for them.

1. "May the God of patience and comfort" - Remember it is God (a Person) who gives the patience and comfort.
 1. The Scriptures themselves are not to be worshiped; they are only the means by which God gives patience and comfort.
2. "Grant you to be like-minded toward one another" - Christians need to be like-minded (of the same disposition and will) as they live and work together.
 1. Thus, he is asking God to help them to do the things required in chapter 14. See also Rom. 12:16; Phil. 1:27; 2:2; 1 Cor. 1:10
3. "According to Christ Jesus" - In accord with His example and will.

1. Thus, Paul is beseeching God, the great giver of patience and comfort, to grant them to be of one mind as they follow Christ.

15:6 that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Thus, Christians should be of one mind with one another so they can unitedly and harmoniously praise God and our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. "And one mouth" - Christians, both the strong and weak, should be perfectly united with one voice praising and honoring God. Heb. 13:15
 1. No where in the N.T. are we told to praise God with a mechanical instrument.

5:7 Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.

1. This refers back to 14:1-3. Thus, the division of the chapter should have been here because it closes Paul's comments on the subject of receiving one another.
2. "Just as Christ also received us" - Just as Christ received us to the praise of God, we ought to accept one another to His praise and honor.
 1. Thus, our action is based on the action of Christ. Col. 3:13
 2. To reject the weak brother runs completely contrary to Christ's will and example.
3. When we receive one another in the way as revealed in 14:1-15:6, God is glorified.

15:8 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,

1. "Now I say Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision" - "For I say that Christ hath been made a minister" (ASV).
 1. Although Jesus was a minister to the Jews, most of them rejected Him. John 1:11
2. "For the truth of God" - He came in behalf of (for the welfare and benefit) of the truth of God.
3. "To confirm the promises made to the fathers" - "To show God's truthfulness in carrying out the promises made to the forefathers" (Goodspeed).
 1. Christ came to fulfill those great promises. 2 Cor. 1:20

15:9 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."

1. "And that" - This further explains why Christ came as a minister or servant.
2. "And that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy" - Those great promises God made to the Jewish fathers also included the Gentiles.
 1. Mercy to the Gentiles (salvation, repentance to life) was an integral part of the promises made to the fathers and fulfilled in Christ. Acts 11:18
3. Paul quotes several passages which show that the Gentiles were to be included in the gospel system.
4. "For this reason I will confess to You among the Gentiles" - From 2 Sam. 22:50; Psalm 18:49
 1. Paul quotes David who represents himself as confessing and singing to God among the Gentiles.

15:10-11 And again he says: "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people!" And again: "Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples!"

1. From Deut. 32:43; Psalm 117:1
2. In verse 10, the Gentiles are represented as being glad among the Jews.
 1. Thus, the Gentiles were to rejoice and praise God along with the Jews.
3. In verse 11, the word "Laud" means "To acclaim praise, to extol."
 1. The Gentiles were to praise the Lord (the one true God) along with all other peoples.

2. Thus, the design of the verses are the same - to establish mutual acceptance of each other.

15:12 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."

1. From Isa. 11:1, 6-10.
 1. Thus, again, the O.T. Scriptures clearly showed that the Gentiles were to have part in the gospel system.
 2. We do not look for a literal fulfillment of Isa. 11:6-9 (and other such passages) as the Jehovah's Witnesses and Armstrong's group teach.
2. Thus, quotations from the law, prophets, and the Psalms establish that God had promised salvation to the Gentiles along with the Jews.
 1. In the Messiah (the root of Jesse), the Gentiles would also submit and have hope.

15:13 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.

Paul makes a beautiful request as he moves toward the conclusion of the epistle.

1. "The God of hope" - God is the author, source, means, and fountain of true hope.
2. "Fill you with joy" - The Christian has manifold blessings of which to rejoice. Rom. 5:1-5; 8:1-2
3. "And peace" - Christians have a peace which passes all understanding. Phil. 4:6-7; Heb. 6:18-19
4. "In believing" - As one continues to believe, or because he believes.
5. "That you may abound in hope" - When filled with joy and peace by believing, our hope increases.
6. "By the power of the Holy Spirit" - The power of the Holy Spirit makes this hope possible.
 1. The Holy Spirit plays an important part in making this hope possible because He has revealed the will of God to us. 1 Cor. 2:10

15:14 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.

Notice the three things Paul had confidence (was persuaded) regarding them:

1. "Full of goodness" - Kindness, generosity of heart and actions. Gal. 5:22; Eph. 5:9
2. "Filled with all knowledge" - This comes through study and meditation on the Word of God, and by means of experience in living the Christian life. 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Pet. 1:1-2; 2 Pet. 3:18
3. "Able also to admonish one another" - Instead of depending on one man (the preacher), every saint should be capable of admonishing others. Col. 3:16; 1 Thess. 5:14
 1. Unlike the Hebrews (Heb. 5:12-14), the Roman Christians had grown to the point where they could mutually teach and admonish one another.

15:15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on some points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God,

1. In spite of their maturity, he had to boldly write to them regarding certain points.
 1. Some in Corinth were accusing Paul of being bold in his letters, but weak in presence (2 Cor. 10:10).
 2. However, Paul was both gentle and bold as the need arose.
2. "As reminding you" - 2 Pet. 1:13; 3:1
 1. Most of our teaching is simply reminding people of what they already know.
3. "Because of the grace given to me by God" - As shown in the next verse, this refers to his apostleship.

15:16 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.

1. "A minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles" - Acts 9:15; 22:21; 26:17-20; Rom. 11:13; Gal. 1:16; 2:7-8; Eph. 3:7-8; Col. 1:25-27; 1 Tim. 2:7
2. "Ministering the gospel of God" - All Christian must do the same. 2 Tim. 2:2; 1 Pet. 3:15; Luke 14:23
 1. The word "ministering" is from a word meaning "one who does priestly service."
3. "That the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable" - By preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, he converted many to God, and these converts were his offering to God.
 1. Thus, Paul saw his apostleship as a sacred duty (ministering in the fashion of a priest) which resulted in various Gentiles being offered as an acceptable sacrifice.
4. "Sanctified by the Holy Spirit" - If it were not for the work of the Holy Spirit, none would be set apart to God.
 1. The Holy Spirit sanctifies through the inspired Word which was preached by Paul. John 17:17; Eph. 5:26; 2 Thess. 2:13-14

15:17 Therefore I have reason to glory in Christ Jesus in the things which pertain to God.

1. "Therefore" - This word connects the preceding (his ministering to the Gentiles) which was his reason to glory in Christ Jesus.
2. "Glory in Christ Jesus" - "Through Christ Jesus" (KJV)
 1. Paul's cause of boasting was not in himself.
3. "In the things which pertain to God" - In the things he had done as an apostle to the glory, honor, and praise of God.
 1. He did not glory in his Jewish heritage, but only in those spiritual things which are in Christ Jesus. Phil. 3:3-11

15:18 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;

1. Paul certainly would not boast regarding another's labor as though it were his own. 2 Cor. 10:13-17
2. "In word and deed" - Paul both taught and set a good example before the Gentiles. 2 Thess. 3:7-9
3. "To make the Gentiles obedient" - Paul was Christ's agent for bringing about obedience among the Gentiles, and in that way Christ worked through him in word and deed.
 1. Paul would boast only in that which Christ had worked through him.

15:19 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.

1. "In mighty signs and wonders" - Paul's credentials as an apostle. 2 Cor. 12:12
2. "By the power of the Spirit of God" - Both Jesus and the apostles attributed their power to work miracles to the Holy Spirit. Matt. 12:28; Heb. 2:3-4
3. "Illyricum" - The territory lying between Italy and Macedonia and Achaia.
 1. "From Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum" shows the wide scope of territory Paul covered in his teaching.
4. "I have fully preached the gospel of Christ" - He always preached the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:20, 26-27), but he probably means here that he fully fulfilled his mission by preaching in many localities.
 1. It staggers the imagination as to how much this man was able to accomplish in his life.
 2. He always attributed his success to the Lord.

15:20 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,

1. It was Paul's main aim to preach the gospel where Christ had never been named.
 1. He did not want to be a rival or competitor of other preachers.
2. It is not wrong to preach where Christ had been named. Some must do the "watering." 1 Cor. 3:6-11
 1. It is sad that many today have the opposite spirit of the beloved apostle Paul. The three most common questions for many preachers as they consider moving to a congregation are:
 1. Do you have elders?
 2. Are you self-supporting?
 3. Do you have a preacher's home?
 2. Often if a church does not meet this criterion, they are not willing to move there.
3. Paul's work for the most part consisted in planting churches. He left the watering in the hands of others.
 1. While there is a divine place for watering, planting is an indispensable part in carrying out the great commission.
 2. When there is no planting, there soon comes a time when there is no longer a need for watering.

15:21 but as it is written: "To whom He was not announced, they shall see; And those who have not heard shall understand."

1. What Paul did was in keeping with the Scriptures as written in Isa. 52:15.
 1. Isa. 52:15 has reference to the conversion of the heathen, the very work to which Paul was referring.
2. Thus, Paul's main mission was to provide an opportunity to hear and understand the gospel to those who had never been taught.

15:22 For this reason I also have been much hindered from coming to you.

1. "For this reason" - Because his preaching where Christ had never been named had been so extensive and time consuming, he had been hindered from coming to them.

15:23 But now no longer having a place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come to you,

1. "No longer having a place in these parts" - He did not have further opportunities in those places to preach where Christ had never been named.
2. "And having a great desire these many years to come to you" - For many years he had a deep longing to visit the Christians in Rome. Rom. 1:8-13; 15:32

15:24 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.

1. "Whenever I journey to Spain" - Paul himself had traveled to nearly all of the parts of the then known world. He now wanted to go to the far West.
 1. Peter, it appears, was working in the other direction. 1 Pet. 5:13
 2. They were to "go into all the world," and it appears they did. Col. 1:23
2. "And to be helped on my way there by you" - This means he wanted them to help provide support for him in his journey and preaching in Spain. 3 John 5-8
3. "If first I may enjoy your company for a while" - Before he went into Spain, he wanted to first enjoy for a limited time the richness of their fellowship.

15:25 But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints.

1. Before he went into Spain, he had another mission to perform.
 1. He was going to Jerusalem to deliver contributions from the Gentile churches to the poor saints in Jerusalem.

15:26 For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem.

1. From this and other passages, we know which churches were making contributions for the poor saints in Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8:1; 9:2), how the funds were to be raised (1 Cor. 16:1-2), and how it was to be taken to Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16:3-4; 2 Cor. 8:16-24).
2. Please notice the following chart on "SAINTS ONLY."

SINGING

Matt. 26:30 - "sung"

Mark 14:26 - "sung"

Acts 16:25 - "sang"

Rom. 15:9 - "sing"

1 Cor. 14:15 - "sing"

Eph. 5:19 - "singing"

Col. 3:16 - "singing"

Heb. 2:12 - "sing"

James 5:13 - "sing"

CHURCH RELIEF

Acts 2:44-45 - "all that believed"

Acts 4:32-34 - "them that believed"

Acts 6:1-6 - "disciples...widows"

Acts 11:27-30 - "the brethren"

Rom. 15:25-26 - "the saints"

1 Cor. 16:1-4 - "the saints"

2 Cor. 8:4 - "the saints"

2 Cor. 9:1 - "the saints"

1 Tim. 5:16 - "widow indeed" (saint)

To establish "general" benevolence, one must:

- (1) Give another passage.
- (2) Show that one of the above does authorize it.
- (3) Admit that it is done without Scriptural authority.

15:27 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.

1. "It pleased them indeed" - The Gentile churches were delighted to be able to share with the poor saints at Jerusalem.
2. "They are their debtors" - Thus, he now gives the reason for the Gentile Christians helping the poor saints in Jerusalem.
3. "Partakers of their spiritual things" - The spiritual things had their origin among the Jews.
 1. See also Rom. 11:17-18.
4. "Their duty is also to minister to them in material things" - Since the Jews had shared the blessings of the gospel with the Gentiles, it was only natural for the Gentiles to now share with the Jews their physical blessings.
 1. In 1 Cor. 9:11, Paul makes this same argument for the support of those who preach the gospel.

15:28 Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them this fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain.

1. "Have sealed to them" - He speaks of when he had secured it to them (the contribution to the poor saints in Jerusalem).
 1. To seal a writing, contract, deed, etc., was to authenticate it, to make it sure.
 2. Paul was going to Jerusalem, himself, to see that it was placed securely in the hands of the poor saints.
2. "This fruit" - The contribution to the poor saints. The fruit (benevolence) which the Gentile churches had produced.
3. "I shall go by way of you to Spain" - Again, he mentions his desire and plans to go there; however, we have no record of his accomplishing it.

15:29 But I know that when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

1. "In the fullness of the blessing of the gospel" - He would come to Rome with full and abundant blessings supplied through the gospel of Christ. Rom. 1:11-12
 1. Though he later went as a prisoner, he was able to preach to all (Acts 28:30-31), and no doubt to impart spiritual gifts to many (Rom. 1:11-12).
 2. His mission was accomplished, though differently than he had expected.

15:30 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,

1. "Now I beg you, brethren" - Paul often incited his brethren to good works and so should we. Heb. 10:24
2. "Through the Lord Jesus Christ" - He makes his appeal through (on account of, on the basis of) the Lord Jesus Christ (because of His authority and will).
3. "Through the love of the Spirit" - Also, he makes his appeal on the basis of the love which the Holy Spirit compels to be in us.
4. "Strive together" - Literally, "To carry on a combat or conflict in company with another."
 1. He was striving (wrestling) in prayers and wanted others to participate in the same. 2 Cor. 1:11
5. "For me" - Paul often asked for the prayers of the saints and so should we. Eph. 6:18

15:31-32 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, that I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed together with you.

Paul asks the Roman Christians to make four requests for him in their prayers:

1. "That I may be delivered from those in Judea who do not believe" - His request here is the same as in 2 Thess. 3:1-2.
 1. The evil Jews in Jerusalem would have put Paul to death, but he was delivered by the Roman soldiers. Acts 21:27-32; 23:12, 23-24
 2. Thus, by God's providence he was delivered from those who did not believe.
2. "That my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints" - Paul feared that the poor saints in Jerusalem, through their Jewish prejudices, might decline relief from Gentiles.
 1. It appears that Paul was not disappointed, and the contribution served to cement the universal spirit of brotherhood among the saints.
3. "That I may come to you with joy" - Paul went there by an all expense paid trip by the Roman government! Acts 25:10-11; 26:32; 27:1-28:14
 1. "By the will of God" - We can do something only if it is the Lord's will. James 4:15
4. "And may be refreshed together with you" - No doubt Paul was able to spend time with many of these saints who had read and studied his epistle. Acts 28:30-31
 1. Paul was refreshed by the Roman saints before he arrived in Rome. Acts 28:14-15

15:33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

1. God is the author of peace and the One who imparts it.
 1. Paul often made this request. No greater blessing could be wished upon anyone.
2. "Amen" - "May it be so"; that is, may the God of peace be with all of you.

16:1 I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea,

1. "I commend to you Phoebe our sister" - Mentioned only here, evidently Phoebe was going to Rome on some type of business and Paul was commending her to them.
 1. Perhaps she carried Paul's epistle to the Roman Christians.
2. "Servant of the church" - Literally, "deaconess of the church."
 1. For one to be in the office of a deacon, he must be the husband of one wife. 1 Tim. 3:12
 2. All of us are servants (ministers, deacons, 1 Pet. 4:10; Heb. 6:10; 2 Tim. 2:24; etc.) but those in the office of deacons are chosen ahead of time so that when a need arises, they can immediately attend to it.
 3. No doubt Phoebe was a deaconess in the sense of being a diligent worker and/or in the sense of being appointed to various tasks by the church.
3. "Cenchrea" - Mentioned only here and in Acts 18:18, Cenchrea was a port-town about nine miles east of

16:2 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.

1. They were to give her a warm welcome as a Christian and as characteristic of saints.
2. "Assist her in whatever business she has need of you" - Paul knew she would be involved in helping saints and they should help her in that endeavor.
3. "For indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also" - She had assisted and ministered to many, including Paul.
 1. No doubt many traveling Christians had passed through Cenchrea, and Phoebe had taken advantage of the opportunity to be of service to them as well as to Paul.

16:3-4 Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

1. Priscilla and Aquila (a married couple) were tentmakers who traveled throughout the Roman Empire preaching the gospel. Acts 18:2-3, 18-19, 24-26; 1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Tim. 4:19
 1. Their business had probably taken them back to Rome at this time.
2. Just when they endangered their own lives for the life of Paul, we are not told.
 1. Perhaps it was during the uproar at Ephesus. Acts 19:23-41
3. We need more husband and wife teams who do a great service for the Lord as did Priscilla and Aquila.

16:5 Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Greet my beloved Epaphroditus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia to Christ.

1. "Likewise greet the church that is in their house" - The Roman Christians were to greet the church which met in the house of Priscilla and Aquila.
 1. We likewise, are to "Greet the friends by name" (3 John 14).
 2. Churches met in many different places in New Testament times. Acts 19:9; 20:8; James 2:2
 1. The word "assembly" in James 2:2 is literally, "synagogue," a word which always stood for the building and not the people.
 3. Jesus showed that the "place" where one worshiped would have no significance. John 4:20-24
2. Epaphroditus was the first convert in Achaia now living in Rome.

16:6 Greet Mary, who labored much for us.

1. There are several "Marys" mentioned in the New Testament; e.g., Matt. 1:16; 27:61; Luke 8:2; 10:39; Acts 12:12. This one is praised for her labor.

16:7 Greet Andronicus and Junia, my countrymen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

1. "My countrymen" - "My kinsmen" (KJV). Paul's fellow Jews. Rom. 9:3; 16:11,21
2. "My fellow prisoners" - At some time, they were imprisoned with Paul for the sake of Christ.
3. "Who are of note among the apostles" - This does not imply that Andronicus and Junia were apostles, but were well recognized and honored by the twelve apostles.
4. "Who also were in Christ before me" - They had become Christians prior to Paul's conversion.

16:8-9 Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord. Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved.

1. "Our fellow worker in Christ" - This suggests that Urbanus had been a teacher of the gospel of Christ and helper of the saints.
2. "My beloved" - Both Amplias and Stachys were special friends to Paul.

16:10 Greet Apelles, approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus.

1. "Approved in Christ" - "Approved" is from the Greek word "dokimos" (approved, accepted).
 1. In 1 Cor. 9:29, Paul used the same word, but with the negative "adokimos" (unapproved, rejected).
 2. Apelles had passed through some very trying circumstances (tests or trials) with success.
2. "Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus" - Notice Paul didn't say, "Great Aristobulus and his household."
 1. Thus, Aristobulus himself was not a Christian, or had already died.

16:11 Greet Herodion, my countryman. Greet those who are of the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord.

1. "Greet Herodion, my countryman" - Herodion was a Jewish Christian.
2. "Household of Narcissus who are in the Lord" - Some in the household of Narcissus were Christians, some were not.
 1. Being one "who is in the Lord" is the greatest privilege and honor on this earth.

16:12 Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, who have labored in the Lord. Greet the beloved Persis, who labored much in the Lord.

1. All of the names in this verse are feminine in the Greek.
2. These women are praised for their labor (works) in Christ.
3. "Greet the beloved Persis, who labored much in the Lord" - Persis was loved by more than just Paul, and was a hard worker for the cause of Christ.

16:13 Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

1. A "Rufus" is mentioned also in Mark 15:21 who may or may not be the same.
 1. Rufus was an eminent, excellent, or choice Christian.
2. "His mother and mine" - No doubt on several occasions Rufus' mother had "mothered" Paul.

16:14 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren who are with them.

1. Five names are here mentioned who were either a small church or from the same household or neighborhood.

16:15 Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.

1. Another five are mentioned all of which are saints, Christians, brethren in the Lord.

16:16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ greet you.

1. "Holy kiss" - Also mentioned in 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:26, and "kiss of love" in 1 Pet. 5:14

1. The Greek word for "kiss" can also be translated "an affectionate touch"; thus, a hand-shake fulfills the command.
2. The greeting should be saintly, without hypocrisy.
3. The apostle by his command ("Greet one another with a holy kiss") did not create the custom. Where the custom did not exist, his command is not designed to create it.
2. "The churches of Christ greet you" - The congregations in different localities sent greetings.
 1. This is the only verse in the N.T. which has the specific expression "church(es) of Christ," although the thought is in other places. 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1

16:17 Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them.

1. "Note" - "Mark" (KJV). This word means, "to look out for, to be aware of." It also carries the idea of "to publicly point out." 2 Thess. 3:14
2. "Who cause divisions" - Those who cause dissensions, quarrels, disputes which cause separation and breaking off into parties or sects.
3. "Offenses" - Those who cause occasions of stumbling, hindrances. Rom. 14:13,21
4. "Contrary to the doctrine" - 2 John 9
 1. "Let everyone take his beliefs and practice strictly from the Bible, let him abandon all creeds and party names, and let him see the sinfulness of divisions, and cherish a profound respect for the word of God." (Moses E. Lard)
5. "And avoid them" - 2 Thess. 3:6,14; Titus 3:10
 1. Turn away from them and have no fellowship with them in their destructive ways.

16:18 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.

1. "Do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly" - They do not serve the Lord, but their own fleshly appetites and interest. Phil. 3:19
2. "By smooth words" - By words that are smoothly used with the appealing powers of speech.
3. "Flattering speech" - "Fair speeches" (KJV). The expression carried the idea of "flattery" in the original.
 1. They deceive by smooth words and flattering speech, the very kind of speech that many desire of their preachers. 2 Tim. 4:3-4
4. "Deceive the hearts of the simple" - They easily deceive the minds of the naive and unsuspecting.
 1. There are many warnings in the Scriptures against the deceptions of false teachers.
 2. To say the least, far too many in our time are being deceived by the smooth and flattering speech of their own preachers.

16:19 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.

1. The faith and obedience of the Roman Christians was widely known (Rom. 1:8), and Paul rejoiced in this fact.
2. "I want you to be wise in what is good" - We should be wise in promoting and doing good.
3. "And simply concerning evil" - The word "simple" means: "1) unmixed, pure as in wines or metals 2) of the mind, without a mixture of evil, free from guile, innocent, simple." (Logos Enhanced Strong's Lexicon)
 1. We should not get "mixed up" with anything that is evil.

16:20 And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

1. "Will crush Satan under your feet shortly" - This refers to either when the kingdom was proven to be an eternal one (as shown in the book of Revelation), or simply to their victory over false teachers and evil at that time.
 1. We share in Christ's victory over Satan (John 12:31-33; Col. 2:14-16; Heb. 2:14-15) because we have remission of sins.
 2. Every time a Christian escapes a temptation or overcomes a trial, Satan is crushed under his feet.
 3. The final crushing of Satan will take place when Christ comes again. Rev. 2:10

16:21 Timothy, my fellow worker, and Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my countrymen, greet you.

As Paul brings his epistle to a close, some of his friends and co-workers send greetings.

1. Paul said he had no one like minded as Timothy. Phil. 2:19-22
2. Perhaps "countrymen" (kinsmen) refers only to Jews (vs. 7, 11; 9:3); however, there are Jewish names in his salutation to whom he did not refer as his kinsmen.

16:22 I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle, greet you in the Lord.

1. This shows that Paul dictated this epistle to a scribe. This provides for absolute accuracy. See also 1 Cor. 16:21; 2 Thess. 3:17; Col. 4:18

16:23 Gaius, my host and the host of the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the treasurer of the city, greets you, and Quartus, a brother.

1. Gaius provided living quarters for Paul and for any of the church who needed it.
 1. There are several with the name "Gaius" who are mentioned in the New Testament: Gaius of Corinth (1 Cor. 1:14), of Derbe (Acts 20:4), of Macedonia (Acts 19:29). There is no way of knowing if any of these, or some other, is the one mentioned by Paul.
2. There is an "Erastus" mentioned in Acts 19:22 and 2 Tim. 4:20. Paul specifically mentions the one here as the treasurer of the city.
3. "Quartus a brother" - The designation "a brother" is of supreme honor and worth for anyone.

16:24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

1. Mentioned for the third time. Vs. 20; 15:33, and one other in 16:27

16:25-26 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 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;

1. Paul closes with beautiful praise to God for His redemption through Christ. He recites again in brief the story of salvation as unfolded in the divine history of redemption.
2. We have in Paul's final benediction (doxology):
 1. The gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ - The good news and proclamation of Jesus Christ.
 2. The revelation of the mystery - It was once hidden, but now made known or revealed.
 3. Kept secret since the world began - It had been hidden from the beginning, but now has been revealed by the unfolding of the gospel plan.
 4. By the prophetic Scriptures has been made known to all nations - It was the plan foretold by the prophets in the Old Testament Scriptures and now made know to all nations.
 5. According to the command of the everlasting God - God Himself willed it to happen.

6. For the obedience of the faith - God's design or purpose was to produce obedience to Him.
3. The Romans had received, believed, and obeyed the gospel, and Paul was now praying that God would confirm and establish them even to the end.
 1. May the same be true of us as well. May the Eternal God strengthen and establish us through means of the glorious gospel of Christ, so that some day we can live with Him forever.

16:27 to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.

1. So be it! Amen and Amen!