

BUILDING FOUNDATIONS
ROMANS



Lesson 1

Introduction – Written by The Apostle Paul

In the previous study of Acts we discovered that the New Testament is a collection of many other books which the Holy Spirit had inspired men to write to the church for the purpose of unfolding the results of Jesus' fulfillment of the eternal plan of redemption. At first, these books were written as letters to churches or individuals. The Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write many of these letters. Although they started out as personal epistles to specific people and churches, God had a much broader purpose in mind and inspired these men to preserve and collect the letters to distribute to all of the churches throughout the ages. Today they are gathered together, called the New Testament, and provide a clear revelation of the facts of spiritual truth that is now true of every believer because Jesus went to the cross and fulfilled the eternal plan. The letters that Paul wrote were mostly written to the churches he had started, but he also wrote to churches started by others. The Book of Romans is one of those letters that Paul wrote.

Because the Holy Spirit had laid on Paul's heart to write to a church he had never visited or had spent any time with before, Paul desired to make sure they were clear on what the big picture of salvation consisted of. So, in the first four chapters, Paul reveals the process for going from someone who is "under the wrath of God" to becoming someone who actually "obtains the righteousness of God." In Chapters 5-8, he lays out the details of what obtaining the righteousness of God consists of spiritually. In the second half of the book, Chapters 9-16, Paul reveals the daily living that is in line with who we have become spiritually.

Romans 1:1-7 – Paul’s Greeting

There are three main characters that Paul focuses on in these first seven verses: himself, God, and the Roman believers to whom he was writing.

- Verses 1-2: Regarding himself, Paul calls himself a “bondservant of Jesus Christ,” “called to be an Apostle,” and that he is “separated to the gospel of God.”

The reason these three things were true of Paul was because the “gospel of God,” the “Eternal Plan of Redemption” and its fulfillment has been the center of God’s plans and purposes for mankind from eternity past.

We saw how God foreordained the plan in eternity past, how He began setting the stage for the plan to be fulfilled in Genesis 1 with creation, how He, when it was the right time, sent Jesus to earth in the form of a man to fulfill the plan, and now we see Him raising up people like Paul to reveal and proclaim the results of the fulfilled plan.

It was God Who so revealed to Paul the reality of the gospel that it moved him from being a hater of Jesus to becoming a “bondservant of Jesus.” Then it was the will of God that chose to use him to raise up believers and establish them in the faith by using him to reveal and explain the results of the fulfilled eternal plan.

- Verses 2-5: Regarding God, Paul says that God (the Father) had promised the fulfillment of the gospel through the prophets in the Holy Scriptures. It was the Trinity that foreordained the plan in eternity past and then raised up various prophets through the OT to reveal the promise.

The promise was regarding Jesus, God the Son, that He would come in the flesh as the seed of David, revealed to be the Son of God in power by the Holy Spirit raising Him from the dead.

- Verses 5-7: Regarding the Roman believers, Paul refers to them (because of their faith/belief in the gospel) as “the called of Jesus Christ,” “beloved of God,” “called to be saints,” and then wishes grace and peace upon them because of the “gospel of God” and Jesus’ fulfillment of it.

Because of their faith in Jesus’ fulfillment of the gospel, God’s grace has been lavished upon them, thereby resulting in the experiencing of being at peace with God.

Romans 1:8-12 – The Need for Spiritual Establishment

At this point in Paul’s writing of this letter to the believers in Rome, Paul had been on three missionary journeys in which he traveled from Jerusalem to Corinth. In many of the cities and locations he had passed through on those trips, many people had believed the gospel and churches were being planted or raised up. Paul would then make follow-up trips to provide further teaching and understanding of the results of the fulfilled eternal plan of redemption for the purpose of establishing these churches more and more in the faith.

This church in Rome was not started by Paul, but because he had heard of their faith in believing the gospel and becoming the children of God, Paul had as much of a desire to now spend time with them as he did the other churches that were planted by him.

In verses 11-12, he clearly reveals why he wanted to spend time with them:

- “That I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established.” Paul knew that these believers had accepted Jesus as their Savior, but he also knew there was a lot that was now true of them as the children of God that they hadn’t yet heard about or come to understand.

This is what Paul was talking about when he said that he wanted “to impart to them some spiritual gift” so that they may become established. It meant that he wanted to explain more to them about what had become true of them, who they have been made spiritually, and what they had been given because of their faith in Christ. The more they would become assured of what they had been given and who they had become in Christ, the more they would become established in the faith.

- Verse 12: Such an opportunity to be used of God to help them become more and more established in the faith would result in mutual encouragement. God uses Paul to encourage these new believers by revealing to them more and more of what they have been given in Christ, and God uses the fact of another church’s growth in the faith to be a source of encouragement to Paul.

Some of the most encouraging times I’ve had in my life are the times that I’ve had with other hungry- hearted believers when we are just sitting together talking about the results of the finished work of Christ and the abundance of grace that has been lavished upon us. God uses this rehearsing and reminding one another of the truth and reality of who we are and what we have been given by grace in Christ to make us more convinced of its reality.

Romans 1:16-17 – The Content of Spiritual Establishment

Here Paul reveals the focal point for establishing these believers in the faith—the gospel.

We know that earlier in Paul's life he wanted nothing to do with the gospel. He believed that Jesus was a blasphemer, and he was seeking to kill and imprison all of His followers. We also saw in Acts how God, by grace, revealed to Paul that Jesus is truly God the Son, the Promised One, and brought him to the place of sending him out as a proclaimer of the gospel.

Therefore, Paul was not ashamed of believing the gospel, for he now understood that through Jesus' fulfillment of it (which is the eternal plan of redemption), the power of God is accessed unto salvation for all "who believe"—all who accept Jesus as their Savior.

- What Paul is saying is that the very moment any person accepts Jesus' shedding of His blood on the cross as the payment for their sin (the gospel), the justice of God becomes met on their behalf. Then by the power of God, "salvation" (and all that it contains) becomes bestowed upon that person.

Paul also stated the gospel was for the Jew first and for the Greek or for the Gentiles as well.

- The message of Jesus came first to the Jews. The promise was first given to Abraham, then God sent prophets to Israel with more promises concerning the Deliverer. Jesus was born through Mary who was a descendent of Abraham. All The apostles were Jews. The first time the gospel was preached, it was preached to Jews on the Day of Pentecost.

- The gospel was first sent to the Jews – that’s why every time Paul went to a new place he always went to the synagogue first. When the Jews refused to listen, he would then go to the Gentiles.

In verse 17, Paul stated that the righteousness of God is revealed through the fulfillment of the gospel “from faith to faith.” What Paul meant by this will become clearer as we get into Chapters 5-8 of Romans; but simply stated, here’s what Paul meant by this:

- We are all born sinful, dead to God, and headed for an eternal separation from Him.
- In order to become “saved” (receive eternal life), we must obtain the righteousness of God.
- Because Jesus’ death on the cross pays for ALL of our sin past, present, and future, God is able to “clothe” us with His own righteousness. (Remember the example of clothing Adam and Eve after they had sinned.)
- As we continue to grow in our understanding of what our salvation consists of and we by faith grow in believing the reality of it all, the righteousness of God that He has bestowed upon us will become more and more manifested as we continue to become more and more established in the faith.

This is exactly what Paul was saying back in verse 11 when he talked about wanting to provide further teaching for these Roman believers to further establish them in the faith.

The content of what our salvation consists of is going to become more and more detailed and clear as we continue through Romans.

Lesson 2

The Need for the Gospel

Paul ended the first section of Chapter 1 by making some statements about the gospel: It's the power of God unto salvation and by it, God's righteousness is revealed from faith to faith. Now beginning is verse 18 of Chapter 1 and proceeding into Chapter 2, Paul is going to prove the fact that ALL of humanity needs the gospel, for every human being is born under the wrath of God.

In order for us to correctly interpret what God is telling us through Paul here in these first chapters of Romans, it's very important that we keep in mind passages like 2 Timothy 1:9, 1 Peter 1:18-20, and 1 Corinthians 2:7. We looked at these verses in the planning stage of the meta narrative context and they reveal to us that God foreordained the eternal plan of redemption for mankind (that didn't even exist yet) that would be by grace and through Christ.

We also know from what God has revealed about Himself through Scripture is that He is love and His desire is that mankind be brought into the eternal relationship the Godhead has been enjoying from eternity past.

Being that God is also all-knowing, before He created man, He clearly knew what mankind was going to become (spiritually); and before He created a thing, He foreordained the eternal plan of redemption.

So, putting all of that together, we have to say that salvation and redemption for the purpose of obtaining an eternal relationship is at the center of all of God's plans and purposes for mankind.

This very fact then, tells us why beginning in verse 18 of Chapter 1, the Holy Spirit is having Paul focus so much on the fact that mankind is sinful and under the wrath of God: for the simple reason that we will see it, realize it, and turn to Christ for salvation by grace.

Lesson 3

Proof of Mankind's Sinfulness

Romans 1:18-23

The first thing Paul highlights that proves mankind is sinful and deserving of God's wrath is what mankind has done with the revelation of God.

Verse 19: Paul says that which may be known about God, God has *"manifested it in them, for God hath showed it unto them."*

Verse 20: *"For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."*

Paul is saying that God has clearly revealed Himself through the variety, beauty, and vastness of all that He created to the extent that His power and deity is undeniably made manifest to all men. Therefore, no one will ever be able to say that they never knew He existed.

So, what has mankind done with this revelation of Who God is?

Verses 21-22: Even though they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, were not thankful for His revealed power, love, and grace, became vain in their imaginations, and they became fools.

Verse 23: Proof of mankind's foolish and sinful rejection of God is revealed when man worships creation above the Creator. This has been something that mankind has done all through history.

The people of Abraham's day were idolaters. In the days of Moses, the Egyptians worshipped many kinds of animals and other things that God had made. Many times, the Israelites turned away from God to worship the false gods of their corrupt neighbors. The Canaanites, who lived in the Promised Land before the Israelites conquered it, worshipped idols. God had warned His people not to forget Him and adopt their wicked ways when they came into the land.

Today the earth is filled with people who worship spirits and all kinds of false gods and false religions. Paul says that mankind has willfully chosen to turn away from the knowledge of God that He has so undeniably revealed to all, and they foolishly worship anything and everything except the One Who Created everything.

The Consequences of Sin

So what has God done about mankind's willful suppressing of the truth and reality of Who He is? He has done what any loving parent would do. He has given mankind over to go ahead and commit all of the sin and every kind of sin that they want to give themselves to.

Why? Out of spite?

Of course not. God is not like us. God is love, and salvation and redemption has been the center of His plans and purposes for mankind from before the world began; but He gives mankind over to his own sinfulness so that the consequences of that sin will become so undesirable and painful in our lives, it will reveal our need for God and causes us to turn to Him instead of continuing to live in rejection of Him.

Romans 1:24-32

Many view what God is doing here as judgment or punishment for sin, but in actuality it's an act of mercy. If God really delighted in punishing sinners, then it would be better to withhold these earthly consequences of sin and let us just live our sinful lives fat, happy, and deceived in thinking that everything is fine only to end in receiving eternal judgment.

But God is Love and He is after the eternal relationship. The eternal relationship will be impossible as long as we remain spiritually unrighteous, unholy, and sinful. Therefore, motivated by His love, grace, and mercy, He steps back and allows mankind to receive the painful consequences of sin, pain, suffering, disease, sorrow, and even death—all for the purpose of causing us to realize our need for the eternal plan of redemption that He foreordained for our glory before the foundations of the world.

Proof of Mankind's Sinfulness

One thing that is for sure is that God knows the heart of every human being. He knows us through and through. There is nothing in our lives or in our hearts that is hidden from Him. He knows us better than we even know ourselves and therefore understands how deceived we can be by thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought to think. We are constantly comparing ourselves to others in an effort to feel good about ourselves. We compare our strength, our size, our speed, our intelligence, our looks, our wealth, our families, our experiences, our values, and just about every other thing you can think of.

But one of the most dangerous areas that we compare ourselves is in our own perceived goodness. Because we can all look around and find other people we think are committing more sin than us or maybe what we would consider to be “worse” sin than us, we become deceived into thinking that we are a better person, less sinful, more deserving of being blessed, and less needful of a Savior.

In Chapter 2, Paul begins to shift his focus away from the obviously sinful people of Chapter 1, those who are committing the worse sins that anyone can think of, to those people who are not committing all those same sins and who are thereby deceived into thinking they are better and less sinful. Paul’s whole point is that even though you may not be committing the same sins or as much sin as those that are described in Chapter 1, you are still equally sinful, under the wrath of God, and in need of the gospel just the same.

Judging Other’s Sin Doesn’t Make One Less Sinful

Romans 2:1-3

It’s important for us to keep in mind who Paul was writing to in order for us to understand the points he is seeking to make. With the book of Romans, he was writing to a group of believers in Rome that he had never visited or spent any time in person with. Therefore, rather than just assuming what they understand about the gospel or don’t understand, he takes the time to lay out each important foundational part.

The very first foundational step that must be in place in one’s understanding for recognizing the importance of the gospel is to first know that they need it. We have to first understand we are sinful and in need of salvation, and this is exactly Paul’s goal in Chapters 1 and 2 and then on into Chapter 3. He is showing that every human being is born sinful, under God’s wrath, and in need of the gospel.

Though every human being is just as sinful as every other human being, we don't all commit the same sins or even the same amount of sin. Paul's point here in verses 1-3 is that, just because someone may not be committing all of the obvious sinful things that are listed out in Chapter 1, they are still just as sinful and under the wrath of God.

It's not the sins we commit that make us sinful; it's the fact that we are born with a sinful human nature. Therefore, how much sin or how little sin one commits has no bearing on the degree of one's sinfulness. It's determined by the fact that we are born with a sin nature.

Therefore, Paul is saying, just because you are not committing the same sins as those listed in Chapter 1, don't be deceived by your own perceived goodness into thinking that you are less sinful, more righteous, and less needy of the gospel than anyone else.

Romans 2:4-11

The next deception we can all fall victim to that prevents us from seeing our need for salvation is the fact of God's goodness. If we are someone who is comparing ourselves to others and are sitting in self-righteousness because we think we are less sinful, then the blessings and the good things that God allows to come our way every day will continue to deceive us into thinking we are better people. Our thinking will be, *"See, look how good things are in my life—it's because I'm NOT doing what those people are doing. I'm not as sinful as they are."*

Paul is saying that the reality is no one is deserving of the goodness of God. God is not good to you because you are less sinful than any other person. He is good to you because HE IS GOOD.

He bestows grace and mercy upon you because He is gracious and merciful. He allows good things to come to even the unrighteous and ungodly because He is love and desires all to be saved. So, if you are someone who recognizes your own sinfulness and need for a Savior, then the goodness of God will humble you and lead you to repentance.

For those who compare themselves to others and are deceived by their own perceived goodness and exalt themselves in self-righteousness, the goodness of God is going to lead to more blindness, self-deception, rejection of the gospel, and eternal condemnation.

Romans 2:12-16

Remember Paul's statement about all of mankind in Chapter 1, verse 20? God has so revealed Himself and His existence to the world through creation, as well as making Himself known within the heart of every man, that if anyone dies in rejection of Him, then they are without excuse.

In this passage Paul is revealing that there is no excuse for anyone not to know that they are sinful. If you are a Jew, then you have the law that God specifically gave to you to reveal your sinfulness by showing your inability to keep any of it.

If you are a Gentile or a non-Jew, a "law of right and wrong" has been "written in your heart" to which your conscience bears witness, and you too know without a doubt that you are sinful, you commit sin, and you are in need of the gospel.

Verse 16: ***“In the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.”*** Paul is saying there is a day coming in which all of humanity will stand before God and He will judge “the secrets of men.” The basis for this judgment will be *“by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.”*

Paul is simply saying that the day is coming in which all humans will stand before God and be judged on the basis of what you did with the gospel. Did you believe the gospel or did you reject the gospel? Therefore, in preparation for this coming judgment, God has given us clear and undeniable proof of our sinfulness, through giving of the written law to Israel and the written law in our hearts, and the need to accept and believe the gospel.

The heart of God has been about salvation and redemption from before the foundations of the earth. He doesn't want anyone to receive their just eternal condemnation on the day of judgment. Therefore, He has gone out of His way to reveal and make our sinfulness abundantly clear so that we will recognize our need for the gospel and believe it and receive eternal life.

Being Born a Jew Doesn't Make One Less Sinful

Paul knew there was an even higher level of self-righteousness that existed among the Jewish people that was blinding them from seeing their need for the gospel. Their self-righteousness was based on the facts that they were descendants of Abraham and God's chosen people who had been given the law.

Even though they couldn't keep the law any better than any other human being, they still considered themselves to be better off (before God) than all others because they were God's chosen people and had become the "gold standard" for all who would find acceptance with God. ***Romans 2:17-29***

Paul makes it clear to the self-righteous Jews that it's not anything physically that enables you to obtain to the righteousness of God. It's not because you are born descendants of Abraham, not because you have been given the law, not because you practice circumcision, and not because you are God's chosen people.

Paul goes on to explain that God's righteousness can only be obtained through an internal, spiritual circumcision of the heart and not by an outward circumcision of the body.

ALL of Mankind is Sinful and under the Wrath of God

Paul then concludes this section that began in Chapter 1:18—all of mankind is sinful and under the wrath of God with this statement in ***Romans 3:9-10***.

All of humanity, regardless of how much you sin, how little you sin, or even what kinds of sin you commit, are born sinful, are under the wrath of God, and the gospel is their only hope for ever obtaining the righteousness of God.

Lesson 4

The Law Proves that All the World Is Guilty before God

In the last three lessons, Paul was showing how all of mankind is equally born under the wrath of God regardless of whether you are a Jew or a Gentile, how much sin you commit, or how “good” you think you are.

In the beginning of this lesson, Paul is going to give the ultimate proof for proving that every human being is born sinful and is truly under the wrath of God. The ultimate proof is the law. Under the law, every human being stands condemned before God, for being born with a sinful human nature makes it absolutely impossible for anyone to keep the law one hundred percent without ever breaking any part of it.

Romans 3:19

What Paul is saying here is, because of God’s law, He has proven all of mankind to be sinners. Although the Gentiles had never received God’s law in written form, God had given to all men knowledge of Himself, a knowledge of right and wrong, and had written the law on men’s hearts so that they are without excuse. However, the Gentiles deliberately turned away from God and disobeyed His laws.

What about the Jew? Were they any different? They had the written law of God and even taught it to others, but they themselves failed to obey it. Therefore, Paul condemns all of mankind by saying that every mouth must be shut, and all must sit guilty before God. There is nothing that anyone can say to justify himself or herself. All people are sinners before God.

It's really important we understand that God's purpose in proving that ALL stand condemned before God is salvation and redemption. His purpose is not condemnation and judgment.

- If mankind doesn't recognize his sinfulness and need for the gospel, then no one will ever turn to Him for salvation.
- Therefore, it's because of the mercy of God that He has given the law that proves we are sinful and condemned before Him.

Romans 3:20

One of the biggest misunderstandings people have regarding the law today is that they think God gave it because He expects mankind to be able to keep it. This is incorrect. God actually gave it because He knew mankind would not be able to keep it, and it would reveal mankind's sinfulness and need for the gospel.

The Righteousness of God Can Only Be Received through Jesus Christ

How then can a holy and righteous God accept unrighteous sinners? Is there anything we can do to make ourselves acceptable to God? No. Only God can make sinful man acceptable to Himself.

- Think back to Noah; was there any way he could escape the flood without God telling him what to do?

- Could the Israelites have saved themselves from slavery in Egypt? Could they provide food and water for themselves in the desert?
- Could Jonah escape from the belly of the fish, which had swallowed him? None of these people could have saved themselves, but God saved them.
- So it is with everyone in the entire world. No one can save himself and make himself acceptable to God.

But, just like Noah, the Israelites, and Jonah, who were unable to save themselves, God has made a way for wicked sinners, like you and me, to become acceptable in His sight and receive His free gift of salvation.

Romans 3:21

The righteousness that we can receive in order to become acceptable in God's sight has nothing to do with our works and obedience to His law. Man's righteous standing before God that is needed to be accepted by Him, is not received through any effort on our part to obey God's laws. Instead, righteous standing and acceptance is offered as a free gift from God to sinful man.

Remember what happened to Adam and Eve after they had sinned.

- They tried to cover their nakedness with fig leaves, just like we often try to cover our sinfulness with our own good works.
- Did God accept their leaves? No. Does He accept our efforts as a valid way of covering our sin? No.

What had to happen for Adam and Eve to receive clothing that was acceptable to God?

- An innocent animal had to die. God killed an animal for Adam and Eve to be clothed.
- In the same way, He sent His Son to die in our stead and take the punishment for our sin in order for us to be clothed with His righteousness.

Therefore, when Jesus took our punishment for us, God was able to give us His righteousness, thereby making us acceptable in His sight. It's not that we no longer commit sin; rather, even though we still sin, God's law can no longer judge and condemn us, for Jesus has already taken our punishment.

The blood of Jesus has paid for every sin we will ever commit (past, present, and future); therefore, God was free to give us His Own righteousness and thereby making us acceptable in His sight.

Romans 3:22-23

Even though God's law condemns us all, God has made a way by which we all can become as sinless and righteous people in His sight. Only through Jesus can we sinners become righteous before God.

The righteousness that makes us acceptable to God is given, because of God's grace and mercy, as a free gift. We do not deserve it.

Remember when the Lord sent poisonous snakes to bite the Israelites because of their sin against Him (***Numbers 21:5-6***)? When they cried out to God for His mercy and help,

God told Moses to make a brass serpent and put it on a pole. God promised that if anyone who had been bitten would look up at the brass serpent, He would forgive and heal him or her (***Numbers 21:7-9***).

Did the Israelites deserve to receive deliverance from the snakes? No. They deserved to die. They had sinned against God. However, because of God's grace, He provided a way through which they could be delivered. Just like the sinful Israelites in the wilderness, none of us deserve God's deliverance. Yet, according to ***Romans 3:24***, He still covers all believers with His righteousness as a free gift for Jesus' sake.

Romans 3:24

God's righteousness was provided for us through the redeeming work of Jesus.

Here's an example that shows what it means to be "redeemed." In Paul's time, the Romans were in control of the known world, and they enslaved conquered people to serve them. They would bring the conquered people to a slave market and sell them to the highest bidders. The slaves who were bought and sold were bound in chains. There was no way of escape and no hope of freedom.

Because of Adam's disobedience to God, we too were all born as slaves of sin and Satan, without any hope of escape. We were like slaves in the Roman slave markets.

- However, Jesus came down into this slave-market world and bought us for Himself. The price He paid to redeem us was His own blood. He bought us and then set us free from sin and Satan's control. Never again will we have to return to the slave market.

God's Provision for the Old Testament Saints

If it's Jesus' death alone that provides us with God's righteousness so that God can accept us, then what happened with the Old Testament saints who died before Jesus came? Were Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob accepted before God? How was that possible? Was it because of the animal sacrifices that they made? Can animal blood take away sin (*Hebrews 10:4*)?

Why did they have to sacrifice animals anyway? God had commanded the Israelites to do this. It was part of the way in which He was preparing mankind for Jesus to come and fulfill His eternal plan of redemption.

- The OT sacrifices served as a picture or shadow of the true fulfillment that was to come through Jesus Christ's future sacrifice of Himself on our behalf (*Hebrews 10:1*).
- By placing their trust in the promise of God to send a Deliverer, they were declared righteous through faith. By just simply taking God at His Word, God gave them righteousness as a gift until the Promised One came to take away their sins.

Romans 3:25

When Jesus died on the cross, His death paid for the sins of all people, for all time—past, present, and future. All through the Old Testament, before the birth of Jesus, because it had already been planned that God the Son would come and die for the sins of the world, God faithfully and consistently reminded mankind of this promise.

At that time when any man believed in the promise of the coming Savior, God gave to him His righteousness and accepted him as if it had already taken place, for it was sure that it would happen in God's time and in God's way.

Romans 3:26

Before we trusted in Jesus' death for our sins, we deserved to die and go to hell. It was not fitting for God to accept us at all. One of God's main attributes is that He is just and it's His holiness and justice that prevented Him from accepting us without our sins paid in full.

Now that we have trusted in the death of Jesus and His shed blood has paid for all of our sin, it is fitting for God to accept us. Therefore, it's right and good for God to accept us now.

Not only is He just, but He is also the One Who justified us. He satisfied His own justice by fulfilling the eternal plan of redemption through the blood of God the Son.

Romans 3:27-28

Since we received our salvation and acceptance as a free gift, there is no room for boasting. Our only part was to believe what HE did for us, and then by faith receive it. We did nothing in and of ourselves to receive this gift. All that is left to do is to thank and praise God.

One Salvation for All Mankind and It Is by Faith Alone in Jesus Christ

Romans 3:29-30

God doesn't have differing ways of salvation for different people. No matter whether we are Jew or Gentile, there is only one way of salvation. Nor does it matter if we are white or black, or rich, poor, male or female. Salvation is the same for all people no matter where they live or when they lived.

Romans 3:31

Through Jesus, God's law was satisfied. Because of our sin, the law demanded our death. Therefore, God sent His Son to take our punishment and die for us. The law insisted that all who God would accept must be perfectly righteous. BUT—***Romans 3:23*** said that NONE are righteous.

Therefore, God clothed us with His own righteousness. God's law had to be fulfilled on our behalf, and it was through Christ's death. Now we can be accepted as righteous before God. This means that the blood of Jesus so paid for ALL of our sin that it's as if we have never ever broken the law! It is no longer possible for the law to ever condemn us again!!!

The Example of Abraham and David

In Chapter 4, Paul holds up two men as examples of sinners who were accepted as righteous through faith and not because of works.

Romans 4:1-3

These two men were Abraham and David who the Jews would consider as the two greatest men in their history. To the Jews, if anyone could have received salvation from their good works, it would have been Abraham. What does Paul say about him? Was he accepted because of his good works?

- God called Abraham out of his own land and sent him into a new land.
- God then gave him promises regarding the Deliverer. Abraham believed God because he knew that God would never lie.
- Keep in mind that Abraham was still a sinner, but God saw him as being perfectly righteous before Him—not because of good works but because Abraham believed God’s Word (*Genesis 15:6*).
- God seeing Abraham as righteous was a free gift; it was undeserved.

Romans 4:4-8

When you work and are paid, is that payment a gift or a wage? It’s a wage. You worked hard and you deserve to receive it. Is that how it is with God’s acceptance? Do we work hard for it and deserve it when we get it? No. God’s acceptance of sinful man is a gift; it is grace.

Paul quoted from the writings of David to remind them of what David wrote regarding this issue. Paul stated very clearly it was only through faith that both Abraham and David were accepted as righteous by God.

It's interesting that Paul mentions these two men. Abraham was proof that no one could receive the righteousness of God through good works or by keeping the law. Abraham was declared righteous before offering up his son Isaac AND before God gave the law.

David, on the other hand, proved that no amount of sin could ever prevent anyone from receiving the righteousness of God by faith. David committed two sins that, under the law, he should have been stoned to death for: adultery and murder. Instead, he received forgiveness for his sins because of his faith in God's promise to send the Deliverer.

Lesson 5

Receiving Eternal Condemnation or Eternal Life, Both Are an Issue of Spiritual Identity

Up to this point in Chapters 1-4, the Holy Spirit has used Paul to reveal the following:

1. All of humanity is born sinful and under the wrath of God regardless of how much sin you commit or how much good you do.
2. In and of ourselves, it's absolutely impossible for any human being to obtain the righteousness of God based on ethnicity, practicing circumcision, or any amount of keeping the law.
3. There is only ONE way to obtain the righteousness of God and that is by faith in Christ alone, believing His shed blood is the only thing that can pay for our sin.

Now here in Chapter 5, Paul reveals the truth about the sinfulness we had and the salvation we now have and that it is very foundational and important for us to become convinced of in order for us to become more and more established in the faith.

- That foundational truth is the fact that neither the sinfulness we were born with nor the salvation we have now received had anything to do with any actions of our own, but it's an issue of the "spiritual DNA" of our human spirit. This will become clearer as we continue through the lesson.

Romans 5:1

In the first half of Romans 5:1-11, Paul begins to reveal some of the things that become instantly true of us the moment we accept Jesus' payment for our sin. That very moment Paul says we become justified; and because we are justified, we are now at "peace with God."

Do you remember that Adam and Eve were put out of the garden away from God because of their sin? The closeness, acceptance, and friendship they had experienced with God before the fall was gone. After the fall and becoming sinful, they and every generation born after them are born separated from God and enemies of God.

- But because of Christ's death on our behalf, Jesus' shed blood has fully paid our penalty. Our sin is forgiven and God accepts us just as He accepts Jesus. When Jesus died and rose again, God clothed us with His own righteousness.

- Because of Jesus' death and resurrection we are now justified and went from being the separated enemies of God to now being made the very children of God who are eternally at peace with Him.

Romans 5:2

The next thing Paul says is now true of us because we have been justified is that we ***“have access into this grace in which we stand.”*** Paul is making a very important foundational point here—God's love and acceptance of us is not based on anything we do but is solely based upon grace and grace alone.

The ramifications of this fact are profound. This means that:

1. Nothing can change God's attitude toward us, not even sin.
2. Nothing can ever change God's acceptance of us. Because the blood of Christ justified us, we have been clothed with His righteousness, we have received full acceptance, and it's been done on our behalf by Christ.
3. There never needs to be a time where we doubt our righteousness or God's acceptance of us because we are on the ground of grace. We have received these things for eternity by grace. There will never be a time when our own sin and unfaithfulness will remove these things from being true of us.
4. Paul is saying that our justification is by grace. God's acceptance of us on a daily basis is by grace, and all that He has in store for us in eternity future will be by grace.

Romans 5:3-5

Name one thing we could obtain in this life that would be more important than receiving justification, peace with God, a standing in grace, and an eternal hope in His presence. Is money more important? Is fame more important? A new car? A mansion?

Paul's point in these verses is that if we become confident in the facts of our justification, peace with God, acceptance before God, and His promise of a future hope, these truths will actually empower us to not only endure, but to embrace every hardship and trial that life in a fallen world can throw at us.

Our mindset will be:

- “I may be poor and destitute, but I belong to Him, He loves and accepts me, and He is preparing a place for me. He is my hope.”
- “I may have cancer, but I am on the ground of grace, accepted in the beloved, and headed to an eternity with Him in which I’ll be living in a new heavenly body that will have no sickness, sorrow, or death ever again.”
- “These people may hate me, mock me, and ostracize me, but the God of the universe is my Heavenly Father Who loves me with a love that surpasses all knowledge and Who accepts me for all of eternity.”

Faith in these facts will drastically change our perspective of every circumstance that comes into our lives and thereby enable us to live godly in a fallen world.

Romans 5:6-8

In case anyone is thinking that what Paul is saying in the previous verses is too good to be true and think, “*Come on, surely some of this has got to be based on me doing something—some form of me sinning less and obeying more. It can’t ALL just be by grace*”; He reminds us that God did all of this for us while we were His separated enemies.

- God did this while we were sinful and under His wrath.
- Had God required some level of goodness or obedience from us in order to justify us, then for one, it wouldn’t be by grace (like He foreordained before the foundations of the earth in **2 Timothy 1:9**), and two, then we never could become justified (**Romans 3:23**).

Verses 6-8 are designed to emphasize the glory of God’s grace which in turn will deepen our confidence in the reality of who He says we are and what He says we have been given.

Romans 5:9-11

Paul is doubling down on the fact that we can be assured with the utmost confidence in the reality of our justification and all that comes along with it, for we were “***justified by His blood***” and not by our own works or faithfulness.

If we were justified by His blood while we were His enemies, then now that are reconciled, have been made His children, are standing in grace, and have been made eternally acceptable to Him, then how much more will all of these things remain eternally true of us because of His resurrection unto life?

- This means that His blood made all of these things true of us, but the fact of His resurrection proves that God's justice is satisfied in full, thereby enabling us to have the utmost confidence that these things can never be taken away or lost.

Our Salvation is the Result of Receiving a New Spiritual Identity

Paul's main purpose in what he is writing here in Chapter 5 is to help believers become absolutely confident in their salvation and all that it contains. The fact that God sent Jesus to fulfill the eternal plan by shedding His blood on the cross while we were "His enemies" takes away any doubt that comes from thinking we must somehow depend upon ourselves in order to obtain it.

Not only did we NOT do anything to obtain it, but we were also His enemies! If you are an enemy of God, then you are doing the exact opposite of what He would want you to do. Therefore, there could be no greater proof that our salvation is truly by grace than for Him to provide it while we were His enemies.

Beginning in verse 12, Paul is going to raise the next foundational point that is designed to make us even more confident in the reality of our salvation, all that it entails, and that it is truly by grace. That is the fact that, because the blood of Jesus has so paid for all of our sin, God by His almighty power has exchanged the fallen spiritual DNA of our human spirit that came from Adam (that caused us to be born dead to God) with a new spiritual DNA (that came from Jesus) that has been recreated in "*true righteousness and holiness*" (***Ephesians 4:24***) that now makes us dead to sin and alive unto God.

Why were Cain and Abel born out of the garden? Why were they born sinners who would die before they ever committed any sin of their own? It was because they were Adam's children. This is also the reason why we were born sinners and must die.

When Adam was put out of the garden away from God and the tree of life, it meant that all of mankind would now be born, live, and die outside of the garden, away from God and the tree of life.

Romans 5:12

Just like Adam, all people have been born outside of the garden and spiritually separated from or dead to God. The reason for this is because Adam failed to believe and obey God and chose to follow Satan instead.

Because Adam sinned, every generation that has been born after him are all born with same fallen spiritual DNA that he received the moment he ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

It's that fallen spiritual DNA of our human spirit that makes us sinners who, instead of following the ways of God, we follow the ways of Satan.

Adam was the first man God created. If Adam had obeyed God, then all of his descendants would have also been acceptable to God. However, Adam disobeyed God and everyone who has descended from Adam is born separated from God. So does God give up on man?

No!! God knew what mankind would become long before He created a thing. Because He is love, before the foundations of the earth, He foreordained the eternal plan of

redemption that would result in sinful humanity obtaining the righteousness of God by becoming recreated spiritually with a new spiritual DNA.

Because Jesus' death on the cross made it possible for all men to receive a new spiritual DNA that is created in true righteousness and holiness, this then results in being made acceptable to God, to be forgiven for all of our sin, and to receive eternal life.

Romans 5:18-19

Because of the first man's disobedience, all people were born under the control of sin and death. Because of the second man's obedience in dying to pay the penalty for the sins of man, all who believe in Him are forgiven and made acceptable to God.

The point Paul is making here is extremely foundational for us to be able to live out our Christian lives biblically and according to God's design.

- It's imperative for us to understand that it was NOT the sins we committed that made us sinful. It was the fact that we were born sinful that caused us to commit sin.
- We were all born sinful and under the wrath of God NOT because of any of our sin but because we were born with that fallen spiritual DNA we received through our parents that came from Adam.
- Why do men dress and act like men and women dress and act like women? In order TO BE a man or a woman? Or because they were born male or female?

- So, it is spiritually. The reason we sin is because we were born with a sinful fallen spiritual DNA that we received because of Adam's sin. That fallen spiritual DNA is what made us sinful in terms of our identity or who we are spiritually.
- Therefore, in order for us to obtain the righteousness of God and become the acceptable children of God is to have that fallen spiritual DNA that we got from Adam removed and replaced with a new spiritual DNA.
- Paul is saying that's exactly what Jesus did by fulfilling the eternal plan of redemption.
- Those who accept Jesus' blood as the payment for their sin receive a new spiritual DNA that makes us righteous and thereby acceptable to God.

Romans 5:20-21

God gave the law to reveal the sinfulness of man. Not only were we sinful and were born the enemies of God, but we were also helpless and unwilling to do anything about it. Despite the fact that mankind brought all of this upon ourselves, God in His grace foreordained the eternal plan of redemption in which He would come Himself in the person of Jesus Christ to die for us! God's grace is greater than our sinfulness!

When we were in Adam, sin and death ruled over us. We were like the Israelites in Egypt. Many were born into slavery because their mothers and fathers were already slaves. Pharaoh wanted to keep them in slavery until they died. There was no way they could escape. God used Moses to go and deliver them (*Exodus 1-14*).

Like the Israelites, we too were born into slavery because Adam was already a slave to sin. Just as God used Moses to deliver the Israelites, God used Jesus to deliver us from sin and death. God's grace rules over us now and He has clothed us with His righteousness. We now have a new spiritual identity as the righteous and holy children of God!!!!

Lesson 6

All Believers Have Died to Sin

At the beginning of Chapter 6, Paul asks a question (*Romans 6:1*).

Why would Paul ask this question? It's because of his statement back in Chapter 5 (*Romans 5:20*). Paul had said the law was given to expose our sin, and then he added, *"But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."*

So, God's grace is even greater than our sinfulness. Now Paul knew some would misinterpret his statement and think that since God was so willing to forgive, they could live anyway they wanted, and God would be magnified by having to forgive even more.

To prevent this thinking, Paul immediately addresses that potential heresy by making the following foundational statement in verse 2.

- Paul's answer is according to the foundational truth he just laid out in Chapter 5: The spiritual DNA of our human spirit is no longer the fallen and sinful DNA we received from Adam and made us dead to God and alive to sin.

- Because of the blood of Jesus and the power of God, that old fallen spiritual DNA has been removed and we have received a new spiritual DNA that is righteous, makes us acceptable unto God, and now dead to sin and alive unto God.
- So, Paul is saying that, because of who you are now spiritually because of the blood of Jesus, it is no longer fitting for us to continue to live in sin. We have a new spiritual identity that makes us holy and righteous and is not characterized by sin.

To be “dead to sin” doesn’t mean that sin is no longer present in our lives. It means we are no longer under its authority and reign.

- Remember from the Creation to Christ lessons that when Adam and Eve sinned, they received death. The wages of sin is death—spiritual death, physical death, and eternal death.
- To now be dead to sin means that the “wages of sin” is no longer ours. Instead of spiritual death, we now have spiritual life. This means we are no longer dead to God but are now alive unto God, no longer enemies but His children.

Yes, these fallen human bodies will still die physically, but only so that we can receive a new heavenly body that no longer has “indwelling sin” in it.

Now we will no longer receive eternal death or eternal separation from God but will now receive eternal life in which we will spend eternity in His presence enjoying an eternal relationship with Him.

Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection on our behalf destroyed sin's authority over us, thereby removing its spiritual and eternal consequences.

- Along with removing those eternal consequences, Jesus' finished work on the cross has also destroyed sin's power over us in our daily lives.
- When we were in Adam, sin and death ruled us. We were like the Israelites who were slaves in Egypt. There was nothing they could do to deliver themselves. God parted the Red Sea, led Israel down into the basin, up and out on the other side, and then closed up the waters on the Egyptian army.
 - God could have delivered them any way He wanted, but He did in a way that physically cut them off from their old way of life as slaves in Egypt. This is an Old Testament physical picture of a New Testament spiritual truth. In this Old Testament physical picture, the Israelites died to (or were separated from) their old life as slaves and now they were living a new life of freedom as God's chosen people.
 - In a similar, spiritual way, we who have trusted Christ as our Savior, through His death, burial, and resurrection, we have received the "cutting off" of our old life of being enslaved to sin's power.

Specifically How We Received a New Spiritual Identity

Romans 6:3

Abraham's experience is a good illustration of this concept. He lived as an unbeliever in the land of Ur. His family was ungodly and happy to continue living in that way. However,

one day God initiated a relationship with Abraham and revealed Himself to him. Abraham acknowledged and believed in God; so when God told Abraham to leave his home and go into a land that God would show him, by faith Abraham abandoned his old life and followed God (*Hebrews 11:8-10; Genesis 12:1-4*).

If we have trusted Christ, we have done a similar thing by leaving our father, Adam's life, and being placed into Christ. Just as we have experienced Adam's death to God, in Christ we now experience His death to sin. Adam's death made us separated from God, but Christ's death makes us separated from sin.

We not only shared in Jesus' death, but also in His burial and resurrection.

Romans 6:4-5

Jesus died, was buried, and brought back to life. Therefore, God says that all of us who are believers experienced all of that with Him. It's similar to what happened to Noah and his family when they were inside the ark. They went where the ark went. If the ark were to sink, then they would sink with it. Because the ark floated and didn't sink, they were delivered from the judgment.

God's judgment was poured out on the world, but Noah and his family were hidden safely inside the boat and delivered from the judgment.

In the same way, we too have been hidden in Christ, experiencing His death, burial and resurrection and have received deliverance from God's judgment.

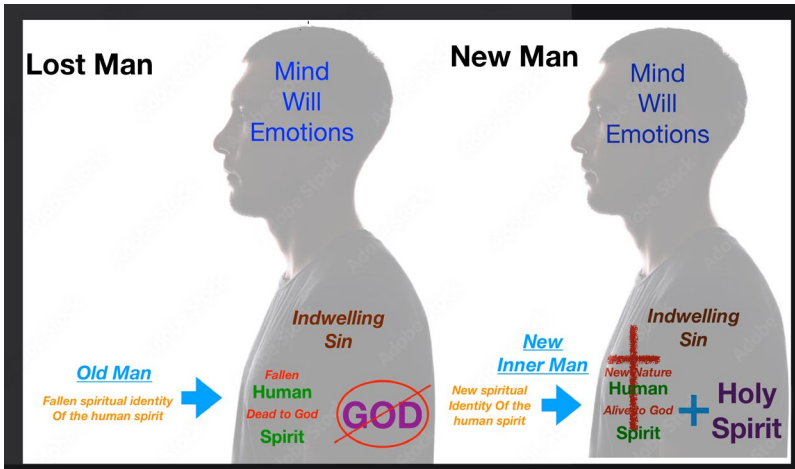
Another physical example of this spiritual truth is a kernel of wheat. The kernel must fall into the ground, rot, and die before it can produce life and eventually fruit (**John 12:24**). So, through Jesus' death and resurrection, we too have died with Christ and now have new life in and through Him.

Romans 6:6-7

Every human is made up of three main parts: the body, soul, and spirit.

1. The body is the outward flesh and bones that can be seen. It is the "tent" that houses the soul and spirit.
2. Soul consists of our mind, will, and emotions.
3. The spirit is our human spirit. It's the DNA or nature of our human spirit that makes us sinful. Here in this chapter Paul refers to it as our "old man." It's the fallen spiritual identity that we received from Adam.
4. Paul also tells us that within our fallen human body, we also have "indwelling sin" or "the flesh." So let's compare what Paul is describing in verse 6 with the diagram on the next page. Paul said, "*the old man was crucified, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we might no longer be slaves to sin.*" So, in this verse, Paul is referencing the DNA of our human spirit, the flesh, and the body along with the soul.
 - He is saying that the "old man" (the fallen spiritual DNA of our human spirit) was crucified. This means destroyed, cut off, removed...
 - ...so that the "body of sin" (which is indwelling sin or "the flesh") might be "done away with" or rendered powerless...

- ...which will then result in us no longer living “as slaves to sin.” The flesh will lose its power to influence and control our mind, will, and emotions. It’s our mind, will, and emotions that ultimately determine what we do and carry out with our outward bodies.



So, looking at this diagram, the man on the left is an unbeliever and the man on the right is someone who has accepted Jesus as Savior. Comparing the two, we can see...

1. The body is the same.
 2. The soul is the same.
 3. Both have indwelling sin.
 4. The difference is regarding the human spirit and the Holy Spirit.
- The human spirit of the lost man is fallen, sinful, dead to God and alive unto sin. His fallen spiritual DNA is actually empowering indwelling sin to influence and control his mind, will, and

emotions, which then results in the carrying out of sin by the outward body.

- The human spirit of the new man or the saved man, like Paul said, the “old man,” has been crucified. This means that the fallen and spiritually dead DNA of his human spirit has been cut off or removed and the power of God has recreated him with a new “inner man” or holy and righteous spiritual DNA (*Ephesians 4:24*). You will also notice that the new man is also indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Now that his newly recreated inner man has been made spiritually alive, He is alive unto God and dead to sin.
 - So, for this new man, his inner man is no longer giving the flesh/indwelling sin free reign to control the mind, will, and emotions. When the flesh/indwelling sin is kept in check by faith in the facts of this man’s new spiritual reality, then it’s no longer able to control the mind, will, and emotions, which then results in the body living a godly life rather than carrying out the deeds of the flesh.

Romans 6:8-10

Here Paul is laying another foundational fact: the believer’s “identification with Christ.” This means the results of all that Jesus accomplished through His death, burial, and resurrection are bestowed upon us.

1. How much sin in the world did His blood pay for? ALL OF IT!! Therefore, all our sin past, present, and future has been paid for forever. His resurrection proves this.
2. How satisfied is the heart of God with Jesus’ payment? One hundred percent satisfied. His ascension to the

right hand of God proves this. Ephesians 2:6 says that we too now are seated in Christ at God's right hand. This is the ultimate proof of our acceptance to God. How acceptable to God the Father is Jesus? We have received the same level of acceptance.

3. Now that Jesus has paid for sin in full, how much of the wages of sin or authority of sin is He still under? ZERO!! Because of our identification with Him, we too are now DEAD to sin.
4. How spiritually alive is Jesus? How righteous is Jesus? How holy is Jesus? Our new inner man has been recreated with the same spiritual life, righteousness, and holiness.
5. What is true of Jesus spiritually is now also equally true of us. We have become "joint heirs with Jesus" (*Romans 8:15-17*).

Romans 6:11

In verses 2-10, Paul has given us the facts of what God has done to us and for us spiritually because of Jesus' fulfillment of the eternal plan. Now here in verse 11 Paul tells believers that we need to believe the facts of what God says He has done in us spiritually.

- The Christian life is not like other religions in which the follower carries out various rituals and good deeds in order to be made acceptable. We are made acceptable by God Himself through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.
- Therefore, our actions do not determine who we are spiritually. Who we WERE spiritually came from Adam, but who we ARE NOW comes from Jesus.

- Therefore, the first step for us in living in light of who we are spiritually is that we have to get to the place where we are basing our sense of who we are on what God says He has done and no longer base it on the things that we are doing.
- So, here in verse 11 he's telling us that we need to "reckon" or believe that we are most assuredly dead to sin and alive to God. It's a done deal. Nothing we do can ever make us more dead to sin or alive to God than what we already are.
- In the same way that we believed the facts of what God said about the gospel for justification, so now Paul is telling us that the facts of our co-crucifixion and co-resurrection in Christ we are to also believe.

Romans 6:12-13

Verse 13 is the key statement in all of Scripture regarding the subject of consecration (to present something or someone to God for His use). In order to live the resurrected Christ-like life and consecrate/present ourselves to God as "instruments of righteousness," we must first be convinced of the truth that sin's power has been broken, and it no longer has the authority to use us as "instruments of unrighteousness."

The key phrase in these verses is "as those who are alive from the dead." Paul is saying that in order to present ourselves as "instruments of righteousness unto God," we must first believe that we have indeed been crucified and now are alive from the dead. Remember ***Romans 6:7—"He who is dead is free from sin."***

Nothing from the old creation can be presented to God, but only that which has passed from death to resurrection. When we know and reckon or count on this truth, presenting or yielding comes naturally.

Romans 6:14

Notice the outcome of all this: sin will no longer have dominion or power over us. And the reason why sin has lost its power is because we are not under law. This is speaking of the authority that the law had to condemn us while we were still dead in our trespasses and sins.

However, the blood of Jesus has so paid for all of our sin that even though we still sin from time to time, the law can never condemn us ever again. We are no longer under the wages, authority, or dominion of sin because of God's grace and the blood of Jesus.

Only when we believe that our history in Adam, with all its responsibilities and demands to produce righteousness, ended at the cross, will we find ourselves completely free to enjoy these words: "UNDER GRACE." Not behaving but believing is God's way; behaving is actually a product of believing.

"Sin shall not have dominion over you." Whatever sin we may now struggle with does not have a right to dominate or control us. In Christ we have a new spiritual DNA that gives us a new spiritual identity that is righteous and holy. Believe it now and enjoy the freedom that His death has bought.

Lesson 7

All Believers Are Now Dead to the Law and Married to Christ

Moving on to Chapter 7, there is a logical question that Paul knows that the truths of Chapter 6 will lead to in people's minds. If we believers have truly received a new spiritual DNA through the co-crucifixion of our old man and the receiving of a new inner man, then why do I continue to see myself doing the things I *don't* want to do and find the inability to do the things I *do* want to do?

Just because we are no longer “under the law” and are “under grace” doesn't mean the standard of holiness that the law upholds no longer exists. God's standard of righteousness and holiness still exists; it's no longer the law that determines if we've obtained it or not but instead the blood of Christ that has paid for all of our sin by grace.

Romans 7:1-4

Paul knew that many Christians were bound to the law, and their only escape from its demands is through death; therefore, he illustrated this by the husband/wife relationship. Under the law, while her husband is alive, the wife is unable to marry another unless he dies.

Why is it so important for believers to receive deliverance from the authority of the law? To begin with, God did not give man the law to keep, but rather to break so that man could see his hopeless, sinful condition, and his need for a Savior (***Romans 3:20***). Keep in mind the law commands perfect obedience without offering any assistance or power to obey it. No one could ever fulfill the demands of the law; therefore, all are under condemnation.

God's original purpose for the law was to prove mankind's sinfulness and need for a Savior. Once we accept Jesus as our Savior, His blood pays for our every sin past, present, and future. Once all of our sin is paid in full, there is now no longer any need for the law. This is what Paul meant when he said we are dead to the law.

For a believer to go on gauging his view of his own righteousness and holiness by how well he is keeping the law will only result in feeling guilty and condemned even though all of His sin is paid in full and he is already at peace with God. Therefore, it's imperative for all believers to understand they are no longer under the law but under grace.

Unable to Fulfill the Godly Desires of the Inner Man

We may think that because we are now children of God, it is up to us to live lives that are pleasing to Him. However, if we try in our own strength to obey God's commands, we will become aware of a battle that is raging in the inner man (*Galatians 5:17*).

One part of us wants to do what God wants, and the other part wants to please self. No matter how hard we try to hold back our anger or not to think evil thoughts, we fail.

What is causing all of this? When we were born again, God crucified our old man and recreated us with a new inner man which always wants to know, please, and obey God. On the other hand, indwelling sin/the flesh is still in us battling against the Spirit to influence and control the soul (mind, will, emotions), which ultimately will control our behavior. Paul concluded that although he wanted to keep the law and please God, he realized that within was the power of sin that sabotaged all of his best efforts.

Romans 7:14-16

God wants us to do what is right and good, and we Christians have a new nature or a new inner man that agrees with God in this. However, we still have “indwelling sin,” the flesh, that is as sinful today as it was when we were first born. It will never get better. It only wants to please itself and serve sin.

Therefore, a Christian who is striving to please God by his own efforts will find that he cannot because the flesh is too strong for him and will defeat him every time. On our own, we cannot choose to disregard our flesh and choose to follow the desires of the new nature.

Paul recognized he had a struggle within himself to obey God. He found that when he tried to do God’s good pleasure, the evil within took over and he failed. No matter how hard he tried, he couldn’t do the things he knew he should do and wanted to do but did the things he didn’t want to do.

Romans 7:17-23

Two times Paul states the battle is going on within every believer. Because we are a new creation with a new inner man, we desire to live godly lives. BUT these fallen human bodies still have indwelling sin—the flesh with all of its lustful passions still dwelling within that often prevents us from living out the godly desires that we wish to do.

Along with identifying this problem that we all have, Paul also makes a very foundational point that we all must become convinced of in our own lives. This foundational point is found in verse 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.”***

- Within every Christian are two sets of desires: godly desires that come from the new inner man and sinful desires that come from indwelling sin, the flesh.
- Paul said, “it is no longer I who sin.” What he meant by this is that indwelling sin is NOT who he is spiritually. His spiritual identity is not determined by the lustful passions of the flesh but has been determined by the blood of Christ and power of God.
- Because of the blood of Christ and power of God, we are new spiritual beings who have been recreated in “true righteousness and holiness” (*Ephesians 4:24*) that are housed in fallen human bodies with indwelling sin. Therefore, Paul asks the very next logical question, “***Who will deliver me from this body of death?***” Who will deliver me, the new inner man from this fallen human body and its indwelling sin?

Romans 7:24-25

Notice that Paul’s question was “WHO,” not “WHAT” or “HOW,” and that his answer was Jesus!! Paul’s answer takes us back to his statement in *Romans 1:16-17*: “***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. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, ‘the just shall live by faith.’***”

When Paul said the gospel is the power of God unto “salvation,” he meant every part of salvation and not only justification. Salvation here means justification, sanctification, and glorification.

- In verse 17 he goes on to say that through the gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith. Here Paul is referring to the process of the righteousness of our new inner man becoming lived out more and more through our daily “from faith to faith.”
- How did we become righteous in the first place? By **FAITH** in the fact of Jesus’ shed blood as the payment for our sin.
- Now, how will that righteousness that we received at salvation become lived out through our lives more and more? By **FAITH** in the facts of our “identification with Christ.” By **FAITH** in the facts that our old man was crucified with Him and that we have also been “resurrected with Him” by the power of God recreating our new inner man in true righteousness and holiness.
- This is exactly what Paul laid out earlier: ***“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 to sin” (Romans 6:6).***

By **FAITH** we accepted Jesus as our Savior and became righteous and holy and acceptable to God. Now by **FAITH** we believe that our old man was crucified, and we now are a new creation in Christ. As we by **FAITH** believe those truths, the flesh will lose its ability to control our mind, will, and emotions and keep our bodies living as slaves to sin.

Instead, the righteousness of God that our new inner man has been created with will become lived out more and more through our daily lives. This happens just as Paul stated in Chapter 1: ***“for in it the righteousness of God is revealed from FAITH to FAITH...the just shall live by FAITH (Romans 1:17)...FAITH in the facts!!!!***

All Believers are Free from the Condemnation of the Law

Romans 8:1

Since we are delivered from living under the law and now find ourselves under Jesus' authority, Paul explains the difference in Chapter 8. The law condemns because no one can keep it. However, in Christ, there is no condemnation—no condemnation before God and no self-condemnation. He took all our punishment.

The penalty for our sin was death (***Romans 6:23***), the payment was blood (***Leviticus 17:11***), and Jesus paid it all. Therefore, we can no longer be condemned even though we still struggle with indwelling sin.

Romans 8:2-4

The law could not make us acceptable to God. Its demands on us were from God; but because of indwelling sin, we were too weak to obey it. Although the law is good and reveals God's righteous standard, it cannot make us good.

It's like demanding that someone born crippled run a marathon. He may want to run, he may even agree that running would be a wonderful thing; but no matter how hard he tries, he is unable to run the race.

This is what the law did to us. It kept demanding for us to do something that is humanly impossible; but now we have the Holy Spirit reproducing the life of Christ within and producing the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. It's interesting to note that the Holy Spirit has been mentioned only one time in

Romans Chapters 1 through 7. Now in Chapter 8, we see the Spirit mentioned nineteen times. As we walk by **FAITH** in our co-crucifixion with Christ, the Holy Spirit will set us free from bondage to sin and the law and reproduce the life of Christ through us.

Lesson 8

Only by Walking in the Spirit Can We Overcome the Power of the Flesh

Paul's focus in Chapter 7 was the surprise that every Christian realizes at some point in their Christian life—the surprise of continued unfaithfulness and sin...the surprise of not being able to live a godly life to the extent that we all desire to live...the surprise of not being able to control our flesh.

We have already discussed Romans 1:16-17 that the gospel is God's provision for EVERY part of our salvation: justification, sanctification, and glorification. This means that every believer has already received God's provision for daily sanctification. Every believer has already been given everything they need to overcome the power of the flesh on a daily basis (2 **Peter 1:2-3**). So then, what's our main problem? Why do we struggle? Paul gives us the answer here in Chapter 8.

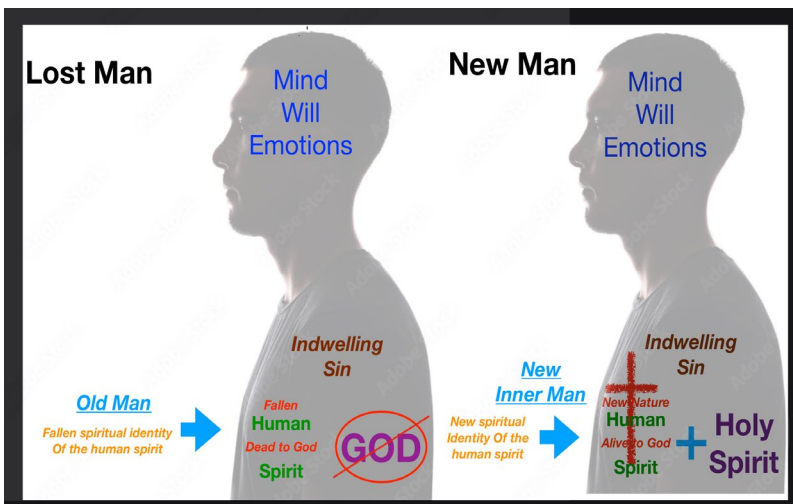
Romans 8:2-4

What the law could not do was accomplished by God. God has not only condemned sin, but He has also provided the Holy Spirit to fulfill in us the righteous requirements of the law. How is He going to fulfill it? This verse tells us: as we ***“walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”***

There are two aspects to the “righteous requirements of the law” being fulfilled in us.

1. First, positionally. The moment we accepted Jesus as our Savior, ALL of our sins past, present, and future were paid for in full—to the extent that the law can never ever condemn us for another sin we commit. It’s as if we have never broken the law. The righteous requirements of the law have been met in us once and for all by the blood of Christ.
2. Second, conditionally. This is the context of Paul’s focus in Chapter 8. Even though all our sin is paid in full and we have been recreated spiritually with a new spiritual DNA in true righteousness and holiness, we still have indwelling sin that often influences our mind, will, and emotions. This leads to controlling our bodies and causing us to commit sin and look like those who have not met the full requirements of the law.

If you look at this visual, we can clearly see what Paul is describing here.



The lost man is still dead in his trespasses and sins. His sins are not paid for, he is still separated from God, the law still condemns him, and he has no choice but to live every day controlled by indwelling sin.

The new man has accepted Jesus as his Savior. Jesus' blood has paid for all his sin past, present, and future. The righteous requirements of the law have been fulfilled in him by the blood of Christ, and the law can never ever condemn him again.

- Even though he still resides in a fallen human body with indwelling sin, his old man has been crucified, and the power of God has recreated his new inner man in true righteousness and holiness.
- He is now alive unto God and is now indwelt by the Holy Spirit.
- Paul is saying this man no longer has to live controlled by his flesh/indwelling sin, but it's possible for him now to live his life led and controlled by the Holy Spirit instead.
- However, at the same time it's also possible for him (even though he is saved) to go on living every day controlled by the flesh as if he was still an unbeliever. The flesh/indwelling sin will never change or improve.

Romans 8:5

Those who live controlled by the flesh will find their hearts set on the self-centered and lustful passions that come from it.

- Not only does this mean the obvious things like lust, greed, immorality, laziness, pride, envy, anger, etc....
- ...but it also means anything on which we depend upon ourselves and not God, especially when it comes to any part of our salvation.

Those whose lives are controlled by the Holy Spirit will find their hearts set and focused on the desires and focuses of the Holy Spirit.

So, what are the desires and focuses of the Holy Spirit? It's not obedience!! Here's what God in His Word tells us that the Holy Spirit is focused on:

- **John 16:14-15** – *“He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and reveal it to you.”*
- **Romans 8:16** – *“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.”*
- **1 Corinthians 2:11-12** – *We have been given the Spirit of God for the purpose of revealing to us “the things that we have been freely given by God.”*
- **Galatians 4:4-7** — *Because we are sons, “God has sent forth His Spirit” into our hearts “crying out, ABBA Father.”*

When we put the reality of these verses together with the context of Paul's teaching here in Romans 8, we can see that the Holy Spirit is working to center our trust, hope, and dependence for every part of salvation on the results of Jesus' fulfillment of the eternal plan of redemption.

- If we are living our lives controlled by the Spirit and we are “minding” the things of the Spirit, then every day we will be resting in the facts that are true of us because we are in Christ. I will live out each day with the confidence that I already am righteous, holy, and acceptable to God because of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection.

- But if I'm living my life controlled by the flesh and "minding" the things of the flesh, then I'll be trusting, hoping, and depending upon my own efforts to be faithful and sin less and obey more in order to feel confident that I am righteous, holy, and acceptable to God.

Indwelling sin, the flesh, is extremely deceitful. It is rooted in self-centeredness that is always manifested by a desire to be independent of God.

- That independence is manifested when we blatantly choose to disregard God and just live how we want doing all that we want.
- It's also manifested when we choose to trust, hope, and depend upon our own acts of obedience in order to feel righteous, holy, and acceptable to God.

Romans 8:6-8

Following our context then, "*to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace*" is speaking about what we will actually experience with our souls as the result.

- *To be carnally minded is death.* If I am walking in the flesh, trusting, hoping, and depending upon my own efforts to be faithful and obedient in order to feel righteous, holy, and acceptable to God—Paul says this will result in death. What death?
 - Death to the righteous requirement of the law (that is already fulfilled in me) becoming lived out through my life.

- Death to the peace, joy, and rest that believing I am ALREADY made righteous, holy, and acceptable to God would cause me to experience.
- Death to walking by faith.
- *To be spiritually minded is life and peace.* If I am by faith becoming increasingly confident that the Holy Spirit is seeking to convince me of who I am, what I've been given, and where I am placed in Christ, Paul says the result will be life and peace.
 - Life in the sense of being empowered to live out the righteous requirement of the law that has already been fulfilled in me by the blood of Jesus.
 - Peace and rest that comes from knowing I am already complete in Him. I am as righteous, holy, and acceptable to Him as I'll ever be because of His finished work.

In verse 7, Paul tells us why carnal mindedness leads to death. Because the mind of the flesh is at enmity with God, it is not subject to God and only ever seeks to be independent of Him. It will never change, never improve, never become less sinful and more holy.

- Not only is the carnal mind NOT subject to the law of God, but Paul says that it's impossible for it to ever become subject to His law.

Therefore, Paul's conclusion in verse 8 is that if a believer is living under the reign and control of indwelling sin/the flesh on a daily basis, it's impossible for that person to do anything that would be acceptable to God. At the center of being controlled by the flesh is self-centered independence.

The Answer

In Chapter 7, Paul laid out every believer's dilemma: I don't do what I want to do but keep doing the things that I don't want to do.

In the first eight verses of Chapter 8, Paul tells why this is our experience. Even though we have been recreated with a new inner man in true righteousness and holiness, our fallen human bodies still have indwelling sin/the flesh within. The flesh is at enmity with God, is not subject to His law, and never can be.

This is why our best efforts to live godly often fail, for we are seeking to live it out through our own effort to be committed and obedient and faithful. Paul said ***the carnal mind CANNOT be subject to the law of God.***

In verses 9-11, Paul gives us the answer for our dilemma.

Romans 8:9-11

Verse 9: First Paul tells us how we can know if we are controlled by the flesh or controlled by the Spirit and that is if the Holy Spirit "dwells" in you. This word means more than just being present.

- When you think of "dwelling" somewhere, you are the one in control of that abode or that space.
- Guests in a home are not in control of what goes on within a home. It would be said that they are "staying" or "visiting" in your home but not dwelling.
- So, if the Holy Spirit is dwelling in you, it means He is the One who is leading and controlling. It means that the focus of your trust, hope, and dependence is centered in His desires and purposes, which are the results of Christ's finished work on the cross for every part of our salvation.

- The Holy Spirit is seeking to convince you daily of your new spiritual identity. The Holy Spirit dwelling in you on a daily basis means that the more you become convinced of your new true spiritual identity, the more you will live out your life in light of who you are.

However, Paul said if you don't even HAVE the Holy Spirit, you don't belong to God. Therefore, it will be impossible for the Holy Spirit to dwell in you.

Verse 10: Paul reminds us of two very important facts that are true of every believer. If Christ is in you, then these two things remain true of you:

1. The body is dead and has indwelling sin/the flesh attached to it.
2. We have been made alive unto God by becoming recreated with a new inner man in true righteousness and holiness.

Verse 11: Now here's the answer. Even though your new inner man with its godly desires are still housed within your fallen human body with indwelling sin that can still control and hinder your best efforts to live godly, ***“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.”***

- Remember what Paul said in ***Romans 6:6 – “the old man was crucified that the body of sin might be made powerless.”***
- Verse 11 tells us how the body of sin is made powerless by the Holy Spirit's “DWELLING” within us, by the Holy Spirit's so convincing us of the facts that...

- Our old man was crucified.
- We have been resurrected with Christ by God recreating us with a new spiritual DNA.
- We are now one hundred percent righteous, holy, and acceptable to God because of our new spiritual identity.
- Faith in these facts will empower us to NOT “fulfill the lust of the flesh” (*Galatians 5:16*).

The Conclusion

Romans 8:12-13

Therefore, because of all of the facts Paul has laid out from Chapter 6:1 to Chapter 8:12...

- We are identified with Christ.
- Our old man was crucified with Him.
- Our connection with Adam is broken.
- We are made to share in His newness of life.
- The Spirit of life dwells in us and sets us free from the law of sin and death.
- Although our bodies are dead to God, the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead will make our bodies alive toward Him when Christ returns.

Because of the reality of all of these results of Christ's finished work, THEREFORE, “*we are not debtors to the flesh.*” We are no longer obligated to live every day controlled by the desires and lustful passions of indwelling sin. It is now possible for the Holy Spirit to “dwell” in our hearts and empower us to walk in the newness of life.

Verse 13: Even though all of these things are spiritually true of you, if you go on living life controlled by the flesh, then you will experience the living out of the deeds of the flesh (*Galatians 5:19-21*).

If the desires and lustful passions of the flesh are being put to death on a daily basis through the Holy Spirit's "dwelling" within us, then we will "live"—meaning, we will be empowered to live out and manifest through our daily lives who we are spiritually in the inner man.

Lesson 9

Nothing Can Separate the Children of God from His Faithful, Eternal Love

Beginning in verse 14 of Chapter 8, Paul shifts his focus from the fact that only through the Holy Spirit's enablement can we find daily deliverance from the reign and control of "in dwelling sin/the flesh" to HOW He will bring about this enablement or empowerment.

Paul says the way in which the Holy Spirit will bring about the empowerment to walk less in the flesh and more in the Spirit on a daily basis is by convincing us of WHY the Holy Spirit will be faithful in our lives—simply because we are the children of God!!!

Romans 8:14

The thing to notice here is that Paul is talking about the Holy Spirit's leading and not our following. The Holy Spirit will lead and will be faithful to work in the lives of those who are the children of God. The only condition put on us is that we are His children. There is no implication here that His leading will be dependent upon our following.

A father may have obedient children and at the same time a rebellious child or two. How the father leads those children and what his leading may look like may be quite different. The fact that some of his children are obedient and some rebellious will not change his faithfulness to lead and work in their lives. There will be a commitment to his children that is determined by the relationship regardless of what their following or obedience looks like.

This is what Paul is stating is true of the Holy Spirit in our daily lives. He will be faithful to seek to lead us to walk under His control and not the flesh because of our relationship and not because of our obedience.

Romans 8:15

Here Paul gives us the first reason why we can be confident in the Holy's faithful commitment to us. It's because of our new spiritual identity. The old spiritual identity we got from Adam caused us to "live in fear" because we were sinful, dead to God, and condemned by the law. We were separated enemies of God and He was our Judge.

Now, we have received a new spiritual identity that has been created in true righteousness and holiness. We are alive unto God, under grace and no longer under the law; we've been made the children of God and now God is our Heavenly Father.

Romans 8:16

So, how can we truly know that we have received a new spiritual identity that changes us from being enemies of God to now being the children of God? I can look in the mirror

and see my physical identity. I can plainly see my gender, my race, and my ethnicity. But I can't look in the mirror and see my spiritual identity. I can't look in the mirror and see my new spiritual DNA.

Paul tells us in this verse that this is one of the roles the Holy Spirit is carrying out in all of our lives. Because we have a new spiritual identity that makes us alive unto God, the Holy Spirit can now "witness" with our spirit the fact that we are the children of God, as well as everything else that is now true of us because of that fact. In verse 17 then, Paul tells us something that is now true of us because we are God's children.

Romans 8:17

Because we are truly His children, we are also His heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. As joint heirs with Christ, what have we received?

- John 17:20-24—*eternal oneness and unity with the Godhead*
- Ephesians 1:3—"every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies"
- Ephesians 1:11—*an eternal inheritance*
- Ephesians 3:8—*the unsearchable riches of Christ*
- 2 Peter 1:2-3—*all things pertaining to life and godliness*

Our ability to believe all these things that God's Word tells us are true of us will be the direct result of the Holy Spirit "witnessing with our spirit" that we truly are the children of God. There is no other way to become convinced of all that is now true of us as the children of God.

Romans 8:18-25

All through this study of Romans, we have mentioned numerous times that the salvation we have received through Jesus' shed blood on the cross includes justification, sanctification, and our future glorification.

Here in Chapter 8, Paul is showing us how the facts of all three aspects of our salvation affects us here and now while we are still housed in fallen human bodies that exist in a fallen and sin-cursed world:

1. Our old man is gone and we have a new inner man with a new spiritual DNA (Chapter 6).
2. But that new inner man is housed in a fallen human body that also has "indwelling sin/the flesh" with its lustful passions (Chapter 7).
3. Indwelling sin often prevents us from carrying out the desires of the new inner man (Chapter 7).
4. We are also indwelled with the Holy Spirit Who is working to strengthen our inner man through faith in the facts of our new spiritual identity (Chapter 8).
5. The Holy Spirit is working to convince our hearts of the reality that we are truly the acceptable Children of God; and because we are His true children, we are also His heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ (Chapter 8).
6. Because our justification is complete, so is our sanctification. All of our sins are paid in full for eternity; therefore, we have been made the children of God for eternity.
7. So, Paul's point here in 8:17-25 is, because our justification is complete, and because our sanctification is complete, we can be confident that our future glorification will be just as sure.

8. Confidence in that fact will give us hope and a rest that will enable us to patiently endure all the pain and suffering that comes from living in a cursed body in a fallen world, while waiting for our redeemed heavenly bodies and the new heavens and the new earth.

Romans 8:26-30

In order to catch the main point that Paul is making in these verses, it's important to tie them back into the context of verses 18-25. Paul's statement in verse 18 is key: ***"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."***

In making this statement, Paul is doing the exact same thing that we do with little children when they don't want to finish their dinner. *"If you eat all of your dinner like a big boy, then you will get your dessert."* The "hope" of the dessert is intended to motivate them to finish their dinner.

Paul is intending that the hope of the glory to come will motivate us to endure the hardships and trials and difficulties of living in a fallen world, but here's the reality. Even though we are a new creation in Christ with a new inner man that has been recreated in true righteousness and holiness (***Ephesians 4:24***), that new identity is still housed in a fallen human body that has indwelling sin.

- In the flesh we lose sight of our future eternal hope, become short sighted, focusing only on our circumstances here and now.
- This is why Paul says in verse 26 that we don't know how to pray as we ought. The same way that little children can be too shortsighted to finish their dinner to obtain dessert, so we too are often so shortsighted that

we lose sight of the eternal hope that is to come and become discouraged and depressed over the circumstances of daily life.

- It's in those times when Paul says in verse 26 that the Holy Spirit prays for us and makes intercession for us "with groanings that cannot be uttered." Even though we are short sighted in the flesh, praying and begging God to change our temporary circumstances here and now, the Holy Spirit is praying on our behalf and making intercession for us in regard to what is really important in lives.

In verses 27-29, Paul tells us the substance of what the Holy Spirit's prayers are focused on in our lives.

- Verse 27: First, His intercession is "according to the will of God."
- Verse 28: God is sovereignly working "all things together for good [...] for those who are called according to His purpose."
- Verse 29: The "purpose" is that we become more and more "conformed to the image of His Son."

Basically, Paul is saying the focus of the Holy Spirit's intercession is that every circumstance that comes into our lives will be used by God to conform us more and more in our daily lives to the image of Christ.

- Verse 30: Our justification is complete, our sanctification (positional) is complete, and our future glorification is sure. Therefore, all that is left is the growing daily in our ability to live out more and more who we already are as a new creation with a new spiritual identity.
 - And that's exactly what the Holy Spirit is focused on in our lives in terms of His working and intercession on our behalf.

Paul's Conclusion to All That Has Been Laid Out from Chapter 1 through Chapter 8:30

Romans 8:31-34

This section begins with Paul asking a rhetorical question: “*If God is for us, who can be against us?*” Paul’s question implies that all that has been laid out in the book of Romans up to this point has proven one main thing—God is FOR us!! So, let’s consider all that God has done to prove He is indeed FOR us.

1. He foreordained an eternal plan of redemption long before mankind was brought into existence that would be by grace and through Christ (2 *Timothy 1:9*).
2. All of mankind became sinful and separated from God just as He expected (*Genesis 3:1-7; Romans 1:18-20; 3:23*).
3. At just the right time, God sent Jesus to the earth in the form of a man to be the propitiation or payment for our sin (*Romans 3:24-25*).
4. Accepting Jesus’ shed blood on our behalf as the payment for our sin so completely pays for ALL of our sin that we become declared to be one hundred percent righteous and holy before God (*Romans 3:26-28; 4:24-25; 5:1*).
5. Not only is our justification complete in Christ at the moment of salvation but so is our sanctification. The moment we accept Jesus as our Savior, our old fallen spiritual identity (old man) becomes crucified and we receive a new spiritual identity that is created in His image in true righteousness and holiness (*Romans 6:1-6; Ephesians 4:24; Hebrews 10:14*).

6. In Christ, we are dead to the law. Though we continue to sin, the law can no longer condemn us. All of our sin is paid in full and we are now on the ground of grace (*Romans 7*).
7. We have been given the Holy Spirit to (1) convince us of all that we have been made and given spiritually, (2) intercede on our behalf on a daily basis, and (3) use every circumstance that comes into our lives to conform us to the image of Christ while we continue to live in fallen human bodies on a sin-cursed earth, waiting for the redemption of both (*Romans 8:1-30*).

Paul has revealed that God in His grace has provided, by grace, for every aspect of our salvation: justification, sanctification, and our future glorification. It's all done and complete in Christ. There is nothing left for us to do in order to add to any aspect of it. It's the ultimate revelation that God is indeed truly FOR us!!!

So, if God through Jesus' substitutionary death on the cross has provided for our every spiritual need past, present, and future, then "who can be against us"?

- Verse 32: If God has already sent His Son on our behalf, then we can rest assured He will also give us all things that His Son has accomplished on our behalf.
- Verse 33: From this point on, we can never be accused of being sinful ever again, for God Himself has justified us.
- Verse 34: We can never be condemned for sin again. Why? Because Jesus died, rose again, and now sits at the right hand of God interceding on our behalf that because of His shed blood, we are declared righteous and made holy forever.

Because we are justified and sanctified, we are no longer the separated enemies of God. We have now been restored to oneness with Him as the children of God. We have been made worthy of entering in the eternal relationship with the godhead.

Because the finished work of Jesus and these results that we have received in Him are eternal, **THEREFORE**, nothing will ever be able to separate us from His love.

Romans 8:35-39

No enemy, no lack, no guilt, no condemnation and now no separation. The word “who” here obviously refers to God’s enemy, Satan. Then Paul begins to name other specific things and the first mention is of tribulation.

- Satan has never succeeded in separating one saint from the love of Christ by tribulation (***I Thessalonians 1:6; 3:3; John 16:33***).
- Nor has he been able to separate any through distress.
- Famine comes next. Famine? Yes! If we are starving to death, does that mean God does not love us? No!
- What about nakedness? We don’t have any clothes; does that mean God doesn’t love us? No! We may be hungry in this Christ-rejecting world and yet loved by our Lord.
- Or peril (danger), or sword (war)—does this mean God does not love us? No!

Verse 36: We, as the dearly beloved children of God live in a fallen and sin-cursed world in which the world, the flesh, and devil seek to hinder us, persecute us, and destroy us. In that sense we are like sheep that are being slaughtered and in and of ourselves can do nothing about it. **BUT. . .**

Verse 37: “We are more than conquerors”!!!! Even though everything is against us and there is nothing we can do to help or save ourselves, BECAUSE HE IS FOR US, we become more than conquerors who have already received the victory!!!!

Verses 38-39: We know that verse 39 declares it is the love of God which is in Christ Jesus from which nothing can separate us. So Paul says, “I am persuaded.” Of course, the very thing that he was persuaded about and the emphasis here is that nothing can separate us from the love of God.

- Not even death which all fear (*Hebrews 2:14-15*).
- Nor can the circumstances of life separate us from the love of God.
- Nor can angels, whether good or fallen, separate us from the love of God.
- Nor can principalities—we know from *Ephesians 1:21 and 6:12* that there are levels of unseen authorities, but none of them can separate us from the love of God.
- Nor things present, nor things to come—nothing today or tomorrow can separate us.
- Nor powers. The word “power” here apparently has reference to spiritism and bewitchment, sorcery, mystic spells. None of these powers can separate us from the love of God.
- Nor height nor depth. Astronomers would frighten us with the vastness of our universe, but Jesus passed through all the heavens and sits on the right hand of God. No height and no depth can separate us from God’s love in Christ.
- Nor any other created thing (including you or I and our sin) can separate us from the love of God.

Because of Jesus' eternally finished work on the cross on our behalf, we have been made to be the children of God for all of eternity. Because we are His children for eternity, His love for us will be eternal and can never diminish or be taken away.

Lesson 10

If Nothing Can Separate Us From God's Love, Then What About Israel?

When we began this study in Romans, we commented that this would not be a verse-by-verse complete study of the book, but rather we would focus on the major points, leaving others for a more detailed study in the future. Therefore, we will not be studying Chapters 9, 10 and 11 at this time. However, we will give a brief introduction into the main topic of these chapters.

God's Sovereign Right to Use Whomever He Wills in His Eternal Plan

What Paul wrote in Romans 1-8 has been truths that are true of every Christian or non-Christian, regardless of being Jew or gentile.

1. Every human is born under the wrath of God (*Chapters 1-2*).
2. Only by faith in Christ alone can ANYONE (Jew or Gentile) obtain the righteousness of God (*Chapters 3-4*).
3. The moment anyone (Jew or Gentile) accepts Jesus as Savior, they become a new creation with a new spiritual identity through the crucifixion of the old and recreation of a new inner man (*Chapters 5-6*).
4. All believers are no longer under law, but under grace (*Chapter 7*).
5. All believers have been given the Holy Spirit and He is currently working to convince each and every one of us of all that is now true of us because of the blood of Christ and power of God (*Chapter 8*).
6. Because we are the children of God, NOTHING can ever separate us from the love of God (*Chapter 8*).

Then where does all of that leave the nation of Israel? It sure seems like their rejection of Jesus as the Messiah has separated them from the love of God. That's the question Paul is answering in Chapters 9-11. God had committed Himself to bless this nation; and now due to their unbelief, they are nationally set aside.

Just because Israel as a nation has been "set aside" corporately, it doesn't mean they have become separated from God's love. For in this point in time, after Jesus has come and fulfilled the eternal plan of redemption, any and every Jew that accepts Jesus' shed blood as the payment for their sin, everything Paul says is true of us in Romans Chapters 4-8 becomes instantly true of them as well.

So then, Romans 9-11 becomes an essential part of Christian doctrine in this respect: while these chapters do not reveal our salvation or our place in Christ as do the first eight chapters, they unfold to us our place in God's plans as well as National Israel's place.

An important point to keep in mind is that God didn't have one plan for Israel and another plan for Gentiles and the church. God has only ever had ONE ETERNAL PLAN that began with His planning in eternity past and the results of which will carry on into eternity future. The part that is different between Israel and the church is how God was/is using each within His one eternal plan.

God chose to bring Israel into existence (during the "preparation stage" of His eternal plan) to be used for two specific purposes.

1. To reveal what mankind is like—*blind, ignorant, sinful, stubborn, hopeless, helpless*
2. To reveal what God is like through His interaction with them—*faithful, loving, gracious, merciful, long suffering, holy, righteous, just.*

God chose to bring the church into existence (during the "results of the fulfilled plan stage" of His eternal plan) to be used at a different time and for different purposes.

1. To become an eternal manifestation of the glory of His grace.
2. To reveal to both the physical world (all of humanity) and to the spirit world, the results of Jesus going to the cross and fulfilling His eternal plan of redemption.

So then, Paul's main point in Romans 9-11 is the fact of God's sovereignty and, therefore, His right to use anyone and everyone for whatever purpose within His plan that He so chooses.

In Chapter 11, Paul told the Jews that God's rejection of Israel as a nation does not mean He has no desire that the Jewish people be saved. Paul reminded them that all through history, at various times when Israel turned away from God, there was always a remnant that remained faithful.

Paul said that even though God has rejected Israel as a nation, at some point the Jews will once again turn back to Him realizing their sinfulness, and God will save them as they place their faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

Lesson 11

Living In Light of Who We Already Are

As we begin Romans Chapter 12, it's important to notice Paul's shift from focusing on foundational identity truth to more of a conditional, living out of the Christian life focus. It isn't until Paul spends eleven chapters laying out the foundational identification truths for all three aspects of our salvation (justification, sanctification, glorification) that he finally gets into any real exhorting and encouraging for how we should be living or what our lives should look like in light of who we already are spiritually.

Romans 12:1-2

Notice that Paul begins this section with a “therefore.” What he is about to say is all because of the “mercies of God.”

It’s important to know that “mercies” here isn’t the same word for “mercy.” This one has more to do with the pity or compassion that one shows for the suffering of others. This is a revelation of the fact that all Paul has been stating about God in Chapters 1-11 first and foremost are intended to be a revelation of the heart of God (**2 *Corinthians 1:3***).

Paul goes on. Because of this amazing display of the heart of God in planning and carrying out the eternal plan of redemption and all that it entails, he urges them to *“present their bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God.”*

The word “present” is the same word that is used of Jesus in Acts 1:3 where He presented Himself as being alive from the dead. Jesus didn’t have to do anything to make Himself alive in order to be presented alive, but He presented Himself as already being made alive.

It is also the same word used in Romans 6:13 where Paul says we are to present ourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead. He is not saying we are to make ourselves alive from the dead and then present ourselves. He is simply stating that we be seen for who we already are spiritually.

So specifically, Paul exhorts us to *“present ourselves as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto the Lord.”*

- **Present** – To be seen, to be near or close by in proximity so as to be seen
- **Living** – Alive as opposed to being dead

- **Sacrifice** – In the OT when a lamb met the criteria for being an acceptable sacrifice, it was set apart (consecrated) from the rest of the flock. It was deemed to be without blemish and worthy of being set apart or “consecrated” unto the Lord.
- **Holy** – Perfect, without blemish, without sin
- **Acceptable** – Well pleasing, at peace, welcomed

So, putting this all together, Paul is simply encouraging believers to live their lives in light of who they already are spiritually. This is done by faith and not by any effort on our part.

- We are already living. In Christ, we have received eternal life (*2 Peter 1:3*).
- In Christ, we are sanctified or set apart as belonging to God (*1 Corinthians 1:30*).
- In Christ, we are made perfect/holy (*Hebrews 10:10, 14*).
- In Christ, we have been made acceptable unto God (*Ephesians 1:6*).

If you are a man, what do you have to do in order to continue to live your life like a man? Nothing—just believe that you are a man and keep living life. Now, if you are confused and think you are a woman, then there will be all kinds of things that you will need to do in order to “present” yourself as a woman. Why? Because you are a man and NOT a woman.

Paul is not telling us to “present” ourselves as something that we are not already in Christ. Therefore, this is not a command for us to do anything in order to make these things true of us but to simply believe that it’s already who we are.

Romans 12:3-5

With these verses, Paul is now going to move into the living out of the Christian life. Again, it's very important to notice the progression in what Paul is saying here. Before jumping into engiftedness and how each believer is to function in the body and for the body, in verses 1-2 he first reminds us of the spiritual identity we've been given in Christ and the importance for believing it to be true by faith.

- This is what he was referring to in verse 2 when he exhorts believers to “renew their minds.”

It's this renewal of the mind by faith in the facts of our true spiritual identity that will enable us to follow the instruction Paul gives in these following verses.

Verse 3: The first instruction Paul gives is that every believer is to ***“not 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.”***

- A true grasp of the justification, sanctification, and glorification truths that Paul laid out in Chapters 5-8 is what will enable believers to *“NOT think more highly of themselves than they ought to think, but to think soberly.”*
- When you see yourself in light of the eternal plan of redemption that was planned by God before the foundations of the earth, was prepared for, fulfilled, and now all of its results have been bestowed upon you by grace and grace alone, there is no room for self-exultation.
- And the humility that comes from having that correct perspective is what will give you the proper mindset for Paul's following instruction.

Verses 4-5: Just as every part of our salvation has been bestowed upon us by grace, so too the spiritual engiftment that every believer has been given was also by grace.

- Regardless of the spiritual gift you have, it was not chosen by you, earned by you, or became true of you by anything you have done. God by His own sovereign will has decided how He wants to use each of us in the body of Christ, and by His grace bestowed upon us spiritual engiftment that will enable us to function according to His will and for His glory.
- In verse 5, Paul tells us why we've each been given specific spiritual engiftment—it's because of our corporate identity. All believers are unified in Christ. We are one in Christ. We are all individual members of the one "body of Christ." the church.
- So, in order for us to be enabled to live and function according to God's will and purposes, we must be assured of both our individual spiritual identity that we've been given in Christ and the corporate identity that we have been placed into in Christ.

Romans 12:6-8

In verse 5, Paul stated each believer has been engifted with spiritual engiftment to function in for the good of the whole body. Now, beginning in verse 6, he begins to list the seven main spiritual gifts God has given to individual believers so that the corporate body of Christ, the church, can exist and function according to God's call and design:

1. **Prophecy** – Those whom God chose to be Old Testament prophets had to speak God's message as He enabled them. In the Old Testament we saw many times that God used prophets to speak His message to people.

- There are approximately 930 mentions of the word “prophet” or “prophesy” in the Old Testament. Only 30 times is it referring to telling the future. Approximately 900 times, God used the prophets to warn the Nation of Israel of His coming wrath because of their sin.
 - God is using prophets today in much this same way. In the New Testament Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to write God’s message to His children in the Bible. All that God wants us to know has been written down. Today there is no longer a need for prophets to tell the future. God is not revealing anything new other than what has already been revealed in the Word.
 - However, the New Testament gift of prophecy is still very much needed in the church as it is the gift that is sensitive to deceitfulness. Therefore, God uses the modern-day prophet to protect the body from false teachers.
2. **Service** – It’s interesting that the Lord inserts the gift of serving between prophesying and teaching.
- Those with the gift of service seem to be able to see physical needs that appear to be insignificant to others. (Notice what Paul said about Timothy: “*I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state*” **Philippians 2:20.**)
 - A servant takes great joy in knowing that through his service, he brings peace of mind to another person. (Timothy served Paul as a “*son with the father*” so that he could carry out his ministry. **Philippians 2:22**)

- A minister to the saints often sees the importance of the task that needs doing and will gladly use personal assets of time, money, and strength.
 - The gift of ministry is the ability and desire to serve wherever needed to free others to study the Word and pray. In Acts 6, we read that the Antioch church chose deacons to minister to the physical needs of the people so that the apostles could be free to spend their time in teaching the Word and prayer (*Acts 6:1-6*).
 - Those with the gift of serving can see the needs clearly and have a God-given inner desire and joy in serving the body.
3. **Teaching** – Those with the gift of teaching have the God-given desire to search out the deeper truths of God’s Word and have the ability to communicate those truths to others.
- The correct teaching of God’s Word is so very important to the overall spiritual health of the church of Jesus Christ; because without correct teaching, the church will not grow in a deep understanding of God and all that He has done.
 - Any of the gifts that the Holy Spirit bestows upon a believer, and in particular the gift of teaching, must be developed in our lives through study of the Word and dependence upon the Spirit.
4. **Exhortation** – The gift of exhortation is distinct from that of teaching. Exhortation appeals more to the will, whereas teaching focuses more on the mind.

- Those with the gift of exhortation seem to be able to discern spiritual maturity in others and enjoy giving encouragement to those who are growing and teachable. This “encouragement” must come from the facts of the results of the finished work of Christ and all that it bestows upon each believer.
5. **Giving** – The literal meaning of giving is “sharing one’s substance with others,” and the manner of such giving is to be without reluctance, for God loves a cheerful giver (*2 Corinthians 9:7*).
- Those with the gift of giving have the ability to discern wise investments. The motive is to use the assets of time, money, and possessions to advance the work of the Lord.
 - Givers desire continuous reassurance that their decisions are in God’s will whether they have little or much to give. (Paul shares how the Macedonians “*first gave themselves to the Lord, and then unto us by the will of God*” *2 Corinthians 8:5*.)
 - A giver has the God-given ability to discern value which motivates him to want to give quality gifts. (Matthew recorded more details than any other gospel writer about the gifts given to Christ. He is the only one who mentioned the treasures brought by the Magi. He also described Mary’s ointment as precious, and Joseph’s tomb as new. *Matthew 2:11; 26:6-11; 27:57-60*).
 - Givers can discern needs when it is not obvious to others.

- Because givers look to the Lord for direction in giving, they desire recipients to look to the Lord for provision. Also, they have great joy in giving quietly and anonymously. (*Matthew is the only gospel writer to emphasize secret giving. (Matthew 6:1-4).*)
 - Givers understand the destructiveness of the love of money and are aware that many to whom they are giving have not learned this; therefore, they look for ways of giving which avoid dependency, laziness, or extravagance.
 - Those with the gift of giving tend to be rather frugal, resourceful and content with the basics.
6. **Administration** – This gift is given to bring order to the church. There are those who God has gifted to oversee and manage the overall ministry of the church. They are servants and not bosses of the church. They are called to exercise their gift with love, humility, and diligence.
- When an organizer is given a project, he is able to picture the completed task and what it will take to accomplish it. (When Nehemiah was given his great task of removing the “*great affliction and reproach of God’s people in Jerusalem,*” he immediately visualized the need to rebuild the wall. *Nehemiah 1:2-3*)
 - Administrators delegate whenever and wherever possible but know when and where they cannot. (Nehemiah delegated the building of the walls, but he retained responsibility for dealing with the enemies. *Nehemiah 4:13*)

- Godly administrators are faithful to complete the task at hand and are willing to endure much opposition to their leadership. (Nehemiah responded to persistent opposition from both outside enemies and fellow workers. *Nehemiah 4:8-18*)
 - Administrators have the ability to take seemingly impossible tasks and break them down into achievable goals. (Nehemiah took the huge task of rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem and broke it down into smaller sections which each family or group was able to complete. *Nehemiah 3:1-32*)
 - Organizers notice small details which others tend to overlook that are necessary for the proper completion of the task, and they are able to remove themselves from outside distractions in order to focus on the ultimate goal. (Nehemiah did not get involved in the actual building; however, he removed obstacles such as financial pressures which would have hindered the workers. *Nehemiah 5:1-13*)
 - One of the organizers greatest joys in life is to motivate others to get involved and then to see everything come together.
7. **Mercy** – The gift of mercy is often perfected in those to whom God has shown mercy.
- Through the gift of mercy, one can sense which individuals are hurting and to share the pain with them. (John wrote his first epistle to give joy, fellowship, hope, and confidence and to cast out fear and torment. *1 John 1:3-4; 3:2-3; 4:18; 5:13-14*)
 - The merciful one finds it very hard to be firm, not wanting to offend others.

- Because of the mercy's sensitivity and understanding of people who are going through mental and emotional distress, many who are hurting are drawn to him and confide in him. (When Christ was hanging on the cross, he transferred responsibility for His grieving mother to John. *John 19:26-27*)
- It's interesting that a person with the gift of exhortation will try to help a person find benefit from his hurt, whereas those with the gift of mercy tend to want to remove the source of the hurt.

In conclusion, all these gifts can only be given by the Holy Spirit, and only through walking in dependence upon Him will we be empowered to function in that gift according to God's will.

Lesson 12

Living In Light of Who We Already Are

In this last section of Chapter 12, Paul gives some commands concerning how we should live together with other Christians. If we were still unbelievers under sin's control, it would be impossible for us to obey these commands.

Again, it's imperative that we come back to Paul's exhortation at the beginning of this chapter in verse 3: "*to not think more highly of yourself than you ought.*"

- A true grasp of the justification, sanctification, and glorification truths that Paul laid out from Chapters 5 to 8 is what will enable believers to *“NOT think more highly of themselves than they ought to think, but to think soberly.”*
- When you see yourself in light of the eternal plan of redemption that was planned by God before the foundations of the earth, and then was prepared for, fulfilled, and now all its results have been bestowed upon you by grace and grace alone, there is no room for self-exultation.
- The humility that comes from having that correct perspective is what will give you the proper mindset for following Paul’s instruction in the rest of this chapter for how we are to view and treat one another.

Romans 12:9-21

Here’s the list of characteristics that Paul exhorts believers to live and manifest in our relationships with one another.

1. Love without hypocrisy – verse 9.
2. Abhor what is evil – verse 9.
3. Cling to what is good – verse 9.
4. Be kindly affectionate to one another in brotherly love – verse 10.
5. In honor give preference to one another above yourself – verse 10.
6. Don’t be lazy in serving the Lord, but serve Him with fervency of spirit – verse 11.
7. Rejoice in hope – verse 12.

8. Be patient in tribulation – verse 12.
9. Continue steadfastly in prayer – verse 12.
10. Distribute to the needs of the saints – verse 13.
11. Be given to hospitality – verse 13.
12. Bless those who persecute you; do not curse them – verse 14.
13. Rejoice with those who rejoice – verse 15.
14. Weep with those who weep – verse 15.
15. Be of the same mind toward one another – verse 16.
16. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble – verse 16.
17. Do not be wise in your own opinion – verse 16.
18. Repay no one evil for evil – verse 17.
19. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men – verse 17.
20. If possible, as much as it depends on you, live peaceably with all men – verse 18.
21. Do not avenge yourself, but give place to the wrath of God (vengeance belongs to Him) – verse 19.
22. If your enemy is hungry, feed him – verse 20.
23. If your enemy is thirsty, give him drink – verse 20.
24. Do not be overcome by evil – verse 21.
25. Overcome evil with good – verse 21.

If every member of our churches were walking in and manifesting these characteristics in all of our relationships with one another, what would our churches look like? How would our churches be viewed by unbelievers? How effective would we be in our carrying out the work of the ministry in local communities?

In Galatians 5, Paul gives us two lists of characteristics. In verses 19-21, he provides the characteristics of the flesh. This is what our lives will look like if we are walking in the flesh (*Gal.5:19-21*).

- Reading through this list, if we are walking in the flesh and manifesting these characteristics in our lives, do you think it will be possible for us to also fulfill or live the biblical instruction Paul gives us here in Romans 12:9-21?
- It will be absolutely impossible!!!

The second list that Paul gives us in Galatians 5 is called the fruit of the Spirit. These are the aspects that will characterize our lives if we are walking in the Spirit and not in the flesh (*Gal.5:22-23*).

- Now, look at each command that Paul gives in Romans 12:9-21 and consider which characteristics of the fruit of the Spirit will be required in order for us to carry out each of his commands.

Bottom line, if we are walking under the reign and control of the flesh, we will live a life that is not in line with who we are in Christ. We will be manifesting these deeds of the flesh instead of the fruit of the Spirit, and it will be impossible for us to function in our spiritual gift, fulfilling Paul's instruction for how we are to love and treat one another.

Lesson 13

God-Given Authority Structure That All Believers Must Submit To

The beginning of Romans 13, Paul speaks of submitting to human leadership, human government. Who is the head person in your country? Under him are governors, representatives, etc. Should we obey those who are in authority? What if they are not godly men or women?

Romans 13:1-2

“Every soul” here refers to believers, as this epistle is written to believers (*Romans 1:1-8*), and “the authorities in power” are the civil authorities ordained of God into whose hands the Lord has committed human government.

To be in subjection to the higher powers means to render them their due respect and obedience according to verse 7: “*tribute to whom tribute is due.*” It doesn’t matter if they are not good and godly leaders; the Word still stands: “*there is no power but of God.*”

Remember that Jesus suffered under Pontius Pilate, one of the worst Roman governors Judea ever had and Paul under Nero, the worst Roman emperor. Neither Jesus nor His Apostle denied or reviled the authority.

The authority is called “*a servant of God to us for good*” (verse 4). Those exercising this authority are called ministers of God for good. He (the authority set up by God) is a minister of God bearing a sword, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil. This speaks of a sword with the death penalty wrapped up in it, to be exercised when necessary.

- God said to Noah when He placed governmental authority into human hands, “*whoso sheds man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed*” (**Genesis 9:6**).
- God established human government, and then appointed certain men to administer it (**1 Peter 2:13-14**).

It is only in spiritual matters, “things that are God’s,” that to “obey God rather than men” is our directive (**Acts 4:18-20**). As to earthly things, we are subject to the powers that God has put in place or ordained and should not resist them.

Romans 13:3-5

This is the general rule: every believer should be praiseworthy in the eyes of rulers. However, we know that there is much opposition to the gospel as well as unjust accusations and persecution against God’s people. Also, the will of God may be such that some may suffer for well-doing (**1 Peter 3:17**).

When properly used, force shown by good human government prevents tyranny, maintains justice, protects those who do right (**Romans 13:3**), and brings punishment on the wrong doer.

Believers are to be in subjection, not only to avoid earthly governmental punishment, but because of a loving conscience toward God—knowing that in being subject, they are doing right, as well as avoiding trouble.

Romans 13:6-7

“God’s minister” – The Lord uses this same word in ***Hebrews 1:14*** regarding the angels, calling them ministering spirits and also concerning the ministering of the Old Testament priests in ***Hebrews 10:11***.

In these days of rebellion against restraint and authority, we must remember that those in authority are ministers of God, not in heavenly spiritual things, but rather in earthly governmental things.

- It is on this account that the governed pay tribute/taxes because these ministers of government must be financially supported.

It’s interesting to consider that taxes and tribute, which is generally a tax paid by subjects to a ruling nation, and custom that is a tax on us or duty on our goods by our own nation is due by God’s design.

“Fear to whom fear” – Fear does not refer to terror here but rather an awe or respect for those in whose hands God has placed governmental authority—whether police, magistrates, judges, governors, presidents, or kings.

“Honor to whom honor” – Honor is an attitude of respect for those in authority. Peter says it so well in ***1 Peter 2:17***.

Romans 13:8-10

Love must remain the root of all our actions; no other law is needed. Pay all other debts; be indebted in the matter of love alone.

Paul continues: “*For he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.*” It’s interesting to note that it is love and not law-keeping which is the fullness of law. The one who loves has (without being under it) manifested what the law sought.

From the principle of grace, love has zealously brought no ill to others. Love therefore is shown to be the fullness, not the fulfilling, of the law. It is only those who are not under law who are free to love others.

- It might be good to consider that it is love and not righteousness which is the active principle of Christianity; furthermore, one who is loving is manifesting righteousness. Therefore, only those not under law show its fullness.
- Remember the believer is a new creation and is to walk by an infinitely higher rule of life (*Galatians 5:15-16*), and not by the law.

Romans 13:11-13

The hope of Christ’s coming is often used by the apostles in exhorting believers to a holy walk in love. This verse sets before us the tendency of many Christians to sink down into slumber and sleep into a spiritual stupor.

Believers are to know the season. Jesus sternly rebuked the Jews of His day for their ignorance concerning the time (*Luke 12:54-57*).

- The Lord called the Jews hypocrites for applying their God-given discernment to the signs of the weather and neglecting to apply it to spiritual things, and so going on

blindly to judgment. How much more this should arouse us who have so much greater light and knowledge.

As long as Jesus was on earth, He was the light of the world (*John 9:5*). Since He is gone, it is spiritual night. But He now says, Ye (believers) are seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.

The works of darkness are to be cast off; and since our old man was crucified with Christ, the Holy Spirit now gives us the power and desire to put them away.

Men wait for the darkness to do their evil deeds (*John 3:19*), but our night is past for we are all children of the light and of the day. Let us do only what is fitting for the light and for the day which our Lord will one day usher in.

- The multitude of drunkenness, of modern night parties are in view here. How we need the warning to keep clear of these things in this hour when the time of the iniquity of the end is drawing near.
- “Not in chambering and wantonness.” The word translated “chambering” is generally rendered as lasciviousness (lustfulness). While wantonness points to an abandoned sensuality. These sins are closely connected with the preceding (reveling and drunkenness) and are often caused by them.
- “Not in strife and envying.” Brawls, troubles, hatreds and jealousies follow this train of self-indulgent sins.

Romans 13:14

All true believers have, positionally, put on the Lord Jesus Christ (**Galatians 3:27**) who is our life. Our Father intends us to know and understand that He has already provided, in Christ who is our life, everything required for our Christian life both in time and eternity. He is patiently teaching us to have no faith in the flesh and to exercise all of our faith in the new man—the results of Jesus’ finished work on the cross.

We are told to do in faith what our Father has already done in fact. At the cross, He freed us from the reign of sin and self. In the resurrection, He positionally united us to the risen Lord Jesus. By faith in the work of the cross, the flesh is rendered powerless; and by faith that we have been recreated with a new spiritual identity, the new man is put on experientially (**Ephesians 4:22-24**).

Here again we see how the truth of being dead with Christ is brought in to deliver us from all fleshly strongholds. By considering the old man to have been crucified at Calvary, the flesh is “put off” daily (**Romans 6:11a**).

- By considering ourselves as newly created in the risen Lord Jesus, we “put on” the new man (**Romans 6:11b**). As we escape self’s reign of death, we enter into Christ’s reign of life.

“Make not provision for the flesh.” The word “provision” here is literally forethought. It communicates the attitude of secretly desiring to fulfill its desires.

- The flesh has endless lusts and desires, all clamoring for indulgence, such as our natural self-sparing slothfulness. There are all the forms of self-pleasing, self-esteem, love of praise, man-fearing, flattery of others for selfish ends,

pride, impatience, empty conceit, and a thousand other desires of the flesh, for which no provision is to be made.

- Often, we can see beforehand and turn away from circumstances that would give the flesh an advantage to indulge itself, but it is only by putting on the Lord Jesus Christ (walking in light of who we are spiritually as a new creation) that we shall find ourselves able and willing to refuse any provision for the flesh.

Lesson 14

Final Instruction For How Believers Are to View and Treat One Another

When God had given the Israelites the Ten Commandments, He also gave to them numerous other commands regarding food restrictions and days to be set aside for worship. All of those feast days and food restrictions were designed to prepare mankind for Jesus to come and fulfill the law.

After Jesus died, returned to heaven, and the Holy Spirit came, these things were no longer required of God's children. The "shadow of things" was no longer the focus, for the substance has come. Many of the Christian Jews didn't understand this. They thought they could still only eat certain food and worship on certain days. Paul referred to these people as being weak in faith or people who were not established in the faith. There were things they still did not understand.

In this fourteenth chapter as well as the following chapter, Paul directs his instruction mainly to the strong—those who understand and are resting in the results of Jesus’ finished work on their behalf. They are no longer thinking they are under the law.

- Paul encourages those who are established in the faith to walk in love and to have faith before God secretly, hiding it from the weaker brother for his sake until he is stronger. This is not easy to do, and it requires walking in love.

Romans 14:1-4

He who is weak in the faith receives, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions. We are to receive and welcome into our fellowship believers less instructed or weaker in faith than ourselves. Keep in mind these people have true faith, they have Christ; but they are weak because of traditional or legal teaching, or through not grasping the fact of their death with Christ and their present and eternal union with Him, or perhaps through self-accusation.

Not all believers have the same knowledge, or the same freedom from tradition, or the same strength of appropriating grace.

- In verse 2, Paul illustrates the strength and weakness of faith in a way that both the Jewish believers of his day and people of today understand. “Faith to eat all things.”
- The thought here is that Christ is Head of God’s house, and all believers are servants of Christ. Let no one judge a servant of another before whom we shall all one day

stand. Therefore, no matter what our failures are, how weak or strong our faith is, or the attitude of others toward us, the fact remains we will ALL stand before Him acceptable in His sight because He has made us acceptable to Himself through His finished work on their cross.

- He is our only Judge, and He has made us acceptable unto Himself.

Romans 14:5-8

Here Paul takes up the day's question, one that continues to be a problem today. We may hear a Christian ask, "Is not the Lord's day above others?" The answer is no, not in itself as a holy day in the same sense that the Sabbath was and will be to Israel before Jesus came and fulfilled the eternal plan of redemption.

- Paul clarifies this in ***Colossians 2:16***: "let no man judge in respect to Sabbath days" (also ***Galatians 4:10***). The thought here is that we died with Christ unto earthly religious things and must not now observe them.

The weak brother, still influenced in his conscience by legal considerations, holds the first day of the week as sacred. The strong believer regards every day alike.

- "Let each man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Moses never could have made that statement. The law allowed no freedom of action in such things because the essence of the law was bondage. Conscience was judged beforehand by the letter of the law. Conduct was prescribed. When a man gathered sticks on the Sabbath, he was stoned. Not so now.

- Not being under the law but in the Risen Christ under God's eternal favor, we have entered into an amazing sphere of holy freedom in which each of us is exhorted to be fully assured in his own heart and mind and walk as Christ's free men. WHY? Because Jesus fulfilled the eternal plan of redemption.

Romans 14:9-12

Here Paul gives us the reason why no believer should be tempted to judge another believer.

- When Jesus comes again, He will be coming as Judge. To appear before Jesus after His ascension will be to appear before Jesus the Judge. Because of that, Paul says "every knee shall bow" in reverence and worship for Who He is.
- Next Paul says, "every tongue will confess." The word "confess" here means to agree with God. It doesn't mean we will all stand there, listing all of our sins. When we appear before Jesus the Judge, we will be appearing as His blood-bought bride!!!
- Then Paul says, "everyone will give an account of themselves" to God. In the Greek, there are two words for "give." One means a forceful giving, like someone is forcing you to give something you don't want to give. The second word is the one that is used here in this passage and it means a "cheerful giving." You are giving something joyfully and wholeheartedly.
 - We, as His blood-bought bride, bowing in praise and adoration with hearts full of joy, will give the only "account of ourselves" before God that matters, and that is, "We belong to YOU!! We are your

children!!! You sent Your Son to shed His blood and pay for ALL our sin!!! You have made us righteous, holy, and acceptable unto Yourself!!!

- For us at the judgment seat of Christ, the focus is going to be on Jesus and His finished work on our behalf and NOT on ourselves and our failings in this life as Christians.

Romans 14:13-15

Here Paul explains we are to judge ourselves, not our brother. It is our responsibility to see that we do nothing that hinders a person or causes them to stumble.

- Before us lies the terrible fact that the destruction of the faith of one who is called a brother lies within the power of our liberty, if it causes him to stumble.

Romans 15:13-24

What Paul states in verse 13 is the key thought to the rest of this passage.

- *“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.”* In Chapters 1-3, Paul shows that mankind, in and of ourselves, have no hope, but he goes on in Chapters 5-8 to show that, in Christ, we have ALL hope. We have received deliverance from the penalty of sin, the power of sin, and the future presence of sin.
- THEREFORE, as the Holy Spirit continues to do His work of confirming and convincing our hearts of these truths, our experience will be that we will “ABOUND IN HOPE.”

Paul goes on to explain that this proclaiming of the gospel of hope has been his focus everywhere he went. It's exactly what he said of his ministry and calling in *Ephesians 3:8-13*.

Romans 15:30-33

Here Paul makes the greatest appeal for the prayers of the saints to be found in all his epistles. True Biblical prayer is acknowledging our weakness to the Father, and confessing our constant need of dependence upon Him.

Paul knew how weak he really was; and if his divinely guided journey to Jerusalem was to be successful, it had to come from God.

- Therefore, Paul asks the Christians at Rome to pray, and God answered those prayers by patiently waiting while Paul was imprisoned at Caesarea two years. In God's time, he came to Rome as a prisoner suffering shipwreck on the way.

Paul just spent fifteen chapters describing the results of the finished work of Christ and the effects that faith in those facts will have in our daily lives. He now closes this letter to the Roman church with a warning to guard this truth and not let anyone come in and deceive them away from it.

Romans 16:17-18

In Rome there were those who were causing divisions among the saints and Paul writes to them and to all the churches: "*I beseech you brethren, mark such ones*" (*Philippians 3:2; Colossians 2:8*).

If anyone was known to be causing selfish divisions or had been an occasion for stumbling or teaching contrary to sound doctrine, which they had learned from Paul, the church's only path was to turn away from them (**2 Thessalonians 3:6; Titus 3:10; 2 John 10**).

Just as in Eden, God did not prevent the serpent from tempting Eve, “*beguiling her in his craftiness*,” so God does not forcibly prevent false teachers, division makers, evil workers, from coming among His saints (**Colossians 2:4**).

But He does warn His saints and make a way of escape (**1 Corinthians 10:13**).

Romans 16:19-20

Everywhere throughout the Roman world, the simple wholehearted faith and love of the Christians at Rome was talked of (**Romans 1:8**).

- However, Paul expresses his concern: “*yet I would have you wise unto that which is good and simple concerning evil*.” Here is a God-given safe path for all believers, “*wise unto that which is good*” (**Philippians 4:8**).
- However, the other side: “*simple unto that which is evil*.” “Simple” here literally means “unmixed”—not becoming mixed up with all that the “false teachers” have to offer. Paul says in **1 Corinthians 13:5**, “*love thinks no evil*”—literally, takes no account of evil. Evil is all around us, but the true believer who is abiding in Christ is kept in sweet innocence toward it.

In verse 20, the same word here translated “bruise” is used of Christ’s breaking the nations in *Revelation 2:27*.

- Note further that it will be “*under the feet of His saints*” that God will do this bruising...
- ...and note that it will be done shortly.

We are to hold fast, by faith, despite all the delays and apparent satanic victories. Meanwhile, it should be extremely encouraging to know that the great foe of God flees before the saints on earth today who submit to God and resist him steadfast in the faith (*Ephesians 6:16; James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:9*).

Romans 16:25-27

It is not generally recognized that in verses 25 to 27, preparation is made by Paul for the unfolding in his later epistles of that great secret of God called “the mystery,” which was hidden for ages (*Colossians 1:26*):

- It is interesting to see that in the words “*to establish you*” in verse 25 refers to truth beyond that which the Romans already knew.
- The word translated “establish” is used about ten times in the New Testament referring to a settled, stable spiritual condition (*Luke 22:32*). It includes not only a knowledge of the truth and a settled persuasion in Christ of that truth, but also a life lived through the power of the Holy Spirit in that truth.

When Paul speaks to them of “*my gospel, and of the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery,*” he is referring to the story of the astonishing intervention of a grace that not only pardoned and justified, but made believing sinners partakers in Christ of the very glory of God Himself (*Colossians 1:26-27*).

“To the only wise God, through Jesus Christ; to whom be the glory unto the ages.” To God be the glory through Jesus Christ!!

- This is the constant message of Scripture. Furthermore, at the beginning, Paul declares this message to be the gospel of God concerning His Son; and as previously noted throughout the epistle, God is the initiator setting forth Christ as a propitiation (substitute).