

**The Pilgrim Way Commentary on
the Book of Romans**



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Apology for This Work

This commentary on Romans follows in a long line of other works by divines of the past as they have sought to study and expound this, probably the greatest of all Paul's writings. It has been well said that he who masters Paul's arguments in Romans masters Christian doctrine, so it is no wonder that this book is a favorite of commentators.

This work grew out of almost 40 years of both preaching through Romans in three pastorates in Maryland, Delaware and North Carolina as well as teaching through the epistle as an instructor at Maryland Baptist Bible College in Elkton, Maryland. I needed my own notes and outlines as I taught and preached from Romans, so this fuller commentary flows from those notes and outlines. Thus, the layout of this commentary is a practical one, written by a preacher to be preached from in the pulpit or to be taught in a Sunday School. It was not written from an isolated study of a theologian who had little contact with people or practical ministerial experience. This commentary is a compilation of materials from many sources. There are many such commentaries on the market, but they tend to be somewhat dull and "safe" and not very practical in their application. It is written as something of a theological reference manual to me, filled with quotes and outlines from various books in my library. The layout and format are designed to help me in my preaching, teaching and personal study of this book. I figured there may be others out there who may benefit from this work, which is why I make it available, but the work is basically laid out in a selfish manner, for my benefit and assistance. You, as the reader, hopefully can find some profit in this!

This commentary cannot be easily classified into any single theological system and that is by design. I believe that no single human theological system is an accurate presentation of Scriptural truth in and of itself. When Charles Spurgeon once wrote "There is no such thing as preaching Christ and Him crucified, unless we preach what nowadays is called Calvinism. It is a nickname to call it Calvinism; Calvinism is the gospel, and nothing else", he displayed a most unfortunate theological hubris and misunderstanding. Calvinism is a human, flawed, limited and uninspired theological system, as is any other theological system. There is some truth there, as there is in any theological system, but it ranks no better than other competing systems, such as Arminianism (which is nothing more than a modified version of Calvin's teachings), dispensationalism, covenant theology, Lutheranism, Romanism, Orthodox theology, pre-wrath rapture, take your pick. All these systems are flawed as they are all the products of human attempts to understand and systematize Biblical presentations. They can all make contributions to our overall understanding of the truth, but none may claim to be the only correct such presentation, at the expense of all others. Knowing the human impossibility for neutrality (we are all influenced by outside forces and ideas) and the human love for theological systems, I readily admit that I cannot be as dispassionate and uninfluenced by human teachings in these pages as I would wish. No man can be. But I have made every attempt not to allow my own personal systems to influence my understanding of what the clear teachings of Scripture.

I have freely consulted a wide variety of commentaries from a variety of theological systems. Some were “conservative” and some were “liberal”. As the old preacher once remarked “I milked a lot of cows, but I churned my own butter.” Direct quotes are attributed to their proper source to avoid that unpardonable sin of literary theft. But simply because I quoted a writer should not be viewed as an endorsement of all that he wrote or of his theological system. I selected the quote because I found it interesting and useful, not because I am in any degree of agreement regarding the rest of his teachings. In this sense, I have tried to follow the form of Charles Spurgeon’s *Treasury of David*, where he quoted a wide variety of other writers. I consider his commentary on the Psalms to be the greatest commentary ever in reference to that format.

This commentary is based on the text of our English Received Version, commonly referred to as the King James Version or the Authorized Version. I believe this is the preserved English translation available to us and that it is the superior translation in English. I can see no good reason to use or accept any of the modern versions, especially the current “flavor of the month” of the New Evangelicals and apostate fundamentalists, the corrupt and mis-named English Standard Version (known by Bible Believers as the ‘English Substandard Version’. It is nothing but an updated of the discredited Revised Standard Version.) or the new “John MacArthur Version” known as the Legacy Standard Version (which is nothing but a rehash of the New American Standard Version). When it comes to these modern, critical text versions, I reject them for a variety of reasons. One major reason is that they have not been proven on the field of battle. I have liver spots older than the English Standard Version, but I am expected to toss my English Received Text, over 400 years old, and take up this new translation, whose ink is still barely dry? How many battles has the ESV won? How many missionaries have done great exploits with an NIV? What revivals have been birthed and nurtured with an NASV? We will stick with the translations and texts that our fathers have used, and that God has blessed. We are also favorably inclined to the Geneva Bible, Tyndale Bible, Bishops Bible, and other “cousins” of our English text. The Greek text used is the underlying text of our English Received Text and its standard 1769 revision, which is the text most widely in use today by God’s remnant. We will comment of the Authorized Version text and will not correct it or attack it.

Each verse is commented upon without altering or attacking the text. I approach the text from a dispensational and premillennial viewpoint, The English grammatical notes are limited to the tenses of the corresponding Greek verbs, for I believe the study of the verb tenses is the most important element of the usage of the Greek text, even more so than word studies. Not every Greek word is commented upon, only unusual or important ones. I am guilty of “picking and choosing” my word studies instead of presenting complete word studies for every word. That system would simply be too unwieldy for my purposes.

I have included some textual studies, mainly comparing the Authorized Version readings with the inferior readings found in the English Standard Version and the Legacy Standard Version, which is an unnecessary revision of the already-unnecessary New American Standard Version. The Legacy Standard Version is the baby of John

MacArthur, who financed its publication and financed it heavily through his charitable trust. I also refer to the readings in the English translations that preceded the Authorized Version for sake of comparison and to examine how the English Received Text readings developed from the Tyndale Bible, through the Coverdale Bible, the Geneva Bible and the Bishops Bible.

The presupposition of this commentary is that what the Bible says is so and that we will not change the English Received Text to suit our theological fancy or because we believe there must be some sort of translation simply because we cannot understand a verse as it is given. The text says what it says and that is what we must accept, else we will be found unfaithful stewards of the Word of God, a judgment we fear. We will not amend the Authorized Version text but will take it as it is the best we can.

This commentary certainly is not perfect, nor is it the final presentation of my understanding and application of the book of Romans. A commentary over 35 years in the making can never truly said to be finished. As new insights are granted by the Holy Spirit and as my understanding of the epistle deepens, additional material will be added, and sections will have to be re-written. One is never truly “finished” with any theological book, especially a commentary, even after its publication. As one deepens and grows in his relationship with the Lord, so does his theological understandings and that should be reflected in one’s writings.

This book was also written as a theological legacy to my four children and three granddaughters. They will need to be mighty for God in their generation for their days will certainly be darker than the generation their father grew up in. This book is an expression not only of the heart of a preacher in the early 21st century but also of a Christian father and grandfather for his children and grandchildren, so they may more fully understand what their father believed and preached during his ministry.

It is my sincere prayer that this unpretentious contribution to the body of Christian commentary literature will be a blessing to the remnant of God’s saints in the earth as we approach the coming of our Lord.

Introduction to Romans

Romans has 9,477 words and 433 verses in our English Bible.

Author- The Apostle Paul. There are no serious challenges to Pauline authorship, even by rank Liberals. Romans is Pauline in language and style. Romans has the mark of Paul's spirit of language and style. The Church has been unanimous as to its testimony of Pauline authorship. Paul was the Apostle to the Gentiles, not Peter. There is no reason to believe that Peter was ever within 500 miles of Rome. It is Paul, not Peter, who writes to the Church at Rome.

Date of writing- around A.D. 56-58.

Place of Writing- probably from Corinth.

Reasons for writing. There is no apparent reason than for Paul to touch base with this Church and to make known his desire to visit them and to preach at Rome. Paul probably intended to use the Roman Church as a base for proposed evangelistic trips into the western half of the Empire, especially Spain (Romans 15:24,28). Some traditions (mainly Welsh) have Paul making it as far as the British Isles before his second arrest. It is possible that the Roman church was suffering doctrinally due to the strong pagan influence of Rome as well as the strong Jewish element there. This may be why Paul puts so much doctrinal material in this book, to strengthen a church that was under doctrinal attack. The Jewish colony at Rome was, according to Cicero in BC 59, large, clannish, powerful and influential. Paul also desired to establish the church at Rome

1. As to the doctrine of justification by faith alone
2. As to holiness as a fruit and evidence of saving faith
3. As to the correct use and place of the moral law
4. As to practical Christianity
5. To promote union between Jews and Gentiles
6. To prepare the church for a future visit by Paul

It has been suggested that Paul, later in his life, desired to write a summation of his thought and doctrine, and did so in Romans

Language. I believe Romans was originally written in Latin since it was sent to Rome, where Latin was the primary language. Paul would have no problem writing in Latin. Since this letter was sent to Rome, it makes sense that "the original" was written in the language of its recipients. The Gospel of Mark may also have been written in Latin. The epistle would then be quickly translated into other major spoken languages, including Greek, Syriac and Gothic.

John Wycliffe thought Romans was written in Latin. "You say it is heresy to speak of the Holy Scriptures in English...Do you know whom you blaspheme? Did not the Holy Ghost give the word of God at first in the mother tongue of the nations to whom it was

addressed? [e.g. the book of Romans first written in Old Italia; the book of Hebrews written first in Hebrew, etc.]...to speak that word in all languages under heaven".¹

The Church at Rome (not to be confused with the Church of Rome). We are unsure how it started but may have been formed by Roman soldiers stationed in Palestine who were converted under the apostolic ministry and Roman Jews in Jerusalem for the events of Acts 2 taking the Gospel back to Rome and forming a church. It is just as possible that Christians from churches in Asia Minor or Europe that were founded by Paul may have migrated to Rome to start this work. No apostle is connected with the founding of the church there, certainly not Peter, who was never within 500 miles of Rome!

Other Remarks

1. In discussing doctrine, Paul uses a "question and answer" method in Romans
2. Paul only gives a list of personal greetings in two epistles, Romans and Colossians, two churches he had not visited at the time of his writings
3. Samuel Taylor Coleridge said Romans was the most profound book in existence
4. Martin Luther said Romans embodied the Gospel in its purest form
5. Romans can rightly be called "The Gospel According to Paul"
6. Paul's longest letter and his most formal letter, on par with Ephesians
7. Chrysostom has this epistle read to him twice a week
8. Romans is one of the "four capital epistles" (Romans, Galatians, 1,2 Corinthians) which are basic to understanding Paul's thought
9. "The Book of Romans, theologically, leads the sinner, step by step, from his most wretched state into the highest burnt offering life (Romans 1-8 & 12-16; Chapters 9-11 are a parenthesis in the Book to Israel). The introduction and theme of the Book are carefully laid down (1:1-17). The theme is easily set forth as: 'The Power of the Gospel of Christ Unto Salvation to Every one that Believeth.' After the reader is brought through an extended outline of the particular sins of the Gentiles and the Jews (1:18-3:20), then the righteousness for the sinner is revealed through Jesus Christ (3:21-22), against the backdrop of the universality of sin in all mankind (3:23). The sinner, theologically, is brought to that distinctive Reformation emphasis of Justification by Faith (3:24-5:11). The Adamic Sin Nature is then acknowledged (5:12-21), and finally, the doctrine of sanctification is introduced and revealed (6:1-8:39)."²
10. He who masters the doctrinal arguments in Romans masters Christian doctrine. Thus, Romans may be the most important doctrinal book in the Bible, followed by Ephesians.
11. Romans is the most influential books of the Bible. Augustine was converted through reading Romans 13:13,14. The Protestant Reformation was launched when Martin Luther came to his understand the meaning of God's righteousness, and that "the just shall live by faith". John Wesley received assurance of salvation through hearing the preface to Luther's commentary on Romans read in a Moravian house church on Aldersgate Street in London.

¹ Gail Riplinger, *In Awe of Thy Word*, page 36.

² O. Talmadge Spence, "The Biblical Doctrine of Sanctification", part two, in *Straightway*, Volume 25, number 7, July, 1997, page 6.

12. “Paul and some unnamed objector. As Paul sets forth the gospel, he seems to hear this objector raising all kinds of arguments against it. The apostle replies to his opponent's questions one by one. By the time he is finished, Paul has answered every major attitude that man can take regarding the gospel of the grace of God. Sometimes the objections are clearly stated; sometimes they are only implied. But whether stated or implied, they all revolve around the gospel—the good news of salvation by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, apart from the works of the law.”³

13. Romans has been called the “world’s greatest gospel tract”.⁴

14. “Paul writes to seven churches. He writes to seven churches, just like John writes to seven churches. When you figure those things out, Paul writes to Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians. So Paul writes to seven churches, and John writes to seven churches. I don’t know what significance there is in that, but the ones that Paul writes to are laid out two, four, and one—which is time, times, and half a time. They’re laid out so there are two first—Romans and Corinthians—and the next four come in a group, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians—and Thessalonians is sticking out over there in the end. Those things come two-four-one, which matches time (two), times (two times two), and a half time (one).”⁵

We will think of Romans as dealing with eleven main questions:

1. What is the subject of the Letter? (1:1, 9, 15, 16);
2. What is the gospel? (1:1-17);
3. Why do men need the gospel? (1:18-3:20);
4. According to the gospel, how can ungodly sinners be justified by a holy God? (3:21-31);
5. Does the gospel agree with the Old Testament Scripture? (4:1-25);
6. What are the benefits of justification in the believer's life? (5:1-21);
7. Does the teaching of salvation by grace through faith permit or even encourage sinful living? (6:1-23);
8. What is the relationship of the Christian to the law? (7:1-25);
9. How is the Christian enabled to live a holy life? (8:1-39);
10. Does the gospel, by promising salvation to both Jews and Gentiles, mean that God has broken His promises to His earthly people, the Jews? (9:1-11:36);
11. How should those who have been justified by grace respond in their everyday lives? (12:1-16:27).⁶

“In Romans, Christ is always viewed upon earth. He has died to sin, is alive in Christ, and is perfectly justified; he is walking through the world in that condition and has to yield himself up to God. In Colossians you get him dead, as in Romans, but also risen with Christ, and he has a hope laid up for him in heaven. In Ephesians you get a step

3 William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary*.

4 James Knox, *New Testament Survey*.

5 Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer's Commentary on Romans*, page x.

6 William MacDonald, **Believer's Bible Commentary**,

further, as there he is sitting in the heavenly places. Each of these three is a Christian state, so far.”⁷

Solomon had his Song of Songs. Romans can be considered the Song of Songs of the Apostle Paul.

Key words in Romans

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Righteousness, used 66 times | 6. Law, 78 times |
| 2. Faith, 62 times | 7. Sin, 60 times |
| 3. Justification/justify, 17 times | 8. Flesh, 20 times |
| 4. Impute, 19 times | 9. Death, 42 times |
| 5. In Christ, 33 times | |

Names and Titles of Christ in Romans

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Jesus Christ 1:1 | 13. His Own Son 8:32 |
| 2. Son of God 1:4 | 14. God Blessed Forever 9:5 |
| 3. Lord Jesus Christ 1:7 | 15. A Stumblingblock and a Rock of Offense 9:33 |
| 4. Christ Jesus 3:24 | 16. End of the Law for Righteousness 10:4 |
| 5. Our Propitiation 3:24,25 | 17. Lord 10:13 |
| 6. God’s Righteousness 3:24,25 | 18. Deliverer 11:26 |
| 7. Our Lord 4:24; 7:25 | 19. Lord of the Dead and the Living 14:9 |
| 8. Our Sin-bearer 4:25 | 20. Minister of the Circumcision 15:8 |
| 9. Our Justifier 4:25 | |
| 10. Christ 5:6 | |
| 11. The Gift of Eternal Life 6:23 | |
| 12. Firstborn Among Many Brethren 8:29 | |

In Romans we have these titles of Jesus:

Christ—68 times

Christ Jesus—6 times

Jesus Christ—26 times

Jesus—38 times

Jesus alone—3 times (Romans 3:26; 4:24; 8:11)

The Lord Jesus Christ—8 times

God—144 times

Names and Titles of God in Romans

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Our Father 1:7 | 7. Lord of Sabaoth 9:29 |
| 2. Creator 1:25 | 8. Lord Over All 10:12 |
| 3. One God 3:30 | 9. God of Peace 16:20 |
| 4. Lord 4:8 | 10. Everlasting God 16:26 |
| 5. Abba, Father 8:15 | 11. God Only Wise 16:27 |
| 6. The Living God 9:26 | |

Names and Titles of the Holy Spirit in Romans

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Spirit of Holiness 1:4 | 3. Spirit 8:1 |
| 2. Holy Ghost 5:5; 9:1 | 4. Spirit of Life 8:2 |

⁷ John Nelson Darby, *Notes and Jottings*, page 66.

5. Spirit of God 8:9,14; 15:19

6. Spirit of Christ 8:9

Old Testament references in Romans

1. The just shall live by faith 1:17 with Habakkuk 2:4
2. Render(according to their deeds 2:6 with Psalm 62:12
3. God no respecter of persons 2:11 with Deuteronomy 10:17
4. God's name blasphemed 2:24 with Isaiah 52:5
5. Justified in speaking 3:4 with Psalm 51:4
6. None righteous 3:10 with Psalm 14:1,3
7. None understand 3:11 with Psalm 14:2
8. All gone out of the way 3:12 with Psalm 14:3
9. Throat an open sepulchre 3:13 with Psalm 5:9; 140:3
10. Mouth full of cursing 3:14 with Psalm 10:7
11. Feet swift to shed blood 3:15 with Isaiah 59:7
12. Destruction and misery in their ways 3:16,17 with Isaiah 59:7,8
13. No fear of God before their eyes 3:18 with Psalm 36:1
14. Abraham's faith counted for righteousness 4:3 with Genesis 15:6
15. Iniquities forgiven 4:7,8 with Psalm 32:1,2
16. Abraham the father of many nations 4:17 with Genesis 17:5
17. Abraham's seed to become many nations 4:18 with Genesis 15:5
18. Thou shalt not covet 7:7 with Exodus 20:17
19. For thy sake we are killed all the day 8:36 with Psalm 44:22
20. In Isaac shall thy seed be called 9:7 with Genesis 21:12
21. Sarah shall have a son 9:9 with Genesis 18:10
22. The elder shall serve the younger 9:12 with Genesis 25:23
23. Jacob have I loved 9:13 with Malachi 1:2,3
24. God's mercy upon us 9:15 with Exodus 33:19
25. Pharaoh raised up for God's purpose 9:17 with Exodus 9:16
26. Shall clay speak to the potter 9:20 with Isaiah 45:9
27. Potter power over the clay 9:21 with Jeremiah 18:6
28. Gentiles called a people 9:25 with Hosea 2:23
29. Gentiles not called a people 9:26 with Hosea 1:10
30. Only a remnant of Israel saved 9:27,28 with Isaiah 10:22,23
31. God's provision of a seed 9:29 with Isaiah 1:9
32. Christ a stumblingstone 9:33 with Isaiah 28:16
33. Living by the law 10:5 with Leviticus 18:5
34. Who shall ascend into heaven 10:6,7 with Deuteronomy 30:12,13
35. God's word is nigh 10:8 with Deuteronomy 30:14
36. The believer not ashamed 10:11 with Isaiah 28:16
37. Call upon the name of the Lord to be saved 10:13 with Joel 2:32
38. The feet of preachers 10:15 with Isaiah 52:7
39. Who has believed our report? 10:16 with Isaiah 53:1
40. Hearing the gospel 10:18 with Psalm 19:4
41. Provoked to jealousy 10:19 with Deuteronomy 32:21
42. God found by those who seek Him 10:20 with Isaiah 65:1
43. God's outstretched hands 10:21 with Isaiah 65:2

44. Israel killing the prophets 11:3 with 1 Kings 19:10,14
45. God's reserved prophets 11:4 with 1 Kings 19:18
46. The spirit of slumber 11:8 with Isaiah 29:10
47. Israel's conduct a snare 11:9,10 with Psalm 69:22,23
48. A Deliverer from Zion 11:26,27 with Isaiah 59:20,21
49. The mind of the Lord 11:34 with Isaiah 40:13
50. Given to the Lord 11:35 with Job 41:11
51. Vengeance belongs to the Lord 12:19 with Deuteronomy 32:35
52. Feeding our enemies 12:20 with Proverbs 25:21,22
53. Various commandments in 13:9 with Exodus 20:13-17 and Leviticus 19:18
54. Every knee shall bow 14:11 with Isaiah 45:23
55. Being reproached 15:3 with Psalm 69:9
56. God(s) mercy among the Gentiles 15:9 with Psalm 18:49
57. Gentiles rejoicing with the Jews 15:10 with Deuteronomy 32:43
58. Gentiles praising the Lord 15:11 with Psalm 117:1
59. Christ, the Root of Jesse 15:12 with Isaiah 11:1,10
60. Christ preached to the heathen 15:21 with Isaiah 52:15

Out of this list, the following Old Testament books are quoted in Romans thusly:

Genesis	6 times	Isaiah	17
Exodus	4	Jeremiah	1
Leviticus	2	Hosea	2
Deuteronomy	6	Joel	1
1 Kings	2	Habakkuk	1
Psalms	15	Malachi	1
Proverbs	1		

Outlines

1. Outline 1:

1. Revelation of God's Righteousness 1-8
2. Vindication of God's Righteousness 9-11
3. Application of God's Righteousness 12-16

2. Outline 2:

1. Salutation 1:1-17
2. Sin 1:18-3:21
3. Salvation 3:22-5:21
4. Sanctification 6:1-8:39
5. Sovereignty (in God's dealings with Israel) 9:1-11:36
6. Service 12:1-16:27

3. Outline 3:

1. Doctrinal 1-8
2. Parenthetical- discussion on Israel 9-11
3. Practical 12-16

4. Outline 4- Partial

1. The need for justification 1-3
2. The way of Justification 3:24-28
3. The illustration of justification 4

1. God saved me from the penalty of sin- justification 1-5
2. God is saving me from the power of sin- sanctification 6-8
3. God will save me from the presence of sin- glorification 8

Outline of Romans by John Phillips,⁸

Prologue 1:1-18

1. The Significance of the Gospel 1:1-4
2. The Servant of the Gospel 1:5-16
3. The Summary of the Gospel 1:17,18

I. The Principles of the Gospel 1:19-8:39

A. The Question of Sin 1:19-3:20

1. The Guilt of the Heathen 1:19-3:20
2. The Guilt of the Hypocrite 2:1-16
3. The Guilt of the Hebrew 2:17-3:8
4. The Guilt of all Humanity 3:9-20

B. The Question of Salvation 3:21-5:21

1. Salvation is Free 3:21-31
2. Salvation is by Faith 4:1-25
3. Salvation is Forever 5:1-21

C. The Question of Sanctification 6:1-8:39

1. The Way of Victory Explained 6:1-7:25
 - a. Deliverance from the domain of death 6:1-11
 - b. Deliverance from the domain of sin 6:12-23
 - c. Deliverance from the demands of the law 7:1-25
2. The Way of Victory Experienced 8:1-39
 - a. The new law 8:1-4
 - b. The new Lord 8:5-13
 - c. The new life 8:14-39

II. The Problems of the Gospel 9:1-11:36

A. God's Past Dealings with Israel 9:1-33

1. Paul's Anguish for the Jewish People 9:1-3
2. Paul's Analysis of the Jewish Problem 9:4-33

B. God's Present Dealings With Israel 10:1-21

1. Christ Revealed As Saviour 10:1-4
2. Christ Received As Saviour 10:5-15
3. Christ Rejected As Saviour 10:16-21

C. God's Promised Dealings With Israel 11:1-36

1. The Fairness of God's Dealings 11:1-10
2. The Farsightedness of God's Dealings 11:11-29

⁸ *Exploring Romans*, pages 7,8:

- 3. The Faithfulness of God's Dealings 11:30-36
- III. The Practice of the Gospel 12:1-16:24
 - A. The Laws of the Christian Life 12:1-13:7
 - 1. The Spiritual Life of the Christian 12:1-13
 - a. The Christian as a believer 12:1,2
 - b. The Christian as a brother 12:14-21
 - 2. The Social Life of the Christian 12:14-21
 - 3. The Secular Life of the Christian 13:1-7
 - B. The Laws of Christian Love 13:8-16:24
 - 1. Love's Moral Conscience 13:8-14
 - 2. Love's Merciful Conduct 14:1-15:7
 - 3. Love's Mature Convictions 15:8-13
 - 4. Love's Missionary Concern 15:14-33
 - 5. Love's Many Contacts 16:1-16
 - 6. Love's Mighty Conquests 16:17-20
 - 7. Love's Marvelous Companionships 16:21-24
- Epilogue 16:21-24

Outline of Romans from the *Recovery Version of the New Testament*:

- 1. Introduction -- the gospel of God -- 1:1-17
 - 1. Promised in the Holy Scriptures -- vv.1-2
 - 2. Concerning Christ -- vv.3-4
 - 3. Received by the called ones -- vv.5-7
 - 4. Proclaimed with eagerness and partaken of by faith -- vv.8-15
 - 5. The power of God's salvation -- vv.16-17
- 2. Condemnation -- 1:18--3:20
 - 1. On mankind generally -- 1:18-32
 - 2. On the self-righteous particularly -- 2:1-16
 - 3. On the religious specifically -- 2:17--3:8
 - 4. On all the world totally -- 3:9-20
- 3. Justification -- 3:21--5:11
 - 1. The definition -- 3:21-31
 - 2. The example -- 4:1-25
 - 3. The result -- 5:1-11
- 4. Sanctification -- 5:12--8:13
 - 1. The gift in Christ surpassing the heritage in Adam -- two men, two acts, and two results with four reigning things -- 5:12-21
 - 2. Identification with Christ -- 6:1-23
 - 1. Identified -- vv.1-5
 - 2. Knowing -- vv.6-10
 - 3. Reckoning -- v.11
 - 4. Presenting -- vv.12-23
 - 3. Bondage in the flesh by the indwelling sin -- 7:1-25
 - 1. Two husbands -- vv.1-6
 - 2. Three laws -- vv.7-25
 - 4. Freedom in the Spirit by the indwelling Christ -- 8:1-13

1. The law of the Spirit of life -- vv.1-6
 2. The indwelling Christ -- vv.7-13
5. Glorification -- 8:14-39
 1. Heirs of glory -- vv.14-27
 2. Heirs conformed -- vv.28-30
 3. Heirs inseparable from God's love -- vv.31-39
6. Selection -- 9:1--11:36
 1. God's selection, our destiny -- 9:1--10:21
 1. Of God who calls -- 9:1-13
 2. Of God's mercy -- 9:14-18
 3. Of God's sovereignty -- 9:19-29
 4. Through the righteousness which is out of faith -- 9:30--10:3
 5. Through Christ -- 10:4-21
 1. Christ, the end of the law -- v.4
 2. Christ, incarnated and resurrected -- vv.5-7
 3. Christ, who is near -- v.8
 4. Christ, believed in and called upon -- vv.9-13
 5. Christ, proclaimed and heard -- vv.14-15
 6. Christ, received or rejected -- vv.16-21
 2. The economy in God's selection -- 11:1-32
 1. A remnant reserved by grace -- vv.1-10
 2. The Gentiles saved through Israel's stumbling -- vv.11-22
 3. Israel restored through the Gentiles' receiving mercy -- vv.23-32
 3. The praise for God's selection -- 11:33-36
7. Transformation -- 12:1--15:13
 1. In practicing the Body life -- 12:1-21
 1. By the presenting of our bodies -- v.1
 2. By the renewing of the mind -- vv.2-3
 3. By the exercising of the gifts -- vv.4-8
 4. By the living of a life of the highest virtues -- vv.9-21
 2. In being subject to authorities -- 13:1-7
 3. In practicing love -- 13:8-10
 4. In waging the warfare -- 13:11-14
 5. In receiving the believers -- 14:1--15:13
 1. According to God's receiving -- 14:1-9
 2. In the light of the judgment seat -- 14:10-12
 3. In the principle of love -- 14:13-15
 4. For the kingdom life -- 14:16-23
 5. According to Christ -- 15:1-13
8. Conclusion -- the consummation of the gospel -- 15:14--16:27
 1. The Gentiles offered -- 15:14-24
 2. The communication between the Gentile and Jewish saints -- 15:25-33
 3. The concern between the churches -- 16:1-24
 4. The concluding praise -- 16:25-27

Outline from H.T. Spence,⁹

- A. Introduction 1:1-7
- B. Sin- The Need for Redemption 1:18-3:20
- C. Justification- The Provision of Redemption 4-5
- D. Sanctification- The Power of Redemption 6:1-8:39
- E. Jew and Gentile- The Scope of Redemption 9:1-11:36
- F. Service- The Fruit of Redemption 12:1-15:13
- G. Conclusion and Greetings 15:14-16:27

Laws in Romans¹⁰

- 1. Law of conscience- 2:14
- 2. Law of Moses- 2:20
- 3. Law of circumcision- 2:29
- 4. Law of works- 3:27
- 5. Law of faith- 3:27
- 6. Law of the flesh- 7:21-23
- 7. Law of sin- 7:25
- 8. Law of the inward man- 7:22
- 9. Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus- 8:2
- 10. Law of sin and death- 8:2b
- 11. Law of love- 13:8
- 12. Law of doubtful disputations- 14:13,14,17,20

Outlines from *The Open Bible*,¹¹

- 1-8 Revelation of God's Righteousness
- 9-11 Vindication of God's Righteousness
- 12-16 Application of God's Righteousness

- 1-3 Sin
- 4-5 Salvation
- 6-8 Sanctification
- 9-11 Sovereignty
- 12-16 Service

- 1. Doctrinal- How the Gospel Saves the Sinner (1-8)
 - 1. The Racial Plight- "Sins" and "Sin" 1:18-3:20
 - 2. The Gospel Answer As To "Sins" 3:21-5:11
 - 3. The Gospel Answer As To "Sin" 5:12-8:39
- 2. National- How the Gospel Relates to Israel- 9-11
- 3. Practical- How the Gospel Bears on Conduct- 12-16
 - 1. The Christian Life As To Social Aspects 12
 - 1. The root- consecration and renewal 12:1,2
 - 2. The fruit- service and love to others 12:3:21

⁹ *The Canon of Scripture*, page 170.

¹⁰ H.T. Spence, *The Canon of Scripture*, page 174.

¹¹ Page 1106:

2. The Christian Life As To Civil Aspects 13
 1. Its expression- conscientious submission 13:1-7
 2. Its foundation- love to one's neighbor 13:8-14
3. The Christian Life As To Mutual Aspects 14,15¹²

From *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption* by W. Graham Scroggie,¹³

Romans 1:18-8:39	Romans 9-11	Romans 12:1-15:13
DOCTRINAL	DISPENSATIONAL	PRACTICAL
Philosophy of Salvation	Philosophy of History	Philosophy of Behavior
1. The Christian Message 1:18-5:11	1. Election of Israel 9:1-29	1. Paths of Duty 12,13
2. The Christian Life 6:1-8:30	2. Rejection of Israel 9:30-10:21	2. Principles of Action 14:1-15:13
3. Summary 8:31-39	3. Conversion of Israel 11	

- I. Romans: The Mystery of Christ's Cross
 - A. I and II Corinthians—Reproof (moral failure)
 - B. Galatians—Correction (doctrinal error)
- II. Ephesians: The Mystery of Christ's Church
 - A. Philippians—Reproof (practical failure)
 - B. Colossians—Correction (doctrinal error)
- III. I and II Thessalonians: The Mystery of Christ's Coming¹⁴

"The expression "of God" occurs in the epistle over and over again with various things coming from God or owned by God or done by God "Of God" will be found in 1:7, 10, 16-18, 25, 32, 2:3-5, 24, 3:2-3, 18, 23, 4:20, 5:2, 5, 15 Those are about half the references,

"The most important thing about the book of Romans is that Paul was the Apostle to the Romans; Peter was never there. This means that the Roman apostle to the Romans at Rome was the greatest anti-Roman Catholic you ever studied in your life This is apparent if you will check the following references: 3:2, 4, 20, 4:5, 8, 5:9, 11, 15, 6:23, 8:8, 11, 29, 38-39, 10:2, 10, 13, 11:15- 23, 25-27, 12:19-20, 14:5, 17, 15:16-22, 16:1-27. The reason chapter 16 is completely ignored by all Catholic Popes, Cardinals, and Bishops is because the epistle to the Romans greets "all that be in Rome •...called to be saints" (1:7) Those "saints" are listed by name in chapter 16, and Simon Peter is noticeably absent from the list. When Paul wrote the book of Romans, he was careful not to mention the "pastor," because Peter was never there. To get Peter in Rome, the Roman Catholic Church had to go to 1 Peter 5:13 and alter the word "Babylon" to Rome (see the change made in the text of the Living Bible).

¹² J. Sidlow Baxter, *Explore the Book*, vol. 6, page 69,75.

¹³ Volume 3, page 133.

¹⁴ John Phillips, *Exploring Romans*, page 14.

"The reason Paul wanted to get to Rome is apparent by his own confession Peter had never been there, and if he had, then he didn't teach anybody anything. Paul says nobody had set up a "foundation" in Rome for him to "build upon" (Rom 15:20-21).¹⁵

"When was the last time you heard a minister expound the doctrines of propitiation, redemption, imputation, etc.? These are the heart of the new covenant, yet they go unmentioned by most ministers in these last days:

Justification: God declaring a man righteous on the basis of the finished work of Christ. **Redemption:** The purchase by God of the sinner – spirit, soul and body. The blood of Jesus Christ is the purchase price.

Propitiation: Appeasement or conciliation of the enmity between God and man through the offering of Jesus Christ.

Reconciliation: The uniting of two parties formerly at war.

Reciprocal Indwelling: The believer being placed in Christ and Christ coming to reside in the believer. **Salvation:** God delivering man from the penalty of sin (at conversion), from the power of sin (daily), from the presence of sin (at His coming).¹⁶

"The Double Cure in Romans

Romans is particularly the book which Paul uses to express the doctrine of "Full Salvation." The theme of the book is: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.(1:16) Then the book divides nicely into the various advances into the truth of the Double Cure:

(1) Condemnation; the whole world guilty under sin. (1:18-3: 20)

(2) Justification; the new birth comes solely as a result of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, without the works of the Law, by faith alone. (3 :21 -5:11)

(3) Carnality remains after Justification; leaving the justified, born again believer with a sin nature, inherited from Adam, reigning. (5:12-6:1)

(4) Sanctification removes the Sin Nature; through the crucifixion of the "old man" by the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ whereby the believer becomes "dead" to sin; "For sin shall not have dominion over you." (6:1-14) In this section Paul shows that this sanctification. is a crisis experience with a "henceforth we should not serve sin."

(5) After the Crisis Experience of Sanctification, we "Yield" the Sanctified Human Nature to God; the body being the particular ground to guard through the process of sanctification working in the daily life of the sanctified believer. (6:15-23)

(6) Using Law and Grace, Paul launches out into the Inward War which will inevitably come into the Born-Again Believer's Heart unless he is Sanctified; revealing the presence of sinful carnality after the person is regenerated; the antagonism of that sin nature with the new nature; and, the desperation of desire in wanting to be delivered from the sin nature and its War. (7:1-25) We will see a little later why Paul uses Law and Grace in this chapter to bring out this truth, but in the early part of this chapter (v. 1-6) the "husband" represents the sin nature as well as the "flesh."

¹⁵ Peter Ruckman, *Ruckman Reference Bible*, page 1484.

¹⁶ James Knox, *New Testament Survey*.

(7) The Sanctified Life in all of its Processes and Growth after the Crisis Experience has been received; "walking" in a present-tense and abiding in spiritual fashion through the entire cycle of life in all of its circumstances. (8:1-39) In view of the fact that chapters nine, ten, and eleven of Romans are dispensational, we will not include that portion in our analysis of the book in the light of the Double Cure. We come to our next division instead.

(8) The Sanctified Vessel Presented in Complete Consecration to the Lord; performing the will of God in service, with one another, under authority of others, in practical instances of life, and concerning the "doubtful" things involved in personal religious convictions. (12:1,2; 3-8; 9-21; 13:1-7; 8-14; 14:1-15:3, respectively.)¹⁷

¹⁷ O. Talmadge Spence, *The Quest For Christian Purity*, pages 124-125.

Romans Chapter 1

Romans 1-8 The Philosophy of Salvation,¹⁸

The Christian Message 1:18-5:21	The Christian Life 7:1-8:39
1. Condemnation 1:18-3:20 a. Of the Gentiles 1:18-32 b. Of the Jews 2:1-3:8 c. Of the World 3:9-20	1. Sanctification 6:1-8:11 a. The Principle of It 6:1-14 b. The Practice of It 6:15-7:6 c. The Preventative of It 7:7-25 d. The Power of It 8:1-11
2. Justification 3:21-5:11 a. The Ground of It 3:21-26 b. The Means of It 3:27-4:25 c. The Effect of It 5:1-11	2. Glorification 8:12-30 a. The Promise of It 8:12-17 b. The Expectation of It 8:18-27 c. The Certainty of It 8:28-30
Summary 5:12-21	Summary 8:31-39

1. Introduction 1:1-7

“In the Roman prescript, which is longer than that of any other Pauline epistle, each of the three parts has been given a substantial theological content. Much the most extensive expansion is in the superscription which runs to six verses. The reason for this is of course Paul’s special need to introduce himself, since the church to which he is writing is one to which he is not personally known, since he hopes to soon visit it, and since it is the church in Rome.”¹⁹

**1:1^{ab} Paul,^c a servant^d of Jesus Christ,^{ef} called to be an apostle,^g separated^{h-perfect}
passive participle unto the gospel of God,^{ijk}**

1a This first sentence is 126 words long in the Authorized Version. This is the characteristic style of Paul, who loved to write long and complex sentences (see Ephesians 1:3-14 for another example). The Apostle John had a different style, with short, simple yet profound sentences. The doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture goes beyond the idea of mechanical dictation that John R. Rice used to push so strongly. The personalities and styles of the human writers are clearly observable, and yet what they wrote is free from error and exactly what God intended. Each Bible writer had his own unique style and characteristics, and yet God used them as His penmen to record exactly what the Lord wanted to be included in His Word. We believe in Biblical inspiration, but it is obvious that that did not override the personal writing style of the author.

1b A “brief” outline of chapters 1-3 could be:

1. The Gentiles are in a mess- Romans 1
2. So are the Jews- Romans 2
3. There’s not a thing you can do about it- Romans 3

1c Paul identifies himself alone, without any co-worker such as Timothy, Barnabas or Luke. Romans is all Pauline, with no outside influence. It truly is the Gospel According to Paul.

18 W. Graham Scroggie *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption* volume 3, page 135.

19 C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, page 47.

Through church history, departing from the doctrines Paul preached resulted in heresy. To receive Paul's gospel and hold it fast, is salvation.

“**Paul**” is the name by which Paul wished to be known in all his letters. He never uses the name 'Saul' though that was how he was known at the time of his conversion and during the early part of his ministry and as a missionary of the church at Antioch. It would appear from Acts 13:9 that at that time he already had the double name 'Saul, Paul', the latter which he presumably had used in the past in Greek circles. As a Roman citizen, 'Paul' was probably part of the formal name by which he was registered according to law. In Acts the transition from 'Saul' to 'Paul' as his regular self-designation more or less coincides with the beginning of his active (recorded) outreach to Gentiles beyond the eastern seaboard of the Mediterranean. Since 'Saul' was an unfamiliar name outside Jewish circles the transition to the more easily recognized name was a natural step. Yet, the completeness of the change strongly suggests a transition in Paul's self-perception, at least in terms of social context within which he had his identity, perhaps a certain freeing of himself from the person he had been perceived to be as 'Saul', or a willingness to engage in new relationships other than those enjoyed by 'Saul'. That 'Paul' thus reflects his increasing commitment as 'apostle to the Gentiles' is therefore quite likely.”²⁰

Paul would rather take the name of the “little one” than of Israel's first king, not because he turned his back on his Jewish heritage, but as an act of humility and spiritual self-depreciation. As Paul was a Benjamite, his being named after Saul was not unusual.

“Many apparently opposite qualities went to make up the special fitness of St. Paul for his great life-work. He combined in his own unique experience a personal connection of the closest kind with the three principal social spheres of his age. He was called out of the very heart of Judaism. Jewish legalism he knew from end to end. He was called out of the very heart of Greek culture, for he lived his early life from infancy in one of the great centres of Hellenic life, and was familiarized with all that was great and noble in Greek literature. He had, moreover, enjoyed from birth all the varied privileges of Roman citizenship. He was thus a Hebrew to the backbone; he was a Greek in the fullest sense of the term; and he was a Roman citizen freeborn. But besides all this, he united in his rare personality an unusual vigor of intellect, strength of will, depth of feeling and sympathy. Intensity was the mark of his character, whether intellectually or morally. Yet the one thing which surpassed all else in preparing him for his apostleship has yet to be mentioned. His sudden and miraculous conversion and call by the direct interposition of Christ Himself, beyond all else, fitted him to compare together Judaism and Christianity with perfect fairness, and enabled him to set the two systems side by side in vivid, startling contrast, as well as empowered him to testify how that Christianity, instead of being a violent antagonism and outrage upon pure Judaism, was the legitimate outcome, development and completion of Old Testament truth.”²¹

1d “**servant**” means a willing servant to Christ. It does not mean “a slave” in our common definition, for that is not the understanding of the relationship that a Christian has with the Lord. Christians are not slaves for slaves receive no compensation for their work besides basic room and board. But servants receive a full reward for their labors of love. And slaves do not love their masters but serve out of compulsion. Servants love their masters and serve because they desire to, and their labor is voluntary. Don't degrade a Christian by calling him a mere “slave” of Christ when “servant” would be a higher and more noble title. The Christian may consider himself a slave, but God sees him as a servant and a son. God employs no slaves, but He does employ many willing and loving servants.

20 James D. G. Dunn, Romans 1-8, *Word Biblical Commentary*, volume 38A, page 6-7.

21 J. Sidlow Baxter, *Explore The Book*.

"Servant" is the more noble term, and it was a favorite of Paul's. Strong's # 1401 *doulos*; a bondservant. From "deo", "to bind". It also denotes absolute dependence. The emphasis of the word is on the service of the servant and of the dependence of the slave upon his lord. It is never used in a disparaging or contemptuous fashion in the New Testament. Although Christians were not hesitant to consider themselves the "doulos" of God, the Rabbis and Pharisees would never apply it to themselves. The term was applied however to those who performed menial service for the rabbis.

In a society where slavery was widespread and freedom was cherished, it was quite something for a man to willingly consider himself as a bondservant or a slave. The concept was not a popular one in Roman culture. Paul willingly adopts such an offensive concept to express his relationship to Christ. While the concept of being a slave was abhorrent to the Greek and Roman mind, Asians saw it as a title of honor as a subject of kings, emperors and God.

The books of Romans, Philippians, Titus, James, 2 Peter, Jude and Revelation also start off with the authors identifying themselves as "servants". The apostles were not such much leaders or "bishops" in the modern denominational sense of the word, but servants. The pope likes to style himself "a servant of the servants of Christ", which would be pathetic if it wasn't so laughable. The pope is too proud and arrogant to serve anyone, judging by the titles and offices he claims for himself. But a true man of God is humble, does not promote himself, does not attempt to build a personality cult around himself. Beware of any man who tries to do these things or has a proud and haughty attitude, and that goes for in and out of the church.

Paul was never a slave. He was a servant. He served God willingly because he loved Him. He was willing to suffer, to spend and to be spent. He received wages from the Lord as well. In this context, it was a higher call to be a servant of Jesus Christ than a slave.

1e To translate "doulos" as "slave" is not consistent with the New Testament concept of service to God. Christians are servants, not slaves. A slave works out of compulsion as he does not desire such service. He does not love his master. He receives bare minimum wages, if any. But a servant serves from love and because he loves his master (Exodus 21:2-6). He receives good wages and even may be adopted by his master. Thus, there is a world of difference between a "servant" and "slave".

Paul makes it clear that Christians are sons and not servants in Galatians 4:1-7, **"Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."**

Jesus said, **"Henceforth I call you not servants . . . but I have called you friends"** in John 15:15. So the New Testament presentation of believers is that we are friends, sons and friends more than servants and certainly not as slaves,

Differences between servants and slaves:

1. Slaves are bought, sons are born (through the new birth) or adopted (in a Roman sense of the word).
2. Slaves serve out of compulsion, servants out of love
3. Slaves receive no wages, but servants do
4. Slaves are usually bound for life, servants may go out free.

A. Exodus 21:2-6 **"If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out**

with him. If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself. And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever."

5. Servants tend to love their masters, slaves not so much.

AV	ESV	LSV
1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called <i>to be</i> an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,	1 Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,	1 Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, called <i>as</i> an apostle, having been set apart for the gospel of God,

Another major problem with the Legacy Standard Version (among many!) is its stubborn insistence of always rendering "servant" as "slave." The Authorized Version and ESV are correct with "servant". Do you think the Hebrews would have referred to themselves as "slaves"?

John MacArthur,²² the driving force behind the LSV, is to blame for this mentality. He thinks in New Testament references where the Greek "doulos" is used, that it must always be translated as "slave". But MacArthur clearly does not understand the distinction between servants and slaves, especially in a New Testament context.

The translators of the LSV, knowing they would catch flak for always translating "doulos" as "slave" but who were determined to do MacArthur's bidding, tried to justify themselves by saying "The NT has a variety of terms that refer to the individuals who serve under the authority of another. Doulos denotes a very specific form of servitude: slavery. The NT uses doulos to describe an individual who is totally subordinate to a master (cf. Matt 8:9; 24:46; 2 Pet 2:19) and even owned by that master (Philem 16-19), in contrast to one who is freed (Gal 3:28). For this reason, the NASV already translated the vast majority of this term as slave. The LSB made this consistent, which brings out how believers are to relate to Christ. He is our Lord and master (2 Cor 4:5), and we are His slaves (Rom 1:1; Phil 1:1). This underscores His great redemption in buying believers from slavery to sin (Rom 6:16). This also underscores the believer's absolute surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom 6:16-17). A consistent translation of doulos, in effect, sharpens the very nature of the Christian life."²³

Peter Ruckman, of all people, repeats John MacArthur's error. "Now, if there is any doubt about what that word "servant" means, turn to 1 Corinthians 6:20. "Ye are bought with a price." Your relationship to Jesus Christ is not that of an employer to an employee. That is a modern Fundamentalist interpretation that attempts not to offend a certain race of people."²⁴

²² MacArthur had a lot of theological problems. He was weak on the blood of Christ in salvation and held to incarnational sonship for a number years before eventually changing his position.

²³ <https://lsbible.org/faqs/>

²⁴ Ruckman was in error of he thinks the reason why so many students reject the idea of Christians being "slaves" is not to offend blacks. Ruckman's own racism shows in such a comment. We reject "slaves" based on a Biblical understanding of "doulos", not because we are trying to be politically correct. It would be quite a revelation to Ruckman for him to realize that he agreed with John MacArthur and the Legacy Standard Bible over the Authorized Version reading! And he is changing the Authorized Version word "servant" to "slave", thus undermining his own professed dedication to not changing any of the words of the Authorized Version. Other examples are legion. It is a widespread misunderstanding.

Every Christian is a slave, knocked down on the block, bought and paid for by Jesus Christ. That may not be very flattering, but that's how it is... That is a picture of your status as a believer. Jesus Christ was the Servant of God (theme of the Gospel of Mark), and you are His servant. In light of that, then, your life is no longer your own. You don't decide on "the church of your choice." You go to the church of His choice. You don't read the Bible version you prefer; you read the Bible of God's preference. He decides where you live, what job you have, who you marry, what you eat, and how long you grow your hair. You are to feel like God feels and like what God likes. You are to conform to Him. It is His will, not yours. "Ye are not your own... therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:19–20).²⁵

I heard Gene Scott, pastor of the University Cathedral in Los Angeles, who was a noted shortwave radio preacher in his day, mutter that we are slaves as he chewed on his big, black cigar and while he cussed as he preached. Scott was a libertine, who taught you could live however you wanted because of grace, so he spent much of his time with Playboy "bunnies" on his multi-million-dollar horse ranch. Then he said Christians are "slaves". How he could reconcile a libertine lifestyle with being a slave is beyond me.

It is true that when we were still sinners, we were slaves to sin. When we are saved, we transition to being servants and sons to God.

David Cloud provides a brief survey of Roman slavery, "In the ROMAN EMPIRE, as many as 35% of the population were slaves, and their condition was often terrible. The city of Rome had a population of one to two million, half of whom were slaves (Henry Burton, *The Biblical World*, Vol. 3, 1894). When Rome conquered a territory, tens of thousands of the people were sold as slaves. After Rome destroyed Jerusalem and Israel's temple in AD 70, more than a million Jews were killed or sold as slaves. Slaves were considered property and had no legal rights under Roman law. They were called *res* (a thing, an object) and *res mortales* (a mortal thing). On the farm, slaves were called *instrumentum vocalis* (a talking tool). Farm slaves were branded on the forehead, chained together in teams of ten, and guarded by a foreman with a whip. Slaves could not own property or legally marry. They could be punished as the owner pleased, tortured, raped, castrated, prostituted, even executed. Runaways were treated as thieves (having stolen themselves from their masters) and suffered terrible tortures as warnings to others. When the slave revolt under Spartacus was defeated in 71 BC, 6,000 of them were crucified along the Appian Way to Rome and their bodies left to rot on the crosses for months. Children born of slaves were the property of their owners. Many slaves were worked to death under cruel conditions. Consider the Egyptian mines. "Egypt's gold and quicksilver mines were worked by slaves, criminals and prisoners of war, including women, elderly men and children. Young men hacked the quartz loose. Older men broke the quartz into fragments. Children dragged the quartz to the grinders, powered by women who like others worked without rest, walking in circles and pushing levers that rotated a shaft. According to the Greek writer Agatharchides, in the mid-100s BCE, relief came only with death, which these miners welcomed" ("Privilege, Poverty and Failed Revolutions," *Macrohistory and World Timeline*, www.fsmitha.com). This description refers to the time of the Greek Empire, but nothing of significance changed under the Romans."²⁶

Does this sound like the way God would treat His supposed "Christian slaves"?

Nowhere in Scripture are Christians referred to as "slaves". If you're born again, you're free and you are called:

1. A child of God, Ephesians 5:1
2. A son of God, Romans 8:14, Galatians 4:6
3. An Ambassador for Christ, 2 Corinthians 5:20
4. A servant of Christ, Colossians 4:12

²⁵ Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer's Commentary* on Romans, page 2.

²⁶ https://www.wayoflife.org/reports/the_history_of_slavery.php, March 26, 2024.

5. A friend of Jesus, John 15:14
6. A joint-heir with Christ, Romans 8:17
7. A new creature, 2 Corinthians 5:17
8. Children of God, Galatians 3:26

"Servant must not be rendered "slave," nor merely "pious worshipper:" because the former excludes the element of freewill, while the latter does not express the entire dedication to Christ."²⁷ This is an interesting observation by Alford. Who would be more dedicated to the cause of Christ, a servant or a slave?

How the various translations handle slave/servant in Romans 1:1:

Slave	Servant or Bondservant
New Living Translation	Authorized King James Version
Legacy Standard Version	New International Version
Holman Christian Standard Version	English Standard Version
New American Version (Roman Catholic, not to be confused with the New American Standard Version)	Berean Literal Bible
Net Bible	New King James Version
	New American Standard Version 1977, 1995
	Amplified Version
	Christian Standard Version
	American Standard Version
	Contemporary English Version
	Rheims-Douay Version
	English Revised Version
	Good News Version
	International Standard Version
	Literal Standard Version
	New Revised Standard Version
	Darby version
	Geneva Bible
	Bishops Bible
	Coverdale Bible
	Tyndale Bible
	Wycliffe Bible of 1380

Commentators

Slave	Servant or Bondservant (writers who do not change the Authorized Version text to "slave" in Romans 1:1)
C. E. B. Cranfield	James Knox
John MacArthur. He is not so dogmatic in his commentary, dated 1991, as he is in his later works.	John Cereghin
Peter Ruckman	John Gill
Rob Ventura	Thomas Robinson (sort of goes both ways)
Robert Haldane	John Calvin

²⁷ Henry Alford, *The New Testament for English Readers*.

Leon Morris	William G. T. Shedd
Douglas Moo	John Trapp
Preachers Outline and Sermon Bible	Ethelbert Bullinger. He cites the word as “doulos” but leaves it at that in his Companion Bible
A. T. Robertson	B. H. Carroll
Adam Clarke	Matthew Poole
John Phillips	
Ian Paisley	
Oliver Greene (who always took his cue from “outstanding [Greek] scholars”)	
Kenneth Wuest	
J. F. Dake	
Henry Morris (Defenders Study Bible)	
J. Vernon McGee	
Thomas Robinson (sort of goes both ways)	
ESV Study Bible	
Charles Hodge	
James Dunn	
Marvin Vincent	
Warren Wiersbe	
Jamieson, Fausset, Brown commentary	
Garner-Howes Baptist Commentary	
William Barclay	
R. C. Sproul, who says in his commentary on Romans that “I have never been satisfied with that English translation of this second phrase” and “I think the proper translation should read, “Paul, a slave of Jesus Christ.” ²⁸	

So most of the versions read “servant” (except for the newer ones) while most of the commentators read “slave” (most older commentators will read “servant”). This is an example of most of the commentators letting the lexicons do their interpretation instead of comparing Scripture with Scripture.

In summary, “slave” is a proper rendering for “doulos” in a New Testament context, regardless of what the dictionaries and lexicons say. Christians are not to serve God as slaves and not even as servants but as sons. We serve because we love God and desire to serve Him and live for Him. This is a higher level of service that you would get from a servant or a slave. Too many times, the commentators take whatever definition they find from the lexicons without question. Gail Riplinger warned and wrote against this practice in Hazardous Materials where she shows the unreliability of the Greek lexicons. The Authorized Version translators knew what they were doing in their translating in not limiting themselves only to the lexicons to get their definitions. The word “slave(s)” is only used twice in the Authorized Version, in Jeremiah 2:14 **Is Israel a servant? is he a homeborn slave? why is he spoiled?** And in Revelation 18:13 **And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls**

²⁸ I have never been comfortable with Sproul’s Calvinism and Covenant Theology and “I think” or strongly believe that Sproul is arrogant in these remarks. His being “unsatisfied” shouldn’t bother anyone at all, especially a Bible-believing student.

of men. The word used in Revelation 18:13 is not “doulos” but “soma”.

In reality, you always get your best service out of sons than you would from servants or slaves. A son is a member of the family with a vital interest in his father's business. He serves his father out of love, not coercion, and the last thing he wants to do is to disappoint his father.

“Doulos” is used 127 times in 119 verses in the underlying Greek text of the Authorized Version and it is never translated as “slave” despite the lexicon definition. Even some Greek “scholars”²⁹ tell us that “doulos” can have multiple meanings. Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament says on page 156 that the word *doulos* can mean either 1. a slave, and bondman, or 2. A SERVANT, and attendant of a king. If so, why limit “doulos” only to “slave”? The question is where did these lexicons get their definitions? And if “doulos” primarily means “servant” then why do so many translations use “servant”? And isn't it interesting how we never question of the lexicons? It's like we consider Strong or Thayer or Vine are divinely inspired in their definitions. The Authorized Version translators, who had access to more than just the lexicons, understood that “doulos” was not always to be translated as “slave”, that there were various shades of meaning to the word.

“In the transformation of the RSV into the NRSV, Metzger joined Jesuit priest, George MacRae, S.J., secular Jew, Harry Orlinsky, Lucetta Mowry, and others “in eliminating masculine-oriented language” and coming up with “the least unsatisfactory rendering.” Interestingly, one debate arose among members about the translation of *doulos*, which in the KJB is rendered “servant.” Some wanted to use the word “slave,” but others pointed out that in the Greek Septuagint it was sometimes used in a much higher way to mean, “official” or “servant” (Metzger, *Reminiscence*, pp. 89, 91). Even a reprobate such as Mark Twain knows that “The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and a lightening bug.”³⁰

“Recent bible translations have sadly substituted the word slave or bond slave for the word ‘servant.’ The word ‘slave’ does not communicate the fact that we come to Christ and we serve him by our own choice. A slave is captured, forced to go with his captor and compelled to work under cruel conditions. As Christians, we are “servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart” (Eph. 6:6). Jesus said, “Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32, 36). Webster defines a servant as, “one who exerts himself for the benefit of another master...as a public servant, an official of government.” That definition recalls such verses as, “...we shall reign on the earth” and “...they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years” (Rev. 5:10, 20:4). All pure English Bibles have ‘servant.’

Gothic A.D. 500	“servant,” <i>piumagus</i> , skalks, et al. The First Germanic Bible, G.H. Balg, NYC: B. Westerman & Co., 1891, pp. 435, 417. Anglo-Saxon
Anglo-Saxon circa A.D. 700-900	“servant,” <i>êeow</i> et al. (pronounced ‘thew’) (If the word was ‘slave,’ it would have been <i>halfincel</i> ; Joseph Bosworth, <i>The Gospels: Gothic, Anglo-Saxon, Wycliffe and Tyndale</i> , London: Gibbings & Co. 1907; <i>Old English Grammar</i> , Elizabeth Wright, Oxford University Press, 1925, p. 185).
Wycliffe 1384	servaunt

²⁹ I've never had much respect for so-called “Greek scholars”. Their scholarship and knowledge of Greek does not make them reliable guides to follow.

³⁰ Gail Riplinger, *Hazardous Materials*, page 155.

Tyndale 1526	servaunt
Great 1540	servaunt
Bishops' 1568	servaunt

"Citing material confiscated and turned over to the police in Orange, California, as part of an investigation into Satanic group crime, New Age Bible Versions documents that Satanists mockingly call Christians 'slaves' of Christ (pp. 221-225). The word 'slave' has very negative connotative associations, ranging from its well-known historical applications to its current debauched meaning among sodomites. Webster defines a slave as, "A person held in bondage...One who has lost control of himself...a drudge..." *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language* states that "sl" words (e.g. slave, slothful, slain, slack) convey a "downward movement...or position." Becoming a servant of Jesus Christ is certainly an upward move."³¹

"The word slave was first suggested for use in the Bible in 1890 by Westcott and Hort's Revised Version and American Standard Version Committee member, James Strong. He buried his opinions about how words should be translated in his Strong's *Concordance*, in its *A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Greek Testament*, hidden in the back. Few realize he created this otherwise useful concordance for "one great object," which was to "index" the changes made to the "Authorized Version" [KJV] by the "Revised Version" of Westcott and Hort, and the "American revisers only" (Strong's Concordance, General Preface, Directions and Explanations, pages not numbered). He admits in item 4 of his "Plan of the Book" that the first Greek so-called 'definition' he gives, is his own; in Strong's Concordance, Preface to the Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Hebrew Bible, Strong admits his Old Testament work is based on Gesenius (a Bible critic) and his definitions are merely his own suggestions for "correcting" the KJV's so-called "wrong translation." His lexical definitions were merely his opinions about how words should be translated in his upcoming ASV, later published in 1901. Some of his ideas were incorporated into this corrupt version; some were not. The word 'slave' was not used, and rightly so. Strong denied the inspiration of the Bible. The Preface of the ASV went so far as to state that the original "Hebrew text is probably corrupt..." (p. vii). Because of the unbelieving Unitarian influence on the ASV committee, the ASV's note on Matthew 2:2 inferred that Jesus Christ was a "creature," not the "Creator."

"The first time the word 'slave' was actually chained to a Bible was in 1961 in the New World Translation of the Jehovah Witness sect. The Catholic New American Bible fell prey to it in 1970. The NIV and NASB submitted to the yoke immediately. The NKJV has a galley of "slaves," including "slaves of God" (Rom. 6:22) and "Christ's slaves" (1 Cor. 7:22). The New Living Translation, Today's New International Version and the Holman Christian Standard Bible were the most recent to sell their readers into slavery."³²

"SERVANT is the translation given to this word by Wycliffe 1395, Tyndale 1525, Coverdale 1535, the Great Bible 1540, Matthew's Bible 1549 - "Nowe letttest thou thy seruaunt departe in peace, accordinge to thy promes.", Bishops' bible 1568, the Geneva Bible 1587, The Beza N.T. 1599, the Bill Bible 1671, Mace N.T. 1729, Whitson's N.T. 1745, Wesley's N.T. 1755, the Worsley N.T. 1770, The Thomson Bible 1808, The Living Oracles 1835, The Pickering N.T. 1840, Morgan N.T. 1848, The Commonly Received Version 1851, The Boothroyd Bible 1853, Julia Smith Translation 1855, Sawyer N.T. 1858, The Revised N.T. 1862, Noyes Translation 1869, Alford N.T. 1870, The Smith Bible 1876, The Revised English Bible 1877, the Revised Version 1885, Young's 1898, ASV 1901, Rotherham's Emphasized Bible 1902, Godbey N.T. 1902, Worrell N.T. 1904, The Clarke N.T. 1913, Weymouth's N.T. 1912, the Moffatt N.T. 1926, J.B. Phillips N.T. 1972, RSV 1946-1973, NRSV 1989, the Amplified 1987, ESV 2011, Message 2002, the NKJV 1982, the NIV 1982 - 2011 editions, the Complete Jewish Bible 1998, The

31 Gail Riplinger, *The Language of the King James Bible*, p. 68.

32(Gail Riplinger, *In Awe of Thy Word*, pages 263-265.

Sacred Scriptures Family of Yah 2001, Names of God Bible 2011, The Voice 2012, the new ISV 2014 (International Standard Version), Common English Bible 2011, and even in Daniel Wallace's inconsistent and wacky NET version 2006.

Also translating Luke 2:29 and numerous other passages that use the word *doulos* as SERVANT throughout the New Testament include the Bible in Basic English 1961, The Word of Yah 1993, The Third Millennium Bible 1998, The Lawrie Version 1998, The Koster Scriptures 1998, God's First Truth 1999, The Common N.T. 1999, the Tomson N.T. 2002, the Evidence Bible 2003, Complete Apostle's Bible 2005, The Resurrection Life N.T. 2005 (Vince Garcia), The Easy To Read Version 2006, The Spoken English New Testament 2008, The English Majority Text Version 2009 (Paul Esposito), Bond Slave Version 2009, The Christogenea N.T. 2009, The Conservative Bible 2010, The Holy Scriptures VW Edition 2010, The New Heart English Bible 2010, The New European Version 2010, The New American Bible 2010, the Biblos Interlinear Bible 2011, The Aramaic N.T. 2011, The Work of God's Children Illustrated Bible 2011, The Mounce Reverse-Interlinear N.T. 2011, the World English Bible 2012, The New Living Translation 2013, The Far Above All Translation 2014, The Hebrew Names Version 2014, The New International Reader's Version 2014, The International Children's Bible 2015, and the Modern English Version 2014.

"Foreign language translations also translate the Greek word *doulos* as servants. Among these are the French Martin 1744, Louis Segond 1910, French Ostervald 1996 and the La Bible du Semeur 1999 - *serviteurs*. Among the Spanish, Italian and Portuguese translations we find the Spanish Reina Valera 1909, 1960, 1995 - *siervos*, the Italian Diodati 1649, Riveduta 1927 and the New Diodati 1991 - *servitori* - as well as the Portuguese Almeida - *servus*."³³

1f **"A servant of Jesus Christ"** Paul was servant before he was apostle. His first words, as he lay in the dust on the Damascus Road in Acts 9, were, "Who art thou, Lord?", as a servant asking for instructions from his master. What caused the change from a persecuting, arrogant little rabbi to the great apostle who considered himself a servant of the man he once despised? The new birth!

There is no greater honor for a man than to be the willing bondservant of such a great God, Who would have us in His service. All men must serve something, either the world, the flesh, the devil, or God. No man is autonomous in that he serves no one. As a bondservant, your life is no longer your own. You don't decide on "the church of your choice." You go to the church of His choice. You don't read the Bible version you prefer; you read the Bible of God's preference. He decides where you live, what job you have, who you marry. You are to conform to Him. It is His will, not yours. **"Ye are not your own...therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's"** (1 Corinthians 6:19,20).

1g At the time of this writing, Paul had not yet been to Rome and had not met this church and had no direct involvement with it, so he starts off by affirming his apostolic credentials to them. Paul was called to be an **apostle**, in opposition to any human ambition. The call is of God and not man.

Paul calls himself an **apostle**, which is literally one sent out with a commission, with authority. We get our English word "postal" from this. When you send a piece of mail and buy a stamp and drop it off at the post office, you are giving the postman the authority to deliver that letter on your behalf. God gave divine revelations to His apostles who had the same authority.

Not everyone is called to be an apostle. While over 500 people may have qualified for the office, only twelve or thirteen men actually carried out the office. God calls all Christians to be saints but not all to be apostles or to go into positions of spiritual leadership. And God is calling no one to the office of an apostle today since the office no longer exists as it is no longer

33 Will Kinney, <https://brandplucked.com/servantsslaves.htm>

needed. When John died after he wrote Revelation, the office ceased. This is despite many modern pastors who desire the office and who have anointed themselves with the title, yet without the blessing of God.

Paul was called to be an apostle but he was never called to be a slave. God is looking for willing servants and sons, not slaves to serve Him or to live for Him.

1h Paul declares he was **separated** and sanctified unto the Gospel ministry. Paul was separated three times:

1. From his mother's womb- his conception.

A. Galatians 1:15 **"But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,"**

2. On the Damascus-Jerusalem Road- his conversion.

A. Acts 9:15,16 **"But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."**

3. In Antioch- his call to missionary service, with Barnabas.

A. Acts 13:1,2 **"Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."**

As a Pharisee, Paul was a "Separated One" (that was one title of a Pharisee). When Christ saved him, Paul became a "Separated One" unto Christ instead.

The word "**separated**" is in the perfect tense in the Greek text, showing it is a permanent, finished and completed action.

1i "**The gospel of God**", is from God, of divine origin, not of man, as false gospels are.

1j "Paul never thought of himself as a man who had aspired to an honor; he thought of himself as a man who had been given a task."³⁴

1k "There are some brethren who in preaching are as timid as mice; but on a political platform they can roar like lions. Had not they better take to what they like best, and give up the work at which they are not at home? For my part, I believe that I am like Paul when he says that he was "separated unto the gospel of God." I am set apart unto the gospel, cut off from everything else that I may preach the glorious gospel of the blessed God to the perishing sons of men. (Charles Spurgeon)."

1:2 (Which he had promised afore^{a-aorist middle} by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)^b

2a "**promised afore**" Promised before. What God has promised, He will fulfill. God cannot break a promise or fail to fulfill it. To do so would mean that He is man, and not God, for men prove themselves to be so unfaithful continually. This also shows that the Gospel pay was preaching was not some new thing hatched up by Paul, but was a very old thing, prophesied by the Old Testament prophets.

³⁴ William Barclay, *The Letter to the Romans* in *The Daily Study Bible*, page 12.

Paul was not preaching some new doctrine but an ancient one. Paul's Jewish antagonists accused him of preaching a revolutionary new message unrelated to Judaism. But the Old Testament is filled with prophecies concerning Christ and the gospel. Paul is simply preaching the fulfillment of standard, accepted Old Testament doctrines.

2b **"holy Scriptures"** This is the only occurrence of this phrase in the New Testament. The Scriptures are holy because they are given by God, are divinely inspired and are without error. Paul's use of this term shows his extremely high regard for the Scriptures. Can the scriptures be anything but holy? They are holy because they are of God,

In this context, the **"holy Scriptures"** would be the Old Testament, as very little of the New Testament had been prepared at the time of this writing. To those who think the Old Testament to be inferior, or not to be as useful as the New Testament, that error must be reconsidered in the light of such a verse as this.

We believe that today, these **"holy Scriptures"** are to be found in the Authorized Version in English, which is the preserved word of God for us. All modern translations are but perversions of these **"holy Scriptures"**. Stick with your Authorized Version/King James Version and you will do well.

1:3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ^a our Lord,^{bcd} which was made^{aorist middle participle} of the seed of David according to the flesh;^e

3a AV

ESV

LSV

3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh;	3 concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh	3 concerning His Son, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh,
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"Jesus Christ" is missing in modern versions.

3b A very clear statement of the sonship of Jesus Christ.

3c **"Jesus Christ our Lord,"**

Jesus- His human name

Christ- official designation

our Lord- title of authority

3d **"Jesus Christ our Lord"** Ten times in Romans Paul uses this title, or, "Our Lord Jesus Christ," that full name beloved by the apostles and all instructed saints from Pentecost onward: for "God hath made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified" (Acts 2:36). Jesus, His personal name (Matthew 1:21) as Savior; Christ, God's Anointed One to do all things for us; Lord, His high place over us all for whom His work was done; and as, truly, Lord of all things in heaven and earth (Acts 10:36).³⁵

3e **"seed of David according to the flesh"** Jesus was a Jew while on earth, from the family of David, both physically (through Mary) and legally through Joseph (as his legal [not biological] Son). This title deals with the Messianic credentials of Christ. It is interesting that Paul would use such a Jewish phrase to a Gentile church unless Paul knew that there was a sizable Jewish

³⁵ William Newell, *Romans, Verse-by-Verse*.

component to the church in Rome. We do know there were Jews in Rome in Paul's day in Acts 28:17ff.

"Veiled in flesh the Godhead see! He took upon Him the form of a servant. He humbled Himself, and He worked as a carpenter. He is still the Son of God eternal, in all His powers, but He has laid aside the signs of His glory for this purpose. He is like a king who is travelling incognito- he goes to the Continent but does not announce that he is the King of England or the Prince of Wales. He travels as 'Mr. Smith' and people do not turn around to look at him. They would expect a king to have all the regalia and to be reported in the newspapers. He is still a king, or a prince...He has not changed his being or position, but he is travelling incognito."³⁶

1:4 And declared^{a-aorist passive participle} to be the Son of God with power,^b according to the spirit of holiness,^c by the resurrection from the dead:^d

4a This declaration was with power. Is there no other way to declare the God of Eternity than in power? We dare not be as those who peep and mutter in dark sentences, but fully declare the truths of the Word of God in full assurance and confidence, speaking in absolutes and not brooking any doubt or "gray areas" in our preaching. God will be declared in no other way. He said it, it shall stand and the decree is fixed. We must not be like the scribes and Pharisees of Christ's day, for it was said of Christ that He spoke not as the religious leaders of His day, but in power, as "never a man spake as this man".

And He was "declared" not "debated". God calls His preachers to declare boldly with power and conviction, not to debate and argue with unbelievers. We are not Church of Christ preachers who would rather debate than preach.

Who declared Jesus to be the "Son of God with power?" In the context, the early church and its preachers and apostles through the Book of Acts. Today, any God-called preacher has this high privilege and responsibility.

4b Jesus was declared to be the Son of God by the Father Himself in Matthew 3:17 "**And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased**". No other declaration of man is necessary, although there are plenty of those kinds of declarations as well. The Bible is a book of very strong and bold declarations. There are no Scriptural half-truths, presented in a tepid and uncertain manner. The great divine truths that the Bible declares are done so with no debate, no option. And they are presented in full assurance and confidence- "This is truth and there is no other." Christ preached like this, with an authority that surprised everyone of His day. The scribes mumbled in their uncertainty and lack of authority as most false teachers do. God's preachers do not suffer from this uncertainty. Read the Old Testament prophets. Read the sermons and writings by Peter, James and John and you will see these bold declarations. That is because these men knew the truth and accepted the truth and thus, they spoke as they had heard.

4c "**spirit of holiness**" not necessarily the Holy Spirit, but the spirit from God which encourages holiness in believers and makes sanctification possible. This is the only place in the English Bible where the phrase is used, so we can't compare it to any other usages.

4d The **resurrection** was a confirmation of the sonship of Christ. Christ said He was going to raise from the dead in fulfillment of the Old Testament scriptures and He was. This doctrine is so important that Paul must mention it in his opening remarks.

36 D. M. Lloyd-Jones, *Romans*, volume 1, pages 116-117.

"A man once said that you could find all of Buddha's bones and still be a good Buddhist. (They have; they supposedly parade them around the streets of India every year.) You could find all of Mohammed's bones and still be a good Moslem. (They have; you can make a pilgrimage to see them.) You could find the bones and corpse of any religious leader who ever lived and still be a good faithful adherent to that religion. But if you found one bone of Jesus Christ, you could no longer be a Christian... If you possessed *one bone* of Jesus Christ, you couldn't be a Christian at all."³⁷

1:5 By whom we have received^{a-aorist} grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith^b among all nations, for his name:^{cd}

5a Two things we have received:

1. **Grace.** We have all received this at salvation for we are saved by grace. After salvation, we live within the grace of God for our Christian walk and service continually.
2. **Apostleship,** although not all believers received this office and it is no longer operating today, despite what a lot of Pentecostal (especially Black Pentecostal) churches and preachers claim. The Church received this temporary office and benefited tremendously by it. Any preacher, or one sent with a commission from the Lord, is an apostle. You don't have to be an ecclesiastical "big-wig" to be an apostle- you just have to be sent with a commission.

Every Christian has received both of these, not just the "preachers" or the spiritual "elites".

5b There is a "faith" to be obeyed. We have commandments from God that we must obey by faith, such as "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" or "Repent and believe".

5c The Apostolic Mission is:

1. Make men obedient to the Faith- the purpose
2. Among all nations- the scope
3. For His name- the motive

5d "There is a lot of activity today that calls itself Christian but just magnifies the name of the preacher or the name of the church or name of the group or the name of the denomination. Paul did not go out and start Pauline churches (though some today do that very thing). It was the church of God here and the church of Christ over there. It was always the Lord's church. It was all about Jesus Christ. If He is the one who died and rose from the dead, if He is the one possessed with the spirit of holiness, then nothing should be done in our name; all should be done to honor His name. At the name of Jesus every knee should bow (Philippians 2:10). No other name should be promoted. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12). So let us do what we do for His name."³⁸

1:6^a Among whom are^{present} ye^b also the called^c of Jesus Christ:^d

6a Paul mentions five blessings that every believer possesses and that he needs every day.

1. We are called (Romans 1:6).
 - A. We have a calling to the Christian life and a calling to some form of ministry or spiritual service.

³⁷ Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer's Commentary on Romans*, pages 10-11.

³⁸ James Knox, *A Christ Honoring Commentary on the Book of Romans*, volume 1, page 39 Kindle edition.

2. We are beloved (Romans 1:7).
 - A. We are recipients and the objects of the love of God.
3. We are saints in the sight of God (Romans 1:7).
 - A. Christians have a very high standing before Him.
 - B. Every believer has this, not just the select few in the Church of Rome.
4. We have grace (Romans 1:7).
 - A. This is the free, unmerited blessing of God.
5. We have peace (Romans 1:7)
 - A. This is something the world wants but cannot obtain.

6b Emphatic.

6c We are **“the called”** since we were called of God unto salvation. We heard the call to salvation and we accepted that call. We, as the Romans once were, idolaters and sinners, on our way to hell, until God called us unto salvation. Thank God we responded through the inward convicting work of the Holy Spirit! No longer are we called by the devil or by the world, but we have received the highest and noblest calling a man can receive- to be the called of Jesus Christ.

But we called to be **“saints”**, or “holy ones”. The call does not stop at salvation. Unfortunately, too many witnesses stop at salvation. Once the convert makes his profession of salvation, the work has just begun. Now comes the work of taking that sinner and discipling him to be a genuine Christian, teaching him how he should live in this present, evil world.

6d AV

ESV

LSV

6 Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:	6 including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,	6 including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,
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The ESV and LSV render this as being called to belong to Jesus Christ.

1:7 To all that be^{present participle} in Rome,^{ab} beloved of God,^c called to be saints:^{def} Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.^{ghi}

7a The gospel had penetrated even to Rome, the heart of the empire and the most important and powerful city in the world in Paul's day. Paul, knowing the power of the gospel (Romans 1:16) would not be surprised. God had His people in the heart of the most wicked city of the day in the same way that He has a people in New York City, San Francisco and any city or country you care to name. In a bad time and in a bad location, God had a church. If the gospel can go even to the heart of Gentile world power and be effective, then it could have a similar effect anywhere. In our day, we would expect the gospel to be able to penetrate to Washington, New York, San Francisco, Mexico City...any earthly city, if only someone would take it there and minister it there. One of the world's largest mission fields, New York City, is a 3-hour drive from my house, with its blend of all nationalities and languages. You can go there without a passport and be overwhelmed by the task facing you and the choices of ministries. My hometown of Washington D.C. wouldn't be a bad choice either.³⁹

As the apostle to the Gentiles, Paul would have a natural burden and concern for the capital city of the Gentile world power.

³⁹ And with all the illegal immigration, the mission field is coming to us, especially Muslims. We can't go to their countries to preach, but they are “fair game” for evangelism if they come here.

7b Let's take a moment to examine the city of Rome as it was in Paul's day. It was the center of the known world. Jews had returned to Rome after being banished by Claudius. Rome was 20 miles in circumference with 30 gates, 420 pagan temples, 5 theaters, 2 amphitheaters, 7 circuses, 16 marble baths. The Circus Maximus stadium could seat 200,000. To be a Roman citizen (like Paul) was the highest honor a man could have in this day. Many spent small fortunes to buy citizenship. Rome's population was near 2 million, half of whom were slaves. There were 700 senators, 10,000 knights, 15,000 troops. Many of the common people lived off public welfare, sleeping in the streets. All they lived for was bread and circuses- "Feed us and entertain us!" Rome was a moral sewer. All Romans cared for was fulfilling the lust of the flesh. From the humble beginnings at this time, the Church at Rome (later to be known as the Church of Rome- how much of a difference is bound up between "Church at Rome" and "Church of Rome"!) grew to 44 presbyters, 7 deacons, 7 sub-deacons, 42 acolytes, 50 exorcists, readers and porters and 1500 widows, poor and sick, by the 3rd century.

"Intellect, Rome had in plenty; the noblest efforts of her genius are scarcely surpassed; her law is the foundation of the best of our codes of jurisprudence; art she borrowed but appreciated; her military system is still the wonder of the world; her great men remain among a multitude of competitors. And yet how pitiless she was! What a tigress! Amid all the ruins of her cities we find none of a hospital, none I believe of an orphan school in an age that made many orphans. The pious aspirations and efforts of individuals never seem to have touched the conscience of the people. Rome incarnate had no conscience; she was a lustful, devouring beast, made more bestial by her intelligence and splendor (Sir H. Rider Haggard, quoted by John Phillips in *Exploring Romans*, page 19)."

Rome was (and still is) a vile sewer, much like modern cities are today. Modern Rome is a moral sewer, as is Washington, New York, Chicago, Mexico City...any city you care to name. When Martin Luther fulfilled a lifelong dream to visit Rome (as he did on business for his monastery before his break with Rome), he expected to see a holy city, filled with saints and pilgrims. Instead, he saw a city wholly given over to the flesh, with open prostitution and drunken priests who were saying mass in a mocking fashion. At one time, the pope taxed prostitution in Rome and most of that tax money came from his priests! And time would fail to describe the great sin in our modern cities, even in our small towns. Sin is universal and affects all centers of human activity and habitation, no matter how large or small. The proverb of the day was "If there is a hell, Rome is built over it".

We don't know how the church was started by Peter certainly had nothing to do with it as we have no indication or reason to believe that Peter was ever within 500 miles of Rome. See remarks in Romans 16. The church could have been started by converts from the Day of Pentecost, possibly Roman soldiers or officials who would have taken the gospel back to Rome when their tour of duty in Israel was completed. Tradition says this is how the church in Wales was started, around A.D. 63.

"The church at Rome was then a flourishing church; but since that time, how is the gold become dim! The Epistle to the Romans is now an epistle against the Romans."⁴⁰

7c **"beloved of God"** What a high honor, even higher than being a Roman citizen! Yet such a title could be had, whether you were bond or free, without money and without price.

7d **"called to be saints..."** Paul said he was **"called to be apostle"** in Romans 1:1. He now says that the Roman believers were **"the called of Jesus Christ"** in Romans 1:6. Paul now expands on that in saying that they were also called to be saints. First comes the call to salvation by Jesus Christ, then the call to sanctification in developing a Christian life and walk.

⁴⁰ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*.

The Roman Christians were called to sanctification, as all saints are, not just the few of the chosen in the Roman Catholic system. All born-again Christians are saints, with holiness and Christ-likeness as the goal (Romans 8:29). Christians, as saints:

1. Are separated from the world by a holy calling.
 - A. John 15:19 **"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."**
 - B. 2 Corinthians 6:14-18 **"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."**
2. Are made partakers of the divine nature
 - A. John 3:6 **"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."**
 - B. 2 Peter 1:4 **"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."**
 - C. 1 John 3:9 **"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."**
3. Are sanctified.
 - A. 1 Corinthians 1:2 **"Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:"**
4. Are willingly devoted to divine service.
 - A. Psalm 110:3 **"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth."**
 - B. 2 Corinthians 8:5 **"And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God."**

We are first called to be saved, then we are made saints by the power of God.

7e **"called to be saints..."** What a high calling! God has called us to be saints in the sense that He wants us to live as saints in the midst of this wicked and evil generation. Are we living up to this high calling? And can a man receive a higher calling? Men may think to be a president is a great thing, or to be a Marine or a billionaire or be elected to some sports Hall of Fame, but no earthly honor or calling can compare to a heavenly and a divine one. We do not have to wait for some church or denomination (such as the Church of Rome) to "declare" us as saints. God has already called us to that and believers are frequently called saints in Scripture.

7f We are called to be saints and sons, not so much servants and certainly not slaves

1. Galatians 4:6,7 **And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.**

7g "from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ..." The Father and Son are the only true sources of grace and peace.

7h Verse 7 ends Paul's unusually long salutation.

7i It seems odd that the Holy Spirit is not directly mentioned here, although He is certainly "in the area" and is not forgotten or overlooked by Paul.

2. Commendation for the Church at Rome 1:8,9

1:8 First, I thank^{present} my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken^{a-present passive} of throughout the whole world.^{bc}

8a The Tyndale, Geneva and Bishops Bibles all use "published".

8b "**spoken throughout the whole world...**" Not literally, of course, since no one in South America had any idea about the church in Rome during this time, but at through the Roman world, or at least through the new, civilized world. The Roman church had a good reputation among the other local churches in the empire. Unfortunately, our modern churches are so weak, spiritually, that our faith is usually not even spoken of across town.

8c Verses 8-12 give us an important lesson on prayer, (with Paul as our example). There at least eight things we learn about prayer from these verses (an undeveloped sermon outline):

1. Prayer Should Include Thanksgiving (Romans 1:8)
 - A. Praise and thanksgiving are vital parts of prayer.
 - i. Philippians 4:6 "**Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.**"
2. Prayer Must Be "Through Jesus Christ" (Romans 1:8)
 - A. Made in the name of Jesus, certainly not in the name of Mary or any "saint".
3. Prayer Should Be Constant (Romans 1:9)
 - A. Pray without ceasing.
 - i. 1 Thessalonians 5:17 "**Pray without ceasing.**"
4. Prayer Should Be Sincere (Romans 1:9)
 - A. Love should be without dissimulation (Romans 12:9). Prayer should be as well.
5. Prayer Should Involve Intercession (Romans 1:9)
 - A. Specific requests on behalf of others. We should not just be praying for ourselves and our needs, but for the needs of others, for sick brethren, backsliders, those with problems, other preachers and churches, evangelists and missionaries, the lost, our country and those in political power, etc.
 - i. 1 Timothy 2:1,2 "**I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.**"
6. Prayer Should Be Specific (Romans 1:10)
 - A. Unfocused, scatter-shot praying accomplishes little. Be as specific as you can with names and needs.
7. Prayer Should Be Submissive (Romans 1:10)

A. Don't be like the charismatic television "preacher" who demands things from God in his spirit of spiritual arrogance. Remember Who it is you are petitioning- the Great High Sovereign of All Creation. Fear Him as you pray.

8. Prayer Should Be Rightly Motivated (Romans 1:11,12)

A. The goal of prayer should always be the glory of God primarily, the good of others and then lastly, the fulfillment of our needs.

1:9 For God is^{present} my witness,^a whom I serve^{present} with my spirit^b in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing^c I make^{present middle} mention of you always in my prayers;^{defg}

9a **"God is my witness"** Paul calls upon God to certify the veracity of his heart and statement to the Romans. This is about as close to an oath as a Christian should get.

9b **"serve with my Spirit"** There is no other way to serve God as He cannot be served in the flesh, although we use our bodies to serve Him on earth. We use the physical body but our service to God is ultimately based on our spirit and our relationship with God more than our horizontal, physical activity. More can be accomplished with spiritual service than mere physical ministry.

This language stands in contrast to his days as a Pharisee. The Pharisees were very much concerned with outward religious deeds and observances while not being inwardly right with God (Matthew 23:27 **Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.**).

9c **"without ceasing..."** Or repeatedly, continually. We cannot pray 24 hours a day constantly as that would involve in other needed duties, as well as sleep, but we should always maintain a spirit of prayer and communion with God, so that we could offer up a prayer at any time, and at a moment's notice.

9d **"always in my prayers"** Every recorded prayer of Paul's is for others and for spiritual needs not physical, with one exception. When he prayed for himself regarding his body (2 Corinthians 12:7-9 **"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."**), the Lord answered, "No."

9e **"without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers"** Do we pray continually for those things and people that we are burdened for? Short, "one-shot" prayers, as a child knocking on a door and then running away (a game they often play) accomplishes nothing in terms of prayer. If we had a genuine burden for something or someone, we would give the throne of grace no rest until we received the answer.

9f "This man, Paul, did a great deal by prayer. I remember a minister, who is now with the Lord, who was thanked by his people for his wonderful sermons; but he said to them, "You never

thanked me for my prayers, yet they were the best part of my service for you." When men of God are mighty in prayer, we owe much to them."⁴¹

9g "No wonder that they prospered so well when Paul always made mention of them in his prayers. Some churches would prosper better if some of you remembered them more in prayer. Of course, you all pray for the church of which you are members; could you not set aside in your heart a little space for some poor church that is dwindling down to nothing? Could you not pray it up again? Who knows what blessing would come upon pastor and people if you bore them on your hearts?."⁴²

3. Paul's Desire to Come To Rome 1:10-13

1:10 Making request,^{present middle participle} **if by any means now at length I might have**
a prosperous journey^{future passive} **by the will of God to come**^{aorist infinitive} **unto you.**^{ab}

10a Paul's travel plans are detailed in Romans 15:28, all, of course, based on the will of God. Paul could plan until he was blue in the face but if God did not bless it or allow it, it would all come to naught. We all need to learn this very difficult lesson, that we should always write our plans in our date book in pencil. See also Romans 1:13.

10b "Paul wanted to go to Rome; but I do not suppose that he ever thought that he would go there at the expense of the government, with an imperial guard to take care of him all the way. We pray, and God gives us the answer to our petitions; but often in a way of which we should never have dreamed. Paul goes to Rome as a prisoner for Christ's sake. Now suppose Paul had gone to Rome in any other capacity, he could not have seen Caesar, he could not have obtained admission into Caesar's house. The prison of the Palatine was just under the vast palace of the Caesars; and everybody in the house could come into the guard-room. And have a talk with Paul if they were minded so to do. I suppose that, whatever I might be willing to pay, I could not have preached in the palace of the Queen, even in this nominally Christian country; but Paul was installed as a royal chaplain over Caesar's household in the guard-room of the Palatine prison. How wonderfully God works to accomplish his divine purposes!"⁴³

1:11 For I long^{a- present} **to see**^{aorist infinitive} **you,**^b **that I may impart**^{aorist subjunctive} **unto you**
some spiritual gift,^c **to the end ye may be established;**^{de-aorist passive infinitive}

11a Strong's #1971 *epipotheō*; from *potheo* (to yearn); to dote upon, intensely crave possession, a desire that does not easily brook delay, from *epi* (Strong's #1909) an intensive, and *potheō*, to yearn, meaning then "to yearn intensely".

11b Paul had a constant and burning desire to visit Rome. He wished to go to Rome to impart some spiritual gift unto them that they may be established. This would be a grave insult if Peter had been reigning as pope as this time (according to Roman legend). If Peter was Pope, why did Paul want to go and do for the Romans what Peter was supposed to do? Or was Peter not doing a very good job as Pope? Certainly, Paul didn't think that he was spiritually superior than the "first vicar of Christ, the Bishop of Rome!" Peter had no business in Rome anyway as he

41 Charles Spurgeon.

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid.

was the apostle to the circumcision (Galatians 2:7,9 **“But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter... And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.”**) while Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles.

Ultimately, it is the Holy Spirit, and not an apostle or any other man, who imparts spiritual gifts upon Christians. But Paul wanted to come and leave something spiritual behind, a gift that was spiritual (as opposed to a “spiritual gift” bestowed by the Holy Spirit), to leave some spiritual token behind.

11c **“spiritual gift”** I do not think Paul necessarily had the spiritual gifts of 1 Corinthians 12 in mind. If he did, he would have probably used the phrase in the plural. He did want to do some good to this church and leave something behind, spiritually, that would be a blessing to these believers. Paul does not specify what this gift might be, as he may not have even known what the Lord would do through him and his ministry to the Roman believers.

11d **“to the end ye may be established”** The establishment Paul speaks of is the desire to help bring the Roman Christians to spiritual maturity and to ground them in proper Christian doctrine and practice. This is the desire of every preacher (especially pastors)- at least it should be, and it should be the goal of every ministry. If a preacher is trying to do anything else with his people than to bring them to perfection and maturity, then he is an unfaithful minister and is probably a false teacher. Paul could bestow no material or economic gift to the saints at Rome for he was a poor man. His gifts would be spiritual, apostolic and eternal. Paul was not planning to bring any new doctrine to Rome, but to establish them in the old truths.

This is the burden of the pastor, to establish his people and to ensure that all of his people are truly on their way to heaven. The pastor’s office is not evangelistic. He does that as a Christian. His preaching and teaching is to be geared toward the saints.

You have to wonder that if Peter was in Rome (as tradition says he was, from A.D. 42-67 as the first “bishop of Rome”), then why did Paul feel the need to go to Rome and preach to them and to establish them? What was Peter doing in Rome all this time? Playing mah-jongg? The strongest argument against Peter ever being in Rome was the fact that Paul felt he had to go there to establish the church.

These observations prove that Peter was never in Rome. If Peter had been in Rome, Paul would not have gone because Paul said he did not want to build on another man’s foundation and that he wanted to go where Christ had not been preached in Romans 15:20 **Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation.**

11e AV

ESV

LSV

11 For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;

11 For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you—

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

“established” The Tyndale, Coverdale, Geneva Bibles and the ESV and LSV use “strengthened” for **“established”**.

1:12 That^a is, ^{present} that I may be comforted together^{b-aorist passive infinitive} with you^{cd} by the mutual faith both of you and me.^e

12a Emphatic.

12b AV

ESV

LSV

12 That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

12 that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine.

12 that is, to be mutually encouraged, *while* among you, by each other's faith, both yours and mine.

The pre-Authorized Version Bibles all use "consolation" or "comforted" while the ESV and LSV use "mutually encouraged", which is weaker.

12c Paul needs spiritual comfort and encouragement just as much- if not more so- than the Romans and those Christians who were not apostles or in positions of spiritual leadership. That is because of all the pressures and discouragements that are all part of the ministry. They can and do take a heavy toll on the preacher, so he needs God's people to help him as well. This comfort should be a two-way street, with preacher and congregation encouraging each other. The preacher often does this through his pulpit and teaching ministry while the congregation can comfort their preacher by attending his services, listening attentively to his messages, verbally encouraging him and praying for him.

12d "Paul wanted his faith to establish theirs, and their faith to establish his. Christians grow rich by and exchange of spiritual commodities; and I am afraid some Christians are very poor because they do not engage in the spiritual bartering with one another. You know how it was in the old time, "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another." Shall I tell you how it is now? They that fear not the Lord speak often one against another. That is a very sad difference. Oh, for more Christian communion; for when we blend our "mutual faith, we are "comforted together"; each believer grows stronger as he cheers his brother in the Lord! (Charles Spurgeon)

12e "A Christian church is the most unusual place in the world. Not only because of the eternal and spiritual components but owing to the unique bond which exists between all those who are washed in the blood. Rich and poor sit side-by-side without regard for the division their temporal wealth would cause were they not brethren. The young and old sing together; the newlyweds and the senior couples work together; those battling the challenges of teen years and those wrestling with their midlife crisis pray together.

"Those once divided by race, social status, and diverse interests now sit at the same table and talk about their common interests and goals in life. This happens in a Bible-teaching church where all are motivated by a common interest in Jesus Christ. There is nothing like it!"⁴⁴

1:13 Now I would^{present} not have you ignorant,^{infinitive} brethren,^a that oftentimes I purposed^{aorist middle} to come^{aorist infinitive} unto you,^b (but was let^{c-aorist passive} hitherto,) that I might have^{aorist subjunctive} some fruit among you also,^d even as among other Gentiles.^e

13a God would not have His people to be an ignorant people. A dumbed-down Christianity is foreign to the spirit of the gospel. Many Christians take refuge in ignorance, thinking that they

⁴⁴ James Knox, *A Christ Honoring Commentary on the Book of Romans*, volume 1, page 57, Kindle edition).

can't be held accountable for what they don't know. Many sinners avoid church for this reason. But many saints think that holiness is only possible through ignorance. They take pride that they have no "book larnin". Many preachers encourage such a mentality in their preaching. They preach a "simple sermon for Sunday morning" since it doesn't require much effort or study on their part. Such a sermon makes no spiritual demands on them, either. So ignorant preachers preach simple sermons to ignorant saints, and everyone is happy, except for the occasional staving sheep who actually wants to be fed. We are not saved by scholarship but ignorance won't keep you out of hell.

1. **"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant"** (Romans 11:25).
2. **"I would not that ye should be ignorant"** (1 Corinthians 10:1).
3. **"I would not have you ignorant."** (1 Corinthians 12:1).
4. **"For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant."** (2 Corinthians 1:8).
5. **"I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren."** (1 Thessalonians 4:13).
6. **"But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing..."** (2 Peter 3:8).

13a Paul planned to go to Rome but was hindered at the time of this writing. No doubt some at Rome complained "If he wants to come, why hasn't he come yet?" Paul answers that question here.

13b **"Let"** is an old English word meaning "hindered", from the Anglo-Saxon word "lettan", to hinder or to make late. The Geneva Bible, Bishop's Bible and Authorized Version use it. Paul eventually got to Rome but he got there not in God's perfect will. I believe it was God's will for Paul to go to Rome but Paul rushed things and was warned several times in Acts not to go as he was planning on doing. Paul did anyway and made to Rome, but not in a limo but in the back end of a pickup truck. No doubt Satan was involved in this hindering of Paul to get to Rome but I think the Holy Spirit was also in it, but for naturally a different reason. Satan wouldn't want Paul in Rome to keep them from being helped and established. The Holy Spirit wanted Paul in Rome but only at the right time and in the right circumstance. The door was closed at this writing, which reminds us of a good maxim: "When God closes the door, don't try to climb in through the window". This also shows that Paul suffered from a common problem with ministers for which he had to constantly apologize. He said that he would do something or be somewhere at a certain time, but circumstances would change and he would be unable to keep his word. This happens all the time to busy men. Some churches were complaining that Paul was always promising to visit but he never did. Paul explains here why he had been unable to keep his promise to visit Rome, although he still fully intended to. In Romans 15:22. Paul does not imply a Satanic opposition or hindrance regarding his plans to visit Rome as he mentions regarding his intention to visit Thessalonica in 1 Thessalonians 2:18. The importance and labor of Paul's ministry is what kept him from visiting Rome earlier. Also see note under Romans 1:16.

13c **"That I might have some fruit among you..."** This is the minister's desire. It is not to build a huge church. It is not necessarily to see a lot of people saved. It is not to raise a lot of money. It is most certainly not to erect an ego-ministry to himself. Paul's primary desire was to be a blessing to the saints and be profitable to them. The fruit is not merely soulwinning (although it does include that) but also Christian maturity, as in the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22ff.

13d **"even as among other Gentiles"** Paul desired the same bearing of spiritual fruit among the Romans that he had seen in the other Gentile churches he had ministered to. That's a good hope, although towns and cities differ. A "successful" ministry in one town might not be

duplicated in another town just down the road. One size does not fit all, and some areas are more difficult to minister in than others.

4. Paul's Debt 1:14

1:14 I am^{present} debtor^{ab} both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians^{cd} both to the wise,^e and to the unwise^{fg^h}

14a AV

ESV

LSV

14 I am **debtor** both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.

14 I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish.

14 I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish.

"debtor" The ESV and LSV have "under obligation" is no improvement over the traditional text reading.

"A debt refers to an obligation. Paul understood that he was responsible to preach the gospel and to fulfill God's calling. He had been trusted with gifts and wisdom and strength and he was obligated to use those things for God. **A debt refers to accountability.** When you borrow money, you are responsible to pay it back and you are accountable to the one from whom you borrowed the money. That is the way it is with the ministry. God gives us gifts and wisdom and strength so that we can accomplish His will, and we will give account for it at the judgment seat of Christ. This was the teaching of Christ in the Parable of the Talents (Matt. 25:14-29)."⁴⁵

14b **"I am"** We see the first of Paul's three "I am's" in Romans 1:14-16:

1. I am debtor- Romans 1:14
2. I am ready- Romans 1:15
3. I am not ashamed- Romans 1:16

14c **"Greeks...Barbarians"** The cultured and uncultured. It is interesting that the Coverdale uses "ungreeks".

14d **"Barbarian"** is a foreigner, a non-Greek person. The Greeks counted all other nations barbarians, not only on account of their language, but their want of culture. A "barbarian" is like a stutter, a "ba-ba-ba-barbarian", one who couldn't speak correctly. Herodotus said the morals of the Barbarians were superior to those of the Greeks.

This would include the Gentiles. For an ex-Pharisee as Paul was, the thought of a Jew being a spiritual debtor to Gentile dogs who were uncultured and savage must have been a very difficult concept! Paul, in his Jewish pride, would have considered himself far superior to any Gentile, especially if that Gentile was considered a Barbarian. But now this proud Jew is a debtor to those he once despised.

Even in "conservative" and supposedly "Bible-believing" circles today, if a preacher or pastor can't speak (or read) Greek, he is considered a theological barbarian with an inferior knowledge of the Bible compared to the scholars in the Bible Colleges and seminaries. Oh yes, they do mock these "uneducated" preachers in the seminary classrooms! Being able to handle Greek (and Hebrew) is nice and is useful but the true key to understanding the Scriptures is prayer and looking to the Holy Spirit to teach us and to lead us into all truth. A knowledge of

⁴⁵(David Cloud, *The Book of Romans*, page 26.

Greek or Hebrew (or Latin or German) does **not** make a man a Bible student or teacher, but a proper heart and spiritual attitude do.

14e "**the wise**" The educated, at least those who think themselves wise. But as we all know, education does not equal wisdom.

14f "**the unwise**" The uneducated. These ones are usually the most open to the gospel because secular education and philosophy has not ruined them or blinded their minds to the truth.

14g In other words, everyone! Every man Paul met was a man whom Paul owed the chance to hear the Gospel. God made Paul a great apostle then made him a great debtor. The unsaved world was his creditor. This debt is naturally spiritual, not physical.

14h It is interesting that Paul does not say he is a debtor to the Jew here. As the apostle to the Gentiles, his obligation was to them first.

5. Paul the Ready 1:15-16

1:15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready^a to preach^b the gospel^{c-aorist middle infinitive} to you that are at Rome^d also.^e

15a "**I am ready**" "I think Paul might have used these words as his motto. We had once a Saxon king called Ethelred the Unready; here we have an apostle who might be called Paul the Ready. The Lord Jesus no sooner called to him out of heaven, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?' than he answered, 'Who art thou, Lord?' Almost directly after, his question was, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' He was no sooner converted, than he was ready for holy service; and 'straightway he preached Christ' in the synagogues at Damascus. All through his life, whatever happened to him, he was always ready. If he had to speak to crowds in the street, he had the fitting word; or if to the elite upon Mars hill, he was ready for the philosophers. If he talked to the Pharisees, he knew how to address them; and when he was brought before the Sanhedrim, and perceived the Pharisaic and Sadducean elements in it, he knew how to avail himself of their mutual jealousies to help his own escape. See him before Felix, before Festus, before Agrippa, he is always ready; and when he came to stand before Nero, God was with him, and delivered him out of the mouth of the lion. If you find him on board ship, he is ready to comfort men in the storm; and when he gets on shore, a shipwrecked prisoner, he is ready to gather sticks, to help to make the fires. At all points he is an all-round man, and an all-ready man; always ready to go wherever his Master sends him, and to do whatever his Lord appoints him. A Moravian was about to be sent by Zinzendorf to preach in Greenland. He had never heard of it before; but his leader called him, and said, 'Brother, will you go to Greenland?' He answered, 'Yes, sir.' 'When will you go?' 'When my boots come home from the cobbler;' and he did go as soon as his boots came home. He wanted nothing else but just that pair of boots, and he was ready to go. Paul, not even waiting for his boots to come home from the cobbler, says, 'I am ready.'⁴⁶

God is looking for ready people. He is not looking for skilled people or educated people or rich and powerful people to serve Him but ready and willing people. If you are ready, God has work for you and He will equip and prepare you for that work.

46 Charles Spurgeon, "Paul The Ready" *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, volume 38, sermon 2285.

15b "Preach,--what? A Christ that the Jewish nation had themselves officially rejected, a Christ who had been despised and crucified at their cries,-- by a Roman governor! To preach a Way that the Jews in Rome would tell Paul was "everywhere spoken against" (Acts 28:22)."⁴⁷

15c **"I am ready to preach the gospel"** Angels desire to look into the gospel but only men are permitted to preach it. The only time in Scripture you see angels preaching is in Revelation 14:6 (**"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,"**) where an angel preaches the Everlasting Gospel toward the end of the Tribulation period. This is because there is no human witness remaining (except a very, very small remnant) left to preach and witness in the final hours of the Tribulation, so God resorts to angels. But angels are poor preachers, since they understand nothing about sin and redemption. And Paul wanted to go to Rome as a preacher, not as a tourist. The "tourist sites" in Rome had no interest for Paul. The souls of men did. Nor was Paul intimidated about going to the most important city in the world, which was seat of the most powerful empire ever. He was intent to go and to do some spiritual good there. Let us follow Paul's example and be always ready to preach and to witnesses wherever and whenever God places us and whatever our current circumstances may be.

This "gospel" is clearly defined in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 (**"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:"**) and that is all there is in the dispensation. No tongues, no sacraments, no water baptism, no politics, no church membership, simply the death, burial and resurrection of Christ and their resulting spiritual benefits. If you are going to preach the gospel, you had better know where it is, what it is what it is not. The gospel is not healing or prosperity. It is defined by Calvinism, Arminianism, dispensationalism, Covenant Theology or any other flawed, uninspired theological system. It is what it is and it is very simple to understand. And no single denomination has any exclusive claim on the gospel. There is no Baptist gospel, no Methodist gospel, no charismatic gospel. Preach it as it is, in its simplicity, without filtering it through some human theological system.

Why would Paul want to preach the gospel to them who were at Rome? If they were already believers, why preach the gospel to them? Preaching involves much more than "Ye must be born again". Once saved, a believer must study what the gospel actually is and how to best preach it to others. Accepting the gospel also changes the life, so preaching the Christian life that flows from the gospel is a necessity.

15d **"I am ready to preach...at Rome"** If Peter was in Rome, reigning as the first pope, wasn't he preaching the gospel? If Peter was in Rome at this time (as the Roman Catholic Church insists that he was), then why did Paul feel that he had to go to Rome to preach? If Peter was there, reigning as the first pope, wasn't he preaching? Or did Paul believe Peter's preaching to be inferior or doctrinally incorrect that he had to go and correct Peter (which he did in Galatians 2:11-13)? The answer is clear- Peter never got within 500 miles of Rome, since he was the apostle to the circumcision and Rome was the center of Gentile world power in this day. The last time we see Peter, he is in Babylon, in the eastern part of the Empire (1 Peter 5:13 **"The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus**

⁴⁷ William Newell, *Romans Verse-by-Verse*.

my son.", which is NOT a cryptic reference to the city of Rome as the Roman Catholic church and other apologists for Rome try to make it to be).

AV	ESV	LSV
15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.	15 So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.	15 So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

"ready" The ESV and LSV has this as "eager".

15e Paul intended to go to Rome but he never assumed that Satan would have to foot the bill and provide the transportation! Paul probably wondered how and when he'd be able to make this trip and how it would be paid for, but as usual, God made the wrath of man to please Him and to serve His own purposes, even if he did go in chains and got there "soaking wet".

1:16^a For I am not ashamed^{bc-present middle} of the gospel of Christ:^d for it is^{present} the power^e of God unto salvation to every one^f that believes;^{present participle} to the Jew first,^g and also to the Greek.

16a "Many of the great piano concertos begin with a crashing chord and then state the theme which they are going to develop. The reason is that they were often performed at private gatherings in great houses. When the pianist first seated himself at the piano, there was still a buzz of conversation. He played the crashing chord to attract the attention of the company, and then, when attention was obtained, the theme was stated. Up to these two verses, Paul had been making contact with the people to whom he was writing; he has been attracting their attention. Now the introduction is over, and the theme is stated."⁴⁸

16b **"I am not ashamed"** Paul gloried in the gospel- Galatians 6:14 (**"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."**). No doubt some of Paul's enemies associated his seeming reluctance to visit Rome to the fact that he was afraid to go head-to-head with the philosophers and politicians in Rome. Paul feared that his gospel would be overwhelmed by the power and might of Rome, so he just chose to stay away. But Paul made it clear that he was not ashamed of his gospel and that it was due to circumstances beyond his control that he was unable to visit Rome (Romans 1:13). No one was able to intimidate him against the gospel, to apologize for it to shy away from it. The philosophers couldn't do it at Athens. Neither the Gentiles or Jews were able to do it at Corinth, Ephesus or Jerusalem. The Judaizers couldn't do it in the churches of Galatia. And Rome couldn't do it with all its grandeur, majesty and power, even while throwing Paul into one of their dungeons and eventually taking off his head. No doubt the high and mighty Roman philosophers may have tried to make Paul look like a fool in his preaching of this gospel, but their mockings and scorn had no effect on Paul or toward his attitude toward this gospel that he had received and preached. Many are ashamed of the gospel. It was too simple. It had not enough mystery about it. It had not enough of worldly wisdom about it, and so on...and excuse to oppose it and to try to excuse themselves from it.

Can the gospel truly hold its own against the political power and philosophies of Rome? Christians have no reason to ashamed of the gospel in the face of the political, military,

⁴⁸ William Barclay, *The Letter to the Romans*, page 18.

economic and philosophical powers of the age, even those of the mighty Roman Empire. The gospel is more than a match. We cannot be ashamed or embarrassed if we find ourselves dealing with a room full of unsaved Ph.D.s or witnessing in the corridors of power in Washington D.C. The gospel can take care of itself and take on all comers.

16c **“ashamed”** Unfortunately, all of us have been, at one time or another, when we failed to speak up to defend Christ or His Word when we knew it was under attack. The fact that we tend of play the coward far too often should make us ashamed of ourselves. We are afraid of ridicule or loss of a job or income or prestige, or we are simply lazy. Whatever the motivation, they all lead to the same condemnation- cowardice and shame of our Great God! May God help us to repent of such a great sin and may we plead for courage and spiritual manhood in this day to witness effectively and faithfully for Christ as Paul did. We don't see people ashamed of their political affiliations or letting you know what their favorite sports team may be, but how often are we ashamed of Christ!

Why be ashamed of a message that changed your life for the better, gave you a reason for living, gave you the truth about God and that gave you a sure hope for life after death?

16d **AV**

ESV

LSV

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ : for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.	16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.	for I am not ashamed of the good news of the Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation to everyone who is believing, both to Jew first, and to Greek.
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“of Christ” is missing in modern versions, including the ESV. Whose Gospel is it that Paul is ready to preach? All “gospels” are not alike. You have variations of the “true” gospel (mainly dispensational distinctions) as well as a thousand varieties of false “gospels”.

The LSV has “the Christ” and that is a New Age phrase. Why couldn't they just say “Christ?”

16e **“power”** Strong's #1411 dunamis, strength power, ability, inherent power, power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature, or which a person or thing exerts and puts forth. It is also translated “mighty works” (Matthew 11:20), “miracles” (Acts 2:22), “strength” (2 Corinthians 12:9), “might” (Ephesians 3:16), and “violence” (Hebrews 11:34). We get two related English words:

1. Dynamite- a destructive power. The gospel is powerful enough to break down sin, self and carnality in the life. As the old mountain preacher once said, “The gospel is powerful enough to blow the beer right out of your refrigerator!” The gospel is destructive in the sense that the sinner must be “broken down” before he can be “built up” by the grace of God in sanctification. The military does this with new recruits- it “destroys” the habits of the old life so that it may re-form the recruit into a soldier or sailor.

2. Dynamo- a constructive power, like a hydroelectric dam that generates electricity.

The Gospel is both! The Gospel can either build up a man in the faith or tear down a man if he should reject it. The same sun that melts the wax hardens the clay. The Gospel that saves the man who accepts it condemns the man who rejects it. It is through the preaching of this gospel that God uses as the active agent, or power, in conversion of sinners.

16f **“every one”** opposed Jewish exclusiveness (and Calvinism!). “That believeth” opposed Jewish legalism and works. Here, we see that the preacher traffics in immortal souls.

16g **"the Jew first"** The priority of the Jew in salvation as he receives the gospel offer first. The Gospel was preached to the Jew first (Acts 2-10) then to the Greek (Gentile) (Acts 10+). The Jew inherited a precedence not a preference. Their position toward the Gospel gives them a greater responsibility toward it. They received it first. With such a great privilege comes a corresponding great responsibility toward it.

"Now when it comes to this issue of Jewish missions, I will say this. I wouldn't say that you couldn't support missions until you've supported Jewish missions, but I will say that any of you Bible-believing pastors reading this commentary who want the Lord to bless your work had better take on some Jewish missionaries. I have done that and would recommend that to any pastor. Genesis 12:3 is still in the Book!"⁴⁹

I don't believe that this means that you must preach to Jews before you preach to Gentiles. Some men have taught that you should not witness to the Gentiles until you have first witnessed to Jews. Paul is simply telling us not to neglect missions to the Jews as we work in our outreach to unsaved Gentiles.

This also shows that Replacement Theology is a heresy. If God had abandoned the Jews after they rejected Christ and if God had transferred all of the kingdom promises and covenants to the Church (meaning that the Church is Israel now), then why preach to the Jews at all? Why make any distinction between Jew and Greek? Paul would just preach to everyone without distinction, since in God's eyes (supposedly), there were no longer any Jews. If God had abandoned the Jews, then could any Jew be saved? Paul was a saved Jew. No, although the Jews were under judgment for their rejection of Christ, they were not rejected. Israel was still Israel and the Church was still the Church and God would keep them separate, as seen in 1 Corinthians 10:32, **Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God.** Paul was a dispensationalist as he saw the importance of keeping Israel and the Church separate and in not mixing them.

6. The Revelation of the Wrath of God 1:17,18

Romans 1 is usually seen as being directed toward Gentile sin but these descriptions and condemnations can also be applied to the Jews as well. In their fall and apostasy, the Jews with all of their spiritual advantages fared no better than the Gentiles, who had none of them. The Gentiles were also fallen but the Jews had to fall from their position of being blessed among all nations and having entered into covenant with God. The Jew fell from a great height spiritually while the Gentiles started at the bottom and stayed there until the gospel went to them in the book of Acts.

1:17 For therein is the righteousness^a of God revealed^{present passive} from faith to faith:^b as it is written,^{c-perfect passive} The just shall live^{future middle} by faith.^{defg}

17a **"righteousness"** In the Greek classics there appears an eternal, divine, unwritten principle of right, dwelling in the human consciousness, shaping both the physical and the moral ordering of the world, and personified as Themis. This divine ordering requires that men should be shown or pointed to that which is according to it- a definite circle of duties and obligations which constitute right. It has a both religious and secular understanding. Each man stands in direct and primary relation to the holy God as He is by the law of His own nature. Righteousness is union with God in character.

⁴⁹ Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer's Commentary on Romans*, page 35.

17b **“from faith to faith”** Literally “out of faith into faith”. It would flow from God to man, His faith given to us, especially if we live **by the faith of the son of God** (Galatians 2:20). This phrase is only used here, which means we have no other scriptural uses to compare it with to get an interpretation and application. If we accept the truths that God reveals to us by faith, He will give us more revelation of truth by faith. The more we exercise faith in God, the stronger our faith becomes and the more we receive from God and the better we understand it. Whenever I hear a sermon or read something that contains a spiritual truth and get convicted about something in my life, God wants me to receive that truth by faith. If I do not, it is not reasonable to expect Him to show me anything else. Why should He give me any more light or truth if I have not responded to what He has already given me?

17c **“It is written”** This is the Greek perfect tense- it has been written and remains written, not to be changed or altered. It is a completed action with continuous results, or the continuance of an act completed in the past. The components are always a past action and continuous results. References to the Scriptures like this are often presented in the perfect tense. “The just shall live by faith” is one of those unalterable truths of Christianity. This perfect tense in reference to New Testament references to Old Testament texts is used 62 times in the New Testament, 16 times in Romans (1:17; 2:24; 3:4,10; 4:17; 8:36; 9:13,33; 10:15; 11:8,26; 12:19; 14:11; 15:3,9,21). This usage of the perfect is a strong argument for the verbal and plenary preservation of the Scripture, as the written Old Testament word stands forever and continues to.

17d **“the just shall live by faith”** A summary verse of New Testament salvation. It will liberate you from the tyranny of works-based “plans of salvation”.

The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith in verse 17. The just shall live by faith, which is quoted from Habakkuk 2:4 (also repeated in Galatians 3:11 and Hebrews 10:38) with one change:

1. Habakkuk: **“The just shall live by his faith”**.

2. Paul: **“The just shall live by faith”**.

Paul left out **“his”** and he did it deliberately and for a reason, and it has nothing to do with Paul quoting any sort of Septuagint or making any sort of a “free quote”. Paul knew exactly what he was doing here. The Old Testament saint had to live by his own faith. No faith was imparted to him. His faith depended upon his devotion to the Law of Moses, the sacrificial system and the Scriptures. He is walking by faith under the Law. The New Testament saint has faith imparted to him at salvation (Galatians 2:20 **“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”**). In Galatians 2:20, Paul says he lives by the faith of Christ, not by his faith **in** Christ. Christ imparted His faith to Paul to help him live the Christian life. It is so very important to notice these differences between the salvation positions between the Old Testament and New Testament saints, for they were not identical. The Law of Moses contained 613 precepts. David reduced them to 11 (Psalm 15). Isaiah reduced those to 6, Micah to 3. Isaiah then comes back and reduces it to 2. Habakkuk and Paul strain the Law down to one point: The just shall live by (his) faith. This is not “saved by faith” but “life by faith”. This is not a salvation verse but a Christian life verse. But we do notice the emphasis of “living by (your own) faith” in the Old Testament. Faith in the sacrifices and in the Law. Faith in the messages of the prophets and the ministry of the priests. God holds man responsible to the amount of revelation he has to work with. There was no new birth in the Old Testament but there were the types of the feasts and sacrifices as well as the prophecies of the Messiah. The Old Testament saint had to put his faith in these things to take

care of his sin problem. As a Jew was faithful to these revelations, his faith increased in proportion, hence he built up his own faith by his devotion and belief.

That there are differences between Old Testament salvation and New Testament salvation should be clearly seen in the fact that the Old Testament saint went to Abraham's Bosom at death (Luke 16:22 **"And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;"**) while the New Testament saint goes directly to heaven at death. How say ye then that both salvations are identical when the saints didn't even go to the same place at death!

We do not live or walk by sight, for our sight is limited and our eyes may deceive us. Walking by sight is walking by human understanding and experience, both of which are greatly limited and unreliable. But when we are walking by faith, we are walking by God's sight and experience, both of which are infinite, perfect, and totally reliable.

In this verse, Paul changed the inspired Hebrew original, as given by Habakkuk and retranslated that inspired original by omitting the pronoun "his", obviously with God's approval. God thought so highly of Habakkuk's "original" that He had Paul change it to make it line up with the progressive New Testament truth. In this case, Paul's inspired translation of Habakkuk was superior than Habakkuk's inspired "original"! This shows that a translation can be superior to the original at times and this is an important truth to consider when considering the Bible version issue.

AV	ESV	LSV
17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.	17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."	17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

"just" The ESV and LSV make an unnecessary change to "righteous".

17e The **righteousness of God** is revealed by faith, as the just shall live by faith and not by works. Man, who has no righteousness in himself, usually tries to either generate righteousness through good works, usually by keeping the Law or by being moral, or he tries to manifest his righteousness publicly by good works, usually religious. But man has no righteousness (Isaiah 64:6) except that which is imputed to him by Christ at salvation.

17f The word **"faith"** only occurs twice in the Old Testament:

1. Deuteronomy 32:20 **"And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith."**
2. Habakkuk 2:4 **"Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith."**

That is a surprising thing to realize as I'm sure that most Christians assumed that "faith" was used many more times than that! Faith in the Old Testament and under the law was not as important as it is in the New Testament, seeing that "faith" is used 229 times in the New Testament. Old Testament salvation did require faith and belief, but there was an element of works involved, with the Mosaic Law, the sacrifices, attendance at the three annual feasts, living by your faith, etc.

17g Three epistles in the New Testament quote Habakkuk 2:4, "The just shall live by his faith."
Romans 1:17 emphasizes *the just*;

Hebrews 10:38 emphasizes *shall live*;

Galatians 3:11 emphasizes *by faith*.

In Romans, the emphasis is upon the fact that man apart from the Law is justified before God. In Galatians, Paul is defending the gospel from those who would add law to justification by faith. Faith plus law was the thrust of Judaism; Faith plus nothing was the answer of Paul.

1:18^{ab} For the wrath of God^c is revealed^{d-present passive} from heaven against all ungodliness^e and unrighteousness^f of men,^g who hold^{h-present participle} the truth in unrighteousness;^f

18a The Coverdale Bible brings some of verse 17 into verse 18.

18b Verses 18-32 is a summary of human failure before God. This failure started in Genesis 3 and has accelerated and grown progressively worse until it will culminate under the Antichrist in the tribulation period.

18c **“wrath of God”** God does punish sin and He does get angry at sin, at unbelief (Mark 3:5) and at error (John 2 at the cleansing of the temple). We immediately have to reject any liberal/modernist notion of God that tries to paint Him as some smiling grandfather figure who supposedly loves everyone so much that He would overlook all their sins and never would so much as frown at anyone. Unfortunately, the wrath of God is seldom preached or presented in evangelism. People always want to hear about the love of God, but few want to deal with the idea that God gets angry. Men seem to have the idea that God has no right to get mad about anything. But He is angry at the Gentile world powers, for the Jews concerning their rejection of His Son, and with man for his sin and rebellion. As sure as there is a heaven, there must be a hell. The doctrines of hell and judgment must be preached more often, and the sinner must be confronted with these truths as we witness to him. It is not so much that “God loves you and He has a wonderful plan for your life” as it is “Your sins have separated you from your God and unless you repent and believe the gospel, God will judge you for your sins.” That might cut down on your results evangelistically, but you will give a more Biblical presentation of the gospel.

18d **“revealed”** The unsaved can see the wrath of God manifested against them, but they try their best to ignore it (by living in sin and pleasure to drive out any thoughts of future judgment and condemnation), explain it away (trying to employ philosophy or “science falsely so-called) or profess some type of bravery against it (usually by some form of atheism in boldly declaring there is no God). But all these defensive measures will prove vain in the day of the wrath of God and in the day of their judgment.

The righteousness of God is revealed in Romans 1:17, the wrath of God is revealed in Romans 1:18. When the revealed righteousness of God is rejected (as it is in the rest of this chapter), then God reveals His wrath against man.

18e **“ungodliness”** Strong’s #763 asebeia; impiety, wickedness, want of reverence toward God.

18f **“unrighteousness”** Strong’s #93 adikia; (legal) injustice; wrongfulness (of character, life or act), wrongdoing. Used in a Hebrew, not in a Greek sense, and extending to every neglect of duty towards our neighbor.

18g “We do not know all the reasons and must not pretend to know them, but we do know this, that at the time our Savior died, sin among mankind in general had reached a climax. There

never was a more debauched age. It is impossible to read the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and to understand its testimony, without feeling sick at the depravity it records. It is such a desperate and altogether truthful description of the infamous vices into which men had fallen in those days, that we feel that they must have gone, in fact, beyond all that we could suppose that the vilest imagination could have fabled! Indeed, so far as our modern time is concerned, the annals of crime are silent as to such atrocities. And for the most of us, it surpasses our belief that licentiousness should ever have grown so extravagant in committing willful violations of nature and indulging a propensity to revel in loathsome folly and unnecessary vice.

“Their own satirists said that there was no new vice that could be invented. Any person who has passed through Naples by Herculaneum and Pompeii, and seen the memorials of the state of society in which those cities existed, will almost rue the day in which he ever saw what he did—for there is no morgue that is so foul as was the common life of the Romans of that age. And, in all probability, the Romans were as good as any other nation then existing upon earth. Their very virtue was but painted vice! What little of virtue had existed among mankind before was gone. Socrates and Solon, so much vaunted everywhere, were in the habit of practicing vices which I dare not mention in any modest assembly. The very leaders of society would have done, openly, things which we should now be committed to prison for mentioning—which it is not lawful to think!

“Society was rotten through and through. It was a stench and offensive to the utmost by its corruption. But it was then, when man had got to his worst, that on the bloody tree Christ, Himself, was lifted up to be a standard of virtue—to be a bronze serpent for the cure of the multitudes of mankind who everywhere were dying of the serpent bites! Christ came at a time when the wisdom of man had got to a great height and, whenever it does get to a great height, man becomes an extraordinary fool! The various masters of philosophy were then going up and down the earth seeking to dazzle men with the brightness of their teaching. But their science was absurdity and their morals were a systematized immorality. Putting the whole of it together, whatever was true in what they taught, our most common Sunday school child understands. But the bulk of it was altogether foolishness, couched in paradoxical terms to make it look like wisdom.

“‘The world by wisdom knew not God.’ But, surely, man had a religion at that time! He had, but *man’s* religion—well, the less we say about the religion which existed when Christ came into the world the better. One of their own poets, speaking of the Egyptians, ridiculed them by saying, “O happy people, who grow your gods in your own kitchen garden!”—for they worshipped leeks and onions! These well-trained and tutored people embalmed the ibis and the cat, and made these objects of religious reverence. If you had stepped into the temple of Isis anywhere, you would soon have discovered emblems of the utmost obscenity. And the holy rites of the common religion of the period—the *holy* rites, I say—done in honor of God were acts of flagrant sin! The temples were abominable, and the priests were abominable beyond description. And where the best part of man, his very religion, had become so foul, what could we expect of his ordinary life?

“To give a boy a Lempriere’s Dictionary, as schoolmasters do, is, I believe, to debauch that boy’s mind, though the most of its execrable records concern the religion of the period of which I am now speaking. If such were the religion of the time, O God, what must its *irreligion* have been? But was there not a true religion in the world, somewhere? Yes, there was and it was in Judea. But those who inherited the canon of Divine Revelation, what manner of men were they? Not one bit better than the heathen, for they were gross hypocrites! Tradition had made void the Law of God. Ritualism had taken the place of spiritual worship.”⁵⁰

50 Charles Spurgeon, “The Sad Plight and the Sure Relief” in *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, volume 20, sermon 1184.

18h AV

ESV

LSV

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who **hold the truth** in unrighteousness;

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

“hold the truth” Most modern versions have “suppress” or “hold down”. The ESV and LSV do this but it is no real improvement. The pre-Authorized Version translations all have “withhold”. The general idea here is “possessing” or “holding fast”. I’ve heard a number of men (who were King James men) who “ran to the Greek” to try to define this “holding” as “suppressing”.

One of the possible definitions of κατέχω katéchō can include “to hold down” but most lexicons give several possible English words, so why just pick “to hold down”? This Greek word is used in 18 other verses and usually is not translated with the idea of “to hold down”.

Luke 8:15, “But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, **keep it**, and bring forth fruit with patience.” Would the Greek word mean “to suppress” here?

Luke 14:9 “And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame **to take** the lowest room.” Does this mean to “hold down” the lowest room?

John 5:4 “For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he **had**.” Or “that he suppressed?”

1 Corinthians 11:2 “Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and **keep** the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.” Would a Christian “suppress” the ordinances?

1 Corinthians 15:2 “By which also ye are saved, if ye **keep** in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.” Would “keep” here mean to suppress or to hold down?

1 Thessalonians 5:21 “Prove all things; **hold fast** that which is good.” Are we to hold down things that are good?

The word is used three times in Hebrews, in 3:6 (“But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we **hold fast** the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.”), 3:14 (“For we are made partakers of Christ, if we **hold** the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end;”) and 10:23 (“Let us **hold fast** the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;). In none of these cases can the word be translated as “hold down”

2 Thessalonians 2:6,7 might be a case to use “suppress”. “And now ye know what **withholdeth** that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now **letteth** will let, until he be taken out of the way.

The idea in our text is that the unrighteous do hold the truth. They may believe parts of it but will usually twist it, mis-apply it, re-translate it in modern English versions, and use it to their own advantage. Some will outright reject it but rejecting a truth is not suppressing it. They may suppress it through error and mistranslations in modern versions, and that application can be made. But the Mormons don’t “hold down” truth, they simple re-package what the Bible teaches. This is the same method used by all the cults and false teachers. But we must be careful in our word studies as it is somewhat of an inexact science to use lexicons edited by unbelievers or

unorthodox men. It is always best to maintain the traditional reading but then to make a cautious application of the possible translation.

What usually happens is that some pastor with little or no Greek training reads a "Greek scholar" or hears another preacher say "this word should be translated as "suppress" or "hold down" and immediately run with it. They may not have the tools or training to search the matter out. If you are unable to critique the "scholars" then you should be quoting them, or writing commentaries!

"The phrase "who hold the truth in unrighteousness" can't be found translated that way in any "Bible" translated after 1885. The translators held "the truth in unrighteousness." Whenever one of the translators of the new versions hits a verse which the Holy Spirit has aimed at him, he alters the verse. If you doubt that for a minute, look up verse 18 in several modern versions. Revised Standard Version: "who by their wickedness suppress the truth." New American Standard Version: "who suppress the truth in unrighteousness." New International Version: "who suppress the truth by their wickedness." New King James Version: "who suppress the truth in unrighteousness." New English Bible: "In their wickedness they are stifling the truth." Living Bible: "evil men who push away the truth from them." Phillip's Modern English: "who render truth dumb and impotent by their wickedness." Today's English Version: "whose evil ways prevent truth from being known." Surprisingly the Jerusalem Bible, a Roman Catholic Bible approved by the censors, gives a far more accurate rendering than any of these others, including the so-called "New" King James: "who keep the truth imprisoned in their wickedness."

"Having thus rendered the verse, the translators can say, "Well, we don't prevent truth or stifle truth or suppress truth. We are getting it out. God can't possibly be mad at us."

"But the idea was not that they "suppressed" or "stifled" the truth. The verse said "hold." The Bible revisers had the truth right in their dirty, unrighteous hands. Instead of judging their sins and repenting of them and confessing them and making an effort to put them away, as a real child of God should, they changed the verse to justify their sin. They reasoned that since they didn't "suppress" the truth that God's wrath would not be against them. See how it is done? You'll see it again down in verse 25."⁵¹

7. Condemnation of Gentile and Jewish Sin 1:19-32

1:19 Because that which may be known of God is^{present} manifest in them; for God hath shewed^{ao} it unto them.^{ab}

19a God has manifested Himself to all men, so they are without excuse and thus have no defense or excuse. No man can claim ignorance to the law of God. Every man, unless an idiot, knows there is a God and has a basic understanding of what sin is. The man will then be held responsible to what he does with that inward witness of his conscience. God manifests Himself even in the construction and operation of the human body. Man's own body is a constant witness to the glory of God. Even the invisible things of God are clearly seen by the witness of creation (see Psalm 19). If a man will simply open his eyes and take an honest look around or at himself that will answer his question "Is there a God?" The next question is "What is my relation to Him? Am I acceptable to Him as I am now?" Conscience will condemn him as being sinful and thus unacceptable to God. If a man will accept that, then God will lead him to more revelation as to what to do about the sin problem. Creation and conscience will not tell a man how to get saved for neither has been ordained to preach the Gospel. But they will get the man started on the right track to salvation.

⁵¹ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on Romans*, page 39.

19b "**God hath shewed it...**" Their problem was not ignorance, but rather a willful rejection of this divine witness. It is much the same way today, as men refuse to acknowledge what is clearly before their eyes in terms of divine design of creation and the evidence of the existence of God. Since God had showed these things clearly to all men, they are without excuse.

God showed the Jew these things through the law. He showed these things to the Gentiles through natural revelation (Psalm 19) and contacts they had with Israel. Israel was to be a missionary nation and were supposed to carry the truths of God to the Gentiles. The Jews largely failed because they fell into the same sins the Gentiles were already in. Gentile corruption and idolatry was too seductive to the Jew. But both Jew and Gentile had enough revelation and knowledge of God to know better, yet both went into idolatry and other sins. Neither the Jew nor the Gentile could claim any excuse.

1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen,^{ab-present passive} being understood^{present passive participle} by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead;^c so that they are^{infinitive} without excuse.^{de}

20a This is a paradox but how true. We cannot see God, yet it is evident He is there. Law, morality, truth, right and wrong are all "invisible" concepts yet all can understand them. Even the sinner can have some knowledge of these invisible things, at least enough to get saved.

In the two recorded addresses of Paul to Gentiles, he begins by appealing to creation.

1. Acts 14:15 "**And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:**"

2. Acts 17:24. "**God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;**"

20b "**clearly seen**" Strong's #2529 *kathoraô*; from *kata* (Strong's #2596) according to, also an intensifier; and *horaô* (Strong's #3708) to see; to look down, see from above, view from on high, to see thoroughly, perceive clearly, understand. Used only here in the New Testament.

20c This refers to the Trinity, also used in Acts 17:29, Colossians 2:9 and 1 John 5:7.

20d "**without excuse**" is the key phrase here. The Authorized Version and Geneva Bible present this differently. The Authorized Version states the fact that the Gentiles are "without excuse" as an absolute fact- they **are** without excuse in an absolute sense. The Geneva Bible presents it in a more subjunctive tense, that they **should be** without excuse, but they may not be necessarily without excuse right now. The Authorized Version rendering is more accurate.

20e Paul will lay out 6 indictments against the Gentile and Jewish apostasy due to their abandonment of God:

1. Inexcusable ignorance, Romans 1:20

A. They are without excuse as God has given them enough revelation so that they know better.

2. Ingratitude, Romans 1:21.

3. Insolence, Romans 1:22

A. Claiming they didn't need God, they became fools.

4. Idolatry, Romans 1:23. This is always the ultimate end of apostasy.
 - A. Reject the worship of God and you will worship things and beasts.
5. Immorality, Romans 1:24-27
 - A. Various forms of homosexuality.
 - B. William Barclay said that fourteen out of the first fifteen Roman emperors were homosexual (cited by Leon Morris under notes for Romans 1:27).
6. Incurability, Romans 1:28-32
 - A. You can't deal with them and they will not admit to any sin or wrongdoing.
 - B. Twenty-three different sins are listed.

AV	ESV	LSV
20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, <i>even</i> his eternal power and Godhead ; so that they are without excuse:	20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.	20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

The ESV and LSV translated "**Godhead**" as "divine nature".

Romans 1:21-24: People "*change*" the truth of God for idols -God "*hands them over*"

Romans 1:25-26a: People "*change*" the truth of God for a lie-God "*hands them over*,"

Romans 26b-31: People "*change*" natural sexual practices for the unnatural -God "*hands them over*"

1:21^a Because that, when they knew^{aorist participle} God, they glorified^{aorist} him not as God,^b neither were thankful;^{c-aorist} but became vain^{d-aorist passive} in their imaginations,^e and their foolish heart^{fgh} was darkened.^{i-aorist passive}

21a Paul now sets out to prove that the entire world is sinful and guilty before God, that there is none righteous and that all men need a savior, regardless of nationality. Paul deals with the Gentiles in Romans 1 and the Jews in Romans 2. By the time we get to Romans 3, we are in pretty bad shape! Paul's arguments for universal depravity are so masterful and skillful that even secular lawyers studying law will consider Paul's arguments, not for their theological merits but for his use of logic to argue his case. Remember the background of Paul's writing of this passage. If he wrote Romans from Corinth, which he probably did, he was eyewitnesses to the worst debauchery and vileness available to human eyes in the Roman Empire in that day. No doubt the low morality of Corinth influenced the severity in which he condemned Gentile sin.

Paul lists the sins of the Gentiles. They knew God but glorified Him not as God in willful rejection. They had their own gods, created by their own fertile imaginations, and had no real need for the true God, the God of Israel. They were unthankful to God, giving their thanks for life and health to their false deities instead. They became vain in their imaginations. They never thought a profitable spiritual thought. Idolatry does not stimulate the intellect but rather dulls it. Their foolish heart was darkened because they rejected the Light of the World. Israel had the light which they were supposed to shine unto the Gentiles. It is true that Israel was less that faithful in their discharge of their duties as witness to the Gentiles, but the Gentiles are also to

be blamed. When Israel was faithful, they rejected the witness as a whole. Only a remnant of Gentiles responded, like Rahab, Ruth and Uriah.

This is true evolution, from verses 21-23, but not as it is presented by the Church of Darwin and his disciples. They imagine that over time, man is getting better and better and is moving upward in all areas, even in direct violation of the various laws of thermodynamics. But Paul knew better. Man's "evolution" is really devolution, a downward spiral and not an upward progress. Man started out innocent in the Garden and since the Fall, has been plunging deeper into sins and depravity. Following is the result of what millennia of sin and rebellion has wrought in man. There is nothing for man to brag about here and even the most ardent secular humanist or devotee of Darwinian evolution would have a hard time promoting the human condition as Paul describes it as being a good thing or something to take pride in. Left to himself, man will always fall and it is impossible for him to advance or progress without the Gospel and the Holy Spirit.

21b Men are not judged according to the knowledge they did not have, but according to the knowledge they did have and what they did with it. There is no "doctrine of reprobation". If a man is lost, it is because of his own choice to reject truth, not because of any sort of divine "negative" election. Man is a responsible creature.

"People are funny; they're weird. You're considered normal if you paint your body the colors of your favorite football team and wear a big cheese wedge on your head and sit on cement benches in twenty-degree weather at the "big game." But if you show up in church every time the door opens or get out on a street corner and yell above the traffic about Jesus Christ, the Bible, and Hell; then you're considered a fanatic."⁵²

AV	ESV	LSV
21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.	21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.	21 For even though they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish heart was darkened.

"**glorified**" The ESV has "honored". "The corrupt "Bibles" sometimes Say "honored" instead of "glorified." The apostate reviser figured if he was "honoring" God; that he could make the verse refer to someone who was not living as he was living. The problem, though, had nothing to do with "honoring" God; it was not glorifying God You can honor God without glorifying Him (Isa 29:13)."⁵³

21c The two sins for the Gentiles that God judged them for:

1. Failure to glorify God
2. Failure to thank God

Ingratitude has to be one of the worst sins, to not acknowledge or return thanks for things done for you, especially when they were done on the basis of grace. God was under absolutely no obligation to do anything for any sinner except to cast him into hell. Yet God did everything necessary, including allowing His only Son to die the horrific death on the cross to make it possible for all men to be saved. A man hears that and then dumps it, being unwilling to acknowledge it or to render even a simple "thank you" to God for that. Man is an ungrateful brat!

52 Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer's Commentary on Romans*, page 47.

53 Peter Ruckman, *Ruckman Reference Bible*, page 1485.

21d **“became vain”** Strong’s #3154 mataioô; become vain. Used only here in the New Testament.

21e “This hath chief respect to the conception and opinions that the heathen framed to themselves of the Divine Being. For though some denied there was a God, and others doubted thereof, yet generally it was acknowledged by them; yea, some owned a multiplicity of gods, and those either corporeal or incorporeal. Others acknowledged but one God, as Plato, Aristotle, &c.; but then they either denied his providence, as the Peripatetics, or tied him to second or inferior causes, as the Stoics. This is the vanity which the apostle here speaketh of (Matthew Poole).”

“There are over 40 Biblical references to man’s imagination, and all of them are negative. It is not a sin to have an active mind nor to be creative; but since man has fallen, his every thought must be compared to the word of God, and those not in accord with the Maker’s will are to be captured and subdued.

“In 2 Corinthians 10:5 the Bible says, Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. A man can use a vivid imagination to write devotional books, prepare sermons, put together Sunday school material for children, or write songs or music for the Lord. Alternatively, he can take that same imagination and create filth, wickedness, and devilish things. Let us arrest all improper thoughts and sanctify the ones that are holy.”⁵⁴

The human intellect is as untrustworthy as the human heart. In every age those who have relied most on their own understandings have sunk deepest into folly. This is a reason why Paul warns so strongly against philosophy in Colossians 2:8 **“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”**

21f **“foolish heart”** The heart if every unsaved man is foolish because it is separated from the truth of God and does not have the ability in and of itself to understand such truths. No matter the IQ of the person or how many earned degrees he may have, he is a fool if he is apart from God. He had rejected God and has practiced some form of atheism (Psalm 14:1; 53:1). How many different forms does this sin take! The Bible rejecter, the man who refuses the free offer of salvation, the unsaved scientist and philosopher, the hedonist, the idolater, the religious man, the moral man- all apart from the truth of God are fools who suffer from a darkened heart!

21g **“foolish heart was darkened”** When they rejected God, He literally turned off the lights of their intellect. Rejection of God ‘no light and no understanding. Now they grope around in the darkness of human wisdom that has been divorced from divine revelation, and what a great darkness that is. God will only darken (or turn off the lights of revelation and illumination) a foolish heart that has rejected God and set itself against God. God will not do this to a good heart.

This verb is in the passive and the Authorized Version correctly renders it, but the Geneva Bible translates it more as an active voice, as the heart being “full of darkness”.

Deuteronomy 28:29 shows a result of a darkened heart, **“And thou shalt grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee.”**

21h **“heart”** The mind, emotions, intellect, seat of personality, the soul of man. The heart of man is really what he is.

54 James Knox, *A Christ Honoring Commentary on the Book of Romans*, volume 1, page 105, Kindle edition).

21i God turned the lights off in the mind and took away their ability to properly reason.

1. They became irreligious. It is not that they don't believe in God anymore, but they also became actively opposed to Him
2. They became irrational. Sin corrupts the thought process so that the sinner cannot think straight or reason well.

1:22 Professing^{present participle} **themselves to be**^{infinitive} **wise,**^a **they became fools,**^{bc-aorist}
passive

22a **“wise”** To be cultured, skilled, educated, learned in letters. They may very well be, in a human sense, but as Bob Jones Sr. used to say “Education without salvation is damnation”. Often, the more education a sinner has, the less likely he is to be saved and the greater fool he is likely to become. For examples of this, visit your nearest secular university. I saw this first hand during the years I preached on the street at the University of Delaware in the mid-to-late 1980s. Nowhere is there such a collection of “wise fools” than at an “institution of higher learning”. And the younger they are (freshmen especially), the worse it is.

This is also the case with most college professors, especially those in some Christian colleges and universities. Most of the apostasy in churches starts in the classrooms and is taught to the ministerial students who then take it into the churches they pastor. That apostasy is then preached to the congregation and the process is then complete. Most church members don't have the background or education to withstand the error they hear from the pulpit, so most of them will simply go along with what they are being taught. This is where the attacks on the Authorized Version and its associated Greek texts and kindred translations originate. It does not start with the laborer or the truck driver or the housewife on the church bench, but from the “professor” with a doctorate in some college classroom attacking the Authorized Version in their “scholarship” and apostasy, and that will get passed on to their students. In an attempt to appear scholarly and to avoid any criticism, the young preachers will swallow what they were taught without any critical examination. They will think “my teachers were all godly men who know more than I do, so who am I to oppose them or to disagree with them?” But what they need to realize is that **“great men are not always wise”** (Job 32:9) and there is an organized apostasy in most “Christian” schools. Education, scholarship, and “godliness” can all be sanctified, and acceptable, forms of idolatry that has its origins in intellectual pride. The teachers that I always respected the most in my Bible college and seminary days were those men who were humble, and who were not afraid to admit that might be wrong about something or that they made a mistake. They did not sit in judgment on the Scriptures. Many men who have an earned doctorate imagine themselves to be smart enough to sit in judgment on Moses, David and Paul. Those with honorary doctorates (“synthetic sheepskins”) are usually even worse! The cure for this mess is in 2 Corinthians 10:5 **“Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ”**.

22b **“fools”** This is the Greek word *moraino*, from where we get our word “moron”. Wise fools! Foolish wise men! They are self-made morons who imagined themselves so enlightened. Oh, they waste no opportunity to tell you how smart they are and how foolish you (the Christian) is! They have degrees by the yard, hold to the doctrines preached by the Church of Darwin, are practicing atheists and they declare themselves so intelligent. Yet they don't where they came from, why they are here or where they are going when they die! They mock the Christian who has all these answers, while foolishly comforting themselves on how intelligent they are! Such madness! Yet it passes for education and culture in worldly circles. The sinners are foolish

because they really dwelt in spiritual darkness. This verse is an oxymoron- wise men who are so educated that they educated themselves straight into foolishness since their "education" was divorced from the wisdom of God and from the Bible. Ignorant men are usually the first, and loudest, to boast of their own wisdom, while truly educated men keep silence and refrain of speaking of their own glory.

22c How foolish did these men become in their sin and apostasy? See Isaiah's sarcastic description of idolatry in Isaiah 44:9-20, **"They that make a graven image are all of them vanity; and their delectable things shall not profit; and they are their own witnesses; they see not, nor know; that they may be ashamed. Who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image that is profitable for nothing? Behold, all his fellows shall be ashamed: and the workmen, they are of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; yet they shall fear, and they shall be ashamed together. The smith with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms: yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth: he drinketh no water, and is faint. The carpenter stretcheth out his rule; he marketh it out with a line; he fitteth it with planes, and he marketh it out with the compass, and maketh it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man; that it may remain in the house. He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest: he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it. Then shall it be for a man to burn: for he will take thereof, and warm himself; yea, he kindleth it, and baketh bread; yea, he maketh a god, and worshippeth it; he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto. He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire: And the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me; for thou art my god. They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand. And none considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten it: and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree? He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?"** How cutting is this divine judgment of idolatry! Yet the Jew fell into this sin and wallowed in it until cured of it by the Babylonian captivity. Yet these fools consider themselves to be so much wiser and more intelligent than Bible-believing people.

1:23^a And changed^{b-aorist} the glory of the incorruptible God^c into an image^d made like to corruptible man,^e and to birds,^f and fourfooted beasts,^g and creeping things.^{hijkl}

23a Men want to worship something they can see. They need a "tangible" religion since visible gods are easier to control and manipulate than invisible ones. Since God is invisible, they reject Him and they turn to that which is visible: animals and themselves. It is interesting Paul does not include the worship of stellar objects in his discussion, such as sun-worship, moon-worship or astrology. They corrupted the glory of the incorruptible God by making idols out of insects, birds and beasts. The Greeks worshiped man. The greater the resemblance to man, the greater the error, which means humanism is the most hellish doctrine of all. It is self-worship carried to the extreme. The more cultured the society, the grosser the error. The Assyrians worshiped birds. The Egyptians worshiped beasts (Psalm 106:20 **"Thus they changed their glory into the**

similitude of an ox that eateth grass."- Jews did it too! Exodus 32:4 **"And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."**)

He who makes a god of nature makes a beast of himself. Pagans worshiped creeping things (snakes). "Creeping things" is the Greek word "herpeton", meaning a reptile, translated "serpent" in James 3:7. That could ultimately translate into Satan worship as one of his symbols is that of a serpent! Devil worship was all too common among these Gentiles.

23b AV	ESV	LSV
23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.	23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.	23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

"changed" This has the idea that they changed the truth for a lie, a bad for a good. It is not that they tried to worship both the Creator and the creature, but changed the worship of God for something else, which, in this case, was the worship of beasts and creeping things. The Authorized Version is the only traditional version that uses "changed" as the others use "turned". The ESV and LSV use "exchanged".

23c God is uncorruptible because He is not corrupted by sin. Sin corrupts, which is why man is in the trouble that he is in.

23d **"image"** This involves a clear violation of the Second Commandment in Exodus 20:4 reads. **"Thou shalt not make unto thee any carved (graven) image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth."** Of course, this meant nothing to them. Many were ignorant of such a commandment but even if they had known of it, such knowledge wouldn't have delayed them in the least.

23e **"corruptible man"** Compare the incorruptible glory of God to the corruptible "glory" of man. All the glory of man is nothing more than corruption! How that will irritate the humanists, who worship this corrupted being! And what has corrupted man? His sin, which he refuses to confess or to forsake.

23f Birds were worshipped in Egypt and greatly revered in Rome. Even the United States has the eagle as its national symbol.

23g He who makes a beast to be his god soon becomes a beast himself.

23h Note the descending scale of objects of Gentile worship: man-birds-four footed beasts-creeping things (snakes). The Greeks emphasized the human form in their gods while the Egyptians emphasized animal forms, including mixed human-animal gods. Serpent worship was common in Babylon and Egypt.

Paul cites Psalm 106:20 in this verse: **"Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass."** Worshiping a cow! Yet Hindus practically do this.

Their gods are beasts. Is it any wonder these worshippers are also beasts, in their actions, attitudes and lifestyles? You are what you worship, and you will pattern your life after the god you serve. Beasts worship beasts. Men fitted for heaven worship the God of glory.

23i The worship of serpents was also popular in many pagan cultures. It is the last step down in the spiritual decline of idolatry.

23j You can also add the idea of Muslims practically worshipping a black rock in Mecca and Catholics and the Orthodox in their veneration (just one step below worship at best) of the saints, images, statutes, “holy relics” and icons.

23k Also see Ezekiel 8:10,11 **“So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, pourtrayed upon the wall round about. And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up.”**

23l After forming their gods, men endowed them with human passions; pretending that they possessed extraordinary strength, beauty, or wisdom but never managing to attach to them the principles of morality. Fallen man invented gods with lewd appetites, disgraceful passions, deviant conduct, and unlimited powers of sensual gratification. In other words, the sinner manifests the desires of his wicked heart in the deities he invents. Look at the Greek, Roman and Hindu gods for examples of this.

1:24 Wherefore God also gave them up^{abc-aorist} to uncleanness^d through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor^{ef-present middle/passive infinitive} their own bodies between themselves: ^g

24a **"gave them up"** God gave them up and then gave them over to their own lusts. God gave them what they wanted. When a nation, or a church or an individual gives up on God, God gives up on them and turns them over to the most hideous and destructive enemy of them all: themselves.

“In the book of Jeremiah, the Lord said, “I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts” (Jer. 6:19). The worst judgment God can bring upon a man is to let him have his own way. The worst thing God can do to you is to allow you to do what you want to do.”⁵⁵

24b **"gave them up"** Homosexual and transgenderism activists and apologists mistakenly maintain that their homosexuality and transgenderism (sexual confusion) is something that they cannot control and something they cannot change. To a degree, they are right, but it is not due to genetics. Rather, God allowed them to degenerate into homosexuals as a judgment for their rejecting the truth and revelation of God. Since their sodomy is a result of this judgment (which they brought on themselves in the first place because of their sin), it is partially true that they can't help the way they are, but then again, they are personally and individually responsible for causing God to pronounce such a judgment upon them. Thus, these kinds of sexual perversions are sent as a judgment upon a condemned people.

24c **“God gave them up”** This is repeated in Romans 1:26 and 1:28, where Paul changed it slightly to **“God gave them over”**. Three times God gave these sinners either up or over to their own hearts. They wanted sin so God turned them over to it, in full measure. God gave them over to their own ways and they will drink that cup to the dregs and suffer the resulting hangover forever in the lake of fire as a result. The moral is be careful what you wish for or

⁵⁵ Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer's Commentary on Romans*, page 51.

desire, because God may just give it to you. And if He does, can you handle it? And what a terrible judgment this is, to be abandoned by God, with no hope of reconciliation, and the judgment that awaits as a result!

God **“gave them up”** three times. He “gave up” on their bodies (Romans 1:24), their souls (Romans 1:26) and their spirits (Romans 1:28). This is a total rejection of the total sinner.

24d **“uncleanness”** Strong’s #167 akatharsia; impurity, filth, impurity arising from indulged lusts. There is a sexual connotation to the word. This attitude toward sexual purity comes as a result of the rejection of God by the sinner and the resulting “giving up” of that sinner by God to his lusts and downward depravity.

24e **“dishonor”** Strong’s #818 atimazô, to dishonor, insult, treat with contempt. We see much dishonoring of the body today. Those with tattoos or body piercings dishonor their body. Those who have their bodies cremated at death dishonor their bodies. Those who dress in immodest apparel dishonor the body. And those who engage in fornication or sodomy greatly dishonor their bodies. These people commit sexual sins against their own bodies because in reality, they hate themselves and live a life of self-destruction. No one who loved their bodies would deliberately engage in any activity that would lead to its destruction. The same could be said for their attitude regarding their souls.

24f The other traditional translations use “defile”. The Authorized Version and the ESV use “dishonor.”

24g **“to dishonor their own bodies between themselves”** Homosexuality, a crime against nature which involves dishonoring the body and the natural, God-ordained sexual process and practice. The Geneva Bible is a bit stronger with “defile”. But we must not limit this to homosexuality. Any perverted sexual practices are also considered here. We have seen a literal explosion of sexual sins in our day, and it will only grow deeper and worse as we continue further into the age.

What the Bible says about sodomy/homosexuality:

1. It is an abomination
A. Leviticus.18:22 **“Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.”**
2. It bore the death penalty under the law
A. Leviticus 20:13 **“If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.”**
3. It defiles the land
A. Leviticus 18:25 **“And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.”**
4. It is the product of a reprobate mind
A. Romans 1:26-28 **“For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;”**
5. It is worthy of the judgment of eternal fire

A. Jude 7 “Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”

6. It is not an unpardonable sin and it can be forgiven

A. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

1:25 Who changed^{a-aorist} the truth of God into a lie,^b and worshipped^{c-aorist middle} and served^{de} the creature^f more than the Creator,^{g-aorist participle} who is^{present} blessed for ever. Amen.^h

25a "changed" They had the truth, didn't like it, and traded it for something they did like, could relate to, and, most importantly, could control and that was not threatening to them. The idea then is that they originally had the truth, didn't like it, so they traded it in for a truth that was better suited to them.

Changing the truth of God into a lie is what happens when Gentiles exchange the truth of God for a lie. The result is a religious mythology.

AV

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23 And **changed** the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.

23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

“**changed**” The ESV And LSV change to “exchanged”. Even the Darby translation reads as the Authorized Version. Classic versions may use “turned”. The corrupt “New” King James Version, which claims to be a simple revision of the Authorized Version, reads as the critical text versions in “exchanged”.

This changing of truth is also very apparent in modern English versions, which make as many as 36,000 changes from the truth of the preserved text of our King James Bible into the lie of the modern versions.

See notes under Romans 1:23.

NKJV Hides Devil's Tactics... Leaves You Vulnerable

<p>King James Bible Romans 1:25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator...</p>	<p>New King James Version Rom 1:25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator....</p>
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❶ The real King James Bible WARNS you that ungodly and unrighteous men **will KNOWINGLY** twist the truth **INTO** a lie.
In short, they are "perps" (perpetrators).

❷ The Devil is the ultimate perp since he changed God's truth into a lie by adding the word NOT in Gen 3:4: "Ye shall **not** surely die."

❸ The NKJV in turns the "perps" into near victims who simply **EXCHANGED** God's truth **FOR** a lie.


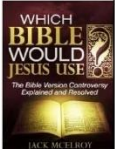
❹ Not surprisingly, the NKJV reads like the New American Standard Bible: "They **exchanged** the truth of God **for** a lie..." NASB Rom. 1:25

Proving once again that the NKJV is...
just another defective modern version.



Learn more, get the book: WHICH BIBLE WOULD JESUS USE? The Bible Version Controversy Explained and Resolved By Jack McElroy
www.JackMcElroy.com

Available from

25b They also think the truth of God is a lie and they have absolutely no respect for the Bible on any level.

25c "**worshipped**" Strong's #4573 sebazomai, to fear, be afraid, to honor religiously, to worship. It is used only here and is rarely used outside New Testament Greek. Paul is not using the "standard" word for worship, which is Strong's # 4352 proskuneō. Paul wants to keep a sharp distinction between the true worship of God and the false "worship" of idols so he uses two different Greek words for "worship".

25d "**worshipped and served**" These verbs are tied together, for you cannot worship something without serving it, and service is a form of worship.

25e "**served**" Strong's #3000 latreuō; from latris (a hired menial); to serve for hire, to serve, minister to, either to the gods or men and used alike of slaves and freemen, to render religious service or homage, to worship, to perform sacred services, to offer gifts, to worship God in the observance of the rites instituted for his worship, of priests, to officiate, to discharge the sacred office, translated "worship" in Acts 7:42, Philippians 3:3 and Hebrews 10:2. This sort of service is actually a form of worship. This is not to serve as a slave, but to serve out of love and devotion. Thus, Christians are not slaves but servants, as we serve out of love, not out of duty.

25f “There appear to me to have been four sources of idolatry: first, an ineffaceable consciousness of God; deified ancestors; the stars; and the principle of generation. These were interwoven, the last giving rise to corruption inconceivable, the consecration of degrading lusts. The gods, as popularly known, were deified passions, as Venus, Mars, etc., and the powers of nature. Behind all these was always the Unknown God.”⁵⁶

25g **"served the creature more than the Creator"** In so doing, they ended up worshiping and serving the creature more than the Creator. This is humanism at its end. For this, God gave them up to vile affections and did nothing to try to restrain them in their sin. If this is what they want, let them have it!

25h **"Who is blessed forever. Amen"** is a carryover from Paul's Pharisee days. This is a Jewish benediction. Whenever the Jewish teachers made mention of God, they supplement it with terms like "Holy One" or "the Blessed One". It was a custom which passed over from the synagogues into the Christian assemblies, that when he who had read or disclosed had offered up a solemn prayer to God, the others in the audience responded "amen" and thus made the substance of what was uttered their own.

1:26 For this cause God gave them up^{a-aorist} unto vile^b affections:^c for even their women^d did change^{aorist} the natural use into that which is against nature:^{ef}

26a **"God gave them up"** Repeated in Romans 1:24 and 1:28, where Paul changed it slightly to **"God gave them over"**. Three times God gave these sinners either up or over to their own hearts.

Strong's #3860 paradidômi; from para (Strong's #3844) of, with, and didômi (Strong's #1325) give; to give into the hands, to give over into (one's) power or use, to deliver to one something to keep, use, take care of, manage, to deliver up one to custody, to be judged, condemned, punished, scourged, tormented, put to death, to deliver up treacherously, by betrayal to cause one to be taken, to deliver one to be taught, molded, to commit, to commend, to deliver verbally, to deliver by narrating, to report, to permit allow, when the fruit will allow that is when its ripeness permits, gives itself up, presents itself

26b Strong's #819 atimia; dishonor, ignominy, disgrace. Something that is "vile" is disgusting, offensive, detestable.

26c **AV**

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26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections : for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:	26 For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature;	26 For this reason God gave them over to dishonorable passions; for their females exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural,
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"vile affections" The ESV and LSV get rid of the "vile" affections and replaces it with "dishonorable passions". The Tyndale, Coverdale and Bishops Bibles use "shameful lusts". The Geneva Bible shares the "vile affections" with the Authorized Version.

⁵⁶ John N. Darby, *Exposition of Romans*, Collected Works, volume 26, pages 116,117.

26d **"women"** Strong's #2338 *thêlus*, female. Not even the more polite word "women". Paul does not think much of these "females" in their sin (they certainly weren't "ladies"), so he uses the more "impolite" form. It would be like calling a whore a "female" instead of a "woman" or a "lady". These women have fallen from the high and lofty pedestal that God and the Bible have placed them on (as the Queen of the Home, the Glory and Crown to her husband and that dear title "mother"- see Proverbs 31) and have allowed themselves to be dragged down to the common level of men. Who can find a true woman, a lady, these days? Most of these unsaved women are drinking in bars, getting tattoos, swearing like sailors, are "working a career" instead of raising their children and running their homes and are participating in the same sexual debauchery as the men are. And then they imagine themselves to be so advanced and "liberated" while they are really in the deepest depths of Satanic slavery.

26e **"their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:"** Their women became lesbians and pagan temple-prostitutes. One sign of God's judgment on a nation is when the women abandon their modesty, chastity and submission and begin to "demand their rights", "strut their stuff" and abandon child-bearing. Feminism is from the pit of hell and is a symptom of spiritual cancer within a society. Not only that, but female homosexuality, or lesbianism, is also a result of divine judgment upon a nation that has rejected God.

26f **"against nature"** A clear statement that homosexuality (whether it be male or female) is against nature, which is one reason why God's people oppose it so strongly. God designed us physically for heterosexual relations, which is obvious. We also notice that God made a woman for Adam, not another man. Thus, there is no possible way sodomy can be justified, either Biblically or by natural law.

1:27 And likewise also the men,^a leaving^{b-aorist participle} the natural use of the woman,^c burned^{d-aorist passive} in their lust^d one toward another;^e men^a with men^a working^{f-present} that which is unseemly,^g and receiving^{present participle} in themselves that recompence^h of their error which was meet.^{ijk-imperfect}

27a **"men"** Strong's #730 *aesên*, male. Used in a similar sense as #2338 regarding the women. The Greek word for "homosexual" (Strong's #733 *arsenokoitês*) is derived from this.

27b The left the natural use of the woman, which means that at one time, they were "there", normal in their sexuality. But through their deepening of sin and their continuing rejection of God, they removed themselves from this "position" and departed unto sodomy. This shows that no one is born a homosexual. It is learned behavior, which often comes as a judgment from God to the sinner who has rejected His grace and mercy.

27c **"natural use of the woman"** This is given in a sexual sense, referring to the natural relations between a man and a woman.

27d **"lust"** Strong's # 3715 *orexis*; excitement of the mind, longing after, desire, craving, lust, appetite, used both in good and bad senses. Used only here in the New Testament. Notice the passive tense of the verb here, showing that something made them burn in their lusts toward each other and it was not caused by themselves. Rather, the sin was imposed on them by another, namely, in this context, the judgment of God for their abandonment of Him. In later classical Greek, it is the most general term for every kind of desire, as the appetite for food.

27e **"burned in their lust one toward another"** Men left that natural use of the women and became homosexuals. They burned in their lust toward each other. They could have no rest until they sinned against their own bodies. The devil is a cruel taskmaster for he will give you no rest until you have sinned to your daily quota! They worked that which was unseemly toward each other. They then received the just recompense of reward for their error, which includes sexually-transmitted disease and AIDS⁵⁷. Homosexuality is always the bottom rung of a nation before God judges it. Thus, "burned" is a very graphic, and correct, term to use, as they were being consumed by the very lusts that enslaved them.

27f Working as a fast-growing and aggressive cancer through their bodies, except this also worked through their soul and spirit as well.

27g **"unseemly"** Strong's #808 *aschêmosunê*; unseemliness, an unseemly deed, of a woman's genitals. of one's nakedness. There is nothing beyond their shame for they cannot blush. The depths of their depravity will only increase as we draw closer to the end of the age as they seek new depths of sin and experiment with all manner of filthiness. It may have a reference to pornography, which existed in this era despite cameras and full-color magazines not yet being invented. It is used only here and in Revelation 16:15 in the New Testament.

27h **"recompence"** Strong's #489 *antimisthia*; from a compound of *anti* (Strong's #473) against; and *misthos* (Strong's #3408) wages paid for work; a reward given in compensation, requital, recompense. It is used only here and in 2 Corinthians 6:13 in the New Testament.

27i **"their error which was meet"** Homosexuality was accepted in Roman society, even highly regarded (cited by Plato in *Symposium* and Plutarch in *Lycurgus*) even the Roman gods practiced it (for example, Zeus' attraction to Ganymede) as well as the emperors (Nero is a well-known case). Paul seems to draw a link between homosexuality and Gentile idolatry and religious practices. But Jewish and Christian communities always opposed homosexuality.

27j **"which was meet"** or which was due, suitable or fitting, which they deserved or had earned.

27k For all of this, sodomy is not an unpardonable sin. God can and has saved sodomites and has delivered them from their death-style. For an example of this, see 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (**"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."**). Paul says that some of the Corinthian believers were "effeminate...abusers of themselves with mankind." They *were* like that but are not now because they were washed from their sins and sanctified. Sodomites are saved the same way drunkards, liars, thieves and good "moral" and religious sinners are.

1:28 And even as they did not like^{aorist} to retain^{infinitive} God in their knowledge,^{abc} God gave them over^{d-aorist} to a reprobate^e mind,^f to do^{infinitive} those things which are not convenient;^{g-present participle}

⁵⁷ Originally called GRID- Gay Related Immune Disease but that was too politically incorrect.

28a AV

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28 And even as **they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge**, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

28 And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.

28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them over to an unfit mind, to do those things which are not proper,

“And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge...” The idea is that these sinners did not want any knowledge of God and whatever they knew of God they tried to discard. This is missed by the ESV and LSV using “acknowledge”.

28b “Wrong thinking results in:

- a) **Debased human character.** Men become unrighteous, wicked, covetous, malicious, envious and deceitful. They become full of malignity, God haters, spiteful, proud, without natural affection, implacable and unmerciful.
- b) **Debased human conduct.** Men become guilty of fornication and murder. They defy parental authority and treat contractual obligations with contempt.
- c) **Debased human conversation.** Men become quarrelsome, whisperers, backbiters and boasters.
- d) **Debased human concepts.** Men become inventors of evil things and God says they are without understanding.
- e) **Debased human companionships.** (John Phillips, *Exploring Romans*, page 33).”

28c These sinners wanted nothing to do with God. They shook their fist into heaven and cried "God, if you leave me alone, I'll leave you alone!" God agrees and leaves them alone, until they die. They then drop into the pit and God later remembers them and judges them at the Great White Throne.

But before this point, God gave them up to a reprobate mind to do those things that are not convenient. Just read again the account of homosexual practices under Romans 1:27 for an example of the fruit of a reprobate mind. Add to it drunkenness, lusts, drug use, murder, lying, stealing and a thousand other sins. "

Reprobate" is the Greek word (Strong's #96) *adokimos*, meaning "unapproved, rejected, worthless, castaway". It is translated "castaway" in 1 Corinthians 9:27 and "rejected" in Hebrews 6:8. How vivid a picture- these sinners are abandoned by God, cast away as worthless flotsam of His creation because of their rejection of Him. A reprobate mind is a rejected and a worthless mind.

28d **“God gave them over”** Repeated in Romans 1:24 and 1:26, where Paul changed it slightly to **“God gave them up”**. Three times God gave these sinners either up or over to their own hearts.

This does not mean that God won't save a Sodomite or a transgendered person. These are not the “unpardonable sins”. These people have gone very deep in their sin and it will be very usual for any of them to be saved but some have repented and became Christians. See 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 9 **Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.** In Corinth, God saved:

1. Unrighteous
2. Fornicators
3. Idolaters

A. Roman Catholics! I was a Roman Catholic when God saved me at age 13.

4. Adulterers
5. Effeminate

A. A good description of homosexuals and transgender men.

6. Abusers of themselves with mankind

A. Another description of homosexuals.

7. Thieves
8. Covetous
9. Drunkards
10. Revilers
11. Extortioners

The Corinthians were like this until God saved them. This is quite a list. It is no wonder that the Corinthian church was in such rough shape! But if God could save sexual perverts in Corinth, He could certainly save them in Rome, or anywhere else.

28e “**reprobate mind**” We have the hint that at one point, their minds were not reprobate until they crossed a certain line with God. They were not born that way but they were given such a mind in rep judgment as a result of their rejection of God. This weakens the Calvinist idea that the non-elect are all reprobates from the foundation of the world. Here, their minds did not become probate until a certain time in their life. Could they have been reprobate/non-elect without having a reprobate mind? Would they be reprobate without a reprobate mind? No, we have to reject the Calvinistic idea of “unconditional reprobation”.

The Tyndale, Coverdale and Bishop’s Bibles use “lewd mind”. The Geneva Bible uses “reprobate” as does the Authorized Version.

“**reprobate**” Strong’s #96 *adokimos*; from a (Strong’s #1) (as a negative particle) and *dokimos* (Strong’s #1384) approved; not standing the test, not approved, used of metals and coins, that which does not prove itself such as it ought, unfit for, unproved, spurious, reprobate. “The word appears four times in the Authorized Version in the singular and three times in the plural. It is from the Latin *reprobates*, from *reprobare*, ‘to reject’. This was a compound verb based on *probare*, ‘to test’. To be *reprobate* is to fail a test, to be rejected, condemned or unapproved. In the Bible, a reprobate is someone or something that is unapproved and therefore rejected. The word later came to be applied to anyone who was depraved, worthless or otherwise worthy of condemnation.”⁵⁸

The word “reprobate” is to “re” “probate”—to put on probation again. A reprobate mind is a mind that has been tested by God and has failed that test, multiple times. The word “reprobate” does not mean “lost with no chance of salvation” or “elected to hell”. It means “something that is worthless or rejected, something that has failed the test. People guilty of these sins can be saved as none of them are the “unpardonable” sin. But these sinners have sunk so far down in their sin that saving them will be extremely difficult.

Reprobate is used the following ways in Scripture:

1. Jeremiah 6:30 **Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the LORD hath rejected them.**

A. Something reprobate is something that God has rejected.

2. Romans 1:28 **And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;**

⁵⁸ Laurence Vance, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*, page 288.

A. God gives sinners over to a reprobate mind as He has rejected them after they have "failed the test" numerous times.

3. 2 Corinthians 13:5-7 **Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates. Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates.**

4. 2 Timothy 3:8 **Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.**

A. Sinners can be reprobate concerning truth.

5. Titus 1:16 **They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.**

A. Sinners can be reprobate to every good work.

28f They reprobated God, God reprobated them. God treated them the same way they treated God. This reminds us of Hosea 4:17 ("**Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone.**"). Ephraim was joined to his idols after many rebukes and dealing by God. After a period, God stopped dealing with Ephraim and left him to his idols, but even then, there was a hope of an eventual repentance and restoration of Ephraim in Hosea 14:8 "**Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found.**"

28g "**not convenient**" They commit sins that are not right, not profitable, not good. Are not all sins like this? There are no good sins, so all sins must fall into this category.

1:29^a Being filled with^{b-perfect passive participle} all unrighteousness,^c fornication,^d wickedness,^e covetousness,^f maliciousness;^g full of envy,^h murder,ⁱ debate,^j deceit,^k malignity;^l whisperers,^m

29a In verses 29-31, Paul lifts the lid off the mouth of hell and grants us a horrifying look. Of course, we need not look into the pit to witness this. We need only to go to our local malls or parks and watch the people as they go by or turn on our televisions and radios to witness the horrible results of rejecting God.

29b "**being filled with**" Notice the perfect tense. This condition of being "given over to a reprobate mind" and these resulting sins are a completed and finished act that will not be reversed. Being so "given over" would be the equivalent of the "unpardonable sin" as no remedy is given for this condition.

This "filling" is the same idea as being "filled with the Spirit". If it fills you, it controls you and dominates your life, thoughts and actions. These people are filled with and dominated by these 23 sins that follow.

29c "**unrighteousness**" Strong's #93 *adikia*; (legal) injustice; wrongfulness (of character, life or act), wrongdoing. Used in a Hebrew, not in a Greek sense, and extending to every neglect of duty towards our neighbor. This is the opposite of justice, which the Greeks defined as "giving to God and man their due". The evil man is one who robs God and man of his rights, while at the same time, insisting upon his rights.

29d **“fornication”** Strong’s #4202 porneia; harlotry (including adultery and incest); idolatry, illicit sexual intercourse between unmarried persons. We get our word “pornographic”, meaning material designed to be sexually arousing.

This word is missing in modern versions. We dare not overlook it for this is a master sin of our sex-soaked generation, where the body and things pertaining to the body are worshipped and the spirit is despised. When “fornication” does appear in modern versions, it is usually translated as something like “sexuality”. But the Holy Spirit was very careful in choosing the word “fornication” instead of something like “sexuality”. If you saw or heard “sexuality”, it would create sexual thoughts, leading possibly to sexual sins. The word “fornication” carries no such danger.

29e **“wickedness”** Strong’s #4189 ponêria; depravity, iniquity, wickedness, malice, evil purposes and desires

29f **“covetousness”** Strong’s #4124 pleonexia; avarice, fraudulency, extortion, greedy desire to have more. The Greeks called this the “accursed love of having”.

They committed covetousness in chasing the Almighty Dollar and hoarding houses and lands on earth instead of sending their treasures on ahead to heaven by investing their wealth into the work of the Gospel. Their motto was “Get all you can and can all you get (then sit on the can)!” “He who dies with the most toys wins!” Their cry was “more, more, more!” as they were never satisfied with what they had. Their lust for material things was infinite and bottomless.

When is the last time you heard a church disciplining someone because they are covetousness? We put all the emphasis on the sexual sins but ignore these supposedly “smaller” or “less important” sins.

29g **“maliciousness”** Strong’s #2549 kakia; badness, depravity, malignity, trouble, wickedness as an evil habit of the mind. This is the general word for “badness” and it carries over into several modern Romance languages, as “kaka”, which can almost be used as a profane word for excrement.

29h **“full of envy”** This would involve covetousness with hatred and other malicious thoughts thrown in. Their hearts were filled with envy as an empty vessel would be filled with water.

29i **“murder”** Jesus would expand on this sin by including even the thoughts of hatred, not just the physical act itself, as the act of murder usually preceded by the thought.

29j **“debate”** They debated and argued (“Just who are you to say that what I do is sin? Who are you to tell me I’m going to hell? What makes you think my religion is wrong?”). They loved to argue for the sake of arguing. They will even argue against “Thus saith the Lord”.

29k **“deceit”** Strong’s #1388 dolos; craft, deceit, guile, “a bait for fish,” and so, to catch with a bait, to beguile. It is also used of debasing precious metals and watering-down wines. These people cannot act in a straightforward manner, but all their acts are done with an ulterior motive, which is usually evil. It is the deliberately misleading of someone through lies and deception.

29l They were filled with **“malignity”**. That’s the English word we use to describe an active cancer. Their sins were literally consuming them, body and soul. The Geneva Bible uses the phrase “taking all things in the evil part”. The other traditional translations use “evil conditioned”. It has the idea of taking the worst part in everything and seeing everything in the worst possible light. It also includes harboring a bad attitude and a sour spirit.

Strong's #2550 kakoêtheia; from lakos (Strong's #2556) bad, evil, and ethos (Strong's #2239) bad, evil; bad character, mischievousness, ill nature, everything with an evil connotation, depravity of heart and life. It is used only here in the New Testament.

We use this term to speak of a cancer that is active and growing, referring to it as "malignant"

29m **"whisperers"** Gossips, tattlers. This was a manifestation of their hate (Psalm 41:7 **"All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt."**). It is the private, verbal defamation of another, to bring harm and disfavor unto the victim. Whispering differs from backbiting (Romans 1:30) as backbiting is usually done openly while whispering is a more secret attack.

Sinners whisper about their sins because they are often too ashamed to speak of them aloud. But even today, with the Sodomite "Pride" movement, these sinners now take to the streets and social media to openly boast of their perversions, as the spirit of the age has taken away shame for even the grossest sins.

Strong's #5588 psithuristês; a secret slanderer, a whisperer. An onomatopoeia (a word that sounds like its definition). It is used only here in the New Testament.

A comparison of the various words used in verses 27- 30, as used in the various English translations:

Authorized	Tyndale	Geneva	Bishops	ESV	LSV
men 1:27	men	men	men	men	males
natural use 1:27	natural use	natural use	natural use	natural relations	natural function
woman 1:27	woman	woman	woman	women	female
lusts 1:27	lusts	lusts	lusts	passion	desire
unseemingly 1:27	unnatural	filthiness	filthiness	shameless acts	indecent acts
retain 1:28	acknowledged of God	regarded not to acknowledge	regarded not to know	acknowledg e	acknowledge
reprobate mind 1:28	leud mind	reprobate mind	leud mind	debased mind	unfit mind
unrighteousness 1:29	unrighteousnes s	unrighteousnes s	unrighteousnes s	unrighteous-ness	
fornication 1:29	fornication	fornication	fornication	(missing)	
wickedness 1:29	wickedness	wickedness	craftiness	evil	wickedness
covetousness 1:29	covetousness	covetousness	covetousness	covetous-ness	greed
maliciousness 1:29	maliciousness	maliciousness	maliciousness	malice	evil
full of envy 1:29	full of envy	full of envy	full of envy	full of envy	full of envy
murder 1:29	murder	murder	murder	murder	murder
debate 1:29	debate	debate	debate	strife	strife
deceit 1:29	deceit	deceit	deceit	deceit	deceit
malignity 1:29	evil conditioned	taking all things in the evil part	evil conditioned	malicious-ness	malice
whisperers 1:29	whisperers	whisperers	whisperers	gossips	Gossips
backbiters 1:30	backbiters	backbiters	backbiters	slanderers	slanderers
haters of God 1:30	haters of God	haters of God	haters of God	haters of God	haters of God
despiteful 1:30	doers of wrong	doers of wrong	despiteful	insolent	violent
proud 1:30	proud	proud	proud	haughty	arrogant

boasters 1:30	boasters	boasters	boasters	boastful	boastful
inventors of evil things 1:30	bringers up of evil things	Inventors of evil things	bringers up of evil things	inventors of evil	inventors of evil
disobedient to parents 1:30	disobedient to father and mother	disobedient to parents	disobedient to father & mother	disobedient to parents	disobedient to parents
without understanding 1:31	without understanding	without understanding	without understanding	foolish	without understanding
covenantbreakers 1:31	covenant breakers	covenant breakers	covenant breakers	faithless	untrustworthy
without natural affection 1:31	unloving	without natural affection	without natural affection	heartless	unloving
implacable 1:31	truce breakers	such as can never be appeased	truce breakers	ruthless	(missing)
unmerciful 1:31	merciless	merciless	unmerciful	(missing)	unmerciful

1:30 Backbiters,^a haters of God,^b spiteful,^c proud,^d boasters,^e inventors of evil things^f disobedient to parents,^g

30a **“backbiters”** Strong’s #2637 katalalos; talkative against, a slanderer. A backbiter is a backstabber, usually employing the dagger of the tongue. It is used only here in the New Testament.

30b **“haters of God”** They hated God because He stood in the way of their fully enjoying their sins. God is a constant barrier to their sin natures fully pressing themselves. This hatred of God also extends to the things of God- the Bible, the church, morality and Christians. Atheists, who claim not to believe in God, fall prey to this sin as well, as they fight very strongly and protest very loudly against someone they claim does not exist! Their desire is a world without God, and thus, without any moral restraints at all. People are not the least bit afraid to publicly declare their hatred for God today.

30c **“spiteful”** Strong’s #5197 hubristês, an insolent man, one who, uplifted with pride, either heaps insulting language upon others or does them some shameful act of wrong. It is used only here and in 1 Timothy 1:13 in the New Testament. We get our word “hubris” from this. It also describes a very hurtful and vengeful spirit. They enjoy causing pain and harm in others. It carries the idea of being insolent and disrespectful. These sinners respect no one, not God, not their fellow man, not even themselves. You see this today in the lives of sinners, how they actually hate even themselves. They pierce their bodies, they stain their skin with tattoos, they drink and use drugs and engage in activities and lifestyles that are self-destructive. They would not only hurt other people, but they also do great damage to themselves as they have no self-respect.

30d **“proud”** Strong’s #5244 hyperêphanos; appearing above others (conspicuous), haughty. From hyper (Strong’s #5228) over, above, and phainô (Strong’s #5316) to shine, show. “Theophrastus was a Greek writer who wrote a series of famous character sketches, as he defined this as ‘a certain contempt for everyone except oneself’. He picks out the things in everyday life which are signs of his arrogance. The arrogant man, when he is asked to accept some office, refuses on the ground that he has not the time to spare from his own business; he never looks at people on the street unless it pleases him to do so; he invites a man to a meal

and then does not appear himself, but sends his servant to attend to his guest. His whole life is surrounded with an atmosphere of contempt, and he delights to make others feel small.”⁵⁹

30e They were **boasters**. This would go right along with their pride listed above. The work is associated with alcoholic beverages and thus probably refers to their state of mind when drunk. The man's booze makes him boastful. When a man gets drunk, he often loses his inhibitions and gives exhibitions. A drunkard often comes with a big mouth to go along with his small mind. It literally means a man who wanders about and later had the idea of wandering quacks who claimed to have great cures for diseases and physical conditions. Also see remarks under “whisperers” in Romans 1:29.

Strong's #213 alazôn; from ale (vagrancy); braggart, empty pretender, a boaster. The word is associated with alcoholic beverages and thus probably refers to their state of mind when drunk. It is used only here and in 2 Timothy 3:2 in the New Testament.

30f “**inventors of evil things**” Strong's #2182 epheuretês; from epi (Strong's #1909) an intensive, and heuriskô (Strong's #2147) to find a discoverer; contriver, inventor. Used only here in the New Testament. These are men who are not content with already established sins. They must seek out and invent new and unique sins. They take the shovel to human nature and after they have already hit the bottom, keep digging deeper. Not everyone falls into this category as many of us only follow those who invent evil things, philosophies, religions, music, literature, etc. Few are original enough or depraved enough to actually invent these things.

30g They were **disobedient to parents**. They would not listen to anyone, including their parents. They rejected everything their parents tried to teach them. They wanted nothing of their parents God or religion for they proudly imagined themselves to be smarter than their parents. This involves a violation of the 5th commandment about honoring your father and your mother (Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16, also see Proverbs 30:17 “**The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.**”). This failure, or unwillingness, to hear the teachings and commands of their parents leads to such disobedience. This also stems from disrespect to parents, since disobedience flows from disrespect. This involves a violation of the 5th commandment. Failure to keep this commandment results in a shortened life, which explains why so many rock singers die young, since they made their living preaching such parental disobedience to the kids who listened to their “music”. Rock music (and other forms, to a lesser degree) have preached this gospel of parental disobedience since the 1950s and the fruit has been the destruction of the home and the family unit, which flows into the overall destruction of society. The Romans set obedience to parents as a very high virtue, so this would be looked upon as a very serious sin. Once the family bonds have been destroyed, society must, by necessity, devolve into chaos.

1:31^a Without understanding,^b covenantbreakers,^c without natural affection,^d implacable,^e unmerciful:^{f,g}

31a The Geneva Bible has this entire verse included with verse 30.

31b “**without understanding**” They are stupid brute beasts, without the (spiritual) understanding that God gave to a monkey. They have rejected God, God's Son, God's Word,

⁵⁹ William Barclay, *The Letter to the Romans*, page 36.

God's laws and God's ways, and then they congratulate themselves on how logical and reasonable they are! At the same time, they are not able to comprehend how foolish they are.

31c They were **covenant-breakers**. If they felt like breaking a contract, they did so- especially in their relationship with God. Honor and character meant absolutely nothing.

Strong's # 802 asunthetos; from a (Strong's #1) a negative particle, and a derivative of Strong's #4934 suntithem, covenant or agreement ; covenant breaking, faithless. It is used only here in the New Testament.

31d They were **without natural affections**. Parents had no love for their children, children hated their parents and siblings, husbands hated wives and vice-versa. Infanticide is an ancient and common practice, practiced by practically all nations and tribes. It is not natural for a mother or father to kill their children, but it was widespread and commonplace in history. It happens today in abortion mills where unborn children are murdered in the cruelest manners possible. If the children are not murdered in the womb, they are raised by perverts in the public school system to question their gender and to mutilate their bodily organs, or worse.

This lack of natural affection can also apply to sodomy. It is not natural for a man to lust after another man or for a woman to lust after another woman, or worse Yet this is the norm today.

Strong's #794 astorgos; from a (Strong's #1) without, and storgh "storgê", family love hard-hearted towards kindred. This is an attitude that is the opposite of family love.

31e "**implacable**" is missing in modern versions.

Strong's #786 aspondos; from a (Strong's #1) without; and spondê, libation or drink offering without libation (which usually accompanied a treaty), truceless. "It is from a French word of the same spelling and it is the opposite of "placable", meaning "appeasable." Therefore, "implacable" means "unappeasable, irreconcilable or that which cannot be mitigated"⁶⁰ No one can please you, no one or nothing is good enough for you. It also includes a stubborn and inflexible attitude that will not accept any apology or forgiveness. You'll never change your mind or admit that you were wrong about anything. You are right and that's that. Mountains of evidence could be piled against you, yet you will never admit to your error. Your ideas, plans and theories can collapse a million times, yet the fault is not with you. Communists and socialists are like this. Their political and economic systems have failed every time and everywhere that it was tried yet hope springs eternal with these people. They claim "real socialism has never been tried. Just let US try it this time and it's sure to work!" When it miserably fails, the fault always lies elsewhere. When is the last time you heard a politician (at any level) admit that his policies were a failure?

31f "**unmerciful**" also has the idea of being ruthless, without pity or mercy, without any consideration for others. Strong's #415 aneleemôn; from a (Strong's #1) without, and eleemon (Strong's #1655) merciful; without mercy. Used only here in the New Testament. Life in Rome was cheap, especially among slaves. Slaves could be put to death on a whim of their master's, and the law could do nothing.

31g "Scholars have found it difficult to detect any satisfactory classification in the long list of offenses included here, which only confirms the fact that sin is irrational in itself and disorderly in its effects."⁶¹

60 Laurence Vance, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*, page 190.

61 Everett Harrison, *Romans* in volume 10 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, page 26.

1:32 Who knowing^{aorist active participle} the judgment of God, that they which commit^{a-}
 present participle such things are^{present} worthy of death,^b not only do^{present} the same, but
 have pleasure^{present} in them that do^{present participle} them.

32a **commit** The habitual, life-style practice of these sins. A Christian may stumble into these sins but he does not stay there, nor is he practicing them as a habit of life, at least he ought not to be.

32b **worthy of death** Not so much physical death, like capital punishment (although many of their sins are capital offenses in the Old Testament) but spiritual death, as these sins lead the way to hell.

Summary- The Heathen

1. They are not as innocent as you might think.
 - a. Romans 1:20 **"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."**
2. They know right from wrong.
 - A. Genesis 20:4 **"But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation?"**
3. They can receive extra-Biblical revelations.
 - A. Genesis 20:4 **"But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation?"**
4. God often intervenes and protects them from sinning.
 - A. Genesis 20:6 **"And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her."**
5. If they obey the revelation (conscience) they have, they live. If not, they die.
 - A. Genesis 20:3 **"But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife."**
6. They are obliged to follow their conscience if that is all they have in the way of revelation. If a missionary comes among them and preaches the gospel they then become responsible for the missionary's message. If any of them are feeble-minded or insane, they are not held accountable like any of us. If he follows his conscience (a God-given internal spiritual gyroscope), it will lead them to Calvary. If not, it will condemn him to hell.

Spiritual Applications, Romans Chapter 1

Romans 1 details the Gentile world sin. It extends to every compartment of life and corrupts men utterly. It is intensified by the rejection of God by man, Who then allows man to plunge even deeper into sin. By the time of the tribulation, Gentile sin will become so abominable and perverted that there will be no option except total judgment, in much the same way that God had to judge the world before the flood in Genesis 6. Man is a well-seasoned sinner, having had 6,000 years of practice, but he has yet to reach bottom. Man simply wants nothing to do with God, His word, His church or His people.

I think we tend to under-estimate the power of the gospel in verse 16 because we see so little of this power today. The gospel is as powerful as ever, but the last-days apostasy has weakened it, as fewer sinners will even consider the gospel or entertain any thought regarding salvation or submitting to God. The hardness of the heart of man makes it increasingly difficult for the gospel to take any root in any heart. I've heard older Christians talking about how frequent conversions were in better days and how much conviction was in evidence in church services. We simply don't see it today. Preachers still pray and faithfully preach the gospel, but the spirit of the age deadens men's hearts to consider, receive or respond to gospel preaching.

Romans Chapter 2

In chapter 1, Paul took aim at the non-respectable sinner, the Gentile. In chapter 2, he levels the gospel gun at the respectable, moral, religious sinner. This would include the religious Jew. "There were Moralists, Reformers and Philosophers like Socrates, Seneca and others. They judged and condemned certain evils. But God declares that they were not a whit better than the rest. The very things they condemned they were guilty of themselves."⁶²

"But why this preoccupation with unbelieving Jews in a letter that i written to Christians, and mainly Gentile Christians at that? Although Paul i undoubtedly rehearsing themes from his missionary preaching, it is not uncon-verted Jews but the Roman Christians who are the real audience of what he says in this letter. To a considerable extent, of course, Paul's focus is due to his desire to set before the Romans, in preparation for his visit and request for support, the gospel he preaches and the need for God's righteousness on the part of bott Jews and Gentiles is an important component of that gospel. Add to this Paul' concern about his upcoming visit to Jerusalem (cf. 15:30-33), and itis no wonder he says as much about the situation of Jews as he does."⁶³

TWELVE GREAT PRINCIPLES OF GOD'S JUDGMENT IN ROMANS 2

Principle of Judgment #1: The moral man is rendered inexcusable before God the righteous Judge, Romans 2:1. God has given the universal witness of the Scriptures plus the inward witness of conscience in the heart of every man.

Principle of Judgment #2: God's Judgment is according to truth, Romans 2:2. Since these judgments are rendered by the God of Truth, how can they be otherwise?

Principle of Judgment #3: God's judgment is inescapable, Romans 2:3.

Principle of Judgment #4: Men should not run away from God, but they should run to God, Romans 2:4. The judgments of God should be a goad to spur us on to repentance of sin and a motivation to holiness.

Principle of Judgment #5: There will be a final day of judgment for the ungodly, Romans 2:5. This will be the Great White Throne judgment in Revelation 20.

Principle of Judgment #6: God's Judgment is perfectly righteous, Romans 2:6. God judges in total and absolute righteousness.

Principle of Judgment #7: God's judgment is just -- every man will get exactly what he deserves, Romans 2:6. God is fair in His judgments. You will always get exactly what you deserve from God.

Principle of Judgment #8: God punishes those who do evil and rewards those who do good, Romans 2:7-10.

Principle of Judgment #9: There is no partiality with God, Romans 2:11. Man cannot judge impartially but God can and does. He will not favor the rich nor despise the poor in judgment.

Principle of Judgment #10: A Person is judged according to the light which he has, Romans 2:12. Those with much light will be beaten with many stripes while those who had little light will be beaten with few stripes (Luke 12:47,48 "**And that servant, which**

⁶² A. C. Gaebelain, *The Annotated Bible*, Volume 2, New Testament, page 16.

⁶³ Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, page 94.

knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.”).

Principle of Judgment #11: Nothing is hidden or kept secret from the Judge, Romans 2:16. This is because God is omniscient and knows all about everything.

Principle of Judgment #12: Jesus Christ will be the final Judge before whom all men shall stand, Romans 2:16. Christ will be our judge in that day, not man. David understood this in 1 Chronicles 21:13 (“**And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let me fall now into the hand of the LORD; for very great are his mercies: but let me not fall into the hand of man.**”) where he stated he would rather be judged by God than man after his sin in numbering the people.

2:1^a Therefore thou art^{present} inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest:^{present active present} for wherein thou judgest^{present active} another, thou condemnest^{present active} thyself; for thou that judgest^{present active participle} doest the same things.^{b-c-d-e}

1a Why did Jews think they were immune from judgment?

1. Their relationship to Abraham
2. Their possession of the Law
3. Circumcision
4. Benefits they have already received
5. Their good works
6. Merits of their ancestors
7. False teachings or the rabbis

1b The Gentiles were guilty of terrible sins, but the Jew had no basis to condemn them because they were also guilty of these same sins, and even worse. A sinner has no basis from which to condemn another sinner. Besides, if you judge, you will be judged according to the same basis by which you judged others. Go ahead and judge but only if you are willing to subject yourself to that same judgment. The real problem here was the hypocrisy of the Jews in condemning the Gentiles for the same sins they were guilty of. Thus, when the Jew, up in his ivory tower, condemned the Gentile, he really ended up condemning himself. Remember, when you point that finger at someone, four other fingers point back at you.

The Gentiles, despite their sin, also harbored false ideas as to their supposed protection from divine judgment. Why does the Gentile think he will escape judgment?

1. Money or position
2. Poverty or insignificance. The social gospel is built upon the idea that God will not judge the poor and oppressed but that God is very angry with the wealthy. It has the idea that God is a socialist Who engages in class warfare.
3. Religious profession or church membership/attendance
4. Good works
5. Their pious ancestors
6. Unbelief of God's Word

1c We must also be very careful that we do not fall victim to this same attitude, that we are somehow qualified to judge others as the Jews thought they were to judge the Gentiles. But how often do we judge unrighteous judgment, condemning the same sins that we are guilty of. We often condemn others while we ought to be condemning ourselves instead.

1d "The sin of the hypocrite is that of being indignant at other people's shortcomings and of being indulgent of his own."⁶⁴

1e There is a lot of judgment in Romans 1-3 as Paul lays out the charges. You usually get the bad news out of the way before you get on to the good news. Paul lays out the bad news from the last half of Romans 1 through Romans 3. He then gets to the good news of the remedy of that sin in chapters 4-6.

2:2 But we are sure^{a-perfect} that the judgment of God is^{present} according to truth against them which commit^{present participle} such things.

2a "**we are sure**" This Greek phrase is a formula used to introduce a fact that is "common knowledge" or that is generally accepted. It is in the Greek perfect tense, showing an absolute statement with no room for doubt or debate.

2:3^a And thinkest^{present middle} thou this, O man, that judgest^{present middle} them which do^{present participle} such things, and dost^{present participle} the same, that thou shalt escape^{future middle} the judgment of God?^b

3a Paul asks the two stinging questions in Romans 2:3,4 to get this self-righteous moralist judge to see his own hypocrisy. All men will be judged of their sin. The issue is their personal accountability to God. By neglecting the fact of God's judgment and how God provided a means of escape of this judgment (through the cross), man ends up despising:

1. The riches of the goodness of God
2. The riches of the forbearance of God. God keeps putting off judgment as long as He can until man exhausts God's patience.
3. The riches of the longsuffering of God

3b No one shall escape the judgment of God, including the one who imagines himself immune from such judgment by virtue of the fact that he believes himself qualified to undertake the ministry of Christ on the bema seat and judge the brethren. His judgment will be more severe than those whom he judged so harshly. God oftentimes isn't as concerned with the actions of others that seem to upset hypocrites so.

2:4 Or despisest^{ab-present} thou the riches of his goodness^c and forbearance^d and longsuffering;^e not knowing^{present participle} that the goodness^c of God leadeth^{f-present} thee to repentance?^{ghij}

4a "**despisest thou...**" Emphatic with a declaration with the question "Do you despise? Yes, verily, you do indeed despise." Men do not praise God for His grace, goodness and longsuffering but actually hate Him for it and mock Him for it.

64 John Phillips, *Exploring Romans*, page 36.

4b AV

ESV

LSV

4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?	4 Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?	4 Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?
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“despisest” The ESV and LSV render this “Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience”. The Authorized Version has “despisest” but the ESV mangles it to simply “presuming upon” the goodness and forbearance and longsuffering of God. Presuming upon something is taking it for granted but that can be done without despising it.

4c **“goodness”** The other English translations handle “the goodness” of God differently. The Tyndale Bible, the Bishop’s Bible, the ESV and LSV have “kindness” while the Coverdale Bible adds “loving kindness”. The Geneva Bible has “bountifulness” which isn’t really the thought here.

4d **“forebearance”** Strong’s #463 anôchêe, self-restraint, tolerance, a holding back. In Classical Greek, a truce of arms. It is used only here and in Romans 3:25 in the New Testament.

4e **“longsuffering”**. This is an attribute of God. God is exceedingly patient with the sins of mankind and does judge at once. But simply because He has not yet judged sin does not mean that He will not or that He cannot. He knows their sin. Judgment will come, but in His timing and method. He simply has not executed judgment yet, but He most certainly will at some point in the future. People take this patience as some license to sin instead of a means of grace or they believe that since He has not judged them, He will not or that He does not care.

Ecclesiastes 8:11 says **“Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.”** The longer the divine delay, the worse the hearts of men become. America must be judged for her numerous sins, but because God apparently has not overtly judged us, deceived men think He won’t, supposedly because we are a “Christian nation” or that we have some other favor with God. But they will quickly repent of that error when the judgment does fall.

4f Notice the present tense- the goodness of God is right now, continually, seeking to lead the sinner to repentance. This is an on-going, 24-hour a day evangelistic ministry of the goodness of God.

4g What man mistakes as a lack of God's judgment upon him is really nothing more than a gracious delay on God's part to get the sinner to repent. Yet this delay usually winds up hardening man's heart all the more. He misunderstands this delay in judgment to mean that God does not care about his sin or that He does not see it as a sin worthy of punishment. The misguided fool will use mercy and delay of judgment as a license to continue in his sin. Thus God's delay, designed for his salvation, drives the sinner into deeper sin as a result of his pride and self-deceit. God will render to every man according to his deeds, whether man thinks so or not.

4h **“repentance”** Josephus uses it for a change of mind of those who have begun to abhor their errors and misdeeds and have determined to enter upon a better course of life, so that it embraces both a recognition of sin and sorrow for it and hearty amendment, the tokens and effects of which are good deeds. Remorse as regret for shortcomings and errors, used with an expressly religious coloring for the positive side of repentance, the beginning of a new religious and moral life, conversion, repentance that leads to the forgiveness of sins.

4i “So God has always shown His goodness to the unsaved heathen by the common blessings He gives to all mankind. But in the context, “the goodness of God” is His “forbearance” (i.e., He doesn’t always punish an unsaved man as He could) and His “longsuffering” (putting up with a sinner). God doesn’t unleash the wrath which He could upon a sinner, and He puts up with his foolishness, in order that the sinner will realize just how good God has been to him, and he will repent and make things right with God.

That is not the way God treats a Christian. The Lord will let a Christian suffer:

1. to make him heavenly-minded.
2. to prove to the Christian that His promises are sure.
3. to make a Christian sympathetic with other people.
4. to allow that Christian to be in a place where he can experience the power of the Holy Spirit.
5. to prove His grace is sufficient.

The Lord will let a Christian suffer for different reasons.

An unsaved man only suffers for one reason. There isn’t an unsaved man or woman in America who isn’t suffering for the same reason. They are suffering to wake them up and show them their need of Jesus Christ, because God doesn’t want them in Hell.”⁶⁵

4j A judge who refuses to punish evil is not a good judge; he is an unjust judge. A corrupt judge is not good, but God in His goodness, Who judges all and does what is right, promises judgment against evil.

2:5 But after thy hardness^a and impenitent heart^b treasurest up^{c-present} unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;^{def}

5a **“hardness”** Strong’s #4643 sklerotes; callousness, stubbornness, hardness, dry. It is used only here in the New Testament. We get our English word “sclerosis” from this, as in arteriosclerosis, or the hardening of the arteries.

5b The Geneva Bible renders this phrase “a heart that cannot repent”. That might be too strong. An impenitent heart is a heart that will not repent, not necessarily one that cannot repent.

5c **“treasurest up”** “Treasuring up wrath is the sinner's daily and hourly employment”.⁶⁶

5d The Jew thought that he would escape the judgment of God. Just because God had not yet judged the Jew gave them a false hope that God would not. After all, they were the seed of Abraham! But in A.D. 70, God did level a massive judgment on Israel, and they have been under judgment for their sin ever since and will be to the end of the Tribulation. If they thought

65 Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer’s Commentary on Romans*, page 73.

66 Thomas Robinson, *Studies in Romans*, volume 1, page 133.

that was bad, then what till they see the results of their "treasuring up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God"!

5e "The verse contains a surprising number of hapax legomena (σκληρότης, ἀμετανόητος and δικαιοκρισία), all occurring only here in the NT, which strongly suggests that Paul is striving to find words which will maximize the impact of what he is saying and will not be shrugged off as merely formulaic or commonplace."⁶⁷

5f "In explaining our sin in relation to God's wrath, Paul uses a banking metaphor. If we begin to save our money, taking a small portion of each paycheck and putting it in the bank, we are building up, slowly but surely, a treasure; we are saving up for a rainy day. Just so, every time we sin, we add an indictment against ourselves, treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath."⁶⁸

2:6 Who will render^{a-future} to every man according to his deeds:^b

6a The Tyndale, Coverdale, Geneva and Bishops Bible all have this as a reward.

6b Be sure of it! Regardless of if you are a Jew or a Gentile, you will not be able to do wrong and get away with it! God rewards the obedient and punishes the disobedient. This is an inflexible law of nature, as constant as the law of gravity. And God will be fair, just and equitable when He does it. You will get a fair shake from God and you will receive everything you have coming to you. We will be judges according to our deeds and not our professions, pedigrees, promises or resolutions.

We will be judged for our deeds, not those of another. No man goes to hell because of Adam's sin or because "the devil made him do it". A man is judged for his own actions and is held personally accountable for his own sins, not those of another.

On the day of judgment (Revelation 20:12 at the Great White Throne, "**And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.**") judgment will be certain and it will be unavoidable. In the day, there will be no place to hide, no place to run, no place to appeal, no place to escape, no one to help. You will be on your own and alone. You will be doomed, because you did not believe there would ever be such a day of judgment. Because men will not repent, they will be dealt with according to works, not according to grace. Those who refused the way of escape in this life will find none in the next.

2:7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek^{present participle} for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life:^{ab}

7a The righteous will seek after 4 things:

1. Glory
2. Honor
3. Immortality

4. Eternal life. This is a bit different from immortality.

"Immortality" deals with the length of life. "Eternal life" deals with the quality of that life. Those in hell/lake of fire will have immortality but it is never said that they have "eternal life", especially since they are suffering from the second death.

⁶⁷ James Dunn, *Romans 1-8* in the Word Biblical Commentary series, page 83.

⁶⁸ R. C. Sproul, *The Righteous Shall Live by Faith: Romans*, note on Romans 2:5.

A. Revelation 2:11 **“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.”**

B. Revelation 20:6,14 **“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years... And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.”**

C. Revelation 21:8 **“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”**

7b AV

ESV

LSV

7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:	7 to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life;	7 to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life;
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I am not sure that the ESV and LSV have it well when it presents God giving eternal life to those who seek for glory, honor and immortality. The traditional translations present it as Paul desiring that God will give such people eternal life.

2:8 But unto them that are contentious,^a and do not obey^{present participle} the truth, but obey^{b-present middle participle} unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,^c

8a **“contentious”** Strong’s #2052 erithêia; intrigue, faction, to work for hire, used in a bad sense of those who seek only their own, strife, rivalry. It represents a motive of self-interest, mercenary interest. It also meant canvassing for public office by using questionable means, scheming. It is used of those who electioneer for office, courting popular applause by trickery and low arts. The New Testament definition would then be a courting distinction, a desire to put one's self forward, a partisan and factious spirit which does not disdain low arts, factiousness. This idea is derived from the Macedonian age from a spinner or weaver, a worker in wool.

The Tyndale Bible has this as “rebellious” while the ESV and LSV have this as “those who are self-seeking”.

The word “contentious” is also used in:

1. Proverbs 21:19 **“It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.”**

A. Anger is associated with contention.

2. Proverbs 26:21 **“As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife.”**

A. Strife is associated with contention.

3. Proverbs 27:15 **“A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike.”**

A. Contention is likened to a constant nagging.

4. Romans 2:8 **“But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,”**

A. Contention is associated with:

i. Not obeying the truth

ii. Obeying

a. Unrighteousness

- b. Indignation
- c. Wrath

8b The unrighteous man will obey 3 things, in direct contrast to the righteous man in Romans 2:7:

1. **Unrighteousness.**
2. **Indignation.** Used by Plato as signifying both the spirit panting as it were concerning the body and the rage with which the man pants and swells.
3. **Wrath,** extreme anger

8c “**unrighteousness, indignation and wrath**” An unholy trinity of sins.

2:9^a Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man^b that doeth^{present middle/passive participle} evil, of the Jew first,^c and also of the Gentile;^d

9a The reward for the wicked man in Romans 2:8 is:

1. **Tribulation,** trouble and lots of it as God will plague him in this life before He judges him for the next.
2. **Anguish**

He will receive these rewards, ultimately, when he arrives at the lake of fire, regardless if this man is a Jew or Gentile, although the Jew would probably be judged more severely as he had greater spiritual benefits than the Gentile did.

9b **AV**

ESV

LSV

9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;	9 There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek,	9 There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek,
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The ESV and LSV wander too far into “gender-neutral” language, despite one of its motivations behind its translation was to oppose the same practice in the New International Version. Here, the ESV and LSV use “every human being” but there is no good justification for this change except to insert “gender neutral” language into the text to appease the feminists.

9c “**to the Jew first**” Because the Jew received the gospel first and was more accountable to it due to his religious heritage and history. With the greater privileges come the greater responsibilities and greater judgment for failure.

9d But there will be no escape for the Gentile.

“**Gentile**” The Coverdale, Geneva, Bishops Bible, ESV and LSV have this as “Greek”. This is a bad rendering. Not every Gentile is a Greek and not even every Greek is a Gentile.

2:10^{ab} But glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh^{present middle/passive participle} good, to the Jew first,^c and also to the Gentile:^{de}

10a The punishments are equal as are the rewards, both to Jew and Gentile, but the Jew is rewarded, or judged, first.

10b The righteous man of Romans 2:7 will be rewarded with:

1. Glory
2. Honor
3. Peace

You will be rewarded with what you are searching for. The wicked man seeks sin, he will get more of it than he can handle. The righteous man wants peace, glory and honor and he will be rewarded with it by the Lord.

10c **“to the Jew first”** As in Romans 2:9, except this time, with regards to the rewards for obedience. It works both ways, for judgment and rewards.

10d This would irritate a Jew, to think that a righteous Gentile could be rewarded in the same way a righteous Jew would!

10e The Coverdale, Geneva, Bishop’s Bible, ESV and LSV have this as “Greek”. This is a bad rendering. Not every Gentile is a Greek and not even every Greek is a Gentile.

2:11^a For there is^{present} no respect of persons^{bc} with God.^d

11a The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles have the first part of verse 12 attached to verse 11.

11b **"respect of person"** The fault of one who when called on to requite or to give judgment has respect to the outward circumstances of men and not to their intrinsic merits, and so prefers as the more worthy, one who is rich, high-born, or powerful, to another who is destitute of such gifts. Having respect of persons, or favoring one man over another on the basis of class, education or wealth, is called a sin in James 2:1-9.

God is impartial in His dealings with men and is the fairest judge you could ever hope to deal with. God will always judge fairly and give you a “fair shake”, even if you don’t like the results of it! The Jew will not get a break simply because he is a Jew. There is no respect of persons in terms of judgment or reward. The difference is the timing of these rewards or judgments (to the Jew first...).

11c The Tyndale Bible has “parcialyte” for “respect of persons”.

11d Differences between human judgment and divine judgment

Man	God
Man often judges hypocritically, forgetting his own sinfulness 2:1-3	God always judges righteously and fairly 2:4,6-11, Acts 10:34,35; Galatians 2:6; Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 3:25; 1 Peter 1:7
Man judges others based on his, or public, opinion Matthew 15:1-9; Luke 14:1-6	

9. Possession of the Law No Safeguard From Judgment 2:12-16

2:12^a For as many as have sinned^{aorist} without law shall also perish^{future middle} without law: and as many as have sinned^{aorist} in the law shall be judged^{future passive} by the law;^b

12a The case of the Gentile is here summarized. All men perish under sin, either with the Law (Jew) or without it (Gentile). Just because the Gentile was not given the Law does not excuse

him from it. Just because the Jew was given the Law does not protect him from being judged by it. Even if a man did keep the Law, it would not justify him. This hits the Jew who thought because he knew it that he would be justified. Simply because the Gentiles did not have the Law to guide them does not exempt them from judgment. They shall perish anyway. Simply because the Jew had the Law will not exempt him from judgment. He will be judged by it. Either way, Jew and Gentile will be judged, regardless of their relationship to the Law.

12b The Jew read the law every Sabbath in the synagogue, then went out and ignored everything he read. Multitudes of Christians are guilty of the same sin today. But the Gentiles in Paul's day had no law to read or to ignore. Their judgment will not be by a law they did not have but they will be judged by what was given to them and what they did know. The Jew, who had the law, will be judged by that law.

2:13 For not the hearers of the law are just before God,^a but the doers^b of the law shall be justified. *future passive*

13a **"For not the hearers of the law are just before God"** This is aimed at the Jew, who hears the law read and expounded every Sabbath in the synagogue. He heard the Law and knew it. But simply because he had heard the Law read would amount to no spiritual advantage to him unless he made an application to the Law in his own life. A head knowledge was not sufficient. It was a heart acceptance that was necessary and required. To be a mere hearer or auditor of the word of God in a church is not enough. Merely to attend a church or be a member of a church and to hear the word of God being preached is not enough to bring justification to a person, he must put the word of God into action in his own life and heart in order to gain justification.

13b **"but the doers"** See James 1:22-25 **"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."** What is this so-called "disagreement" between Paul and James that some commentators have claimed to find? There is none, of course. Paul is echoing the theme of James 2, where James says that faith must be evidenced by works. To merely hear the word of God and do nothing with it (like accept it) does nothing spiritually for the hearer. Justification comes from a proper application of the received word and belief in it.

2:14 For when the Gentiles, which have^{present participle} not the law, do^{present subjunctive} by nature the things contained in the law, these, having^{present participle} not the law, are^{present} a law unto themselves:^a

14a There is a basis for Gentile judgment and condemnation, even if they are ignorant of the law. That is the basis of conscience and natural theology (Romans 2:15). Even though they do not have the law, Gentiles still know what is right and wrong because of their God-given conscience, plus the preaching of natural religion. Nature is a wonder preacher (Psalm 19) to tell you there is a God and He does have a law. This law, in basic form, is imprinted on every human heart. Everyone knows murder and theft are wrong, no matter who you are or where

you live. Even in the deepest jungles among the most heathen of tribes, they know better than to take their neighbor's cow and tie it in their front yard.

2:15 Which shew^{present middle} the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience^a also bearing witness,^{present participle} and their thoughts the mean while accusing^{present participle} or else excusing^{bc-present middle/passive participle} one another;)^d

15a **"conscience"** Thomas Robinson⁶⁹ gives a summary of "conscience". "Innate connatural judgment implanted in all men, approving or condemning their conduct (Schott). 'Conscience 'is not merely that which I know, but that which I know with some other; that other being God, who makes His law and His presence felt and acknowledged in the heart (Trench). Conscience a double or joint knowledge; one of a divine law or rule, and the other of a man's own action (South). Refers etymologically to the reflex attention which the mind gives to its own condition or acts. Primarily identical with self-knowledge or self-consciousness. Such still the general meaning of the corresponding Greek, Latin, and French words. By early Christian moralists and even by heathen writers, conscience is not only consciousness, but- (1). The faculty which recognizes the law which is to try them; (2). The Judge who inflicts the penalty due to disobedience (Wayland's *Elements of Moral Science*). Conscience the faculty by which we discern the moral quality of actions and are capable of certain affections in respect to this quality (Wayland). The voice which pronounces for each man the distinction between right and wrong (Whewell)...Purely impulsive; a moral spring rather than a moral guide (Payne)...First perceptions of right or wrong not the object of reason, but of immediate sense and feeling (Adam Smith). The moral sense (Hutcheson). Moral faculty (Macintosh). The inward testimony and judge as to our own conduct. No guilty man absolved in the court of his own conscience (Seneca)...What ails thee? what disease destroys thee? Conscience; for I am conscious of having done a dreadful deed (Euripides)."

Conscience is from two Latin words "con", with and "science", knowledge. It is the build-in, internal knowledge or right and wrong that all people have. It is left over from the Fall. It is the internal witness of our hearts and of the Holy Spirit that lets us know if we have sinned or are living poorly or are in the wrong concerning an issue.

The word "conscience" only appears in the New Testament and is used 31 times. Below is a presentation of "conscience" using Biblical theology:

1. Older people seem to be affected by it more than younger people
 - A. John 8:9 **And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.**
2. You can live in good conscience and have a good conscience.
 - A. Acts 23:1 **And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.**
 - B. 1 Timothy 1:5 **Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:**
 - C. 1 Timothy 1:19 **Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:**
 - D. Hebrews 13:18 **Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.**

⁶⁹ *Studies in Romans*, volume 1, page 157.

- E. 1 Peter 3:16 **Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.**
- F. 1 Peter 3:21 **The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:**
3. You can have a conscience "void of offence"
 - A. Acts 24:16 **And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.**
 4. Conscience bears witness, either good or bad.
 - A. Romans 2:15 **Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)**
 5. The Holy Spirit is associated with the conscience.
 - A. Romans 9:1 **I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,**
 6. We are to do certain things for the sake of our conscience.
 - A. Romans 13:5 **Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.**
 7. Weak consciences can be defiled
 - A. 1 Corinthians 8:7,10,12 **Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled. For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.**
 - B. Titus 1:15 **Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.**
 8. Should we be judged according to another man's conscience?
 - A. 1 Corinthians 10:25, 27-29 **Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake...If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake. But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof: Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?**
 9. We commend ourselves to every man's conscience.
 - A. 2 Corinthians 4:2 **But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.**
 10. You can have a pure conscience.
 - A. 1 Timothy 3:9 **Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.**
 - B. 2 Timothy 1:3 **I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;**
 11. The conscience can be seared.
 - A. 1 Timothy 4:2 **Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;**
 12. A perfect conscience

A, Hebrews 9:9 **Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;**

13. The conscience can be purged from dead works.

A. Hebrews 9:14 **How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?**

B. Hebrews 10:2 **For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.**

14. An evil conscience

A. Hebrews 10:22 **Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.**

15. Conscience toward God

A. 1 Peter 2:19 **For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.**

15b **“excusing”** How well-versed we are at excusing and justifying sin! Man can justify anything. He can justify murder (“he had it coming”), theft (“I need the money” or “my boss is a crook anyway”) to adultery (“my wife doesn’t love me anymore”). If you can’t think of a way to somehow justify your sin, the devil will be more than happy to give you more possibilities.

One of the excuses that Gentiles give to justify their sins is that “everyone else is doing it” or “he/she does it, too!” In their minds, that makes it all right. You see this “line of reasoning” in high schools all the time. After all, can millions of people who smoke, drink, dance and commit fornication be wrong? Yes they can and yes they are! Sin does not cease to be sin just because it is popular or widely practiced.

15c “There are seven things the Devil teaches a man to give him an alibi to sin. He never has to adjust those seven things for any man, no matter what the man’s station or rank in life is. If I were the Devil and wanted to mess up a high school freshman, a college graduate, a four-star general, a buck private, a doctor of philosophy, or a junkie; I would use the same methods on all six of them. Here they are:

1. “We’ve always done it that way.”
2. “Everyone else is doing it.”
3. “It depends on how you look at it.”
4. “A little bit doesn’t hurt.”
5. “We know when to stop.”
6. “You gotta get married.”
7. “You have to make a living.”

Those seven will take care of all humanity. Each of those is either an accusation or it is an excuse. Those are what the Bible calls “the rudiments of the world” (see Col. 2:8).

The Christian, on the other hand, has a different set of standards. The rudiments of the new life in Christ are:

1. “Is it right?”
2. “Will it edify?”
3. “Can I ask God to bless it?”
4. “Will it glorify God?”
5. “Would the Lord like to find me doing it when He returns?”

Those five are a different set, and they will stand the test of verse 16.”⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer’s Commentary on Romans*, page 89.

15d This passage connects with Romans 1:20. The Gentiles, although they do not have the Law of Moses, still have a law they are accountable to. That is the witness of nature and conscience, as discussed in Romans 1. That says the same thing as the Law of Moses and that is designed to guide the Gentile in the absence of the Law. While the Law of Moses was written on tables of stone, this law is written upon the heart so that all men are aware of it. The law of conscience is written on the Gentile heart and that is what he is responsible to. His conscience will point him to God if he is willing to follow. Their consciences will accuse them of their sin. The question then is "Will they respond to this witness or not?"

2:16 In the day^{ab} when God shall judge^{future} the secrets of men^c by Jesus Christ^d according to my gospel.^e

16a When is this **day**? That depends upon to whom it is addressed. For the believer, it would be the bema judgment. For the unbeliever, it would be the Great White Throne judgment. It is at these judgments when the hearts of men will be made manifest, and rewards or punishments bestowed. And it will be Jesus Christ who will preside at both judgments. But since the context is dealing with the unbelieving sinner, the primary application would probably at the Great White Throne.

16b **"In the day"** What an expectation!

"God shall judge" What an experience!

"the secrets of men" What an exposure!

"by Jesus Christ" What an Executor! Critical texts transpose this to "Christ Jesus".

"according to my gospel" What an examination! (Ian Paisley, *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans*, pages 33-34).

16c Not just their deeds but their thoughts, what was in their hearts, their secrets, the inner most thoughts they never told anyone, the things they were ashamed of. The hidden secrets of their hearts will dance in public for all the universe to see in that day. Nothing will be off-limits or "privileged" information. God knows every thought, every attitude, every scheme of the fallen heart of man and He will sift them out in that day. In a human court of law, you are judged for your deeds, not your thoughts. But in God's court, thoughts are also judged as they lead to the deeds.

16d **AV**

ESV

LSV

16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.	16 on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.	16 on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus.
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"Jesus Christ" The ESV and LSV have "Christ Jesus".

16e **"my gospel"** The Gospel as Paul preached it and understood it. Romans may very rightly be called The Gospel According to Paul. Paul did not create this gospel, of course, but the revelation of it was committed to him and he identified himself so closely and so strongly with it that he considered it "his". When you think about the "gospel of the grace of God", you would think of Paul. We preach this same gospel today as it was not exclusive to Paul.

10. Being a Jew No Protection From Divine Judgement 2:17-24

2:17 Behold,^a thou art called^{present passive} a Jew,^b and retest^{present middle/passive} in the law, and makest thy boast^{present middle/passive} of God,^c

17a Paul summarizes the state of the Jew. He is called a Jew by both Gentiles and fellow Jews, thus, he has a reputation and a name. He rests in the Law in that he puts his trust and confidence in it. He bets his soul against his obedience to the Law. Because of that he makes his boast of God. A man who thinks he keeps the Law is usually a proud, boastful man. He does know the will of God but this doesn't necessarily mean he'll do it! He approves the things that are most excellent. He is instructed out of the Law. He believes he is a guide to the blind (those ignorant of the Law, like a Gentile). He teaches the Law to others yet does not teach it to himself. For example, he teaches others not to steal/commit adultery/commit sacrilege out of the Law while he is doing these very things.

17b AV

ESV

LSV

17 Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God,

17 But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God

17 But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God

The ESV and LSV shift the voice of the verb from the passive (as in the Authorized Version) to active "But if you call yourself a Jew." The Coverdale Bible adds "take heed".

17c Before we move on, let's summarize the positional advantages the Jew had over the Gentile, as given in Romans 2:17-20:

1. He was called a Jew. He did have a claim to be the physical seed of Abraham (Romans 2:17).
2. He rested in the law (Romans 2:17).
3. He made his boast of God. He knew the true God as He had revealed Himself to him and had entrusted to the Jew His Law (Romans 2:17).
4. The Jew knew the will of God (Romans 2:18).
5. The Jew did approve those things that were more excellent. They did choose the divine and reject the profane (Romans 2:18).
6. He was instructed out of the Law, a privilege denied to most Gentiles (Romans 2:18). He actually was taught the wisdom of God.
7. He was confident that he was a guide of the blind and a light to those who were in darkness (Romans 2:19).
 - A. This would include the Gentiles who had to grope along in the darkness of their sin and ignorance of the Law. The Jew was supposed to guide him to the light of the revelation of the Law, which they failed to do.
 - A. How can you be a light to the blind when you are dwelling in darkness?
8. He was an instructor of the foolish and a teacher of babes (Romans 2:20). This presupposes that the Jew had enough understanding of the Law to be able to teach it.
9. He had a form of knowledge in the Law (Romans 2:20).

Just what were the Jews being taught in respect to the Law? What were the rabbis teaching them? Not the Law in its pure form but rather tradition. Below is a sampling of rabbinical teaching which passes for "the Law".

1. Rabbis were to be honored over one's own father and was to be revered as God Himself. Sounds like the pope!
2. Men were not to pray in the presence of a rabbi, nor to salute him.
3. Rabbis were able to excommunicate men who had offended them on the spot for nearly any reason.
4. Rabbis practiced astrology, magic and used charms and amulets.
5. They taught men how to evade divine commands.
6. Rabbis made it legal to swindle a Gentile or an impious Jew of his land and not have to make restitution. He could even kill an unlearned Jew and not be punished.
7. They taught salvation by works and rituals.
8. Rabbis had men whipped for the slightest offences.
9. Rabbis forbade helping a poor man on the Sabbath and forbade helping a Gentile under any circumstance, even in life-or-death situations.
10. Rabbis would openly debate God and would accuse Him of foolishness.
11. Rabbis taught Israel was righteous because they received the Law.
12. They also taught anyone Jew buried in the Holy Land would not see condemnation.
13. It was okay to let your parents starve if you gave all your money to the temple instead of providing for them.
14. Immorality was rampant among the rabbis. They would proposition married women in public.
15. They were guilty of murder.
16. Drunkenness was common among the rabbis.

Often, professing religionists live worse than the unsaved. This Jewish self-righteousness and self-deceit probably went much deeper than what is described here.

"The heathen is a man with a perverted religion; the hypocrite is a man with a pretended religion; the Hebrew represents a man with a powerless religion,"⁷¹

2:18 And knowest^{present} his will, and approvest^{present} the things that are more excellent,^{ab-present participle} being instructed out^{present passive participle} of the law;^c

18a Or "you know right from wrong because of your possession of the law."

18b AV	ESV	LSV
18 And knowest <i>his</i> will, and approvest the things that are more excellent , being instructed out of the law;	18 and know his will and approve what is excellent, because you are instructed from the law;	18 and know his will and approve what is excellent, because you are instructed from the law;

"more excellent" The ESV and LSV omit the "more" before "excellent". The traditional translations all handle the first part of this verse differently, mainly regarding the idea of "approvest".

18c **"being instructed out of the law"** A Jewish advantage that no Gentile had, unless he was a proselyte. But access to the Law obviously did the Jew little good as his sins were as bad as the Gentiles, who were ignorant of that same Law.

⁷¹ John Phillips, *Exploring Romans*, page 46.

2:19 And art confident^{perfect} that thou thyself art^{present} a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness,^b

19a The Jew saw himself to be a spiritual light and a guide to the Gentile, who was blind as to the law and the things of God. Now God certainly intended for this to be the case, but with the apostasy of Israel, this situation wound up being a case of “the blind leading the blind.”

2:20 An instructor^a of the foolish, a teacher of babes,^b which hast^{present participle} the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.

20a AV

ESV

LSV

20 An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.	20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth—	20 a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth,
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“**instructor**” The LSV has “corrector” which is not the same as an “instructor”. The Tyndale, Coverdale and Bishops Bibles use “informer”.

20b “**Foolish and babes**” would be a Jewish reference to the Gentiles, even Gentile converts to Judaism. Naturally, the terms were used in a degrading sense. The Bishop’s Bible uses “them which lack discretion”.

2:21 Thou therefore which teachest^{present participle} another, teachest^{present} thou not thyself? thou that preachest^{present participle} a man should not steal,^{present} dost thou steal?^{ab-present}

21a Paul points up three specific examples of how the Jews were making themselves out to be hypocrites before the Gentiles they were looking down upon:

1. Verse 21- They taught a man should not steal yet they stole (“sacrilege” of Romans 2:22).

2. Verse 22- They taught a man should not commit adultery, yet they committed adultery. Paul singled out this sin as it was a very common problem among the Jews of his day. They also railed against idolatry yet were guilty of this sin. The “abhorrest” has the idea of a physical repulsion. The Jews had such an aversion to the physical act of bowing down to gods of stone and wood but seemed to have no such aversion to setting up the invisible idol in the private chambers of the heart.

3. Verse 23- They boasted of the Law yet broke it continually.

The Jews were not practicing what they were preaching, and in so doing, made themselves out to be hypocrites of the worst stripe. The Gentiles had an “out” since they did not have the law and were not preaching the morality that the Jews claimed they practiced. The Jews, who publicly condemned these sins and knew better, were actually committing them in secret- they were doing the very sins in private that they condemned openly, which made them religious hypocrites.

21b Stealing was a popular vice in that day, even among the Jews. Its popularity has not waned even to our own day, especially if you work in government.

2:22 Thou that sayest^{present participle} a man should not commit adultery,^{infinitive} dost thou commit adultery?^{a-present} thou that abhorrest^{a-present middle/passive participle} idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?^{b-present}

22a Another very popular sin of Paul's day, widely practiced even by the Jews (see Jeremiah 5:8).

22b "**abhorrest idols**" The Jews, after their return from the Babylonian captivity, developed a revulsion to the very thought of idolatry. When they saw idolatry in action, they would shrink away in sheer horror and revulsion. How different from a typical Roman Catholic, who can't practice his religion without a lot of statues and "holy pictures!" The Catholic and Orthodox love their idols.

22c "**sacrilege**" Strong's #2416 hierosuleô; to rob a temple, used only here in the New Testament. What does it mean to "rob a temple?" The idea is to show disrespect for the temple or other place of worship by not contributing to it or by stealing from it. So many people have absolutely no respect for anything connected to God or the Bible. Despising a "temple" by lack of attendance or blasphemous words would also fit into this. Christians can be guilty of this attitude toward a local church. "The English word comes from a French word of the same spelling. It means stealing or misappropriating what is consecrated to God's service or profaning anything held sacred."⁷²

Most commentators think "**dost thou commit sacrilege**" is an incorrect translation since the Jews were supposedly beneath this sin, but obviously they weren't. In Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*, Vol. IV, viii, p. 10, he quotes Moses as addressing the Jews near Jordan, "let no one blaspheme the gods which other cities revere, nor rob foreign temples, nor take treasure that has been dedicated in the name of any god." Furthermore, Deuteronomy 7:25 reads, "**The carved images of their gods shall ye burn with fire; thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein; for it is an abomination to the Lord thy God.**" Also in the uproar at Ephesus, Paul and others were defended by the town clerk when he said, "**ye have brought here these men, who are neither robbers of temples, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess**" (Acts 19:37).

AV

ESV

LSV

22 Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege ?	22 You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?	22 You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?
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"**sacrilege**" The ESV and LSV have this as "rob temples". The Bishop's Bible has "robbest God"

2:23 Thou that makest thy boast^{present middle/passive} of the law, through breaking the law^{ab} dishonourest^{present} thou God?^{cd}

23a "**breaking the law**" or "transgressing the law", which gives the impression of a deliberate and willful violation of the law of God.

⁷² Laurence Vance, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*, page 296.

23b Greek synonyms for "sin":

1. hamartia, the missing of a mark
2. parabasis, the overpassing of a line
3. parakoe, the disobedience to a voice
4. paraptoma, a falling when one should have stood
5. agnoema, ignorance of what one should know
6. hettema, a diminishing of what should be rendered in full measure
7. anomia or paranomia, non-observance of the law
8. plemmeleia, dischord.

"Sin" is implicit, "transgression" is explicit, a deliberate act.

23c **"dishonourest thou God?"** The implied answer is "yes". By his hypocrisy, the Jew does dishonor God and gives the Gentiles opportunity and excuse to blaspheme. He claimed to be so superior to the Gentile because he was a Jew and because he had the Law, but he acted no better than the Gentile did. The Gentile sinned without the Law while the Jew sinned with the Law. Who do you think would receive the greater damnation? The Law and heritage did nothing to make the Jew better than the Gentile, so he also stands in condemnation. This is displayed in Romans 2:21 with Paul saying "You teach Gentiles not to sin, yet you sin yourself. You teach them to keep the Law while at the same time you break it! You teach others yet you do not teach yourself." The talk of the Jew was not matching the walk of the Jew.

23d AV

ESV

LSV

23 Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God?

23 You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law.

23 You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law.

Only the Bishops Bible agrees with the Authorized Version by making this verse a question. The other versions make a statement.

2:24 For the name of God is blasphemed^{a-present passive} among the Gentiles through you,^b as it is written.^{c-perfect passive}

24a **"For the name of God is blasphemed"** You can blaspheme God by act and a hypocritical life, as well as with words and thoughts.

24b The Gentile would see the Jew, making his boast of God and of the law, living worse than he was. The law was not improving the activities of the Jews. They were lying, cheating and stealing just like any Gentile.

The Gentiles and Romans saw how the Jewish leaders treated Jesus, who made reasonable claims to be their Messiah and king. They saw how the Jews cried for His blood and then insisted on His crucifixion. After His resurrection, they saw how the Jewish leaders paid hush money to the Roman guards to lie about the disciples stealing His body.

What kind of conclusion would the Romans have come to after witnessing all this about the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?

Consider the Babylonians who came up against the temple in Jerusalem in 586 B.C. What do you suppose they would have thought of the Israel's God when they beheld all the iniquity and idolatry? They would have concluded that Israel's "god" was no better than any of

the gods of the nations around them and that there was nothing special or unique about the religion of the Jews.

24c **"As it is written"** is quoted from Ezekiel 36:20,23. It is in the Greek perfect tense- it has been written and remains written, not to be changed or altered. It is a completed action with continuous results, or the continuance of an act completed in the past. The components are always a past action and continuous results. References to the Scriptures like this are often presented in the perfect tense. "The just shall live by faith" is one of those unalterable truths of Christianity. This perfect tense in reference to New Testament references to Old Testament texts is used 62 times in the New Testament, 16 times in Romans (1:17; 2:24; 3:4,10; 4:17; 8:36; 9:13,33; 10:15; 11:8,26; 12:19; 14:11; 15:3,9,21). This usage of the perfect is a strong argument for the verbal and plenary preservation of the Scripture, as the written Old Testament word stands forever and continues to.

11. Circumcision and Uncircumcision 2:25-27

Verses 25-28 could be summarized as "Religious Ritual Without Regeneration".

2:25 For circumcision verily profiteth,^{present} **if thou keep the law:**^{present subjunctive} **but if thou be**^{present subjunctive} **a breaker of the law,^a thy circumcision is made**^{perfect} **uncircumcision.^b**

25a **"breaker of the law"** or a "transgressor of the law", one who deliberately breaks the law. This would include both the Jew, who broke it despite his knowledge of the law, and the Gentile, who broke it in his ignorance.

25b This mind-set of the Jew nullifies the value of his circumcision by his hypocrisy. Circumcision is not the most important issue, but obedience. An uncircumcised Gentile who obeyed God would be in a better situation than a circumcised Jew who was disobedient. The circumcised Jew may even find himself judged by the uncircumcised Gentile! This circumcision, which the Jew prided himself in, was wasted by his sin and served only to increase the burden of his guilt and judgment as he continued in his rebellion. Circumcision is only effective spiritually if the Law is kept.

The Jew had the same mentality regarding his circumcision as some Christians have regarding their baptism, their keeping of sacraments, what denominational tag they call themselves or even their race or nationality ("I'm not a heathen, I was born in America!"). There was nothing more important! But both these Jews and religious Gentiles find themselves running into the same dead end in trying to appeal to these outward things for their internal justification. None of them work before God. Outward ritual cannot bring inward justification.

The Jews had the idea that their circumcision guaranteed their salvation in much the same way a Roman Catholic might think his baptism would guarantee his salvation. "The relevant Rabbinic material includes such statements as: 'Circumcised men do not descend into Gehenna'; 'Rabbi Levi (c. A.D 300) said: At the last Abraham will sit at the entrance to Gehenna and will not let any circumcised man of Israel go down there'; 'Circumcision will deliver Israel from Gehenna'. Only in certain extreme cases is the saving power of circumcision believed to be ineffective."⁷³

⁷³ C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans 1-8*, page 172.

2:26 Therefore if the uncircumcision keep^{present subjunctive} the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted^{future passive} for circumcision?^a

26a An uncircumcised Gentile could attain to the same righteousness as a circumcised Jew. Here, circumcision has no part to play in how righteous or unrighteous a believer is. A righteous Gentile is just as righteous as any observant Jew.

2:27 And shall not uncircumcision^a which is by nature, if it fulfil^{present participle} the law, judge^{future} thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?^{bc}

27a AV	ESV	LSV
27 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law?	27 Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law.	27 Then he who is physically uncircumcised but keeps the law will condemn you who have the written code and circumcision but break the law.

Why do the ESV and the LSV add “physically” before “uncircumcised” here?

27b How revolting for a circumcised Jew! In the day of judgment, a righteous Gentile who has never been circumcised could end up judging an unrighteous Jew who had been circumcised!

27c “**law**” The ESV and LSV have “written code”. How is that an improvement from the word “law”?

12. Who Is A Jew? 2:28,29

2:28^a For he is^{present} not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:^b

28a This is a very important passage because it has been used by Catholics and most Reformed churches to steal the Old Testament physical promises from Israel and grant them to the Gentiles. This is a foundational teaching of both the Church of Rome and most Protestant groups via their Covenant Theology and postmillennialism and amillennialism. Most heretical groups (Jehovah’s Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventists, Mormons, Church of Christ, etc.) uses these verses to substitute their sect for Israel when it comes to the blessings God gave to the Jews. This is called “Replacement Theology” and teaches that due to the Jews’ rejection of Christ, God replaced Israel with the Church. This is a heresy as clearly seen by Paul’s teachings in Romans 9-11.

Only Dispensationalism, among the theological systems, maintains this sharp distinction between Israel and the Church as seen in 1 Corinthians 10:32 (**Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:**). Israel is not the Church, and the Church is not Israel and the two cannot be mixed theologically. The Bible gives absolutely no encouragement to any theological system to steal the promises and covenants that God gave to Israel and give them to the Church or to the Gentiles. It is spiritual theft and vampirism because those covenant and promises are the lifeblood of the nation. Any theological system that tries to

apply the Jewish promises in the Psalms or Isaiah (for example) to the Church is a false theological system.

A majority of commentators do not make this distinction. Most Protestant and non-dispensational commentators teach that the Church replaced Israel after they rejected Christ. For an example of this, refer to the Thompson Chain Reference Bible and look through the Old Testament, especially in the Psalms and Isaiah 40-66 where Thompson put the Church into the chapter headings, where the church is not being talked about. Israel is the subject of these verses, not the Church. To try to make the Church “new Israel” (or something like that) will lead to all manner of theological dead-ends. The Church of Rome does not hold to this distinction, which enabled them to believe that they were the “City of God” (to cite Augustine) on earth and that it was okay to establish fascist state-church set-ups. John Calvin and the Massachusetts Puritans fell into that trap, which led to infant baptism and persecution of any religious group that did not conform to the established religion.

28b See remarks under Romans 2:29.

2:29 But he *is* a Jew,^a which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.^b

29a What is a Jew? Who is a Jew? Is everyone who calls himself a Jew really a Jew? Are these arrogant, self-centered Jews Paul described above true Jews or are they men who call themselves Jews who are ignorant of what it means to be a true Jew? The latter is true. Outward circumcision does not make a Jew (see Ishmael- he was a circumcised non-Jew!). Many Jews were physically circumcised went into deep apostasy. And a physical act does not produce a spiritual result. You could circumcise an unsaved Gentile and that would not make him a Jew. Nor does observance of Jewish ritual, such as synagogue attendance, knowledge of Hebrew, observance of feasts, wearing of phylacteries or anything else made a man a Jew. A true Jew is one who is circumcised inwardly- of the heart (Deuteronomy 10:16; 30:6). His old nature is cut free from his heart. It is still there but he is no longer bound to it. He obeys the Law in spirit, not just in letter. Paul then makes the distinction between a racial Jew and a spiritual Jew. Simply because Abraham is your father does not make you a true Jew for many modern Jews are atheist or are non-practicing and basically reject the God of their Fathers.

29b Let's make a summary of the court proceedings up to this point. This is a trial. The Gentile and the Jew are both on trial for their sin. In Romans 1,2, Paul dismantles the plea of the heathen, the hypocrite and the Hebrew. The charge against mankind: High treason Against the Government of Heaven by Sin. The Pleas:

1. The heathen: I plead innocent on the basis of ignorance.
 1. Refutation: The witness of nature and conscience show you your condition, Romans 1:19,20.
2. The hypocrite: I am not as bad as some and am better than most.
 1. Refutation: You do the same sins that other men whom you condemn commit, Romans 2:20.
3. The Hebrew: I'm a Jew.
 1. Refutation: You act like a Gentile and are guilty of the same sins. Your being a Jew does you no good.

Spiritual Applications, Romans Chapter 2

Advantages of race, religion, culture, breeding or religion do not guarantee that a man will be a good man or that he will accept Christ. The Jews had every possible advantage, yet they killed their Messiah and persecuted His prophets. Today, their spiritual condition has not improved, despite witnesses by the Church and by Christians. They are in spiritual blindness and will remain in that state until the second coming. All of their advantages and everything God did for Israel was wasted, and that must be accounted for in the tribulation period.

We also see what makes a “true Jew”. It is not outward observances of rites and ceremonies (like circumcision) but a proper attitude toward God through the spiritual circumcision of the heart that Moses talked of in Deuteronomy 10:16 and 30:6. Physical circumcision may get a man into the covenant, but it has no effect upon the heart. Keeping the Sabbath or the dietary laws have no effect on the heart. Only when the heart is circumcised from carnality and self-will any positive spiritual activity result.

Romans Chapter 3

The Jew would be expected to react strongly against Paul's condemnation of him along with the Gentiles. Paul anticipates Jewish objections by answering them in chapter 3. The Jew would ask 7 questions and Paul would answer them. But most of these questions were just "red herrings" that they would throw out into the debate in order to try to confuse the issue and counter and criticism of them. The asking and answering of questions was a favorite rabbinical method of teaching, one Paul would have been very familiar with.

Questions in Romans 3:

Question 1: Is there any advantage of being a Jew? (3:1,2)	Answer- Yes, because the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God.
Question 2: Will Israel's unfaithfulness nullify God's promises? (3:3,4)	Answer- No.
Question 3: If God uses human sin to set forth His glory, would He not be unrighteous to punish that same sin? (3:5,6)	Answer- No.
Question 4: If the truth of God was enhanced through the sin and rebellion of the Jew and if He got glory through it, why would He punish the Jew as a sinner? (3:7,8)	Answer- What a silly question! Do you think God will overlook your sin simply because you are a Jew? If He would not overlook Gentile sin, why should He pass over the sins of the Jews?
Question 5: Are Jews better than other people? (3:9-20)	Answer- No, but they are special in God's eyes and have unique privileges and responsibilities, which will subject them to more intense judgments. Many Jews thought they had some special "protection" with God due to no other fact that they were Jews. Paul, as an ex-Pharisee, probably held to such a view dogmatically until the Lord corrected his thinking.
Question 6: How does God save people? (3:21-30)	Answer: By grace through faith, without the deeds of the law.
Question 7: Does faith nullify the law? (3:31)	Answer: No, faith fulfills the law.

In Romans 3:1-8 Paul raised and answered four objections that a Jew might have offered to squirm out from under the guilty verdict Paul had pronounced on him in chapter 2. The essential objections are as follows.

1. The Jews are a privileged people (vv. 1-2).
2. God will remain faithful to the Jews despite their unfaithfulness to Him (vv. 3-4).

3. God will be merciful since the Jews' failings have magnified God's righteousness.
4. God will overlook the Jews' sins since they contribute to the glory of God.

Self-righteous people still raise these objections. Some people assume that because God has blessed them, He will not condemn them. Some believe the character of God prohibits Him from condemning them. Some think that even though they have sinned God will be merciful and not condemn them. Some feel that since everything we do glorifies God in some way God would be unjust to condemn them.”⁷⁴

13. What Advantage Has The Jew? 3:1-2

3:1 What advantage^a then hath the Jew?^{bc} or what profit *is there* of circumcision?

1a The Tyndale, Geneva and Bishops Bibles use “preferment”. The Coverdale Bible uses “furtherance”.

1b Seeing the Jews are in the same condemnation as the Gentiles, as Paul proved in chapter 2, is there any advantage to being a Jew? Does he have any special status or standing before God? If Jews and Gentiles are both guilty before God, what advantage is there in being a Jew? Paul says yes! They have the advantage that they received the oracles of God. They received the Scriptures and were placed into custodianship of them. And they did a rather good job in their preservation and guardianship of the Old Testament scriptures.

1c It was a grand thing to be a Jew in the Old Testament days. When all the rest of the world was in the dark, the Jews had the light for “unto them were committed the oracles of God.” The Jews had many spiritual advantages over the Gentiles:

1. In knowledge and revelation: he had light that the Gentiles did not have and was given the Old Testament scriptures.
2. In laws: he had the Law of Moses
3. In government: God was their King
4. In religion: it was a God-established religion
5. In social life: the Jews were the most advanced social people

So the Jew had an advantage in external privilege but not in divine acceptance. What did the Jew do with these advantages? Nothing- he wound up in the same pit with the Gentile.

3:2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed^{aorist passive} the oracles of God.^{abcde}

2a Notice this name for the Scriptures, the "**oracles of God**". This is simply a term to describe the sayings of God as He spoke them to the Old Testament prophets, who later preserved them in written form. In the heathen religions of Paul's day, if a worshiper of a certain god wanted a revelation or some divine guidance, he would go to the appropriate temple, pay the required sum, and one of the priests or priestesses would give him the desired word. The Bible is God's word to us. God speaks to us through His Word. The Bible, as the Word of God, is the means and channel that God uses to communicate with His people, hence it's being called an “oracle”.

⁷⁴ Thomas Constable, *Notes on Romans*.

We also see that in order for a set of "religious writings" to be the "oracles of God", it must be given through the Jews, so both the Old and New Testaments qualify. The New Testament qualifies because every writer was a racial Jew (even Luke I believe was a racial Jew). This means that the Hindu and Buddhist "scriptures", although ancient, do not qualify since Israel had nothing to do with them. This also disqualifies the Koran since Israel had nothing to do with that. These writings are the voice of uninspired sinners, not the oracles of a holy God.

2b An "oracle" is a person or agency considered to be a source of wise counsel or prophetic opinion. It may also be a revealed prediction or precognition of the future that is spoken through another object. This would certainly apply to the living word of God.

"Profane writers make this word to signify the answer that was given by the demons, or heathen gods; and yet the Holy Ghost doth not disdain to make use of this word, (as well as divers others), though abused to heathenish superstition (Matthew Poole, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*)."

2c Like it or not, God has favored the Jew above the Gentile. God gave the Jew the Scriptures, the Law, the Sabbath, the sacrifices and the Kingdom. God gave none of these to any Gentile nation. This would breed resentment, envy and jealousy among the Gentiles, especially when they saw how unfaithful Israel has been to God despite all of these advantages. The Gentile might think "Israel was unfaithful so God will turn from Israel to the Gentiles". This is a root for the heresy of "Replacement Theology" (that the Church has replaced Israel) and anti-semitism.

2d This is how we know that works like the Book of Mormon or the Quran or Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures or the various Buddhist and Hindu works are all frauds. The oracles of God were given to the Jew, not to the Gentiles. If your "holy book" did not come from Israel or the Jew, then it did not come from God and thus, is not inspired or authoritative.

2e "To the great detriment of the church, many of its ministers mimic the heathen oracles, as they deliver what they imagine to be private utterances given to them by God, rather than preaching truth from the scriptures. The notion that the Lord speaks to each man, audibly or inaudibly, has wrought great harm. God gave His word through a small group of select men, and these written words are the only true oracles of God.

"The careless way in which ministers set forth their thoughts or imaginations ("God spoke to me") and the way in which men and women justify their sin by claiming the Lord led them to do it match the very actions which brought divine censure upon those Jehovah labeled false prophets in the Old Testament era."⁷⁵

14. What If Some Do Not Believe? 3:3-4

3:3 For what if some did not believe?^{a-aorist} shall their unbelief^b make the faith^c of God without effect?^{d-future}

3a This is a question that Calvinists also ask but cannot find an answer. We who believe our Bible say that it is God's will for all men to be saved, although we realize that not all will be saved. The Calvinist, with his doctrinal bias, asks "Well, if God wants all men to be saved, then is His plan defeated unless all men are saved?" Of course not! Paul says the same thing when asked if God's plan for Israel was thwarted because some of them did not believe. This question

⁷⁵ James Knox, *A Christ Honoring Commentary on the Book of Romans*, volume 1, page 288, Kindle edition.

is also the basis for Covenant Theology. The Jews did not believe. Does that make the faith of God of no effect? Is God done forever with Israel? Did God transfer the kingdom promises to the Church? Paul says "God forbid" in Romans 3:4a. The unbelief of the Jews has not altered the Abrahamic or Davidic Covenants one bit. God still intends to return to Israel and to use them as He promised to and to set up the Millennial Kingdom as He promised regardless of Israel's unbelief. All Israel will be saved eventually at the end of the Tribulation, so this faith will be vindicated in the end. But these promises and covenants God made to Israel are unconditional and cannot be disannulled by the unbelief of man.

The idea behind this question is that the Jews thought that unbelief actually enhanced God's faithfulness and therefore should be encouraged. It was a good thing to do a bad thing because the sin would enhance the good response of God. Would the unfaithfulness of some make God unfaithful? God forbid! Therefore, God would be faithful even if some were unfaithful, and that's a good thing! But what twisted logic! God is never unfaithful and He never goes back on His Word. God had given promises to Israel but the fact that He gave such promises did not mean that Israel would escape judgment by their unfaithfulness, even in the light of those promises and the faithfulness of God.

3b AV

ESV

LSV

3 For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?	3 What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God?	3 What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God?
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"unbelief" The ESV and LSV mistranslate this as "faithlessness", which is not the same as "unbelief" You can still believe yet be unfaithful, lazy, unreliable.

3c **"faith"** The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles have "promises". Why? The Greek here is "pistis".

3d "Some will say, "If So-and-so, and So-and-so do not believe the gospel, then religion is a failure." We have read of a great many things being failures nowadays. A little time ago, it was a question whether marriage was not a failure. I suppose that, by-and-by, eating our dinners will be a failure, breathing will be a failure, everything will be a failure. But now the gospel is said to be a failure. Why? Because certain gentlemen of professed culture and supposed knowledge do not believe it. Well, dear friends, there have been other things that have not been believed in by very important individuals, and yet they have turned out to be true. I am not quite old enough to remember all that was said about the introduction of the steam-engine, though I remember right well going to see a steam-engine and a railway-train as great wonders when I was a boy. Before the trains actually ran, all the old coachmen, and all the farmers that had horses to sell, would not believe for a moment that an engine could be made to go on the rails, and to drag carriages behind it; and in parliament they had to say that they thought they could produce an engine that could go at the speed of eight miles an hour. They dare not say more, because it would have been incredible if they did. According to the wise men of the time, everything was to go to the bad, and the engines would blow up, the first time they started with a train. But they did not blow up, and everybody now smiles at what those learned gentlemen (for some of them were men of standing and learning) ventured then to say. Look at the gentlemen who now tell us that the gospel is a failure. They are the successors of those who have risen up, one after the other; whose principal object has been to refute all that went before them. They call themselves philosophers; and, as I have often said, the history of philosophy is a history of fools, a history of human folly. Man has gone from one form of philosophy to another, and every

time that he has altered his philosophy, he has only made a slight variation in the same things. Philosophy is like a kaleidoscope. The philosopher turns it round, and exclaims that he has a new view of things...I have to say, with Paul, "What if some did not believe?" It is no new thing; for there have always been some who have rejected the revelation of God. What then? You and I had better go on believing, and testing for ourselves, and proving the faithfulness of God, and living upon Christ our Lord, even though we see another set of doubters, and another, and yet another ad infinitum. The gospel is no failure, as many of us know."⁷⁶

3:4 God forbid:^a yea, let^{aorist middle optative} God be^{present middle/passive imperative} true, but every man a liar; as it is written,^{bc-perfect passive} That thou mightest be justified^{aorist passive} in thy sayings, and mightest overcome^{aorist subjunctive} when thou art judged.^{d-present active infinitive}

4a AV

ESV

LSV

4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.	4 By no means! Let God be true though every one were a liar, as it is written, "That you may be justified in your words, and prevail when you are judged."	4 By no means! Let God be true though every one were a liar, as it is written, "That you may be justified in your words, and prevail when you are judged."
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"**God forbid**" is about a strong negative statement as you can make. It is literally "let it not be!" or "perish the thought!" Most commentators attack the phrase but all the traditional translations use it, so it did not originate with the Authorized Version, it only maintained the traditional reading. Even the Rhemis-Douay Version (Roman Catholic), the Revised Version of 1881 and American Standard Version of 1901 keep this reading. John Darby dropped it in his translation, replacing it with "For what"? That is a much weaker reading. The modern versions are no more literal and are usually weaker. The RSV, ESV and LSV use "by no means!" The NIV "not at all" and "by no means!" The NASV has "may it never be!" The New King James Version has "certainly not!" Also see in Romans 3:6.

4b "**it is written**" Greek perfect tense- it has been written and it remains written, not to be changed. This tense is common with this Greek word in referring to a divine truth that has been revealed and preserved in Scripture. Perfect tense- it has been written and remains written, not to be changed or altered. It is a completed action with continuous results or the continuance of an act completed in the past. The components are always a past action and continuous results. References to the Scriptures like this are often presented in the perfect tense. "The just shall live by faith" is one of those unalterable truths of Christianity. This perfect tense in reference to New Testament references to Old Testament texts is used 62 times in the New Testament, 16 times in Romans (1:17; 2:24; 3:4,10; 4:17; 8:36; 9:13,33; 10:15; 11:8,26; 12:19; 14:11; 15:3,9,21). This usage of the perfect is a strong argument for the verbal and plenary preservation of the Scripture, as the written Old Testament word stands forever. What about this unbelief the Jews displayed toward the oracles of God? They received the Scriptures but it didn't seem to do them much good spiritually. Their disobedience consisted in their almost constant national obedience to those oracles. They also neglected them to the degree that they nearly passed out of existence. By Josiah's day, only a single copy of it was found to be in

⁷⁶ Charles Spurgeon, "God Justified, Though Man Believes Not" in *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, 1892, volume 38, sermon number 2255.

existence and it only survived because it had been lost in the temple. Jewish pride in this possession of the oracles was also evident. Although they possessed the oracles, the oracles had never possessed them.

With reference to the Jewish attitude toward their sin, the rabbis taught that all of Israel was righteous. Even if a Jew was to be punished for his sin (highly unlikely according to rabbinical tradition), that Jew would still eventually be saved and be given eternal life. The rabbis were guilty of a form of Jewish universalism. Paul condemns that idea and states that the Jews have no inborn immunity to judgment. If they fall under the condemnation of God, they would not receive eternal life but would rather go to hell just like any Gentile, regardless of the fact that they were Jews.

4c **“as it is written”** is also a quote from Psalm 51:4. Some commentators claim Paul is quoting the Septuagint here. We view with great suspicion any translation of the Old Testament into Greek prior to the Church Age. There is no reason to believe Paul was quoting any B.C. Septuagint as there was no such translation. We believe the Septuagint dates from the early church era, second or third century at the earliest.⁷⁷

4d “When” they are judged, not “if”. Certain judgment waits for the nation of Israel, just like as for everyone else.

Peter Ruckman gives his interpretation of this verse as “Sinners are going to try to justify themselves at the White Throne Judgment, and, in so doing, they are going to have to *condemn* God. Look at it, right smack in front of your face is Job 40:8...God will “overcome” at that judgment by quoting His Book. Note the “oracles of God” right in the passage (3:2) (Peter Ruckman, *Salient Verses*, page 247).” He adds to this in his *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, “Romans 3:4—**“God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.”** (Paul quotes Psa. 51:4 when he says **“it is written.”** Notice that Paul changes the voice of the verb from active to passive. **“That thou [God], mightest be justified in thy sayings** [The context is the Bible. Look at Rom. 3:1–3.] **and mightest overcome when thou [God] art judged.”**)

“Notice that all unsaved men are going to get a chance to judge God, and try to condemn Him. The Bible is written (Rom. 3:1–3) so that when men try to judge God and condemn Him, God takes the Book and “overcomes” the man and condemns him. We have a terrific illustration of this great truth in the gospels. Did you know that every question that the scribes and Pharisees asked Jesus, He answered? Did you know that every question that He asked them, they could not answer? This means that the nature of the White Throne Judgment is that men get up there and say, “Where do the heathen go?” God answers. “Are the heathen lost?” God answers. “Do babies go to hell?” God answers. “Did Christ die for everyone?” God answers. “Why did you elect some to salvation and others not?” God answers. “Why did you pass by these and not the others?” God answers. “Why did you have them saved in one dispensation by grace, and another by faith, and another by faith and works, and another by works without faith?” God answers. “Why did you make the Bible so hard to understand?” God answers. “Why didn’t you give us the original manuscripts and the original Greek and preserve it?” God answers.

“Sinners are always trying to justify themselves and their sin and condemn God. Man is very good at this. But look at the example of David in Psalm 51. He could have tried to blame God for his sins of murder and adultery, but David, godly man he was, condemned himself and

⁷⁷ My seminary teacher, O Talmadge Spence, founder of Foundations Bible College in Dunn, North Carolina, said that the best use for the Septuagint is as a Greek dictionary.

justified God. David knew he had no grounds to try to condemn God and justify himself, no matter how much his old nature wanted to try.

God may allow sinners who will be judged at the Great White Throne to “accuse God”. God may allow them to air all of their grievances against God, and they will charge Him with being unrighteous, unfair, cruel, etc. God will let them have their say. When they have “shot their wad”, God will refute all of their arguments and accusations, justify Himself and He will then judge them in absolute righteousness.”⁷⁸

15. How Shall God Judge The World? 3:5-8

3:5 But if our unrighteousness^a commend^{present} the righteousness of God, what shall we say?^{future} Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?^b (I speak^{present} as a man)^{cde}

5a “**But if our unrighteousness...**” Notice Paul did not say that our unrighteousness would commend the righteousness of God, but says “What if..?” Even if our sin commended the righteousness of God, would we escape judgment? Of course not! If God uses us in spite of our unrighteousness and if our unrighteousness does not affect His unconditional covenants and promises, is He then unrighteous if He punishes us for that unrighteousness? If it doesn’t affect His plans, then why should He judge us? Paul rejects that question with another “God forbid” and stresses that God will judge the world for their unrighteousness and that it is not connected with His plans. God’s holiness demands He take vengeance on the unrighteousness of man.

The idea is since our badness demonstrates God’s goodness, then God should let us sin and “live it up” so it will make Him look better when He saves us and forgives us. But this idea is to be rejected. We glorify God by holiness, submission and obedience, not by sin.

5b The Coverdale Bible weakens this to simply God “being angry” The Geneva Bible has “punishes” which is still not as good as “taketh vengeance”.

5c The Jews would appeal to exemption from judgment on the basis of “Our unfaithfulness serves to commend the faithfulness of God, therefore we ought not to be punished.” According to this line of thought, Paul says the worse we are, the better, for the more we sin the greater will be God’s mercy toward us. What kind of spiritual logic is that? If God did not punish Jewish sin, then how could He possibly be righteous and just when He judged the rest of the world? If God would not punish Jewish sin then He could not rightly punish Gentile sin, otherwise He would be rightly accused of showing favoritism and “using two decks”. Gentiles at the judgment could accuse God with being unfair since He would have overlooked Jewish sin. If God overlooked Jewish sin for no good reason, why should He not overlook Gentile sin? But God could not allow such a thing as it would violate His holiness. The Jews could then not appeal to that false hope that God would overlook their sin and not judge them.

5d “**I speak as a man**”, or Paul says “I’m coming down to the same level as these unregenerate Jews and am going to put it ‘right over the plate, waist-high’ so they will not misunderstand what I’m saying to them”.

5e “The idea is that since our *badness* demonstrates God’s *goodness*, He ought to let us get away with our sin since He can look better. See similar statement in Romans 6:1. But the

⁷⁸ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on Romans*, pages 734-736.

answer in both cases is *no* (vss. 6-8; Romans 6:2). WE should glorify God by *submission* and *obedience*, not by *contrast* ."⁷⁹

3:6 God forbid:^{a-*orist middle optative*} **for then how shall God judge**^{*future*} **the world?**^b

6a "**God forbid**" is about a strong a negative statement as you can make. It is literally "let it not be!" or "perish the thought!" Most commentators attack the phrase, but all the traditional translations use it, so it did not originate with the Authorized Version.

6b This question presupposes that God will judge the world, especially at the Judgment of the Nations (Matthew 25) and the Great White Throne judgment (Revelation 20). The Bema Seat judgment of 1 Corinthians 3, Romans 14 and Revelation 4 is not a judgment of the "world" but only of believers. The Bema Seat (or Judgment Seat of Christ) is also a different judgment in its character from the Great White Throne and the Judgment of the Nations.

3:7 For if the truth of God hath more abounded^{a-*orist*} **through my lie unto his glory;**
why yet am I^a **also judged**^{*present passive*} **as a sinner?**^b

7a Emphatic.

7b Others would ask "if my unrighteousness is actually promoting the glory of God, then why should God judge me as a sinner? After all, I'm helping Him and glorifying Him!" What the Jew did not understand that God was using Israel in spite of their unrighteousness and not because of it. Israel's unrighteousness in itself did not promote the glory of God but was working around it instead. Unrighteousness itself does not glorify God but rather how God uses it to eventually glorify Himself.

3:8 And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported,^{a-*present passive*} **and as some**
affirm^{*present*} **that we say,)**^{*infinitive*} **Let us do**^{a-*orist subjunctive*} **evil, that good may come?**^{b-*orist*}
^{*subjunctive*} **whose damnation is**^{*present*} **just.**^{cd}

8a "**slanderously reported**" The same Greek word as "blaspheme". Paul was being blasphemed by his enemies since they were claiming he was saying something that he really wasn't.

8b This entire attitude was based on the false premise "**let us do evil so that good may come**". This is a similar question to Romans 6:1 "**Shall we continue in sin so that grace may abound?**" Both questions have the same negative answer. The Jew may have answered that God was using them more in their supposed unrighteousness than He would have otherwise. "Let's sin so that God can really glorify Himself in us!" Such attitudes display an ignorance of what really constitutes the glory of God. God is not glorified by our sin, period. Israel, who was inadvertently glorifying God by their disobedience in the calling out of the Gentiles would receive no credit for the works of God in this situation, but they would be judged as the sinners they were. Of course, Paul taught no such doctrine although his enemies twisted his words to say such.

⁷⁹ Peter Ruckman, *Ruckman Reference Bible*, page 1488.

8c The moral is that no one should imagine themselves immune from God's judgment for any reason. If you sin, you will be judged unless you accept the Gospel. God will judge sin and no excuse will prevent it.

8d **"let us do evil so that good may come"** "The mighty paradox of justification (without works) lent itself easily to the distortions, as well as to the contradictions, of sinners. 'Let us do evil that good may come' no doubt represented the report which prejudice and bigotry would regularly carry away and spread after every discourse and every argument about free forgiveness. It is so still: 'If this is true, we may live as we like'; 'If this is true, then the vilest sinner makes the best saint.'"⁸⁰

16. Both Jew and Gentile Guilty Before God 3:9-19

3:9 What then? are we better^{present middle/passive} than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved^{a- aorist middle} both Jews and Gentiles, that they are^{present} all under sin;^{bcde}

9a **"we have before proved"** A forensic accusation.

9b **"all under sin"** And that includes the Virgin Mary! Paul begins to summarize chapters 1 and 2. His premise is the Jews and Gentiles are both guilty of sin and both would be judged by God. One group was not better in the eyes of God since they both practiced unrighteousness and were guilty of sin. This is another slap at Jewish pride. They thought themselves better than the Gentiles which they had no basis for. Advantaged (Romans 3:1-4) does not mean better. This again shows the universal guilt of sin since all men either are Jews or Gentiles.

9c A summary of the condition of fallen man (Romans 3:9-18):

1. They are all under sin- Romans 3:9
2. There is none righteous- Romans 3:10
3. There are none that understand- Romans 3:11
4. None seek after God- Romans 3:11
5. They have all gone out of the way- Romans 3:12
6. They are all unprofitable- Romans 3:12
7. None of them do good- Romans 3:12
8. Their throat is an open sepulcher- Romans 3:13
9. They use their tongues for deceit- Romans 3:13
10. The poison of asps is under their lips- Romans 3:13
11. Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness- Romans 3:14
12. Their feet are swift to shed blood- Romans 3:15
13. They leave a trail of destruction and misery- Romans 3:16
14. They do not know the way of peace- Romans 3:17
15. There is no fear of God before their eyes- Romans 3:18

But! "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Corinthians 6:11).

This is the natural state and condition of every man. Adam's sin, transmitted through the human race, has caused fatal and irreparable spiritual "birth defects" in all men. Our condition,

⁸⁰ H.C.G. Moule.

as listed above, is so severe that there is no cure or treatment. The only remedy is to die to the Old Man and be born again (John 3).

9d “Not long ago, one of our missionaries, out in China, was attacked concerning the Bible on this very ground. One of the learned men said to him, “This Bible of yours cannot be as ancient as you say that it is, for it is quite clear that the next chapter of the Epistle to the Nomads must have been written by somebody who had been in China, and who had seen the habits and ways of the people here,” — so accurate is the Holy Spirit, who knew right well what the ways and manners and secret vices of the heathen were, and still are (Charles Spurgeon).”

8e “**under sin**” “Some form of the word sin is used 49 times in this epistle. In Romans all men are under sin (Romans 7:14), so they die by sin (Romans 5:12); but Jesus Christ saves men from sin (Romans 6:7, 18, 22), so that being made dead to sin (Romans 6:2), it is no longer necessary to live in sin Romans (6:1). Preach that!”⁸¹

3:10^a As it is written,^{b-perfect passive} **There is**^{present} **none righteous, no, not one:**^{cdefg}

10a Verses 10-18 is one of the strongest in dealing with the depravity of fallen man.

10b “**as it is written**” Greek perfect tense- it has been written and it remains written, not to be changed. This tense is common with this Greek word in referring to a divine truth that has been revealed and preserved in Scripture. Perfect tense- it has been written and remains written, not to be changed or altered. It is a completed action with continuous results or the continuance of an act completed in the past. The components are always a past action and continuous results. References to the Scriptures like this are often presented in the perfect tense. “The just shall live by faith” is one of those unalterable truths of Christianity. This perfect tense in reference to New Testament references to Old Testament texts is used 62 times in the New Testament, 16 times in Romans (1:17; 2:24; 3:4,10; 4:17; 8:36; 9:13,33; 10:15; 11:8,26; 12:19; 14:11; 15:3,9,21).

10c The universal condemnation of both Jew and Gentile is laid out in Romans 3:10-20. Paul is like a prosecuting attorney in the courtroom making his concluding remarks to the jury. First, there are none who are righteous. No Jew is righteous. No Gentile is righteous. No individual is righteous. No people are righteous. Every individual has sinned. This is spoken of all unregenerate men, regardless of rank, station or income. Every nation has sinned. The United States is no better in this regard than any other nation in history, despite what those who substitute patriotism for Christianity as their religion may try to maintain. Even Adam was not righteous. He was innocent, which was simply untested righteousness, a test he failed.

It is interesting that Paul will use the Jewish scriptures, the Old Testament, that the Jew put his hopes for righteousness upon, as the tool to condemn the Jew.

10d “**there is none righteous, no, not one**” And this includes the Virgin Mary, as she was not righteous apart from Christ, despite anything the Church of Rome may try to wrongly assert. The sin-guilt of mankind is universal- none are exempt. Also see Ecclesiastes 7:20 “**For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.**”

10e Verses 10-12 are quoted from Psalm 14:3 and 53:1.

81 James Knox, *A Christ Honoring Commentary on the Book of Romans*, volume 1, page 315, Kindle edition.

10f Man is:

- 1- Depraved in character (vv. 10-12)
- 2- Depraved in conversation (vv. 13,14)
 - A. In his speech
- 3- Depraved in conduct (vv. 15-18).

10g This means everyone, including the Virgin Mary, who was also a sinner and who needed a Saviour in Luke 1:47, **And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.**

3:11^a There is^{present} none that understandeth,^{b-present participle} there is^{present} none that seeketh after^{present participle} God.^c

11a Paul quotes their own prophets to the Jews so that they might see what their own character was by nature. They could not appeal that Paul was quoting Gentile writers or just pulling these vices out of thin air. Paul would say, “as Gentile mouths have been already stopped by the descriptions of their vices, you also, the favored people of God, have your mouths stopped by the descriptions of yourselves taken from your own prophets.” Their own prophets and Scriptures were condemning them, along with the Gentiles.

11b **“there is none that understandeth”** Neither Jew nor Gentile truly understood the law or revelation of God. Paul will say in Ephesians 4:18 that their understanding is **“darkened”**- no light. Jeremiah stresses this in Jeremiah 4:22 **“For my people is foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish children, and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.”**

11c **“none that seeketh after God”** We are all as brute beasts without the proper spiritual understanding that would make us desire to seek after God. In reality, we are seeking to get as far away from God as possible! No man in his natural state seeks after God nor is there any desire to know Him on a personal basis. Men everywhere have no desire for God and no craving to know His law. All men are running just as fast as they can away from holy things. God reaches out to man and man bites His hand as a ungrateful dog. Men were seeking their own false gods, demons and idols but did not seek after the one true God. Men would rather seek after a lie than to seek for the truth. A man who refuses to seek after his Creator, his Judge, his King, is neglectful of his highest and most urgent duty- to seek out and learn of such a God and to honor Him as such. Surely will God judge a man for his failure in this duty.

The only way fallen man will seek after God is through the prompting of the Holy Spirit as He begins His work of conviction that will (hopefully) lead to the conversion of the sinner. But it is God who starts this process. Fallen man does not start seeking after God on his own volition.

“Moreover, my dear brethren, if we do not seek after God and do not find Him, in the end we shall lose everything. Suppose we live in this world simply to hoard up money? Is it a sublime thing to have it reported in *The Illustrated London News* that we died “worth” so many thousands of pounds? What is the good of such a notice as that? Or, suppose we gain honor and fame so that our names are handed down to posterity? Will that charm the ear of Death, or keep a single worm from devouring our body in the grave? What is the use of fame—the breath of men’s nostrils—when it is gained by flattery, or by doing that which God would not have us do? Is there anything worth living for except our God? To die without God, oh, what an eternal loss is that! To wake up in the world to come and to have no Heavenly Father, to have no Advocate in the Day of Judgment, to have no Rock of refuge to hide under in the Last Tremendous Day! O Sirs, if you seek not God, you are, indeed, fools! I dare not use any milder

expression than that. We are all fools that we did not seek Him earlier, but if we permit age to tell upon us and our God is still not sought, then write upon us that word, "FOOLS!" in capital letters and speak it with an emphasis, for so we deserve to be described! The first thing that a man who wishes to be accounted wise should do is to know his God and to be right with his God."⁸²

3:12 They are all gone out of the way,^{a-aorist} they are together become unprofitable;^{b-aorist passive} there is^{present} none that doeth good,^{cd} no, not one.^{e-present}

12a **"gone out of the way"** This is a good definition of sin. None of us walks in the way of holiness but rather have taken the broad way that leads to the pit. None of us are in the way of holiness and life. We are all unprofitable, spiritually worthless to God because of our sin and unholiness. They are on the broad way that leads to destruction and have forsaken the narrow way (Matthew 7:13 **"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:"**). To the natural mind, this is understandable. If one is traveling on the long trip of life, wouldn't it be easier to travel on a 6-lane interstate rather than on a goat path? But the broad, easy way is the one that leads to hell and is the path the majority of men travel.

12b **"become unprofitable."** They are all unprofitable. They are bad figs that cannot be eaten (Jeremiah 24:2 **"One basket had very good figs, even like the figs that are first ripe: and the other basket had very naughty figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad."**). They are bad fish that are cast away (Matthew 13:48 **"Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away."**). They are fruitless branches good for only feeding the fire (Ezekiel 15:2-6 **"Son of man, What is the vine tree more than any tree, or than a branch which is among the trees of the forest? Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or will men take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon? Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel; the fire devoureth both the ends of it, and the midst of it is burned. Is it meet for any work? Behold, when it was whole, it was meet for no work: how much less shall it be meet yet for any work, when the fire hath devoured it, and it is burned? Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; As the vine tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem."**). A man without God is a man who is not useful to God. Also see Paul's comment in Philemon 11 (**"Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me:"**)

Strong's #889 *achreioō*; to render useless, spoil, become depraved. Used only here in the New Testament.

12c None of us do any good. Any "good" we may appear to do is not good in a spiritual, eternal sense. Even the good things a sinner may do are not motivated by holiness but by self. With that improper motivation, our "good" is not good in God's eyes. This is quoted from Psalm 14:1-3 and 53:1-3.

12d The word "good" in Romans 3:12 is different than "good" in Romans 3:8.

1. In Romans 3:8, it's Strong's #18 *agathos*; of good constitution or nature, useful, salutary, good, pleasant, agreeable, joyful, happy, excellent, distinguished, upright, honorable

⁸² Charles Spurgeon, "The Greatest Folly in the World" in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, volume 43, sermon number 2545.

2. In Romans 3:12, it's Strong's #5544 chrestotês; moral goodness, integrity, benignity, kindness, profitableness, wholesomeness.

The difference is that agathos refers to something that is inherently good while chrestotês refers more to a moral goodness.

12e In summary, all men fall short of God's standard or righteousness and there are no exceptions to this. It is a universal truth/

3:13^a Their throat is an open^{perfect passive participle} sepulchre;^b with their tongues they have used deceit;^{c-imperfect} the poison of asps is under their lips:

13a Paul does not use flattering words, as those liberal preachers do who go on about the dignity of human nature or the glory of man. Man was once a noble creature when he was created in the image of God; but sin blotted out all his dignity and degraded him into the vilest of sinners.

Verses 13-18 are a perfect description of the evil, blood-thirsty and murderous "religion" of Islam.

13b **"open sepulchre"** This is extremely graphic. Go to any graveyard, dig up a coffin that has been there for a year, lift the lid and gaze within. THAT is fallen human nature! Most graves are closed for a reason. The throat of sinners is an open grave sending forth a corrupting stench, waiting for prey and entrapping those who fall into it. And what is in this open tomb is horrible to behold. These spiritually dead men were possessed with a dead throat. Dead words proceeded through that grave of a throat which issued forth from a dead heart. Nothing profitable comes from a grave. No life-giving words which lead to spiritual life issue forth from such sepulchers.

1. Psalm 5:9 **"For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue."**

2. Psalm 140:3 **"They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adders' poison is under their lips. Selah."**

13c **"deceit"** These are the kind of people who lie constantly yet are offended if they are called liars. The poison of asps is under their lips. They have honey on their lips, poison under them. Their words are poison which can only kill rather than to heal and to impart life.

A. Jeremiah 9:3-5 **"And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the LORD. Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders. And they will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity."**

B. James 3:1-12 says much about the misuse of the tongue.

3:14 Whose mouth is full^{present} of cursing and bitterness:^a

14a This is quoted from Psalm 10:7 **"His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity."** Instead of being full of the Holy Spirit and having words seasoned with salt and grace, their mouth can only spit out cursing and bitterness. This is all you can expect from a spiritual rebel.

3:15 Their feet are swift to shed^{aorist infinitive} blood:^{ab}

15a Romans 3:15-17 is quoted from Isaiah 59:7,8.

15b They run as fast as they can away from God and to sin. Instead of following after peace and life and using their feet to promote the Kingdom of God, they use them for murder. Even if a sinner never takes a life, there is murder in his heart toward someone and would kill him if he thought he could get away with it. Life is cheap to the sinner, and they have no intention of obeying the sixth commandment forbidding murder. If it suits them, they will inflict bodily harm. At the slightest provocation they shed blood. These are the type of people who are ready to fight at the drop of a hat. They cannot claim the blessing of the peacemaker of Matthew 5:9. (**"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."**) Both Josephus and the Talmud testify to the wide-scale practice of murder in Israel in Paul's day.

3:16 Destruction and misery^a are in their ways:^b

16a This is what they leave in their wake and these are the footprints they leave behind. Not only are they miserable in their own sin but they seek to spread it to others. After all, "misery loves company". A sinner is not happy unless he can corrupt else into the same sin.

16b AV

ESV

LSV

16 Destruction and misery <i>are</i> in their ways:	16 in their paths are ruin and misery,	16 DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS,
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There are lots of variations for "misery" among the translations. The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles have "wretchedness". The Geneva Bible has "calamity". The Bishop's Bible and LSV read as the Authorized Version. The ESV uses "ruin".

3:17 And the way of peace have they not known:^{a-aorist}

17a They certainly are looking for peace and would like to find it but they cannot do so since they reject the God of peace. They are ignorant of what true peace really is and how to obtain it. These sinners wouldn't know peace if it came up and bit them. Sinners, especially those in government and in the United Nations, think that if men quit shooting at each other then they can have peace. But the primary peace Paul is talking about is internal, peace in the heart and peace with God. This kind of peace no sinner possesses or understands. And they cannot understand the peace of heart that a Christian has.

3:18 There is^{present} no fear of God before their eyes.^{ab}

18a This is quoted from Psalm 36:1. This is the root of the sinner's problem. He has no fear of hell, judgment, the Great White Throne or of God Himself. And since they had no fear of God, they have no wisdom (Proverbs 1:7) since it is the fear of the Lord that is the beginning of wisdom.

18b If we were to summarize the condition of the world in this fallen condition, we can imagine a patient with a multitude of problems sitting in the examination room of a doctor. As the doctor

begins his examination, he gives him an IQ test but learns that the patient has no understanding. He looks into his mouth but finds only cursing and bitterness. He checks under the tongue and finds the poison of asps. He examines the feet and determines they are swift in running to shed blood. The doctor then steps back and begins to shake his head. His nurse cries out "Doctor, is there nothing that can help this patient?" The doctor replies "There is only one hope for this patient. He must be born again!" Our first birth resulted in so many spiritual birth defects as to render us spiritually stillborn. The effects of sin cannot be cured in the human body. Hence, the only way to escape the effects of sin is to die to that sin and to be born again by the Spirit of God!

We realize that not every sinner sinks to these depths in his life. Some sinners are almost respectable. But their hearts are black and corrupt and they have in within their heart to sink to these depths of depravity. We must be careful not to put any degrees on sinfulness. A sinner is a sinner and is guilty of sin no matter how "respectable" he might be. He might say "I'm not as bad as most sinners and certainly not as bad as Paul described me!" The problem is not how bad a person is but how good is he? Does he have the righteousness of Christ? Are those sins forgiven? Is he good enough for God? No sinner in himself is perfectly righteous as he must be in order to enter heaven. God will not allow sin or imperfection into heaven so that sinner cannot enter in without that perfect, divine righteousness imputed unto the sinner by Christ through faith and belief. This is what the law cannot do. Even if a man decided to keep the law and managed not to offend in any point, it would not impart unto him a new, divine nature. He would still possess that fallen nature and would lack a divine nature which can only be attained through the new birth. Nor would his obedience to the law remove the sins he committed before his resolution to keep the law. The law does not impart justification, holiness or that divine nature that every sinner so desperately needs in order to see the inside of God's heaven.

3:19 Now we know^{a-perfect} that what things soever the law saith,^{present} it saith^{present} to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped,^{b-aorist passive subjunctive} and all the world may become^{aorist middle subjunctive} guilty^c before God.^{de}

19a **"now we know"** The perfect tense shows an absolute, concrete and "finished" knowledge that is the fruit of a long study and consideration, almost like delivering a verdict after long deliberation.

19b Including the Jews.

19c AV

ESV

LSV

19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.	19 Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God.	19 Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are in the Law, so that every mouth may be shut and all the world may become accountable to God;
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"guilty" The Tyndale Bible uses "subdued" and the Coverdale Bible has "be debtor". The Geneva Bible has "be subject to the judgment of God". The Bishops Bible has "endangered" and the ESV and LSV use "held accountable". The Authorized Version is more direct and forceful- guilty!

19d What is the law's relation to man's condition? The Law will condemn him and strip him of any defense before God. This is what the law does. It can only bring condemnation, but it cannot justify. It was never meant to justify the sinner but rather was designed to place the sinner in a corner where he would come to realize that his good works, his religion and his nationality (if he is a Jew- or an American!) will not save him. The law takes away his hope so that he will be forced to cry out to God and God alone for help and to rely on justification by faith apart from works to save him.

19e **“all the world may become guilty before God”** A legal idea, like the effect of overwhelming evidence silencing any further testimony.

17. By The Deeds Of The Law Shall No Flesh Be Justified 3:20

3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified^{abc-future passive} in his sight:^d for by the law is the knowledge of sin.^{ef}

20a This might be a good place to make the distinction between pardon and justification. According to Charles Hodge, pardon is "the remission of punishment" while justification is the "declaration that no ground for the infliction of punishment exists". The sinner simply doesn't need pardon, he needs divine justification! Pardon is outward justification while divine justification through the new birth is inward justification. "Justification involves two things: first, making a man inwardly just; and secondly, acknowledging him to be so (Hodge)." To justify a man is not to make a man inwardly holy but to declare him to be so, to acknowledge that there are no grounds of condemnation in him and there can no case be made against him.

“Justified” is Strong's #1344, dikaiōō. In Classical Greek, it has the idea of “to make right, make anyone righteous by permitting such a one to bear for himself his condemnation, judgment, punishment or chastisement.” The word is used meaning “to do justice or to defend the right of anyone, irrespective of the fact that that defense may prove the person guilty or innocent”. In the New Testament, it has the idea of “to set forth as righteous, justify as a judicial act.” The New Testament usage is to persons only, not truths or situations, as the classical meaning could include.

Summary of Justification:

1. It is promised in Christ
 - A. Isaiah 45:25 **In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.**
 - B. Isaiah 53:11 **He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.**
 - i. “My righteous servant” in Christ.
2. It is an act of God
 - A. Isaiah 50:8 **He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who is mine adversary? let him come near to me.**
 - B. Romans 8:33 **Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.**
3. Under the law, it cannot be attained by man

- A. Job 9:2,20 **I know it is so of a truth: but how should man be just with God?... If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.**
- B. Job 25:4 **How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?**
- C. Psalm 143:2 **And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.**
- D. Romans 3:20 **Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.**
- 4. Under the gospel, it is not attained by works
 - A. Acts 13:39 **And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.**
 - B. Romans 3:28 **Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.**
 - C. Galatians 2:16,17 **Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.**
 - D. Galatians 3:11 **But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.**
 - E. Galatians 5:4 **Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.**
- 5. Under the gospel, justification is by faith alone
 - A. Acts 13:39 **And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.**
 - B. Romans 3:30 **Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.**
 - C. Romans 5:1 **Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:**
 - D. Galatians 2:16 **Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.**
- 6. It is by grace
 - A. Romans 3:24 **Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:**
 - B. Titus 3:7 **That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.**
- 7. It is in the name of Christ
 - A. 1 Corinthians 6:11 **And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.**
- 8. It is by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ
 - A. Romans 5:18 **Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.**
- 9. It is by the blood of Christ
 - A. Romans 5:9 **Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.**

10. It is by the resurrection of Christ
 - A. Romans 4:25 **Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.**
11. It frees from condemnation
 - A. Isaiah 50:8 **He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who is mine adversary? let him come near to me.**
 - B. Romans 8:33,34 **Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.**
12. It entitles us to an inheritance
 - A. Titus 3:7 **That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.**
13. It ensures glorification
 - A. Romans 8:30 **Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.**
14. The wicked shall not be justified
 - A. Exodus 23:7 **Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked.**
15. It excludes boasting
 - A. Romans 4:2 **For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.**
16. Does not nullify the law
 - A. Romans 3:30,31 **Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.**

20b “**no flesh be justified**” The law negatively considered- it was never designed to be used for the purposes of justification. See also Psalm 143:2.

AV	ESV	LSV
20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law <i>is</i> the knowledge of sin.	20 For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.	20 For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

“flesh” The ESV and LSV use “human being”, which makes for a very clunky reading.

20c In Romans 3:20 Paul says that **justification** is not of works.
 In Romans 3:27 Paul says that **justification** is not of works.
 In Romans 3:28 Paul says that **justification** is apart from works.
 In Romans 4:2,6 Paul says that **justification** is not of works.
 In Romans 9:11 Paul says that **election** is not of works.
 In Romans 9:32 Paul says that **righteousness** is not of works.
 In Romans 11:6 Paul says that **election** is not of works.
 In Galatians 2:16 Paul says that **justification** is not of works.
 In 2 Timothy 1:9 Paul says that God's **salvation** and **calling** are not according to works.
 In Titus 3:5 Paul says that **salvation** is not of works.

Do you get the “drift” about works yet? It’s amazing how many people never do!

20d The Tyndale defines this by inserting “God” into the text, but “theos” is not in the text, so this would be more of an interpretation than a translation.

20e **“is the knowledge of sin”** The law positively considered- it was designed to define sin and condemn men as sinners. The law was never given to save men or to justify men, but to define sin and to enlighten men as to what sin is. But when you use the law rightly, it has a good ministry to us.

20f “All the law does is to show us how sinful we are. Paul has been quoting from the sacred Scriptures; and truly, they shed a lurid light upon the condition of human nature. The light can show us our sin; but it cannot take it away. The law of the Lord is like a looking-glass. Now, a looking-glass is a capital thing for finding out where the spots are on your face; but you cannot wash in a looking-glass, you cannot get rid of the spots by looking in the glass. The law is intended to show a man how much he needs cleansing; but the law cannot cleanse him. “By the law is the knowledge of sin.” The law proves that we are condemned, but it does not bring us our pardon.”⁸³

18. Righteousness By Faith and Grace 3:21-24

**3:21^a But now^b the righteousness of God without the law^c is manifested,^{d-perfect}
passive being witnessed^{present passive participle} by the law^e and the prophets;^{fg}**

21a Beginning in verse 21 and continuing to the end of the chapter, the key word is “righteousness”.

3:21-righteousness;

3:22-righteousness;

3:24-justified;

3:25-righteousness;

3:26-righteousness, just, justifier

21b **“But now...”** Paul has painted a very gloomy and hopeless picture of the human condition. But he is not going to leave us in the dark. The diagnosis has been made. Now the cure is described! The “But...” here marks a dramatic switch from the gloomy diagnosis to the hopeful cure.

21c **“the righteousness of God without the law”** A strong emphasis in the Greek that this righteousness has no association with the law at all.

21d This salvation is “manifested” by God. It is not of human origin nor does it rest on human reason, intellect or effort. The answer to man’s sin is wholly divine, given of manifestation by God.

21e **“witnessed by the law”** Even the law itself declares that it cannot save or justify! Yet how many ignore the testimony of the law to itself and try to make it say something it never said or do something it never claimed it could do!

⁸³ Charles Spurgeon.

21f What Paul is saying here is no novelty as it is also discussed in the law and by the Old Testament prophets. Righteousness for the sinner is made available without the Law as witnessed by the Old Testament. The Passover, the mercy seat, the brazen serpent, the city of refuge and not the law all testified to the workings of grace, mercy and belief on the behalf of the Old Testament sinner seeking justification. The prophets also witnessed to this as not a one of them ever said "Keep the law and you'll be saved". They rather emphasized the necessity of belief and faith for justification. Even the law itself contains no statement that if it is kept then God will impute righteousness.

21g "If you put believers under law, you must put their federal Head, Christ, back under law; for "as He is, even so are we in this world." To do this you must reverse Calvary, and have Christ back again on earth "under law." For law, we repeat, was not given to a heavenly company, but to an earthly nation. Scripture says it was to redeem that earthly people (Israel) who were under law, that Christ was "born under the Law" (Galatians 4:4). You must thus, if you are "under law," be joined to a Christ belonging to Israel, a flesh and blood Christ; and must consent to be an Israelite--to which nation He was sent. But alas! You find that such a Christ is not here! That He said He must "abide alone,"--like the grain of wheat unless it "fall into the ground and die." To an earthly, Jewish Christ, you therefore cannot be united. And so your vain hope of having Moses and Christ is wholly gone. Therefore you must be united with a Risen Christ, or with none at all! But if to a Risen Christ, it is unto One who died unto sin (6:10); and those (Jewish) believers who were under the Law died with Him unto it (7:4). And you, if you are Christ's, are now wholly, as Christ is, on resurrection ground."⁸⁴

3:22 Even the righteousness of God^{ab} which is by faith of Jesus Christ^c unto all and upon all them that believe:^{present participle} for there is^{present} no difference:

22a The nature of this righteousness:

1. Its *source* is God, it is the "righteousness of God".
2. Its *substance* is Jesus Christ, it is "of Jesus Christ".
3. Its *science* is faith, it is "by faith"
4. Its *scope* is believers, it is "upon all them that believe"⁸⁵

22b As it did in verse 21, the Coverdale Bible makes an unnecessary addition by adding "I speak of...". The Geneva Bible does the opposite and whacks down the first part of the verse to merely "to wit".

22c "faith of Jesus Christ"

AV	ESV	LSV
22 Even the righteousness of God <i>which is</i> by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:	22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction:	22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction:

"**faith of Jesus Christ**" changed by the ESV and LSV to "faith in Jesus Christ". We are not justified by our faith "in Christ" but by the faith "of Christ". It is not our faith in Christ that justifies us but rather the faith of Christ which is imputed on our behalf at the new birth that justifies us.

⁸⁴ William Newell, *Romans Verse-by Verse*.

⁸⁵ Ian Paisley, *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans*, page 46.

Faith in Christ saves us, but it is the faith of Christ that justifies us. This is a spiritual benefit no Old Testament saint had, for his own faith was important in his eventual justification before God, but not so with the New Testament saint. Christ's faith justifies me as I hardly have any faith at all. My faith is weak. I have difficulty believing. I am plagued by doubts and fears. But if I ask Christ to save me and put what faith I have in Him, His faith will justify me. It is the faith of Christ imparted to me at salvation that justifies me as He gives me the faith to believe.

Most translations and commentators will simply render "faith of Jesus Christ" to "faith in Jesus Christ". As usual, the commentators tend to be less than useful with this verse. They focus on the first part of the verse and neglect the second.

The phrase "faith of Jesus Christ" is used in three verses:

1. Romans 3:22 **Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:**
2. Galatians 2:16 **Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.**
3. Galatians 3:22 **But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.**

A similar phrase "faith of Christ" is used:

1. Galatians 2:16 **Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.**
2. Philippians 3:9 **And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:**

Then there "the faith of the Son of God"

1. Galatians 2:20 **I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.**

Because we must take note of every word of Scripture and the word "in" is not the same word as "of", we have to make the distinction between faith "in" Christ and the faith "of" Christ. Most commentators don't. They correctly observe that justification is by faith but they do not notice the conjunctions or prepositions about faith "in" Christ and the faith "of" Christ.

Let's compare "faith in Christ"

1. Acts 24:24 **And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.**
 - A. A generic term for Christianity and the Gospel.
2. Galatians 3:26 **For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.**
 - A. Faith in Christ makes us children of God.
3. Colossians 1:4 **Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints,**
 - A. A generic term to describe their profession.
4. Colossians 2:5 **For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.**
 - A. A generic term to describe their profession.

3:23^a For all have sinned,^{b-aorist} and come short^{c-present passive} of the glory of God;^d

23a Verse 23 is quoted in practically every evangelistic message preached today. Since both Jew and Gentile are guilty of sin, they are each saved the same way. How? "Unto all them that believe". Righteousness comes by belief in what is written in the Scriptures and not by the works of the law. The universal plan of righteousness corresponds to the universal need of man. All have sinned, regardless of nationality, and have come short of the glory of God. If all have sinned then all must be saved. Since sin is universal, righteousness must also be offered on a universal basis. Jew and Gentile receive righteousness in the same way. By coming short of the glory of God, men have not lived up to the expectations that God has placed on them. God's glory demands holiness from man. If measured alone the cane rod of divine holiness, man measures far short. He measures 9 inches to a yard and 12 ounces to a pound. His sin is the hindrance which keeps him from measuring up to God's standards as expounded in the law. Therefore, because of his sin, man has not attained unto the glory and holiness of God. Justification before God is glory begun. Sanctification by His Spirit is glory advancing. Glorification with Christ is glory completed (Colossians 3:4 **"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory"**).

23b **"all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"** This also includes the Virgin Mary for she was a sinner just like the rest of us, despite any and all pronouncements from the Church of Rome. The sin-guilt of mankind is universal- none are exempt. This is the final verdict upon all mankind. Even the best of men are altogether vanity (Psalm 39:11 **"When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity. Selah."** and Psalm 144:4 **"Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away."**).

23c **"and come short"** A good definition of sin- to come short of the holiness and demands of God.

23d "When I was growing up, they used to require a policeman to be 6 feet tall, standing in his stocking feet.⁸⁶ Now, into the police station come two guys who are trying out for a position on the police force. The first one lines up against the board; he stands 5 feet 11¾. He doesn't qualify. The next guy comes up and he's 5 feet 2. He doesn't make the force either. That first fellow almost made it, you understand; he was a quarter of an inch off. He may not have been off as much as that second fellow, but he was off enough that he didn't qualify. Do you know what those few inches did for that first guy? Not one cotton-pickin' thing, man. Neither one of them qualified for the force. Brethren, a miss is as good as a mile when it comes to you measuring up to God's standard.

"Here are two guys in "concrete galoshes" ("cement overshoes"). The "mob" throws one guy into 10 feet of water, and they throw the other fellow into 50 feet of water. Do you know what happens to both of those men within six minutes? They both drown. The only thing being nearer to the surface did for first guy was to give him a false hope that if he could just stretch a little further he could get some air. He didn't. When it comes to meeting God's standard, it won't matter how much you try to stretch your own goodness, you won't make it any better than the fellow who drowned in 10 feet of water.

"Let's look at it this way. You are driving down the road on a garbage pickup day. Alongside of the road are everyone's garbage cans, waiting for the garbage truck to stop by. There's one so nice and shiny. Those folks must have bought it at Wal-Mart last night. Across

86 Such a requirement would be discrimination today!

the street is one someone has had for a while. Oh, it is not dented or beat up, but you can tell the aluminum has begun to corrode, for it is no longer shiny like the other one. Then a little further down the street you see an old, beat up, garbage can with rust all over it. In some places it has even rusted through. Now think; except for the age and owner, what is really different about those three cans? Nothing! All three contain garbage!

“That’s the case of every person reading this page. You may be refined, cultured, and proper. You may be respectable, highly educated, and intelligent. Or you may be rude, crude, and socially unacceptable. You may dress in a suit and tie and wear right guard and left guard and enough cologne to smell like a perfume factory, or you may wear a regular T-shirt and dungarees and smell from B.O. so badly that you would put a blister on a brick wall at thirty feet. Every hair of your head may be neatly combed and in its place, or you can look like a rat built a nest on your head. What’s the difference? “THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” When the Lord looks down from Heaven, He sees the same crew.

“When God looks at mankind, He sees two kinds of people. He sees sinners inside of Christ and sinners outside of Christ: saved sinners and lost sinners. He calls those sinners outside of Christ (the lost ones) Jews and Gentiles, and as we have already seen in verse 9, as far as sinners go, there is no distinction between them. Physically, there is a racial distinction with the promises (or lack thereof) that accompany that distinction, but spiritually, we are all in the same boat.

“That is awfully hard to get across to people. Americans think that if a man has a big salary, and his wife has been to finishing school, and they own an expensive home, three automobiles, and a yacht, that they just have to be respectable. Some of the meanest devils in the world are in that bracket.”⁸⁷

3:24 Being justified^{present passive participle} freely^a by his grace through the redemption^b that is in Christ Jesus:^{cde}

24a “**Freely!**” What a grand word, especially in the context of salvation! Justification must either be wholly by grace or by works. Works and grace are as oil and water; they cannot be mixed. Justification is not earned by works of the Law but is bestowed freely on the basis of belief. Believe and justification can be yours free for the asking! The agency of this free justification is the grace of God. This was made possible by the redemption work of Christ on the cross. Christ died and purchased salvation for all who will believe. It is given by the grace of God freely unto those who exercise belief.

We must emphasize salvation by faith alone. Salvation can never be dependent upon works. If a man could earn his salvation, then why did Christ have to die? Why would He go through that terrible suffering and death on the cross if a sinner could earn it? If salvation could be earned then Christ died in vain, He died for nothing. His sufferings and His death were all wasted!

AV	ESV	LSV
24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:	24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,	24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

⁸⁷ Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer’s Commentary on Romans*, pages 137-139.

The ESV and LSV mangle the simple idea of “freely” with “by his grace as a gift”. How is that wordy translation and improvement? This is interpretation and not translation.

24b **“redemption”** Strong's # 629 apolutrôsis; from apo (Strong's #575) from, and lutroô (Strong's #3084), to redeem; riddance, Christian salvation, deliverance, redemption, the recalling of captives from captivity through payment of a ransom. To whom is this payment, or ransom, made? Not to Satan but to the Father, Who has been wronged by our sin and whose law we have broken. God the Father is the offended party in relation to sin so any payment for sin flowing from the cross of Christ goes to the Father.

“redemption that is in Christ Jesus” Redemption and atonement are found only in Christ and not in the law.

24c **“Christ Jesus”** whenever “Christ” comes first in this title of Jesus, it is to emphasize the deity part of Christ, where “Jesus Christ” would emphasize His humanity.

24d Four Aspects of Justification

1. Justification by grace (Romans 3:24)
2. Justification by blood (Romans 5:9)
3. Justification by faith (Romans 3:28)
4. Justification by works (James 2:24 **“Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only”**)

24e “Starting with verse 24, a series of words are introduced that deal theologically with salvation. These words, including SALVATION, end in “-tion” or “-ion.” Each one deals with a different aspect of salvation. One of the ways you know that you are not getting real Bible preaching in America these days is that these words are missing from modern sermons. The modern plan of salvation goes something like this: “You’re having a rough time in life, so let Christ come into your life, and after that all your troubles will clear up, you will become financially independent, and you will have good health the rest of your life.” The Biblical plan of salvation is quite different.

Here are words that define Bible salvation:

I. JUSTIFICATION—the declaration that a man is righteous when he is not.
II. REDEMPTION (vs. 24)—the payment made to buy the sinner back from the wrath of God.

III. PROPITIATION (vs. 25)—the price paid to satisfy the demands of an angry God against sin. The difference between redemption and propitiation is that in redemption the payment is made; in propitiation the payment is accepted by God and appeases, or placates, His anger. He is completely satisfied with the payment He received.

IV. REMISSION (vs. 25)—the payment for sin is applied to your account, and you are forgiven the debt that you owed.

V. EXPIATION—the act of purging (burning out) or cleansing of sin. Sin is taken away, not merely forgiven, based upon the actions of Christ on our behalf.

VI. IMPUTATION—the act of God whereby He charges the sinner's sins to Jesus Christ, and whereby He charges the righteousness of Jesus Christ to the sinner.

VII. REGENERATION—the act of salvation in which the Holy Spirit enters the sinner and gives him new life by a new birth. A new spirit, able to respond to the Holy Spirit, is created within the sinner.

VIII. RECONCILIATION—the act whereby two warring parties (you and God) are brought together in peace.

IX. SPIRITUAL CIRCUMCISION—the act of the Holy Spirit that divides the new nature in the Christian from his body of sinful flesh, so that no sin done in the flesh can affect the new spirit.

X. ADOPTION—the act whereby God takes a sinner and puts him into the family of God upon salvation.

XI. SANCTIFICATION—the act whereby God sets a saved sinner apart, so that, from then on, he is dealt with as a son instead of as a stranger.

XII. GLORIFICATION—the ultimate end of the saved sinner whereby he is made completely like Jesus Christ and given an inheritance with Him in His kingdom.”⁸⁸

19. Christ Our Propitiation 3:25-26

3:25 Whom God hath set forth^{a-aorist middle} to be a propitiation^b through faith in his blood,^c to declare his righteousness for the remission^d of sins that are past,^{perfect active participle} through the forbearance of God;

25a “**set forth**” Set forth publicly.

25b “**propitiation**” Strong's # 2435 hilastêrion; an expiatory (place or thing), an atoning victim, the lid of the Ark, mercy seat, a covering. “Propitiation”, mercy seat, where sin was dealt with blood. The Greek word is “hilasteerion”, translated “mercy seat” in Hebrews 9:25, which is the only other place the word is used in the New Testament. This “propitiation” is a covering of sin. An example of this is seen in Genesis 2 with Adam and Eve after their fall. Adam and Eve tried to hide their nakedness. This shows man’s futile attempts to make himself right with God through his own works, but their effort was not acceptable to God. God clothed them properly in garments that were made by the death and shed blood of a substitute, which illustrates salvation through Jesus Christ. The believing sinner is clothed in Christ’s righteousness and is therefore acceptable to God. When God looks at the propitiated sinner, God sees the very righteousness of Christ. This then is also connected with the doctrine of substitution. Christ died in our stead for us. If we believe, then the work of Christ is credited to our behalf. Christ died so we would not have to. Someone must die for our sin. Either we die or an acceptable substitute must die for us. Christ was that acceptable substitute who died for the sins of the world. If we exercise faith in the work and person of Christ, then His death which he suffered is imparted to our account. Because He died, we do not have to. It is like a convicted felon on death row who is prepared to die. He has pled guilty of his crime and is strapped into the chair. He deserves to die, and everyone knows it, including him. At the last minute, the relative of the victim whom the condemned man killed offers to die in the place of the convict! As long as he has no crimes of his own to answer for, he may take the penalty of another. The law does not care who dies for a crime as long as someone does, either the condemned or an acceptable substitute.

This is wrapped up in the idea of God pardoning us from the penalty of our sins and then justifying us from the reputation and condemnation of these sins. The president may pardon a man of a vile crime, but it is not within his power to justify him. The stain of the crime remains upon the guilty. Only God can lift the stench of the act from the man’s reputation and set him as though he had never committed that sin, or any sin. This is the work of God, to both pardon and justify the believing sinner. Not only that, but Christ takes not only the punishment of the sinner upon Himself but also his guilt. In our courts, an innocent party may (I suppose) take the punishment for a guilty party if the court would allow it. But there is no way that an innocent

⁸⁸ Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer’s Commentary on Romans*, pages 140-141.

party could accept the guilt of the condemned party. But Christ takes both the punishment and the guilt off the repentant sinner.

The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles give the translation of “**propitiation**” as “seat of mercy”. The Geneva Bible uses “reconciliation” which really isn’t the same thing as “propitiation”.

“The term propitiation appears three times in the Scriptures: here in verse 25, in 1 John 2:2, and in 1 John 4:10. In each case it is Jesus Christ Himself who satisfies the demands of God. The Father twice declared that He was “well pleased” with Jesus Christ (Matt. 3:17, 17:5). The Lord said in Isaiah 53:10–11, “Yet it PLEASED the Lord to bruise him...He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.” You appropriate that satisfaction when you trust in His blood atonement for you. Isaiah 53:10 said that “when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin...the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.” Do you want God to be pleased with you enough to take you to Heaven? Then trust Christ and His shed blood.”⁸⁹

Looking at the word “propitiation” in both 1 John and then in Romans 3 provides numerous definitions.

1 John	WHO	WHAT	FOR WHOM	WHY
1:7	Jesus Christ	Cleanseth	Us	Sins
2:1,2	Jesus Christ he	Propitiation	For our	Sins
2:1	Jesus Christ			
2:12	His name’s sake	Forgiven	Your	Sins
3:5	He	Take away	Our	Sins
3:16	He	Laid down his life	For us	
4:10	His Son	Propitiation	For our	Sins
4:14	The Son	Saviour	Of the world	

Definition: The word ‘propitiation’ is enhanced and clarified by the parallel words: cleanseth, forgiven, take away, Saviour, and laid down His life.

Romans reference⁹⁰	What You Get	By and Through What Means	In and Of Whom
3:22	Righteousness of God	By faith	Of Jesus Christ
3:24	Justified freely	By His grace through the redemption that is	In Christ Jesus
3:25	Propitiation	Through faith	In His blood
3:25	Remission of sins	Through the forbearance	Of God
3:28	Justified	By faith	
3:30	Justify	By faith Through faith	
3:31		Through faith	

25c “**faith in his blood**” This also involves faith in the shed blood of Christ. A bloodless soteriology cannot save. No literal shedding of blood, no salvation! We are not saved simply by the death of Christ but by His blood. Ephesians 1:7 and Colossians 1:14 say this redemption is by the blood of Christ and our redemption was purchased with this blood in Hebrews 9:12.

⁸⁹ Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer’s Commentary on Romans*, pages 141-142.

⁹⁰ Gail Riplinger, *In Awe of Thy Word*, pages 79-80.

25d “remission”

AV	ESV	LSV
25 Whom God hath set forth <i>to be</i> a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;	25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.	25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.

‘remission’ The translations handle “remission” in a variety of ways. The Tyndale, Coverdale, Geneva and Bishops Bibles all have the idea of “forgiveness”. The ESV and LSV use “passed over”.

3:26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be^{infinitive} just, and the justifier^{a-present participle} of him which believeth in Jesus.^b

26a This plan of salvation allows God to be just in justifying sinners. God's holiness is not harmed nor is justice by the plan of salvation which involves faith and a blood atonement. Any plan of salvation that violates the holiness of God will not work. This is why salvation cannot be earned because God will not go into debt unto any man. Even if a man could earn his way into heaven, it would not settle the sin problem. Is he justified through the blood of Christ or not? Justification cannot be earned but must be accepted freely without works. A thing cannot be given freely if it is earned. There is no other way to attain this justification except by freely receiving it.

26b **“the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus”** “Does Justice come to you this morning and say, “Sinner, you have sinned, I will punish you”? Answer thus—“Justice, you have punished all my sins. All I ought to have suffered has been suffered by my Substitute, Jesus. It is true that in myself I owe you a debt greater than I can pay, but it is also true that in Christ I owe you nothing, for all I did owe is paid, every farthing of it.

The utmost drachma has been counted down, not a dolt remains that is due from me to you, O you avenging Justice of God.” But if Justice still accuses and conscience clamors, go and take Justice with you to Gethsemane and stand there with it. See that Man so oppressed with grief, that all His head, His hair, His garments are bloody? Sin was a press—a vice which forced His blood from every vein and wrapped Him in a sheet of His own blood. Do you see that Man there? Can you hear His groans, His cries, His earnest intercessions, His strong crying and tears? Can you mark that clotted sweat as it crimson the frozen soil, strong enough to unloose the curse? Do you see Him in the desperate agony of His spirit, crushed, broken, bruised beneath the feet of Justice in the olive press of God? Justice, is not that enough? Will not that content you?

“In a whole Hell there is not so much dignity of vengeance as there is in the garden of Gethsemane. Are you not yet satisfied? Come, Justice, to the hall of Pilate. Do you see that Man arraigned, accused, charged with sedition and with blasphemy? See Him taken to the guard room, spat upon, buffeted with hands, crowned with thorns, robed in mockery and insulted with a reed for a scepter? I say, Justice, see that Man and do you know that He is “God over all blessed forever” and yet He endures all this to satisfy your demands? Are you not content with that? Do you still frown? Let me show you this Man on the pavement. He is

stripped. Stand, Justice and listen to those stripes, those bloody scourges, and as they fall upon His devoted back and plow deep furrows there, do you see thong-full after thong-full of His quivering flesh torn from His poor bare back? Are you not content yet, Justice? Then what will satisfy you? "Nothing," says Justice, "but His death."

"Come with me, then, so you can see that feeble Man hurried through the streets! Do you see Him driven to the top of Calvary, hurled on His back, nailed to the transverse wood? Oh, Justice, can you see His dislocated bones, now that His Cross is lifted up? Stand with me, O Justice, see Him as He weeps and sighs and cries—see His soul-agonies! Can you read that tale of terror which is veiled in that flesh and blood? Come, listen, Justice, while you hear Him cry, "I thirst," and while you see the burning fever devouring Him, till He is dried up like a potsherd and His tongue cleaves to the roof of His mouth for thirst! And lastly, O Justice, do you see Him bow His head and die? "Yes," said Justice, "and I am satisfied. I have nothing more that I can ask. I am fully content. My uttermost demands are more than satisfied..."

But how, then, is it that Justice itself actually demands that every soul that repents should be pardoned? It is so. The same Justice that just now stood with a fiery sword in his hand, like the cherubim of old keeping the way of the tree of life, now goes hand in hand with the sinner. "Sinner," he says, "I will go with you. When you go to plead for pardon I will go and plead for you. Once I spoke against you. But now I am so satisfied with what Christ has done that I will go with you and plead for you. I will change my language. I will not say a word to oppose your pardon, but I will go with you and demand it. It is but an act of justice that God should now forgive." And the sinner goes up with Justice and what has Justice got to say? Why, it says this—"God must forgive the repenting sinner, if He is just, according to His promise." A God who could break His promise were unjust. We do not believe in men who tell us lies. I have known some of so gentle a disposition that they could never say, "No." If they were asked to do a thing they have said, "Yes." But they have never earned a character for it, when they have said "Yes," and afterwards did not fulfill."⁹¹

"The Lord had a problem...how to justify sinners and declare them righteous when they weren't. The Lord is absolutely righteous, and He wouldn't do anything wrong to keep anybody out of Hell, no matter how much He loves them. God reconciled His holiness and wrath with His grace and mercy by personally coming down to earth and taking man's place. He lived the righteous life required to satisfy His holiness and when He died, He took the full punishment for men's sins to satisfy His wrath. To satisfy His mercy and grace, He then offers man the righteousness for which He Himself paid. In this way He cannot only impute righteousness to the sinner, He can actually justify him because the full payment to obtain that righteousness has been made."⁹²

20. The Law of Faith 3:27

1. Humiliation: Romans 3:27,28
2. Integration: Romans 3:29, 30
3. Affirmation: Romans 3:31

3:27 Where is boasting then?^{ab} It is excluded^{aorist passive} By what law? of works? Nay:^c but by the law of faith.^d

27a We do not glory in our works in a grace-salvation but rather we glory in Christ who makes it possible. If a man could earn salvation, then he would brag and would be insufferable. "Not

⁹¹ Charles Spurgeon, "Justice Satisfied" in *The New Park Street Pulpit*, volume 5, sermon 255.

⁹² Peter Ruckman, *Ruckman Reference Bible*, page 1489.

me!" you might say but you would. You would strut around heaven like a peacock and brag on the fact that you were good enough to be in heaven because you earned it! Salvation by works does not develop humility, holiness and spirituality but only pride. Men who are trying to work their way to heaven are among the proudest men you will ever meet. But the man who accepts the free gift of God has nothing to boast of except Christ. Christ did it all! I did nothing except receive the gift! Christ did all the work, therefore He alone gets all the glory. Salvation by grace robs men from boasting and rather gives the glory unto God to whom alone it belongs.

Another reason behind the law then is to shut the boastful mouths of little men who must boast of their goodness, morality and religion. There must be fewer things that are more sickening to God than to hear sinners boast about anything, especially about earning salvation. If sinners (and saints!) had a proper understanding of the law and of their relation to it, they would fear even to utter a single word regarding their works.

As a result of the Jew's failure with respect to the law, any grounds for boasting on his part have been stripped away by Paul's arguments.

27b The Tyndale, Coverdale and Geneva Bibles all use "rejoicing" here. Did "rejoice" and "boast" have a similar meaning 500 years ago? "Boasting" can't really have the modern idea of rejoicing because Paul is forbidding it here, and why would he ever forbid our rejoicing in God?

27c "In Romans 3:20 Paul says that **justification** is not of works.

In Romans 3:27 Paul says that **justification** is not of works.

In Romans 3:28 Paul says that **justification** is apart from works.

In Romans 4:2,6 Paul says that **justification** is not of works.

In Romans 9:11 Paul says that **election** is not of works.

In Romans 9:32 Paul says that **righteousness** is not of works.

In Romans 11:6 Paul says that **election** is not of works.

In Galatians 2:16 Paul says that **justification** is not of works.

In 2 Timothy 1:9 Paul says that God's **salvation** and **calling** are not according to works.

In Titus 3:5 Paul says that **salvation** is not of works.

27e "**law of faith**" Righteousness comes by the Law of Faith not by the Law of Works (Mosaic Law). Law of Faith says to be justified; the sinner must put faith in the work and person of Christ and rely not on his own works. To the contrary, the Law of Works says that to be justified, the sinner must do certain things. God never made that kind of bargain with a sinner under the Law of Works. A sinner who is trying to earn salvation under the Law of Works made a deal with God that God never agreed to. In order for a contract to be valid, both parties must sign it. The Contract of the Law of Works may carry the signature of the sinner but does not have God's signature. That renders it null and void. Such is the Law of Works- it is null and void in the salvation transaction. God rejects it because it only puffs up the sinner as he earns his salvation. Such a plan of salvation would glorify the Lord, but it would glorify the sinner. Such cannot be the case and it must be rejected.

Laws in Romans:

1. Law of works

A. Romans 3:27 "**Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.**"

2. Law of faith

A. Romans 3:27 "**Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.**"

3. Law of God

A. Romans 7:22 "**For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:**"

- B. Romans 7:25 **"I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."**
- C. Romans 8:7 **"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."**
4. Law of my mind
A. Romans 7:23 **"But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."**
5. Law of sin (and death)
A. Romans 7:23 **"But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."**
B. Romans 7:25 **"I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."**
C. Romans 8:2 **"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."**
6. Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus
A. Romans 8:2 **"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."**
7. Law of righteousness
A. Romans 9:31 **"But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness."**

21. Paul's Conclusion- Justification By Faith Alone 3:28

3:28 Therefore we conclude^{a-present middle/passive} that a man is justified^{present passive infinitive} by faith without the deeds of the law.^{bc}

28a Here is Paul's grand conclusion, the grand summary in one sentence of 16 words. Salvation by faith without the deeds of the law, plain and simple.

28b Repeating from verses 20 and 27 (because it is so important and repetition is the key to learning!):

In Romans 3:20 Paul says that **justification** is not of works.

In Romans 3:27 Paul says that **justification** is not of works.

In Romans 3:28 Paul says that **justification** is apart from works.

In Romans 4:2,6 Paul says that **justification** is not of works.

In Romans 9:11 Paul says that **election** is not of works.

In Romans 9:32 Paul says that **righteousness** is not of works.

In Romans 11:6 Paul says that **election** is not of works.

In Galatians 2:16 Paul says that **justification** is not of works.

In 2 Timothy 1:9 Paul says that God's **salvation** and **calling** are not according to works.

In Titus 3:5 Paul says that **salvation** is not of works.

28c The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ (Galatians 3:24). It is not designed to save us but is designed to convince us of our sins and to get us into a spiritual condition where we would be ready to seek God's remedy for salvation. But it is folly to seek salvation in the very thing that condemns us!

22. The Universality of Justification By Faith 3:29-30

3:29 Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:^{ab}

29a This plan of salvation of justification by faith without the deeds of the law is for both Jew and Gentile. There is only one plan of salvation for all. Since God is a God of all men, both Jew and Gentile He would have one way of salvation for all men. There is not a separate plan of salvation for both Jew and Gentile. A Jew must be saved in the same fashion as a Gentile. What a blow to Jewish nationalistic pride! He is placed on the same level as the Gentile dog! He has to enter the same gate as the Gentile. No wonder so many Jews reject Christ- they cannot stomach this thought!

29b This strikes against the “Two Covenant Theory” held by some Charismatics that teaches that Jews can be saved by keeping the law while Gentiles must be saved by faith. No, no. He is a God of both Jew and Gentile and is one God with one plan of salvation. Paul stresses that not even a Jew can be justified by keeping the law and that since both Jew and Gentile have the same God, then they must also have the same plan of salvation. In Romans 3:30, it is clear- God shall justify the circumcision (Jews) *by faith*, not by the works of the law. This is identical with God’s dealing with the Gentiles. There are not two plans of salvation for Jew and Gentile but only one plan of salvation for all.

3:30 Seeing *it is* one God,^{ab} which shall justify^{future} the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.^c

30a AV

ESV

LSV

30 Seeing <i>it is</i> one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.	30 since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith.	30 since indeed God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that faith, is one.
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“one God” The ESV reverses the phrase to “God is one” which makes us uncomfortable, as that is New Age terminology. “One God” does not have the same meaning as “God is one”. The reading of the LSV is totally mangled.

30b Only God justifies. Justification is in a person, not in a religion, creed, system or works.

30c Notice the prepositions. The Jews are justified BY faith while the Gentiles are justified THROUGH faith. It is by faith for both groups but their relationship to this saving faith seems to be different. What exactly is this? The Jew is justified BY (ek) while the Gentile is justified THROUGH (dia) faith. “Ek” applied to Jews as already long in possession of faith; ‘dia’ to the Gentiles, as having but recently obtained it. Jews born heirs to faith; to the Gentiles faith something new. ‘Ek’ indicating the ground or foundation of justification; ‘dia’ the means or instrument.”⁹³

93 Thomas Robertson, *Studies in Romans*, 1:237-238.

23. Does Faith Void The Law? 3:31

3:31 Do we then make void^{a-present} the law through faith?^b God forbid:^{aorist middle optative} yea, we establish^{present} the law.

31a **“make void”** Strong’s #2673 katargeos, from kata (Strong’s #2596), an intensive and argeô (Strong’s #691), to be idle; to render inactive, idle, useless, ineffective, make to cease.

31b This plan of salvation, based of faith and grace without the deeds of the law (or any works) does not destroy the Law of Moses but rather establishes it. Salvation by works would run contrary to that law. A man with a proper understanding of the law of Moses would understand that he could never hope to keep that law. Faith, rather than works, is the goal of the law. That is where the law is attempting to lead the sinner. Those with imperfect understandings of the law keep trying to justify themselves by the deeds of the law, so they wind up in hell because their efforts are futile. But salvation by faith is the conclusion of the law.

Spiritual Applications, Romans Chapter 3

The universal guilt and sin of the entire human race is declared, but so is the remedy. A good doctor does not simply provide a diagnosis, he always provides the treatment. God had condemn all under sin in these first three chapters, but He does not leave man in a hopeless state. Salvation has been offered by faith in Christ and in repentance of sin. But how many will not accept the medicine! It is as if they were mad at the doctor for daring to tell them they had cancer. So they reject the medicine and then go about, trying to establish their own righteousness. God’s plan of salvation has no appeal to fallen man because they would have to acknowledge the fact that they cannot save themselves. They must rely totally upon the grace of God. But fallen man is still religious and wants to “earn it” so he can force God to take him to heaven, or to demonstrate that he didn’t need God in the first place, as he was able to earn salvation by his own merits. Man wants to do it himself, without any help or input from God. But salvation only becomes possible when the sinner comes to the end of his rope, realizes that his works are no good and that his case is hopeless, and is driven to call out to God. But most sinners will not allow themselves to every get into that condition.

God will simply not allow a sinner to justify himself as man is a horrible braggart. If a man was able to justify himself by his own works, and if such a man did make it to heaven, it would be impossible to live with such a man. He would boast constantly and would be totally insufferable. You would never be able to shut up a man like that!

Romans Chapter 4

Romans 4 is one of the greatest New Testament chapters on salvation by grace alone, without the works of the law.

24. Justification By Faith: Abraham 4:1-5

4:1^a What shall we say^{future} then that Abraham our father,^{bc} as pertaining to the flesh,^d hath found?^{perfect infinitive}

1a The best way to teach is to do so by example. Illustrate your point with a familiar historical example. Paul will do so by giving two examples of justification by faith apart from the works of the law in the persons of Abraham (Romans 4:1-5) and David Romans 4:(6-8). Paul gives the strongest argument against the Jewish concept of justification by works in giving the example of Abraham. Abraham was the father of the nation, so a Jew should be very interested in God's dealings with him when it came to justification by faith, without the works of the law. The Gentiles would be interested as well, to demonstrate that they could be saved without the Jewish law.

1b Abraham is called "**our father**" despite the fact that Paul is writing to Gentiles, since he is the father of all the faithful (Galatians 3:29), not just the Jews. The Jews boasted of Abraham as the father of their nation and their spiritual father. "Abraham our father" is still the common phrase used by all orthodox Jews just as it was in the days of John the Baptist. But John warned them "**Say not within yourselves. We have Abraham to our Father** (Matthew 3:9)." That will not save the Jew (or anyone else) in the day of judgment. The believing Gentiles also had a (spiritual) claim on Abraham as their spiritual father, as he is of all the faithful.

1c Abraham: A "Case Study" In Being Justified By Grace in the Old Testament, Romans 4:1-22

1. An example Jews would respect as the Jews revered Abraham and looked to him as their spiritual father
2. If Abraham were justified by works, he could...
 - A. boast in his righteousness
 - B. claim God owed him salvation, Romans 4:4
3. Righteousness was "imputed" to him, or "credited to his account" by his faith, not by his works 4:3
 - A. Faith seen over Abraham's lifetime:
 - i. Genesis 12:4; Hebrews 11:8, when he left Haran
 - ii. Genesis 15:1-6, believed God concerning his seed
 - iii. Genesis 17:1-5, believed concerning Isaac
 - iv. Genesis 22:1-19 incident regarding offering Isaac as a burnt offering
 - B. Abraham was justified by imputed righteousness, but his salvation is not the same as our salvation.
 - i. The gospel was not yet revealed.
 - ii. There was no work of Christ for him to believe.
 - iii. He believed the limited revelation of God that he had received.
 - a. Romans 4:20,21 **"He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform"**

iv. He went to "Abraham's Bosom" at his death (Luke 16:22), not heaven. He would go to heaven after the death of Christ when He "led captivity captive" (Ephesians 4:8 **"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."**)

4:2 For if^a Abraham^b were justified^{aoist passive} by works, he hath^{present} whereof to glory;^c but not before God.^d

2a Notice the "if" here- this is hypothetical since Abraham was *not* justified by works but by faith, as "he believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness" (Genesis 15:6). Does this contradict James 2. where James says that Abraham was justified by works (James 2:21)? No. All apparent "contradictions" can usually be easily explained by a careful reading of the Scriptures involved and by comparing Scripture with Scripture. James links Abraham's justification "by works" to his near-sacrifice of Isaac in Genesis 22. It was at that event that Abraham justified his faith in God and His promises by being willing to offer Isaac as a burnt offering. That work was the visible manifestation of his faith in God. Paul is looking at Abraham in a more plenary view, not just at the one event that James discusses.

Works justify our faith before men, and this is what James deals with. Works are an outward evidence of our salvation so that other men can see it, since they cannot see our heart. But faith justifies us before God, since there are no works we can do to justify ourselves before Him.

2b The first Old Testament example of Old Testament salvation by grace without works is Abraham. If God did justify anyone by works, you would think Abraham would have been the one. After all, he was the friend of God and probably walked closer to God than anyone in history. God used Abraham to establish the Jewish nation and he is the father of all the faithful. Could he earn his justification by doing a certain amount of works? Paul clearly answers in the negative. The reason again is to prevent boasting on the part of the sinner who was able to earn it. If salvation could have been earned, then God would be in debt to the sinner. God would receive no glory and Christ could not be honored in such a plan. Such a plan of salvation would also render the work of Christ on the cross as needless.

Abraham could not have been justified by works because the Law was given 430 years after Abraham. If Abraham could have earned it, by what standard would he have followed? There was no Law or any divinely inspired standard of holiness. What works would Abraham have known to do in order to earn salvation?

2c **"whereof to glory"** Or boast or brag, which is something God hates (Proverbs 6:17). Such self-righteous men would tend to boast before God of their self-righteousness and works more than simply rejoicing in them.

2d Abraham could boast before man of his righteousness but what would that accomplish? You may impress man but that means nothing in terms of salvation. We might have some human grounds to boast before man (although we ought not to do that anyway) but we have absolutely no grounds or basis to boast before God regarding anything.

4:3 For what saith^{present} the scripture?^a Abraham believed^{aoist} God, and it was counted^b unto him for righteousness.^c

3a Forget what the rabbis teach or what Jewish tradition says (or what some church, denomination, preacher or school teaches), **“What saith the Scripture?”** Most of them were not strong believers in the Scriptures anyway, preferring their traditions over the teachings of Scripture. What saith the inspired writings of God? This is the final court of appeal in all doctrinal matters, not tradition or what someone "teaches". The Scripture says in Genesis 15:6 that Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. This is the clearest Old Testament verse that shows that salvation in the Old Testament was by grace through faith without works. The Scripture here is the Old Testament since the New Testament did not exist at the time of this writing.

3b As justification, imputed righteousness is reckoned in an aorist tense. The reckoning of righteousness to the account of a newly saved man happens in an instant as he is also justified in an instant. Both events happen at a singular point in time and are totally and finally completed, not needing to be repeated or improved upon. Faith was credited, or applied, to Abraham's spiritual account, like putting money into someone's bank account.

3c This was Abraham's plan of salvation. This way of salvation is the same as ours, but the object of Abraham's faith was different from ours. Abraham had to believe the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant. That is all he knew. Christians believe the Gospel, which is a later and fuller revelation than the Abrahamic Covenant. Once Abraham believed God's revelation, God credited Abraham's account with righteousness (like God putting money in Abraham's bank account).

We must make this distinction: salvation is always by faith and not by works. The object and the conditions of that faith may vary from dispensation from dispensation. Works may be required to stay saved in some dispensations (like the Tribulation or Millennium), but never to be saved. God holds every man in any dispensation responsible to the amount of revelation that he has at any given time. A man must accept and believe that revelation in order to be justified.

The Old Testament is very clear that Abraham was not justified by works. By quoting Genesis 15:6, Paul forces the works-oriented Jew to choose to either believe his (Old Testament) Scriptures or the teachings and traditions of the rabbis, for he cannot hold to both since they contradict each other. But how can a Jew really argue with this, seeing Paul clearly quoted the inspired Old Testament scripture?

4:4 Now to him that worketh,^{present middle/passive participle} **is the reward not reckoned**^{present middle/passive} **of grace, but of debt.**^{ab}

4a There would seem to be two ways to be justified, either by works or by faith. One works while the other doesn't. Salvation must be of grace and faith because if it were of works, then God would owe people heaven. Then there is no grace and God receives no glory. Salvation is all of grace and none of debt. We are in debt to God, but He will never allow Himself to go into debt to sinners. If we did earn justification (if such a thing were possible) it would be a matter of justice and not grace to give that person eternal life. Justice rather than grace! Who wants that? How much more valuable is grace than justice! I would rather have God do something for me because He wanted to than because He had to.

4b The Tyndale, Coverdale and Bishops Bibles have this as “duty”, as if God would have a duty to award righteousness to Abraham through his works.

4:5 But to him that worketh^{present middle/passive participle} not, but believeth^{a-present participle} on him^b that justifieth^{c-present participle} the ungodly, his faith is counted^{present middle/passive} for righteousness.

5a “**but believeth**” This is an important phrase and verse because there are those who might raise an objection by saying “Isn’t exercising belief work?” Not according to God. He separates belief from works. They are not the same. Belief is not counted as a work.

Righteousness comes from belief and not by works, any works.

This summation totally destroys the rabbinical teaching that a man is made right with God by keeping the law, that is, on the basis of his own religious efforts and works. If Abraham was not and could not have been justified by keeping the law, then no one could be.

5b AV

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5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.	5 And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness,	5 But to the one who does not work, but believes upon Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness,
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Both the Geneva Bible and the ESV had “believeth in him”. The LSV has “upon him”. There is a difference with respect to that preposition. Anyone can believe “in” Jesus in the fact that believe He existed, He was crucified, even that He is the Son of God. But that person still may not be saved despite that belief in these historical and theological truths. But believing “on” Jesus is a stronger term, implying a believing unto salvation and a total dependence upon Him. When you lean “on” something, you place your full weight upon it, confident that it will hold you up. This is salvation, not just believing “in” Jesus but believing “on” Jesus. The prepositions, both in Greek and Hebrew, are very important in drawing these distinctions.

5c See Appendix 2 for a review of the doctrine of Justification

25. Justification By Faith: David 4:6-8

4:6 Even as David^a also describeth^{b-present} the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth^{cde-present middle/passive} righteousness without works,

6a Here is the second example of Old Testament salvation by grace without works- David. Paul now let us have David preach concerning justification by faith as he gives David’s description of the benefits of salvation by grace. David sums it up by saying “Happy is the man who has righteousness imputed unto him without works”. Could we then conclude then that the man who was trying to attain this imputation by works is not blessed? He has received no gift from God and no free favor from Him. It is one thing to earn someone’s favor but how much better is it to have that same person’s favor simply because they loved you without any works from you? This poor man tried to buy the gift of eternal life. In so doing, he lost any joy that would have come with a free acceptance of the gift of free justification.

6b “**David also describeth**” The Geneva Bible has “**declared**” which seems stronger and more definite.

6c “**impute**” comes from Anglo-French *imputer*, from Latin *imputare*, from *in-* + *putare* to consider. The word means “To relate (something, usually something bad) to a particular cause or source; place the fault or responsibility for, to assign as a characteristic; credit.

6d Three Great Imputations:

1. Adam’s sin was imputed to the whole human race.
 - A. Romans 5:12 **“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:”**
2. The sin of mankind was imputed to Christ on the cross.
 - A. 2 Corinthians 5:21 **“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”**
3. The righteousness of God was imputed to the sinner who believes on Christ.
 - A. Romans 4:6 **“Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,”**
 - B. 2 Corinthians 5:21 **“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”**

This imputation would be God giving His righteousness to a man who has no righteous deeds of his own.

6e See Appendix 8 for a summary of imputation.

4:7^{ab} Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities^c are forgiven,^{aorist passive} and whose sins are covered.^{d-aorist passive}

7a The man working for his salvation never has assurance of it. He doesn't know how much he must do and for how long before he has it. How many spiritual works does he have to do to earn justification? For how long? The man who simply believes doesn't have to worry about any of this. He simply receives the assurance because he is trusting on the work of God and not upon his own works. No wonder this man is blessed! The man who is trying to earn his salvation never has the assurance his heart longs for and therefore never has the joy of such assurance.

7b Verses 7 and 8 are quoted from Psalm 32:1,2.

7c AV

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7 <i>Saying</i> , Blessed <i>are</i> they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.	7 “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered;	7 “BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED.
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“iniquities” Why does the ESV and LSV insist on replacing “iniquities” with the wordier “lawless deeds”? This change adds nothing to the text.

7d **“Sins are covered”** is the idea of the Hebrew word “kaphar”. This is the Old Testament idea of the settlement of the sin question. David's sins were not taken away until the death of Christ, just like any other Old Testament believer. But they were covered by the blood of the sacrifice of the animals under the Mosaic economy. The covering of the sins held the Old Testament believer over until the death of Christ took them away forever. Ultimately, it had the

desired effect of giving the joy of the settlement of the sin problem to David, Abraham and other Old Testament believers who followed them in faith. Now, sins are covered only by the blood of Christ.

This was important to David as he committed two sins, adultery and murder (2 Samuel 16) for which there was no sacrifice proscribed under the law. Both sins carried the death penalty. The fact that David was not put to death for either sin showed the mercy of God on his behalf, but it is clear that David was an exception in this case and not the rule.

4:8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute^{ao} sin.^{abcd}

8a David, a man under the Law, says blessedness comes apart from works- without the Law! His sins are covered by the blood and without works of the Law.

8b David had personal experience with this, in his adultery and murder in the case of Uriah and in his sinful census of the people. Under the Law, David was condemned for his murder and adultery and there was no hope or “out” for him. He must die. But he repented, cried out for mercy and threw himself totally upon the grace of God- and God forgave him. That forgiveness was based solely and entirely upon the mercy and grace of God, not on anything that David had done or could do to “earn” forgiveness for there was absolutely nothing that David could do- except ask for mercy.

8c “There are three things in sin to be considered:

1. There is an offence against God, which is said to be *forgiven*.

2. There is a filthiness in sin, which is said to be *covered*.

3. There is guilt in it, which is said not to be *imputed*. (Matthew Poole, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*).”

8d “**Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.**” That is what the Lord does with babies (especially those who die before reaching the “age of accountability”) and those who do not have the mental ability to understand sin and salvation. God did this with men like David, who is the prime example of God not imputing sin to a man. David had good reason for writing Psalm 32:1,2, as he had committed two sins for which there was no sacrifice in the Old Testament (Psalm 51:16 “**For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering.**”). He committed adultery (Leviticus 20:10 “**And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.**”), and murder (Numbers 35:31 “**Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death.**”). And yet, God “put away” his sin and did not exact the required punishment for his sin (2 Samuel 12:13 “**And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.**”). If David had been charged with his sin, he would have been put to death.

With children, God does not impute sin “when there is no law” (Romans 5:13). There is a time in a child’s life when he does not know the difference between good and evil and does not understand sin, so he is not under the spiritual judgment of God against sin (Deuteronomy 1:39 “**Moreover your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.**”). When a child comes to age and realizes that the wrong things he does are violations of God’s Law and that he is a sinner, he then becomes accountable and guilty before God, and his sins are imputed to him. From that moment on, that person is responsible for receiving Jesus Christ as his Saviour, or he will go to Hell. Look how

We call that “the age of accountability,” but there is no set age when that happens. It varies from person to person. I don’t remember when it was for me. I was saved at age 13 but I remember being under conviction of my sin at age 12, despite growing up in the Roman Catholic Church. I might have come to this understanding earlier in my life if I had been raised in a Bible-preaching church, but I was not.

26. Justification Without Circumcision 4:9-12

4:9 Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision^a only, or upon the uncircumcision^b also?^c for we say^{present} that faith was reckoned^{aorist passive} to Abraham for righteousness.

9a “the circumcision” The Jew.

9b “the uncircumcision” The Gentile.

9c How does this blessedness of which David spake come? By works? No, but by having faith and righteousness reckoned unto us by belief. David was also a recipient of the grace of God on his behalf for being spared the death penalty for his sins of adultery and murder.

4:10 How was it then reckoned?^{aorist passive} when he was^{present} in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision,^a but in uncircumcision.^{bc}

10a “not in circumcision” Abraham could not have been justified by circumcision since Abraham was declared justified in Genesis 15 and circumcision was not instituted until Genesis 17. As many as 14-24 years could have passed between Genesis 15 and 17, depending on the various chronologies. Circumcision did not confer righteousness to Abraham; it simply confirmed it.

10b “but in uncircumcision” The Jews wouldn't like this! Their circumcision had nothing to do with their justification before God! The Jews took pride in their circumcision but forgot that it was merely an outward sign of the Abrahamic Covenant and said nothing of their own personal relationship with God. Abraham received the covenants and promises as a believing man, not as a circumcised man.

“Paul has turned the Jew's boast upside down. It is not the Gentile that must come to the Jew's circumcision for salvation; it is the Jew who must come to a Gentile faith, such faith as Abraham had long before he was circumcised...When Isaac was saved he was not saved by his circumcision any more than was his father before him. God never promised salvation except by faith. He never promised a perpetual nationality except to circumcised men who believe” (Donald Barnhouse).”

10c How is righteousness reckoned? By circumcision or uncircumcision? Paul says by uncircumcision. The outward act of ceremony is incompatible with the gospel of grace. Jewish ceremonies cannot impart righteousness. Abraham was circumcised yet he received his righteousness by belief (Romans 4:3 “**For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.**”) not by virtue of his circumcision. His circumcision isn't even mentioned in Genesis 15. More importantly, he wasn't even circumcised until Genesis 17, after God had pronounced him justified! This allows uncircumcised Gentiles to also believe and receive the same righteousness as Abraham had. Now the uncircumcised

Gentiles could God their Father. Abraham found this not by circumcision or any other religious rite or work, but solely upon the grace of God. Religious works had nothing at all to do with this righteousness that Abraham received, for it was bestowed upon Abraham without any such works.

The Jews would also violently object to any Gentile dog addressing the Almighty in such affectionate terms. They believed such a "father-son" relationship was restricted to Israel. The rabbis forbade Gentile proselytes to call God "Father".

4:11 And he received^{aorist} the sign of circumcision, a seal^a of the righteousness of the faith which *he had yet being uncircumcised*: that he might be^{infinitive} the father of all them that believe,^b though they be not circumcised;^c that righteousness might be imputed^{aorist passive infinitive} unto them also:^{de}

11a “**Sign**” refers to the material token while “**seal**” has a religious import. “**Seal**” Strong’s #4973 sphragis; an instrument for sealing, a signet, signet-ring, a seal as impressed upon letters or books for the sake of privacy and security, also a seal impressed as a guarantee of something’s genuineness as a motto or inscription, a promissory token, pledge, proof.

11b “**all them that believe**” Jew or Gentile- there is no difference. Nor does Paul say ☐the father of all those who are circumcised☐ as circumcision has no bearing on one’s state of salvation.

11c “**they be not circumcised**” This would bother the Jew. He could see Abraham being the father of the Gentiles if they were proselytes, but Paul says that Abraham is the father of Gentiles as long as they believe, regardless of if they undergo circumcision and become Jews. The Jews thought so highly of circumcision that they believed salvation was impossible without it. Now here is the Lord justifying Gentiles without works and with circumcision. No wonder the Jews have so much trouble with New Testament salvation. The same can be said for any follower of a theological system that is based on works for salvation. They are told that God justifies without works and they think “All the works I have done are for nothing!”. This is why salvation without works is so offensive.

11d “**righteousness might be imputed...also**” Do NOT try to run water baptism into this! Absolutely nothing is said about equating circumcision with baptism. Paul is talking about PHYSICAL JEWISH MALE CIRCUMCISION and NOT baptism. Is that clear? If not, make it clear before you go any farther, else you’ll wind up in the theological briar patch. Covenant theologians try to make New Testament baptism (usually infant baptism by sprinkling) the counterpart of Old Testament circumcision in saying that “both get you into the Covenant. Circumcision gets the Jew into the Abrahamic Covenant while baptism gets you into the New Covenant.” First, there is no New Testament verse to suggest such a doctrine and second, Romans 4:11 (“**And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:**”) certainly does not lend itself to such an application.

11e “Therefore, in sum, “the gift of God” [Ephesians 2:8] that is identical to “righteousness...imputed” [Romans 4:11] to the believer is:

1. “counted unto” the believer as the best gift, the hallowed gift and the everlasting gift of God’s righteousness that turns away God’s wrath from the believer.

2. "reckoned to" the believer as the restorative gift that returns him to a lost former state of innocence and bestows even more upon him by means of a new standing in God's righteousness and as the established gift underwritten by God Himself.

3. "imputed to" the believer as the doubly blessed gift for him that bestows God's righteousness on the recipient and his sin on the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. "accounted to" the believer as the royal gift and the abundant gift by which the recipient of God's righteousness."⁹⁴

4:12 And the father of circumcision^a to them who are not of the circumcision only,^b but who also walk^{present participle} in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which *he had being yet uncircumcised*.

12a "**father of circumcision**" would be Abraham, to whom God gave the practice. Abraham did not create the practice, but he was the first one who was circumcised. God initiated circumcision, not Abraham. It was used only as a physical sign of having accepted the Abrahamic Covenant. It was NEVER designed to be replaced by water baptism as many in Covenant Theology teach. Circumcision was Jewish, never extended to the New Testament Church. You couldn't be a Jew if you were uncircumcised but you can be saved and a Christian if you are unbaptized.

12b "**not of the circumcision only**" are Gentiles, who did not practice circumcision. But this did not prevent them in sharing in the spiritual blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant, since they "**walked in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham**". That is what determines the spiritual blessings and benefits- not physical circumcision, but rather obedience to the laws of God and the proper practice and application of faith. After all, Abraham received the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant before he was ever circumcised, so the spiritual blessings of the Covenant were not dependent upon circumcision. If you are going to imitate "Father Abraham", it would be better to imitate his faith and obedience instead of his circumcision.

27. Abrahamic Covenant Through Faith 4:13-22

4:13 For the promise, that he should be^{infinitive} the heir of the world,^a was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law,^b but through the righteousness of faith.^c

13a "**Heir of the world**" through the ultimate fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant in the Millennium. It does not simply have reference to Canaan but all the earth, as has been promised to the Jew through Abraham. Faith ushers in this Millennial kingdom and the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant, not works.

13b "**not...through the law**" Since the law was not given at the time the covenant and its promises were first given to Abraham and confirmed through Isaac and Jacob. The law then had nothing to do with these promises.

13c "**the righteousness of faith**" The basis of the Abrahamic Covenant is not the Law of Moses since the Law would not be given for another 400 years. How could anyone, except a Jew wrapped in his dead tradition, think that the promises made to Abraham through that

⁹⁴ Alan O'Reilly.

covenant of Genesis 12, 15 and 17 were based on Abraham's obedience to a law that would not be given for centuries?

4:14 For if they which are of the law *be* heirs, faith is made void,^{ab-perfect passive} and the promise made of none effect:^{cde-perfect passive}

14a **"faith is made void"** Works invalidate faith in terms of salvation- they cannot co-exist and salvation cannot be by both works and faith- no mixture at all.

14b **AV**

ESV

LSV

14 For if they which are of the law *be* heirs, faith is **made void**, and the promise made of none effect:

14 For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void.

14 For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith has been made empty and the promise has been abolished;

"made void" The Tyndale, Coverdale and Bishops Bibles translate this as "vain" while the ESV uses "null", which is not the same idea. The LSV is closer to the meaning with "made empty".

14c **"the promise is made of none effect"** There would be no need for a promise if salvation could be earned. Works would destroy the promise. God promised justification by faith. Any plan of justification based on works would destroy those promises God made. The law works wrath and brings transgression, not justification. The law makes men miserable as they come to a realization of their sin and rebellion. It cannot be used to impart faith and promise as grace and belief can. The law was not designed to do that which faith can do.

14d **"none effect"** Strong's #2673 *katargeos*, from *kata* (Strong's #2596), an intensive and *argeô* (Strong's #691), to be idle; to render inactive, idle, useless, ineffective, make to cease.

14e The verbs in this verse are all in the Greek perfect tense, having an absolute and irrevocable action. Faith and the promises of God made by grace are absolutely and totally rendered void if justification was by the works of the law, as works and faith/grace cannot co-exist in relation to salvation.

4:15 Because the law worketh^{present middle/passive} wrath: for where no law is,^{present} there is no transgression.^a

15a **"Where no law is, there is no transgression"**. The law defines sin. How do we know murder is wrong? It simply is and civilizations from the dawn of time acknowledge it to be so. But now that a prohibition to murder has been passed down by God in the law, it is now not just wrong but illegal, and can be punished as a crime. If there were no written law, there would be no sin since there would be no definition of sin. How could you judge something if you couldn't even define the crime? But now that we have the law, we know exactly what sin is and what acts are defined as sin. The law is then given not only to define sin but to make sin known. This way, men can understand the sinfulness of sin and flee to God for forgiveness and justification.

Libertines and antinomians love this verse because they believe they can do what they want as long as there is no specific law prohibiting it. The Bible does not say "Thou shalt not

smoke” so they think it is okay to smoke. But while specific acts may not be prohibited, the idea behind these transgressions is dealt with in Scripture. If God had to list every single sin that was forbidden, the Bible would be the size of a New York City phonebook. They believe that if we can just get rid of the law, we could get rid of sin, and that the law is the cause of sin. So if there is no law, there would be no sin and God couldn’t judge or punish anyone. But you can’t get rid of the law. You can burn the law books and the Bible, but the natural law is still written on the hearts of every man. That is where conscience comes in. Your conscience tells you if something is wrong or not, even if that act is not listed as a crime or a sin on paper.

4:16 Therefore *it is* of faith,^a that *it might be* by grace;^b to the end the promise might be sure^c to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is^{present} of the faith of Abraham;^d who is^{present} the father of us all,^{ef}

16a “Faith indeed might be described as a kind of sixth sense. Its function is to make tangible and real the verities of the spiritual world (John Phillips, *Exploring Romans*, page 83).”

16b Salvation, if it is to be of grace, must then be of faith and grace to be able to extend the promise to all seed (including believing Gentiles). If salvation were of the Law, the Gentiles would be shut out again since they did not have the Law. This way of justification by faith makes Abraham the father of all who believe, not just of Jews.

16c “**sure**” Strong’s #949 bebaian, stable, fast, firm, meaning the opposite of “being made of none effect”.

16d “**faith of Abraham**” And what faith he had! Abraham did not consider anything beyond the promise and the God who gave it! The difficulties in His promises and covenants were for God to consider, not for Abraham!

What did Abraham have? A covenant with its attendant blessings in Genesis 12, repeated in Genesis 15. He also had a promise that Sarah would not only bear him a son (Ishmael did not figure into this) but that his seed would be as the sands of the sea for number. Abraham knew that God had made the world out of nothing and that He supported all things by the word of His power and, therefore, he felt that nothing was too hard for Him! His own advanced years and those of Sarah were of no consequence. Abraham knew that God is not a man, that He should lie, nor the son of man that He should repent. He was quite certain that the Lord had not spoken beyond His abilities to perform, but that what He had promised He was able to perform. It belongs to man to speak more than he can do. Many times, man’s mouth over-promises and cannot deliver, but with the Lord it is never so. Abraham believed in the immutability, truth and power of the living God, and looked for the literal fulfillment of His words! All this strong, unstaggering faith which glorified God rested upon the Lord alone. Abraham was given no signs, marks, tokens, or indications to validate or confirm these promises. He had no church, no pastor, no Bible, no Christian library or Christian radio to build up his faith. All Abraham had was the word of God Himself. That was good enough. Jehovah has said it and that He will make it good!

Another example of that faith was the test God gave Abraham in Genesis 22. God told Abraham to take Isaac, his promised son, and offer him for a burnt offering. That command made no sense to reason. Kill the son of the covenant, the miracle child? Wouldn’t that undo the covenant and the promises? But God had commanded it. The only thing Abraham could conclude out was that God would resurrect Isaac from the dead to maintain his promises! That was faith talking, shouting out reason.

16e “**who is the father of us all**” Believing Jews and Gentiles- there is no difference as Abraham is the spiritual Father of us all, regardless of circumcision. If you believe, you have a claim on Abraham as your father. This applies to Jews and Gentiles, but the Moslems have no such claim, although they claim Ishmael as their link to Abraham. Since they do not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, they can make no claim to being children of Abraham.

16f AV	ESV	LSV
16 Therefore <i>it is</i> of faith, that <i>it might be</i> by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,	16 That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,	16 For this reason <i>it is</i> by faith, in order that <i>it may be</i> according to grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the seed, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all—

The ESV handles the verse very poorly and reads in a very clunky and wordy manner.

4:17^a (As it is written,^{b-perfect passive} I have made^{perfect} thee a father^c of many nations,) before him whom he believed,^{aorist} even God, who quickeneth^{present participle} the dead, and calleth^{present participle} those things which be^{present} not as though they were^{d-present participle}

17a Verses 17-21 summarizes Abraham's faith and how it led to his justification. Paul uses the example of Abraham believing that he would have a son although he and Sarah were too old to bear children. Physically they were unable to have children, but they believed God would fulfill His promise for a son and God delivered. Abraham believed that part of the Covenant and was justified for it. He staggered not at the promises of God (even for the impossible) although he had every reason to but was strong in faith. He was fully persuaded that God would and could do what He promised.

17b “**as it is written**” Perfect tense- it has been written and remains written, not to be changed or altered. It is a completed action with continuous results, or the continuance of an act completed in the past. The components are always a past action and continuous results. References to the Scriptures like this are often presented in the perfect tense. "The just shall live by faith" is one of those unalterable truths of Christianity. This perfect tense in reference to New Testament references to Old Testament texts is used 62 times in the New Testament, 16 times in Romans (1:17; 2:24; 3:4,10; 4:17; 8:36; 9:13,33; 10:15; 11:8,26; 12:19; 14:11; 15:3,9,21). This usage of the perfect is a strong argument for the verbal and plenary preservation of the Scripture, as the written Old Testament word stands forever and continues to. God made this promise to Abraham in Genesis 12,15 and 17 and nothing is going to alter it and nothing is going to change God's mind with reference to this covenant.

17c “**I have made thee a father...**” Quoted from Genesis 17:4,5.

17d “**calleth those things which be not as though they were**” In the context of Isaac and the children that would come after him. At the time of God's initial promise to Abraham that he

would have as many children as stars in the sky, none of them were yet born and the human prospects for such children were extremely poor. Yet in the mind of God, these children already existed, although none were yet born. But God, not confined to linear time, can see these children in the future even if they do not yet exist in our present.

4:18 Who^a against hope believed^{aorist} in hope,^b that he might become^{aorist middle infinitive} the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken,^{c-perfect passive participle} So shall thy seed be.^{d-future}

18a The Tyndale and Geneva Bibles insert “Abraham”: for “who”.

18b **“against hope believed in hope”** Part of the Covenant was the seed and God told Abraham that Ishmael was not that seed but that Sarah would bear him a son. Both Abraham and Sarah were well beyond their child-bearing years yet God’s promise stood and Abraham clung to that hope in the face of the physical impossibilities. Abraham had no reason to hope for a son by Sarah except through the promise of God, and he was not disappointed. None are disappointed who put their full trust in the Word of God.

The Geneva Bible is stronger than the Authorized Version in using “above hope” while the Bishop’s Bible has “contrary to hope” which is also stronger.

18c **“that which was spoken”** The promise God gave Abraham, the verbal Word of God, which is all Abraham had to go on. He had no written Bible as we do today. He could only hope in a verbal promise God gave him. He had less to base his hope on than we do today, yet how much stronger was Abraham’s faith than ours is, even though we are in a much superior spiritual situation than Abraham ever was in! We have a Bible. Abraham didn’t. We had 6000 years of history to study. Abraham didn’t. We have the Holy Spirit indwelling us. Abraham didn’t. We have a local church. Abraham didn’t. We have biographies and sermon collections and hymnbooks to strengthen our faith. Abraham had none of that. Yet our faith tends to be so much weaker than Abraham’s and that is a serious rebuke to us. “Thus saith the Lord” should settle all doubts and end all controversies.

18d **“so shall thy seed be”** is from Genesis 15:5.

4:19 And being not weak^{aorist participle} in faith,^a he considered^{aorist} not his own body^b now dead,^{perfect passive participle} when he was^{present participle} about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb:

19a **“not weak in faith”** Abraham was weak in faith in the early years of his walk but not after the crises of Genesis 17.

19b **“considered not his own body...”** The physical impossibilities were dismissed from his mind when the hope and faith in God’s promise kicked in. Faith and hope cannot co-exist with doubt. Neither did the deadness of Sarah’s womb bother him.

4:20 He staggered^{aorist passive} not^a at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong^{aorist passive} in faith,^{bcde} giving^{aorist participle} glory to God;

20a “**staggered not**” Abraham did not doubt, made no objection, was not overwhelmed by the promise.

Strong’s #1252 diakrinô; from dia (Strong’s #1223) separation and krinô (Strong’s #2919) to distinguish, decide, judge; to separate thoroughly, to withdraw from, oppose, to discriminate, decide, hesitate, contend, make (to) differ, discern, doubt, judge, be partial, stagger, waver. Used only here in the New Testament.

20b This “**strong faith**” wound up giving glory to God. Faith and belief glorify God. Works unto salvation do not bring this form of glory to God.

20c In comparing belief and unbelief, John Bunyan wrote a good comparison between the two in *Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ*: “Let me here give the Christian reader a more particular description of the qualities of unbelief, by opposing faith unto it, in these particulars:

1. Faith believeth the Word of God, but unbelief questioneth the certainty of the same.
2. Faith believeth the word, because it is true, but unbelief doubteth thereof, because it is true.
3. Faith sees more in a promise of God to help than in all other things to hinder; but unbelief, notwithstanding God's promise, saith, How can these things be?
4. Faith will make thee see love in the heart of Christ when with His mouth He giveth reproofs, but unbelief will imagine wrath in His heart when with His mouth and word He saith He loves us.
5. Faith will help the soul to wait, though God defers to give, but unbelief will snuff and throw up all, if God makes any tarrying.
6. Faith will give comfort in the midst of fear, but unbelief causeth tears in the midst of comforts.
7. Faith will suck sweetness out of God's rod, but unbelief can find no comfort in the greatest mercies.
8. Faith maketh great burdens light, but unbelief maketh light ones intolerably heavy.
9. Faith helpeth us when we are down, but unbelief throws us down when we are up.
10. Faith bringeth us near to God when we are far from him, but unbelief puts us far from God when we are near to Him.
11. Faith putteth a man under grace, but unbelief holdeth him under wrath.
12. Faith purifieth the heart, but unbelief keepeth it polluted and impure.
13. Faith maketh our work acceptable to God through Christ. But whatsoever is of unbelief is sin, for without faith it is impossible to please Him.
14. Faith giveth us peace and comfort in our souls, but unbelief worketh trouble and tossings like the restless waves of the sea.
15. Faith maketh us see preciousness in Christ, but unbelief sees no form, beauty, or comeliness in Him.
16. By faith we have our life in Christ's fulness. but by unbelief we starve and pine away.
17. Faith gives us the victory over the law, sin, death, the devil, and all evils; but unbelief layeth us obnoxious to them all.
18. Faith will show us more excellency in things not seen than in them that are, but unbelief sees more of things that are than in things that will be hereafter.
19. Faith makes the ways of God pleasant and admirable, but unbelief makes them heavy and hard.
20. By faith Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob possessed the land of promise; but because of unbelief neither Aaron, nor Moses, nor Miriam could get thither.
21. By faith the children of Israel passed through the Red Sea, but by unbelief the generality of them perished in the wilderness.
22. By faith Gideon did more with three hundred men and a few empty pitchers

than all the twelve tribes could do, because they believed not God.

23. By faith Peter walked on the water, but by unbelief he began to sink.

Many more may be added, which, for brevity's sake, I omit, beseeching every one that thinketh he hath a soul to save or be damned to take heed of unbelief, lest, seeing there is a promise left us of entering into His rest, any of us by unbelief should indeed come short of it."

20d "For a child to trust its father is natural, so natural that no one counts it a virtue. How astounding is our moral perversity that we should be so far gone out of our right condition of heart that we have to argue ourselves into believing our God—and even then succeed not till the Holy Spirit gives us faith! It ought to be a very difficult thing for a Christian to doubt his heavenly Father. In fact, it ought to be impossible, seeing that the Divine Character is incapable of falsehood! Beloved, should we not have strong faith who believe in a God whose very essence is pure truth? Where deception is inconceivable, doubt should be impossible!"⁹⁵

AV	ESV	LSV
20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;	20 No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God,	20 yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God,

The AV says Abraham was "strong in faith" but the ESV and LSV have Abraham not being strong in faith but growing in his faith. Abraham was already "strong IN faith".

20e Types of faith in Scripture:

1. Common faith (Titus 1:4 **To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.**)

2. Human faith (Mark 11:22 **And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.**)

3. Divine faith (Galatians 2:20 **I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.**)

4. Historical faith (1 John 5:10-13 **He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.**)

5. Mental faith (James 2:14 **What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?**)

6. Little faith (Matthew 6:30 **Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?**)

7. Wavering faith (James 1:6 **But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed**)

8. Unfeigned faith (1 Timothy 1:5 **Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned**)

95 Charles Spurgeon, "Unstaggering Faith" in *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, volume 23, sermon 1367.

9. Active faith (Hebrews 10:19-22 **Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.**)⁹⁶

4:21 And being fully persuaded^{a-aorist passive participle} that, what he had promised,^{perfect} middle/passive he was^{present} able also to perform.^{b-aorist infinitive}

21a “**fully persuaded**” This would be a very strong term. Abraham was fully assured of the promises of God because of his deep and strong faith. The Tyndale and Bishops render this as “certified”.

There is a similarity between the object of Abraham's faith and ours: they both involved belief in God giving life to the dead. Abraham believed that God would quicken the dead womb of Sarah. The Christian believes that God would raise Jesus Christ from the dead.

21b How could Paul say that Abraham did not waver at the promise of God concerning Isaac. When we see in Genesis that at times it seemed like Abraham had lapses in faith regarding this promise (in Genesis chapter 16, he became impatient for God to fulfill His promise concerning Isaac and so he listens to Sarah's suggestion to have a son through Hagar. And then in Genesis 17:17, we are told that Abraham fell on his face and laughed when God told him that he would have a son through Sarah). What do we do with these seeming contradictions? When Paul speaks in our passage about Abraham's great faith not wavering at the promises, he is making a general observation about Abraham's faith as a whole. He is not claiming that Abraham's faith was perfect or that he never had any doubts whatsoever. Rather, his point is that Abraham, despite some very human doubts, always came back in the end to faith in the promise of God.

4:22 And therefore it was imputed^{ab-aorist passive} to him for righteousness.

22a “Credited to his spiritual account”.

22b What was imputed to Abraham? Righteous and justification, as implied by the context of Romans 4.

28. Abraham- Our Example of Faith 4:23-25

4:23 Now it was not written^{aorist passive} for his sake alone,^a that it was imputed^{aorist} passive to him;

23a “**not for his sake alone**” This was not just for Abraham's benefit for the instruction of all men, especially believers. His faith is to be an example for all of us.

4:24^a But for us also, to whom it shall be^{present} imputed,^{present passive infinitive} if we believe^{present participle} on him that raised up^{aorist participle} Jesus our Lord^b from the dead;^c

⁹⁶ Peter Ruckman, *Ruckman Reference Bible*, page 1491.

24a This example of Abraham was not an isolated incident but is the pattern for the rest of us. If we exercise the same faith in the revelation that we have, then the justification which Abraham enjoyed can be ours, regardless of if we are Jew or Gentile, circumcised or uncircumcised.

24b **“Jesus our Lord”** This phrase, without the word “Christ” in the title of Jesus, only occurs here and in 2 Peter 1:2.

24c **“that raised Jesus our Lord from the dead”** That same divine power that allowed Sarah to conceive at age 100 also raised Christ from the dead. But this also shows the belief in the resurrection of Christ is vitally important for salvation. No man can be saved if he does believe in the resurrection. We must believe on Him (the Father) who raised Jesus from the dead.

4:25^a Who was delivered^{aorist passive} for our offences,^b and was raised again^{aorist passive} for our justification.

25a Tie this into Romans 4:24b to see what we need to believe in order to be justified. Abraham had to believe in the Abrahamic Covenant. We are not bound to that. Remember, we said that all men must be justified by faith, but the object of that faith varies. The Abrahamic Covenant is certainly a part of what we must believe since it is contained in the Bible, but Paul specifically mentions the following which is required of us to believe:

1. Believe on God the Father
2. Believe in the resurrection of Christ
3. Believe in the atoning and substitutionary work of Christ.

This is the focus of our belief in order for us to be justified by faith.

25b Christ was:

1. Delivered for our offenses
2. Raised for our justification

Summary Concerning Abraham and his salvation:

1. How was Abraham saved? By faith and belief, Romans 4:3.
2. When was Abraham saved? Before his circumcision, when he believed the promises of God, Genesis 15:16 **But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full.**
3. Why was Abraham saved? That he might be the father of all who believe, Romans 4:11.

Adam Clarke summarizes it this way: “FROM a careful examination of the Divine oracles it appears that the death of Christ was an atonement or expiation for the sin of the world: For him hath God set forth to be a PROPITIATION through FAITH in HIS BLOOD, Romans 3:25. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ DIED FOR the UNGODLY, Romans 5:6. And when we were ENEMIES, we were RECONCILED to God by the DEATH of his Son, Romans 5:10. In whom we have REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD, the FORGIVENESS of SINS, Ephesians 1:7. Christ hath loved us, and GIVEN HIMSELF FOR US, an OFFERING and a SACRIFICE to God for a sweet-smelling savor, Ephesians 5:2. In whom we have REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD, the FORGIVENESS OF SINS, Colossians 1:14. And having made PEACE THROUGH the BLOOD of his CROSS, in the BODY of HIS FLESH, through DEATH, Colossians 1:20, 22. Who GAVE HIMSELF a RANSOM for all, 1 Timothy 2:6. Who GAVE HIMSELF FOR US, that he might REDEEM us from all iniquity, Titus 2:14. By which will we are sanctified, through the OFFERING of the BODY of Jesus Christ, Hebrews 10:10. So

Christ was once OFFERED TO BEAR THE SINS of many, Hebrews 9:28. See also Ephesians 2:13, 16; 1 Peter 1:18, 19; Revelation 5:9. But it would be transcribing a very considerable part of the New Testament to set down all the texts that refer to this most important and glorious truth.”

Spiritual Applications, Romans Chapter 4

If anyone would have been able to earn their salvation by works, you would think it would have been Abraham. But verses 1-3 says that his justification was because he believed, not that he works. Salvation by works is illogical. What works do you have to do? Where are they listed? How long do you have to work before you earn enough “points” to earn your salvation? The rest of your life? Can you know if you have earned salvation or not? Can you lose your salvation? Will you ever have the assurance that you are saved? How much better is it to simply receive salvation as a gift?

Salvation by faith and having faith in God are always superior to the alternative. When you rely on works, it’s always about you. You have to work. You have to keep it up. You can never rest or take a day off. But you base your salvation on the grace of God and the finished work of God, then you know that everything is finished, completed and paid for and you don’t have to do anything, as your salvation is already purchased by the blood of Christ.

Salvation can never be of works as that would make God a debtor to man. If a man did earn his salvation, God would owe salvation to him, and salvation would then be reckoned by debt and obligation, rather than by grace.

Romans Chapter 5

Romans 5 is divided into two parts: verses 1-11 describe the benefits of justification by faith and verses 12-21 is a comparison between the work of Adam and the redemptive work of Christ.

Since the number “5” stands for death in Biblical numerology, we would expect Romans 5 to deal strongly with some aspect of death, which it does.

Romans 5:1-11 there are three things to rejoice in:

1. Our future rejoicing--"we rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Romans 5:2)
2. Our present rejoicing- "we rejoice in tribulations" (Romans 5:3)
3. Our past rejoicing--"we rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have now received the reconciliation" (Romans 5:11).

Our reconciliation has been accomplished (PAST), God is now molding and shaping us through tribulations (PRESENT) and our glorification is yet to come (FUTURE).

“Our standing before God is the subject of Romans 5; our state is the subject of Romans 6-8.”⁹⁷

29. Peace Through Justification 5:1

5:1^a Therefore being justified^{bc}-aorist passive participle by faith,^{def} we have^{present} peace^{gh} with God^{ijklm} through our Lord Jesus Christ^{nop}

1a This verse summarizes Paul's arguments up to this point. Since we are justified by faith, we now have peace with God through Christ. This peace comes only through justification by faith. Justification by works cannot bring peace with God through Christ.

1b “**therefore being justified**” Notice we are justified now. Justification is not something promised for the future but is something to be possessed, experienced and enjoyed now. Future justification isn't very practical since it could not be enjoyed now. These are the people who claim "you can't know until you die if you are going to heaven." What good is that? But a present justification is something to be experienced, enjoyed and applied now.

Do you notice how firm Paul is in his conclusions? He uses no such words as “if” or “but” or “maybe”. He is all firmness and faith. Paul talks as if he were a mathematician proving a theorem, and as positively as though he could see the thing written before his eyes. “There is a certain class of professors who think strong faith is pride, and doubts and fears are humility. Therefore, they look upon these base-born thorns as though they were choice flowers, and they will cull them together like a bouquet of nettles and noxious weeds—a fool’s bouquet of flowers. Have you ever seen it in the magazines? I have observed it very frequently. Or they will dig up a nasty ugly thorn, put it in a flower pot, place it in an ornamental situation, display it outside the window, and call you all to admire it, as being a special, a wonderful piece of Christian experience breathing.

⁹⁷ John Phillips, *Exploring Romans*, page 88.

"If I should say to some poor man—one terribly poor—"I will pay your rent for you tomorrow," and he should say, "Well, well, I hope you will," I should not feel pleased with him. If you should say to your child tomorrow morning, "Well William, I shall buy you a new suit of clothes today," and he should say, "Well, Father, I sometimes hope you will, I humbly trust, I hope I may say, though I sometimes doubt and fear, yet I hope I may say I believe you," you would not encourage such a child as that in his uncomely suspicions. Why should we talk thus to our dear Father who is in Heaven? He says to us, "I give unto you eternal life, and you shall never perish, neither shall any pluck you out of My hand." Is it humility for us to reply, "Father, I do not believe you, I cannot think it is possible"?"⁹⁸

1c The Greek construction (the aorist tense) shows this justification to be a one-time act in the past, not needed to be repeated. It is a "point-in-time" action, even if the English requires it to be translated in a past-tense, but English has no equivalent to the Greek aorist tense.⁹⁹ Justification is a one-time act by God with continuing results, although the act itself is not repeated. Once you are saved, you are *saved* once and for all. The act does not need to be repeated although we continually enjoy the benefits from that one-time historical act.

1d **"by faith"** The only source of peace is justification by faith. Only a total, complete and free declarative justification can bring peace to a sinner's heart. The Romanist may go to mass and pray his rosary, but he cannot find peace of heart. The Protestant or Baptist may attend church and have their name put on the roll or they may have been water baptized but they soon discover that these works, rites and ordinances do not bring peace. The Jehovah Witness passes out his *Watchtower* and *Awake!* while the Mormon makes his pilgrimage to Salt Lake City, but again, these do not bring peace. Only the free pardon of sin through justification by faith without the works of the law (or the works of your church) can bring this long-sought for peace.

"Some silly people who have got high doctrine in their heads, so high that it smells offensive in the nostrils of those who read the Scriptures—they say we teach that man is saved by mere believing. We do—by mere believing. There is a poor, starving man over there. I give him bread—his life is spared. Why do not these people say this man was saved by mere eating—by mere eating! And here is another person whose tongue cleaves to the roof of his mouth by thirst, and is ready to die. I give him water, and he drinks, and his eyes sparkle—and the man is saved by mere drinking. And look at ourselves—why do we not drop down dead in our pews? Just stop your breath a little while and see. Surely we all live by mere breathing."¹⁰⁰

1e **"by faith"** "By faith" is found in the Majority of all texts as well as Sinaiticus, C, most Old Latin copies, the Vulgate, Syriac Peshitta, Harkelian, Palestinian, Coptic Boharic, Armenian, Ethiopic, Georgian and Slavonic ancient versions. It is also in the RV, ASV, NASB, NIV, and ESV. However Vaticanus omits "by faith" and so do the RSV and the NRSV. So the revision and the revision of the revision omit the words "by faith", but then the revision of these (ESV) now has put it back in! Westcott and Hort put the words in brackets, but later in the 4th edition of the Nestle text they took away the brackets. But now in the 27th edition of the Nestle text they have once again put the brackets around the words, thus indicating doubt as to their authenticity.¹⁰¹

98 Charles Spurgeon, "Peace by Believing", *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, volume 9, sermon 510.

99 The Greek aorist tense is a nightmare for every Greek student. No one really seems to have an idea of how to translate it. Is it a past tense? A "tenseless" tense? There is no agreement among the Greek grammars.

100 Charles Spurgeon, "Peace by Believing", *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, volume 9, sermon 510.

101 Will Kinney

1f **“justified by faith”** Not by tears, repentance, church membership, penance, good works, morality, prayers, humblings, self-mortification, sacraments, “going to confession”, “doing penance”, doing the “stations of the cross”, doing a “novena” or anything else. “Nor are we justified by wafer, war, water, wealth or works.”¹⁰² “We are justified by faith and by faith alone.

1g **“we have peace”** Peace! The war of rebellion against God is done! We surrender at salvation and God rewards our heart with justification and peace. He is satisfied with us through Christ and we can now start to love Him and serve Him as we were created to. Such peace is only made available to the justified, which explains why no sinner has this peace and why the world does not have this peace. It is the desire for this peace of soul that funds the drug, psychology, New Age and liquor industries. Yet if you bought a dime-store Bible and followed it, you’d have peace that world couldn’t give and that the world couldn’t take away.

1. Isaiah 57:21, **“There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.”** The wicked have no peace because:

- A. They are lost.
- B. They have not been justified by faith.
- C. They are unwilling to get this peace God’s way.

1h **“we have peace”** The traditional text reads “echomen” (1st person plural present active indicative of “echo, to have”) while the critical text has “echômen” (1st person plural present active subjunctive), an omega instead of an omicron. Marvin Vincent (*Word Studies in the New Testament*, 3:57) claims “echômen” is “the true reading”, which is typical of his anti-Textus Receptus/Authorized Version bias. James Denney, in *The Expositor’s Greek Testament* (2:623) says “The MSS. Evidence is overwhelming in favor of ecômen, so much so that Westcott and Hort notice no other reading and Tischendorf says ecômen cannot be rejected”. The Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary insists “let us have peace” has overwhelming textual support, which it does not. Robertson’s Word Pictures also errs here. But even Denney has his doubts about “echômen” although Vincent does not. The critical text reading would have this phrase in the imperative, “let us have peace”, which is totally different from the traditional text rendering “we have peace”. This makes a big theological difference too, for if the Critical Text is correct, then we do not have peace as a settled fact as a result of our justification, but we should, or ought, to have it instead, which is not a settled matter nor a present-tense possession. So is it an indicative mood as in the Traditional Text or a subjunctive as in the Critical Text? Do we have peace as a fruit of our justification or not? Naturally, we retain the Traditional Text reading as preserved in the King James Bible.

We can understand why the Roman Catholic commentators and versions would read “let us have peace”. In their wretched theology, peace comes by sacrament and ritual, not by faith. No one within the Church of Rome can claim to be saved and thus, no one can claim to have this “once-for-all” peace. The Romanist must keep coming back to the Church and the sacraments over and over again to maintain whatever peace they may have. This is why the mass accomplishes nothing. Rome crucifies the Lord daily to keep the people in bondage. You must keep crucifying as there is no final answer to the sin problem. And there is no final impartation of peace, either. You must continually come to the Church to get this peace that the truly born-again child of God has in an absolute sense. Works-based salvation systems are like this. They cannot impart peace, assurance or salvation.

It is interesting that even the Critical Text seems to prefer the indicative rendering. The 27th edition of *Novum Testamentum Graece* (as does the 23rd edition of 1957) has “echomen” but lists “echômen” in the footnotes as a variant reading. The 4th revised edition of *The Greek*

¹⁰² David Allen Hoffman, *The Common Man’s Reference Bible*, page 1676.

New Testament also has this reading in the text with the variant reading in the footnote (agreeing with *Novum Testamentum Graece*). The variant list seems about split down the middle, although “echômen” seems to be evidenced by more of the Church Fathers while “echomen” seems to have more manuscript evidence. But earlier versions of the Critical Text read “echômen”, as in Nestle’s edition of 1923, published by the British and Foreign Bible Society (1904). It seems that the earlier editions liked “echômen” but they later shifted their stance to echomen, in agreement with the Traditional Text. Is there a good reason for the New King James Version, which advertises being a mere “updating” of the King James Bible, to place the Critical Text reading “let us have peace” in the footnote and attach the lie that this reading is in “some ancient mss.” while the Critical Text editions are abandoning this reading? We think not. It is obvious that the New King James is not a mere “updating” or “revising” of our English Received Text (otherwise known as the King James Version or the Authorized Version) but is rather an entirely new translation.

A blatant example of unbelief regarding the correct traditional reading is made by Daniel B. Wallace, who taught at Dallas Theological Seminary¹⁰³ claims that Tertius misspelled *echomen*, changing Paul’s indicative “we have” to the subjunctive “let us have.” Supposedly Paul caught the mistake and made the correction in the original Epistle to the Romans so that the recipient audience would not know which reading was correct and which was erroneous. Such nonsense is easily refuted by passages such as Jeremiah 36:4 which shows that God’s words were recorded perfectly by the scribe, Baruch, in the inspiration process. We would expect no less in the New Testament inspiration and transmission process.

A survey of the English translations on this verse:

“we have peace”- ESV, LSV, NIV (questioned in footnote), NASV, NLT, CEV, NKJV (questioned in footnote), New Century Version (questioned in footnote), God’s Word translation, 21st Century King James Version, ASV, Young’s Literal Translation, Darby, Holman Christian Standard Bible (questioned in footnote), New International Reader’s Version, Wycliffe, Today’s NIV

“let us have peace”- Amplified Bible,

Other translations, like The Message, are totally incomprehensible in their reading. Most of the translations read as the Authorized Version and the Critical Texts are moving toward the traditional readings. Most of the attacks this time are coming from the commentators, like Lenski, Alford (and most of the Greek commentators) and Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, D.M. Lloyd-Jones supports the traditional reading but his stand is weak and if the wind had blown in an opposite direction, he would have supported the incorrect reading.¹⁰⁴

Summary- the traditional reading is correct and any translation or commentator or teaches who attacks this reading is wrong, despite how much education he may have.

1i **“peace with God”** Peace by itself is delightful and is highly prized, but how much more when that peace is peace with God! How much more valuable is that? This is what multitudes of religious people, of all religions, literally kill themselves for and spend huge sums of money for. But we receive it free, as a benefit of salvation!

103 Do Christians have Peace with God? A Brief Examination of the Textual Problem in Romans 5:1,” <http://www.bible.org/docs/soapbox/rom5-1.htm>, 2/10/2002.

104 In his multi-volume transcribed sermon set on Romans, Lloyd-Jones does not hesitate to correct the traditional readings when the mood suits him. With his reputation, it is a major disappointment to see him imagining himself to be smarter and more spiritual than the Authorized Version translators. While he may have many good insights, we simply cannot tolerate this attitude, which is why I can not recommend this series.

If we have peace with God then we can expect no peace with or from the wicked. Woe to that believer who is sojourning in Mesech and dwelling in the tents of Kedar without complaint! If we love God and are right with God, the world will hate us as we are out of sorts with it. You cannot have peace with God and peace with the world at the same time, as no man can serve two masters. After all, this world crucified the Giver of your peace and is an enemy against your King. How can you hope to dwell at ease among them without stirring them up?

1j “The meaning of peace with God is striking. Peace with God does not mean escapism, a quiet atmosphere, the absence of trouble, the control of situations by positive thinking, the denial of problems, the ability to keep from facing reality. Peace with God means the sense and knowledge . . .

- that one has restored his relationship with God
- that one is no longer alienated and separated from God
- that one is now reconciled with God
- that one is now accepted by God
- that one is freed from the wrath and judgment of God
- that one is freed from fearing God’s wrath and judgment
- that one is now pleasing God
- that one is at peace with God.”¹⁰⁵

1k “A moment’s contemplation would suffice to arouse any man to the terror of the position involved in being at war with God. For a *subject* to be in a state of sedition against a powerful monarch is to commit treason, and to incur the forfeiture of his life. But for a *creature* to be in arms against its Creator! For a *thing* that depends for its existence upon the will of God—to be at enmity with the God in whose hand its breath is! For a soul to know that God, who is terrible in His power, and Almighty to protect or to destroy, is his foe! That He whose anger endures forever, and His wrath burns even unto the lowest Hell, is his chief and grand Enemy—this is an appalling thing, indeed!

Could any man but understand and realize this, smitten through with terrors as great as those which surprised Belshazzar when he saw the handwriting on the wall, he would cry out in anguish, and he would make a thrilling appeal for mercy. God is against you, O sinful man! God is against you, O you who have never submitted yourself unto His Word! God is against you! And woe unto you when He shall rend you in pieces, for none can deliver you out of His hand! Happy! Happy beyond all description is the man who can say with our Apostle, “We have peace with God.” But wretched! Wretched, again, beyond all description! Wretched must that man be who is at war with his own Maker, and sees Heaven itself in arms against him.”¹⁰⁶

1l **“peace with God”** If you are unsaved, you have no peace with God but you have peace with Satan, which will, in the end, trouble you in the Lake of Fire, separated from true peace forever. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked (Isaiah 48:22) because they are like the troubled sea (Isaiah 57:20) with all their turmoil. The moment you trust Christ, you were declared to be righteous before God. God not only gives you His righteousness, but He makes a legal declaration that you are justified, and your sins have been completely paid for by the blood of Jesus Christ. Before you were saved, you were at war with God. That state of war between you and God remains until you are reconciled to God by Jesus Christ. When you trust Christ as Saviour, you are absolved of your crimes and rebellion against God because someone has already died in your place. “The peace treaty” between you and God was signed by the Son of God in His own blood and “ratified” by your faith.

¹⁰⁵ Preacher’s Sermon and Outline Bible.

¹⁰⁶ Charles Spurgeon, “Peace by Believing”, *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, volume 9, sermon 510.

1m Paul says we have peace **with** God, not the peace **of** God. There is a difference. Look at Philippians 4:6,7, **“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”** The prepositions in Scripture are important and must not be ignored.

The peace **of** God keeps our hearts and minds. It gives us security and assurance as well as protection from the world around us. We need this when in trial or tribulation. We need it when we do not know what to do next. We need it when confronted with temptation.

Peace **with** God is different. This deals with reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:21), communion and fellowship. We need the peace of God before we can peace with God. Peace with God comes with Christian maturity.

1n **“through our Lord Jesus Christ”** Christ as our daysman or mediator, Who brings peace between God and man. This is the only basis for our peace and our hope. If your peace is not based squarely on the work of Christ on the cross, then you have no basis for your peace. It is a false peace and a false hope that will fail you in that day when you will need it the most.

1o “So we ascend this golden ladder, from faith to peace, from peace to access with God, and from this to joy by the way of hope.”¹⁰⁷

1p **“Therefore, being justified...”** Note gratefully the seven products of our justification by faith, as summed up in chapter v. 1-11.

“Being justified by faith...”:

“We have peace with God...”

“We have access by faith...”

“We rejoice in hope of glory...”

“We glory in tribulations...”

“The love of God is shed in our hearts...”

“We shall be saved from the wrath...”

“We joy in God” (having received “atonement” i.e. reconciliation, although formerly condemned rebels!)¹⁰⁸

30. Access By Faith Into Grace 5:2

5:2^a By whom also we have^{perfect} access^b by faith^c into this grace^{de} wherein we stand,^{perfect} and rejoice^{present middle/passive} in hope^f of the glory of God.

2a Other benefits of justification by faith, including “peace with God” in 5:1 include:

1. Access by faith
2. Rejoicing
3. Hope

2b **“By whom also we have access”** The Old Testament Gentile was barred at the gate of the Temple but could not proceed any farther. The Jewish woman was stopped at the women's court. The non-Levite Hebrew could not enter the inner court. The High Priest could only enter the Holy of Holies once a year and then only with blood. Now, through the death of Christ and

¹⁰⁷ Charles Spurgeon.

¹⁰⁸ J. Sidlow Baxter, J., *Explore the Book*, page 1490.

through justification by faith, the Christian may enter into the heavenly temple any time via prayer! The Christian has privileges that no Old Testament man enjoyed, not even the High Priest. The **“also”** refers to not just the non-priests among the Jews but also to the Gentiles.

2c **“access by faith”** Not by works- never by works! It is always by grace alone without any human works..

AV	ESV	LSV
2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.	2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.	2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we boast in hope of the glory of God.

“access” The LSV reading is horrible, with its “introduction”.

2d **“into this grace”** Justification by faith also brings access by faith into the grace of God. We have stability in the grace of God. Christians have a privilege that no one has ever before enjoyed.

2e **“grace”** “The use of *charis* here is somewhat unusual- “grace” as a sphere or state (a secure area) into which one enters. But it is a quite natural extension of its more normal Pauline sense, denoting the gracious power of God outreached to humanity and working in and through human beings so- here, the sphere or dimension marked out by God’s grace, the status characterized by God’s grace. Since a reference to royal favor is also a quite natural part of its broader Greek usage, its use here strengthens the court imagery of *prosagôgê*: to enter the king’s presence being possible only if the king extends his royal favor to the suppliant.”¹⁰⁹

2f **“hope”** expectation. We also are able to rejoice in hope through justification by faith. A works salvation cannot bestow any sort of rejoicing since that man never has the assurance that he has done enough work to merit his salvation. But the man who enjoys the benefits of justification by faith may rejoice in the hope of his salvation since his salvation is a finished transaction.

31. The Ministry of Tribulation 5:3-5

5:3 And not only so, but we glory^{present middle/passive} in tribulations^{abc} also: knowing^{d-} that tribulation worketh^{perfect active participle} patience;^{efg}

3a **“we glory in tribulations”** This is a definite mark of justification. It is unnatural to glory in tribulations, but Christ, through the new nature given to us and the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, enables us to and thus to glorify Him. A Christian can glory in his tribulations as an old soldier can glory in his battle scars. Our tribulations are our medals. There is a **“ministry of evil”** (Isaiah 45:7 **“I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things.”**) as reversals, trials and troubles are often sent from God as a ministry to the saints to draw them closer to God and to deepen them in their Christian walk. And these are not the common, ordinary troubles of life that we all face but rather refer to the tribulations that come from persecution for Christ’s sake.

¹⁰⁹ James D. G. Dunn, “Romans” in *Word Biblical Commentary*, volume 38A, page 248.

Being able to glory in troubles is also a benefit of having peace with God. When you know God is on your side (and that you are on His) and that everything between the two of you is on a good footing, then you can put up with just about anything, knowing that God is with you. And we know that while tribulations may affect our circumstances on earth, they cannot affect our standing with God in heaven.

Paul told the Corinthians that he gloried in his infirmities, the troubles he experienced in his bodily health (2 Corinthians 12:5-9. He also told them, **“I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation”** (2 Corinthians 7:4).

3b **“tribulations”** There is a definite orderly process here. Tribulation is good for us because it can lead to hope and love. A Christian might be able to get through life without tribulation, but he will be the sorrier for it. The only way that the Christian life becomes precious is if it has been suffered for. Salvation is free but to make it precious is not cheap. This process starts with tribulation. We suffer to some degree for our faith. If the tribulation is embraced as a gift of God, it will result in patience. It will increase our spiritual stamina as we wait for God to work out His will in our lives. Tribulation forces us to wait on God as He is the only one who can get us out and bring us through. Then comes experience which results in hope.

3c Four reasons why we can glory in tribulations (note the plural, not one but many tribulations):

1. Our justification and peace, Romans 5:1
2. The grace of God, Romans 5:2
3. The love of God, Romans 5:5
4. The power of the Holy Ghost, Romans 5:5

The Christian can glory in his tribulations as an old soldier can glory in the wounds he received in battle.

3d **“knowing”** “Paul was no agnostic, he was a “knowing” man, and all God’s people ought to be the same. they are a very dogmatic people when they are what they ought to be; they have nothing to do with “ifs”, and “ands”, and “buts”, and “peradventures”; but they believe and are sure (Charles Spurgeon).”

3e **“patience”** Justification by works does not promote such patience for the same reason- the man has no assurance of salvation. Why should such a person suffer for Christ if he has no assurance of salvation? He may end up suffering for nothing. But the man who is justified by faith has a firm grasp on salvation and is more willing to suffer for his faith since he has a faith to suffer for. Patience is only to be learned and acquired through the school of affliction.

3f **“tribulation worketh patience”** A man who never suffers tribulation will never know of patience. Where this puts the “health-and-wealth” style of Christianity, that teaches God wants you healthy, wealthy and happy and that suffering is of the devil, is a little hard to say.

“The natural tendency of tribulation is to work impatience, it produces peevishness in many; but where the Spirit of God is, there is a heavenly counteraction of natural tendencies, and “tribulation worketh patience... You cannot learn to swim on dry land, and you cannot learn to be patient without having something to endure (Charles Spurgeon).”

3g “Now, experience is more than having done something before. It’s having gone through the trouble that accompanies a particular task. An experienced mechanic is the mechanic who has dropped the tools, burned his hand on a hot engine, banged his head on the bottom of the car, etc. He has learned what not to do as much as he has learned what to do. Experience means that you have gone through the mistakes as well as the successes.

“So troubles help you develop patience. Patience helps you go through the experience, and the experience that you encounter gives you hope. How is that? Well, the more trouble you have the more you look forward to something better. Your experience in this world as a Christian should cause you to look forward more to Heaven.”¹¹⁰

5:4 And patience, experience;^a and experience,^{bc} hope:^d

4a “**experience**” This word “experience” is interesting. It is Strong’s #1382 dokimê, meaning “test, trustiness”. The way the Greek word is translated is even more interesting:

1. 2 Corinthians 2:9 **For to this end also did I write, that I might know the *proof* of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.**
2. 2 Corinthians 8:2 **How that in a great *trial* of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.**
3. 2 Corinthians 9:13 **Whiles by the *experiment* of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them, and unto all men;**
4. 2 Corinthians 13:3 **Since ye seek a *proof* of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.**
5. Philippians 2:22 **But ye know the *proof* of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.**

4b AV

ESV

LSV

4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:	4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,	4 and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope;
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The Bishop’s Bible is very choppy here, and uses the word “profe” for experience. The ESV translates it as “character”. The ESV and LSV change the entire verse except for “hope”.

4c This experience then has to do with the proving or testing of our faith which will produce true Christian character. If it is real, genuine and heavenly, then tribulation will only strengthen our faith. If a man is a mere professor, then the first trial that he is confronted with will defeat him. But unto us who are saved, these tribulations will confirm to our hearts that we are indeed justified by faith and are true children of God. Tribulation then is the great acid test of testing the salvation experience. Trials not only detect hypocrites and mere professors but also true saints.

4d “**hope**” or “expectation.”

5:5 And hope maketh not ashamed;^{a-present} because the love of God is shed abroad^{perfect passive} in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given^{aorist passive} *participle* unto us.^b

5a “**hope maketh not ashamed**” The link from tribulation to hope will not leave the believer with disappointment. If a man travels this path rightly, he will get what he is after; a purer faith. Such a holy hope in God does not bring shame to the Christian but rather results in the love of God being shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. And this love that is shed abroad in our

¹¹⁰ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on Romans*, page 202.

hearts is like a nourishing rain that waters our hearts with the love and grace of God. He who puts his faith, hope and trust in God will never have reason to regret it.

5b The Holy Ghost is given to every Christian, at salvation. The indwelling of the Holy Ghost in our hearts is the evidence of the love of God toward us, that He would give us His Spirit.

32. Christ Died For Us, The Weak 5:6

5:6 For when we were^{present participle} yet without strength,^{abc} in due time^d Christ died^e for the ungodly.^{fg}

6a This reminds us of the spiritual deadness of every sinner. We do not carry it as far as the Calvinist would in saying that man is totally dead, including his will. That simply is not the case as God continually tells dead men to choose either life or death. While man is spiritually dead, this deadness does not extend to the will of man. His spirit may be dead but his soul is not and the will is a part of the soul. It is very much alive and able to choose and respond (or not) to spiritual things. But man is dead and helpless nonetheless. Until a man acknowledges his deadness and helplessness, Christ cannot save him.

6b **“without strength”** We were unable to save ourselves, to improve our spiritual situation before God, or do anything at all for ourselves. We were trapped in the quicksand, unable to extract ourselves. The Greek word here is usually applied to those who are sick and feeble, deprived of strength by disease (Matthew 25:28; Luke 10:9; Acts 4:9; 5:15). But it is also used in a moral sense, to denote inability or feebleness with regard to any undertaking or duty.

6c A four-fold description of our former, lost, state:

1. We were without strength- weak, dying, helpless and hopeless in our sin, unable to do anything for our salvation
2. We were ungodly- sinful, depraved, fallen
3. We were sinners-by nature, choice and practice
4. We were enemies of God as we hated God, the law of God and the holiness of God

6d Christ had to be born and die at a certain time, **“in due time”**. When the time was right on God's calendar, then was He born and then did He die. This has the similar idea as Galatians 4:4, when Paul says that Christ was born “in the fullness of time”. The time of Christ's death could not come until certain requirements had been fulfilled:

1. In order to fulfill Daniel's prophecy of the 70 weeks which predicted the date when Messiah would be cut off.
2. The Greek language had to be universal in order to write and preserve the New Testament.
3. Roman government had to be set up to provide rapid and safe transmission of the Gospel.
4. Jewish apostasy had to be mature in order for Christ to be rejected as He was.
5. The days of Christ's birth were also the worst time morally, with the Herod's in charge. The days of the Herods and the Caesars were worse than any other time in history, including even the darkest days of the Middle Ages or the twentieth century. Human depravity had to be at its lowest for the Light to shine the brightest.

6e Christ **died for the ungodly** who were without strength and unable to save ourselves or change our natures. If we had any strength, Christ would have been a helper and not our Savior. He died to save those who could not have saved themselves. He didn't die to help those who couldn't save themselves but to save them. Christ is a Savior, not a helper. He who lived for us also died for us as one of us. This was a concept the Jews could not understand and even the Gentiles would have trouble understanding it.

Christ did not die for righteous men. First, there are none righteous. Second, a self-righteous man will never receive the atonement of Christ, although Christ did die for all. But self-righteous men will never respond due to his pride. Theologically, Christ did die for him but practically, it will not amount to much since that self-righteous man will reject the substitutionary death of Christ on his behalf. But since all men are unrighteous by nature and by birth, this death of Christ was on the behalf of all these ungodly men. Christ then died for His enemies, for sinners, for children of the devil, for those who murdered Him and for those who blaspheme His name every waking moment.

It took Christ to die for the sins of the ungodly if they were going to be paid for at all, for who else would have been able to do so?

If Christ died for us when we were ungodly and enemies, how much more will He do for us now that we are reconciled?

This single sentence should convince anyone beyond the shadow of any doubt about the love of God toward fallen man.

Unless you see yourself as an ungodly sinner deserving of and heading for hell, then Christ did not die for you! He only saves sinners as self-righteous men will not come to Him for salvation. "Unsaved people make fun of us Bible-believing Baptists because we believe in eternal security. They say, "Who do you think you are to say that you are going to Heaven, and we are not? Do you think you are better than we are?" And my reply to that is, "No, I think that I am worse than you are. You are so good that you don't need a Saviour. I am so bad that I have to have one.

6f The Calvinist says that Christ died for the elect only, not for all men. But the word "elect" is nowhere used near this passage. Were the elect ungodly? But if they were elect, how could they have been ungodly, since they were elected to their salvation and saved from before the beginning of the world? And how did the ungodly elect differ from the ungodly unelect, seeing that both groups were ungodly? No, it is clear that Christ died for all men since all men are ungodly and the Calvinistic system of "limited atonement" and "unconditional election" are overthrown with the simple fact that Christ also died for "reprobates". Why would Christ die for reprobates if the reprobate had no chance to be saved? Christ died for the "reprobate" and for those who are in hell and those who are going there. This is what makes hell so terrible and so much of a tragedy- no one needs to be there! Every person in hell was died for and had salvation provided for him. Calvinists put the reprobates in hell because Christ did not die for them and they had no opportunity to be saved. We have said many times and will continue to "till kingdom come" that Calvinism is a philosophical system more than a theological one and must be rejected as a theological system, for it has too many problems.

According to Scripture, for whom did Christ die?

1. For all

A. Isaiah 53:6 **All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.**

B. 1 Timothy 2:6 **Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.**

i. Many Calvinists say that "all" here doesn't mean "all" but "all kinds". They try to say that "all" doesn't always mean "all-inclusive". But there is no justification to limit the scope of "all" in passages like this unless you

are trying to push a theological agenda or elevate your theological system above Scripture.

2. For every man
A. Hebrews 2:9 **But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.**
3. For the world
A. John 3:16 **For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...**
4. For the sins of the whole world
A. 1 John 2:2 **And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.**
5. For the ungodly
A. Romans 5:6 **And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.**
6. For false teachers
A. 2 Peter 2:1 **But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.**
 - i. If the Lord bought false teachers, then how can a Calvinist say that Christ only died for the elect? Are false teachers part of the elect?
7. For many
A. Matthew 20:28 **Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.**
 - i. Christ died for all as the above Scriptures clearly indicate, but obviously not "all" with repent, believe and be saved, but "many" will.
8. For the Church
A. Ephesians 5:25 **Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;**
9. For "me"
A. Galatians 2:20 **I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.**

6g The Jew had 4 classes in which they categorized men:

1. The just, who said "What is mine is mine what what is thine is thine".
2. The accommodating, who said "What is mine is thine and what is thine is mine".
3. The pious, who said "What is mine is thine and what is thine is thine".
4. The ungodly, who said "What is mine is mine and what is thine is mine".

So for which group did Christ die? All 4 groups. Although some men might be better than others externally, all are ungodly who are without the strength to save themselves. But Christ died for all four classes, for even the "moral" and the "good" (humanly speaking) were sinners and were unable to save themselves from their sinful condition.

33. Christ Died For Us, Sinners 5:7,8

5:7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die:^{future middle} **yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare**^{present} **to die.**^{a-aorist infinitive}

7a Men might die for a friend or for some great cause but it is a rare brand of man who would die for his mortal enemy. In contrast to the selfishness of the natural man, Christ died for His enemies so they might be His friends. Who would die for an enemy? Who would give his life knowing that the person would not appreciate the sacrifice and would vilify the memory of the man who died for him? Christ did! He died for the sin of the world, knowing full well (ahead of time- foreknowledge) that the majority of men would reject that sacrifice and would remain His enemy. Yet Christ died for His enemies as well as for those who would become His friends. This is called "divine love". Human love will not suffer for an enemy, but divine love does so gladly in the hopes that he who was once an enemy may become a friend.

Christ died for sinners not saints. He died for all men and not just the "elect". The elect would certainly be the righteous and there is no question that Christ died for them. But Christ also died for sinners and for His enemies! Get this down- *Christ died for so-called "reprobates!"* Christ died for all men- "elect" and "non-elect." Limited atonement, as presented by orthodox Calvinism, is not a Scriptural teaching no matter how many of the "greats" taught it. The universal extent of the atonement is a theological fact.

5:8 But God commendeth^{a-present} his love toward us, in that, while we were^{present} yet sinners,^b Christ died^{aorist} for us.^{cd}

8a Strong's #4921 *synistēmi* to place together, to set in the same place, to bring or band together, to stand with (or near) to set one with another, to comprehend, to put together by way of composition or combination, to teach by combining and comparing, to show, prove, establish, exhibit.

"Commend" comes from a Middle English word "commenden", from the Latin "comendare", meaning "to commit, enjoin, entrust". This is the same etymology as "command". "Commend" means "to confidently deliver something into the hands of another".¹¹¹

8a "**while we were yet sinners**" If Christ did so much for us while we were His enemies, how much more will He do for us now that we are His friends? If He displayed so much love and manifested so much grace upon His enemies, what will He do for His friends, those who accept His sacrifice?

8b "**Christ died for us**" God demonstrated His love for us in the death of Christ while we were yet still in our sins. The best of all creation died for the worst. God did not first save us and then show us His love but showed His love and then He saved us. His love toward us then is not dependent upon us but upon Him. It is not that we loved Him (for we did not) but that He loved us. This is the great keystone of the gospel, that Christ Jesus indeed died for sinners. Did Mary Baker Eddy? Ellen G. White? Mohammad? Joe Smith? Any pope? The "Blessed Virgin" Mary? These false Messiahs did no such thing. Hence the "But God..." Man would not die for an enemy and only a few men would die for a friend. Christ died for His enemies. Some would become His friends as a result, others would remain His enemy.

8d There have been cases where someone will see a person about to be hit by a car and will shove the other fellow out of the way and get him instead. That is an instinctive reaction. You didn't stop and consider it, you simply sprung into action. In combat, an enemy may roll a grenade into your area and you may throw yourself on it as an instinctive reaction. But would you sit down and calmly, rationally plan out how you would die an agonizing death in order to save people who would later spit in your face and blaspheme your name? That is what Christ

¹¹¹ Steven J. White, *White's Dictionary of the King James Language*, volume 1, pages 250-251.

did. His going to the cross was not an “instinctive” act but one that was long planned out and prepared for and entered into deliberately.

34. Saved From Wrath Through The Blood 5:9

5:9^a Much more^b then, being now justified^{aorist passive participle} by his blood,^{cde} we shall be saved^{future passive} from wrath^f through him.^g

9a Verses 9 and 10 would be "much mores" of future safety and the ones of verses 15 and 17 would be "much mores" of the abundance of grace.

9b “**much more**” Starting with Romans 5:9, the phrase "much more" occurs 4 times in this chapter:

1. Romans 5:9 ***Much more* then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.**
2. Romans 5:10 **For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, *much more*, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.**
3. Romans 5:15 **But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, *much more* the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.**
4. Romans 5:17 **For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; *much more* they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.**

9c “**justified by his blood**” The literal blood which was shed by Christ (and this is not some “word picture” for “death” either) does two things:

1. Justifies us
2. Saves us from the wrath of God

It is important to see this not as spilled blood for that could be an accident, but rather as shed blood in atonement.

9d We are justified “**through His blood**” and by nothing else. Nothing can be added to this. Justification is never through human merit, religious ritual, self-righteousness or by anything else. The only currency of redemption is the shed and applied blood of Christ.

9e The blood of Christ:

1. Is called precious by Peter-
 - A. 1 Peter 1:19. **But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:**
2. Redeems
 - A. Colossians 1:14 **In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:**
3. Cleanses
 - A. 1 John 1:7 **But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.**
4. Purges
 - A. Hebrews 9:14 **How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?**

5. Atones

A. Romans 5:11 **And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.**

6. Justifies

A. Romans 5:9 **Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.**

7. Saves

A. Romans 5:10 **For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.**

9f **“we shall be saved from wrath...”** Not only did Jesus die for us, but much more than that, He justified us through His blood. Simply dying for the sinner was not enough. The mere death would not save the sinner. It also involved the justification of the sinner with the blood of the Lamb. Without this blood- justification, the death of Romans 5:8 would have been a noble gesture on the part of God but would have accomplished nothing for the sinner. We are not only saved by His death but much more by His blood. Justification is not only through faith but also through the blood of Christ. Justification by faith is impossible if there is no shed blood of Christ. It is by the blood that the sin debt is paid, making a free pardon of sin possible. The blood of Christ is the only currency heaven accepts for payment of the sin-debt.

9g The Christian’s salvation is in three tenses:

1. Past- 1 Thessalonians 1:10. **And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.**

A. Your soul was saved when you believed on Christ.

2. Present- Philippians 2:12. **Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.**

A. Your spirit is being saved daily from the power of sin.

3. Future

A. Romans 5:9 **Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.**

B. 1 Peter 5,9. **Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.**

C. We wait the rapture or death to come into the full consummation of our salvation. This is when our body will be saved when we receive our glorified body.

35. Saved And Reconciled 5:10

5:10^a For if, when we were^{present participle} enemies,^b we were reconciled^{cde-aorist passive} to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled,^{f-aorist passive participle} we shall be saved^{future passive} by his life.^{gh}

10a A Four-fold description of our former state:

1. We were without strength Romans 5:6
2. We were ungodly Romans 5:6
3. We were sinners Romans 5:8
4. We were enemies of God Romans 5:10

10b **“while we were yet enemies”** God saved us while we were yet His enemies, not after. God saved us before we were worth saving. God does not save the worthy, only the unworthy! By the death and of Christ, we have been reconciled to God. We are also saved by His life- His sinless life on earth as He fulfilled the demands of the Law and qualified to pay for our redemption. He is also alive now, acting as our great heavenly high priest. A living Christ is needed as much as a dying Christ. If Christ were dead today in the same sense as Joseph Smith or Buddha or any pope, then His death and the blood would be meaningless for we are not only saved by His sinless earthly life but also by His eternal life made possible by the resurrection.

10c **Reconciliation** is the bringing together of two differing parties. Christ was the mediator who brought together God and man, again, on the basis of His blood. When Christ died for us, there was no middle-ground before the sinner and God. The sinner hated God because of His holiness. God was upset with the sinner because of his rebellion. Christ then died and applied His blood upon the heavenly mercy seat. God was satisfied with that and on that basis and that basis alone was man drawn back to the fellowship of God. The quarrel was settled by the blood of Christ. The justified sinner is now a son of God and God adopts him into the family of God.

The Greek word used for reconciliation here is Strong's #2644 *katallassô*, meaning "to (ex)change mutually, to compound a difference, receive, reconcile". The "kata" prefix is an intensive which gives the word the strongest possible meaning. Reconciliation is the highest form of changing a former relationship to a new one. Once the relationship has been changed from sinner to saint, there is no going back. It is an eternal and permanent change.

10d See 2 Chronicles 29:24 for another association between atonement, reconciliation and a blood sacrifice, **“And the priests killed them, and they made reconciliation with their blood upon the altar, to make an atonement for all Israel: for the king commanded that the burnt offering and the sin offering should be made for all Israel.”**

10e See Appendix 3 for a Summary of Reconciliation:

10f A listing of the benefits of justification in Romans 5:

1. Past justification (v. 1)
2. Peace with God (v. 1)
3. Access into God's grace (having been under
4. Joy in tribulation (vv. 3-5a)
5. The indwelling Holy Spirit (v. 5b)
6. Deliverance from future condemnation (vv.9-10)
7. Present reconciliation with God (v. 11)¹¹²

10g **“saved by His life”** That perfect, sinless life, that culminated in His atoning death and all the benefits that came with it. His death on the cross would have been in vain if His life had not been sinless, for one earthly sin would have stained the Lamb of God, destroying the redemption He gave to provide.

10h There is a strong argument for the security of the believer here. If Christ would go as far as to give His life to secure the salvation of His enemies, how much more will He do to secure the security and safekeeping of His friends in that salvation that He provided? If Christ did all this for an enemy, how much more will He do for a friend?

¹¹² Thomas Constable, *Notes on Romans*.

36. We Have Received The Atonement 5:11

5:11 And not only so, but we also ^{joy}^{present middle/passive participle} **in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received** ^{aorist} **the atonement.** ^{abcdef}

11a Our atonement is also through Christ. He paid our sin debt and suffered our penalty. Our sin debt has been paid in full by Christ. Knowing this and accepting it by faith through His blood, we can joy in it

11b "**Atonement**" literally means making "at-one-ment", reconciling two opposing parties by bringing them together and making them one. Reconciliation is the effect of the atonement. Etymologically, the word signifies a harmonious relationship or that which brings about such a relationship, a reconciliation. It is principally used of the reconciliation between God and man effected by the work of Christ. The need for such a reconciliation was caused by man's rebellion. The word is used for the Old Testament animal sacrifices which provided the temporary "patchwork" solution of the sin problem as well as for the sacrifice of Christ on the cross which provided the permanent solution.

I have read in some commentaries and in some sermons that men complain that this is a poor translation, that "atonement" should better be translated as "reconciled" or some such thing. Seeing the scholarship behind the King James translation committee and how that every verse was review no fewer than 17 times by the various translators, I see no reason to complain about the translation. "Atonement" was chosen for a definite reason.

11c There are nine major views of the atonement:

Theory	Definition	Proponent	Texts	Man's Spiritual Condition	Meaning of Christ's death	Value to man
Ransom to Satan	Christ's death was a ransom paid to Satan to purchase captive man from Satan's claims	Origen	Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45; 1 Corinthians 6:20	In bondage to Satan	God's victory over Satan	Freedom from enslavement to Satan
Recapitulation	Christ in His life recapitulated all the stages of human life, in so doing reversed the course initiated by Adam	Irenaeus	Romans 5:15-21; Hebrews 2:10	In bondage to Satan	Christ's recapitulation of all the stages of human life	Reversing the course of mankind from disobedience to obedience
Dramatic Theory	Christ is Victor in a divine conflict of good and evil	Aulen	Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45; 1	In bondage to Satan	God's victory over Satan	God's reconciliation of the world

	and wins man's release from bondage		Corinthians 15:51-57			out of its bondage to evil
Mystical theory	Christ took on a human, sinful nature but through the power of the Holy Spirit triumphed over it. A knowledge of this will mystically influence man.	Schleiermacher	Hebrews 2:10, 14-18; 4:14-16	Lack of God-consciousness	Christ's triumph over His own sinful nature	A mystical subconscious influence
Example theory	Christ's death provided an example of faith and obedience to inspire man to be obedient	Pelagius, Socinus, Abelard, Charles Finney	1 Peter 2:21; 1 John 2:6	Spiritually alive (Pelagian)	Meaning of Christ's death- an example of true faith and obedience	Inspiration to a faithful and obedient life
Moral influence	Christ's death demonstrated God's love, which causes man's heart to soften and repent	Abelard, Bushnell, Rashdall	Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:17-19; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 3:24	Man is sick and needs help	Demonstrated God's love toward man	Man is moved to accept God's forgiveness by seeing God's love for man
Commercial theory	Christ's death brought infinite honor to God. God gave Christ a reward which He did not need and thus passed it onto man	Anselm	John 10:18	Man is dishonoring to God	Brought infinite honor to God	This honor, not needed by Christ, is applied to sinners for salvation
Governmental theory	Christ's death demonstrates God's high regard for His law. It shows God's	Grotius	Psalms 2,5; Isaiah 42:21	Man is a violator of God's moral law	A substitute for the penalty of sin and showed God's	Makes legal God's desire to forgive those

	attitude toward sin. Through Christ's death God has a rationale to forgive the sins of those who repent and accept Christ's substitutionary death				attitude toward sin	who accept Christ as their Substitute
Penal Substitution	Christ's death was a vicarious (substitutionary) sacrifice that satisfied the demands of God's justice upon sin, paying the penalty of man's sin, bringing forgiveness, imputing righteousness and reconciling man to God	Calvin	John 11:50-52; Romans 5:8,9; Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 3:18	Man is totally depraved	Christ bore the penalty of sin instead of man	Value to man- through his repentance, man can accept Christ's substitution as payment for sin

Of these views, I hold that the penal substitution is the nearest to Scripture.

The extent of the atonement is clearly and obviously unlimited in that it is sufficient for all people but efficient for only those who repent. This is contrary to the Calvinistic view which teaches that Christ died only for the elect. We must reject that view in the light of the following verses which teach Christ died for the entire world:

1. 1 Timothy 4:10 For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, **who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe.**
2. 1 John 2:2 And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, **but also for the sins of the whole world.**
3. Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; **and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all** (not just the elect!)
4. John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, **which taketh away the sin of the world.** (the whole world, not just the "world of the elect")
5. 1 Timothy 2:6 **Who gave himself a ransom for all**, to be testified in due time.
6. Titus 2:11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation **hath appeared to all men...**

7. Hebrews 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; **that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.**¹¹³

These verses do not state that every man will be saved¹¹⁴ but rather that every can be saved. The Scripture clearly teaches that the universality of the atonement extends to every man yet only those who repent and believe can be benefitted by it. Calvinistic claims that this truth is a form of universalism simply betray their failure to understand this simple point. The universal availability of this redemption to all mankind is one of the clearest teachings of Scripture and any attempts to limit it only to "the elect" or a certain few is only possible by the most severe form of Scripture-twisting.

11d A summary of the benefits and results of justification by faith in Romans 5:

1. Peace with God 1
2. Access into the grace of God, 2a
3. Rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, 2b
4. Glorifying in tribulations, 3
5. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, 5
6. The Holy Ghost is given unto us, 5
7. We are saved from wrath, 9
8. We are reconciled to God, 10
9. We have received the atonement, 11

We have these now- these are immediate, not delayed, benefits which can be enjoyed now through justification by faith. Paul does not list any such benefits of justification by works since there are none! It brings no spiritual blessings or benefits to those who reject salvation by faith in order to work for it themselves.

11e See Appendix 4 for a Summary of Atonement:

11f AV

ESV

LSV

11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the **atonement**.

11 More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

11 And not only this, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

"**atonement**" The ESV and the LSV used "reconciliation".

37. Death By One Man 5:12

5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin^a entered^{aorist} into the world,^{bc} and death by sin;^d and so death passed^{aorist} upon all men,^{efg} for that all have sinned:^{hij-aorist}

12a Thomas Robinson gives a consideration of the definition of sin in church history on pages 298 and 299 of his book *Studies in Romans*: "Definitions of the nature of sin in the early Church indefinite and unsettled. Gnostics ascribed the origin of evil to the Demiurge, or maintained that it was inherent in matter. Its sources traced by the orthodox to human volition. Origen viewed

¹¹³ Not just for the elect!

¹¹⁴ I am not universalists. That teaching is a heresy to say that at the end, all men will be saved.

moral evil as something negative. Literal interpretation of the narrative of the fall rejected by some. The fall viewed by Origen as a type of what takes place in all moral agents; by Clement of Alexandria as partly fact and partly allegory; by Irenaeus as a historical fact. Fathers differed as to the original excellence of the first man and the nature of his sin. The temptation universally believed to be a real temptation and the transgression of Adam a fall from a state of innocence followed by disastrous consequences upon man. Man, according to Theophilus, created neither mortal nor immortal, but capable of both; according to Clement, a perfect being, not in relation to his moral excellence, but his capacity of choosing virtue. Death and physical evils viewed as the effects of Adam's sin. Many inclined to look on sin rather as the voluntary acts of a moral agent than as a hereditary tendency, and sinful acts less as the effects of the first sin than a reputation of it. According to Origen, man's soul is stained with sin in a former state and so enters the world in a sinful condition. According to Tertullian it is propagated with all its defects and faults like matter. Tertullian the author of the phrase 'Vitium originis'. Augustine ascribed sin to the will as the first cause, in order to oppose the Manichean notion that sin is inherent in matter. Lactantius viewed the body as the seat and organ of sin. The Church tacitly approved this view; hence the prevalence of ascetic practices. Effects of the fall continued to be greatly restricted to the body and this life. Some admitted its effects on the moral faculties. According to Gregory of Nazianzum, both the mind and soul affected by it. Still depravity not entire, and the will free. According to Athanasius, many born free from all sin. Cyril of Jerusalem, Ephraim the Syrian, Gregory of Nyssa, and Basil the Great, speak of men as born in a state of innocence. Chrysostom, however, believed in man's moral depravity. Hilary and Ambrose taught that sin is propagated by birth, but that the will is free. Celestius and Pelagius denied man's natural depravity. The former accused by Paulinus and condemned at the Synod of Carthage, AD 412. According to Celestius, Adam was created mortal; his sin only affected himself; man is born as Adam was before the fall; dies neither in consequence of Adam's death nor his transgressions, nor rises in consequence of Christ's resurrection; some before the appearance of Christ did not commit sin. Pelagius also condemned at the Synod of Carthage in 418. Augustine believed a mysterious connection between Adam's transgression and the sin of all men; that all sinned in him; that original sin is in some sense a punishment of the first transgression; and that all are justly exposed to the wrath of God on account of this hereditary sin and the guilt of Adam's transgression. His interpretation of Romans 5:12 in opposition to that of Julian, bishop of Eclanum in Apulia, confirmed by the Synod of Carthage. His views as to the imputation of original sin different from preceding ones. According to Augustine, the freedom of the will is lost in the natural man, who only has a power to do evil, while only in the regenerate man the will is free. Augustine followed by almost all the schoolmen. Abelard, however, referred the hereditary nature of the first sin not to the sin itself, but to its punishment. Several of the later schoolmen, especially Duns Scotus, inclined to semi-Pelagianism. while Thomas Aquinas and his school adhered to the definitions of Augustine. According to Anselm of Canterbury, original sin is also unrighteousness for which man is justly condemned, as all sinned when Adam did and as in Adam came the necessity of sinning as soon as we come into the world. Evangelical theologians toward the time of the Reformation, as John Wessel, looked on the unregenerate as children of wrath. Protestants in general believed that the fall corrupted man's inmost nature, changed his original righteousness into absolute depravity of their nature. Calvin held that Adam so corrupted himself that the contagion passed from him to all his offspring. Zuingli less rigid. According to the Roman Catholic Church, the fall only caused a loss of divine gifts, with imperfection and infirmity as the consequence. Arminians held still milder views. Socinians bordered more than all on Pelagianism, viewing death as the consequence of the first sin, but denying original sin; and maintaining that moral infirmity is from the habit of sinning, and not from the sin of Adam. Rationalists erased the doctrine of original sin from their system."

12b **“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world”** Sin entered into the world by one man- Adam and his sin. Adam, as the federal head of the race, dragged the race into death and sin with him when he fell. All have sinned in Adam (not by Adam). We inherit the sinful nature that was created in Adam at the moment of his sin. Sin then became a hereditary defect, passed on to every man and woman. The only way Christ managed to avoid it was because He came into the world in a unique way. His father was not Adam but Jehovah, who has no sin. The virgin birth, by removing sinful Joseph from the procreation of Christ, prevented Adam's sinful nature to be transferred to Christ since the Adamic nature is transmitted by the father to the child. Hence His humanity was a perfect, sinless one, not corrupted by the transmission of Adam's sin nature.

Would this reading go contrary to any ideas about the so-called “gap theory” of a pre-creation creation between Genesis 1:1,2? According to that theory, there was a pre-Adamic creation that God destroyed, presumably because of the sin and rebellion of Lucifer. If that is the case, wouldn't Paul have been more accurate to say that sin “re-entered” the world, the second time, because there would have been basically two incidents of sin that brought judgment, the one by Lucifer at his fall before the creation of Adam, and then Adam's sin after the re-creation of Genesis 1:2.¹¹⁵

12c Views of Adam's fall:

1. Pelagian

- A. Adam's sin affected only himself and resulted in a bad moral example but nothing else.
- B. Man has a free will and there is no such thing as original righteousness.
- C. Man is endowed with reason so that he could know God; with free will so that he was able to choose and to do the good and with the necessary power to rule the lower creation
- D. Man was born without virtue but also without vice. Therefore, man must choose to be good or bad and he has the power to make such a choice.
- E. Forgiveness may be obtained through baptism or some other rite or ritual.
- F. Man is not born in sin so he does not really need to be saved.
- G. This was the position of Charles Finney. If Pelagianism is such a heresy (and it is) then why do so many Fundamentalists, Baptists and hyper-evangelists promote him so? Men like John R. Rice and Peter Ruckman promoted his ministry and held him up as such a great evangelistic power and soulwinner. It must be because they agree with his methods, if not his theology, but you cannot separate a man's methods from his theology. Since Charles Finney was such a powerful preacher and (supposedly) “saw revival”, his theology must have okay. Another reason for this promotion of Finney is ignorance of what Finney taught and believe. Did his promoters ever read his books? The presentation of Finney is that of a mighty revivalist (which he was not) who sparked the Second Great Awakening (which he did not. Finney didn't begin his ministry until about 1825-1826, when the Second Great Awakening was winding down.). But the facts of history disagree. But because these “great men” promoted Charles Finney and his methods, who would dare to stand against someone like John R. Rice back in his day? Not many pastors and evangelists had the courage to do so for fear of being accused of “having a cold heart” or for “having no burden for souls”, which would have been a Mafia-style “kiss of death” in these theological circles.¹¹⁶

2. Semi-Pelagian (promoted by Aquinas)

¹¹⁵ See my notes on Genesis 1:2 in *The Pilgrim Way Commentary on Genesis* at www.pilgrimway.org. I generally tend to accept the so-called “Gap Theory” but not dogmatically. I still have some issues with the teaching.

¹¹⁶ See my book *Nettleton Verses Finney: The Shift in Evangelicalism 1820-1830* at www.pilgrimway.org.

- A. Adam's sin only weakened his will to resist sin and do good.
- B. Righteousness is an added gift after man's creation.
- C. The grace of God and the will of man work together in salvation in which man must take the initiative

3. Semi-Augustinianism

- A. The grace of God comes to all, enabling a person to choose and perform what is necessary for salvation
- B. This is probably the closest position to the Biblical truth.

4. Federal or Augustinian

- A. Adam's sin and its consequences were imputed to his posterity. Sin not only affected Adam but every one of his children. All were affected by Adam's sin. Sin did not simply weaken our desire to do good and resist sin but it plunged us into sin and destroyed our desire and ability to do spiritual good.
- B. Man is dead in sin. Salvation is totally by the grace of God, which is given only to the elect. This would be the Calvinist view. We would hold to this view although this does not mean that we identify with a Calvinist system.

12d **"death by sin"** Death is caused by sin. It is sin that kills men, not disease. You can look in the obituary column and see that this man died of a heart attack and this man died of cancer or this man was killed in a robbery, but the truth is that sin is what killed them.

12e Paul lists seven ways that Adam's sin in Eden affected the human race in Romans 5:12-19:

1. Death entered into the world, Romans 5:12a
2. Death passed unto all men, Romans 5:12b
3. Many died, Romans 5:15
4. Judgment unto condemnation, Romans 5:16
5. Death reigned as a king over man, Romans 5:17
6. All men were condemned, Romans 5:18
7. Many became sinners, Romans 5:19.

All over the disobedience over the eating of fruit (probably grapes)! Adam's one sin carried such a heavy price tag that it took the death of God to pay it.

12f "Death is a Divine decree: "It is appointed unto men once to die and after this cometh judgment," Death involves four consequences: First, the utter ending of what we call human life. Second, falling consciously into the fearful hands of that power under which men have during their lifetime lightly lived, unprotected from the indescribable terrors and horrors connected therewith. Third, being imprisoned in Sheol or Hades--in "the pit wherein is no water," as was the Rich Man in Luke 16. Compare Zechariah 9:11. fourth, exposure to the coming judgment and its eternal consequences. Of course, the believer is rescued from all this--even physical death,--from bodily. "falling asleep," if Christ comes during his lifetime while it is true of all saints, those who keep Christ's word, that they shall "never see death" (John 8:51). Death and judgment are past for the believer, Christ his Substitute having endured them. Nevertheless, in this day of mad pleasure-seeking, it certainly behooves all of us to reflect on the fearful realities connected with death!"¹¹⁷

12g Three Great Imputations:

1. Adam's sin was imputed to the whole human race- Romans 5:12
2. The sin of mankind was imputed to Christ on the cross- 2 Corinthians 5:21

¹¹⁷ William Newell, *Romans Verse-by-Verse*.

3. The righteousness of God was imputed to the sinner who believes on Christ- Romans 4:6; 2 Corinthians 5:21 **For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him**

12h **“for all have sinned”** This includes the Virgin Mary, of course, thus completely overthrowing Romanist Mariolatry. Paul knew nothing about any doctrine that Mary was sinless, a notion Mary herself rejected in Luke 1:47, where she called God her Savior. Why would a sinless person need a Savior?¹¹⁸

12i The Coverdale Bible takes the last part of verse 12 and moves it to verse 13.¹¹⁹

12j “The question is not ‘Why did God allow sin?’ The question is ‘Why don’t you take the cure for sin when God offers it to you?’”¹²⁰

38. No Sin Without the Law 5:13

5:13 (For until the law^a sin was^{imperfect} in the world: but sin is not imputed^{bc-present} when there is^{present participle} no law.^{de}

13a **“until the law”** From Adam to Moses.

13b **“is not imputed”** has the idea of “imputed as a penalty”, used only here and in Philemon 18.

Imputed. When a sinner sins, God places the charge for that sin on the spiritual account of the sinner, which he builds up continually. This places the sinner in a horrible state of accumulating a debt he can never hope to pay. The sinner has nothing to pay for even one sin, much less billions. See Matthew 18:24,25 for an example of this. The sin debt must be paid or forgiven. It cannot be forgiven by God without it violating His justice, so it must be paid by one who is ready, willing and able to pay it and that is Christ.

13c **AV**

ESV

LSV

13 (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.	13 for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law.	13 for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.
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“imputed” The ESV has a weak rendering “counted” although the LSV retains the word. The New King James Version mangles the word **“imputed”** by rendering Romans 5:12 as “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.” “Spread” replaces “imputed”. “Imputed” does not mean “spread”, it means “to place to someone’s account”. Thus, the New King James Version, while claiming to be a simple “updating” of the Authorized Version, shows its true colors that it is in reality a wholly separate and independent, modernist translation, since it destroys the doctrine of important imputation in this verse.

118 Romanist apologists have worked overtime to try to defend this teaching, yet the clear and simple fact is that the Bible knows nothing about any supposed sinless of Mary.

119 There was some instability in verse numbering in the early English versions.

120 Peter Ruckman, Ruckman Reference Bible, page 1492.

13d **"sin is not imputed when there is no law"** Sin was in the world but was imputed by the giving of the Law. The law defined sin and explained to all men what it was. Until the giving of the law, men had an idea what sin was but there was no "final authority" by which to hold men responsible to. Men have no such excuse after Exodus 20 since the giving of the law. Sin was certainly in the world from Genesis 3 to Exodus 20 but not legally so. There was nothing to define it since the law was not yet given. Sin could not rightfully be punished as it is today since there was no written divine law to break. "What a happy condition!" some may say. "There was no law and therefore sin was not imputed!" But there are three flaws in such a deception:

1. This was a period of death¹²¹
2. God still judged sin.
3. Men still knew about sin, even without the law.

A. Genesis 12:11-20 **And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon: Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive. Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee. And it came to pass, that, when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she was very fair. The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. And he entreated Abram well for her sake: and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels. And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife. And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What is this that thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife? Why saidst thou, She is my sister? so I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore behold thy wife, take her, and go thy way. And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him: and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.**

B. Genesis 20:2-16 **And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah. But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife. But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? Said he not unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine. Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears: and the men were sore afraid. Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done. And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing? And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this**

121 See remarks under Romans 5:14.

place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake. And yet indeed she is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This is thy kindness which thou shalt shew unto me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He is my brother. And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and womenservants, and gave them unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife. And Abimelech said, Behold, my land is before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee. And unto Sarah he said, Behold, I have given thy brother a thousand pieces of silver: behold, he is to thee a covering of the eyes, unto all that are with thee, and with all other: thus she was reprov'd.

Genesis 18 and 19 clearly demonstrate this as God condemned Sodom and Gomorrah. But by what law did God bring judgment? The law of nature and of conscience. There was no formal law yet. That would not come until Exodus 20. But there was law that men were held accountable to. According to Romans 1:18-32, it was the law of conscience, written on the heart of every man. Even without the Ten Commandments, men knew what was right and wrong because their God-given inner consciences witnessed to them of sin and righteousness. When men violated this unwritten law in the heart, they were punished. The Sodomites, through the witness of their consciences, knew their sin grieved God yet did nothing about. God held them accountable to it. Yet this law could not save nor bring about a situation whereby men could be saved, as the Law of Moses did. Christ never died to fulfill this Conscience Law, nor was He ever judged by it. His substitutionary judgment was by the Decalogue, that written standard of God's holiness.

13e In conjunction with Romans 4:15, this shows that those who do not have the mental capacity to reason (the retarded, for example) do not have sin imputed to them since they cannot understand or reason out the law or where there is no knowledge of the law in either the conscience or the heart.

39. Death Reigned From Adam to Moses 5:14

5:14 Nevertheless death reigned^{a-aorist} from Adam to Moses, even over them^b that had not sinned^{aorist participle} after the similitude of Adam's transgression,^c who is^{present} the figure of him that was to come.^{d-present participle}

14a “**death reigned...**” Death is personified and kingly powers are ascribed to it. By Adam's sin, death reigned from Adam to Moses. When the law was given, a way out was constructed. While the law could not save, it provided the means of salvation. If the demands of the law could be fulfilled, then men could be freed from sin. This was the work of Christ. His sinless life fulfilled these demands. Yet He died as a transgressor to the law although He was not, in order to be a substitute for all men. Because the law had no claim against Him, He was qualified to die for all those who were under the condemnation of the law. But before the law was given, such a substitutionary death was not possible. There was no formal law to condemn men and no law to fulfill or die for. In order for men to be saved from Adam's sin, they had to be first condemned by the Law of Moses. Once formally condemned, they could be redeemed.

14b A "great theological question" arises over who the "**them**" are who did not sin after the similitude of Adam. Who is Paul referring to here? Some contributions include:

1. **Infants** (Augustine, Beza, Hodge). This is a Calvinistic/Reformed Theology view. But there are obvious problems with this. First, infants cannot sin since they do not have the intellectual capacity to understand sin. How can they be held accountable for doing something they cannot comprehend? Second, why limit the scope of the verse to just the infants from Adam to Moses? Would not all infants from all ages be included? The issue here is "original sin". There is no such doctrine. Infants are born not with Adam's sin inherited to their account but with the transmission of Adam's sin nature to their natures. Infants who die before the age of accountability go to heaven regardless if they have been "baptized" or not. They have not yet sinned themselves and are thus in a state of innocence. Adam's sin has no consequence on them since no man goes to hell for Adam's sin. We suffer the results of Adam's sin but do not suffer for it. Thus we must reject any notion of "original sin". We are born with a sin nature but not with sin, including Adam's. But what about the "all have sinned" of Romans 5:12? Would that not include infants? Yes, if they live long enough. That baby will sin once it gets old enough. "All have sinned" is not a time-based reference to include supposed original sin of infants but as a statement of the universal guilt of mankind.

2. **Those men who lived from Adam to Moses**. This is a better interpretation since this is the context Paul is dealing with, the spiritual condition of these men who lived in this period.

14c When men died, they died because of Adam's sin nature, which was passed unto all men. Men did not die for Adam's sin since all men are responsible for only their sin, not someone else's. They were placed into the same condemnation as Adam, although they had not sinned after the similitude of Adam. I die for my own sin, even though it does not involve me eating from any forbidden tree. I did not inherit Adam's sin but I did inherit its consequences; a sinful nature.

A man may rightly ask "Why should I go to hell for Adam's sin?" You will not. If you go to hell, you do so for your own sin. Every man dies for his own transgression, not for the sins of his father (Ezekiel 18:19,20). You inherited a sinful nature from Adam but any judgment of sin you receive will be your own.

What happened to Adam happened to all men since Adam was the federal, or representative, head of the race. Because Adam sinned and died, so must we also die. When we speak of Adam being the federal head of the race, we simply mean that whatever happened to Adam would have been imputed to us. If Adam had not sinned in Eden, what kind of a blessed situation would we be in today? Yet he did sin and the results are transmitted to us. Adam is the head of the race, not Eve. We did not suffer for Eve's sin. She could have sinned a million times in Eden and it wouldn't have affected us at all. But one sin from the federal head Adam and see the results! God entrusted the Edenic Covenant to Adam, not Eve. Adam was responsible to make that the forbidden fruit was not eaten, not Eve. And although Eve started it, it is Adam who is held responsible, not Eve.

Adam's sin put us in the mess we are in, but every man dies because of his own sin. Adam's sin made it possible for us to be in our lost situation. There was no sin offering made until Moses- men had nothing they could do on the account of their sins until the Law was given.

14d Adam is called the "**figure of him that was to come**". Adam was an antitype of Christ in his federal headship and influence over the human race.

Comparing Adam and Christ Romans 5:14-19

ADAM	CHRIST
Introduced spiritual death 5:15	Introduced spiritual life 5:15
Brought condemnation 5:16	Brought justification 5:16
An act of transgression 5:18	An act of righteousness 5:18
Disobedience made many sinners 5:19	Obedience made many righteous 5:19
Place- Eden	Place- Calvary
Scope- sin abounded	Scope- grace did much more abound

40. The Offence of One Man and the Gift of One Man 5:15,16

5:15^a But not as the offence,^b so also is the free gift. For if through the offence^b of one^c many be dead,^{aorist} much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded^{aorist} unto many.

15a (for verses 15-20) "Just as, sometimes, a physician may give a medicine which causes the disease to be more fully developed in order to its ultimate cure, so does the law make a discovery of our sin to us, and it also excites us to greater sin, by reason of the enmity of our nature, which is opposed to the law of God, and becomes the more active the more clearly the law is known, even as Paul says, further on in this Epistle, "I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."¹²²

15b "**Offence**" here is Strong's #3900 *paraptōma*; a side-slip (lapse or deviation), (unintentional) error or (wilful) transgression, fall by the wayside, mistake. Sometimes used in profane Greek to designate a sin not necessarily heinous in nature. It is not "harmatia" which is the general word for sin which has the idea of a deliberate transgression. These are sins of ignorance or "accidental" sins that were committed without such premeditation, in a moment of weakness. Both uses of "offence" are this word. The first use of "offence" we can see such a definition of a "slip" but how so the second use? The second use of "offence" is a clear reference to the sin in the garden by Adam and Eve. Eve's sin may have been a "paraptoma" in that she did sin in her deception. Adam sinned in full knowledge but not Eve. "The offence of one" must be a reference to Eve's sin then rather than Adam, else we would expect to see "harmatia" used instead. It is a strong word, showing the seriousness of our sin that would require such an extreme remedy.

15c "**offence of one**" One man sinned: Adam. By his offense, all died. Correspondingly, by the obedience of one man, Jesus Christ, all are made alive. Adam's sin brought death to all. Christ's obedience brought "the gift by grace" which abounded unto many. Both the disobedience of Adam and the obedience of Christ were universal in their repercussions. And as the disobedience of Adam is the opposite of the obedience of Christ, so is condemnation to justification. And it is the offence of "one", not two, as Eve's transgression is not factored in here. Adam was the head of the race, not Eve.

We then have two men:

1. The First Man, Adam, whose disobedience plunged the human race into sin.
2. The Second Man, Christ, whose obedience obtained salvation for the human race.

¹²² Charles Spurgeon.

5:16 And not as *it was* by one that sinned,^{aorist participle} so *is* the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation,^a but the free gift *is* of many offences unto justification.

16a The condemnation of the disobedience of Adam resulted in judgment upon all men. But the free gift of the grace of God provided for by the obedience of Christ brings justification instead.

41. Death and Life By One Man 5:17

5:17 For if by one man's offence death reigned^{aorist-b} by one; much more they which receive^{present participle} abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign^{future} in life by one, Jesus Christ.)^c

17a With the disobedience of Christ, men changed masters. Because of the disobedience of Adam, death reigned over all men. Men were under the awful dominion of this cruellest of tyrants. But due to the obedience of Christ, we have been transferred into a new kingdom where the gift of righteousness reigns. Of course, only born-again Christians experience the greatness of this new king in their lives. Sinners who refuse to repent voluntarily keep themselves submitted to the cruel taskmaster of death. How foolish! The way out of their slavery has been provided and paid for. All they have to do is accept it and they could escape the miseries of their king. They are miserable in life and must go to an eternal hell for their sin. What they don't understand (until it is too late) that they forged their own chain and wrote out their own condemnation by their refusal to accept the free pardon of grace. This is the task of the gospel preacher: offer liberty to the captives and show men what they must do to escape the chains of their self-maintained bondage.

17b “**death reigned**” Death is personified as a ruling king.

17c In this passage are “two things”

1. Two men- Adam and Christ
2. Two acts- Adam's disobedience in the garden and Christ's obedience on the cross
3. Two results- Adam brought sin, Christ brought redemption.

42. Offence and Righteousness By One Man 5:18

5:18 Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men^a to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free*^{bc} *gift came* upon all men^a unto justification of life.

18a Paul continues to stress the universal extent of the atonement, that it extends to all men. This does not mean that all men are saved. It means that all men may be saved and that justification is available to all men.

18b Notice that in Romans 5:16-18, Paul continues to emphasize the freeness of justification; the "free gift" of Romans 5:16, the "gift of righteousness" of Romans 5:17 and the "free gift" again in Romans 5:18.

18c We repeat again that justification is free and the results of the obedience of Christ are also freely given. The results of Adam's disobedience were freely given. How many of us had to work at being a sinner? It simply came naturally, freely! No one had to work for their condemnation. The gift of righteousness is just as free as the "gift of condemnation" was! If you did not have to work to be condemned, why on earth should anyone think they have to work to be justified? Both justification and condemnation are free, imputed without works.

43. Sinners and Righteous Men Made By One Man 5:19

5:19 For as by one man's disobedience^{ab} many^c were made^{aorist passive} sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made^{future passive} righteous.^{def}

19a **"One man's disobedience...one man's obedience"** the words "disobedience" (parakoê) and "obedience" (hupakoê) both have the idea of hearing. This disobedience is a failure to hear while the obedience is willingness to hear. Literally, Adam's sin was in a failure to hear or hearing wrongly. But Christ's obedience in reversing the effects of Adam's sin stemmed from a disobedience due to a willingness to hear aright on Christ's part.

When Adam sins, we all sin and inherit his fallen sinful nature. But when Christ is obedient, we don't all become obedient as a result. Adam's fall has automatic and universal effects on mankind. But Christ's obedience does not have the same automatic and universal effect on mankind, but it does make the blessings and effects of that available unto all. We have no choice in Adam, but we do in Christ.

19b **"disobedience"** Strong's #3876 parakoê; inattention (failure to hear or hearing amiss), disobedience

"obedience" Strong's #5218 hupakoê; attentive hearkening, compliance or submission

19c The same word **"many"** is used to describe those made sinners and made righteous. All were condemned by the Fall. But all were made righteous by the Cross! All men are in a sense saved! Their sin debts are paid. Now I am not teaching Universalism, but the fact remains. All men are saved. All they have to do is to receive the free gift of justification. A man cannot enjoy the benefits of a gift unless he receives the gift. He may take the gift yet not unwrap it, open it and use it. Let's say he received a new car as a gift. The tags are already on the car and the keys are given to him. But if he never uses the car, what good is it to him? Every man receives justification through the death of Christ, but few men ever use it in asking Christ to save them or in seeking after God or serving Him. They reject the gift when they refuse to repent of their sins or refuse to accept Christ as their Savior. What good then is their free gift of justification? It is a wasted gift in their life and cannot enjoy the benefits of it, including escape from hell and eternal life in heaven.

There is no way any form of universalism can be taught anyway, in the light of this verse, as Paul says "many" shall be made righteous, not "all".

19d If a man's sin debt is paid in this fashion, how then can men be sentenced to hell? Is that not a form of "double jeopardy" in forgiving a man of a debt and then later condemning him for it? No. The point here is that while all men may be saved and since salvation is available to all men, all men will not be saved. Many will make their choice and reject it. Men are then condemned because they refused the offer of atonement for their sins. Christ paid the debt, but they reject that payment, thus rendering it null and void in that man's life. A gift can be rejected. If so, it no longer is offered and is withdrawn. The gift of free justification is offered to all men but many neglect it or refuse to accept it. That is why they are condemned. The fault lies not with

Christ or the quality of His redemptive work. The fault lies in the heart of man who trample such an offer under their feet in rejection. All may be saved but obviously all will not be saved. The fault and responsibility are not God's but man's.

19e Verses 15-19 summation- Notice how Christ undid the damage done by Adam's sin. Sin entered into the world by the disobedience by one man, Adam. Sin was taken out of the world by the obedience of one man, Christ. Notice the contradictions between the disobedience of the one man Adam and the obedience of the one man Christ.

19h What Adam did in plunging the entire human race into sin in Eden, Christ undid by His death on the cross. Christ then was the counterbalance to the sin of Adam. Adam's disobedience was his breaking the commandment of God about eating of the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil. Christ's obedience was in His dying on the cross in order to redeem men from the effects of Adam's sin. This also underlies the importance of the humanity of Christ. Since Adam was a man, Christ also had to be a man in order to undo his sin. A man plunged us into sin and it must be a man who will redeem us out of it. If Christ had not been fully human, He would not have qualified to redeem mankind. Sin came into the world by a man and must be taken out by a man. This is why Christ is called the "Second Adam". Christ was the only man who could undo the damage of Adam's disobedience. What Adam did Christ undid. The sin of Adam plunged the race into sin because Adam was the federal head of the race. As the head is, so goes the body. Christ is the corresponding federal head of the race. By obedience, the race was taken out of sin. All men, through the death of Christ, have their sin debts paid for. Men go to hell because they die without making that application to their own personal sin accounts. They die in sin and spiritually bankrupt to pay the wages of their sin since they never made the transfer from Christ's account of righteousness and justification into their own by the new birth.

44. The Reign of Sin and Grace 5:20,21

**5:20 Moreover the law entered,^{a-aorist} that the offence might abound^{b-aorist subjunctive}
But where sin abounded,^{aorist} grace did much more abound:^{cd-aorist}**

20a The law **entered** alongside of the sin and did so privately, as per the Greek word *pareiserchomai* (Strong's #3922; to come in alongside, supervene additionally or stealthily, from "para" alongside, and "eiserchomai", enter.) It did not come with a fanfare of trumpets, but God brought the law in quietly and placed it alongside of us and the sin that had affected us. The law of Moses was then already added to something that was already in existence. Men were sinners before the law came in Exodus 20 but God had begun to implement the plan of salvation before Exodus 20. The law was then added to define sin and make the sinfulness of sin that much more evident to man.

20b As a result of Adam's sin, the law entered and the offence abounded. By the work of Christ, grace entered in and did much more abound. Grace abounds where there is sin. The worse the sin, the greater the need for grace. As sin reigned as a result of Adam's sin, grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life through Christ.

20c Verse 20 is the favorite nesting ground of the antinomian who says "If sin causes grace to abound, I'm going to live it up and really sin in order to heap up this grace and to take full advantage of it". Ignorant fool! Read Romans 6:1 where Paul dismantles such unholy thoughts.

20d “The more a man be acquainted with himself, and see the numberless number of his abominations, the stubbornness of his own heart and the vast gulf and sink of all mischief in himself, the more high thoughts will he have of the free and matchless grace of God, in coming over so many mountains, and pardoning such a multitude of transgressions and iniquities and sins and washing a purging such a nasty, filthy, abominable heart.”¹²³

**5:21 That as sin hath reigned^{aorist} unto death,^a even so might grace reign^{aorist}
subjunctive through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.**

21a Sin's reign over man is:

1. Usurpation- it seeks to overthrow God as man's king.
2. Rebellion- against the authority of God.
3. Unnatural- goes against man's better judgment to serve sin.
4. Despotic- sin is an unmerciful tyrant.
5. Tyrannical- a harsh taskmaster.
6. Cruel- ends in death.
7. Deceitful- sin lies.
8. Seductive- lures its victims away from God.
9. Powerful- cannot be resisted in the flesh.

Spiritual Applications, Romans Chapter 5

Access to God is one of the great benefits of Christianity. A Christian can go directly into the throne room of God and commune or petition the King anytime. We do not need to go through the priests, the Church, the saints or Mary or anyone or anything else. We have free, direct and open access, yet how little do we take advantage of it through prayer and communion!

Romans 5:20- Don't abuse grace or presume upon it. Don't develop the idea that because 1 John 1:9 is in the Bible that we can freely sin and that God will forgive without consequence. God will forgive but we may still have to deal with the results of our sin. You may smoke cigarettes for 40 years and God will forgive you of that, but you still may have to deal with the resulting effects of lung cancer. There are so-called “grace preachers” who teach this, but this demonstrates that they know nothing of the grace of God or the true nature of sin.

¹²³ John Brown, *An Exposition of the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans*, pages 195-196.

Romans Chapter 6

Chapter 6 deals with the effects of justification upon the living of a holy life. Justification from sin should result in a changed attitude toward sin and a desire for holiness. In some ways, Romans 6 may be the most important chapter in Romans because it is here that Paul gives us God's "three-point outline" to break the power of the flesh and of carnality in our lives, "reckon, yield and obey". One may be saved (as laid out in Romans 4 and 5) but the believer will never progress to the spiritual heights of Romans 8 and 12 if he never gets past Romans 6 and 7.

Romans 5 deals with our standing while Romans 6 deals with our state.

There is the three-step plan leading to sanctification given in Romans 6:

1. Know Romans 6:5
 - A. That we are crucified with Christ Romans 6:1-3
 - i. We were crucified with Him when we identified with His crucifixion
 - B. That we are raised with Christ Romans 6:4,5
 - i. Through his resurrection
2. Reckon Romans 6:11
 - A. Count your old man as dead and treat him as such
 - B. It is a declaration and an acknowledgment. I died to my old man and to my old life when I identified with the death of Christ on the cross.
 - C. Romans 6:7: He that is DEAD is freed from sin.
 - D. Romans 6:8: If we be DEAD with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.
 - E. Romans 6:11: Reckon ye also yourselves to be DEAD indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ.
 - F. Colossians 3:3: For ye are DEAD, and your life is hid with Christ in God.
3. Yield Romans 6:13
 - A. Do not yield to the flesh Romans 6:12,13
 - B. Yield to the Spirit Romans 6:13-23

A Christian can't live in sin because He lives in Jesus Christ. He may commit sin, but he can't live in it because he is dead to it.

Sanctification Romans 6:1-8:11¹²⁴

- a. The Principle of It, Romans 6:1-14
- b. The Practice of It, Romans 6:15-7:6
- c. The Preventative of It, Romans 7:7-25
- d. The Power of It, Romans 8:1-11

124 W. Graham Scroggie, *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption*, volume 3, page 135.

Questions in Romans 6

Question	Answer
6:1 Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?	6:2 God forbid. We are dead to sin. How can we live any longer therein?
6:15 Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace?	6:15 God forbid.

45. Dead to Sin 6:1,2

6:1 What shall we say^{future} then?^a Shall we continue^{bc-future} in sin, that grace may abound?^{defghi-aorist subjunctive}

1a **“What shall we say...?”** What conclusion can we draw from the truths of the previous chapter? “The phrase is Paul’s way of acknowledging that what he has just said is controversial and requires further elucidation to avoid possible misinterpretation.”¹²⁵ This is also a debater’s phrase and is used to preface to making an objection to a statement that must be opposed.

1b **“Shall we continue...”** Paul was probably frequently annoyed by this question, so he had to devote special attention to the answering of it. He probably heard it so often and was asked it so often that it became a real issue, as carnal believers keep looking for loopholes that would allow them to claim to be Christians yet continue in their old life. These people did not die out in the first century. Today, multitudes are looking for ways to justify listening to rock (Christian Contemporary Music) or country music (Southern Gospel Music), keep playing blackjack at the casino, engage in fornication, etc., while still claiming to be a Christian.

One of the great apostles of this mentality was Gene Scott,¹²⁶ who pastored the “University Cathedral” in Los Angeles. He was all over television and shortwave radio, preaching his twisted version of “grace”. He had the mistaken idea that grace saved you and kept you but also allowed to you “live in sin” so that you could make that grace to abound. This is what allowed him to frolic with Playboy bunnies at his mansion while he gave his million-dollar horse show exhibitions. Scott would chomp on a cigar and cuss while he preached, while demanding that his followers “get on the telephone!” and check in, while sending him an offering. I actually heard one of Scott’s disciples, E. C. Fulcher of the Aberdeen, Maryland area, claim on the radio that now that he was saved by grace, he was going to “live it up” and get even more grace. Such attitudes are a blatant rejection of Pauline teachings, since neither Scott nor Fulcher could claim ignorance.

1c **“continue in sin”** “It is one thing for sin to continue *in us*, but quite something else for us to continue *in sin*...Sin can flourish anywhere but in the shadow of Christ’s cross.”¹²⁷

1d **“...that grace may abound?”** Paul asks a rhetorical question: shall we who are saved continue to live in sin and pursue sin in order to make grace abound? Such a thought ought to be revolting to the Christian. The doctrines of grace, however, are always open to such slander and misunderstandings.

Seeing we have been delivered from the pollution of sin, such a thought of returning to the hog-pen ought to never be seriously considered. Kenneth Wuest sees it as a “mechanical

¹²⁵ James D. G. Dunn, *Romans*, Word Biblical Commentary, volume 38A, page 306.

¹²⁶ He died in 2005.

¹²⁷ Thomas Robinson, *Studies in Romans*, pages 319.320.

impossibility" to live unto righteousness and still serve sin¹²⁸. Considering the great truths about the benefits of justification by faith and about the redemptive work of Christ in counteracting the sin of Adam, as explain in chapter 5, could we continue in sin so that grace may abound? Paul continues this thought from 5:20. The idea is that to make grace really valuable, shall we go deep into sin or continue in it to make it really valuable? After all, the more we sin, the more grace God extends to us, right? Not if we deliberately sin after we have received the knowledge of the truth. This is the grace of God designed to bring the sinner to repentance, not to give a man license to continue in his sin in the delusion that God would be too merciful to punish him.

"The whole spirit of the gospel is opposed to the idea of sinning because God is gracious. It is a horrible Satanic suggestion, — "As pardon can be so easily obtained from God, let us sin the more against him." The bare suggestion is utterly degrading and diabolical."¹²⁹

1e **"that grace may abound?"** How absurd that a medicine should feed the disease it extinguishes."¹³⁰

1f Both the Geneva and Bishop's Bible put "God forbid" in verse 1.

1g "As he has so often done in this letter, Paul is once again carrying on an argument against a kind of imaginary opponent. The argument springs from the great saying at the end of the last chapter: 'Where sin abounded, grace superabounded.' It runs something like this:

The Objector: You have just said that God's grace is great enough to find forgiveness for every sin.

Paul: That is so.

The Objector: You are, in fact, saying that God's grace is the most wonderful thing in the world.

Paul: That is so.

The Objector: Well, if that is so, let us go on sinning. The more we sin, the more grace will abound. Sin does not matter for God will forgive anyway. In fact, we can go further than that and say that sin is an excellent thing, because it gives the grace of God a chance to operate...

Paul's first reaction is to recoil from that argument in sheer horror.¹³¹

While it is true that God will forgive sin in the life of the Christian, this above Objector has made several grave errors by failing to take into account what sin will do to the Christian:

1. It breaks fellowship with God.
2. It damages our relationship with God.
3. It damages our relationship with the brethren.
4. It causes inward guilt in us.
5. It can make us into hypocrites.
6. It retards progress in our Christian walk.
7. Our sin may give the enemies of the gospel great occasion to blaspheme (2 Samuel 12:14 **"Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die"**).

1h "The best illustration I have ever found of grace is an incident in the life of Fiorello LaGuardia, the mayor of New York City, during the Depression. Before he became mayor,

¹²⁸ *Romans in the Greek New Testament*, page 92.

¹²⁹ Charles Spurgeon.

¹³⁰ Thomas Robinson, *Studies in Romans*, volume 1, page 320.

¹³¹ William Barclay, *The Letter to the Romans*, pages 82-83.

LaGuardia was a probate judge. One day a poor fellow was hauled into court for stealing bread to feed his family.

After the trial was over, LaGuardia fined the man ten dollars for stealing the bread. Then LaGuardia pulled a ten dollar bill out of his own pocket and paid the fine. After that, he fined the courtroom \$50 for living in a city where a man had to steal the bread. Then he took up a collection from everyone in the courtroom and gave an additional \$47.50 to the man.

Though that guy was found guilty, he walked out of the courtroom with \$97.50 in his pocket and no sentence. That's grace!

The Scriptural analogy to that is that you are hauled into court. The Judge asks, "How do you plead? Guilty or not guilty?"

"Nolo Contendere. Guilty with no contention."

The Judge brings his gavel down and says, "Guilty as charged. The judgment for your transgression is death. So I condemn you to die in the electric chair."

Then the Judge rises from His bench, takes off His robes, goes to the electric chair, and dies in your place. In the meantime He has left a written court order that you are to become a ward of the state and the state is to take care of all your needs until such a time when all of the Judge's property can be completely turned over to you."¹³²

1i "This is the second part of the double cure, or, the question that leads to its benefits. The entire previous fifth chapter of Romans deals with the first problem of the double sinner, that of being "justified by faith," and, therefore, having "peace with God," having realized and confessed our sins. The sins of the sinner, in the plural, of chapters 1, 2, and 3. in Romans, are now forgiven by the regenerating power of Jesus Christ, and the sinner has been justified or made righteous by the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, without the works of the Law, but on the condition of repentance and faith.

"However, immediately after this justification is declared in Romans, Paul begins to deal with the second need in the double sinner. That being his sanctification. Man is a sinner by choice AND a sinner by nature. Therefore, Paul presents the blessed provision after we have been justified, "through our Lord Jesus Christ," to another ("also") "access by faith into this grace wherein we stand (Rom. 5:2.) Thus, we repeat, that here is a provision of "access" to another portion of grace which deals with sin (with the definite article) as a king that "reigns." (Rom. 5:12-21.) Now, sin as an act cannot be confused with sin as a "king." There is a scriptural distinction between "sins" in the plural, and "sin" in the singular. The latter, predicates the nature of sin which rules and wars and reigns in the heart of the sinner. When sin "reigns" in the life, it is indicative of a power, a nature, or a propensity within.

Now, the question of Romans 6:1 comes to us after regeneration of the sinner's heart. Now, the question is no longer dealing with THE MASTER SIN in a person's life, that has been settled. Now, the MASTER ROOT OR NATURE OF SIN is brought out. The former, we committed. The latter was transmitted down from Adam. It is sometimes called "the Adamic nature" or "inbred sin." However, these are not definitely scriptural terms, but they do describe its truth...The verse before us may be paraphrased as: "What shall we say then, since we have been born again and justified? Shall we now continue with the sin nature?" We conclude the quotation here for the benefit of our purpose, only, to give greater emphasis. The answer to this grave question is immediately forthcoming. "God forbid." Suffice it to say at this point that this answer is clear. We shall not go on into the exegesis of the following verses of this chapter because we shall deal with it at length in later truths. However, this brings out the question of purifying, which is the point at hand."¹³³

132 Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer's Commentary on Romans*, pages 231,232.

133 O. Talmadge Spence, *The Quest For Christian Purity*, pages xxxiii-xxxiv.

6:2 God forbid.^{a-aorist middle optative} **How shall we, that are dead**^{aorist} **to sin,**^{bc} **live**^{future} **any longer therein?**^{defgh}

2a **“God forbid”** Dismiss the thought! Away with the thought! Let it not be! This phrase is used 14 times by Paul (10 times in Romans alone [3:4,6,31; 6:2,15; 7:7,13; 9:14; 11:1,11]). It is the strongest Greek idiom for repudiating a statement, and it contains a sense of outrage that anyone would even dare think or suggest such a thing. “Absurd that a medicine should feed the disease it extinguishes.”¹³⁴

2b While we were sinners, we were **dead in sins** (Ephesians 2:1). As Christians, we are now to be **dead to sin**.

2c We are **“dead to sin”** in two ways:
1. Forensically, dead in law
2. Experimentally, dead in fact.¹³⁵

Expand this to include that believers have died to sin:

1. Legally in justification
2. Personally in sanctification
3. Professedly in baptism (ibid).

2d We note the repeated declarations of Romans 6 as to our identification and relationship to the death of Christ:

1. We are dead to sin (Romans 6:2).
2. We were baptized into His death (Romans 6:3).
3. We were buried with Him (Romans 6:4).
4. We have been planted together in the likeness of His death (Romans 6:5).
5. Our old man is crucified with Him (Romans 6:6).
6. He that is dead is freed from sin (Romans 6:7).
7. We are dead with Christ (Romans 6:8).
8. Reckon yourselves dead to sin (Romans 6:11).

Death is a separation. Physical death is a separation of the spirit and soul from the physical body. Death to sin is also a separation, this time from sin and unto righteousness.

“Dead to sin” in Biblical theology:

1. If we are dead to sin, how can we live any longer in sin?
A. Romans 6:2 **God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?**
2. If we are dead, we are freed from sin
A. Romans 6:7 **For he that is dead is freed from sin.**
3. We are to reckon ourselves to be dead unto sin but alive unto Christ
A. Romans 6:11 **Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.**
4. Our body is dead because of sin
A. Romans 8:10 **And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; the Spirit is life because of righteousness.**
5. Crucifixion on the old man

¹³⁴ Thomas Robinson, *Studies in Romans*, volume 1, page 320.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

A. Galatians 2:20 **I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.**

B. Galatians 5:24 **And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.**

C. Galatians 6:14 **But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.**

6. We are free from the rudiments of the world

A. Colossians 2:20 **Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,**

7. Our life is hid with Christ in God

A. Colossians 3:3 **For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.**

8. If we are dead with Christ, we shall live with Him

A. 2 Timothy 2:11 **It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:**

9. We should live unto righteousness

A. 1 Peter 2:24 **Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.**

2e **“live any longer therein”** A believer cannot live without sin, but neither can he live in sin. Sin may live in a believer (by virtue of the continuing existence of the sin nature) but the believer cannot live in sin. How can a Christian “live in sin” when he is supposed to be dead to sin?

2f Abounding sin may be the cause of abounding grace but abounding grace puts an end to abounding sin. We are to be dead to sin. How then can we live in sin? Why should we even desire to continue in it? Something is very wrong with the "Christian" who has any kind of desire to live in sin instead of forsaking it. It is simply unnatural for a Christian to desire to live in sin or to magnify his sin in order to provoke the grace of God. Such attitudes reveal serious spiritual defects. Believers are free, but free to live for God, not free to live in sin. A believer cannot live apart from sin or without sin, but neither can we live in sin.

2g Kenneth Wuest offers the following illustration of Romans 6:2: "To use an illustration that will show the definite cleavage between the Christian and the evil nature, the disengagement that took place when God performed that major surgical operation. A floor lamp is connected to a wall outlet. It derives its power to give light from the electric outlet in the wall. Just so, a sinner is connected to the evil nature, and derives his incentive and energy to sin, from the evil nature. Remove the connecting plug from the wall outlet, and the light ceases to function. Its source of power has been cut off. Cut the connection between the sinner and the evil nature, and he ceases to function as a sinner. His source of power has been cut off. Upon no other basis can one explain the instantaneous and radical change in the outlook and actions of a sinner saved in a rescue mission, this change more apparent because of the life of gross sin he has lived. Connect the floor lamp with the wall outlet and it starts to give light again. Connect the Christian with the evil nature still in him, and he sins again. But the point is, he is under no compulsion to put himself back into the control of the evil nature again, nor can he do it habitually, nor frequently. God has so adjusted things in the Christian's life, that while he remains a free moral agent capable of choosing between obeying the divine nature or the evil nature, yet, the preponderance of his choices are Godward. Thus does Paul declare the mechanical

impossibility of a Christian habitually sustaining the same relationship to the evil nature which he sustained before he was saved."¹³⁶

2h "In a certain church was a narrow, bigoted old deacon, wedded to the old paths and suspicious of anything new. A dried-up old die-hard was he, sitting in judgment on all who refused to be ruled by his view of Scripture, acid of temperament and barren of soul. Although that was not his real name, we shall call him Macadam. To this church came a young man with the fresh dew of God's anointing upon him, a young man of vision, gift, charm and possessed of an unusual grasp of Scripture and a distinct measure of wisdom. This young man's ministry was singularly blessed of God to the salvation of souls and the quickening of many of God's people. But, inevitably perhaps, some of his views did not coincide with those of the dour old Scot who ruled the deaconate. For years the deacon did all in his power to discourage, oppose and criticize the younger man. One day another member of this church asked the younger man how he managed to put up with this deacon. "William," was the startling reply, "I died to Macadam five years ago." This young man had grasped the secret of the believer's death with Christ."¹³⁷

46. Baptized Into His Death 6:3-5

6:3 Know ye not,^{a-present} that so many of us as were baptized^{aorist passive} into Jesus Christ^b were baptized^{aorist passive} into his death?

3a "**know ye not**" Paul repeats this in 6:16; 7:1, 1 Corinthians 3:16; 5:6; 6:2,9; 9:24. Paul used this language to express that the doctrines being considered were things that his readers ought to know. He expresses either surprise that they may not know them or issues a rebuke that they do not.

3b This baptism must be a reference to Spirit baptism since water baptism does not put us "into" Jesus Christ. All water baptism does is make you wet. The new birth and the accompanying baptism with the Holy Spirit is what places the new saint into Christ, which is what takes place at salvation. Since water baptism has nothing to do with our salvation, it cannot be what Paul is referring to here.

AV	ESV	LSV
3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?	3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?	3 Or do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

"Jesus Christ" The ESV and LSV reverse this to "Christ Jesus".

6:4 Therefore we are buried^a with^{aorist passive} him by baptism into death: that like as Christ^b was raised up^{aorist passive} from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk^{aorist subjunctive} in newness of life.^c

4a "**buried**" "Burial is the act which consummates the breaking of the last tie between man and his earthly life. This was likewise the meaning of our Lord's entombment. Similarly, by

¹³⁶ *Romans in the Greek New Testament*, page 95.

¹³⁷ John Phillips, *Exploring Romans*, page 101.

baptism there is publicly consummated the believer's breaking with the life of the present world, and with his own natural life."¹³⁸

4b **"that like as Christ"** Language like this identifies the figurative and typical language Paul is using relating water baptism to death and resurrection.

4c **"newness of life"** Thomas Manton lists three properties of such a life:

1. **It is a godly life**, as beginning and ending in God, and carried on by those who are absolutely devoted and addicted to him.
 - A. 2 Peter 3:11, **What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?**
 - B. It is called "the life of God" Ephesians 4:18. **It is from God and for God; you live by him and to him; in others, self is the principle, measure, and end.**
2. **It is a holy life**, measured by the pure word of God.
 - A. Psalm 119:140, **Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it**
 - B. Romans 7:12, **The law is holy, and the commandment is holy, and just, and good.**
 - C. 1 Peter 1:15, **As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.**
 - D. Luke 1:75, **That we should serve him in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our lives.**
 - E. The inclinations are planted in us by God's first work:
 - i. Ephesians 4:24, **That ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.**
3. **It is an heavenly life:**
 - A. Philippians 3:20, **Our conversation is in heaven.**
 1. It is the most noble life the nature of man is capable of; it is called **'the life of God,'** Ephesians 4:18.
 2. It is the most desirable life: Proverbs 3:17, **Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.**
 3. It is the most profitable life; it is a preparation for and introduction into eternal life:
 4. Romans 6:22, **But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.**¹³⁹

6:5 For if we have been ^{perfect} **planted together**^{ab} **in the likeness of his death, we shall be** ^{future} **also in the likeness of his resurrection:**^{cd}

5a **"planted together"** Strong's #4854 *sumphutos*; grown along with, closely united to, united by growth, could be used in referring to Siamese twins. "This word is about 40 sun- compounds which form a characteristic and distinctive feature of Paul's style and theology (more than half the 40 appear only in Paul in the New Testament). He uses them both to describe the common privilege, experience and task of believers, usually nouns (*sugkoinônos*, *sugchairein*, *suzugos*, *sumparakaleisthai*, *sunagônizesthai*, *sunergos*, etc.), and to describe a sharing in Christ's death and life, usually verbs (*suzên*, *suxôopoiein*, *summorphizesthai*, *summorphos*, *sumpaschein*,

¹³⁸ Frederic Godet.

¹³⁹ From *24 Sermons Upon Romans 6* in *The Collected Works of Thomas Manton*.

sumphutos, sunapothnêskein, sundoxazein, sunegeirein, sunthaptein and su(n)stauroun; also sugklêronomos)."140

5b The Tyndale, Coverdale and Bishops Bible all use the idea of being "grafted in" to Christ.

5c "The Christian is a real enigma. He is not merely a schizophrenic (two personalities); he is a "multiple personality." He is a living soul walking around in a dying body. He is a new spirit that lives to God. He is an old man buried in the tomb with Christ. At the same time that same old nature is nailed to the cross and is dying with Christ. If that weren't enough, the Christian has, in him, the eternal life of Jesus Christ that stretches back before Genesis 1:1 and goes out into the future beyond Revelation 22. How is that for "alter egos" and "split personalities."141

5d This resurrection is at our new birth. We "died" spiritually when we were saved. We died to the old life. We then were raised to newness of life when we were born again. We were dead spiritually (Ephesians 2:1 "**And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;**") but were alive unto sin in our natural state. This "flipped" at our new birth, when we dies to sin and self but were then quickened spiritually and then became alive to the things of God.

47. The Old Man Crucified 6:6,7

6:6^a Knowing^{b-present participle} this,^c that our old man^d is crucified^e with^{aorist passive} him,^f that the body of sin^g might be destroyed,^{hi-aorist passive subjunctive} that henceforth we should not serve^{infinitive} sin.^{jklm}

6a A brief outline of Romans 6:6 would be:

1. Christ's work, 'Our old man is crucified with him.'
2. The fruit of it, 'That the body of sin might be destroyed.'
3. The obligation lying upon us, 'That we might no longer serve sin.'

This is a verse listed by O. Talmadge Spence in his *Quest For Christian Purity* that he lists as a "guiding verse" for that quest. This is a verse that deals with some aspect of the Christian's growth and pursuit of God.

6b "**Knowing**" as a settled and established fact, not mere opinion or speculation.

6c The Tyndale Bible has this as that we should "remember" that our old man is crucified with Christ, not just to "know" it. We do know it but let's not forget it or let it slip!

6d "**old man**" the Greek word for "old" is "palaios" (Strong's #3822), meaning "antique, not recent, worn out". At the new birth, this old man/sin nature becomes worthless and worn out. It is useless and obsolete. What good is it? It's like your grandmother's sewing machine in the attic. The old man is an antique, junk with a price tag attached to it. It is to be cleaned out with the rest of the junk from your life before Christ as one would clean out a cluttered garage during spring cleaning. This phrase "**old man**" (ho palaios anthrôpos) is only used by Paul, and then, he only uses it three times (here, in Ephesians 4:22 and Colossians 3:9).

140 James D. G. Dunn, *Romans*, in Word Biblical Commentary, volume 38A, page 313.

141 Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer's Commentary on Romans*, page 234.

6e **“crucified”** Crucifixion is:

1. **A violent death.** The victim usually did all he could to avoid the nails, thrashing violently and cursing to the end.
2. **A painful death.** Nailed through the hands and feet and hung to die, defenseless against the birds and the elements. It was a death like no other. The word *“excruciating”* literally means “out of (or from or by) crucifying”. Death could result from any combination of causes, including blood loss, hypovolemic shock, or sepsis following infection, caused by the scourging that preceded the crucifixion, or by the process of being nailed itself, or eventual dehydration
3. **A shameful death.** Roman culture only used it for slaves and the lowest of criminals. It was very shameful for a Jew to be executed in such a way, as he was not accorded the “privilege” of being put to death by his law.
4. **A lingering death.** The victim could take as long as a week to finally die.

6f **“crucified with him”** “Christ's death is the best glass wherein to view the deadly nature of sin. It was so great and heinous an evil in the sight of God, that nothing but the blood of the Son of God could expiate it: Rom. 8:3, 'For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.' Jesus Christ must come and suffer a shameful death; this painful, shameful, accursed death of the Son of God sheweth God's displeasure against sin, and what it will cost us if we allow it, and indulge it in our hearts and lives; for if this be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?”¹⁴²

Our flesh, our old life, is dead in the sight of God. It is thus of no use to serve the flesh. It is serving a corpse that God places no value upon. God makes no provision for the “old man” and does not seek to reform it or improve it, only to destroy it by crucifixion.

6g **“body of sin”** had the idea in classical Greek of a corpse, also used in later Greek and in New Testament Greek. It is this that must be destroyed by our crucifixion. It is destroyed but not annihilated. Something may be destroyed, which means it is ruined and cannot be used for its intended purpose. But physically, it yet remains. Our bodies of sin (sin natures) may be destroyed by Christ's work on our behalf, but they are not annihilated. It is simply weakened, harmed, made more difficult to operate as it once did before. The body of sin remains but it is severely damaged by Christ's work. One day, it will be totally removed from us when we receive our glorified bodies and we will never be troubled with it again. But that day is not yet here, so we must continue the battle against our old sin nature until that day arrives.

“The sins of Christians, who profess a communion with his death, are more criminal and scandalous than the sins of heathens. They never heard of the Son of God, that came to redeem them from their vain conversations at so high a rate as his own precious blood. They never were called solemnly to vow integrity of life and conversation, as a service due to that Redeemer, as is done by Christians. All this we believe, and this some have done, and yet disobeyed our master's will. Heathens had no expectation of any gracious immortal reward, feared no dreadful doom nor sentence after death. We are hedged in within the compass of our duty both on the right hand and the left: on the right hand with the hopes of a most blessed everlasting estate; on the left, with the fears of an endless and never-dying death: all which are included in our baptism, and so, if all be not mockery, our old man is crucified with Christ.”¹⁴³

6h “A man fastened to the cross suffereth great pain, his strength wasteth, and his life droppeth out with his blood by degrees. So sin is not subdued but by constant painful endeavours; not by

¹⁴² Thomas Manton, *24 Sermons on Romans 6*, Collected Works, volume 2.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

feeding the flesh with carnal delights, but by thwarting it, watching, striving against it, bemoaning ourselves because of it, and so by degrees the love of it is not only weakened, but deadened in our soul. If it be tedious and troublesome, nothing that hath life will be put to death without some struggling: we must be content to suffer in the flesh; Christ suffered more, and none but 'he that hath suffered in the flesh ceaseth from sin,' 1 Peter 4:1. You make it more painful by dealing negligently in the business, and draw out your vexation to a greater length: the longer you suffer the Canaanite to live with you, the more doth it prove a thorn and goad in your sides. Our affection increaseth our affliction; your trouble endeth, and your delight increaseth, as you bring your souls to a thorough resolution to quit it...No delight so sincere as the contempt of vain delights. The crucified man's pains end when death cometh."¹⁴⁴

6i There needs to be a death in order for the Christian to live spiritually. This death should take place at the new birth when we take the death of Christ and have it applied to our account. Positionally, we are dead to our sin at the new birth through the imparting of the divine nature and the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Practically is something else, as any Christian will testify to! But the only escape of the dominion and power of sin is that we have to die to it. If we are dead, then sin has no power over us. Nothing has power over a dead man. How can anything control a corpse? This is why dying to sin is a must for the Christian if he ever hopes to live for God and overcome sin in his life.

Galatians 2:20 describes our present condition. We are crucified and our old nature is dying a slow, lingering death. We do not crucify our old man to punish it or to reform it or to "get it out of the way so it won't bother us", we crucify it in order to kill it! Death by crucifixion was a slow, painful death. Although our old nature is crucified, it won't die until we die or are raptured. Christ died in order to allow us to put to death our old nature so that we might be alive unto righteousness. Christ suffered terribly on the cross and so does our old man and we feel the pain of that death in our daily struggles with sin. This is a lifelong struggle because crucifixion is not quick and painless. There will be spasms of pain, mocking, ridicule and the constant desire to put an end to the suffering, come down from the cross and live a life of ease and surrender. But we must endure this slow, lingering and painful death if we are to put an end to that sin nature once and for all. It is a difficult process, and one few Christians have any stomach for. But for those willing to endure the process, the rewards are well worth the suffering.

6j **"not serve sin"** the Greek word for "serve" Strong's #1398 δουλεύω, to be a slave, serve, do service, to obey, submit to, to yield obedience. This is the relationship the sinner is to his old nature- he is a slave to it. He cannot fight it nor can he resist it. It says "jump" and the sinner jumps. Only the Holy Spirit can enable a man to break the yoke of this cruelest of all taskmasters.

This is also the goal of Christ's work on the cross for us- that we might be liberated from such a cruel taskmaster. Christ has indeed freed us from sin, but we must be careful not to voluntarily return to sin, even after we have been saved. The carnal professor does this, as does the backslider. It is high treason against our King and shows despite toward His death on our behalf. Christ has liberated us from sin with His own blood through His death, based on His grace and love toward us. As a result, we have been liberated, made a child of God, and have been given everlasting life, among other great benefits. Now, on the basis of all that Christ has done for us, we will return to that old devil to serve it once again? What sort of insanity is this? This was the sin of the Galatian churches, in forsaking the gospel of grace to return to the law, despite all the goodness that God had bestowed upon them in salvation. It is no wonder that Paul was so severe with the Galatians in his epistle to them, and for very good reason.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

6k **"not serve sin"** It is one thing to sin. It is quite another thing to serve sin. Sin may dwell within us but it must not be allowed to reign within us and we should not dwell in it. Why serve that which hates us and tries to condemn us to hell? Any time you spend serving the flesh is wasted time. It is time serving a corpse. It is lost time, resulting in lost rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

6l "Some men part with their sins with the intention of returning again to them if they can, as the dog returns to its vomit and the sow to her wallowing in the mire. Or they part with them as of old the oxen parted with their calves at Beth Shemesh, lowing as they went because of the calves they had left behind. Like Lot's wife they set out to leave Sodom, but their eyes show where their hearts are. How many a drunkard has given up his cups because he would otherwise have lost his situation or been laid by with illness? How many a foul one has renounced a vice because he felt that it was too great a strain upon his constitution, or brought too much shame upon him? They drop their sins as the dog does the meat when it is too hot to hold—but they love it none the less—they will be back when it cools. Such sinners leave sin as Orpah did Moab, but they soon find opportunity to return. They fight sin as stage actors fight on the stage—it is mimic conflict—in reality they do not hate sin. Ah, but Friends, we must have our whole hearts burning with an intensity of desire to get rid of our sins."¹⁴⁵

6m "Christian, what hast thou to do with sin? Hath it not cost thee enough already? Burnt child, wilt thou play with the fire? What! when thou hast already been between the jaws of the lion, wilt thou step a second time into his den? Hast thou not had enough of the old serpent? Did he not poison all thy veins once, and wilt thou play upon the hole of the asp, and put thy hand upon the cockatrice's den a second time? Oh, be not so mad! so foolish! Did sin ever yield thee real pleasure? Didst thou find solid satisfaction in it? If so, go back to thine old drudgery, and wear the chain again, if it delight thee. But inasmuch as sin did never give thee what it promised to bestow, but deluded thee with lies, be not a second time snared by the old fowler — be free, and let the remembrance of thy ancient bondage forbid thee to enter the net again! It is contrary to the designs of eternal love, which all have an eye to thy purity and holiness; therefore run not counter to the purposes of thy Lord. Another thought should restrain thee from sin. Christians can never sin cheaply; they pay a heavy price for iniquity. Transgression destroys peace of mind, obscures fellowship with Jesus, hinders prayer, brings darkness over the soul; therefore be not the serf and bondman of sin. There is yet a higher argument: each time you "serve sin" you have "Crucified the Lord afresh, and put Him to an open shame." Can you bear that thought? Oh! if you have fallen into any special sin during this day, it may be my Master has sent this admonition this evening, to bring you back before you have backslidden very far. Turn thee to Jesus anew; He has not forgotten His love to thee; His grace is still the same. With weeping and repentance, come thou to His footstool, and thou shalt be once more received into His heart; thou shalt be set upon a rock again, and thy goings shall be established."¹⁴⁶

6:7 For he that is dead^{a-aorist participle} is freed^{b-perfect passive} from sin.^{cd}

7a Dead to sin. Dead slaves are no longer pursued by their masters. "Dead" Christians are no longer pursued by their former lusts or by the forces of this world system.

7b **"freed"** He that is dead to sin is declared to be righteous in the eyes of the law. Righteousness requires a death to sin. As long as a man is alive to sin, he cannot truly be

145 Charles Spurgeon, "The Old Man Crucified", *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, volume 15, sermon #882.

146 Charles Spurgeon, *Morning and Evening*, May 30.

considered wholly righteous. He has a blot, a stain, which that sin has caused. Only a total death of self to all sin in our lives will result in a full positional and practical righteousness. And if we are free from sin, why go back to it, as so many professing Christians do? See remarks under 6:6 above. Paul will also give an illustration of this using marriage in Romans 7.

AV	ESV	LSV
7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.	7 For one who has died has been set free from sin.	7 for he who has died has been justified from sin.

“freed” The Tyndale and Bishops Bibles use “justified from sin”, stressing the justification from sin. The Coverdale Bible has “made righteousness from sin”. The ESV and LSV also use “justified”.

7c Not only is the dead man freed from sin but from everything else as well. As long as we remain alive to sin in refusing to forsake it and follow Christ with the whole heart, we will be under its dominion. It is possible that Christians can still be enslaved by sin since they never forsook it. Sure they've been born again but they have never put to death their old man of sin and have never turned to God. Death cancels all obligations.

A dead man has no affections. Nothing affects a corpse. You can insult a corpse and it will not respond. You can freeze it, heat it, pierce it, do anything to it and it will not respond. It pays no taxes, and it couldn't care less if you threw it into jail. It is oblivious to everything around it. Our new man is as oblivious to sin. Tempt the new man and it will not respond because it is born of God and cannot sin. Tempt it with booze, drugs, illicit sex, money, power or anything else and it simply will not respond because it is dead to those things. It responds only to those things it is alive to, things pertaining to righteousness. Why then do we sin? Because our old man, although in the practical process of dying daily, is not dead yet and will not finally "kick the bucket" until death or rapture. It is very much alive to sin and will respond to it. We sin because in those times, the old sinful nature is in control over the new, sinless nature. If we wish to be fully freed from sin, everything within us that responds to sin must be crucified so there would be nothing in us to lead us to sin.

7d We must realize this struggle between the two natures of the Christian. Positionally we are totally sanctified and dead to sin. But this is clearly not the cast practically for we must work out our own salvation. Paul dealt with this struggle throughout his life as he realized that his sinful man was not about to die a quiet death. Sin never goes down without a fight. It is a long, bloody battle between both natures as each demands the dominion over the believer and neither has any intention of surrendering. It seems that the greatest saints in church history have been very aware of this struggle in their life and they never forgot it. The depths of the daily struggle against sin is a very real one and is a battle which must be won if we are to grow at all in our Christian life and in the depths of our own personal relationship to God.

48. Dead With Christ- Alive With Christ 6:8,9

Some commentators have difficulty accepting the truths in this passage. William Newell, in his commentary on Romans, can't seem to accept that David Brainerd and George Whitefield continually complained about their sinfulness (even when they were being so greatly used of God). Newell writes after commenting on extracts from Brainerd's diary "God forbid that we should disparage in the least such a very saint as Brainerd...Yet Paul's attitude is the Divine example. He believed what he wrote- that he had been justified from sin itself. So that all

struggles from self-condemnation were over."¹⁴⁷ Newell then attempts to explain away the struggle Paul records in Romans 7. Newell did not seem to be able to accept the fact that justification does not prevent us from sinning. We sin after our justification, and it causes the godly man to moan and lament over his sinfulness because of his intense and deep desire to be free from sinning. He is free from the power of sin yet he still sins on a daily basis through the weakness of his flesh. We are free from sin but not from sinning. We will be on a firm foundation to carefully consider the experiences of great saints such as Brainerd and McChesney and Payson.

6:8 Now if we be dead^{aorist} with Christ,^a we believe^{present} that we shall also live^{future} with him:^{bc}

8a Who is “**dead with Christ?**” Only truly born-again people. No unsaved man can make such an identification. The carnal professor and the backslider are those who have abandoned this identification and have gone back to sin, to be re-identified with it, even if they are truly saved. They are, in such seasons, trying to serve two masters. But their true Master will have no such rebellion on the part of the subjects He died to redeem and will certainly strongly undertake for their discipline and restoration back to the good graces of their Master.

8b This is something of a paradox: the only way to live with Christ is to die with Him. Dead to sin but alive to Christ! Christ died so that He might be raised in the resurrection unto eternal life. So must we also die in order to be raised into newness of life. Unless we are willing to die to our old sin nature and to wage war on it and to renounce it, we cannot live with Christ in the normal, Spirit-filled Christian life. We would still be under the dominion of sin in such a case, and we cannot live for Christ and be under the dominion of sin at the same time.

8c “**we shall also live with him**” This is one of the infinite number of benefits that come with salvation. Die to sin and the world and you will not only live unto Christ but also you will live with Christ forever in glory.

6:9 Knowing^{a-perfect participle} that Christ being raised^{aorist passive participle} from the dead dieth^{present} no more;^b death hath no more dominion over^{present} him.^c

9a “**knowing**” is in the perfect tense. In relation to the resurrection, this is a settled fact to the Christian, that does not need to be re-opened, re-considered or debated. We start with the settled fact of the resurrection of Christ (and our minds will not be changed about that!) and proceed from there.

The Tyndale Bible has this as that we should “remember” that Christ was raised from the dead, not just to “know” it. We do know it but let’s not forget it or let it slip!

9b “**dieth no more**” Christ died once and He need never die again. His death on the cross satisfied the demands of the Law and there is no further need for Him to die anymore. One death was sufficient to fulfill the demands of the Law on our behalf. Once a man has died and has been raised, death has no more dominion over him. Resurrection nullifies the power of death. When we are raised to our glorified bodies in the rapture, we will also escape the power and domain of death forever. The great thing about that last generation is we will escape death without having to die! Even Christ could not do that! Christ had to die, we do not! That last

¹⁴⁷ *Romans*, page 217.

generation, along with Enoch (Elijah will die in Revelation 13) will never taste of death yet will escape the power of it because they will be raised from their physical deadness of their mortal bodies to their glorified bodies in the rapture-resurrection.

If Christ died once to die no more, then there is no need to re-crucify Him daily in the Roman Catholic mass! This is repeated in Romans 6:10.

9c This verse says that death once had dominion over Christ, as it would over any other man. But Christ conquered the power of death in His resurrection. Death could not keep Christ in the grave, but He showed His power over it by His resurrection. That same victory over this final enemy of man is also promised to Christians who die to their sins and who live after righteousness through the new birth.

49. One Death Unto Sin 6:10

6:10 For in that he died,^{aorist} he died^{aorist} unto sin once:^a but in that he liveth,^{present} he liveth^{present} unto God.

10a Also see Romans 6:9. Christ died once unto sin once. One time was sufficient for Christ to make redemption possible and available unto all men. Christ does not need to repeat any aspect of His redemptive work since He complete the requirements fully the first time. The Roman Catholic mass is then a blasphemy as they re-crucify Christ daily in a continual sacrifice. Christ died *once*. So why do they insist on re-killing Him every day in the mass? And why is it that in the Church of Rome, they re-enact the death of Christ daily in the mass but they have no ceremony where they re-enact the resurrection of Christ on this same daily basis? Sung Myong Moon, the Korean false messiah of the "Unification Church", says that God called him to complete the work Christ left unfinished. Moon is a liar and a bad one at that. Christ only died once because it was not necessary for Him to die again to complete what He left undone the first time. Those who promote a works-salvation also blaspheme the work of Christ in saying that the death of Christ was not sufficient in securing salvation and that man has to complete the transaction by a series of religious works. But Christ died once because it was not necessary for Him to have to die again to complete redemption. Hebrews 9:12,26,28; 10:10,12 and 14 clearly support the sufficiency of Christ's "once" death.

1. Hebrews 9:12,26,28 **Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.... For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself... So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.**

2. Hebrews 10:10,12,14 **By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.... But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God... For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.**

50. Reckon Yourselves Dead But Alive 6:11

6:11^a Likewise reckon^{b-present middle/passive imperative} ye^c also yourselves to be^{present} dead indeed unto sin,^d but alive^{present participle} unto God^e through Jesus Christ our Lord.^{fg}

11a This verse tells you how to live a sinless life- die to sin! It's that simple! But working out this simple command is where the problems lie!

11b Account yourself dead to sin. "Reckon" is that business term that has the idea of the accountant looking at his ledger and trying to make the "income" and "outflow" columns match up. We are to take a look at our sins and our life with God and place ourselves into the "dead unto sin" column and account ourselves dead to sin and this world system so that we may be alive unto God. We must be one or the other. I cannot be alive to both the world and to God at the same time. I must be dead to one and alive unto the other at any given time.

"reckon" The Tyndale Bible uses "imagine", the Geneva Bible has "think" and the ESV "consider yourselves".

11c Emphatic.

11d **"dead indeed unto sin"** Seeing I have been baptized into the death of Christ and that I have been born again, I should voluntarily reckon, or count, myself dead to sin. I should account myself as being dead to sin. I put to death that part of me that responds to sin so that there should remain nothing in me that wants to sin. And if I am dead to sin then I should at the same time reckon myself alive to Christ. What good is it to be dead to sin if I am not also alive to Christ?

We do not reckon sin to be dead in us because it is not (Romans 7:17). We reckon ourselves to be dead to sin. Our body is dead, not our sin (nature).

11e **"alive unto God..."** We are to reckon ourselves thus. God does so positionally at our new birth, but He does not do so practically. We must do this ourselves. There is positional and practical sanctification. Positionally, I am dead to sin because I am born again. Practically, what am I going to do about it? Will I live like it? Will I allow that great truth that I am freed from the power of sin be a reality in my life? Everyone asks themselves that question, but few follow up on it. I must voluntarily account myself dead to Christ but alive to God. God will not do it for me but He will help me because that is His will for me. If I don't want to die to sin practically, then God will not force it upon me. I can live a weak, meaningless, powerless "Christian" life if I want but what a loser I will be for such a foolish choice!

11f **"through Jesus Christ our Lord"** occurs three times, in Romans 6:11,23 and 7:25.

AV	ESV	LSV
11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.	11 So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.	11 So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

"through" the ESV and LSV change the preposition to "in". The ESV and LSV miss the divine agency of this spiritual life through Christ.

11g "When once we do know, the reckoning enjoined in verse 11 becomes perfectly plain to us. Our case is governed by Christ's, for we are identified with Him. Did He die to sin? Then we are dead to sin, and so we reckon it. Does He now live to God? Then we now live to God, and so we reckon it. Our reckoning is not mere make-believe. It is not that we try to reckon ourselves to be what in point of fact we are not. The very reverse. We are dead to sin and alive to God by His own acts, accomplished in the death and resurrection of Christ (to be made effectual in us

by His Spirit, as we shall see later on) and that being so, we are to accept it and adjust our thoughts to it. As things are, so we are to reckon."¹⁴⁸

Applying these truths of personal sanctification can be difficult. It would be a good thing to read testimonies of those in church history who "found the secret" and how they found it and how they applied it to their Christian lives. Below is an example of a friend of mine, Dr. H. T. Spence, president of Foundations Bible College.

"I remember during my freshman college year I first started seeking God for sanctification. Having been saved for several months, I was already strongly feeling the war of Romans 7. I was determined in my heart that I had to see this struggle through. I remember there were four things that came to my mind that I needed to start doing for this hope. If I was seeking God for a working of grace, I had to be seeking Him in hope, not in doubt or wondering whether it would happen. I had to seek Him in hope-with great expectation.

"First, I placed myself in a position for God to do the work. I quit pursuing carnal things, making provisions for the flesh. Although leaving off carnal things would never sanctify me, it was an indication of my hope. While there were some things within my heart and nature whose power I could not break, there were things without that I could turn from to place myself into a position with hope. At least I was telling my heart that I did want these pursuits in my life. A lot of people who say they seek for a deeper life give no evidence that they really want such a life. They are content to live with the misery. They may secretly say, "What hope do I have that God will do this?" But keep in mind what hope is. The very word simply means a great expectation. "I am expecting God to do this. I am not doubting; I am not wondering if He can or cannot; I am walking in a posture of expectation. I want Him to do this."

"The second burden I undertook that year in seeking the hope of sanctification was to lay hold of the many Scriptures that promised me this work of Christ's grace. This fed my hope!

The third burden I undertook was to begin speaking with other students about holy things. I asked them, "What has God spoken to you about today through His Word?" I was looking for anything to feed this hope. This burden is one of the aspects noted in Hebrews 10:25, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner [custom] of some is; but exhorting one another." The Greek word for exhort here simply means encouraging. It may be that another brother or sister is in the same struggle. We must feed one another with hope. If a Christian knows that someone else is going on with God, then he should ask, "Has any passage of Scripture come to your heart today that you could share with me?" Such a pursuing Christian should always be looking for ways to feed that hope and faith. During that season of my life, I could not pursue this conversation with every one; some young men were carnal and worldly in their lives. I discerned those I could feed among. We are reminded of the words found in Song of Solomon 2:16, "My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies." The lilies in this precious book are the saints. In that same book we read in 6:2, "My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies. I am by beloved's, and my beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lilies." In contrast, carnal Christians feed among carnal Christians. A carnal, worldly Christian in an audience of a thousand will eventually find that other carnal Christian. We tend to be drawn to either what we are or what we want to be. Do I want to be spiritual? I will be drawn to the spiritual. Do I want to be godly? I will be drawn to the godly. Do I want deliverance? I will be drawn to those who have been delivered or are longing for this deliverance.

"I remember one young man with a mutual need and hunger who suggested, "Let us enter into a covenant of prayer together; each day at a certain time wherever we are, we will pray for one another about this specific need." It is good when people enter into a covenant; it does not mean they have to be together when praying, but they know they are going to be

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taking this spiritual pursuit seriously. It is "the effectual fervent prayer ... that availeth much;" and that is what we are wanting.

"The fourth burden I undertook was a re-evaluation of my thought life. I began to force myself to think better and to endeavor to control the thoughts that would make their way into my mind. I believe this is what 2 Corinthians chapter 10 is all about. You have to consciously discipline your thought life. We need to be conscious at all times of what we are thinking. The Christian must rein in his thoughts or drive out other thoughts. We must pray for God to help us with our thought life each day. Some Christians who have had tragic pasts continue to be plagued by their memories. They come to God with their minds so cluttered with certain thoughts that they are under constant mental pain. Some may say, "Do you think I will ever have a mind that is stayed on the Lord?" Oh yes, if that is your hope and if that is your faith, it can be.

"I am sorry to state that I went about eight months in frustration because I began to fail in some things, backing off, growing cold, and falling into indifference. It is good to write down truth, and it is good to pursue truth, but we cannot afford to cast away the confidence we already have in that truth. We must have patience that "after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." What do you want? To what extent are you willing to sacrifice everything? Do you want to be an anointed, godly preacher? To what extent will you sacrifice to get there? Ultimately, we should long for the "mind of Christ."¹⁴⁹

51. Let Not Sin Reign 6:12

6:12 Let not sin therefore reign^{present imperative} in your mortal body,^{ab} that ye should obey^{c-infinitive} it in the lusts thereof.^d

12a Something is going to reign in your body, either Christ or sin. Everyone will serve something and will submit to a master greater than they. Which one will be served? This is the great struggle that the Christian fights on a daily basis. He must ask "Whom will I let reign over me, sin or Christ?" on a moment-by-moment basis. One will reign as a king over us and will control us. If we allow sin to reign in our mortal body, we will obey it in its lusts. By contrast, if we allow Christ and holiness to reign in our bodies, we will obey Him in the holiness thereof.

12b Paul mentions our "**mortal body**" because it is only in our mortal body, while we are alive on the earth, can we make such a choice. Those in heaven in a glorified body will not allow sin to reign at all but wholly allow Christ to reign. Sin had no power on a glorified body so Paul is urging us not to allow sin to affect our earthly bodies. Those in hell in an unglorified body are in the opposite condition in they have no choice but to allow sin to consume them. It is too late for them to choose not to allow sin to reign and cannot choose holiness.

12c "**obey**" This obedience to the flesh is "hupakouo", meaning "to hear under (as a subordinate), to listen attentively; to heed or conform to a command or authority". A man obeys his flesh as a slave obeys his master. His master commands him to do something and the slave obeys his master's voice. Such is it with the sinner. His old nature commands him and he can't help but obey.

12d This is all that motivates the flesh (the old nature)- lusts, a strong and overriding desire to have something or to have its own way, or gratifying the body and the appetites. The term is not necessarily sexual in meaning here, although that is certainly included in the definition.

¹⁴⁹ H. T. Spence, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, pages 221-223.

52. Yield Not Your Members 6:13

6:13 Neither yield^{a-present imperative} ye your members^b as instruments^c of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield^{aorist imperative} yourselves unto God,^d as those that are alive^{present participle} from the dead, and your members as instruments^{bc} of righteousness unto God.^e

13a “**neither yield**” If we can choose to yield our members to unrighteousness then we can choose not to. Paul is encouraging us not to. This is a deliberate choice. We can choose not to sin and not to do unrighteousness.

13b These “**members**” are the parts of our bodies that would be used for either righteousness or unrighteousness. Our mouth, ears, eyes, hands, feet, thoughts can all be dedicated as instruments of either righteousness or unrighteousness. How will we use this body God gave us? Will we use it for righteousness, to fulfill the will of God and to serve Him, or will we use it to serve our own selfish lusts and desires? The choice is ours and we are responsible for the results.

The Coverdale Bible uses “wapens” and “wapes” for “instruments”. Is this an old spelling for “weapons”? The Geneva Bible also uses “weapons”.

13c The **instruments of righteousness** is a military term, “hoplon”, meaning “an implement or utensil or tool (especially offensive for war)”. The only physical weapons we have in our warfare against the flesh, world and the devil is our bodies. Swords of steel are of no use in this battle but our bodies themselves are. We yield our bodies to be used as weapons of warfare on behalf of righteousness against sin. The phrase denotes the body belonging to, or ruled by, the power of sin, in which the members are instruments of unrighteousness.

13d James has it as, “**Submit yourselves therefore to God...Draw nigh to God**” (James 4:7,8). This must a volitional choice on our part. “**Yield**” has the idea of letting someone else have his way before you. A familiar example would be a yield sign. You are to slow down and yield the right of way if you see someone coming the other way. We are to do the same thing, as God has first claim on our lives and our bodies. We are yield the “right of way” to both to Him as He has the greater claim on both than either we have or the world has.

13e THE CHRISTIAN'S THREE-FOLD ENEMY¹⁵⁰

Problem	Solution
The World 1 John :2:15-17 (lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, pride of life)	Flee 1 Timothy 6:11; 2 Timothy 2:22
The flesh Romans 7:18-24	Deny Romans 6:12,13; 8:13
The devil 1 Peter 5:8	Resist 1 Peter 5:9

53. Under Grace, Not Law 6:14

6:14 For sin shall not have^a dominion^{b-c-d-future} over you:^{e-f} for ye are^{present} not under the law,^g but under grace.

150 Thomas Constable, *Notes on Romans*, page 67.

14a The Tyndale Bible has this more of a subjective mood in “let not sin have...”

14b Three dominions in Romans 6:14:

1. The Dominion of Sin- Sin shall not have dominion over you
2. The Dominion of Law- Ye are not under law
3. The Dominion of Grace- But under grace

14c “**dominion over you...**” There has never been a king or a ruler who rules over so many souls as this tyrant Sin. Millions that have departed now mourn forever the condemnation from which they never shall escape, as they have perished without Christ. And millions more that are still upon the earth bow down to Sin and suffer it to rule over them and this fell monster lords it over the myriads of the human race! No Hitler or Pol Pot or Stalin was ever crueller to their subjects than this monster.

Some external force has dominion over us at all times. No man is his own master and no man is sovereign over his own will. At any given time, either sin has dominion over us or God has dominion over us. We can determine who has dominion over us at any given time by how yielded we are to God (Romans 6:13) and whether we are filled with the Holy Spirit. If we are under the dominion of sin, it is our fault and not God's. We do not have to be under the dominion of God if we choose not to be. We have been redeemed from that tyrant by the death of Christ and we are free, if we want to be. How many people stay in their bondage even after their freedom has been paid for? If we sin, we do so because we desire to. We can choose to reject sin and not follow it. We can reach the point in our lives that we sin not, that we do not sin deliberately. If we sin in this state, we do so accidentally, not because we desired to.

14d There is no reason for us to be under the dominion of sin since positionally, we are no longer under law but by our new birth, we are under grace. When men were under the law, they had very limited power (if any) to choose not to sin. The law did nothing to help them avoid sin or choose to reject sin. The law defined sin but could do nothing to deliver the Old Testament saint from its power. The grace of God made available through the death of Christ gives the Christian power to say "no" to sin.

"The believer does sin at times, but he does not provide in his life's plan for occasional acts of sin. He hates sin and endeavors to keep it out of his life and in the event that he does commit an act of sin, he deals with it in confession to the Lord Jesus, putting it out of his life and receiving the cleansing blood of our Lord offers."¹⁵¹ I think the key phrase in Wuest's comment is the believer does not have room for a continual practice of sin in his life. When he does sin, it is an aberration, a slip, not a habitual, pre-meditative practice. This is the goal we should be aiming for in our Christian life.

14e “Those of you who are acquainted with John Bunyan's *Holy War* will remember how wonderfully the glorious dreamer describes Diabolus besieging the town of Mansoul after it had been occupied by the Prince Immanuel. After many battles and cunning plots, the enemy entered into the city, filled all the streets with the yells of his followers and polluted the whole place with the presence of his hosts. But yet he could not take the castle in the center of the town, which held out for Immanuel. That castle was the *heart* and he could, by no means, secure a footing in it. He beat his big Hell drum almost day and night around the walls, so that those who had fled to the castle had a very terrible time of it. And he set all his huge machinery to work to batter down the walls, but he could not enter. No, sin may, for a while, seem to prevail in the Believer till he has no rest and is sorely beset, hearing nothing but the devil's tattoo sounding in his ears—“Sin, sin, sin”—but nevertheless sin shall not have dominion over

¹⁵¹ Kenneth Wuest, *Romans in the Greek New Testament*, page 109.

him! Sin may haunt your bed and board and follow you down the streets in your walks. It may enter the very room into which you withdraw to pray—but your inmost self shall still cry out against it, for, “sin shall not have dominion over you.” Sin may vex you and thrust itself upon you, but it cannot become your lord! The devil has great wrath and rages horribly for a while, knowing that his time is short, but he shall be subdued and expelled, for the Lord our God gives us the victory through Jesus Christ.

“...Sometimes, alas, sin not only enters us, but prevails over us and we are forced, in deep anguish, to confess that we have fallen beneath its power. It is terrible that it should be so, even for a moment, and yet it would be idle to deny the mournful fact...Still, a temporary defeat is not sufficient to effect a total subjugation. Sin shall not have *dominion* over the Believer, for though he falls he shall rise again. The child of God, when he falls into the mire, is like the sheep which gets up and escapes from the ditch as quickly as possible. It is not his nature to lie there. The *ungodly* man is like the hog which rolls in the filth and wallows in it with delight. The mire has dominion over the swine, but it has none over the sheep! With many bleatings and outcries the sheep seeks the shepherd again, but not so the swine. Every child of God weeps, mourns and bemoans his sin and he hates it even when, for a while, he has been overtaken by it—and this is proof that sin has not dominion over him. It has an awful power, but it has not dominion—it casts us down, but it cannot make us take delight in its evil. There are times when the Believer greatly feels his danger.”¹⁵²

14f “Sin reigneth when it is not opposed, when a man doth yield up himself to execute all the commands thereof, and doth fulfil and obey its lusts; as the ambitious, the worldly, and the voluptuous do whatsoever their lusts command them, with a miserable bondage, yea, they willingly walk after it: Proverbs 7:22, ‘He goeth after her straightway as an ox to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks.’ Sin is as a guest to evil men, but as a thief and robber to the godly, welcome to the one, but the other would not have it come into their hearts. It is one thing to wear a chain as an ornament, another as a bond and fetter; to give way to sin, or to have it break in upon us; to put it on willingly, or to have it put and forced upon us. It may be they may be sensible of it, they may purpose not to do it, or may complain of it; but this is a constant truth, that we oftener complain of sin than we do resist it, and oftener resist it than prevail against it. It is not enough for men to see their sins, or blame them in themselves, or to purpose to amend them and forsake them, but they must strive to overcome them, and in striving, prevail. But we speak now of the first complaining of sin. There is a double deceit of heart, whereby men harden themselves in complaining of sin without resistance of it.”¹⁵³

14g “**under the law**” should not be understood as the Mosaic dispensation of law. Paul is not thinking in a dispensational term here but rather in a positional one. We are under the power of the condemnation of the law, but rather are subject to the free grace of God through the dead of Christ.

This verse is a favorite of those who use and abuse dispensational truth in trying to establish a doctrine that Christians are freed from the law and have no responsibility toward it anymore. They would teach that the Ten Commandments and the Law of Moses no longer apply to a Christian because we are no longer “under law” but rather “under grace”. Well, if we are no longer under the law, then why are nine of the ten commandments repeated in the New Testament (excepting the 4th, commandment regarding the Sabbath)? The law is still binding in the New Testament. Paul’s point is the penalty and condemnation of the law is now gone, replaced by the grace of God. The Old Testament saint was “under the law” for his justification,

152 Charles Spurgeon, “Believers Free from the Dominion of Sin”, *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, volume 24, sermon 1410.

153 Thomas Manton, *24 Sermons on Romans 6*, Collected Works, volume 2.

but since Jesus fulfilled the law in His body on the cross (Romans 10:4), the demands and penalty of the law have all been fulfilled in Christ and are no longer binding on Christians. Thus, this passage will not support an antinomian view of the law.

54. Abusing Grace 6:15

6:15 What then?^{ab} shall we sin,^{future} because we are^{present} not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.^{aorist middle optative}

15a This is as shocking a question as we saw in Romans 6:1. If are under grace and not law, as Paul said in Romans 6:14, does that mean we can continue in sin? Paul addressed this question to our common sense. Stop and think about this question for a minute: Does our position under grace then give us a license to sin? Since we are in a better position in relation to sin under grace and since we are forgiven of our sin through the death of Christ, shall we then sin? This is almost the same question as mentioned in Romans 6:1 and Paul gives the same answer: God forbid that we should ever choose sin for any reason at all! Under grace, we have liberty to serve whom we will. We had no such choice under law. But now we may serve either God or sin. We can choose but God forbid we volitionally decide to sin!

15b This is directed against those who believe that the security of the believer is a license to sin. Grace and security is not a license to sin or to live in carnality, just the opposite. It is just the opposite- this doctrine is designed to produce holy living in believers.

55. Serving Righteousness or Unrighteousness 6:16-20

6:16 Know ye^{perfect} not,^a that to whom ye yield^{present} yourselves servants^b to obey, his servants ye are^{present} to whom ye obey;^{cde-present} whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?^f

16a “**Know ye not...**” See notes under Romans 6:3. Here, the question is in the perfect tense, showing that we should know, in a settled, absolute sense, that if we yield our bodies and our talents to sin, we will become slaves to sin and it will dominate our lives, even if we are Christians. No one should debate this or deny this observation, for it should be obvious to all.

16b The “**servant**” is the Greek word *doulos*, (Strong's #1401) meaning a (bond)servant, someone who voluntarily chooses to serve his master. The free will of man is again shown in that he is free to make his decision as to what he will serve, sin or righteousness, if he will be saved or if he will continue in his sin. Kenneth Wuest says “*doulos*” also has the thoughts of “one whose will is swallowed up in the will of another” and “one who serves another to the disregard of his own interests.”¹⁵⁴

The Authorized Version continues to use “servant” for slave” in translating “*doulos*” as we voluntarily choose to serve sin or Christ. We voluntarily serve sin when we are confronted with the gospel, learn of our spiritual state and the provision made for our salvation by Christ on the cross, yet reject it to continue serving sin. Before, we were “slaves” as we knew no better and knew of no alternative or escape from sin. But when the gospel comes, deliverance is offered. Yet how few avail themselves of it! They like sin, like the word, like the flesh, and choose to remain slaves to their old master. We start off serving sin involuntarily as we are born

154 Page 110 in his commentary on Romans.

in sin, but if the gospel is rejected, then sin is served voluntarily. See our notes under Romans 1:1.

16c **“whom ye obey”** A man who lives a life of sin demonstrates that he is a servant of sin and that sin is his master. You are in bondage to whatever it is you choose to serve. In this sense, you choose your own master to serve (sin or righteousness) but once you make that choice, you are bound to it. You are not your own, you belong to someone and you are in subjection to something. Sinners like to boast “I’m my own man! No one tells me what to do!” This is the voice of arrogant ignorance speaking. Since they have chosen to follow sin by their rejection of Christ, they are the servants of sin and have no choice but to obey its dictates. They cannot resist the commands of sin in their lives, despite their imagined liberty and free will. The Christian is in the same position, except that his master is Christ. While sin forces the sinner to obey its will, the Christian, who has made his choice to obey Christ, does so voluntarily because he wants to. He must because he knows it is right. But all men must make such a choice. It cannot be avoided. And failing to choose automatically defaults you to serving sin, for no man can serve righteousness without the enabling power of the Holy Spirit to help him make that decision, as well as a deliberate act and choice of the will on the part of the man doing the choosing.

16d “His servants ye are to whom ye obey,’ whether there hath been a formal contract, yea or no. He that actually obeyeth another is to be accounted his servant, and becometh his servant. The first notion teacheth us that none can be a servant to another but by the election and consent of his own proper will, and whatsoever service men enter, they enter it of their own accord; the devil cannot force us to evil, and Christ will not force us to good... That the great business which belongeth to our duty is the choice of a master, or to consider to what we must addict ourselves, and upon what we bestow our minds and hearts, our life and love, our time and strength: 1 Kings 18:21, ‘How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him.’ He brings the business to a trial, not to give them liberty to be of what religion they pleased, but on deliberation to choose the best. So Josh. 24:15, ‘If it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you will serve.’ He doth not leave it to their liberty to choose God or idols, but would have them to compare the best with the worst, the service of God or the service of devils; which will be life and which will be death, which will be good and which will be bad for them; not as if it were doubtful which to choose, for that is evident to any man in his right wits; nor to blunt their zeal by any demurrer in the case, but rather quicken and hasten their choice; but chiefly that they might choose freely, and be more firm and constant in their covenant, and to shame them, that they might be more inexcusable, if, pretending to God, they divert their obedience from him to other things. Well, then, whom will you serve and love? To whom will ye give up your minds and hearts, and whole man? To do what God requireth, or to serve and please your lusts? Make a right choice, and then be firm and true to it. Will you pretend to be servants to God, and do nothing for him?”¹⁵⁵

16e “To understand this, we must understand the status of a slave....In Paul’s day...he had no time which belonged to himself; every single moment belonged to his master. He was his master’s absolutely exclusive possession....Paul says ‘At one time you were the slave of sin. Sin had exclusive possession of you. At that time you could not talk of anything else but sinning. But now you have taken God as your master and he has exclusive possession of you. Now you cannot even talk about sinning; you must talk about nothing but holiness.”¹⁵⁶

155 Thomas Manton, *24 Sermons Upon Romans 6*, Collected Works, volume 2.

156 William Barclay, *The Letter to the Romans*, The Daily Study Bible, page 89.

16f There are only two masters that a man may choose in life:

1. Sin unto death
2. Obedience unto righteousness

That's it! There are no more choices! You either serve righteousness or unrighteousness. You either serve God or the Devil (and serving self or anything besides God is serving Satan). You must serve either God or mammon, although you cannot serve both.

6:17 But God be thanked, that ye were^{imperfect} the servants^a of sin, but ye have obeyed^{aorist} from the heart that form of doctrine^{bc} which was delivered you.^{aorist}
passive

17a “**ye were the servants of sin**” Paul is speaking of Christians here who, before they were saved, were the servants of sin (as all sinners are) but thanks to their new birth no longer are. They were the servants of sin but have obeyed that form of doctrine that was delivered to them which led then to godly repentance. “God be thanked that ye *were* the servants of sin...”, not “*are* the servants”. Those still in sin for whatever reason have absolutely nothing to rejoice over. They are still in their slavery by their own choosing and voluntarily continue in their misery.

17b These Romans obeyed **that form of doctrine** they had received from the heart rather than the head. Salvation is a heart matter and not a head matter. Many people end up in hell because they have that “form of doctrine” in the head but it never gets two feet “further south” to the heart. Devils have a head knowledge of the gospel but do not believe from the heart.

17c “**Doctrine**” is literally “that which is taught”. Doctrine is truth that is to be taught by those who are apt to teach and who have been given the spiritual gifts to teach. Doctrine then must be taught but it must also be studied in having it taught to somebody. Lazy believers will not be adept at doctrine since they will not put forth the necessary work and discipline to study it. The great theologians in church history have been men willing to study, work and who were humble enough to be taught.

AV	ESV	LSV
17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.	17 But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed,	17 But thanks be to God that <i>though</i> you were slaves of sin, you obeyed from the heart that pattern of teaching to which you were given over,

“**doctrine**” The ESV and LSV do not like the word “doctrine”, using “standard or pattern” of teaching.

6:18 Being then made free^{a-aorist passive participle} from sin, ye became the servants^{aorist} of righteousness.^{bc}
passive

18a “**free from sin**” This is one of the many benefits of salvation. We will not fully realize what a great benefit this is until we get to heaven, receive our glorified bodies, and only then realize how much damage sin had done to our mortal bodies while on earth!

18b **“servants of righteousness”** After their salvation, they were freed from the dominion of sin and then became the servants of righteousness. Here then is the only way to escape the tyranny of sin: be saved! We were then able to change our master. Only Jesus can redeem from the slave-market of sin. Rites, rituals and religions cannot. Remember, salvation is a person, not things or rites.

Paul assumes that if a man has been made free from sin that he will become a servant of righteousness and that he will not backslide back into servitude of sin. There is something seriously wrong with a professing Christian who willingly and deliberately lapses back into servitude of sin. Either he never really was saved to begin with and thus was never emancipated from sin, or is so horribly backslidden that he is in danger of making his faith shipwreck and is in danger of an early death due to the "sin unto death".

If you really stop and think about it, salvation is simply a servant changing masters. Before the new birth, we were slaves to a tyrant of a master, sin. After we were saved, we were bought by another master, righteousness. Our status changes from a slave to a servant. Christians are servants to righteousness.

18c Notice there is no middle ground mentioned here. You serve either sin or righteousness. There is no independent state of man here where neither master claims him. He is under constant servitude of one or the other all times and in all seasons of his life. A sinner may deny being the servant of sin, claiming that he is his own master, but such boasts are made in ignorant and denial of the true state of his situation. No man on the planet has ever been truly “free” in this regard.

6:19^a I speak^{present} after the manner of men^b because of the infirmity^c of your flesh:^d for as ye have yielded^{aorist} your members servants to uncleanness^e and to iniquity^f unto iniquity; even so now yield^{aorist imperative} your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.^f

19a Remember when you were unsaved how you willingly and happily served sin? You wallowed in sin, enjoyed it and never gave it a second thought. Paul is pleading for such a dedication to righteousness now that we are saved. Serve righteousness with at least as much fervor (hopefully more) than you served sin. Yield your members to righteousness at least as much if not more than you did to sin when you were yet lost.

AV

19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

ESV

19 I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification.

LSV

19 I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, leading to *further* lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, leading to sanctification.

19b The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles have this as "I will speak grossly", which is a very strong way to render "I speak as a man"! But the ESV and LSV really weakens this by using "I speak in human terms". Meh.

19c **"infirmity"** The ESV translates this as "lawlessness" which is not the correct translation.

19d The ESV has this as "your natural limitations" while the other translations correctly have this as referring to the weakness or the infirmities of the flesh. The ESV is giving a pass to the "flesh" or old nature here and we must wonder why the ESV is so hesitant to say something negative about it.

The ESV and LSV also continue their error in using "slave" for "servant".

19e **"uncleanness"** Strong's #167 akatharsia; impurity, filth, impurity arising from indulged lusts. There is a sexual connotation to the word.

19f Holiness is the ultimate goal of our salvation and our yielding ourselves to righteousness. These "instruments" of sin may become the "instruments" of "righteousness unto holiness."

6:20^a For when ye were^{imperfect} the servants of sin, ye were^{imperfect} free from righteousness.^b

20a It is impossible to serve both sin and righteousness at the same time. No man can serve two masters but must dedicate himself to one. When we were yet in our sins we served sin and not righteousness. While in our sins we were free from righteousness. Now that we are saved, we ought to be free from the dominion of sin.

20b Being **free from righteousness** is the Greek word "eleutheros", meaning "unrestrained (to go at pleasure), (as a citizen) not a slave (whether freeborn or manumitted), exempt (from obligation or liability), capable of movement, unconstrained, unfettered, independent". There is a sense that the Christian is more constrained than the sinner in his actions. The sinner is allowed by his flesh and old nature to do whatever he wants. He may get drunk, commit adultery, and sin at his heart's content. Of course, he will pay for it in this life and later but he is at liberty in his sin to sin. What else do you expect the sinner to do, go to cottage prayer meetings? The demands of righteousness have no binding influence upon the sinner since he is not under righteousness. The saint cannot partake in these same activities because he bound by grace. His master, Christ, will not permit him to live as the sinner because of the restraints of righteousness. But are they really restraints? Do we as Christians really miss the cocktail parties, the theaters, the rock concert? We cannot indulge the flesh in these activities as Christians but why should we want to? It's like living next to a sewage lagoon and having my parents say "Now do not go swimming in the sewage". The neighbor boy may be allowed to by his parents but I am restricted by mine. It is a restriction but in reality, it is not because I have no intention to go swimming in sewage! So as Christians, God commands us to stay away from the sewage of the world, but do you really need such a restriction?

56. Fruit From Righteousness 6:21-23

6:21 What fruit had ye^{a-imperfect} then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?^{present middle/passive} for the end of those things is death.^b

21a **“What fruit had ye...”** Imperfect tense, denoting continuation but not completion. “What fruit were you continuing to have while you served sin?” The only fruit that can be had from a life of sin is laid out in Romans 6:23- death. Was there anything positive, eternal, really important and lasting that you gained from serving sin? There are a lot of temporary, cheap pleasures at satisfy for a season, but the long-term fruit is death and the lake of fire. The fruit of the world is like smoking a cigarette or taking a drink of liquor. It satisfies for a moment, but then you need another and another, all the way to the pit.

21b Why not sell out to God the way we sold out to Satan when we were yet unsaved? We served Satan with all of our might when were lost and for what? What was our reward? Our wages were death. Now that we are saved with a reward of eternal life, why not “sell out” to God?

6:22^a But now being made free^{aorist passive participle} from sin, and become servants^{aorist} to God, ye have^{present} your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting^b life.

22a Paul contrasts the two sets of fruit which are spawned from serving either sin or righteousness. The only fruit of serving unrighteousness is death. The wages of sin, or the payment of sin is also death. But the fruit of serving righteousness is holiness and everlasting life. Paul asks us to stop and dwell upon our past state and compare it to our present, justified one. Was sin so precious and sweet that you still harbor a desire to dabble in it, even after you have been justified? What did sin ever do for you? What benefits has it imparted unto you? Did it make your life better? Did it benefit your family? Did it magnify your good name in the community? Didn't it rather grease your sinful skid into the pit? Didn't it ruin your body, wreck your health, steal your money, rape your reputation and harm your family? What advantage is there in sin to make a justified man still lust after it? The wages of sin is death. Is death so much more desirable than the gift of God, which is eternal life? Common sense questions but you would be surprised how many Christians could not give a common sense answer.

22b **“fruit unto holiness”** is probably similar to the fruit of the Spirit of Galatians 5:22,23.

6:23^a For the wages^b of sin is death;^{cd} but the gift^e of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ^f our Lord.

23a Verse 23 is another one of those great evangelistic verses in contrasting the payoffs of sin and righteousness. Serving sin can be likened to working for a man. Come payday, the employee receives his paycheck for the amount of work he has put in. Sin also gives a paycheck to those who serve it and work for it. The amount of the check is "death", eternal death in the lake of fire. Serving sin pays off in death in hell. "No man ever struck against this master, Sin, for higher wages."¹⁵⁷ Sin is a terrible paymaster! Would you knowingly and willingly take a job where the boss promises that when payday rolled around, you would be cast into hell? But serving God pays off in the free gift of eternal life. You don't even have to work for that gift of eternal life as God gives it freely. The man serving sin has to work in order to be paid off in death! This man works his way to hell! The Christian receives his eternal life as a free gift but the condemned man is going to hell anyway but is forced by sin to actually work for the condemnation he already has! Who would work to go to hell? Yet that is what every unsaved

¹⁵⁷ J. Frank Norris, *Lectures on Romans*, page 96.

man is doing. How foolish are these sinners? The gift of eternal life is at their fingertips yet they will reject it to continue to sweat and labor themselves to the pit. We'll say it again that sin is insanity. Sinners cannot think straight in terms of themselves and their eternal destiny.

23b It is interesting that the "**wages**" in Romans 6:23 is a military term meaning "rations for a soldier, his stipend or pay". As a soldier musters for his pay on payday, so will the sinner be lined up to receive his wages of death at the Great White Throne.

23c "**wages of sin...**" "**Wages**" is a reward for labor. Death is sin's due reward and it must be paid. A business owner employs a man and agrees that man that should receive his wages. If his employer did not pay him his wages, it would be an act of gross injustice. If sin did not bring upon man death and misery, it would be an injustice. It is necessary for the very standing of the very justice and holiness of God that sin be punished. They that sow, must reap. The sin which hires you must pay you. Every transgression and disobedience must receive its just recompense of reward. When we chose to serve sin, we also agreed to serve for its wages, which are death, and we must be paid what we agreed to. And this wage is earned. The workman receives the wages on payday not only because it was agreed to beforehand but also because the workman earned such payment by virtue of the effort and production he generated. And every sinner has done a very exceptional job at sinning and has served his master well. When payday comes, he will be "rewarded" accordingly.

This is what is involved in evangelism- trying to get the sinner to change jobs, wages and masters by offering him better. Instead of working for Satan, he can work for Christ. Instead of languishing under the whip of sin, he can serve as a son. Instead of death as his recompense, he may receive glory and everlasting life instead. What man in his right mind would not desire such a change in employment? Yet how many millions continue to voluntarily suffer under such a soul-crushing load! Christ desires to recruit them but they will have none of it.

23d "**...is death**" To everyone, one and all, to all of mankind without exception. No one is exempt, regardless of religion, income, status or fame. Sin kills all and it is 100% fatal.

23e Why does the ESV add "free" before "gift"? That reads more like a commentary than a translation. None of the traditional translations add "free."

23f AV

ESV

LSV

23 For the wages of sin <i>is</i> death; but the gift of God <i>is</i> eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.	23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.	23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gracious gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
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"**Jesus Christ**" The ESV and LSV transpose this to "Christ Jesus".

Spiritual Applications, Romans Chapter 6

In Romans 6, Paul has discussed the Christian's deliverance from the domination of sin in his life. Can a Christian reach a point in his life where sin has no more power over him? According to Paul, yes. We can grow to such a relationship that we do not sin deliberately. We will still sin accidentally, but we will not do so in a deliberate, high-handed fashion. The power of sin in the life of a believer should be weakening over time as we become stronger and more mature in the Lord and in grace. But we must not

confuse this with any sort of sinless perfection or eradication of the sin nature, as was taught by Adam Clarke and some of the old Methodist theologians who followed him (who took John Wesley's teachings on "perfect love" too far). We never mentioned the Christian reaching a stage in this life where he could not sin but rather would not sin. There is no such state as sinless perfection or eradication of the sin nature in this life. But we can come to a point that, as John Wesley described it, perfect love toward God in that we love God too much to deliberately sin against Him. We would rather die than sin. When we do sin, it was because the old nature snuck up on us and blind-sided us. It was a slip, an accident, not a habit or way of life. We do not have to be a slave to our sin. We do have deliverance and victory over it. We sin because we want to. We love that sin so much that we have difficulty renouncing it. When we come to the point where we love God more than that sin, then we can get the mastery and victory over it and be freed from its power.

The following excerpt is from an article entitled "The Biblical Doctrine of Sanctification" by O. Talmadge Spence, as printed in *Straightway* (July 1997). This relates to Romans 6-8 and the doctrine of sanctification.

"The Book of Romans, theologically, leads the sinner, step by step, from his most wretched state into the highest Burnt offering life (Romans 1-8 & 12-16; Chapters 9-11 are a parenthesis in the Book to Israel).

The introduction and theme of the Book are carefully laid down (1:1-17). The theme is easily set forth as: "The Power of the Gospel of Christ Unto Salvation to Every one that Believeth."

After the reader is brought through an extended outline of the peculiar sins of the Gentiles and the Jews (1:18-3:20), then the righteousness for the sinner is revealed through Jesus Christ (3:21-22), against the backdrop of the universality of sin in all mankind (3:23). The sinner, theologically, is brought to that distinctive Reformation emphasis of Justification by Faith (3:24-5:11).

The Adamic Sin Nature is then acknowledged (5:12-21), and finally, the doctrine of sanctification is introduced and revealed (6:1-8:39). Romans, chapter six, is revealed to the believer, justified, in the subjunctive mood to question that believer if he should continue (6:1) under the dominion (6:9) of "the sin" (Greek; 6:1), which by the presence of the definite article referring back to the Adamic Sin as a reigning king (5:17) in the life of the justified believer. This king is also called "our old man" (6:6).

Although the word "destroyed" (6:6) does not mean annihilation of the sin nature, yet it does mean "to render the old man inoperative," or to destroy the power and dominion (6:9; Lordship) of the inherited sin nature.

The seven aorist tenses are set forth in seven words: "dead" (6:2), "baptized" (6:3), "buried" (6:4), "raised" (6:4), "planted" (6:5), "crucified" (6:6), and "destroyed" (6:6). The aorist tense is a punctiliar tense, indicating that there is, theologically, a crisis here. Our word "crisis" comes from the Greek word (krino; krisis) rooted in the word "judgement." The Holy Spirit takes the revealed Word of God concerning the doctrine of sanctification and "judges" the believer's obedience to God concerning the power and dominion of sin in the flesh. This causes a crisis to occur in the believer's war with the flesh in neglecting the "walk after the Spirit" (cf. 6:4&8; 1&4). The believer's soul cries

out: "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (7:24). Of course, the Victory of the Sacrifice of the Son of God, in a co-crucifixion with the believer brings the victory over the lordship of sin in the believer's life. The believer, "henceforth" (from 6:6b; the crisis) is to be no longer a slave to the power of the flesh in his Christian life (6:9b). Romans, chapter six, is conditioned to the believer's "reckoning" (6:11), "obedience" (6:12b,16,17), and "yielding" (6:13,16,19) in the present tense. The result is clear:

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. (Romans 6:12)

For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. (Romans 6:14)

Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. (Romans 6:18)

But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. (Romans 6:22)

But this sevenfold crisis leads to the "walk" in holiness (6:4 & 8:1 & 4); the process, the quest, and the life must follow. We must have our "fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life" (6:22b). The entire eighth chapter of Romans summarizes that "walk...after the Spirit," "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (cf. Romans 8:1-4 & Galatians 4:19-31).

There has been much said and written with the question "was the war of the flesh in Romans, chapter seven, the life of Paul as a Christian, personally?" The answer lies in the past tense of Paul's life and not the present as is clear in his own words:

For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter. (Romans 7:5,6).

The matter in question is whether Romans 7 is Paul's current experience or a past one that he has gotten the victory over. I would tend to agree with Spence that the struggle with Romans 7 is not a lifelong condition but is a crises in the life as the believer struggles with sin and carnality in his life. Eventually, he comes out of that struggle and enjoys victory over the reign of sin in his life. Of course, this has nothing to do with sinless perfection or eradication of the sin nature, but rather it deals with the dominating power of sin has been broken by the power of God in the life of the believer. We will never be fully and truly free from the power and presence of sin until we get to heaven and receive our glorified body.

The tricky part in all this is that there are many aorist¹⁵⁸ verbs in Romans 6 but Paul uses present tense verbs in Romans 7:14-25. There are 42 Greek verbs in that passage and none of them are in the aorist, but 38 are in the present tense. Paul uses 38 present tense verbs to describe his crises in Romans 7:14-25. Is the crises still ongoing in his life as he writes Romans 7 or is he aware that the struggle with sin is never truly over in the life of a believer, even if he has broken the power of that sin in his life? By the use of the present tense, Paul shows that he is in that crises at the time of his writing Romans 7. Paul had NOT received the total and final victory over his sin nature yet nor was Paul sinlessly perfect at the time he wrote that. The struggle never ends on earth, although we can enjoy more and more victory over sin and our sinful nature as we go further with God and develop more spiritual maturity. Paul knew where the victory was and how to apply it to his life. That is where the struggle was rooted, in that Paul had a desire to have the power of the flesh broken in his life and to go one with God in the power of the Spirit. Whenever and believer declares war on his flesh in that manner, the struggle is on. This is why many professing Christians know nothing of the struggle as they have never developed the desire to break the power of the flesh in their lives, so they have never declared war on their indwelling old nature. Since no war is declared in their lives, there is no struggle since they are at peace with their own carnalities.

158 The Greek aorist verb is difficult to interpret and even the Greek grammar books have difficulty defining exactly how it should be interpreted. It is usually interpreted as some form of the past tense but sometimes it is used as a “tenseless” tense or even a future tense. It is very elastic in use and meaning and translators have difficulty rendering it into English. The Greek verb is probably the most important part of speech for New Testament translation and interpretation, which is one reason why I included them in this commentary.

Romans Chapter 7

As the law cannot produce justification, Paul now says that the law cannot produce sanctification, nor can it deliver from the power of the flesh.

“Paul describes men as being either natural, carnal or spiritual. The natural man is the unsaved man who can rise no higher than his intellectual, moral or volitional powers can lift him. He is ruled by his senses. The carnal man is a saved man still dominated at least partially by the power of sin and under the control of the old nature. The spiritual man is the believer whose life is controlled by the Holy Spirit. These three “men” are in view in Romans 7.”¹⁵⁹

Questions in Romans 7:

Question	Answer
Is the law sin? Romans 7:7	No. I had not known sin, but by the law. Romans 7:7
Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Romans 7:24	Jesus Christ- Romans 7:25

57. The Example of Marriage 7:1-4

7:1 Know ye not^{a-present} brethren, (for I speak^{present} to them that know^{present participle} the law,)^b how that the law hath dominion^c over^{present} a man as long as he liveth?^{d-present}

1a “**know ye not**” See notes under Romans 6:3. The Tyndale is the only translation that renders this as “Remember ye not...”.

1b “**them that know the law**” There must have been a sizeable Jewish element to the church in Rome as Paul assumes many of them would understand the following illustration, which is straight from the Jewish law.

1c “**dominion**” Just as the husband is the lord over his wife, sin has the same lordship over all mankind.

1d “**as long as he liveth**” This is why it is necessary to die to sin as Paul talked about in Romans 6. As long as a man is alive, he is under dominion of the things of the world, including sin. In order to escape such a condition, the believer must die. Death is the only release from the dominion of sin for the believer in this life. Death cancels all obligations and debts and release from all civil obligations.

Divorce is not in view here because divorce does not involve a death. You may legally dissolve a marriage through divorce but not physically or even emotionally, many times. Paul is talking about a clean break and dissolution of the marriage relationship by death and not by divorce.

¹⁵⁹ John Phillips, *Exploring Romans*, page 111.

7:2 For the woman which hath an husband is bound^{a-perfect passive} by the law to her husband so long as he liveth;^{present} but if the husband be dead,^{arist subjunctive} she is loosed^{perfect passive} from the law of her husband.^{bc}

2a **"is bound"** has the idea of obliging by a moral or religious obligation. We are under obligation to sin. We choose sin voluntarily and we then have an obligation to serve and be in subjection to the master which we have chosen.

2b Under Jewish law, the wife could not divorce her husband, although the husband could divorce his wife, as in Deuteronomy 24:1-4. If trapped in an unhappy marriage, there was nothing the wife could do to escape it except wait for the death of her husband. Then she could remarry. Things were quite different under Roman law, where either partner could end the marriage, which was why divorce was fairly common in Paul's day, as it is in ours. "

Moreover, in Roman law, a woman was not freed from the law of her husband by his death, since she was obliged to mourn his death and to remain unmarried for 12 months; otherwise she would forfeit everything which had come to her from her first husband."¹⁶⁰

2c **"law of her husband"** Paul, in describing the relation of the believer to sin draws a parallel to the relationship between a woman to her husband. She is married to a husband, Sin Law. He is a rotten husband who cares nothing for her. He is a tyrant. But she meets Christ and would rather be his wife. But as long as her first husband is alive, she cannot marry Christ until Sin dies. But he does die, freeing her from her obligation to him. She is then free to marry Christ as a second husband. As long as the husband is alive, she is in subjection to her husband. The only way out of that relationship is by the death of the husband. "What about divorce or desertion?" you say? That would only be allowed if the husband would desert the wife. Unfortunately, sin will not desert us nor will it neglect us. It will pay us very close and constant attention and, like Christ, will never leave us nor forsake us. But when the husband dies, the wife also dies in her relationship to the marriage. So by the death of the sin-husband, the wife also ends up dying to her husband and dissolving the marriage.

7:3 So then if, while her husband liveth,^{present participle} she be married^{arist middle subjunctive} to another man, she shall be called^{future} an adulteress:^a but if her husband be dead,^{arist subjunctive} she is^{present} free from that law; so that she is^{infinitive} no adulteress,^b though she be married^{arist middle participle} to another man.^c

3a **"she shall be called an adulteress"** Again, because the wife could not divorce her husband under Jewish law. If she left her husband while he was still living, and he had not divorced her, and took up with another man, she would be an adulteress.

How then is the believer an adulteress? By living for Christ yet still serving sin in his life. The "husband of sin" is still alive and has not been put to death. When sin dies in our life, we sever our marriage relationship to sin and enter into a new one with Christ. If we are thus married to Christ, why should we go and serve our former husband by continual willful sin? That is spiritual adultery. This is why we must make up our minds once and for all if we are going to look to the Law for our justification or Christ, to ourselves or to Him. We must choose one for we cannot choose both.

¹⁶⁰ James D.G. Dunn, *Romans* in Word Biblical Commentary, volume 38A, page 360.

3b A woman can only be married to one man at a time, lest she be called an adulteress. She must either be with her husband or be an adulteress. For the sinner, his husband is sin but until he is born again, he will desire no other. The point here is to the believer. In order to get out of his relationship with the law, he must die. Death terminates the marriage contract (regardless of Mormon doctrine). The marriage-relation between sin and the believer is not severed by any form of spiritual divorce but only by the believer dying to that sin. We cannot "file for divorce" so death is the only way out of our "marriage" to sin.

Some have taken these words out of context so as to mean that under no circumstances whatsoever can a person remarry while his or her spouse is still alive. This is not Paul's point here as the matter of being married to another person is not in the context.

3c So we are a bride to either sin or Christ, one or the other. Every man is married spiritually, either to sin (if he is unsaved) or to Christ (if he be a Christian). In this regard, all of mankind is the "bride" married either to a harsh husband (sin) or to the best of all husbands (Christ). Before our salvation, we were married to sin and the world. This is the lot of every man. But our husband treated us so badly, we wanted a divorce. But we were not able to sue for divorce since the woman in a marriage (us) had to legal right to do so in Jewish law. Either we had to die or our husband had to die in order to be freed from our husband so that we could marry Christ. We met Christ, fell in love with Him, and desired to be His bride. The only way this could be done was if we died or if our husband (sin) died. We died at salvation- died to sin and self, thus freeing ourselves from our spiritual marriage to sin and making it possible for us to take a new husband in salvation- Christ.

We must be married to either sin or to Christ. There is no middle ground or vacuum in who has the lordship over the life of the believer. It is one or the other, either sin or Christ. If you are lost, then you are married to sin and cannot be married to Christ. If you are saved, you must be fully married to and consecrated to Christ lest you be found a spiritual adulteress by continuing in sin. A believer who goes back under law commits adultery against Christ. He is married to Christ yet then goes back to his old husband, sin, whom he divorced by death. This gives the believer two husbands (Sin and Christ), thus making him both an adulterer and a polygamist. Christians, who fiddle with sin after salvation or who are otherwise unfaithful or neglectful of grace, are poor spouses!

The same is true with the believer who goes back to the law for his justification. You are dead to the law. Why are you running back to it? You are married to Christ. Why are you running back to your old husband? You must choose one husband to "justify" you, either the Law of Christ. You cannot place your loyalties and love to both. This is aimed at the Judaizer, who claims to be saved by grace but tries to be justified by the Law. He is guilty of spiritual adultery against his husband, Christ. All who promote a works-based salvation are guilty of such adultery against Christ.

Thus, the sinner cannot serve God and the Christian cannot serve sin. To do so would make one guilty of spiritual adultery. The unsaved man will be unfaithful to his husband (sin) if he gets religious (how many unsaved preachers are spiritual adulterers against their true spiritual husband, sin, while they fool around with Christ!). And if a Christian backslides and goes back into sin (or goes back to the law for his spiritual justification), then he commits spiritual adultery against Christ. Both are serious offenses, calling for the death penalty under the Mosaic Law.

7:4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead^{a-aorist passive} to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married^{aorist middle infinitive} to another, even to him who is raised^{aorist passive participle} from the dead,^{ab} that we should bring forth fruit^{aorist subjunctive} unto God.^{cd}

4a "Are become dead", "from the dead" Strong's #2289 thanatoô, signifying a violent death, similar to the death of Christ. Death to sin is a violent death because it involves crucifixion. See remarks under Romans 6:6,11.

4c We can choose either to die or not to die to sin. We have free will in this choice. The first choice comes at the moment of salvation. Will we accept Christ and become dead positionally dead to sin or not? If so, we die to sin in a positional sense although not in a practical one. This second choice comes later in the Christian life when the believer reaches the crises experience in his life. There will be a time in the life of every believer when the Lord will dead in a very certain and specific manner regarding sin in the life of that believer. The Lord will ask him "Will you take the next step in your life and strengthen your relation to me by forsaking that sin and seeking after holiness or not?" This is where we die to sin practically. To be fully free from the lordship of sin, we must die both times. We must accept Christ and die to sin positionally and then die to sin in our life practically in the crises experience of sanctification. Dying in this manner is the only way that we can be made free from sin.

4d Paul mentions the reason why Christ desires us to be married to Him, in order that we might bring forth fruit unto Him. This is spiritual fruit which is produced in our continuing spiritual progress as described by the nine-fold fruit of the Spirit of Galatians 5:22,23 **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.**

4e Death breaks all human bonds, husband and wife, master and servant.

58. Delivered From The Law 7:5,6

7:5 For when we were^{imperfect} in the flesh,^a the motions^b of sins, which were by the law, did work^{imperfect middle} in our members to bring^{aorist infinitive} forth fruit unto death.^c

5a "In the flesh" is our condition while we are in sin. We cannot live in sin and be in the spirit at the same time. "While we were in the flesh" then has reference to the unsaved state of man who is married to sin, serves sin and bring forth fruit unto death.

Does "in the flesh" refer to our unsaved state or to a carnal, immature state as Christian? Romans 8:9 says **"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."** Paul says we are not in the flesh, or at least are not supposed to be. We were in the flesh (imperfect tense, which is the same as our past, continued tense) but we are not now. It could then refer to two possible states:

1. When we were unsaved.
2. As a Christian but immature, carnal, struggling.

5b AV

ESV

LSV

5 For when we were in the flesh, the **motions** of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.

5 For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death.

5 For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death.

"Motions" is an older English word meaning "emotions" or "impulses". The other versions have this as "lusts" or "affections". The ESV and LSV use "sinful passions".

5c **"fruit unto death"** This relates back to Romans 6:23 about the wages of sin being death. Being married to sin means serving sin and bring forth fruit unto sin which leads to death. This is not the fruit desired by Christ in Romans 7:4.

7:6 But now we are delivered^{aorist middle} from the law,^{ab} that being dead^{aorist participle} wherein we were held;^{c-imperfect passive} that we should serve^{infinitive} in newness of spirit,^d and not in the oldness of the letter.

6a **We are delivered from the law** in the new birth. How so? We are delivered from the penalty of the law when we are born again. We will not be judged by it because Christ, who died for us, already has been judged according to the law in our place. He suffered our penalty demanded by the law, which is death. Hence we stand perfect in the sight of the law due to the death of Christ. Yet the law still exists, does it not? Exodus 20 is still in the Christian's Bible. Although we will not be judged according to it, we are responsible to it because it remains God's standard of holiness and it continues to define sin for the believer. We still study it, honor it and pattern our lives according to it. We are delivered from the power of the law but not from our obligation to it in the sense of ceasing from sin. That is what the law does, define sin for us. In order to avoid sin, we need to know what it is we are supposed to be avoiding and that knowledge only comes from a study of, understanding of and acceptance of the doctrines of the law. But our salvation has no bearing to our relation to the law, since that salvation has already been purchased by Christ. The law rather helps us in our life and relation to God but does not affect our salvation.

6b To be delivered from sin is the same thing as to be delivered from the law as the law, which not sin itself, defines sin. Subjection to either and both brings condemnation. To be delivered from one is to be delivered from the other. We cannot go half-way on this. We cannot be freed from the law yet still in subjection to sin, nor can we be dead to sin but still in condemnation under the law. Thus we are delivered from the law so that we may serve the Lord in the newness of life. We cannot be condemned by the Law as that condemnation already fell on Christ.

6c **"wherein we were held"** Since we have been crucified with Christ, and are dead in sin (Galatians 2:19), we are now freed from the demands of the law that we may marry Christ. The Bishops Bible has the strongest rendering of this as being "in bondage".

The passage Romans 7:7-25 details Paul's personal experience of his own spiritual struggle is trying to keep the law and please God in his own power. Eventually, every works-based salvation system winds up at Romans 7:7-25 and ends in a dead end, unable to progress to the blessed truths of Romans 8. Only salvation by faith through grace without the works of the law

can go beyond the failures and helpless condition described in Romans 7. And Paul found the deliverance from the bondage of sin in Romans 7:25 in the person, work and provision of Jesus Christ.

“Chapter vii is the problem chapter of this Epistle. Students of it are not agreed upon Paul’s application of the illustration in verses 4-6, of the Husband and Wife; but verses 14-25 of the chapter are still more a subject of controversy. Opinion is sharply divided as to whether the experience here described is that of a regenerate or of an unregenerate person. The arguments on both sides are full of interest and instruction, but the present occasion does not lend itself to a consideration of these. Personally, against the majority of commentators, I believe that in these verses Paul, as a regenerate man, is telling of an experience through which he had passed, and through which very many Christians have passed, and are passing.”¹⁶¹

59. Is the Law Sin? 7:7-12

7:7 What shall we say^{future} then? Is the law sin?^a God forbid.^{b-aorist optative middle} Nay, I had not known^{aorist} sin, but by the law:^c for I had not known^{pluperfect} lust,^d except the law had said,^{imperfect} Thou shalt not covet.^{ef-future}

7a “**Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay...**” Paul uses the strongest Greek negative wording he can to shoot down any idea that the law is sinful.

7b “**God forbid**” Dismiss the thought! Away with the thought! Let it not be! This phrase is used 14 times by Paul (10 times in Romans alone [3:4,6,31; 6:2,15; 7:7,13; 9:14; 11:1,11]). It is the strongest Greek idiom for repudiating a statement, and it contains a sense of outrage that anyone would even dare think or suggest such a thing. The Law does not cause sin; the Law reveals and defines sin. If you want to know whether something is a sin, go to the law and check. Romans 3:20 says “**By the law is the knowledge of sin.**”

7c The sin problem in man does not stem from the law but from man. Our problems with the law come from our misuse of it and our misunderstanding of it. The law is not responsible for our sin. The law does not cause sin, it defines sin. We cannot blame the law for our sins but must blame ourselves. There is nothing wrong with the law, as it is perfect. The Law is God’s Great Detective of Sin, defining it and searching it out for all to see. God Himself gave the Law so there is no flaw in the law and it cannot be sinful. Paul gives the purpose of the law, to define sin. Paul says he would not known what sin was unless God had given a law. In this sense, the law did us a favor. Yes it condemned us but it led us to salvation by grace. We now know what sin is. We know what our problem is and what the source of it is. We cannot deal with a problem unless we know what it is. The law diagnosed our sin problem. Once the problem was determined, finding the remedy is easy.

The purpose of the law is to define sin. Something cannot be wrong or illegal if there is no law in place stating that it is wrong. The law lays out the things that are sin, showing us what is sin and condemning us as sinners for violating those laws.

¹⁶¹ W. Graham Scroggie, *Salvation and Behavior*.

7d **“lust”** “The moment the law said, “Thou shalt not lust,” why you might as well tell me not to be a man. Even if my will is right-the case supposed here-yet I am in such a state that I cannot succeed in mastering the flesh.”¹⁶²

7e **“thou shalt not covet”** The Tenth Commandment (Exodus 20:17) is repeated by Paul, showing that it is still in force in the New Testament age and has not been rescinded. It is still a sin to covet today. The only commandment not repeated in the New Testament is the Fourth, regarding the Sabbath, since that is a covenant sign with Israel that is not binding upon the Church.

7f Lust (desires of the flesh. They need not be sexual in nature. It is also equated with covetousness. Lust is the intense desire for something that we are not permitted to have or that we should not have.

7:8 But sin, taking^{aorist active participle} occasion^a by the commandment, wrought^{aorist middle} in me all manner of concupiscence.^b For without the law sin was dead.

8a **“sin taking occasion”** Sin, by the law, took full advantage of Paul in his ignorance before he came to know sin by the law, making a wreck of his life.

8b Paul gives sin the qualities of a living, conscience being with a will, almost making it sound as if it were alive.

Strong’s #1939 *epithumia*; desire, craving, longing, desire for what is forbidden, lust. The *epi-* prefix intensifies the word. **“Concupiscence”** is from the Latin *con-*, *with* + *cupi*, *cupid* - desire (usually sexual) + *-escere* - suffix denoting beginning of a process or state. It has the idea of an ardent, usually sensuous, longing; a strong sexual desire or lust, a selfish human desire for an object, person, or experience.

7:9 For I^a was alive^{imperfect} without the law once:^b but when the commandment came,^{aorist active participle} sin revived,^{c-aorist} and I^a died.^{d-aorist}

9a Emphatic.

9b **“I was alive without the law once”** In his ignorance of the law. Paul didn't know what sin was without the law to tell him. In his ignorance of the law, Paul thought he was pretty good. Paul was very religious and thought all was well. But one day, he learned about the true nature and meaning of the law, revealing that in the eyes of the law, he was anything but alright. Paul knew about the law as a Pharisee but did not understand it. That came at the time of his conversion and that understanding led to his conversion. Sin was revived in Paul's life when that understanding of the law entered his life. The law then killed him by showing him his condemned state before God. The law punctured Paul's balloon of self-justification! The law brought a revival- a revival of sin, which would later lead to his new birth. He went from a deceived religious man who imagined himself alive to a man waiting for the judgment of God to fall upon him.

“The verse has to be reconciled with Ephesians 2:1-3, for no man is “alive” spiritually “without the law”: everyone is born dead. Paul plainly means that sin is not imputed to a man when he is a child (see note on Rom. 4:15). When a child “finally gains the “knowledge between

¹⁶² John N. Darby, *A Few Detached Notes on Romans 7*.

good and evil" (Deut. 1:39), sin and the death that goes along with it are attributed to him. From then on, a man needs the New Birth."^{163 164 165}

9c AV

ESV

LSV

9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived , and I died.	9 I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died.	9 I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died.
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"revived" We think the ESV's and LSV's "sin came alive" is a weaker rendering than what the other translations have as "sin revived". If sin "revived", then it was dead once but then came alive, something the modern versions miss.

9d "The Law points to the Gospel for salvation. It is a "schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Gal. 3:24). Lester Roloff preached a sermon called "Dr. Law and Dr. Grace" in which the Law is likened to a doctor who can diagnose the patient's illness but can't prescribe a treatment. Only Dr. Grace can help treat whatever is wrong. But you need to know what is wrong before you can be treated."¹⁶⁶ The law can only kill. It cannot impart life.

7:10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found^{aorist passive} to be unto death.^a

10a Paul found the law to be death rather than life. How could something that brings death really be said to be "ordained to life"? Because the law puts the self-righteous sinner into a corner and strips away his veneer. By the time the law finishes with the sinner, he has one foot in hell. When God gets a man into that position, then the Holy Spirit can start to deal about the sin in that man's life in order to bring him to repentance. The old saying "You can't get a man saved until you get him lost" is very true. This is what the law does- gets you lost so that God can get you into a position that He can bring you to salvation.

7:11 For sin, taking^{aorist active participle} occasion by the commandment, deceive^{d^a-aorist} me,^{bcd} and by it slew^{aorist} me.^e

11a The word **"deceived"** is exapataô (Strong's #1818; from ek, (Strong's #1537) an intensive, and apataô" (Strong's #538), to seduce, meaning to seduce wholly, lead out of the right way to error). This is what sin always does. It tries to make us think that we are really okay and that our sin is really too unimportant for God to worry about. Sin deceives us into thinking there is no hell or judgment. When we have been so seduced, then we are sitting ducks for the kill- when we realize (often too late) that we were lied to by sin and payday has come and the price is more than we can pay. As they say, sin will always take you farther than you want to go and will always charge you more than you want to pay. No right-thinking man would hold such a low

163 Peter Ruckman, *Ruckman Reference Bible*, page 1494.

164 This would include those with mental conditions that make it impossible to understand their sinful condition.

165 Ruckman's note on Romans 4:15 that he cites is "This verse and Romans 5:13 show you that God does not impute sin (vs 8) to a child who has "no knowledge between good and evil" (see note on Dent 1:39), even though that child is born "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph 2:1) and is one of "the children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3) by nature (*Ruckman Reference Bible* page 1490).

166 Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on Romans*, page 259.

view of sin unless he was deceived and seduced into doing so. We would expect such deception as Satan, the Father of Sin, is a liar and the Father of Lies in John 8:44.

11b **“For sin...deceived me...”** Sin had literally seduced Paul, lied to him and had made itself appealing to him. Paul, like all men, fell for it and suffered the consequences. On this side of that seduction, with the 20-20 hindsight of experience, we can see the three ways sin deceives all of us:

1. **That there is satisfaction in sin.** But sin is like a cigarette. There used to be commercials for Camel cigarettes that stated “They satisfy!” But that was a lie. If cigarettes satisfied, there would be one stick in the package. You’d smoke it and then you would be satisfied! Sin is the same way. We think that wallowing in the flesh will somehow bring a satisfaction to our souls, but we are proven wrong every time. Only a right relation with God brings this kind of satisfaction that we seek.

2. **That we can excuse sin.** We can justify our sins very well, that somehow, we are entitled to this sin, or that God has to allow us some sin. But there is no justification for sin that God will accept. All unrighteousness is sin, no matter the circumstances or motivations behind it. Man is very good in justifying his sin but it cannot be justified, only condemned.

3. **Sin isn’t really a problem or that it doesn’t exist.**

A. Christian Scientists deny that sin even exists. It’s all in your head.

B. Tends to be ignored and not taken seriously today.

C. Nothing is really a sin since morality is relative.

D. But **fools make a mock at sin**- Proverbs 14:9

4. **That we will escape the judgment for sin, or that there is no payment for sin.**

Every man, in the dark corners of his mind, thinks that somehow, God will not judge him for his sins, or that he will somehow be able to escape judgment. No man sins with the thought that he will actually pay the penalty for his sin. No one robs a bank with the expectation that he will get caught and go to jail, but rather, he has the hope that he will somehow be able to escape the long arm of the law. But sin catches up with us...eventually. We must be sure that our sin will indeed find us out.

A. Romans 6:23 makes it clear that there is a wage for sin that cannot be escaped. Sin is costly- just ask the Prodigal Son in Luke 15.

B. Numbers 32:23 **Be sure your sin will find you out.**

11c Sin will always misrepresent itself. It will not reveal itself as it truly is. It deceived Eve. Sin presented itself as a way to gain knowledge that the Lord had not revealed. She got the knowledge but oh! At what cost!

11d “Sin deceives you by leading you to believe you can sin with impunity. Sin deceives you by leading you to believe that your actions won’t hurt anyone else. Sin deceives you by leading you to believe you won’t give account. Sin deceives you by leading you to believe God doesn’t know about it or won’t pay attention to it or won’t remember it or will overlook it. Sin deceives you by making you believe it can satisfy. Sin deceives you by telling you that you can stop it whenever you want. SIN IS A LIAR.”¹⁶⁷

11e Sin uses the law to try to swallow the sinner up in despair in thinking that he is too bad to be saved. This is a natural and logical position for the sinner to find himself in. Once the law gets done with him, sin comes and says “According to the law, you are far too sinful to be saved!” The sinner then despairs and believes himself as good as in hell. He feels God could

¹⁶⁷ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on Romans*, page 260.

never save someone as bad as him. A man must be killed by sin via the law before he can be made alive by Grace.

7:12^a Wherefore the law *is* holy,^{bc} and the commandment holy, and just, and good.^d

12a This is the same idea as in Romans 7:7 in that the law is not sin, nor is it evil. It is holy, just and good, regardless of the evil it may seem to do unto sinners. But remember, although it seems evil, it is eventually for the sinner's own good. The problem is not with God or His law but it lies with us and our sin. One cannot blame the law for the plight of the sinner. It is the misuse and misunderstanding of the law and its ministry to us that causes the problem.

12b **“the law is holy...”** The Law is holy because it was given by a holy God. How then could the Law be other than holy?

12c **“the law is...just”** The Law is just because God is just and is a God of justice. Man-made law-codes cannot said to be “just” because man is not just. There are loopholes galore and if you are crooked enough or have enough money or contacts, you can pervert justice to your favor. But such cannot be done with the Law of God. There are no such loopholes and justice cannot be perverted under a divine system and code of law.

12d **“the law is...good”** The Law is good because God is good. Manmade law codes can be evil since the heart and intellect of man is depraved and sinful. But since God is good and since there is no darkness in Him, we can expect His law code to be as good as the One Who gave it.

60. The Ministry of the Law 7:13

**7:13^a Was then that which is good made^{perfect} death unto me? God forbid.^{aorist}
subjunctive middle But sin, that it might appear^{aorist subjunctive passive} sin, working^{present}
middle/passive participle death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment
might become^{aorist subjunctive middle} exceeding sinful.^{bc}**

13a It is through a misunderstanding of the law that it seemed that something that was good (the law) was made something that was made death (sin) unto Paul. The law did not create sin, it only defined it and allowed a grounds to punish it and provided a way to escape its condemnation. The law makes sin exceedingly sinful in order to bring us to the point that we realize we are spiritually dead so that God could revive us by grace. It is necessary to recognize the sinfulness of sin. Sin is not just a mistake or a slip, it is a deliberate, high-handed attack on the holiness of God. Sin is not just sinful but is exceedingly so. The law magnifies the sinfulness of sin. Without the law to do this, men would not realize the scope of the sin problem or the sinfulness of sin. But the law came, defined sin, magnified it to the point that it shut up the sinner in his corner of spiritual death and put the sinner into the position that God could save him.

13b “Sin, like the deadly frost of the northern regions, benumbs its victim before it slays him. Man is so diseased that he fancies his disease to be health and judges healthy men to be under wild delusions. He loves the enemy which destroys him! He warms at his bosom the viper whose fangs cause his death. The most unhappy thing that can happen to a man is for him to

be sinful and to judge his sinfulness to be righteousness! The Papist advances to his altar and bows before a piece of bread—but he does not feel that he is committing idolatry—no, he believes that he is acting in a praiseworthy manner! The persecutor hounded his fellow creatures to prison and to death, but he thought he verily did God a service! You and I can see the idolatry of the Papist and the murder committed by the persecutor—but the guilty persons do not see it.”¹⁶⁸

This shows us that sin, when it appears to us, usually does not appear to be sin. We can justify anything, even sin. When we sin, we either see it as something else or the sin itself comes to us in a disguise, deceiving us into thinking that it is not really sin. A man may steal from work and then justify it that his employer underpays him or that he has to provide extra for his family. But it is sin. A man may start an adulterous affair with another woman because he has convinced himself that his wife no longer loves him. The adultery presents itself to its victim as a necessity, if not a virtue, but it is still sin. When a man sees his sin as sin and as nothing else, he is in a position to repent, beg forgiveness from God and be saved.

13c “Beware of light thoughts of sin. At the time of conversion, the conscience is so tender, that we are afraid of the slightest sin. Young converts have a holy timidity, a godly fear lest they should offend against God. But alas! very soon the fine bloom upon these first ripe fruits is removed by the rough handling of the surrounding world: the sensitive plant of young piety turns into a willow in after life, too pliant, too easily yielding. It is sadly true, that even a Christian may grow by degrees so callous, that the sin which once startled him does not alarm him in the least. By degrees men get familiar with sin. The ear in which the cannon has been booming will not notice slight sounds. At first a little sin startles us; but soon we say, “Is it not a little one?” Then there comes another, larger, and then another, until by degrees we begin to regard sin as but a little ill; and then follows an unholy presumption: “We have not fallen into open sin. True, we tripped a little, but we stood upright in the main. We may have uttered one unholy word, but as for the most of our conversation, it has been consistent.” So we palliate sin; we throw a cloak over it; we call it by dainty names. Christian, beware how thou thinkest lightly of sin. Take heed lest thou fall by little and little. Sin, a little thing? Is it not a poison? Who knows its deadliness? Sin, a little thing? Do not the little foxes spoil the grapes? Doth not the tiny coral insect build a rock which wrecks a navy? Do not little strokes fell lofty oaks? Will not continual droppings wear away stones? Sin, a little thing? It girded the Redeemer’s head with thorns, and pierced His heart! It made Him suffer anguish, bitterness, and woe. Could you weigh the least sin in the scales of eternity, you would fly from it as from a serpent, and abhor the least appearance of evil. Look upon all sin as that which crucified the Saviour, and you will see it to be “exceeding sinful.”¹⁶⁹

61. The War Within (or The Christian in Conflict) 7:14-25

The main ideas in this passage are:

1. There is no sinless perfection in this life.
2. We can live blameless but not sinless.
3. Even a mature saint like Paul struggled with his own sin nature and he never “attained” any sort of sinless perfection.
4. This struggle is the wrestling with sin and the old nature.
5. There is deliverance from this struggle and there remains a rest (Hebrews 4).

¹⁶⁸ Charles Spurgeon, “The Monster Dragged to Light”, *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, volume 19 sermon 1095.

¹⁶⁹ Charles Spurgeon, *Morning and Evening*, March 11.

6. Many people get discouraged when they don't stop sinning after a period of years and they begin to despair and to doubt their salvation as they try to attain their idea of "perfection" apart from the power of Christ for any and all victory comes from His indwelling power in our lives.
7. The experience Paul describes should not be the present spiritual state of the Christian.

Paul has moved into the Civil War of the Soul. He is between wrestling with his sin nature in Romans 6 and the spiritual victory available to all Christians in Romans 8. Both chapters are pulling at him. Though saved, the flesh still wants control of the life and to walk carnally, in a type of Christianity that is acceptable to the world. The new, divine nature wants a Christian life, communion and a walk with God. These lives are incompatible with each other and in the end, one will win. The Christian will usually live in Romans 6 or Romans 8, but not in both.

7:14^a For we know^{b-perfect} that the law is^{present} spiritual:^c but I^d am^{present} carnal,^{ef} sold^{g-perfect passive participle} under sin.^h

14a In this passage (verses 14-25), Paul is baring his very soul and that very personal struggle that he had with his own sin nature. Few men would be willing to write such a candid admission of their own personal struggle with their sin and sinful nature. Too many preachers want to paint themselves as some kind of "super saint", far more spiritual than everyone else, who has no trouble with sin or his sinful nature. To admit that they still have these struggles would be an admission of weakness that would somehow damage the personality cult that they have erected around themselves. It would hurt their image and income! But Paul wanted to be brutally honest with himself, his readers, those he ministered unto, and to God.

14b A self-evident truth that needed no defense.

14c The problem is not the law as it is spiritual and it came from God. The problems come from man's misunderstanding of the law, misapplication and misuse of the law and man's rebellion against the law.

14d Emphatic.

14e "**Carnal**" is Strong's #4559 sarkikos, similar to the Greek word for flesh, "sarx". When Paul condemns himself as being carnal, he is acting, living and thinking in the flesh, as are all of us. It is the exact opposite of being spiritual, or "in Christ".

14f "**I am carnal**" This is the root of our problem- it is our fallen Adamic natures, not the Law. The Law cannot force us to sin nor does it have any bearing on our natures. It simply defines sin and condemns of sin when violated.

From this admission, Paul is brutally honest about how he view his spiritual state. He was "carnal" despite all the churches he planted, all the souls he led to Christ, all the revelations he received from God and the fact that he was writing Scripture. If Paul, at any time in his life, would have claimed that he was without sin, he knew that he would have made a liar out of God (1 John 1:10) and the truth would not have been in him (1 John 1:8)

14g **"sold"** We are sold as a slave to a harsh taskmaster known as "sin". Sin was our master as we were sold to it and were under its domain.

14h **"sold under sin"** Sold as a slave. Sinners are slaves to sin and so is the carnal believer. Emancipation comes through spirituality, surrender and the new birth. Paul emphasizes again that the law that made him a sinner in a legal sense before God was spiritual, not evil. Paul was carnal and sinful, not the law. As a result of this proper understanding of the law, Paul learned that he was not religious but carnal and that he was not a free man as he thought so in his religious pride but was a slave, sold under sin and was under the domination of the cruelest of all taskmasters.

7:15^{abc} For that which I do^{c-present passive/middle} I allow^{present} not: for what I would^{present} that do^{b present} not; but what I hate,^{present} that^f do^{d-present} I.

15a Verses 15-24 detail the inner struggle with sin and the indwelling sin nature that Paul grappled with, that we all deal with. This is the same battle we who are saved and who desire to live for God also fight on a continual basis. Only a man with the head of a theologian but the heart of a divine will come to a proper understanding of the passage. The ones best able to comment on the passage would be those men who had attained a high degree of personal holiness in their own lives after long struggles and wrestlings with self.

Paul's struggle was between his old man of the sin nature and the new man of his divine, sinless nature. Both sides were battling for domination of Paul. Although Paul was saved, Satan, sin and the old man never give up their bid to control the heart of the believer. Salvation does not eradicate the sin nature. It merely provides it competition, with the new, divine nature, that cannot sin.

This great spiritual battle resulted in a failure on Paul's part to do the things his new nature desired to do. He wanted to serve God but his old man would always interfere. His indwelling sin nature had no intention of cooperating with Paul's desire to serve God. Although Paul said in Galatians 2:20 that he was crucified with Christ and died daily, the old man still won periodic victories over Paul. He wanted to do right but did not always do so. He wanted to avoid sin but he sometimes slipped. The winner at any one time is the nature that is stronger at that moment, the one we have fed the most, spiritually.

If the great apostle Paul underwent this struggle, then we should also expect to fight this battle in our own life. It is a good sign that we do experience such struggles as it shows us that the old man has something that is strong enough and that is enough of a threat to it to warrant a fight in the new nature. The presence of such a struggle is a sign that we are saved and that we are in possession of a divine nature through the new birth. The very presence of the inward struggle shows us that we have the dual natures, unlike the unsaved man, who possesses only the singular, fallen nature. Many Christians never experience this battle on this scale because their new nature is so weak that it cannot put up any sort of resistance to the old man and it wins every time. But the man with a healthy divine nature deliberately sets out to do that which is good and the old man fights him every step of the way.

Paul writes this passage in the present tense showing that he was in this struggle at the present time of this writing. There is only one perfect tense used in this passage, in Romans 7:18. Everything else is present tense, showing Paul was fighting these battles NOW, not in the past. He had not gotten the final victory over them at the time of this writing. Paul, even at this stage of his ministry, fought this daily, intense struggle with sin. Paul was never sinless. He never had his old man eradicated, not even at his new birth, and he was never "totally sanctified". He was totally dedicated to God and spent his life in the Gospel service and wrote two-thirds of our New Testament, but he had a daily struggle with sin. Fighting sin strengthened

Paul spiritually, more than if had no struggle at all. Fighting is exercise. You get to know your enemy much better if you are engaged in hand-to-hand combat with it. By virtue of his struggles, Paul had a much deeper understanding of both himself and sin. Christians who imagine themselves fully sanctified or who think their old natures to be eradicated never fight these battles and thus have a much weaker understanding of sin and are spiritually weaker than those who fight these inner battles.

Paul is dealing with the two natures of the believer. Every Christian has two natures, an old one inherited from Adam at birth and a new one bestowed by Christ at the new birth. In a sense, Christians are schizophrenic as we do have two natures. We have the "Jekyll-and-Hyde" complex of an indwelling monster and an angel in the same body. In the flesh, even a Christian is capable of the most hideous sins because he still has the same nature as any unsaved man has. The difference lies in the new nature which should serve as a check on the old man and can overpower it in ultimate victory.

15b Some deny the dual natures of the Christian, such as J. F. Dake, the Pentecostal commentator. Consider the following incorrect statements from his *Dake Study Bible*:

1. Commenting on Romans 7:24 "This is not a picture of a redeemed soul but of a captive of sin. Every statement in this chapter proves that this was Paul's experience while bound by sin under the law before he was freed from the law of sin and death...His testimony indicates deliverance was after the 3 days of blindness at Damascus (Acts 9:17,18). The experience must have been during those 3 days..." Naturally this is false for Paul makes no such mention of his Acts 9 experience anywhere in Romans.
2. Commenting on Romans 7:25 "Many have used these words to prove Paul, himself, was not saved from sin. This would contradict all the arguments of Romans up to this point..." No, it does no such thing, despite what Dake claimed.
3. Commenting on Romans 8:1 "This proves that the experience of Romans 7:7-24 was not Paul's at the time of the writing of Romans..."
4. Commenting on Romans 6:6, Dake identifies the "old man" as Satan rather than the old sinful, Adamic nature which still infects the Christian. "There is no such thing as an old nature other than man's own body, soul and spirit dominated by satanic powers..." Dake then contradicts himself without realizing it. The old man is the "soul and spirit" of man that is still under the control of sin, a Satanic power, exactly what we have been saying all along. Dake was obviously unfamiliar with the truth of 1 John 1:8 "if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us". Dake rejects these verses since he has an incorrect presupposition of sinless perfection after a "second blessing", which he strives to maintain, despite the clear Biblical teaching on this issue. He let his Pentecostal theological system interfere with his commentating. Dake has many other serious theological errors in his writings and in his "study Bible" which is why we cannot recommend it.

Robert Haldane, in his *An Exposition of Romans*, on page 302 summarizes the chapter thusly: "The warfare between the flesh and the spirit has greatly exercised the ingenuity of men not practically acquainted with its truth. Few are willing to believe that the best of men are so bad as they are here represented, and it is fondly imagined that the best of men are much better than this description would prove them to be. Every effort of ingenuity has accordingly been resorted to, to divert the Apostle's statements from the obvious conclusion to which they lead, and so to modify his doctrine as to make it worthy of human wisdom. But they have labored in vain. Their theories not only contradict the Apostle's doctrine, but are generally self-contradictory. Every Christian has in his own breast a commentary on the Apostle's language. If there be anything of which he is fully assured, it is that Paul has in this passage described his experience; and the more the believer advances in knowledge and holiness, the more does he loathe himself, as by nature a child of that corruption which still so closely cleaves to him. So

far is the feeling of the power of indwelling sin from being inconsistent with regeneration, that it must be experienced in proportion to the progress of sanctification. The more sensitive we are, the more do we feel pain; and the more our hearts are purified, the more painful to us will sin be. Men perceive themselves to be sinners in proportion as they have previously discovered the holiness of God and of His law."

The question arises as to whether Paul ever got the victory over himself in regard to his sin. We believe that answer to be "yes". There is a victory to be won, and such a victory can be enjoyed in this life, but its final consummation will not be until we reach glory. Romans 7:25 and chapter 8 make it clear that Paul found the victory through this crises period in his life. There is an end to the crises if we allow the Holy Spirit to bring us through it and if we submit ourselves to His workings in our lives. Every Christian goes into a crises sometime after his salvation regarding sin in his life, and what he intends to do about it. For me, I entered it in 1992 after being a Christian for 14 years. It dealt with whether I was really serious about serving God and living a genuine Christian life or if I would be content to live a carnal, low-level Christian life. What about my sin? What about my carnality? What, if anything, was I going to do about it? Who would I yield to in my life as a Christian, self or Christ? This is the crises that we all wrestle with. Too many Christians fail here, as they refuse to go into this crucible as they decide to shun a higher Christian life and a closer walk with God. They are saved and satisfied. They will live a nominal Christian life. The crises for them is short and painless. But for the Christian who has a true heart of a disciple, he will enter the crises, go into the crucible, and allow God to break the power of sin in his life. When he emerges from that crises, he will be on the road to becoming a genuine Christian who lives above the power of sin and who refuses to allow sin to reign in his life. This does not mean sinless perfection or eradication of the sin nature or a "second blessing". It is merely the breaking of the power of sin and self in the life. Misapplication of this truth will lead to Charismatic errors such as a "second blessing" or eradication of the sin nature, which are not taught in the Bible.

15c AV

ESV

LSV

15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.	15 For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.	15 For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.
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The ESV and LSV preface verse 15 with "For I do not understand my own actions." That is not to be found in the text and none of the other translations (Authorized Version and prior translations) have this. This is more commentary than translation.

15d Verse 15 is interesting in looking at the word "do", which is used 3 times by three different Greek words. The verse reads as follows: "For that which I **do** (Strong's #2716 katergazomai; do work fully, accomplish; to finish, fashion) I allow not: for what I would, that **do** (Strong's #4238 prassô; to practice, perform repeatedly or habitually, to execute, accomplish; to collect (dues), fare (personally)) I not; but what I hate, that **do** (Strong's #4160 poieô; to make or do (single action)) I." Retranslated (without attacking the reading of the Authorized Version), it would read "For that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that habitually do I not; but what I hate that do I only once." Paul successfully did not do those things which he did not want to do but only did those things (or sins) which he did not want to do occasionally. Paul had continual victory over sin in his life but he, like all of us, did suffer the occasional lapse since we are not perfect or totally sanctified.

7:16 If then I do^{present} that which I would^{present} not, I consent^{present} unto the law that it is good.^{ab}

16a The problem is not with the law but rather with us. There is not a thing wrong with the law, until and unless it is misused. If you are using the law to define sin and to establish human helplessness and sinfulness, then you will have no issue with the law. When you start trying to make it a means for justification and salvation, then the problems begin.

I may make a choice to sin, the law cannot be faulted for that because it is good, even if and when I do bad things.

16b “...it is good.” We are not good as we are sinners by birth, choice and practice. But the Law is good as it was given by a good God.

7:17 Now then it is no more I^a that do^{present middle/passive} it, but sin^b that dwelleth^{c-present} in me.^d
active participle

17a Emphatic.

17b The culprit is sin. Paul says that it is the sin nature in him that causes him to sin, not anything else in his body. The new man certainly did not desire to sin but the old nature always does. When Paul sinned, he rightfully blamed it on the old man which Paul allowed to be in control at that time.

17c “dwelleth” Sin actually takes up residence in us, and makes its home with us. Sin houses itself in our bodies as a permanent resident, not a temporary lodger.

17d This verse illustrates the dual natures of the Christian. We are regenerated in our spirit and as a Christian with a new nature, we cannot sin (1 John 3:9, **Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.**). But we live in a body of death that does nothing but sin.

7:18 For I know^{perfect} that in me (that is, ^{present} in my flesh,^a) dwelleth^{present} no good thing:^b for to will^{infinitive} is present^{present middle/passive} with me; but how to perform^{present} that which is good I find^{present} not.^c
infinitive middle/passive

18a The **flesh**, which is the same thing as the old nature, was all of sin and contained no spiritual good in it. There is nothing good, spiritual or commendable about the old man. It is totally corrupt and cannot be redeemed. It must be put to death by self-crucifixion and be replaced with the new man.

18b “no good thing” Nothing! Nothing means nothing! God makes no provision for the flesh and instead condemns it. There is nothing in the old man or in our natural sin nature that is any good or that can be used for God and it cannot contribute anything to the sanctification of the believer. We cannot sanctify our old sins or lifestyles or way of thinking and try to use them for God. So many try to do this today, especially with music. A young person gets saved. Before, he was heavily into the rock/heavy metal/hip hop (whatever) scene. After he is “saved”, he does not want to leave his music because he still enjoys it too much, so he tries to bring it over into his Christian life. He attempts to use an unholy thing for holy purposes, forgetting that the Lord

told him he cannot serve or love God and mammon at the same time. He must make a choice between the things of God and the things of the world and chances are, he will choose the world. We must condemn the flesh, crucify it, kill it, bury it, leave it buried, and instead rely upon the new man to live and serve God. Trouble always comes from trying to find some good thing in human sin nature, for nothing is there that can be sanctified.

18c In the struggle, Paul desires to do good. But with sin present, how can he? With sin obstructing his way, how can he do that which is pleasing to God? How can I grow to be a prayer warrior? How can I be faithful? How can I be a true and genuine Christian if I keep having these problems with sin? How can I live for God and please Him if I keep having such a struggle with sin and my old sinful nature? This is the struggle every Christian goes through. He wants to live right but the flesh is very strong. How do I live as a Christian if I have this old nature? How do I fight it?

7:19 For the good that I would^{present} I do^{present} not: but the evil which I would^{present} not, that I do.^{a-present}

19a The spirit and the new man is indeed willing to serve God but the flesh is weak (Matthew 26:41 "**Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.**"). Paul wants to do good but doesn't. He wants to avoid sin but doesn't.

7:20 Now if I do^{present} that I^a would^{present} not, it is no more I^a that do^{present} middle/passive it, but sin that dwelleth^{present active participle} in me.^b

20a Emphatic.

20b As in Romans 7:17, Paul blames that old Adamic nature that was not destroyed at the new birth. Although it must share Paul's body with that new, divine nature, the Adamic nature doesn't like it. It still insists upon having its way in Paul's life. When Paul sinned, it was not him, or his divine nature that did it but rather was the old Adamic nature. This does not do away with our personal responsibility and accountability of our sin as it is possible to control old Adam. If he gets control, it is our fault as we let him. We made provision for him and let him off the cross. Although it was not the divine part that sinned, the sin remained, and we still must deal with its circumstances in our life.

7:21 I find^{present} then a law,^{ab} that, when I would^{present active participle} do^{infinitive} good, evil is present^{present passive/middle} with me.^c

21a In verses 21-23, Paul discovered two laws working in him- the Law in his members (old nature) that desired Paul to sin, and the Law of God, which he delighted in. His inward man delighted in the Law of God while the outward man did not. The outward man delighted in the law of sin while the inward man did not. Every Christian undergoes this conflict every minute of his life. The unsaved man does not, since he has only one nature. The Christian's conflict is caused by the two natures that abide in him. Both are incompatible- they cannot peacefully coexist. Conflict becomes inevitable and it is a duel to the death where no quarter is asked or given by either side.

21b **“I find then a law”** An unnamed law is mentioned here that we could call The Law of the Inward Struggle. Paul, as any believer, fought between his new nature, that wanted to do right, and his old nature, that was under the domination of sin. Paul wanted to do right but he saw this opposing nature in his body that oftentimes drove him to do those things that he did not want to do and that oftentimes prevented him from doing the things he wanted to do. Evil and sin are always present with the believer, so we must learn how to deal with them.

21c AV

ESV

LSV

21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is **present** with me.

21 So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand.

21 So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand.

“present” The ESV and LSV are weaker with “evil is close at hand” instead of it being “present”.

7:22 For I delight^{a-present passive/middle} in the law of God after the inward man:^{bc}

22a Paul “consented” to the law in Romans 7:16 but here, he “delights” in it. Verse 16 is more of the old nature talking, being forced to acknowledge the law that it did not like. But the new man in verse 22 “delights” in the very same law the flesh does not like. The character of a godly man is to delight in the law of the Lord while the sinner and the carnal professor tolerates it at best.

22b If you do not delight in the law of God, then you have a serious spiritual problem. A godly man will love the law of God and seek to order his life by it and to promote it while the carnal man will hate it, chaff under it, and seek to live under some other law than God’s law.

22c AV

ESV

LSV

22 For I delight in the law of God after the **inward man**:

22 For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being,

22 For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being,

“inward man” the new, regenerate man, the spiritual man, as opposed to the flesh and the old, outward man. The ESV and LSV have “inner being”. That is no improvement over “inner man”.

7:23 But I see^{present} another law in my members, warring against^{present middle/passive} the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity^{a-present} to the law of sin^b which is^{present active participle} in my members.

23a **“bringing me into captivity”** Paul continues the military language with this phrase, as if sin captured him on the field of battle and placed him into a prisoner-of-war camp.

23b Two laws mentioned in this verse:

1. **The law of my mind**

2. **The law of sin**, also mentioned in Romans 7:25.

Neither law is described or defined by Paul, but we would assume the “law of sin” refers to the dominating power of sin in the life that can only be broken by dying to it through the power of the Holy Spirit. This “law” is something that is “served” with the flesh, or the old nature. And we also get the impression from Romans 7:25 that one serves either the law of God or the law

of sin, but not both at the same time. The new man (the redeemed nature) serves the law of God, but the old, Adamic sin nature serves the law of sin.

7:24 O wretched man that I^a am! who shall deliver^{future middle} me from the body of this death?^{bcd}

24a "That "wretched man" has been a problem to expositors. Does he represent a Christian believer, "born again" but not fully liberated? Or does he represent the unregenerated sinner? Some say the former; but if, as is usually taught, chapter vi. teaches the believer's sanctification and death to sin (verse 11, etc.), why does Paul suddenly slip back in chapter vii. to this pitiful bondage of the "wretched man"? Yet there is equal difficulty if we regard this "wretched man" as representing the unregenerated. If that is how he must be regarded, why bring him in here? Does he not rather belong to the first half of chapter iii?

I remember how a renowned old Calvinistic Methodist preacher once threw out a challenge on this seventh chapter of Romans. He had been brought up in the old Puritan school, and would have none of your "second blessing" or "sinless perfection" ideas! According to him, Romans seven was inserted to save us from inferring too much from Romans six! There was no real deliverance from the wicked old "self" in each of us! He must plague us to the bitter end! I remember how the grand old preacher quoted bits from this "wretched man" paragraph, and then triumphantly wheeled round on us with: "There, now; there's no going beyond that, is there?" Well, of course, the answer is: "Yes; it is quite easy to go beyond that: you simply go beyond it to the next chapter (viii.), where you learn that the 'wretched man' finds full deliverance!"¹⁷⁰

24b This is the heart-cry of every Christian who understands his own sinfulness and who desires to be pure and holy. Remember, Paul is saved now and has been involved in missions for years. He had received revelations from God and has done mighty signs and wonders. Yet after considering his own failures and the corruption that still lurks in his body, he does not boast on his holiness or attainments but rather "O wretched man that I am!" He was saved yet not totally sanctified. Total sanctification from sin does not occur in this life but only at death or rapture when we receive our sinless, glorified bodies.

This cry is the marrow of practical Christian theology and is the burden of the doctrine of sanctification- how shall we get the victory over our indwelling sin nature, both in a daily, moment-by-moment practical way, and overall, spiritually? The answer is in the next verse. We do not get the victory ourselves by anything we do but rather, we receive the victory through the work of Christ on the cross. The problem is becoming aware of what Christ has provided for us and successfully applying it in our lives.

24c The "**body of death**" Paul mentions is an allusion to the Roman penalty of strapping the body of the dead victim to the back of the man who murdered him. Paul, by crucifying his old man, had, in a sense, "murdered" it (or at least had tried to). Yet the old rotting corpse was not dropped at salvation or at the sanctification crises. Paul carried that stinking, rotting corpse around with him day by day, infecting him with the stench of sin. Who will unloose that body and free Paul from his sin? Christ! *When?* Not today, for we must continue to fight and strive for the victory over sin our life. Only this kind of struggle engenders to holiness. Holiness only comes to those who understand the sinfulness of their sins and who come to a full realization of its awfulness. We may drop the body of sin and death today, if we should graduate to glory or be raptured today!

170 J. Sidlow Baxter, *Explore the Book*, volume 6, page 84.

It is obvious then that regeneration does not destroy the body of death. The sanctification-crises experience does not destroy the body of sin either. Only our physical death or translation totally destroys the body of our death. What we strive for is the absolute control over it and the putting it under submission to the divine nature.

24d In Romans 6:6, our body was called the “**body of sin**”. In Romans 7:24, Paul refers to it as the “**body of this death**”.

24e “Louis XIV said to a Huguenot preacher ‘I’ve heard many great sermons and I’ve been highly pleased with them. But whenever I hear you, I go away displeased with myself.’”¹⁷¹ A good preacher disturbs his hearers into acknowledging and doing something about his sin problem.

7:25 I thank^{present} God through Jesus Christ our Lord.^a So then with the mind I^b myself serve^{present} the law of God;^c but with the flesh the law of sin.

25a “**I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord**” There it is! There is the answer! Paul found his ultimate deliverance in Christ and was able to serve God, but still not to his full satisfaction. There was still an on-going conflict. With his mind (heart), he served God, yet his old nature (flesh) served sin. We have deliverance from sin only in Christ and it is available to every Christian to live a victorious life over sin and his old nature. How few Christians take advantage of it and instead live only half-lives of defeat! Christ and Christ alone gives the spiritual rest from striving with sin and self (Hebrews 4). We stop trying to earn our own righteousness. We desire deliverance from sin and carnality. Paul found this through the work of Jesus Christ, which he will describe in the next chapter.

25b Emphatic.

25c The new man serves God with the heart, mind and will, if not with the body. The problem that every Christian struggles with is how to get the body to obey the mind. We want to do something and the body of flesh fights it for it would rather sin. The flesh serves the law of sin while the heart and mind of the Christian serves the law of God.

Moral- the Christian wants to serve God and can to a degree, but not to his full potential because the old nature is still dying a slow death and is still kicking. Every Christian has the two natures battling inside him, each trying to gain dominance. The winner will be decided by which nature he feeds most.

Spiritual Applications, Romans Chapter 7

Let’s summarize Paul’s arguments up to this point. Every Christian has two natures, the old Adamic he was born with and the new divine nature he received at the new birth. The old nature is all sinful while the new nature desires to serve God. The Adamic nature is not eradicated at the New Birth and the believer continues to struggle with it for the rest of his life. Every day is a contest between these natures, each desiring dominion over the life of the believer. The Christian who has a vision of holiness and who desires sanctification will come to realize the sinfulness of his sins

¹⁷¹ Peter Ruckman, *Ruckman Reference Bible*, page 1495.

and will see himself as vile as he continues in the struggle. Paul was undergoing this struggle between both natures as he wrote Romans. The godliest men in Church history understood the nature of the struggle and fought the good fight as they sought to overcome the power and presence of sin in their lives. This is a good fight and struggle, one that makes us loathe sin all the more and love holiness all the more. The struggle is necessary in order to attain and achieve personal holiness in the life of the believer. Without it, the Christian lapses into a dead-orthodox theologian with no heart for his doctrine. Divines understand the struggle and work it to their advantage. Instead of denying the fact of the struggle or running from it, let us embrace the challenge to gain the victory over old Adam as we seek for the perfect love to obey Christ and to avoid willful sin.

What Paul lays out as to his struggle with his own sin nature in Romans 7:

1. Sin dwelt in him, even though he delighted in God's Law
2. His will was powerless against it. He could not defeat his indwelling sin or his old sin nature. He was simply too weak to war against himself. Even a mighty apostle like Paul was no match for his old Adamic nature.
3. His condition was wretched and hopeless, from a natural viewpoint. The law could offer no hope or relief, only condemnation, as his old nature was simply too strong to attack in his own strength.
4. There only deliverance was through Christ, who had given him the victory over himself and his old nature.

"Some simpletons have said that Paul was not a converted man when he wrote the closing verses of that 7th chapter. I venture to assert that nobody but an advanced Christian, enjoying the highest degree of sanctification could ever have written it. It is not a man that is dead in sin that calls himself "wretched," because he finds sin within him; it is a man made pure by the grace of God, who, because of that very purity, feels more the comparatively lesser force of sin than he would have done when he had less grace and more sin. I believe that the nearer we get to absolute perfection, the more fit to enter the gates of heaven, the more detestable will sin become to us, and the more conflict will there be in our souls to tread out the last spark of sin. Bless God, beloved! if you feel a conflict, bless him and ask him that it may rage more terrible still, for that shall be one evidence to you that you are indeed out of all condemnation because you are struggling against the evil."¹⁷²

In reality, the only way to get victory over sin is to die to it. You can fight it every day but we will eventually fail and sin and it regains a mastery over us. But if we die to it, it cannot have anymore influence over us. This is still a difficult thing to do as we seem to experience almost daily resurrections of our death to sin! The challenge is to die and then stay dead to it, while being alive to God!

¹⁷² Charles Spurgeon.

Romans Chapter 8

Up to this point in Romans, the Holy Spirit has been mentioned only once (Romans 5:5). In this chapter, He is mentioned 19 times.

After the great doctrines of sanctification have been dealt with in chapters 5-7, Paul will now summarize the doctrines of the Christian experience in chapter 8. The Christian's position and standing are now summarized after the great works of Christ on his behalf have been expounded in chapters 5-7. We are now on the mountain peak of Romans, as chapters 1-7 have all been building up to this chapter and summation.

It has been said that "we need to get out of Romans 7 and go to Romans 8 and the Victorious Life". But there can be no victory of Romans 8 until the struggle of Romans 7 is recognized. Romans 7 naturally flows into Romans 8.

"This chapter is, like the Garden of Eden, full of all manner of delights. Here you have all necessary doctrines to feed upon and luxurious Truths of God with which to satisfy your soul. One might well have been willing to be shut up as a prisoner in paradise and one might well be content to be shut up to this one chapter and never to be allowed to preach from any other part of God's Word. If this were the case, one might find a sermon in every line— no, more than that, whole volumes might be found in a single sentence by anyone who was truly taught of God! I might say of this chapter, "All its paths drop fatness." It is, among the other chapters of the Bible, like Benjamin's meal which was five times as much as that of any of his brothers! We must not exalt one part of God's Word above another, yet, as "one star differs from another star in glory," this one seems to be a star of the first magnitude, full of the brightness of the Grace and Truth of God! It is an altogether inexhaustible mine of spiritual wealth and I invite the saints of God to dig in it and to dig in it again and again. They will find not only that it has dust of gold, but also huge nuggets which they shall not be able to carry away by reason of the weight of the treasure! I notice, in this chapter, and also in many other parts of Paul's writings."¹⁷³

Romans 8 starts with no condemnation (Romans 8:1) and ends with no separation (Romans 8:38,39).

There are several contrasting "twins" in chapter 8:

1. The flesh and the Spirit through the chapter
2. Two laws in Romans 8:2
3. Two minds, or two ways in Romans 8:5-7
4. Two spirits in Romans 8:15

¹⁷³ Charles Spurgeon, "Heirs of God", *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, volume 51, sermon 2961.

62. No Condemnation in Christ 8:1

8:1^a There is therefore now^b no^c condemnation^{defg} to them which are in Christ Jesus,^{hij} who walk^{present active participle} not after the flesh, but after the Spirit^{klmn}

1a Verses 1 and 2 are verses listed by O. Talmadge Spence in his *Quest For Christian Purity* that he lists as a “guiding verse” for that quest. This is a verse that deals with some aspect of the Christian’s growth and pursuit of God.

1b “**now**” Emphasize this present tense- *now* no condemnation, even while still in a sinning body on earth- *now* no condemnation, not later in heaven. We, at this very moment of time, are totally freed from any condemnation of the law or from our sins by the work of Christ. This is not a future blessing but a present possession that all believers enjoy right now.

1c “**no**” Emphatic in the Greek- this word occurs first in the sentence in the Greek. “Not even one, single, condemnation”.

1d “**no condemnation**” Romans 8 begins with “no condemnation” and ends in “no separation”. There once was condemnation against us while we were under the law and in our sins, but Christ’s work on the cross has eliminated it as He took our condemnation in His own body while on the tree. There was a two-fold condemnation against us:

1. Based on Adam’s transgression- sinners by nature
2. Based on our own transgression- sinners by choice

1e Satan accuses the saints of sin (Job 1,2; Zechariah 3:1; Revelation 12:10) but he cannot condemn us. He is like a prosecuting attorney in a courtroom. He can accuse and rail on the accused (us) all day, but he has no power to condemn.

1f Christ condemns our sin but He does not condemn us. Our sins cannot be saved but we can. When Christ saves us, He saves from our sin but not in our sins, nor does He make any provision for us to continue in our sins or old life.

1g There is much tribulation in Christ but no condemnation.”¹⁷⁴

1h “**in Christ Jesus**” First, a man must be born again in order to be “in Christ”. Once a man is in Christ, he then must walk not after the flesh but after the spirit to avoid condemnation. While a Christian positionally would have no condemnation because of his new birth, he could have a practical condemnation if he continues to live in a carnal fashion after he has been born again. Consider a professing Christian who still drinks, smokes, curses and buys pornography on a habitual basis. He might be saved but are you going to say there is no condemnation toward him because of his carnality? He is willingly living in sin with no immediate plans to repent. Is he living right? No. Is he pleasing God? No. Is he growing in grace and the knowledge of the truth? No. Does he risk the “**sin unto death**” of 1 John 5:16? He certainly does. Is he making his salvation shipwreck? Yes. Does he stand the threat of suffering total loss at the bema judgment? Yes. The only way to have this double-justification is to be saved (positionally justified) and then to walk in holiness (practically justified).

¹⁷⁴ Thomas Robinson, *Studies in Romans*, page 411.

This freedom from condemnation is found only in Christ, not in a church, a denomination, a theological system, by following a man or anything else. Nor is this freedom from condemnation based on our own internal "holiness" (or morality), our spirituality, our education or how well we think we keep the law. It is all bound up in Christ, not in ourselves or in religious practices.

1i **"in Christ"** One of Paul's favorite verses, used by him in all his epistles.

1j "Come, my soul, think thou of this. Believing in Jesus, thou art actually and effectually cleared from guilt; thou art led out of thy prison. Thou art no more in fetters as a bond-slave; thou art delivered now from the bondage of the law; thou art freed from sin, and canst walk at large as a freeman, they Saviour's blood has procured thy full discharge. Thou hast a right now to approach thy Father's throne. No flames of vengeance are there to scare thee now; no fiery sword; justice cannot smite the innocent. Thy disabilities are taken away: thou wast once unable to see thy Father's face: thou canst see it now. Thou couldst not speak with Him: but now thou hast access with boldness. Once there was a fear of hell upon thee; but thou hast no fear of it now, for how can there be punishment for the guiltless? He who believeth is not condemned, and cannot be punished. And more than all, the privileges thou mightst have enjoyed, if thou hadst never sinned, are thine now thou art justified. All the blessings which thou wouldst have had if thou hadst kept the law, and more, are thine, because Christ has kept it for thee. All the love and the acceptance which perfect obedience could have obtained of God, belong to thee, because Christ was perfectly obedient on thy behalf, and hath imputed all His merits to thy account, that thou mightst be exceeding rich through Him, who for thy sake became exceeding poor. Oh! How great the debt of love and gratitude thou owest to thy Saviour!"¹⁷⁵

1k Who is free from the condemnation of sin and the law?

1. Them which are in Christ Jesus
2. Those who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.

This supposes that if a man is not in Christ Jesus and does not walk in the Spirit, then he remains under condemnation. It is obvious that a sinner, who is not in Christ Jesus, is under condemnation, but what about this man who is walking in the flesh? Can a Christian be truly saved and yet walk in the flesh? If he does, is he yet under condemnation? Is this the same form of condemnation as the sinner endures? We believe that a believer may, for a season, walk in the Spirit but will not be permitted by the Heavenly Father to continue such a sin for long. God will either deal with that heart with the intent of bringing him into a normal Christian walk, else He may turn him over to the devil for the destruction of the flesh so the Spirit may be saved. Such a forsaking by God to the power of Satan or the "sin unto death" of 1 John 5 is a unique form of condemnation reserved unto Christians. It does not involve the loss of the soul but the loss of rewards and honor at the bema.

The Christian is not under eternal condemnation for his sin if he is truly born again, but he may come under temporary, earthly condemnation and suffer some of the consequences of his sin now. A man who smokes will not suffer eternal condemnation as that will not affect his salvation, but he can suffer the temporary condemnation of smoking by developing lung cancer and dying early. A Christian can be condemned by his sin without going to hell. Look at the "castaway" of 1 Corinthians 9 or the "shipwreck" of 1 Timothy 1 or the "sin unto death" of 1 John 5. All are serious but all involve Christians who, we assume were truly born again. These sins will condemn them in this life and destroy rewards at the bema seat, but that Christian would still be "saved by fire" (1 Corinthians 3:15).

¹⁷⁵ Charles Spurgeon, *Morning and Evening*, February 13.

AV**ESV****LSV**

1 *There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, **who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.**

1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

1 Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

11 The phrase **"who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit"** causes a lot of trouble to those who do not major on personal and practical holiness. This phrase is omitted in most critical text Bibles, including the Living Bible, New World Translation of the Jehovah Witnesses, Today's English Version, New American Standard Version, Revised Standard Version, Revised Version, the English Standard Version and is questioned in the Amplified New Testament (where it is put in brackets), New King James and New International Version (in the footnotes). It is not a gloss from Romans 8:4 as Ethelbert Bullinger mistakenly thinks in his *Companion Bible*, nor do "all the texts omit" as his marginal note claims (see below). It is not hard to guess why- someone doesn't want to have to live holy! Most commentaries also attack the verse. Even Charles Spurgeon, to his shame, took the bait¹⁷⁶ as he was entranced and seduced by the grossly flawed Revised Version of 1881 (the corrupt Westcott-Hort New Testament which he took a liking to during the latter years of his ministry). Few commentators will defend the integrity of the traditional text in this verse, as the Authorized Version and her kindred translations have few friends among the mainline commentators, whether they be Catholic, Protestant or Baptist. They are offended by the phrase so out it goes!

These six precious words have few friends who will defend them against the Satanic onslaught. Most liberals, modernists and New Evangelicals are very worldly and carnal and resent being told they must live a holy life (which includes the practice of that hated doctrine of separation) in order to be fully free from condemnation. Just because the phrase crosses your doctrinal system or aggravates your hatred of the doctrine of holy living is no reason to remove even one word of Scripture. We have too much respect for the doctrines of inspiration and preservation to imagine ourselves wiser than the Holy Spirit who wanted this phrase included in the Scripture.

Look at the manuscript evidence concerning the first six of the last ten words: **"Who walk not after the flesh."** In Nestle's Greek Text Apparatus, the listings against the Authorized Version reading are:

- 1- Westcott and Hort reject the reading
- 2- Nestle gives no other evidence for taking these six words out of Romans 8:1. His only evidence is because Westcott and Hort did, so he does! But what if Westcott and Hort were wrong?

The manuscript evidence for the six words are:

- 1- Textus Receptus (traditional Received Text)
2. The following uncials: Alexandrinus, Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis, Codex Athous Laurae
3. The following minuscules: 81, 629, 2127
4. The following Old Latin manuscripts: Demidovianus, Augiensis, Speculum, Bodleianus, Harleianus-Londiniensis
5. The following versions: Vulgate, Syriac Peshitta, Gothic, Armenian
6. The following Church Fathers: Victorinus, Ambrosiaster, Ephraem, Basil, Chrysostom

¹⁷⁶ Sermon #1917.

Now to the last four words: **but after the Spirit**. The evidence against the Authorized Version reading is:

- 1- Westcott and Hort rejected the reading
- 2- The Alexandrian family
- 3- The Western family
- 4- Seidelianus

The evidence for the Authorized Version reading is listed by Nestle as:

- 1- The Textus Receptus
- 2- The following uncials: Codex Sinaiticus [after at least three correctors had tampered with the text], Codex "D" [also after at least three correctors had tampered with the text] , "K" [Codex Cyprius] , "L" [Codex Regius] , "F" [Porphyrianus]

The Expositor's Greek Testament lists the following evidence against the Authorized Version reading:

- 1- Sinaiticus [after one corrector, the first one to change the text]
- 2- "B" [Vaticanus 1209]
- 3- "C" [Codex Ephraemi]
- 4- "D" [the first corrector having probably taken it out]
- 5- "F" [Codex Bezae Cantabrigiae]
- 6- Minuscule number 47
- 7- The Egyptian and Ethiopic versions
- 8- Origen
- 9- Athanasius
- 10- And all critical editions [anti-Antiochian text manuscripts]

The evidence for the Authorized Version reading [the last half of Romans 8:1], "Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" is as follows:

- 1- Sinaiticus [it is against and it is for depending on which corrector messed with the text]
- 2- Claromontanus [a corrector messed with the verse]
- 3- Codex Cyprius
- 4- Codex Porphyrianus
- 5- The following minuscules: 33, 88, 104, 181, 326, 330, 451, 614, 630, 1241, 1877, 1962, 1984, 1985, 2492, 2495
- 6- The majority of Byzantine manuscripts
- 7- The majority of lectionaries [thousands of them]
- 8- Ardmachanus
- 9- Sangermanensis [some doubt to the reading because of the bad condition of this MS]
- 10- The Harclean Syriac
- 11- Theodoret
- 12- Pseudo-Oecumenius
- 13- Theophylact
- 14- Chrysostom

1m The critical text versions leave the second appearance of this phrase in Romans 8:4 alone, for some odd reason. If they attacked it in Romans 8:1, then why did they leave it alone in Romans 8:4? Nothing is gained by removing these words and we are on very safe ground to retain them in our English text.

1n We notice the conflict between the flesh (the old nature) and the spirit (the new nature). There is no fellowship between the two for they are polar opposites. Any attempt to merge them or to reconcile them is doomed to failure. You are either in the flesh or in the spirit.

63. The Law of the Spirit of Life 8:2

8:2^a For the law of the Spirit of life^b in Christ Jesus hath made me^c free^{de-aorist} from the law of sin and death.

2a Two laws are mentioned here, the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ and the Law of Sin and Death. What are these laws?

1. **Law of the Spirit of Life** would be bound up in salvation by faith and grace apart from the works of the Law. Justification by faith alone. Conformity to this law results in full and free justification.
2. Those who are not covered by the Law of the Spirit of Life are under the authority of the **Law of Sin and Death**. If a man has not justification according to the Law of the Spirit of Life, he has no justification at all and will die in his sins and will experience the eternal second death in the Lake of Fire. Every man is under one (but not both!) laws.

God operates in a very legal manner, according to law, order and design. He has established laws in regard to justification. Justification can only be obtained lawfully. Trying to earn justification is unlawful and illegal and does not work. If a man wants to be justified, he must do it according to the Law of the Spirit of Life and accept justification by faith.

We are all born under the domain and jurisdiction of the "law of sin and death". But there is a higher law from a Higher Lawgiver, the Law of the Spirit of Life. Just as federal law is higher than state law, the Law of the Spirit of Life is higher than the Law of Sin and Death. The issue is how do we transfer ourselves from the domain of one law to the other? By changing citizenship! An American who becomes a Canadian citizen is no longer subject to American law as he is no longer an American citizen. When we become a citizen of heaven through the new birth, we become subject to the laws of our new country and our new King and are no longer answerable to the laws of our old country of this world and its god, Satan.

2b The Coverdale Bible has this as "the Spirit that brings life".

2c AV

ESV

LSV

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.	2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.	2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.
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The ESV and LSV have "you" instead of "me" as in all the traditional versions.

2d "**made me free**" Nothing else could do this. The law, works, Jewish rituals, nothing could set Paul (or anyone else) free from sin and death.

2e "**Hath made me free**" a man can be saved and know it. Paul knew that he had been delivered from condemnation. Salvation is a matter which can be definitely felt by those who possess it.

64. The Weakness of the Law 8:3,4

8:3 For what the law could not do,^a in that it was weak^{imperfect} through the flesh, God sending^{aorist active participle} his own Son^b in the likeness of sinful flesh,^c and for sin, condemned^{aorist} sin in the flesh:^{de}

3a **"what the law could not do"** The law could not bring justification not because it was impotent to do so but because of the weakness of our flesh. The problem was not with the law but was with us. There was simply no way we could fulfill the law in our sinful flesh. Christ was able to because He had no sin. What the law could not do, Christ did through His atonement work on the cross.

3b **"God sending His own Son"** In the incarnation through the virgin birth. God did not send an archangel, for this task was so important, it could be entrusted to no one but the very Son of God Himself. Besides, what does an angel know sin, corruption, suffering? Angels are not men and so cannot die for man. It takes a man to redeem man, so Christ became the Man Christ Jesus to pay for our redemption.

3c **"The likeness of sinful flesh"** has been a proof-text for Gnosticism in denying the real humanity of Christ. They say He just appeared to be a material man but was really all spirit. They simply translated the verse according to their own doctrine. Christ was every bit a man as any other man. He looked exactly like a normal man, except for the fact that there was no sin in that flesh. You'd never know it by simply looking at him for there was nothing physically remarkable about Him. He looked like a sinner but under that human exterior was the sinless Son of God.

We see an example of God using something that appeared to be the problem as the solution. In Numbers 21, God used a brazen serpent, which resembled the literal serpents that God had sent among the complaining Jews. The cure resembled the problem. Here, Christ resembled sinful flesh although His flesh was not sinful. He was fully human but only had the appearance of sinful flesh. His death then resembled the problem, a man who resembled human flesh dying for men who had sinful flesh.

3d Christ **"condemned sin in the flesh"** on the cross. He had fulfilled the law in His flesh and took its demands off of us through His substitutionary death for us. A man was finally able to keep that law after 1500 years of failure. Christ had thus conquered sin by His sinless life and broke its stranglehold upon the human race.

When sin strung Christ in death, it actually destroyed itself. Like a bee that dies after losing his stinger, sin also dies when it lost its stinger after stinging Christ.

3e The Coverdale Bible moves the last part of this verse to verse 4.

8:4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled^{aorist subjunctive passive} in us,^a who walk^{present active participle} not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.^b

4a **"fulfilled in us"** This act of Christ and resulting benefits is for those who now walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Technically, backslidden and carnal believers also have these benefits in a positional sense, but they do not enjoy them nor do they benefit by them since they walk after the Spirit. It is like having a million dollars in the bank yet eating in soup kitchens every day. Many Christians do not take advantage of the victory and provisions given them by

Christ. They are millionaires yet live like paupers. They have the power made available to them to live like Christians instead of carnal ones that they are.

4b **“after the Spirit”** This phrase is repeated from Romans 8:1. The righteousness of the law in producing holy living can only be fulfilled by those who walk in the Spirit and not by those who walk in the flesh. Carnality does not produce righteousness and vice-versa. The righteousness of Christ has enough trouble being fulfilled in those who live a Spirit-filled life. How then could it possibly be fulfilled by those who walk carnally?

65. Spiritually or Carnally Minded? 8:5-7

8:5^a For they that are^{present active participle} after the flesh^b do mind^{present} the things of the flesh;^{cd} but they that are after the Spirit^b the things of the Spirit.^e

5a As Romans 7 was dominated by “I”, “me” and “my”, Romans 8 is dominated by the Holy Spirit.

5b What you are determines what you do. What is in your heart also determines who or what you will follow. If you are Spirit-filled, it will manifest itself in your life. A carnal-hearted man will produce a carnal walk. A spiritually-minded man will produce a spiritual walk with God. The root in the heart produces and determines the fruit of the actions and attitudes. A carnal man cannot walk in the Spirit and a Spirit-filled man won't.

5c **“do mind the things of the flesh”** The Geneva Bible is stronger in using “savor the things of the flesh”, which is probably a better reading, since those in the flesh do indeed love and indulge in the things of the flesh, just as those in the Spirit do indulge in and love the things of the Spirit.

5d Five things that will never happen to the flesh:

1. Its nature cannot be changed
2. It cannot be reformed, only condemned and crucified
3. It can never be conquered or tamed, as it is too strong for human will
4. It cannot be improved
5. It cannot be reconciled to God

5e The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles use “ghostly minded” for “spiritually minded” at the end of the verse.

8:6^a For to be carnally minded^b is death; but to be spiritually minded^c is life and peace.^{de}

6a This is a verse listed by O. Talmadge Spence in his *Quest For Christian Purity* that he lists as a “guiding verse” for that quest. This is a verse that deals with some aspect of the Christian's growth and pursuit of God.

6b **“carnally minded”** A mind of the flesh, fleshly-minded, a mind that is dominated by the flesh instead of the Spirit.

Can a Christian be carnally minded? Unfortunately, it would appear so. If you don't believe it, visit any church at random on Sunday morning and you'll see pew after pew of

backslidden believers. Living below your privileges produces hate, worry, worldliness and similar sinful attitudes. A carnally-minded Christian is slowly killing himself, having his spiritual life slowly sapped away until his mind is dead although saved. When this "Christian" hits the judgment seat, he'll be saved as though by fire. He may be saved but what kind of salvation is this? What kind of a Christian life is this? He is not enjoying his justification. But to be spiritually-minded results in just the opposite- life and peace. Of course, he is not really a Christian although he may profess salvation. A Christian is a disciple, a "Christ-one" and such a follower of Christ would not live carnally. This carnally-minded Christian may be saved (which in itself is debatable) but he has no claim to the title "Christian" until he starts living like one.

Of course, the primary application of the carnally-minded man would be that of an unsaved man. He cares nothing for the things of this world and is on the fast track toward the pit. He is not happy nor satisfied, regardless of what he may try to tell you. Woe to the professing Christian who has this same mind! We must really wonder if a man can be truly be born again and be carnally minded. If he were really born again and understood what that involved, his love for Christ would be strong enough to deliver him carnality and deliver him unto the normal Christian life of the spirit-filled walk.

6c **"spiritually minded"** Just the opposite- a mind dominated by the Holy Spirit. There are only these two options- spiritually-minded and carnally-minded. There is no other alternative. At any given time, you are one or the other. And you are one or the other- you cannot be both minded at once, nor can you be 30% spiritual and 70% carnally at any one time. You either are or you aren't, either 100% of one mind or not at all.

6d AV

ESV

LSV

6 For to be carnally minded <i>is</i> death; but to be spiritually minded <i>is</i> life and peace.	6 For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.	6 For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.
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The ESV and LSV are overly wordy and awkward here. Their readings are very inferior to the traditional translations.

6e "Flesh cares for flesh. The man who is all body cares only for the body. The man, whose mind is under subjection to his body, minds "the things of the flesh." Where the Holy Ghost is Supreme where the spiritual world has become predominant over the heart and life. There, men live for something nobler than the worldly man's trinity, "What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" The carnal life is only becoming to a beast, or a bird, or an insect. But when a man cares for his immortal spirit, and lives for divine and spiritual things, he has attained to the life that is life indeed."¹⁷⁷

8:7 Because the carnal mind^a is enmity^b against God:^c for it is not subject^{present} ^{passive} to the law of God, neither indeed can be^{cd-present middle}

7a The **"carnal mind"** is one that thinks only of the flesh, never the spirit. It dwells only upon the appetites and lusts of the body and never takes any thought for the soul or for the world to come. It also has no time to consider God or heavenly things, since it is totally wrapped up in things of this earth alone.

¹⁷⁷ Charles Spurgeon.

7b **“enmity”** is an active opposition against something, a very lively hatred that results in some form of action against the object hated.

7c The Geneva Bible has a very odd rendering of “the wisdom of the flesh...” which none of the other translations have.

7d A sinner will not submit to the authority of God in his life. God commands that man to repent (Acts 17:30) but the sinner thinks nothing of it. Don't even bother speaking of holiness, prayer or the Bible to such a one. But what of the carnal believer? He is as disobedient for he refuses to confess and forsake his sin and to cease his backslidings by returning to the Lord who bought him. As long as anyone's mind is fixed on carnality, the law of God will not move him.

The flesh is self-centered, not God-centered. It is concerned with its own satisfaction. It doesn't seek God's glory. The flesh has only one law: Me first; you next. That attitude can't be saved, it can only be condemned and crucified. You can't save the flesh (or the old nature), nor can it be improved.

66. The Commendation of the Life of the Spirit 8:8

8:8 So then they that are^{present active participle} **in the flesh**^a **cannot**^{present middle} **please**^{aorist}
^{infinitive}**God.**^{bcd}

8a **“in the flesh”** is a life lived in the world, under the domain of sin, apart from the presence of God without regard for His Word. It is a life spent on self, to fulfill the lusts of the flesh, without any consideration of the glory of God. Its end is the lake of fire.

8b Sinners cannot please the Lord. Even when they go about to do their daily toils is a displeasure to God (Proverbs 21:4). The sinner is under the constant judgment of God until he repents. Even those religious things he will do only serve to anger God more. The carnal Christian also displeases his Lord as he continues in his worldliness after professing salvation. To please God, one must be both in Christ and in the Spirit.

Here is the master sin of our generation- carnality! The Church is carnal by choice today. The Church believes that the only way to evangelize our current carnal generation is to use carnal methods and means. They do not believe Biblical or spiritual means can be used successfully to evangelize the lost, as if the Bible was no longer relevant to our age. This explains the widespread use and popularity of Christian Contemporary Music, Southern Gospel Music, modern Bible versions, the lowering of standards and the “seeker sensitive movement”. Everything on Trinity Broadcasting Network or Daystar of The Church Channel is geared to appeal to the flesh. They can attract quite a crowd, but it will be a carnal crowd since carnal “bait” was used to attract them. You cannot attract spiritual people using carnal means. You cannot build a spiritual church using carnal methods. These carnal churches and ministries cannot please God because they are based on carnal methods and philosophies. Spiritual churches and ministries may be much smaller and be much more humble in their public appearance but they have the blessing of God and are able to please God because they are in the Spirit.

8c Thomas Manton lists some reasons why the natural man cannot please God:

1. **There is a defect in their state**, they are not renewed and reconciled to God by Christ, and therefore God may justly say; Malachi 1:10, 'I have no pleasure in you, neither will I accept an offering at your hands.' They live in their sins, and therefore he

may justly abhor and reject all their services; they live in enmity to him, and in neglect of his grace, and will not sue out their atonement

2. **There is a defect in the root of these actions.** They do not come from faith working by love, which is the true principle of all obedience, Galatians 5:6. Without love to God in Christ, we want the soul and life of every duty. Obedience is love breaking out into its perfect act: 1 John 2:5, 'If we keep his word, herein is love perfected.'

3. **There is a defect in the manner.** They do not serve God with that sincerity, reverence, seriousness, and willingness, which the work calleth for; they show love to him with their lips, when their hearts are far from him, Matthew 15:8; there is an habitual aversion, whilst they seem to show love to him. All their duties are but as flowers strewn upon a dunghill.

4. **There is a defect in the end.** They do not regard God's glory in their most commendable actions; they have either a natural aim, as when they are frightened into a little religiousness of worship in their extremities: Hosea 7:14, 'They howl upon their beds for corn and wine.' And then they are like ice in thawing weather, soft at top, and hard at bottom. Or a carnal aim, out of bravery and vain glory, Matthew 8:2. Or a legal aim, when they seem very devout, to quiet conscience, or to satisfy God for their sins, by their external duties: Micah 6:6-8, 'Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, and calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?' But Solomon telleth us, Proverbs 21:27, 'The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord,' much more when he bringeth it with an evil mind. At best it is an abomination, much more when it is to buy an indulgence in some licentious practice, by performing some duties requiring a sin-offering, not a thank-offering. But this cannot please God, so as to obtain an eternal reward. God temporarily rewardeth moral obedience, to keep up the government of the world; as Pagan Rome while it excelled in virtue, God gave it a great empire and large dominion, And Ahab's going softly and mourning, was recompensed with a suspension of temporal judgments: 1 Kings 21:29, 'Because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days.' Again, there is a difference between a wicked man going on in his wickedness, and a natural man returning to God. When wicked men pray to God to prosper them in their wickedness, as Balaam's altars were made; or to beg pardon while they go on in their sins; so 'the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord,' Proverbs 15:8. Namely, as they rest in external performances, and think by their prayers or some other good duties to put by the great duties of faith, repentance, and new obedience, so these prayers and good things are abominable; but in sinners returning to God, and using the means, and expressing their desires of grace, though but with a natural fervency, and with some common help of the Spirit, though the action doth not deserve acceptance with God, and the person is not in such an estate that God hath made an express promise to him that he will accept him, yet he hath to do with a good God, who doth not refuse the cry of his creatures in their extremities, and it is a thousand to one, but he will speed. The carnal man is to act these abilities, and common grace he hath, that God may give more."¹⁷⁸

8d God can't please these sinners as they want to live in sin and God condemns them for it. They dislike His holiness, His Bible, His Gospel, His (genuine) preachers, and the way the Bible is preached (if it is preached properly). That is why a mediator between God and man is needed

if man and God are to be reconciled, and that Mediator is Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:5 **For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.**).¹⁷⁹

67. The Impartation of the Life of the Spirit 8:9

8:9 But ye^a are^{present} not in the flesh,^b but in the Spirit,^c if so be that the Spirit of God dwell^{present} in you. Now if any man have^{present} not the Spirit of Christ, he^a is^{present} none of his.^d

9a Emphatic.

9b At least you shouldn't be, if you are saved!

9c **"in the Spirit"** Christians are not in the flesh, or at least are not supposed to be. You are one or the other- in the flesh or in the spirit. You cannot be in two locations at the same time. We again cast a weary eye to the carnal, worldly professing Christian to wonder if he is really born again. He may claim to be but he and God will hammer that out. We must separate from such carnal professors as an open rebuke to their sinful lifestyle and not tolerate their wet-blanket effect upon our churches. Either get right or get out. If they refuse to conform to the image of Christ, let them find a New Evangelical or Charismatic church where they will feel comfortable. These have no place in Remnant churches. Our desire for purity is too strong to tolerate carnality.

9d The second part of this verse is an important one doctrinally in regards to the Spirit of Christ, which must be another title for the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God dwells in us or else that man is not a Christian. Every Christian enjoys the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, regardless of the spiritual maturity of that Christian. If a man does not have the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, he is not saved. Such truth refutes several errors, especially in the Pentecostal and Charismatic camps. This refutes the Charismatic teaching of a "second blessing"- being saved and then, later, receiving the Holy Spirit (being baptized with the Holy Spirit). They teach that a man accepts Christ but does not receive the Holy Spirit at conversion. He must earn his own "baptism of the Holy Spirit" where he receives the Spirit. In such theological systems, it would be possible to be saved but not have the Holy Spirit. But not according to Paul.

The confusion may be between a conversion experience and a crises experience. Christians, at some point in their life, reach the level of spiritual puberty when they must make an "adult" decision. For the years of their spiritual babyhood, they must decide what they want to do with the rest of their Christian life. Will I serve God or self? Will fulfilling the will of God in my life be all important or will I serve God when I have time to? Will I follow after holiness or live my own way? Christians who come out of this crises will develop into Spirit-filled Christians who are totally sold out. Charismatics confuse this with receiving the Holy Spirit but such is not the case. For these Christians, they simply have reached a point where the Holy Spirit has become all-important in their life. They have gone from living a nominal Christian life to living a normal one. They had the Holy Spirit before the crises, now He is simply more real in their life and He controls them more fully than He did before. Even a few non-Pentecostal Fundamentalists, like R. A. Torrey, D. L. Moody and John R. Rice (who followed such men almost to the letter in these issues because "they were great soulwinners") held to this "second blessing" of being endowed with the Holy Spirit at specific times for soul-winning power. They confused the baptism of the Holy Spirit with power for soul winning, which of course it is not. We do need Holy Spirit

¹⁷⁹ Never Mary! She is never referred to as any sort of mediator.

power to do any work for Christ but we do not receive any re-baptisms whenever we witness to someone. They unsuccessfully attempted to mix Bible truth with Pentecostal error and came out with this doctrine which fed the hyper-evangelism errors promoted by Rice and those who followed his teachings and the *Sword of the Lord*.

Every Christian (even the carnal ones) have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12) at the moment of their salvation. There is no (nor is there a need of) a "second baptism". We all receive the Holy Spirit at conversion, never to lose Him. We may grieve Him or quench Him but we never lose Him. It is clear that in order to be a Christian, you must have been baptized with the Holy Spirit at salvation and have the Holy Spirit indwelling you. If the Holy Spirit is not in you then you are not saved. To teach that one can be a Christian but has not been baptized with the Holy Spirit or that the Holy Spirit does not indwell some Christians is a Pentecostal heresy that we dealt with above. All Christians, who have been truly born again, have been baptized by the Holy Spirit at salvation and all Christians have the Holy Spirit indwelling them, although this certainly does not mean that all Christians are currently filled with the Spirit or are living a Spirit-filled life. Such a spiritual state has nothing to do with salvation but rather with sanctification.

68. The Foundation of the Life in the Spirit 8:10

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

10a If, or even since, Christ is in you (simply another way to describe the indwelling of the Holy Spirit which was a result of the new birth experience), you are dead (Romans 6) to sin but alive unto Christ. You cannot have Christ in you and still be alive to sin. Such a situation simply cannot be allowed. Either the old nature is alive or the new nature is alive. One is dead and the other is alive. They both cannot be alive at the same time. When one revives, the other must die for they cannot coexist.

10b AV

ESV

LSV

10 And if Christ <i>be</i> in you, the body <i>is</i> dead because of sin; but the Spirit <i>is</i> life because of righteousness.	10 But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.	10 But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.
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The ESV and LSV do not offer a good rendering of the first part of verse 10. It is clunky as is most of their handling of the verses in chapter 8 and offers no improvement at over the traditional translations.

69. The Culmination of the Life in the Spirit 8:11

8:11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up^{aorist active participle} Jesus^a from the dead.^b dwell^{present} in you, he that raised up^{aorist active participle} Christ^c from the dead shall also quicken^{future} your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth^{present active participle} in you.^d

11a **"Jesus"** "The only other place this use of the Lord's single name alone in Romans is in Romans 3:26. The name 'Jesus' was Christ's human name. Paul wants to call attention to the

fact that Jesus was once in the place of weakness, but God raised Him from the dead by the Spirit."¹⁸⁰

11b Practically speaking, how do we have the "**Spirit of him that raised up Jesus**" dwell in us? This is done by mortifying the deeds of the body. This is voluntary action that comes first by a desire for the Spirit to rule and not the body. This quickening of the Spirit and our bodies is done only by the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus and not by the Law.

11c AV

ESV

LSV

11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up **Christ** from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

"**Christ**" The ESV and LSV have "Christ Jesus".

11d Doctrinally and prophetically, this is not a reference to any quickening of our current sinful bodies or of any type of sinless perfection in this life. The flesh is hopelessly incurable and God makes no effort to restore it. He will help us to live a victorious life over that flesh as long as we are dwelling in it but the flesh itself is under condemnation. We need new glorified bodies made possible by the new birth which we will receive at the first resurrection of the rapture. Notice the context with the resurrection. Our mortal bodies (bodies of sin, death, corruption and weakness) shall be quickened (made alive) at the rapture when we shall receive our new glorified bodies.

70. The Obligation of the Life in the Spirit 8:12,13

8:12 Therefore, brethren, we are^{present} debtors,^a not to the flesh, to live^{infinitive} after the flesh.^{bcd}

12a See also Romans 1:14.

12b Since we have been delivered from the demands of the law by the death of Christ, our obligations to it have ended. We did die to the law when we accepted Christ and as we have stated in the last chapter, there are no obligations on a dead man. Our debt now is to the Spirit which delivered us from the power of the law and it is to the Spirit we must live. The Spirit redeemed us and set us free from the law. What debt then do we have to something we have been delivered from? What debt do we owe the old nature? We already gave it years of hard service before our salvation, so it really can expect no additional service from us. We owe the flesh nothing as it gave us nothing but death and hell.

12c "We are debtors *to the past*. Methinks I see the fathers at their midnight lamps, the ancient saints in their much frequented closets, the thrice brave preachers in their pulpits denouncing error and the faithful pastors reproving wrong. To such who have preceded us we owe the purity of the Church and to them we are debtors. Methinks I see the martyrs and confessors rising

¹⁸⁰ John Phillips, *Exploring Romans*, page 127.

from their tombs—I mark their hands still stained with blood and their bodies scarred with the wounds of persecution. They tell me that they of old maintained the Truth and preached it in the midst of fire and sword—that they bore death in defense of the cause of God that they might hand down His holy Word inviolate to us! I look on them and see among their glorious ranks some whose names are celebrated in every Christian land as the bold “lions of God,” the immovable pillars of Truth. I see men of whom the world was not worthy, whose praise is in all the Churches and who are now nearest the eternal throne. And as I look on them and they on me, I turn to you all and say, “Brethren, we are debtors.”

We are debtors to the men who crossed the sea and laughed at the fury of the storm, who risked the journeying and the weariness and all the various perils to which they were exposed, by reason of robbers and false brethren. We are debtors to each stake at Smithfield.

We are debtors to the sacred ashes of the thousands who have there followed Jesus even unto death.

We are debtors to the headless bodies of those who were beheaded for Christ Jesus.

We are debtors to those who dared the lions in the amphitheater and fought with wild beasts at Ephesus. We are debtors to the massacred thousands at the hands of the bloody Church of Rome and the murdered myriads of her pagan predecessors. We are debtors to them all.

Remember the bloody day of St. Bartholomew, the valleys of Piedmont and the mountains of Switzerland. Let the sacred mounds of our fathers’ sepulchers speak to us. Is not this Bible opened and read by us all the gift of their self-denying faithfulness? Is not the free air we breathe the purchase of their death? Did not they, by bitter suffering, achieve our liberty for us? And are we not debtors to them? Shall we not, in some degree, repay the immense debt of our obligation by seeking to make the future also debtors to *us*, that our descendants may look back and acknowledge that they owe us thanks for preserving the Scriptures, for maintaining liberty, for glorifying God? Brethren, we are debtors to the past.”¹⁸¹

We can add to this in saying that we are also debtors to the present age, as we are charged to stand fast in the faith in a wicked and compromised day. Many around us are falling away. Churches are softening up. They are changing their Bible versions and their music. They are adjusting their standards and their presentations of the gospel to accommodate a wicked and shallow age, in a vain attempt to lure in carnal teenagers with pizza and rock concerts. The old warhorse of the Church, that Authorized Version, is much despised today but we have a present duty to the men who gave us such a book, the Wycliffes, the Tyndales, the translators of the Geneva Bible and the men who worked on our Authorized Version. What of the men who took that same traditional Greek text and translated it into other languages? They also suffered greatly. Do we not have a present duty to their memory? We must stand fast and faithful in this day, to let this generation know that there is still a remnant in the earth that has not gone over to contemporary Christianity and modern thought. After all, who has suffered anything for the English “Standard” Version?¹⁸² What battles has the New International Version won? These modern versions are simply too young to have accomplished anything and are too weak and contemporary to have won any spiritual battles.

We also have a duty to generations yet unborn. We must think of our children and grandchildren, to leave them a godly and faithful legacy. May they bless us as we blessed our fathers. We must show them how to stand in bad days so they will be able to stand in theirs. We cannot expect future generations to be valiant if we have fainted in the day of our adversity. We will sow, they will reap, but what sort of crop are we planting for them to harvest?

181 Charles Spurgeon, “The Christian- A Debtor”, *New Park Street Pulpit*, volume 2, sermon 96.

182 Known by Bible believers as the “English “Substandard” Version. It really is a “substandard version as it is nothing more than a re-hatched Revised Standard Version.

But we are not debtors to our old, sin nature. What do we owe it? It brought us nothing but misery and woe. It would have sent us to hell if God hadn't saved us. Once you are saved, you start a new life and those old obligations are settled.

12d The Coverdale Bible pushes the last half of this verse to verse 13.

8:13 For if ye live^{present subjunctive} after the flesh, ye shall^{present} die:^{a-infinitive} but if ye through the Spirit do mortify^{bc-present} the deeds of the body, ye shall live.^{def-future middle}

13a **"live after the flesh ye shall die"** This is one of the laws of the Bible- living after sin and the flesh leads to spiritual death. Sinners live after the flesh as they have no desire for the Spirit so they must die both physically and spiritually. What about a carnal saint, a man like Lot? Does he die? If he does, it is not in the same manner as the sinner. The saint will not see the second death. But if a professor who may be saved lives after the flesh, he will develop no spiritual life within him. He is spiritually alive- but barely, as on life support and comatose. The only way to take firm hold on spiritual life and enjoy it is to put to death the deeds of the flesh through the Spirit.

The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles are a bit stronger with "ye must die".

13b **"Mortify"** means "put to death". It is up to us to put to death our own old natures. There must be a desire and an effort to do so. It won't die on its own but will continue to kick. God gives us the weapons we need for victory and mastery over the flesh, but it is up to us to use them. God will not kill it for us but we must go and possess the good land of holiness ourselves, with full confidence of victory given us.

13c It is through the Spirit that we must mortify the deeds of the flesh for we cannot do it in our own power. Many have tried and failed. Monks of the early church would fast for extended periods and subject their bodies to the most horrible rites usually reserved for torture chambers, in a desperate but sincere attempt to kill their sinful natures. It was mistakenly believed that this would produce holiness. It didn't work because the most important ingredient was missing- the Spirit! Mortification of the body must first be done spiritually. Once the proper spiritual frame of mind has been achieved, mortifying the physical will become that much easier.

This "mortification" of the flesh of the early church and Middle Ages led to the clerical celibacy of the Church of Rome. It was taught that even the natural drives of the flesh (such as marriage) was sinful and the only way to deal with it was by celibacy. Some went as far as to castrate themselves (like the "church father" Origen. That was supposed to make him extra-holy but it only strengthened him in his apostasy). This is one reason why there was (and is) so much sexual abuse in the Church of Rome. You can't just as men and women to "turn it off" without any outlet. If the priests weren't abusing children, then they were involved in homosexuality. There were many instances of priests and nuns "shacking up" and then aborting and killing the babies that were born. But this does not explain why there was so much immorality among Protestant and Baptist churches that did not have such restrictions and who preachers were allowed to marry. That can be explained by the indwelling "old nature" causing havoc more than misguided ideas of what produces holiness in the life.

13d The way to spiritual life is through death. We die to sin and the flesh. We die to this world system and philosophy. By that death,¹⁸³ it makes it possible for us to live unto God and unto righteousness. We cannot live to both at the same time for it is impossible. If we are alive to

¹⁸³ Paul would liken it to crucifixion in Galatians 2:20.

sin, we will be death to righteousness. If we are alive to God we will be dead to sin. The reason why Christians have as much trouble with the flesh as they do is because we are still too much alive unto the flesh and the flesh is not dead. It may very well be in the process of dying but it won't hurry up and die. Crucifixion is a slow, lingering, agonizing death. Literally, it would take victims sometimes three days to die. Spiritually, it may take 50, 60, 70 years or more for the flesh to die, but even then, it will not fully and finally die until the day of our physical death or rapture. But as the flesh dies, it should get progressively weaker, which means the power of sin should

13e "Shall a dying body, then, be my master? Shall the appetite for eating and drinking, or anything else that comes of the flesh, dominate my spirit? God forbid!"¹⁸⁴

13f "Another excess that arose from the private, Catholic misinterpretation of this passage was the famous "flagpole" sitters of the "early" church. The most famous of these was Simon Stylites of Syria. He consecutively sat on poles of twelve feet high, fifteen feet high, and twenty feet high. The idea was that the more he deprived himself, the more he grew in grace, and the more he grew in grace, the closer he got to Heaven.

The last pole he set up was fifty feet high with a three-foot-square platform on top of it. He stayed up on the platform for twenty years. He ate up there, he slept up there, and, I might add, he defecated up there. The only time he ever got a bath was when it rained. He was up there in all kinds of weather doing penance and bemoaning his sins and trying to atone for them. After twenty years, somebody climbed that pole and found him dead. He was covered with matted hair, ulcers, maggots, and flies all over his body.

That old boy was a professing Christian. He would preach repentance to everybody who came around. He believed in Christ, the Bible, the crucifixion—he believed it all! He just never had "the joy, joy, joy, joy down in his heart."

By all accounts, you would have to admit that old Simon was one of the holiest men ever to live. But he was just as crazy as a coot. Paul went to where the people were: down at the river, into the marketplace, in the schools and synagogues, from house to house.

Some monks, like Pacimeus and St. Anthony, tied heavy chains to all parts of their bodies and dragged them around. Others wore a gunnysack all year round. Those fellows were called "Anchorites." All of that ascetic stuff originated in Egypt."¹⁸⁵

71. The Sons of God 8:14-17

8:14 For as many as are led^{bcdefg} ^{present passive} by the Spirit of God, they^a are^{present} the sons of God.

14a The hardest thing to discern is that we are really being led of God. Everyone claims that, even to justify their sin. "Well, God led me to commit adultery". That is nonsense. The Spirit will never lead you to sin, but He will always lead you to holiness. The hard thing is to discern whether we are being led of the spirit or being led of the devil. The devil can be so Christ-like sometimes in his deceptions that it can be difficult to tell at times. How many times has a pastor gone into a huge and expensive building program, claiming that "the Lord led him"? He then does into debt and later has to declare bankruptcy. But he will claim the whole time that the "Lord led him". What we do many times is use the Holy Spirit and His supposed "leading" as a scapegoat for what we want to do. We do it and when it fails, we blame Him.

¹⁸⁴ Charles Spurgeon.

¹⁸⁵ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on Romans*, page 291.

14b Sonship of God involves the requirement to be led by the Spirit. God does not lead the unsaved nor does He lead the carnal believer. No answers to prayer, no fellowship, nothing of any spiritual value. But can a carnal believer be a son of God? If He is born again, then he is a son of God and thus must be led by the Spirit. We again must question the validity of a professing carnal believer's salvation. He cannot be a son of God unless he is led by the Spirit. If a professor is so backslidden and carnal that the Spirit is not leading him, can he rightly be called a son? A believer who is living carnally is not glorifying the family name of his adoptive Father and he not is he acting as His son. Sons are to reflect the image of their fathers in their speech and walk. The carnal man is reflecting Satan more than the Father. Does he lose sonship? Not if he is truly born again. If he should be saved, he is again living below his privileges and status and is not glorifying his Father. The Lord would not allow such a situation to continue long.

Remember, the Lord said **"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me"** in John 10:27.

14c We would conclude that the following of the Spirit is a habitual thing. The condemnations associated with not following the Spirit must also be habitual. We are talking about the Christian who occasionally backslides for we all do that in varying lengths of time. We talk of a professor who never follows the Spirit and who always lives according to the flesh. Look for the fruit! Any fruit at all, no matter how small? If a man is born again, there will be some growth, even if it is small or difficult to find. The professor will have no growth at all since he does not have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. But every true believer will produce some degree of fruit. If a person as powerful as the third member of the Godhead took up residence in our hearts, how could there not be any fruit produced at all?

14d God leads through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit but it is up to the believer to follow. God leads- He does not drive. We follow like a blind man follows a guide or as an obedient soldier follows a general. God leads us because we are His sheep and sheep follow the Shepherd. Goats, or unsaved people, won't follow anyone but must be driven. How then can a carnal man who must continually be whipped and driven to live right claim to be a son of God? He is exhibiting none of those son-like and sheep-like qualities. He does not love God else he would live for Him. He does not honor the family name. He will not follow God. This man has no fruit nor testimony to claim the name "Christian".

14e **"sons of God"** Also see the **"children of God"** in 8:16 and 17. If we are the children of God through the new birth, then we should expect to carry some likeness of our father, as children usually carry the likeness of their physical parents. This is manifested in a gradual conformity to the image and likeness of Christ (Romans 8:29) and an ever-deepening walk with God and a corresponding increase in our own personal holiness and Christ-likeness.

14f The Coverdale Bible pushes the last half of this verse to verse 15.

14g Obviously there is no such heretical doctrine of the "universal fatherhood of God". God is Creator of All but is only the Father of the believer.

8:15 For ye have not received^{aorist} the spirit of bondage^a again to fear;^b but ye have received^{aorist} the Spirit of adoption,^{cde} whereby we cry,^{present} Abba,^f Father.^g

15a The ESV and LSV have “slavery” but we think the traditional rendering of “bondage” is better, as always.

15b **“spirit of bondage again to fear”** When we were saved, we did not receive the spirit of bondage unto fear. That is what we were delivered from, not to. The law gave us this spirit of fear and bondage. We have received the spirit of sonship when we were saved, being delivered from the spirit of bondage that we were under while lost. The lost are under bondage- to sin. The saved are servants (Romans 1:1), which is a voluntary, happy form of servitude rendered by the Christian to God. Having received this Spirit, we can now cry “Abba, Father”, a very intimate term of affection (“Daddy!”). Slaves were never permitted to call their masters “Abba”, only sons were given that privilege. Slaves used “Ab”. We’ve been legally adopted. We were born into Satan’s family as a result of Satan’s fall yet have been taken into the family of God and given full privileges of sonship. We were Satan’s slaves before our new birth, we then because the sons and servants of God. Christians should never be thought of as “slaves” of God.

15c **“Adoption”** is Strong’s #5206 *huiothesia*; adoption as sons, that relationship which God was pleased to establish between himself and the Israelites in preference to all other nations, the nature and condition of the true disciples in Christ, who by receiving the Spirit of God into their souls become sons of God, the blessed state looked for in the future life after the visible return of Christ from heaven. Adoption is related to regeneration yet distinguished from it. Regeneration is a birth, adoption is a transfer into God’s family. Regeneration is an act of power while adoption is an act of love. Regeneration is an internal act; adoption is an external act.

Adoption itself is an interesting concept. It is a Greek and Roman practice for it does not stem from the Jewish law, although it was practiced (Moses in Exodus 2:10, Genubath in 1 Kings 11:20 and Esther). But each of these occasions occurred outside of Israel. Paul, who moved in Greek and Roman circles, was more familiar with it than Peter, James or John. Speaking in a secular sense, the motive and initiative of adoption always lay with the adoptive father, who thus supplied his lack of natural offspring and satisfied the desire to perpetuate his family. The process and conditions of adoption varied with the different peoples. Among oriental nations it was extended to slaves (as Moses) who thereby gained their freedom, but in Greece and Rome it was, with rare exceptions, limited to citizens. In Greece a man might during his lifetime, or by will to take effect after his death, adopt any male citizen into the privileges of his son, but with the invariable condition that the adopted son accepted the legal obligations and religious duties of a real son. In Rome the unique nature of parental authority by which a son was held in his father’s power, almost as a slave was owned by his master, gave a particular character to the process of adoption. Roman adoption was the process by which a person was transferred from his natural father’s power into that of his adoptive father, and it consisted in a fictitious sale of the son, and his surrender by the natural to the adoptive father.¹⁸⁶ The Hebrew Law Codes made no mention of adoption. The Greek word does not occur in the LXX and in fact, no term corresponding to the Greek word “*huiothesia*” exists in Hebrew.^{187 188}

15d There are differences between spiritual adoption and civil adoption, of which we are more familiar with:

1. We never adopt our own children, but God adopts no one but His own children.

¹⁸⁶ *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, page 58.

¹⁸⁷ *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, page 61.

¹⁸⁸ This is why it is important to study Biblical customs in context of their era, not according to modern Western ideas.

2. There are usually some good qualities and characteristics in the adopted child, but not in those whom God adopted.
3. Civil adoption cannot give the child the same nature as his new father, but spiritual adoption does.
4. Civil adoption can be voided in some situations but not spiritual adoption (eternal security!).

What are the comparisons between civil and spiritual adoption?

1. The Father starts both processes.
2. Both adoptions provide an inheritance to a child who before has none.
3. Both adoptions provide a change of name.

15e Summary of adoption:

1. Is through Christ
 - A. Galatians 4:5 **"To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."**
 - B. Ephesians 1:5 **"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,"**
2. Saints predestinated to
 - A. Ephesians 1:5 **"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,"**
3. Saints receive the spirit of
 - A. Romans 8:15 **"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."**
4. A privilege
 - A. John 1:12 **"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:"**
 - B. 1 John 3:1 **"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."**
5. Waiting for
 - A. Romans 8:23 **"And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."**
 - i. We come into our adoption at the bema judgment, where the Father will recognize us before all creation.
6. Entitles to an inheritance
 - A. Romans 8:17 **"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."**
 - B. Galatians 3:29 **"And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."**
 - C. Galatians 4:7 **"Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."**
 - i. If we are no longer a servant, then we certainly are not slaves! Sons are not slaves or even servants.

15f **"Abba"** Strong's #5 Abba, a Syro-Chaldaic word for "Father" which was also used by the Greeks. It is a very personal and intimate word, similar to our "Papa" or "Daddy". Slaves were not permitted to use the term, only sons. Who is permitted to refer to the High King of Eternity

so? The lost? No. The "Universal Fatherhood of God" is a liberal pipe dream. No heathen has this sort of relation with God. But His adopted children are given the authority and position so that they may refer to the Lord thus. The Lord bids us to use this term in order to cultivate that deep, close and intimate relationship with Him which He desires. When "abba" is used in the New Testament, it is given as "Abba, father", the "father" being supplied as an interpretation, another example of how the Scripture interprets itself. Slaves were not permitted to use this word, only sons.

15g "I have heard critics say, sometimes, of our prayers, "How familiar that man is with God." And one adds, "I do not like such boldness." No, you slaves! Of course you cannot speak with God as a child can! And it would not be right that you should! It befits you to fear, crouch and, like miserable sinners, to keep yourselves a long way off from God. Distance is the slave's place—only the child may draw near! But if you are children, then you may say, "Lord, You have had mercy upon me, miserable sinner as I was, and You have cleansed me, and I am Yours. Therefore deal with me according to the riches of Your Grace. My soul delights herself in You, for You are my God and my exceeding joy." Who but a true-born child of God can understand those Words of God—"Delight yourself, also, in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of yours heart"?

"I do not know any more *delightful* expression towards God than to say to Him, "Abba, Father." It is as much as to say—"My heart knows that You are my Father. I am as sure of it as I am sure I am the child of my earthly father! And I am *more* sure that You would deal more tenderly with me than that my earthly father would." Paul hints at this when he reminds us that our fathers, verily, chastened us after their own pleasure, but the Lord always chastens us for our profit. The heavenly Father's heart is never angry so as to smite in wrath, but in pity, gentleness and tenderness He afflicts His sons and daughters. "You in faithfulness have afflicted me." See what a blessed state this is to be brought into, to be made children of God, and then in our prayers to be praying, not like serfs and servants, but as children who cry, "Abba, Father"!... And this praying of the true Believer who has the Spirit of adoption is very *earnest* praying, for it takes the form of crying. He does not say, "Abba, Father." Anybody can say those words. But he *cries*, "Abba, Father." Nobody can cry, "Abba, Father," but by the Holy Spirit. When those two words, "Abba, Father," are set to the music of a child's cry, there is more power in them than in all the orations of Demosthenes and Cicero! They are such heavenly sounds as only the twice-born, the true aristocracy of God, can utter, "Abba, Father." They even move the heart of the Eternal!"¹⁸⁹

8:16 The Spirit itself^{ab} beareth witness^{present} with our spirit,^c that we are^{present} the children of God:^d

16a AV

ESV

LSV

16 The Spirit **itself** beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

"**The Spirit Itself**" does not destroy the personality of the Holy Spirit by calling Him "it" but is simply a literal rendering of the neuter Greek word here. Enemies of the Trinity and the personality of the Spirit jump at this and declare that since the Spirit is referred to as "it", then He is not a person. Well, what about the dozens of other passages where the Spirit is referred to as "he"? Why do they ignore those verses? We often call unborn and newly-born babies "it",

¹⁸⁹ Charles Spurgeon, "The Spirit of Bondage of Adoption" *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, sermon 1759.

don't we? Yet that is not an attack against his personality, is it? Since Paul is talking about the work of the Holy Spirit and not the personality of the Holy Spirit in this verse, there is nothing wrong with using the neuter pronoun here.

None of the pre-Authorized Version translations use a pronoun to describe the Spirit as the Authorized Version does. The modern versions violate the Greek texts by using "himself" although the pronoun is neuter in the Greek. That is another case of interpreting and not translating.

16b Below is a very excellent article by Will Kinney on the supposed "mistranslation" of "the Spirit itself":

"The Spirit ITSELF beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Is referring to the third person of the of the blessed Trinity, as "itself" a major error in the King James Bible, which borders on blasphemy?

Doug Kutilek is a well-known critic of the KJB. He has both printed, and posted an article on the internet, which harshly criticizes this "supposed" error in the King James Bible. Mr. Kutilek states: "Any honest evaluation of the King James Version leads to the conclusion that it has numerous defects as a translation, some major, most minor. But of these defects, among the most serious, quite probably the worst of the lot, is its occasional use of the English pronoun "it" to refer to the Holy Spirit." He continues, "I will plainly state my opinion on the matter: I think that here the KJV comes dangerously close to blasphemy, if it does not in fact actually wander into it." He closes his article with these words. "Those who imagine that the KJV. . . is faultless and error-free are compelled to address the matter."

The purpose of this article is to "address the matter". I believe Mr. Kutilek's objections to the use of "it" or "itself" in referring to the Holy Ghost are both hypocritical and ignorant. Hypocritical because there are many versions, including the modern ones, that use "itself" in either the very same verses or in the very same manner; and ignorant because he doesn't know the English language very well.

First, see how the Random House *Webster's College Dictionary* of 1999 defines the use of the words "it" and "itself". The second definition given for "itself" is: "used to represent a PERSON or animal understood, previously mentioned, about to be mentioned, or present in the immediate context - Who is it? It is John. . . Did you see the baby? Yes, isn't it cute. . . the cat likes to sun itself in the window."

The *Websters 1967 Collegiate Dictionary* defines "it", as "a PERSON or animal whose gender is unknown OR DISREGARDED." The Father and the Son are clearly masculine, but the Spirit is sometimes referred to as masculine and sometimes as neuter, not because He is neuter, but rather because the gender is disregarded or not taken into account in that particular context.

The four verses in the KJB that Mr. Kutilek criticizes are: John 1:32, Romans 8:16, Romans 8:26, and I Peter 1:11. We will examine these verses with other translations and then look at some examples in the new versions.

The first verse is John 1:32. "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending like a dove, and IT abode upon him." Other Bible versions that agree with the KJB in their use of "it" are Tyndale, the Geneva Bible of 1599 and 1602, Bishops Bible 1568, Daniel Mace's N.T. 1729, Wesley's translation 1755, Darby, Revised Version of 1881, American Standard Version of 1901, the Douay of 1950, Henry Alford's translation, Young's 'literal', the 21st Century KJV of 1994, William's New Testament 1937, Lamsa's translation of the Syriac 1933, Daniel Webster's of 1833, the 20th Century New Testament, Weymouth's translation, Goodspeed's American translation 1943, the 1998 Third Millennium Bible, the Revised Standard Version of 1952, the New American Bible 1970, the NRSV of 1989, and the 2001 English Standard Version.

The second verse is Romans 8:16. "The Spirit ITSELF beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Versions that agree with the KJB are the 21st Century KJV,

Alford's, Bishop's Bible, Darby, Webster's, Rotherham's Emphasized Bible of 1902, Goodspeed 1943, the Third Millenium bible of 1998 and the NRSV of 1989.

The third verse is Romans 8:26. "But the Spirit ITSELF maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Again the 21st Century KJV, Alford's translation, the Bishop's Bible 1568, Daniel Mace's N.T 1729, Wesley's 1755 translation, Coverdale 1535, Darby, Webster's 1833, Rotherham's Emphasized Bible 1902, Goodspeed 1943, the Third Millenium Bible, and the Geneva Bible of 1599 and 1602 agree with the KJB.

The fourth verse is 1 Peter 1:11. "Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when IT testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." Versions that agree with the use of "it" here are Alford's, the Revised Version of 1881, the American Standard Version of 1901, Webster's, the Berkeley Version, Basic Bible in English 1960, the 1989 Revised English Version, and the NRSV of 1989.

So we see that many Bible versions which both predate and follow after the King James Holy Bible have used "it" and "itself" to refer to the Spirit of God. This is perfectly acceptable English, and a very accurate translation. Those who criticize the King James Bible for doing this only show their own ignorance of the English language. They also demonstrate their own blind pride that places their own minds and defective understanding above that of numerous other bible translators throughout the centuries who had far more understanding and translational skills than they will ever possess.

The NASV and NIV have two interesting, parallel verses in the New Testament. Both Matthew 12:45 and Luke 11:26 speak of a "spirit that takes along with IT seven other spirits more wicked than ITSELF".

Here is a case of a spiritual entity that can see, hear, speak, and has a personality, yet the gender is disregarded in the NAS and NIV, and is referred to as "itself". This spirit was not an inanimate object, but rather a spiritual being with a distinct personality.

In Luke 8:29, the same thing occurs in the KJB, NKJV, NIV, and NASV. "For he had commanded the unclean SPIRIT to come out of the man. For oftentimes IT had caught him." Here again is a spirit that talks, reasons, hears, and knows that Jesus is the Son of God and that torment awaits him. This is clearly a personality and yet all the above-mentioned versions refer to him as an "it". The gender is disregarded, and this is perfectly acceptable English.

Another instance of the Lord Jesus Christ using the little word "IT" to refer to himself is found in the NASB, NIV, and NKJV in Luke 24:39 where He says: "Behold my hands and my feet, that IT is I myself: handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."

Again in Revelation 12:4, a multitude of Bible versions, including the NKJV, NIV, and the brand new English Standard Version of 2001, all refer to the child Jesus as IT. "And the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as IT was born."

All of the modern versions use "itself" when referring to both animals and groups of people. The NKJV has the donkey itself in Hosea 8:9, the goat itself in Lev. 16:22; Israel itself in Judges 7:2. Numbers 23:9 speaks of "a people dwelling alone, not reckoning itself among the nations", and Zechariah 12:12, "the family of the house of David by itself."

All Bible versions at times speak of Jesus Christ as being a thing or something neuter. In Matthew 1:20, the angel of the Lord says to Joseph: "fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for THAT WHICH is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." Notice the angel does not say "he", but "that which": it is neuter both in Greek and in English. In Luke 1:35, the angel says to Mary, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also THAT HOLY THING which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." That holy thing is neuter, yet we all know that Jesus Christ is a person, in fact, God manifest in the flesh.

The book of 1 John opens with a reference to Jesus Christ, yet it refers to Him as a thing. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life." Yet Christ is not a thing, but a person. In 1 John 5:4 we are told: "WHATSOEVER is born of God overcometh the world." This is a neuter. Are we to assume that everyone who is born of God is a thing?

Mr. Kutilek's objections to these four verses in the King James Bible are totally unfounded. I have found that without exception, every person who takes it upon himself to criticize something found within the pages of the King James Bible is himself a Bible Agnostic. Not one of them can or ever will tell you where you can find the complete, inspired and inerrant words of God in Book form in any language on the face of this earth. Why? Because they simply do not believe that such a thing exists nor ever did exist.

They profess to believe selected portions of their multiple-choice bible versions, but doubt, question, criticize and would change numerous others found in ALL versions out there. They are Bible Agnostics. God's ways are not our ways, and His thoughts are not our thoughts. He has revealed Himself to us in His inspired words, and I along with thousands of other Christians believe He has faithfully kept them for us today in the English language of the King James Bible.¹⁹⁰

Of the English versions, the following versions agree with the Authorized by using "itself"

1. New American Bible (not to be confused with the New American Standard Version).
2. Noah Webster's translation.
3. John Nelson Darby's translation.

The pre-Authorized Version translations word the verse as to avoid any pronoun, where they read "The same Spirit..."

16c Notice the double witness of our divine sonship- the witness of the Holy Spirit and the witness of our own spirits. Two witnesses were required to establish a thing in a court of law so God has given us such a double witness.

16d How can we know if we are the **children of God**? By the indwelling witness by the Holy Spirit to our Spirit. It's not necessarily by feeling but by fact and faith. Too many people rely upon emotion or experience as their basis for salvation. "I feel saved". "I remember that great experience when I got saved" and so on. Unless your final assurance rests upon the Scripture and is witnessed to you by the Spirit of God, you will never have a firm, bedrock assurance of salvation. And you cannot fully enjoy and use something until you have a firm grasp on it and fully possess it!

8:17 And if children, then heirs;^a heirs of God, and joint-heirs^b with Christ;^{cd} if so be that we suffer^{present} with him, that we may be also glorified together.^{ef-aorist}
subjunctive passive

17a Seeing we are children of God, we are also joint-heirs along with the Son of God. "Heir" presupposed an inheritance. As Jesus has an inheritance (a kingdom- the millennium), so do we, seeing we are in the same family and have the same Father. This sonship, adoption and inheritance are more facts that the Spirit witnesses to us about. Our "heirship" involves all that God has that also becomes ours. He owns the cattle on a thousand hills (as well as the hills!).

¹⁹⁰ <http://www.geocities.com/brandplucked/rom8.html>

That is also ours. No good thing will He withhold from us, His children. After all, He gave us the most precious possession He had in His Son, so He then will not deny us all things.

17b **“joint heirs”** The Geneva Bible uses “annexed” which supposed a more organic, physical union with Christ.

17c “In the golden age of Rome, if a man were tempted to dishonesty, he would stand upright, look the tempter in the face and say to him, “I am a Roman.” He thought that a sufficient reason why he should neither lie nor cheat. It ought to be ten times more than sufficient answer to every temptation, for a man to be able to say, “I am a son of God. Shall such a man as I yield to sin?”

“I have been astonished in looking through old Roman history at the wonderful prodigies of integrity and valor which were produced by idolatry, or rather, which were produced by patriotism and that principle which ruled the Romans, namely, love of fame. And I say it this morning—it is a shameful thing that ever idolatry should be able to breed better men than some who profess Christianity. And I think I may stand firmly while I argue here, that if a Roman, a worshipper of Jupiter or Saturn, became great or glorious, a Son of God ought to be nobler by far.

You have heard of Regulus, the Roman general. He was taken prisoner by Carthaginians, who anxiously wished for peace. They told him to go home to Rome and see if he could not make peace. But his reply was, “No, I trust they will always be at war with you, for Carthage must be destroyed if Rome is to prosper.” They compelled him, however, to go, exacting from him this promise—that if the Romans did not make peace he would come back and if he came back they would put him to death in the most horrid manner that ever cruelty could invent. Regulus returns to Rome. He stands up in the senate and bids them never to make peace in Carthage. He then tells them that he is going back to Carthage and, of course, they tell him that he need not keep faith with an *enemy*. I imagine that he said, “I promised to go back and though it is to pangs indescribable, I will return.” His wife clings to his shoulder, his children seek to persuade him. They attend him to the waters’ edge. He sails for Carthage—his death was too horrible to be described. Never martyr suffered more for Christ than that man suffered for his word’s sake. And shall a Christian man break his promise? Shall a son of God be less true than a Roman or a heathen? Shall it be, I say, that integrity shall be found in heathen lands and not be found here? No. May you be holy, harmless, sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.”¹⁹¹

17d We are all equal heirs with Christ, regardless of when we were saved, how long we were saved, what our part in the Body of Christ may be or what our calling within the Body of Christ is. We are all brethren, equal one to another and we should never be trying to lord it over another brother. There are to be no “big names” and “big shots” within the Body. But is there any higher privilege for a man than this?

17e **“glorified together”**

1. Conformity; we shall in some measure be like him in glory.

A. John 17:22 **“And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:”**

B. Philippians 3:21 **“Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”**

2. Concomitancy (“something that accompanies or is collaterally connected with something else”, jc); we shall be present with him in glory

191 Charles Spurgeon, “The Sons of God” *New Park Street Pulpit*, volume 6, sermon 339.

A. John 17:24 **“Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.”**

B. 1 Thessalonians 4:17 **“Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”**

3. Conveyance; our glory will be from him; his glory will reflect on us, and we shall shine in his beams.¹⁹²

17f “The reality of the world is that there are places on this earth (and there have been since A.D. 33) where your brothers and sisters in Christ are suffering persecution and torture because they won’t deny the Saviour. I guarantee you that some of them have been tortured to the point where they signed a confession recanting what they believed as Christians. You can only take so much pain until you would be willing to confess to anything.

That is what happened to Harlan Popov in Bulgaria. The Communists tortured that saint until he signed a confession to all kinds of crimes he never committed. At the time, he had no idea what he was signing.

When it comes to situations like that, I have nothing to say. You can’t say for sure what you would do in situations like that until you have been through it. I have an *Encyclopedia of Torture* in my library that lists all the ways men have found to torture someone. When it comes to inflicting pain on a fellow man, men are infinitely inventive. The moment you get to thinking how spiritual you would be under persecution, just read some of the more “creative ways” you could be handled and then tell me how you would “stand up for Jesus.”

Consider this: if you were able to withstand under the most severe torture imaginable, would you hold up if they were doing the same thing to your wife or your husband or your children or your parents? There was many a momma in the Middle Ages who saw her children taken away from her to be raised by the nuns or priests in some monastery because she wouldn’t acknowledge that salvation was in the Catholic Church. They saw their children thrown to wild pigs and torn to pieces.

Ladies, when you get to heaven, you will meet some of your sisters in Christ who watched their husbands’ heads blown off right in front of them and then had to pick up the pieces for burial. You will meet sisters who had their breasts cut off by Moslems because they wouldn’t acknowledge Mohammed as a prophet of God.

Parents, you will see little children in Heaven who are there because they wouldn’t deny Christ for Allah. The good Moslem (following the Koran—Sura 5:33) then cut off an arm on one side of the body, then cut off a leg on the opposite side of the body. Still professing Christ as Saviour, the little twelve-year-old then had his other arm cut off and then his other leg cut off and was left to bleed to death. That is how that child entered Glory.

Now, I won’t go into much more detail, but if you want the eyewitness accounts, as recorded in history, then I would recommend that you get the following books:

Martyr’s Mirror by T. J. van Braght.

Book of Martyrs by John Foxe.

Tortured for Christ by Richard Wurmbrand.

Madame Jeanne Guyon by Madam Guyon.

Then when you have read those, get material from Wurmbrand’s ministry “Voice of the Martyrs,” and find out what your brethren are going through in Sudan, Indonesia, India, and China.

¹⁹² Matthew Poole, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*.

When Paul talks about suffering with Jesus Christ, those are the kinds of things he is talking about. The problem with American Christians is that they have never suffered any real persecution for the sake of Christ. Sure they might get a little ridicule, but “sticks and stones....,” man. Ridicule is nothing.

Americans may be ostracized from friends and family for the Gospel’s sake. Some may even lose a job from time to time, but that is about as bad as it gets. American Christians tend to think the Tribulation has begun when gas prices go up fifty cents more a gallon.

If suffering for Christ, in the real sense, were the only way of reigning with Christ, then no American Christian (1960–2003) would even have a chance of being dog catcher in the Millennium. In Colossians 3:24, God offers a Christian “the reward of the inheritance” for putting off “the old man with his deeds” and putting on “the new man” (Col. 3:9–10) and living for Jesus Christ (Col. 3:12–23). But that is a reward for self-discipline in the Christian life. It is not automatic.”¹⁹³

72. The Sufferings and the Glory 8:18

8:18^a For I reckon^{b-present middle} that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall^{present active participle} be revealed in us.^{cd}

18a Verses 18-25 are the highest peak in this highpoint chapter of the book of Romans.

18b AV

ESV

LSV

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy <i>to be compared</i> with the glory which shall be revealed in us.	18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.	18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.
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“**reckon**” The ESV and LSV have the weakest reading here, with “I consider”. The other translations use either “count”, “reckon” or are “certainly persuaded”.

18c I think Paul knew a little something about the sufferings of this life as few Christians suffered for the gospel's sake as he did. Yet he confidently affirms these sufferings are not worthy to be mentioned alongside the glory that will result from them. It will indeed be worth it all to suffer with Christ so that we may partake in his inheritance. Paul sat down, got his ledger out, and did some reckoning. He put the sufferings of this life in one column and the glory that shall be revealed in us in another column and added them up, then compared the results. The glory tally was greater than the suffering tally!

This sort of suffering has a benefit to it- one of fellowship and camaraderie with others who have endured the same things. Paul talks about the fellowship of Christ's sufferings in Philippians 3:10. Get a few Marines together and before long they will start swapping stories about the horrors of boot camp and how they survived. Christians who have served and suffered should have a much stronger and deeper bond than any secular sufferings may bring.

“Reckon” has the idea that Paul sat down at a ledger, much as a bookkeeper would, and began to add up his accounts. In one column, he listed all the sufferings he had experienced in his life and service for Christ. In the other column, he tallied all the glories and blessings that he had already received in his years as a Christian and the glories that God had promised him in the next life. Then Paul added up both columns. They did not match. The sufferings column

¹⁹³ Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer's Commentary on Romans*, pages 305-308.

came up far short of the blessings column. Paul would then conclude that the blessings would far outnumber the sufferings, and it was worth enduring those sufferings in order to gain the blessings!

18d Once you get to heaven, receive your glorified body, see your heavenly mansion and see Jesus face to face, your earthly sufferings, no matter how severe, will be forgotten. What you suffered for Christ on earth will indeed be worth it all when you see the spiritual fruits of that godly sufferings.

73. The Hope of the Creature 8:19-22

8:19 For the earnest expectation^a of the creature waiteth^{present middle} for the manifestation of the sons of God.^{bc}

19a This has the idea of an anxious looking with an outstretched head and eyes wide open.

19b **“manifestation of the sons of God”** This probably won’t happen until the Millennium, or after. Right now, we are rather hidden, unpromoted and unglorified. But in the Millennium, the Lord will put the Redeemed on full display and in all their glory before all creation. Those believers whom the world hated and had no use for during the days of human dispensations will be glorified by God Himself before their enemies in vindication of their faith and testimony.

19c “The world knows nothing of this astonishing verse. All the saints should always have it in remembrance! Man’s philosophy and science, taught in their schools, continually prate of “evolution” and “progress” in the present creation. And they go back in pure imagination millions of years and forward millions of years, telling you confidently how things came to be, and when, and what they will come to be; but they know nothing. Here God tells us unto what creation is coming--for what it is waiting: “earnestly.” Whether inanimate things on earth (for even the rocks and hills shall sing for joy shortly!) or whether the moving creatures on earth or sea; or whether, may we say, the hosts on high--all are waiting in expectation for that “unveiling of the sons of God.” For the word here translated “revealing” is apokalupsis, a removal of a covering,--as when some wonderful statue has been completed and a veil thrown over it, people assemble for the “unveiling” of this work of art. It will be as when sky rockets are sent up on a festival night: rockets which, covered with brown paper, seem quite common and unattractive, but up they are sent into the air and then they are revealed in all colors of beauty, and the multitude waiting below shout in admiration. Now the saints are wrapped up in the common brown paper of flesh, looking outwardly like other folks. But the whole creation is waiting for their unveiling at Christ’s coming, for they are connected with Christ, one with Him, and are to be glorified with Him at His coming.”¹⁹⁴

AV

ESV

LSV

19 For the earnest expectation of the **creature** waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.

19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.

“creature” The ESV and LSV has the “creation” waiting this manifestation rather than the “creature”. I would thing we “creatures” would long for our manifestation as the “sons of God”

¹⁹⁴ William Newell, *Romans Verse-by-Verse*.

more than the creation would. Same in Romans 8:20,21. In verse 22, the ESV and LSV actually agree with the Authorized Version.

8:20 For the creature was made subject^{active participle} *aorist passive* to vanity,^{ab} not willingly,^{present} but by reason of him who hath subjected^{aorist active participle} the same in hope,

20a You can thank Adam and his sin as the Federal Head of the Race for the weakness and vanity we suffer from. Eve was not to blame. Her sin affected no one but her. But in “Adam’s fall, we sinned all.”

20b “**vanity**” It has the idea of “disappointing misery”.

8:21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered^{future passive} from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty^{abc} of the children of God.

21a This is still future. We are saved now but we will not come into our full and complete salvation until after death or rapture (probably the Millennium or after), when we will be finally delivered from the power, penalty and presence of sin.

21b What is this “**liberty**”? Liberty from sin, the power of sin, the presence of sin, the practice of sin, the physical limitations of this human body, the spiritual and mental limitations of this human body and all that this entails, and the liberty to finally be able to live for God, to serve God and to love God as we would desire to do, and in such a way that He is worthy to be loved and served.

All children of God should enjoy this liberty for it was provided to us by Christ by virtue of His work on the cross. It is part of the *divine depositum* granted to every believer at salvation. Yet far too many believers live below their spiritual privileges and still live in bondage to their master sins, to the remaining carnality in their hearts and to the overall influence of this fallen and corrupt world system.

21c AV

ESV

LSV

21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the **glorious liberty** of the children of God.

21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

The ESV and LSV have “freedom of the glory” (whatever that means) instead of the “**glorious liberty**”, thus downplaying this spiritual liberty that we have.

8:22 For we know^{present} that the whole creation groaneth^{abc-present} and travaileth in pain,^{present} together until now.^d

22a Verse 22 is the first of three groanings here in Romans 8:

1. The groaning of creation because of the curse of Genesis 3. The fall of Adam and the accumulated untold numbers of sins committed by his children cause all of God’s

creation to groan in a most uncomfortable manner, for it certainly is greatly affected by these sins.

2. The groaning of the Christian because of his sin as he awaits his glorified body (Romans 8:23). We also groan in unison with a groaning creation, and we shall not at present get rid of our aches, and pains, and sicknesses altogether until we receive our glorified bodies. This creation will receive a "glorified body" after it has been renovated by fire (2 Peter 3:10) when it shall groan no more, just as we will groan no more after we receive our new bodies. Fortunately, we will receive ours sooner (at the rapture) than the creation will so we do not have as long to wait!

3. The groaning of the Spirit as He helps us in prayer (Romans 8:26).

22b 1. The Creation Groans, Romans 8:22

A. Because of our sins.

2. The Christian Groans, Romans 8:23

A. Because of his sins.

3. The Comforter Groans, Romans 8:26

A. On behalf of our sins.

22c This groaning is manifested in many forms by nature, through storms, floods, droughts, etc. Every rotten log, dead carcass of an animal, destroyed bird's nest or forest ravished by a fire is testimony to the damage that man's sin has done to this planet. The creation does know that deliverance from these killing effects of sin is coming, but, like man, it does not know how much longer a wait we have until the regeneration of all things and the final removal of sin from creation. "We live in a world that is under a curse, — a world that was made subject to bondage through human sin. What means this cold? What mean these fogs? What mean the general mourning and sighing of the air all through the winter? What mean the disturbances, and convulsions, and catastrophes that we hear about on all hands? It is the creation groaning, travelling, waiting, — waiting till there shall be a new heaven and a new earth, because the former things shall have passed away."¹⁹⁵

22d All creation is awaiting the removal of the curse (which will take place in the Millennium) and the manifestation of the true sons of God. All creation (including we who are redeemed) are waiting for this whole mess to be over and for the new heavenly order to be implemented. As we wait for that eventual and ultimate day of redemption, all creation (as well as us) groan under the burden of our circumstances. Creation groans under the curse it was put under in Genesis 3 with earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, storms and drought. The redeemed likewise groan under the burden of our daily and constant struggles against sin and self. How much longer must we wait? When will we be redeemed and delivered from these oppressions?

74. Waiting for the Adoption 8:23

8:23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have^{present active participle} the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we^a ourselves groan-^{present} within ourselves,^b waiting^{present middle/passive participle} for the adoption, to wit,^c the redemption^d of our body.^e

23a Emphatic.

¹⁹⁵ Charles Spurgeon.

23b **“groan”** And what Christian hasn’t groaned in himself over his sins, corruptions, carnalities and failures? How many of us have groaned “O Lord, how long, until I be delivered from the body of this death? How long until I be delivered from the power of my sins once and for all?” If you haven’t ever groaned like this, then are you even truly saved?

23c **“to wit”** an archaic legal term, meaning “namely”, used to define that which precedes it by that which follows it.. Sometimes it is spelled “to-wit,” or “towit.” “Wit’ is from the Old English *witan*, ‘to know’. None of our modern versions contain any form of these words. The word **wit** is used in the AV three times as an infinitive meaning to know. **Wit** also appears seventeen times in the expression ‘to wit’ that means indeed, that is to say, namely, or that is.”¹⁹⁶

23d The Redeemed wait for the redemption of their sinful bodies and for the day when they will receive their glorified bodies at the first resurrection. Nature awaits the removal of the curse. We await our full redemption. Now we are only 2/3 redeemed: spirit and soul are redeemed, but not the body. When our bodies are quickened into the glorified body like unto our Savior at the rapture, then we will finally experience our full redemption from sin as we will never sin again. That is our “blessed hope” of Titus 2:13 **“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;”**

23e **“redemption”** Some of the versions (The Tyndale, Coverdale and Bishops Bibles) use “deliverance” for this word. But we like “redemption” better as it gives the idea of some sort of payment being involved for this deliverance. That payment was, of course, the blood of Christ. Even the ESV and LSV use “redemption”.

75. Saved by Hope 8:24,25

8:24 For we are saved^{participle} ^{aurist passive} **by hope:**^{ab} **but hope that is seen**^{present middle/passive} **is not hope: for what a man seeth,**^{present} **why doth he yet hope**^{present} **for?**^c

24a **“saved by hope”** This is our hope and it keeps us going from day to day. When we get tired, we think of our full redemption. When we get weary or discouraged, our thoughts turn to this blessed hope. We are saved, or delivered, by hope- that blessed hope that is the end result of our faith- total redemption. It is the living reality of this hope that gives us our patience to keep on living, suffering, forbearing and groaning under the weight of our problems. Only the blessed hope could inspire us to put up with that! It makes you wonder how the sinner, who only has the hope of fire and brimstone, can keep going on as he does day by day? What is his hope? His expectation? He has none. It is a wonder that more sinners don't commit suicide every day if they really understood their hopeless plight outside of Christ. Not so with the redeemed!

AV	ESV	LSV
24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?	24 For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees?	24 For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees?

¹⁹⁶ Laurence Vance, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*, page 381.

“saved by hope” The Coverdale Bible confuses the verse with “For we are saued i dede, howbeit i hope”. The ESV and LSV weakens it as not rendering that we are “saved by hope” but “For in this hope we were saved.” How is that clearer than saying that we are saved by hope?

24b But we are **saved by hope**? I thought we were saved by faith and by grace? Is all a sinner has to say is “I hope I’m saved!” and be saved? No. This is not a plan of salvation and hope cannot deliver the sinner from sin but it can believer the saint from despair. Hope has nothing to do with our justification, but it has everything to do with our motivation. Faith saves the sinner- hope saves the believer. Faith unites us in Christ- hope sustains us in His service. Faith trusts for salvation- hope waits for it. Faith looks to the Author of our salvation- hope to the salvation itself. Faith quiets the soul- hope animates it.

And this is certainly not the idea of “I hope I’m saved!” as if one could not know for certain if one was truly saved or not. Salvation is a certainty, not something that should be “hoped” for in unbelief. But there is a hope that also accompanies that certainty, the solid hope and expectation of full salvation!

By context, this “hope” deals with the salvation of the physical body, as we wait for its redemption, when it is changed and made like His glorified body at the rapture. And we “hope” that it may happen today! This is the “blessed hope” of the believer (Titus 2:13 **Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;).**

24c We hope because we have not seen heaven, have not seen Christ with the physical eye and have yet to experience the joy and blessedness of a glorified body. We have laid our eyes on none of the things that God has promised for us. If we did see them and could grasp them, then they would be the objects of hope but rather, of sight. Hope and faith then operate on the same principle- things unseen. Thus, we hope. But that hope will be turned to sight after death or rapture and then, we shall hope no more because we will finally possess our hope then.

8:25 But if we hope^{present} for that we see^{present} not, then do we with patience wait^{present middle} for it.^a

25a When you hope for something, you wait for it with anticipation until it comes to pass. Then it is hope fulfilled, and we have nothing more to live for in this particular context.

76. The Intercession of the Spirit 8:26,27

8:26^a Likewise the Spirit also helpeth^{present middle} our infirmities:^b for we know^{present} not what we should pray^{aorist subjunctive} for as we ought:^{c-present} but the Spirit itself^d maketh intercessio^{ne-present} for us^f with groanings^g which cannot be uttered.^{hi}

26a **His divine enablement-** “helpeth our infirmities”
His divine enlightenment- “we know not what we should pray for as we ought”
His divine encouragement- “the Spirit itself maketh intercession”¹⁹⁷

26b **“infirmities”** Strong’s #769 astheneia; malady; morally, frailty, disease, weak, sick. These would include our trials and tribulations as well as our physical and spiritual weaknesses and

¹⁹⁷ Ian Paisley, *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans*, page 133.

sicknesses. Paul was certainly a man well-acquainted with trials, troubles and infirmities (see 2 Corinthians 11:23-29 for a list of Paul's ministerial "qualifications"). Paul gave us the example of how the Christian is to survive his infirmities. The less he depended on his flesh the more of "the power of Christ" was given him (2 Corinthians 12:9 **"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."**) by the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:10-12). Because of the help of the Holy Spirit, Paul was able to "glory" in his infirmities and "take pleasure" in them (2 Corinthians 12:9,10 **"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."**), which simply is not natural for anyone to be able to do! If the Spirit helps us in our prayers because of our infirmities, then it is because we are weak and need all the help we can get from the Spirit for anything and everything we do.

Notice that "infirmities" is in the plural. This is not the general fact that we are weak but relates to the various types and manifestations of our weaknesses. This is the same difference between "sin" and "sins". "Sin" relates to our sin nature. "Sins" relates to our individual sins. The same goes for "infirmity" and "infirmities". "Infirmity" relates to our weak and helpless state spiritually. "Infirmities" would list our individual manifestations of these weaknesses.

26c Showing our spiritual ignorance. Because you may have a Th.D., in theology or because you have been saved 50 years or have preached ten thousand sermons does not exempt you from the condemnation of our spiritual ignorance of the ways and wills of God and how we should pray and what we should pray for. We think we know what we should pray for and we think we know what the will of God is for whatever situation we may find ourselves in or what we are praying about, but we really don't. We are often guilty of imposing our wants onto God's will and confounding the two. For example, Paul was ignorant in his praying about his **"thorn in the flesh"** until God straightened him out on it (2 Corinthians 12:8,9).

The **"ought"** deals both with the manner and the material of our prayers. We don't know how to pray or what we ought to pray for, which is why the help of the Spirit is so desperately needed by the saints.

26d **"The Spirit itself"** See extended notes under Romans 8:16. The Greek uses the neuter, hence the neuter pronoun in the English versions. Since the Holy Spirit is a Spirit and does not normally have a body, He is referred to in the neuter pronoun. But this does not damage the doctrine of the personality of the Holy Spirit since He is referred to in the masculine pronoun in other verses. Jesus is called a "which" 1 John 1:1 and believers are called "whatever" in 1 John 5:4. We see something similar in Philippians 4:13, where Paul refers to Jesus as a "which" instead of a "who". The King James translators are literally rendering the neuter Greek pronoun into the proper English usage. Christ is called a "holy thing" in Luke 1:35. The Holy Spirit is called "itself" by Paul in Romans 8:16. Neuter pronouns are perfectly acceptable to use when referring to persons. Even today, many people will refer to babies (born and unborn) as "it".

26e **"maketh intercession for us"** A precious promise of prayer. When we pray, we do so in ignorance. We think we know what we need or what is best for us but in reality, we don't. But the Spirit does. He helps us in our ignorance. God desires us to pray but we must realize how poor even our best prayers are. One ministry of the Holy Spirit to the believer is this help in the prayer closet. As we pray, He collects those prayers, remolds them into more acceptable petitions and delivers them up to the Father for consideration.

Prayer becomes a necessity in the midst of our groanings. We would never get through our trials and tribulations without prayer and without the help of the Holy Spirit in both our prayers and in our circumstances.

The Holy Spirit also prays for us before the Father when we are in periods of distress and trial. He can do this as He can see what the true purpose of the Father is in our trials. We can't. But He does, so He knows exactly how to pray for us to ask the Father for the graces we will need to make it through our trials in such a way as to glorify the Father and to better and improve us.

26f The Spirit cannot help us in our prayer life if we are not praying and interceding. The Spirit's intercession is a very person ministry of Him to us as He personally intercedes for us individually. No matter how ignorant the prayer or how halting or fearful, the Spirit works with us and shows us what to pray for and how to pray and intercedes on our behalf

26g This is the word "stenagmos", which is only used here and in Acts 7:34, where Stephen is making his defense before the Sanhedrin, where he mentions the groanings of the children of Israel in their Egyptian bondage.

26h **Groanings that cannot be uttered** are prayers that cannot be refused. Believers groan in prayer- unbelievers groan without prayer. This goes much deeper than simply saying a prayer at the dinner table or shooting off a quick "Now I lay me down to sleep..." ditty before bedtime. This is work, mighty wrestlings with God, where you must have the answer or die, and will not take a "no" for an answer.

These groaning may not be uttered by man but they can be understood by God.

26i These **groanings** have nothing to do with praying in an unknown tongue, as some Charismatics have tried to interpret! Tongues can certainly be uttered- these deep prayers cannot!

8:27 And he that searcheth^{present active participle} the hearts^a knoweth^{present} what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession^{b-present} for the saints^c according to *the will* of God.^d

27a Who "**searches the hearts**"? This must be the Christ (see Revelation 2:23 "**And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works**") for He knows what the "**mind of the Spirit is**" when the Spirit takes our prayers, rearranges them as presentable to the Father so that He may act upon them. We don't know what we should pray for. We often pray for the wrong thing or for a poor thing or just plain foolishly. The Holy Spirit re-packages our prayers as what we truly need, not what we think we need or selfishly want. The Spirit knows the will of God much better than do we, so He is better able to pray for us than we are.

27b "**maketh intercession**" is a different Greek word than found in Romans 8:26. Here, it is Strong's #1793 entugchanô; from en (Strong's #1722) in; and tugchanô (Strong's #5177) hit the mark; to light upon a person or a thing, fall in with, hit upon, a person or a thing, to go to or meet a person, especially for the purpose of conversation, consultation, or supplication, to pray, entreat, make intercession for any one.

One of the ministries of the Holy Spirit is to make intercession before the Father on behalf of our prayers. Nowhere in Scripture is it even hinted at that Mary is our intercessor for anything. That is a Romanist fairy-tale. Paul never mentions her by name in any of his writings.

Intercession:

1. Christ made intercession for transgressors.

A. Isaiah 53:12 **Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.**

2. Intercession forbidden

A. Jeremiah 7:16 **Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee.**

3. The Holy Spirit makes intercession for us in our prayers.

A. Romans 8:26,27 **Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.**

4. Christ makes intercession for us

A. **Romans 8:34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.**

B. Hebrews 7:25 **Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost⁶ that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.**

5. Isaiah made intercession for Israel

A. Romans 11:2 **God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying,**

6. We are to make intercession for all men as we pray.

A. 1 Timothy 2:1 **I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;**

7. God marvels at the lack of intercessors.

A. Isaiah 59:16 **And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him.**

27c Not for sinners. There is no intercessory ministry by the Holy Spirit for an unsaved man since they cannot even pray in the first place.

27d **“according to the will of God”** This is always the deciding factor as to if and how God will answer prayer. He will answer if the prayer is prayed according to His will and if the answer will further His will. We should never be praying according to our will but only to His, as the will of God is always superior to the will of man,

77. All Things Work Together For Good 8:28

8:28^a And we know^{b-present} that all things work together^{present} for good^{cd} to them that love^{present active participle} God, to them who are^{present active participle} the called according to his purpose.^{efg}

28a This is the great promise of God's control and oversight of our life. Which Christian has never quoted this verse at one time in his life? When the house burnt down, who has not quoted these words? When the baby goes into the hospital or we lose our job, these words carry an extra-special comfort.

28b This is not theory or speculation but is based on faith and experience.

28c **"all things work together for good"** All circumstances, as being ordained and ordered by God, are all part of His over-arching providence and it all serves His will, no matter how random or chaotic they may seem to be to us. It is not God working here but circumstances that are ordered by God and ordained by God that are working for us.

28d **"good"** is not necessarily material good, as in having money and possessions, but it is always spiritual good to us. Notice that all things work together **for good**, not "our good". God is good and all things work together for good. So things work on our behalf for the ultimate glory of God and that is good for us.

A Biblical commentary on this would be Joseph's remarks in Genesis 50:20 (in Modern English) "'And as for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it **for good** in order to bring about his present result, to preserve many people alive". The evil his brothers selling him as a slave into Egypt was turned into good by God to save the lives of many from the famine and to work out the overall plan of God on behalf of the nation of Israel.

28e **"All things work together for good only to them that love God and who are the called according to His purpose."** This promise does not extend to the unsaved man since he does not love God. If he did love God, he'd get saved. What about a backslider whose love has grown cold? How much of this promise can he claim, if any? "To them who are the called according to His purpose" would have the idea of a Christian engaged in some form of service, fulfilling the purpose for which the Lord saved him and called him. Busy Christians quote the verse much more than those who are engaged in no labor for the kingdom. The Christian who is familiar with the crucible has much more experience with the verse and a better understanding of it than the nominal Christian. How much of this verse can a lazy, pew-warming, Sunday-morning-only Christian claim, seeing he is fulfilling none of the Lord's will and is suffering from a lukewarm love toward God?

28f "You may have heard also the story of that eminent martyr who was likely always to say, "all things work together for good." When he was seized by the officers of Queen Mary to be taken to the stake to be burned, he was treated so roughly on the road that he broke his leg. And they jeeringly said, "All things work together for good, do they? How will your broken leg work for your good?" "I don't know how it will," said he, "but for my good I know it will work and you shall see it so."

"By God's grace it proved true that it was for his temporal good. For being delayed a day or so on the road through his lameness, he arrived in London in time enough to hear that Elizabeth was proclaimed queen and so he escaped the stake by his broken leg. He turned

round upon the men who carried him, as they thought, to his death and said to them, "Now will you believe that all things work together for good?"¹⁹⁸

28g "Debt will work for your good. Desertion will work for your good. Divorce will work for your good. Disease will work for your good. Disability will work for your good. Death will work for your good. And even the damnation of the lost will work for your good. But those things work out according to God's will and purpose and in God's timing. So don't give up hope and don't give in to despair."¹⁹⁹

78. Predestination, Foreknowledge, Calling, Justification, Glorification 8:29,30

8:29^a For whom he did foreknow,^{b-aorist} he also did predestinate^{c-aorist} to be conformed to the image of his Son,^{de} that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.^f

29a These are misunderstood and misapplied verses by Calvinists who relate predestination to salvation. They say something along the lines of "God, through the determinate counsel of His sovereign will, predestinated some to go to heaven and some to go to hell" or something like that. Wrong. Predestination does not deal with salvation but rather with sanctification. An unsaved person cannot be predestinated to heaven or hell. No man was ever predestinated to salvation. Rather, the Christian is predestinated "to be conformed to the image of His Son". Only Christians can be predestinated and this only extends to his sanctification as he is slowly and gradually conformed to the image of Christ. This involves the growth process in a Christian where God is bringing him to the point that he is more and more like Jesus in his life, speech and service. This process will be completed when we receive our glorified bodies. This conformity is a painful lifetime process and God prunes away those things in our life that do not speak of Christ.

29b We need to look at the word "**foreknow**". Foreknowledge is to know something beforehand. According to 1 Peter 1:2, the foreknowledge of God is the basis of election. Don't let the Calvinists scare you away from the Bible doctrine of election. God does elect men unto salvation. The question is "What is the basis of that election?" There are two possibilities: the "sovereign will of God" in that God chose you for no other reason than His sovereignty, or based on His foreknowledge that you would repent and believe the Gospel. First Peter 1:2 clearly supports the second position.

The foreknowledge of our salvation comes before our predestination as Christians to be conformed to the image of Christ. No one can be predestinated until he has been foreknown and thus elected since no unsaved man can be conformed to the image of Christ. The unsaved man will be conformed to an image, but it will be the image of his father the Devil, that serpent, that old Dragon!

Foreknowledge then is associated with both election (1 Peter 1:2) and predestination (our text) and there is no way that can be denied without denying Scripture.

29c Regarding "predestinate/predestination", we are:

1. Predestinated to adoption

A. Ephesians 1:5 "**Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,**"

198 Charles Spurgeon, "The True Christian's Blessedness", *New Park Street Pulpit*, volume 3, sermon 159.

199 Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer's Commentary on Romans*, page 331.

2. Predestinated to the purpose and will of God
 - A. Ephesians 1:11 **"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:"**
3. Predestinated to sanctification
 - A. Romans 8:29 **"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."**

Predestination is not tied to the salvation of the sinner for God predestines no one to be saved, but He does predestinate saints to be holy. It's easy to assume that but Biblical theology does not support that conclusion. Predestination deals with sanctification, service and adoption after salvation. The term can be defined as "God determining beforehand the position and ministry of the believer." Only Christians can be predestinated and that only to sanctification. Thus, predestination is tied into God's foreknowledge, which means that God knows in advance who will accept the Gospel and who will reject it (1 Peter 1:2 **"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."**) and on the basis of that, He elects believers to salvation and then predestines those believers to sanctification.

Predestination always follows foreknowledge (Romans 8:29 **"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."**), and election always follows foreknowledge (1 Peter 1:2 **"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied"**).

29d **"image of His Son"** Some wrongly interpret this as literally saying that our glorified bodies are going to be exact carbon copies of Christ's glorified body. We will all look alike, including the women, who will supposedly receive male glorified bodies! This "image of Christ" is not a physical one but a spiritual one. We will all be sinless with a glorified body just like Christ's. We will think as He does, love what He does and hate what He hates. The only physical characteristic of this conformity is toward the nature of our glorified body, which will have the same properties and powers as His.

29e **"image of His Son"** Adam was created in the likeness of God the Father, but we must be born again to be made into the image of God the Son. In this sense, Christians have a two-fold image of God- by creation and one by redemption.

29f The five-link chain of God's dealings with us:

1. He foreknew us. He knew us before we were born.
 - A. Jeremiah 1:5 **"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."**
2. He predestinated us. Predestination always deals with Christians and involves our predestination of children, not to salvation. No unsaved person was ever predestinated to anything.
 - A. Ephesians 1:5,11 **"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will...In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:"**

3. He called us to salvation and service
4. He justified us through the new birth
5. He will glorify us in heaven

These are "Paul's Five Points" of Salvation.

8:30^a Moreover whom he did predestinate,^{aorist} them he also called:^{aorist} and whom he called,^{aorist} them he also justified:^{aorist} and whom he justified,^{aorist} them he also glorified.^{b-aorist}

30a Notice the progression of the Christian's experience in 8:30 (those who have been predestinated):

1. We were called (salvation)
2. We were justified (occurred at moment of salvation)
3. We were glorified. We were glorified at our salvation and will be even more so at our reception of our glorified bodies when we will be delivered from sin forever.

30b Those who are Christians have been called, justified (declared righteous) and glorified.

79. Who Shall Be Against Us? 8:31,32

8:31^a What shall we then say^{future} to these things?^b If God be for us, who can be against us?^c

31a Notice the questions Paul asks from verses 31-35:

1. What shall we then say to these things? Romans 8:31
2. If God be for us, who can be against us? Romans 8:31
3. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Romans 8:32
4. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? Romans 8:33
5. Who is he that condemneth? Romans 8:34
6. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Romans 8:35
7. Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Romans 8:35

31b Paul now begins to conclude the doctrinal section of Romans (the first 8 chapters) by this question. The answer, which Paul takes the rest of the chapter to expound, is no one! Sure we have plenty of enemies but who cares about them as long as God is for us. Even if all creation were against us, we are still promised the victory because God is for us. What is He for? God is for sanctification, holiness and conformity to Christ's image. He is against sin, self and Satan. Many careless talkers will try to tear down such doctrines while Christians find themselves in speechless awe of these truths.

31c **"against us..."** The Christian must have enemies and opposers for the godly have always had them from the days of Abel. Our Lord had enemies by the bushel and their numbers grow to this present hour. How can we expect to escape without foes? But regardless of their numbers, their opposition to us, our walk and our ministry is doomed to failure because Christ is for us. The favor of Christ trumps all the opposition of man and devils. We may suffer their slings and arrows for a season here, but we are assured of the ultimate victory because Christ has already won that victory. With the victory already secured, failure is impossible.

8:32 He that spared^{aorist middle} not his own Son, but delivered him up^{aorist} for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give^{future middle} us all things?^a

32a God will withhold no good thing from us, seeing He gave the one thing most dear to His heart: His Son on the cross. If the Father gave Jesus, His most precious possession, then He would certainly give us all things. How can He deny us less valuable things if He has already given us His Son?

AV	ESV	LSV
32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?	32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?	32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

“freely” The ESV and LSV have “graciously” but “freely” is better.

80. Who Shall Condemn Us? 8:33,34

8:33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge^{future} of God's elect?^{ab} It is God that justifieth.^{cd-present active participle}

33a **Who can bring anything to the charge of God's elect?** Plenty try, including Satan, the Accuser of the Brethren. Let them all try! All will fail! Let them blow as much as they will. but it will be in vain. We have been justified by the blood of Christ and nothing can challenge that. Who can possibly convince the elect of sin and hope to win? It is God who has done the justifying of Christians and no one can undo it or say anything against. It is the biggest waste of time and effort in the universe. Once God has declared someone justified, that is it and nothing can be done against it.

33b “Most blessed challenge! How unanswerable it is! Every sin of the elect was laid upon the great Champion of our salvation, and by the atonement carried away. There is no sin in God's book against his people: he seeth no sin in Jacob, neither iniquity in Israel; they are justified in Christ forever. When the guilt of sin was taken away, the punishment of sin was removed. For the Christian there is no stroke from God's angry hand--nay, not so much as a single frown of punitive justice. The believer may be chastised by his Father, but God the Judge has nothing to say to the Christian, except "I have absolved thee: thou art acquitted." For the Christian there is no penal death in this world, much less any second death. He is completely freed from all the punishment as well as the guilt of sin, and the power of sin is removed too. It may stand in our way, and agitate us with perpetual warfare; but sin is a conquered foe to every soul in union with Jesus. There is no sin which a Christian cannot overcome if he will only rely upon his God to do it. They who wear the white robe in heaven overcame through the blood of the Lamb, and we may do the same. No lust is too mighty, no besetting sin too strongly entrenched; we can overcome through the power of Christ. Do believe it, Christian, that thy sin is a condemned thing. It may kick and struggle, but it is doomed to die. God has written condemnation across its brow. Christ has crucified it, "nailing it to his cross." Go now and mortify it, and the Lord help you

to live to his praise, for sin with all its guilt, shame, and fear, is gone.”²⁰⁰

33c **“It is God that justifieth”** Who dares bring a condemnation against a man declared innocent by the highest court in the universe? Who dares question the judicial righteousness of God and the power of Christ's atonement? Satan is arrogant and stupid enough to, but even those efforts are futile. God's verdict is final and unalterable and cannot be overturned by any sort of appeal.

33d God alone can justify the sinner. He cannot be justified by his own works, the law, his own spirituality, the sacraments or ordinances, the church he belongs to, etc. Justification unto salvation is the work of God that is impossible to man and a ministry that it denied to him.

8:34^a Who is he that condemneth?^{b-present active participle} **It is Christ that died,**^{c-aorist active participle} **yea rather, that is risen again,**^{d-aorist passive participle} **who is**^{present} **even at the right hand of God,**^e **who also maketh intercession**^{present} **for us.**^{fg}

34a Verse 34 shows that Christ is not presently unemployed in heaven but is functioning as our High Priest in making intercession for us before the heavenly mercy seat. Hebrews 4,9 and 10 develop this theme about the present work of Christ more closely.

34b **“Who is he that condemneth?”** Paul lays this down as a challenge to Satan, the devils, the world and its minions, to attempt to bring any charge against a Christian who has been justified by the blood of Christ. Who dares attempt to condemn when God Himself has justified? Who will disannul that legal decree or imagine himself powerful enough to undo that justifying work of Christ on the sinner's behalf? Many will try but none will succeed in condemning a man who has been justified and declared righteous by the very God of all Eternity Himself, for none can undo or spoil the redemptive work of Christ on the cross. There is only one Judge and that is Jesus. If He does not condemn us, then who can? He will not condemn those who have trusted in His blood, so we are quite safe from this kind of condemnation.

34c Christ died for us to secure the grounds and means of our justification. Who can undo that? Who would dare to call His work into question when it has been accepted by the Father, as seen in the resurrection of Christ? And who would dare judge the Judge?

34d **“yea, rather that is risen again”** Paul had full confidence in the resurrection of Christ. It was a settled fact in his mind. He declares the historical and theological fact of the resurrection and makes no apology for it. It is not so much the death of Christ that brings about this justification but His resurrection. The resurrection was the token that the Father accepted the work of Christ on the cross and that it was successful since He was fully obedient to the will of the Father. If the Father had not risen Christ from the dead, then the work on the cross would have been in vain on our behalf since it would have been obvious that the Father did not reject it, due to some flaw in Christ's person or work. But happily, such was not the case!

Christ died but rose again. Everyone dies, and every “great” man and religious leader has died. Mohammad is dead. The Buddha is dead. Every pope has died. But how many of them rose again? If Islam wants to impress me and convince me that Mohammad was some sort of a prophet, then show me where he was raised from the dead. What? He is still in his grave? Then he has nothing for me. Christ was raised from the dead. Unless your prophet or

200 Charles Spurgeon, *Morning and Evening*, devotional for the morning of July 27.

savior can claim the same thing, then he is not prophet or savior at all and is grossly inferior to Jesus Christ.

34e He who was once despised and rejected of men, now occupies the most honourable position of a beloved and honoured Son at the very right hand and throne of God.

34f “Is it not a noble thing for a Christian to be able to go where he may and feel that he cannot meet his accuser? That wherever he may be, whether he walks within himself in the chambers of conscience, or out of himself among his fellow men, or above himself into Heaven, or beneath himself into Hell, yet is he a justified one and nothing can be laid to his charge? Who can condemn? Who can condemn? Yes, echo, O you skies, reverberate, you caverns of the deep. Who can condemn when Christ has died, has risen from the dead, is enthroned on high and intercedes?

“But all things pass away. I see the heavens on fire, rolling up like a scroll—I see sun, moon and stars pale now their feeble light—the earth is tottering. The pillars of Heaven are rocking. The grand assize is commenced—the herald angels descend, not to sing, this time, but with thundering trumpets to proclaim, “He comes, He comes to judge the earth in righteousness and the people in equity.” What says the Believer, now? He says, “I fear not that assize, for who can condemn?” The great white throne is set, the books are opened, men are trembling, fiends are yelling, sinners are shrieking—“Rocks hide us, mountains on us fall.” These make up an awful chorus of dismay. There stands the Believer, and looking round on the assembled universe of men and angels, he cries, “Who shall lay anything to my charge?” And silence reigns through earth and Heaven.

“Again he speaks, and fixing his eyes full on the Judge Himself, he cries, “Who is he that condemns?” And lo, there upon the Throne of Judgment sits the only One who *can* condemn. And who is that? It is Christ that died, yes rather, that is risen again who sits on the right hand of God, who makes intercession for him. Can those lips say, “Depart you cursed,” to the man for whom they once did intercede? Can those eyes flash lightning on the man whom once they saw in sin and from there with rays of love they did lift him up to joy and peace and purity? No, Christ will not belie Himself. He cannot reverse His grace. It cannot be that the throne of condemnation shall be exalted on the ruins of the Cross. It cannot be that Christ should transform Himself at last, but till He can do so, none can condemn. None but He has a right to condemn, for He is the sole Judge of right and wrong. And if He has died for us shall He put *us* to death? If He has risen for us, shall He thrust us downwards to the pit? And if He has reigned for us and has been accepted for us, shall He cast us away? And if He has pleaded for us, shall He curse us at the last? No. Come life, come death—my soul can rest on this. He died for me. I cannot be punished for my sin. He rose again, I must rise and though I die, yet shall I live again. He sits at the right hand of God and so must I. I must be crowned and reign with Him forever. He intercedes and He must be heard. He beckons me and I must be brought at length to see His face and to be with Him where He is.”²⁰¹

34g Also see notes under Romans 8:26,27.

81. Who Shall Separate Us From The Love of Christ? 8:35-39

8:35 Who shall separate^{future} us from the love of Christ?^a shall tribulation,^b or distress,^c or persecution,^d or famine,^e or nakedness,^f or peril,^g or sword?^h

201 Charles Spurgeon, “The Believer’s Challenge”, *New Park Street Pulpit*, volume 5, sermon 256.

35a **"Who shall separate us..."** The answer is, in a word, nobody! Nothing and nobody is powerful enough to undo the justifying work of God. And no external force can separate us from the love of God. We can separate ourselves from the love of Christ when we backslide, but nothing will separate God and His love from us if we are saved.

Cruel and wicked men have tried every form of persecuting the saints of God. They have been more inventive in the torments which they have applied to Christians than in almost anything else. Even the communists learned much from the Inquisition and the State torturers as they practiced their craft upon believers. Yet no torture, no rack, no imprisonment has ever separated them from Christ. They have clung to Him after the manner of John Bunyan, who, when they said that he might go free if he would promise not to preach the Gospel, said, "I will lie in prison till the moss grows on my eyelids rather than I will ever make such a promise as that! If you let me out of prison today, I will preach tomorrow, by the Grace of God", which he did, even with the threat of continued imprisonment. These sorrows are not sufficient to separate us from the love of Christ.

The Greek structure shows a rhetorical denial of the possibility of anyone or anything separating us from the love of Christ.

35b **Tribulation** should draw us closer to God and strengthen our faith rather than to separate us from God. If tribulation severs you from God then we wonder what kind of "salvation" you had. Tribulation would be defined then as "pressure from without". Ask any martyr or anyone else who suffered without dying if they were closer to God and if they felt the love of God stronger before their persecutions or after.

Paul knew something about tribulation as he recorded many of his troubles as a minister in 2 Corinthians 11:23-28. If there was anyone who knew that the love of God was greater than any earthly tribulation, it was Paul. Samuel Rutherford was a close second. He lost his wife and his church and spent much of the latter half of his life in a cruel exile over his religious beliefs regarding the freedom of the church from political control by the king. Many of the 365 letters we have from him speak of his love to Christ even in the midst of dark times of sufferings.

If tribulations pull you away from the love of God, then you testify that there is something in this life greater than the love of God.

35c **"distress"** Strong's # 4730 stenochôria; narrowness of room, calamity, distress. This is trouble from within, as contrasted with tribulation, which can refer to external troubles.

35d **"persecution"** Strong's # 1375 diôgmos; persecution. If we are persecuted for righteousness' sake, it should draw us ever the closer to God. Even if no public persecution exists we may well experience personal and private persecution.

35e **"famine"** When the refrigerator is empty, and the cupboard is bare would it affect your relationship with God? Can you sing on an empty stomach? It was often this way with George Muller as he had hungry orphans to feed, but such a temporal discouragement never shook his faith in an all-providing God. We don't worry about this much today, but it was a constant possibility in Paul's day.

35f **"nakedness"** This demonstrates the most extreme form of poverty, so as not to even be able to afford a rough garment to cover yourself. Even such depths of poverty cannot separate us from the love of Christ. Nakedness also involves great shame and even that has no bearing on our relation to Christ's love. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 4:11, **"Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place."** Yet such a state of want did no damage or harm to Paul's spirituality or to his

relationship to Christ at all. Besides, even such a dire condition is only a temporary one for the Christian, as God will provide the daily bread needed by His children.

35g **“peril”** This would be a life-threatening danger, a constant exposure to sudden death. This dogged the early church continually, as the persecutions of the Caesars could have overtaken a believer at any time. Used only here and in 2 Corinthians 11:26.

35h **“sword”** Death and martyrdom would certainly never separate us from the love of God. The sword often pictures judicial death, such as being punished or put to death by the State in persecution, something the early Christians were very familiar with and something American Christians may be forced to acquaint themselves with soon. If anything, such persecution would tend to strengthen the relation with Christ, not weaken it, as any martyr would testify.

Comparison of word studies in verse 35:

AV	Tyndale	Coverdale	Geneva 1599	Bishops	ESV	LSV
tribulation	tribulacion	trouble	tribulation	tribulation	tribulation	tribulation
distress	anguysshe	anguysh	anguish	anguishe	distress	distress
persecution	persecucion	persecucion	persecution	persecution	persecution	persecution
famine	honger	honger	famine	hunger	famine	famine
nakedness	nakednesse	nakednesse	nakedness	nakednesse	nakedness	nakedness
peril	parell	parell	peril	peryll	danger	danger
sword	swearde	swerde	sword	sworde	sword	sword

8:36 As it is written,^{a-perfect passive} **For thy sake we are killed**^{present passive} **all the day long; we are accounted**^{aorist passive} **as sheep for the slaughter.**^b

36a **“as it was written”** Greek perfect tense- it has been written and remains written, not to be changed or altered. It is a completed action with continuous results or the continuance of an act completed in the past. The components are always a past action and continuous results. References to the Scriptures like this are often presented in the perfect tense. "The just shall live by faith" is one of those unalterable truths of Christianity. This perfect tense in reference to New Testament references to Old Testament texts is used 62 times in the New Testament, 16 times in Romans (1:17; 2:24; 3:4,10; 4:17; 8:36; 9:13,33; 10:15; 11:8,26; 12:19; 14:11; 15:3,9,21). This usage of the perfect is a strong argument for the verbal and plenary preservation of the Scripture, as the written Old Testament word stands forever and continues to.

36b **“we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter”** This is a quote from Psalm 44:22. Even being counted as sheep for the slaughter by the world which knows not God or martyrdom does not in the least bit weaken God's love for us. God's love for His own is not dependent upon what the world thinks about us. Rather, if the world hates us, then we can be sure that God's loves us all the more. But the saints still have the victory, even in the face of such a slaughter.

8:37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors^{a-present} **through him that loved**^{aorist active participle} **us.**^{bcd}

37a **“more than conquerors”** Through Christ, we are not just conquerors but more than conquerors. There is a difference between winning the Super Bowl by one point or a hundred. You won under both scenarios but you have a greater victory under the 100-point win. In Christ,

we simply didn't "squeak by" in our battle with sin but we utterly destroyed it. We can conquer all these forces that would seek to separate us from the love of God or to attack our justified standing with God through Him that loved us. Nothing, not even ourselves, can overthrow the work and the love of God on our behalf.

This verse is also the capstone of the Christian experience and standing- conquerors- and moreso- through Christ! Paul summarizes the culmination of Christian standing and state. He starts at our initial and natural state of sin and guilt, and Christ's resulting work for us to remedy it, and to provide justification. Then comes the knowledge of indwelling sin, and the Spirit's work within us, and deliverance from sin's power through the work of Christ. Next, Paul deals with God before for the saints, on their side in their struggles. Our sinful hearts, prone to legality and unbelief, with great difficulty receive these comforting truths, that God is for us. We have failed and will continue to fail in our battles against our old nature, but He is for us. We are ignorant, but He is for us. We have not brought forth much spiritual fruit, but He is for us. If our hearts would only surrender to the glorious fact that there are those whom God will eternally be for, then we shall be ready to magnify the God of all grace!

"We conquer when we ourselves are conquered; we conquer by those which are wont to conquer others; we beat our enemies with their own weapons."²⁰²

37b **"him that loved us"** his is obviously Christ.

37c If anything, these things listed in verses 35-37 would tend to strengthen Christian profession. Just ask any martyr or apostle or anyone who suffered persecution or imprisonment for Christ's sake!

37d "We go to Christ for forgiveness, and then too often look to the law for power to fight our sins. Paul thus rebukes us, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Take your sins to Christ's cross, for the old man can only be crucified there: we are crucified with Him. The only weapon to fight sin with is the spear which pierced the side of Jesus."²⁰³

8:38^a For I am persuaded,^{b-perfect passive} that neither death,^c nor life,^d nor angels,^e nor principalities,^f nor powers,^g nor things present,^{perfect active participle} nor things to come,^{present active participle}

38a Verses 38 and 39 are two of the greatest verses regarding the security of the believer.

38b **"persuaded"**

AV

ESV

LSV

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

38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,

38 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,

202 Matthew Poole, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*.

203 Charles Spurgeon, *Morning and Evening*, April 23.

Paul was no doubt fully persuaded, beyond any doubt, and beyond the ability of Satan to sway his mind. The Bishops, ESV and LSV use a weaker “I am sure”. The “persuasion” of the other versions gives you the stronger idea of being totally convinced of this fact, not just “sure” about it.

38c **“death”**. How could death separate us from the love of God? Death is that transition from this world of woe to the eternal glories of heaven. Death would not separate us from God but would bring us to Him!

38d **“life”** The right kind of life, lived in the power of the Spirit for the glory of God could never separate us from the love of God.

38e **“angels”** A good angel would never want to separate us from the love of God while a fallen angel never could.

“Now the Rabbis--and Paul had once been a Rabbi--believed that they were grudgingly hostile to men. They believed that they had been angry when God created man. It was as if they did not want to share God with anyone and had grudged man his share in him. The Rabbis had a legend that when God appeared on Sinai to give Moses the law he was attended by his hosts of angels, and the angels grudged Israel the law, and assaulted Moses on his way up the mountain and would have stopped him had not God intervened. So Paul, thinking in terms of his own day, says, “Not even the grudging, jealous angels can separate us from the love of God, much as they would like to do so.”²⁰⁴

38f **“principalities”** Strong's # 746 archê; a commencement, chief (in various applications of order, time, place, or rank). It is somewhat difficult to really get a handle on the definition of this word. “The English word is from the French word ‘principalite’, meaning the government of a prince. A principality is a kingdom, state, country or realm that is ruled by a prince.”²⁰⁵

38g **“powers”** Strong's # 1411 dunamis; force, miraculous power. Nothing of a supernatural power, not even the supernatural power of Satan, could separate us from the love of God. We are held in a supernatural bond that is the most powerful force in Creation.

8:39 Nor height,^a nor depth,^b nor any other creature, shall be able^{future middle} to separate^{aorist infinitive} us^c from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

39a **“height”** Nothing in heaven will separate us from God. This could also refer to prosperity and the positive things in life. Prosperity can often be more harmful than persecution in wrecking a man's spirituality since so few Christians know how to handle riches or success.

39b **“depth”** Nothing in hell or the underworld can separate us from Christ. These are the negative things in life, which are not supposed to be able to diminish our spirituality or our relation to God.

39c **“shall be able to separate us”** Again, absolutely nothing can undo it! Think of what you will but all these are futile in any attempt they might make to wreck our salvation or our relationship to Christ. It is not the external things we need fear but rather the internal foes which

204 William Barclay, “Romans” in the *Daily Study Bible*.

205 Laurence Vance, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*, page 270.

reside in our own heart. These things within us are our greatest enemies. I fear my own heart more than I fear Satan. He cannot harm me, but I can make my own salvation shipwreck.

Spiritual Applications, Romans Chapter 8

What can you say about Romans 8 that hasn't already been said? This chapter is beyond all human praise. It is the mountain peak of Romans. All of Paul's thinking has culminated in this. This chapter is Paul's great summary and conclusion of the doctrine of salvation and its associated doctrines. It is like a lawyer arguing his case from Romans 1-7, and then summarizing it in chapter 8. This chapter is one of those superlative chapters of scripture, like John 17 or Hebrews 11. The amount of theological ground covered in this chapter is immense and one feels overwhelmed when attempting to study it or preach on it.

Romans Chapter 9

The burden of chapters 9-11 is why God chose, or elected, Israel over all the other nations of the earth. Paul is dealing with national and racial election of Israel, not personal and individual election to salvation. Trying to read personal and individual election to salvation into Romans 9 will lead to theological errors and confusion. There is how the Calvinists go wrong in their understanding of “unconditional election”. Doctrines relating to Calvinist dogmas of “unconditional election to salvation” do not belong to Romans 9 as Paul is dealing with Israel and her election as God’s covenant people, not to personal and individual election to salvation.

There are no proof texts to support the Calvinist idea of “unconditional election” in Romans 9. Calvinists seem to imagine that Romans 9-11 present an “unanswerable” presentation and defense of their theological system but that is obviously not the case. They do get very arrogant and dogmatic about it, saying that their commentaries on Romans 9 prove beyond any doubt their positions on unconditional election. We must realize that Romans 9-11 deals with nations, not individuals. If these chapters are not read in this light, their truth will never be seen. Thus, we do not take a Calvinistic or Arminian approach to these chapters. Instead, we take a Biblical approach and do our best to let Scripture influence our thinking, not an uninspired and imperfect human theological system. We admit we are dispensational, but use that as an interpretative tool. My “dispensationalism” is not based on Darby, Scofield or anyone. It is based on the understanding that the Church and Israel are separate and distinct groups within God’s plan. That much I figured out for myself. However much Darby or Scofield or Chafer may agree or disagree with my understanding isn’t really important to me. That my understanding of the Church and Israel might be pigeon-holed into “dispensationalism” is just an accident since I developed it independently.

“Calvin is wrong when he reads into these verses election either to salvation or to damnation in the eternal sense. That is not their scope. They belong only to a Divine economy of history. Paul opens the paragraph by asking: “Is there then unrighteousness with God?”—and the rest of the paragraph is meant to show that the answer is “No”; but if these verses referred to eternal life and death, there would be unrighteousness with God; and that which is implanted deepest in our moral nature by God Himself would protest that even God has no honour.”²⁰⁶ It is apparent then that this passage can be expounded and understood without appeal to any Calvinistic system of theology.

Charles Spurgeon, in his *Commenting and Commentaries*, while reviewing commentaries on Romans, complained about non-Calvinists dealing with these chapters and lamented as to why non-Calvinists just couldn’t leave these chapters alone. It is the height of arrogance to think that only Calvinists were qualified or permitted to comment on these chapters!²⁰⁷ These chapters are for all Christians, not just Calvinists. We will not allow ourselves to be intimidated by such unscriptural

²⁰⁶ J. Sidlow Baxter, *Explore the Book*, vol. 6, page 88.

²⁰⁷ Spurgeon had a tendency to be arrogant when it came to his “defense” of Calvinism.

attitudes. Anyone, from any theological system (or those who claim no theological system!) are at divine liberty to expound these verses, as much as any Calvinist is. We will comment on these verses although we do not claim any allegiance to any Calvinistic or Arminian theological system. We will approach these next three chapters from a Bible-believing viewpoint, shunning the human theological systems as much as possible.

In analyzing the Calvinist views on these chapters, I would recommend *The Other Side of Calvinism* by Laurence Vance as an aid. Vance shows the various errors of the Calvinistic theological systems as they apply to this, and other passages, of Scripture. His is the best and most comprehensive survey of Calvinism from a non-Calvinist (and non-Arminian) Bible-believing position.

Chapters 9-11 deal with the Biblical understanding of the so-called “Jewish Problem”. There really is such a thing as “The Jewish Problem” but not in the way Adolph Hitler or the anti-Semites define it. The “problem” is “What do we do with Israel in the overall plan and economy of God? What is their present condition and what does the future hold for them?” There are many so-called “Independent Fundamental Baptists”²⁰⁸ that teach “Replacement Theology”, that the Church has replaced Israel and that the modern Jews are not true Jews. This sounds suspiciously like the teaching of the “Christian Identity” and “British Israelism” movements. We maintain, through clear Biblical teachings, that God is not finished with Israel and that the Church is not Israel, according to 1 Corinthians 10:32. Only a dispensational approach to Scripture can make that clear distinction between the Church and Israel and only a dispensational approach to Scripture puts the Jew in the right place historically and prophetically and can properly define the question “What, or who, is a Jew?”

Romans 9-11 from *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption* by W. Graham Scroggie, 3:142

Election of Israel 9:1-29	The Rejection of Israel 9:30-10:21	The Conversion of Israel 11:1-36
1. The Subjects 9:1-5	1. Righteousness was sought by works and not by faith 9:30-10:13	1. The rejection is not total 11:1-10
2. The Vindication 9:6-29	2. Opportunity and warning were neglected 10:14-21	2. The rejection is not final 11:11-32
		Doxology 11:33-36
Past	Present	Future

1. Isarel's Past Romans 9:4-8

- A. Chosen people
- B. Have the covenants, the adoption, the glory, the law
 - i. Romans 3:1,2; 9:4
- C. Rejected the prophets and the Messiah
 - i. Matthew 27:25 “**His blood be on us and on our children**”
- D. God then turned to the Gentiles, after Acts 7

²⁰⁸ Mainly followers of Steven Anderson of Pheonix, Arizona.

2. Israel's Present Romans 10:1

1. Lost but with a zeal

i. Romans 10:2,3

2. Ignorant

i. Romans 10:2

3. In spiritual blindness

i. Romans 11:25

ii. 2 Corinthians 3:13-16 **"And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away."**

4. Temporarily set aside but not permanently

i. Romans 11:1,2

3. Israel's Future Romans 11:1,2

1. They must go through the tribulation for purification- time of Jacob's Trouble

i. Jeremiah 30:7 **"Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it."**

2. 2/3rds of Israel will die in the Tribulation

i. Zechariah 13:8,9 **"And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God."**

3. Millennial kingdom

4. Fulfillment of the covenants

5. All Israel shall be saved

i. Romans 11:26

What is the relation between Israel and the Church in the Church Age? The various positions are:

1. God is finished with Israel and has transferred the kingdom promises to the Church. This position is held by the Roman Catholic Church, nearly all Protestant and Reformed churches and Calvinists. The *Thompson Chain Reference Bible* also holds to this position. If you check the page headings, especially in the prophetic books, you will see where Thompson applies the Millennial promises made to Israel to the Church. This is why Calvinist commentaries on Romans 9-11 tend to be of limited value because they hold to this incorrect interpretation. White Supremacists, Neo-Nazi and other anti-semitic groups hold to some variation of this, mainly that the modern Jews are not true Jews at all, but they still find a way to blame them for all modern ills.

2. The Church is the True Israel. Many cults hold to this position, such as Herbert W. Armstrong's Worldwide Church of God. They believe the true identity of Israel was lost after the Assyrian and Babylonian deportations, but somehow, the

lineage was preserved through the English-speaking people of Europe, especially in the English. The kings and queens of England were crowned on the same stone Jacob used for a pillow and now the Kingdom promises rest with the English people and their descendants in the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Other nuts claim all the Jews were black and that the black races are the True Israel.

3. The Church and Israel are separate bodies with their own covenants and promises. This is the central teaching of Dispensationalism. The Church is not Israel and never will be. Paul is clear on this in 1 Corinthians 10:32 (**"Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:"**). We do not try to steal the lifeblood of the nation of Israel (her covenants and promises) and apply them to the Church. This is the Bible-believing position and that is our position.

82. Paul's Burden For Israel 9:1-3

9:1 I say^{present} the truth in Christ, I lie^{present middle} not,^a my conscience also bearing me witness^{present active participle} in the Holy Ghost,^b

1a **"I speak the truth...I lie not"** A most solemn oath, about as strong of an oath as a Christian can make, even calling upon Christ to witness it and verify it. Paul makes as strong a statement as he can to demonstrate that what he is about to say regarding his burden for Israel is true and is not just a put-on or a lot of pious hot-air. He will speak in a deliberate way in what he has to say.

1b **"my conscience bearing me witness"** It is when the conscience is under the control of the Holy Spirit does it become a reliable guide, not otherwise since then it may very well be defiled by sin. But Paul had a clear conscience which allowed him to say what he is about to say truthfully. These were the same Jews who tried to kill him, who persecuted his brethren, who blasphemed his Lord continually and who were implacable against his gospel. Their hate towards him and Christ knew no bounds. Yet Paul could still pray for them and desire their salvation, even if it had to involve his own damnation. Paul harbored no resentment against his persecutors. Not only were these Jews against Christ but they were also against Paul personally and would have killed Paul as they did his Master. Forty of them bound themselves under a great curse to eat no food or drink no water until they had tasted Paul's blood. This is what Christianity does in the heart- it makes you love for and pray for your enemies who would like to see you dead. Can you pray for an enemy? Can you pray for those who spitefully use you? A Spirit-filled Christian can- and will do these things.

Would we be able to pray for our "kinsmen after the flesh" as Paul prayed for his? Can we pray for our fellow Americans (or for whatever ethnic group we belong), knowing how wicked most of them are and how against the gospel they may be? Can we have a burden for our own, for those in our own house, for our own wicked family members who may have done us great injury?

9:2^a That I have^{present} great heaviness^b and continual sorrow in my heart.^{cd}

2a This is what constitutes a burden for someone's salvation, when that person (or in this context, nation) is on your heart continually and you can think of nothing else. This is the paradox of the Christian- he has a continual sorrow in his heart for the lost whom he loves while at the same time enjoying the great joy which accompanies salvation.

2b **“heaviness”** Strong’s #3077 *lupê*, sorrow, pain, grief, annoyance, affliction, of persons mourning

2c **“continual sorrow”** Paul’s burden for the Jews was no “fly by night” thing or just some emotional distress that came around whenever he sat in a missions conference. It was continual with him, a constant companion that dogged every waking hour. It was a permanent fixture with him and made up his spiritual fiber.

2d “His grief for his nation and people he expresseth,

1. By the greatness of it; it was such as a woman hath in travail so the word imports.

2. By the continuance of it; it was *continual*, or without intermission.

3. By the seat of it; it was in his *heart*, and not outward in his face. The cause he doth not here set down, but it is easily gathered from what follows, viz. the obstinacy and infidelity, together with the rejection, of the Jews.”²⁰⁹

9:3 For I could wish^{a-imperfect} that myself were^{infinitive} accursed^{bcd} from Christ^e for my brethren, my kinsmen^f according to the flesh:^g

3a **“wish”** is in the Greek imperfect tense. Paul had started wishing this at some undisclosed time in the past and he was still wishing this, as he had not yet stopped, as his burden had not yet been fulfilled.

3b **“accursed”** Strong’s #331 *anathema*, a gift given by vow or in fulfillment of a promise, and given up or devoted to destruction for God’s sake, given up to the curse and destruction, accursed. It answers to the Hebrew “*cherem*”, which the Septuagint translates by it, and means either a thing or person separated from its former state or condition, and devoted to destruction. In this sense it is used, Deuteronomy 7:25, 26; Joshua 6:17, 18; 7:12. It denotes an indissoluble vow. Paul was willing to give of himself as a sacrifice devoted to utter destruction and condemnation if it would result in Israel’s salvation. In the fullest sense, Paul was willing to go to hell for his countrymen if it would result in their salvation. Of course, it would not, as Paul was a sinner with his own sins and a sinner cannot pay the sin debt for another sinner since he also has a debt of his own that would first have to be discharged- impossible except through the blood of Christ. There is therefore no way anyone could claim that Paul was anti-Semitic in any of his writings. But what Paul wished for himself is what Jesus has already done for the nation of Israel on the cross! Paul realizes he must be patient for the salvation of Israel, as it will not happen in his lifetime, although he wishes he would be alive to witness it.

3c **“I could wish myself accursed...”** This may sound like pious dribble but Paul says in Romans 9:1 “My conscience bears me witness in the Holy Ghost”. Paul’s burden was genuine and that was one of the secrets as to why God used Paul the way he did. And very few Christians understand this kind of burden. Paul here is showing his willingness to be cursed for Israel, but not its necessity. But could Paul use any stronger words to express his crushing burden for the salvation of his people?

3d **“I could wish myself accursed...”** Compare with what Moses said in Exodus 32:32 “...blot me out of thy book!” Moses would have understood something about Paul’s burden for Israel.

²⁰⁹ Matthew Poole.

But what Moses couldn't do and what Paul couldn't do, Christ did on the cross! He died for all men, both Jew and Gentile, since both Jew and Gentile needed to be saved.

3e You can't be accursed "in" Christ! You cannot be blessed "out" of Christ.

3f **"my kinsmen"** Although a Christian, Paul, a former Jew religiously, still considered himself Jewish, at least racially.

- 3g
1. **Israel's Position-** "my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh" Romans 9:3
 2. **Israel's Privilege-** "Who are Israelites...and the service of God and the promises" Romans 9:4
 3. **Israel's Pedigree-** "whose are the fathers" Romans 9:5."²¹⁰

83. God's Sovereignty in Regards To Israel 9:4-29

9:4 Who are^{present} Israelites;^a to whom *pertaineth* the adoption,^b and the glory,^c and the covenants, and the giving of *the* law, and the service *of* God,^d and the promises;

4a To be an Israelite was the highest honor a man could have in a national sense. They had 7 spiritual advantages over the Gentiles. Israel had:

1. The adoption. Israel had Sonship
 - A. Exodus 4:22,23 **"And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn: And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn."**
 - B. Hosea 11:1 **"When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt."**
2. The glory. This was demonstrated in the wilderness with the pillar of fire/cloud and at the dedication of the Solomonic Temple.
 - A. 1 Kings 8:10 **"And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD,"**
 - B. 2 Chronicles 5:13 **"It came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of musick, and praised the LORD, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the LORD;"**
3. The covenants
 - A. Abrahamic
 - i. Genesis 12,15
 - B. Mosaic
 - i. Exodus 19,20
 - C. Palestinian
 - i. Deuteronomy 30
 - D. Davidic
 - i. 2 Samuel 7

²¹⁰ Ian Paisley, *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans*, page 144.

- E. The Gospel or the Church Age dispensation do not nullify any of these covenants.
 - 4. The giving of the Law
 - A. Exodus 20
 - B. Deuteronomy 5
 - 5. The service of God (the priesthood and Levites)
 - 6. The promises
 - 7. The Fathers, or the Patriarchs
 - A. Romans 9:5
- No Gentile nation had any of these.

This was what troubled Paul so much concerning the Jews, that they should have such extraordinary spiritual privileges and benefits. Yet it profited them nothing. They rejected everything God gave them including Jesus Christ, Who was of their race, bone of their bone, flesh of their flesh. Yet they would not receive Him. The terrible hardness of the human heart! The hardness of their heart broke Paul's heart.

4b **"pertaineth to the adoption"** While individuals may be adopted, Israel is the only nation that will be adopted. No Gentile nation will be thus adopted. This is national adoption, not individual adoption.

4c **"the glory"** The visible glory of God, seen at the tabernacle (with the glory of God dwelling between the cherubim over the mercy seat) and later at the temple.

4d **"the service of God"** Namely, the priesthood and tabernacle/temple service. What a great privilege it was for them to be given such a high and noble service to God!

9:5 Whose *are* the fathers,^a and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ *came*, who is ^{present active participle} over all, God^b blessed for ever. Amen.^c

5a **"the fathers"** The patriarchs- Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the 12 sons of Jacob. No Gentile nation has anything similar.

5b **"Christ...who is over all, God..."** Christ is expressly called "God" in this verse.

5c **"Amen"** Paul does a very "Jewish" thing by inserting a benediction here. This is common in the rabbinical writings.

AV	ESV	LSV
5 Whose <i>are</i> the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ <i>came</i> , who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.	5 To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.	5 To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

"Christ" Both the ESV and LSV use "the Christ", which is New Age terminology.

9:6 Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect.^{a-perfect} For they^b are not all Israel, which are of Israel:^c

6a **“Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect”** It had. It always does. The problem was not with the Word of God but rather with the hard heart of the Jews, and their willful rejection of that Word.

6b Emphatic.

6c **“they are not all Israel...”** These would be racial Jews who were not believing Jews. They did not believe in the Abrahamic Covenant or in the coming of the Messiah. They are non-observant. Paul says they are not really Jews at all. A good example today would be many non-observant Jews (many of them of Russian heritage and origin) who may be Jews as to their heritage but are atheistic. Paul says they are not truly of Israel. Today, in a New Testament/Church Age context, we could say that everyone who is a member of our Church is not a true Christian.

9:7^a Neither, because they are^{present} the seed of Abraham,^b are they all children:^c but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.^{d-future}

7a This verse refers to Genesis 21:12, **And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.**

7b The Tyndale Bible is a bit wordy here with “nether are they all chyldren strayght waye”. It might be an attempt to emphasize that they are not not Jews simply because Abraham was their father, although none of the other translations place any real emphasis on this.

7c Ishamel, as the older son of Abraham, should have been chosen over Isaac, humanly-speaking and as was the custom of that day, but God chose the younger- an unnatural act. Just because a man is a child of Abraham does not mean he is of the promised seed. The Arabs are of the seed of Abraham through Ishamel yet the blessing is to the Jew through Isaac. Thus the Arabs, and by extension, the Muslims, do not have the covenant or the promises that God made to Israel through Isaac. God will do nothing through Islam as the blessing and the covenant is through Judaism.

7d Paul does not mention Ishmael here so there is no room for Islam in God’s plan for mankind.

9:8 That is,^{present} They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God:^a but the children of the promise are counted^{present passive} for the seed.^b

8a Simply being born a Jew does not automatically mean that one is saved any more than one who is born into a Christian family does not automatically save that child. Jews must be saved by faith in the Messiah in the same way that the Gentiles are. Racial Jews are not the ones God counts for the seed, but Jews who are believing. Just because someone was born into a Jewish home does not automatically mean that he is saved, justified, or in the covenant. All that comes from belief and faith, not the providence of birth.

8b Historically, Paul would be thinking about how the promise went through Isaac but Ishmael and the children of Keturah, although physical descendants of Abraham, are not counted as the seed.

9:9^a For this *is* the word of promise, At this time will I come,^{future middle} and Sarah shall have^{future middle} a son.

9a This verse quotes Genesis 18:10 “**And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him.**”

9:10 And not only *this*; but when Rebecca also had^{present active participle} conceived by one, even by our father Isaac.

9:11 (For *the children* being not yet born,^{aorist passive participle} neither having done^{aorist active participle} any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand,^{ab-present active subjunctive} not of works, but of him that calleth;)^{c-present active participle}

11a The reason why God chose Isaac over Ishmael or Jacob over Esau had nothing to do with works, wither good or bad, on anyone’s part. God had His reasons for the selections He made and they were not dependent upon works. God had other reasons to choose Jacob over Esau than their supposed goodness or merit. But God never really has disclosed what that reason is, and is not really obligated to do so. The sovereignty of God is the basis for this election of one person over the other for the covenants and the nation.

11b “**according to election**” In this context, this election is not unto salvation but rather to service, nationhood and through whom the promises and covenants would go to and through. Not all of God’s elective acts deal with salvation. Here, God is choosing one brother over another to work His overall plans for the human race and in relation to which nation He will work through in the giving of the covenants. It is clear that God’s elections sometimes deal with only one or two people for special callings and service.

The “election” here then has nothing to do with individual salvation, but rather which nation will serve the other, as in verse 12.

11c “**...him that calleth**” First Peter 1:2 really can’t be run in here as Peter there is clearly discussing election unto personal salvation while Paul is discussing the reasons behind Israel’s election as the covenant nation. Peter makes it very clear that election to individual salvation is based upon God’s foreknowledge. The Bible never speaks of “unconditional election”. Election is always based on something, although God seldom tells us what it is apart from His foreknowledge. Paul says here, in this election of nations, that foreseen good works is not a basis for election. How to resolve the apparent contradiction? Simply realize that Paul is not discussing individual election to salvation, as Peter is, but rather is discussing the reasons why God chose Isaac over Ishmael and Jacob over Esau. Although both Peter and Paul are discussing election, they are discussing different elements of it, so they cannot be directly compared.

9:12^a It was said^{aorist passive} unto her, The elder shall serve^{future} the younger.^{bc}

12a This verse refers to Genesis 25:23, with Esau and Jacob. It could be further extended to Ishmael and Isaac, but that is not as solid, as both had different mothers, born years apart. But Esau and Jacob were twins, of the same mother, so they are Paul's primary burden here.

12b Again God chose the younger over the older, which is the reverse of the usual order. Esau should have gotten the blessing and the covenants, but Jacob got both. God chose Israel over Edom. Why? Again, this was a choice and selection of God to operate in this fashion. It was not because Isaac and Jacob were "better" than Ishmael or Esau, since works did not enter into these elections. It was based on the sovereignty of God.

12c **The elder shall serve the younger** is completely backwards as compared to the almost universal practice and belief in Biblical days. The firstborn got all the goodies- a double portion of the inheritance, the "power of attorney" from his father, etc. The oldest was always regarded with more honor than his younger siblings. But again, God is sovereign and is under no constraint. He may work in any fashion He pleases without restricting Himself to the norms and traditions of human societies.

9:13 As it is written,^{a-perfect passive} Jacob have I^b loved,^{aorist} but Esau have I^b hated.^{cde-aorist}

13a **"As it is written"** Greek perfect tense- it has been written and remains written, not to be changed or altered. It is a completed action with continuous results or the continuance of an act completed in the past. The components are always a past action and continuous results. References to the Scriptures like this are often presented in the perfect tense. "The just shall live by faith" is one of those unalterable truths of Christianity. This perfect tense in reference to New Testament references to Old Testament texts is used 62 times in the New Testament, 16 times in Romans (1:17; 2:24; 3:4,10; 4:17; 8:36; 9:13,33; 10:15; 11:8,26; 12:19; 14:11; 15:3,9,21). This usage of the perfect is a strong argument for the verbal and plenary preservation of the Scripture, as the written Old Testament word stands forever and continues to.

13b The Tyndale Bible uses "he" instead of "I" both times.

13c **"Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated"** This is quoted from Malachi 1:2-4, **I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them, The border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the LORD hath indignation for ever.**

Hated how? Hated why? If this election was not based on works, then why would Esau be hated and Jacob loved? Of course, there is more to this election than meets the eye in the mind of God. While works may not have been a factor in this election, there was still something in Esau's character and personality that God did not approve of and was actively opposed to. That's clear when we see how carnal he was.

Is this "hatred" just another way of saying that God loved Jacob more than He did Esau? Is this "hatred" simply a comparative term? I do not think it is wise to dilute the "hated" here.

God did love Jacob more than Esau, but what the ultimate basis for this is not specially told us.

When we assume that God hated Esau because He wanted to based on “sovereign election”, we may be assuming too much. God has a reason for everything He does. His actions are not arbitrary. But God is under no obligation to explain His actions to us or why He does what He does. This leaves us to either simply accept it for what it is or to try to pry behind the curtain into His secret counsels, something we cannot do.

God’s “hatred” of Esau was justified, seeing how Esau turned out as a man of the flesh and how his descendants persecuted Israel. Not that there was a lot of love about Jacob, humanly speaking, as he was a liar, a cheat and a swindler, who played favorites with his children and was given to severe bouts of self-pity. Jacob did turn out “alright” at the end of his long life and Esau did not, but there is a deeper reason as to why God reacted to these two men in the way that He did, and that is never clearly discussed in Scripture. God did wrestle with Jacob but he never bothered to visit Esau in such a manner.

13d Why was Esau hated? Doesn’t God love all men? He does, for “God so loved the world” and He desires all men everywhere to be saved. These are theological facts. But when did God start hating Esau? From eternity past or as Esau’s character developed? After all, he had the birthright and the blessing but he wasted them. He sought to murder his brother. He married heathen women, much to the despair of his parents. He certainly was not a lover of God or of the things of God as his grandfather Abraham was. Was God’s attitude toward Esau based on His foreknowledge (1 Peter 1:2 **Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.**) of his character and actions? When this hatred “kicked in” regarding Esau is not told. God simply said He hated Esau, but never says why or when He started hating him, or what exactly this hating entailed spiritually, God loves men because it is His nature to love, but He will hates these same men if they hate Him and oppose Him, as so many do. If God ends up hating a man, it is because that man has earned the wrath of God upon him.

This can also be applied to the nations Jacob and Esau founded. Jacob and his twelve sons made up Israel and that nation was accepted by God as His covenant people. Esau and his people, the Edomites, were rejected by God for any covenant considerations and they turned against Israel and became one of their bitterest enemies.

13e It’s important to note that God’s statement about hating Esau was never made during Esau’s lifetime. God’s anger with “Esau” doesn’t appear in scripture until the book of Obadiah, well over one thousand years after his death. In Genesis, Scripture actually records the tender moment when a cowardly Jacob, afraid that Esau might kill him, divides his family into three groups as he prepares to be greeted by the brother he so wickedly deceived. Shockingly, Esau welcomes Jacob home with heartfelt-tears, and a warm, sincere embrace. (Genesis 33:1-16) Esau had removed his anger and bitterness far from him and received his deceiver with mercy, kindness and joy.

While God was obviously disappointed with Esau’s carnal decision to trade his birthright for a single meal decades earlier, it’s unlikely that his emotional reunion with Jacob would have been recorded with the details Moses provided if God truly despised him as a person.

Esau’s descendants, the nation of Edom, becomes a proud, wicked and murderous nation, one that constantly wars with Israel and even pillages their land after the northern kingdom is carried off to Assyria. In Obadiah, we see God’s fury at this wicked nation, which gloats at the harsh but necessary judgement of God on his chosen people. Not only is Edom brimming with pride, but it rejoices at Israel’s calamity and plunders them when they are weak and scattered. Just as God referred to Israel as “Jacob” throughout the Old Testament (including 16 times from Isaiah 40-49), so he referred to Edom as “Esau” in multiple books of

the Old Testament, such as in Obadiah 1-14, 18.

God isn't talking about two individual men, but two nations in conflict, Edom (Esau) and Israel (Jacob). God's fury with "Esau" a/k/a Edom, is clearly justified. Obadiah notes God's hot displeasure at their pride and violence, "against thy brother Jacob (a/k/a Israel)." There are few things God despises more than pride (Proverbs 6:16,17. **These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look...**). God abhors it when the strong take advantage of the weak, even if their weakness is a consequence of their own sin. Edom has done both of these things, and he has done it against God's chosen and beloved nation, Israel.

In Malachi, as in Obadiah, God is clearly speaking of a nation that sprung from the loins of Esau, the Edomites. God despised them, not because they came from Esau, but because they were proud and delighted in evil.

9:14^a What shall we say^{future} then? Is there unrighteousness^b with God?^c God forbid.
d-aorist middle optative

14a These verses make up the strongest discussion of the sovereignty of God in the Bible.

14b AV

ESV

LSV

14 What shall we say then?
Is there unrighteousness
with God? God forbid.

14 What shall we say
then? Is there injustice on
God's part? By no means!

14 What shall we say then? Is
there any unrighteousness with
God? May it never be!

"**unrighteousness**" The ESV makes another unnecessary change with "injustice" for "unrighteousness". The LSV reads as the Authorized Version.

14c "**Is there unrighteousness with God?**" No doubt there will be many who will object to God making His election on whatever basis He did. "If it wasn't by works, then on what basis did you choose the younger over the elder? On what basis do you love Jacob and hate Esau? God's choices are not fair!" Since God is not basing these actions or feelings on human emotions or reasoning, man has difficulty in trying to figure them out and accept them. Until He can, he will charge God with unrighteousness and of not being fair in His dealings.

14d "**God forbid**" Do not even entertain the thought that there is any unrighteousness with God in how He deals with men in the context of His will and overall plan. There is absolutely no unrighteousness in Him or in what He does or in how He does it. Simply because we do not or cannot understand it, or because God has not chosen to completely and fully explain Himself or His reasons is no basis to start questioning His righteousness.

Man acts in a sovereign manner on occasion. We decide who to marry, what kind of job to take, what kind of car to buy, who we want playing on our team. This is natural and expected. Why would we deny God the same privileges while demanding them for ourselves?

9:15^a For he saith^{present} to Moses, I will have mercy on^{future} whom I will have mercy,
present active subjunctive **and I will have compassion^{future} on whom I will have compassion.**
present active subjunctive

15a This verse is a quote from Exodus 33:19, with respect to those who fell away in the incident with the golden calf.

**9:16 So then *it is not of him that willeth,*^{present active participle} *nor of him that runneth,*^{a-}
present active participle **but of God that sheweth mercy.**^{bc-present active participle}**

16a The Tyndale Bible has “cunning” instead of “running”. I don’t think that is a typo, seeing the two words sound so similar, but that the Tyndale Bible is expanding on the “will”, as in one who is trying to work or earn God’s favor. The ESV does something similar with its use of “so then it depends not on human will or exertion”.

16b This would not be based on Israel’s merit but on God’s mercy and grace. No one deserves God’s mercy nor can it be earned by any human merit or religious exercise, much like grace. God has conditions on His mercy. We will be merciful to those who want His mercy and He will withhold His mercy from those who do not want it. You can’t “will” God to show mercy to anyone but you can “will” yourself to be put into a position where you can receive His mercy.

16c This is a Calvinistic proof-text to try to build up their idea of “unconditional election” and “sovereign grace” in the salvation of sinners. But as we have said in this chapter, Paul is not discussing individual salvation, but rather is discussing God’s dealing with Israel and the Gentile nations. This verse does not deal with salvation, but rather where, when and under what circumstances God will have or show mercy. In the various circumstances and situations of life, God will decide where, when and if He will show mercy to a sinner, as seen in His dealings with the Pharaoh of the Exodus.

9:17^a For the scripture saith^{present} unto Pharaoh,^b Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up,^{c-aorist} that I might^{shew^{aorist middle subjunctive}} my power in thee,^d and that my name might be declared^{aorist passive subjunctive} throughout all the earth.^{efgh}

17a This verse quotes Exodus 9:16.

17b Notice the phrase “**For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh...**” Not “Moses” said to Pharaoh, but “the scripture”. And Pharaoh had utter contempt for it. We see several interesting things about the scriptures here:

1. The scriptures are living- they can speak! They are not simply some scraps of paper lying around. The Bible is literally alive. It is the Book of God and has the life and power of God within it.
2. There was some form of the scriptures available in Pharaoh’s day. The Bible as we have it did not exist in this day, but SOMETHING in a written form was available to witness to Pharaoh.
3. The scriptures are given human characteristics. This is because the Scriptures have life.
4. The scriptures are not just the long-lost originals but also include accurate copies of those originals.

Compare this with Galatians 3:8 where the scriptures foresee and preach, “**And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.**”

17c The pre-Authorized Version translations use “stirred thee up”.

17d **“I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee”** What a blow to Pharaoh’s ego. At this time in history, Pharaoh was probably the most powerful king of the most powerful nation on the earth, yet God said that he was nothing more than a tool through which God would glorify Himself. No wonder Pharaoh resisted God and hardened his heart as he did, for he had absolutely no intention of acknowledging such a truth concerning how the God of his slaves was really the One in Charge instead of him.

17e **“that my name might be declared throughout all the earth** “And it was! See Rahab’s testimony in Joshua 2:10,11 **“For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.”**

17f “The fact is that Pharaoh’s hardening by God is *a judicial act of God’s moral government in the world*. In Exodus 3:19 it is stated by Jehovah that the King of Egypt would not let them go. That was indeed the case, but the fact is that God acted upon a heart already hard, the hardening by God being historically noted as occurring *after* the notice that Pharaoh hardened his heart (though God predicted that He would harden Pharaoh’s heart) -- and that is the patent fact. God does not make the heart evil, but it being evil and manifesting its hardness in rejecting the testimony brought to that heart, God confirms such a one in his manifested obduracy. Psalm 105:25 and Exodus 12:36, do not alter this fact, nor does Proverbs 21:1. God hardened Sihon also (Deuteronomy 2:30) as he subsequently did with Canaanites (Joshua 11:19, 20). In cases such as Pharaoh’s, where sufficient particulars are given, we can see that God’s judicial act of His moral government in hardening fell upon them after certain conduct. This is also quite evident in Romans 1:24 (“wherefore God gave them up . . .”), Romans 1:26 (“for this reason God gave them up . . .”), and Romans 1:28 (“And according as they did not think good to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up to a reprobate mind . . .”).”²¹¹

17g The Coverdale has “all the lodes” for “all the world”. “Lodes” must be an archaic term for “world” or “earth”.

17h “The briefest study of Pharaoh’s case (from Romans and Exodus) would convince a reasonable man that Pharaoh is not predestinated to go anywhere unless he wants to go and buys the ticket and boards the plane.

A. The entire subject matter of Romans chapter 9 is a comparison of Gospel privileges for Israel and the Gentiles—not individual salvation. (Observe verses 4, 5, 6, 24, 25, 26, 30, 31, and 32).

B. Esau and Pharaoh are likened to unbelieving Israel (vss. 13, 17).

C. Unbelieving Israel deliberately rejected Christ in the face of visible signs, miracles, and wonders (Acts 2:22–23); and you will observe that individual responsibility is so great in the verse that mentions “foreknowledge” (Acts 2:23), that the action is justly called “murder” (Acts 3:15, 7:52) and deserves capital punishment.

D. No amount of mishandling John 12:37–43 can change the picture of unbelieving Israel, for right in the context (where a nation has supposedly been forced into unbelief—John 12:39), it says: “Nevertheless among the CHIEF RULERS also many believed on HIM” (John 12:42)! (See Rom. 9:6 for a similar case.)

E. The word predestination occurs NOWHERE in Romans chapter 9.

211 R. A. Huebner, Thy Precepts, May/June 2007, number 219.

F. The “election” of verse 11 is a temporal act in time, and nowhere in the Bible does the word election ever occur in an eternal setting. God elected nothing nor anyone until AFTER Genesis 1:1, and this is clear in every context where the word is used (Isa. 42:1, 45:4, 65:9, 22; Matt. 24:22, 24, 31; Rom. 8:33; Col. 3:12; 1 Tim. 5:21; 2 Tim. 2:10; Tit. 1:1; 1 Pet. 1:2; etc., etc.).

G. The illustration of Pharaoh, in Romans chapter 9, is that he was a piece of clay in the potter’s hands (vss. 19–23). Clay is a visible substance which did not exist before Genesis 1:1. The context is the clay after it is on the table (!), and there is no mention of the clay before it is dug out of the hill or brought to the shop. If the “clay pot” repents (Jer. 18:8), its destination is changed.

H. We have clearly seen that “foreknowledge” preceded Pharaoh’s “hardened heart” (Exod. 3:19), exactly as it preceded every act that God ever did (Acts 15:18). There is not a statement that God decided to show Pharaoh “no mercy” before Pharaoh was born (Rom. 9:15). The text in Romans is a quotation from Exodus 33:19—not Exodus 9:16.

I. Lastly, observe how carefully the Holy Spirit has guarded the correct reading of the King James Bible from the corruptions of the NASV (1963), recommended by Hyles-Anderson, Liberty University, Tennessee Temple, Bob Jones University, Dallas, Fuller, BIOLA, and other “Conservative” schools. Paul has written “raised thee up” (Rom. 9:17) right in the same account, and has likened it to the forming of a vessel—NOT the CREATION of clay or the PRESERVATION of clay. Now, this minute detail shows the great care that God has exercised in preserving the true text against the ravages of textual criticism carried on by Conservatives and Fundamentalists as they side with infidelity. Anticipating any and all changes, the Holy Spirit produces—in 1611!—the middle reading between the critics who hated the Bible while professing to believe it, for lo and behold:

1. Calvin, Augustine, and the Vulgate have translated Romans 9:17 as “CREATED thee,” forcing hyper-Calvinism on anyone who reads their “Bibles.”
2. Clarke, Keil, Delitzsch, and Schaff have mistranslated the same verse (Rom. 9:17) as “caused thee to STAND” to match the “preservation theory” of Origen (A.D. 185–254).

Here, beautifully preserved for all to see, are the three readings which one will find in any age in three different “Bibles.” First, we have the correct Bible (AV, 1611), then the half-correct Bible (the Latin Vulgate), and last, the incorrect Bible (the ASV, 1901). (Why anyone is so anxious to identify himself with Calvin is a little mysterious. Calvin flatly denied the inspiration of Acts 7:15–16 and Matt. 27:9, plus Zech. 11:12–17. He had a professing Christian—Servetus [1511–1553]—burned at the stake, and Calvin sprinkled babies while admitting that the Biblical form of baptism was immersion of adults! See *History of the Christian Church*, Philip Schaff, Vol. VIII, pp. 586–587. If you are a “Calvinist,” don’t broadcast it too loudly.)

God raised up Pharaoh exactly as He raised up Nebuchadnezzar and Caesar. None of these men are said to be “prepared aforetime” (Rom. 9:23) for destruction, and no judgments are pronounced on them until AFTER Genesis chapter 1; in every case (see John 6:64), foreknowledge precedes any “divine decree.” Pharaoh was “raised up” in the sense that he was given an official position with tremendous authority. The Holy Spirit has carefully guarded us from Calvin’s error in supposing that Pharaoh was CREATED for destruction, and has also protected us from the Septuagint’s error that he was PRESERVED for destruction. He was “RAISED UP” to demonstrate the longsuffering of God (Rom. 9:17) and God’s power that God’s “name may be declared throughout all the earth.” (See Exod. 9:16.)²¹²

212 Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on Exodus*, pages 190–193.

9:18 Therefore hath he mercy^{present} on whom^{present} he will have mercy, and whom he will^{present} he hardeneth.^{ab-present}

18a God hardened his heart in order that God could demonstrate His power. Pharaoh hardened his own heart (Exodus 8:32; 9:34) and God did too (Exodus 4:21; 7:3,13). If Pharaoh had let Israel go the first time Moses asked him, God would have had no chance to manifest anything. But Israel now would have a reminder of what God did for them and of His power through God's hardening of Pharaoh's heart. The heart is "hard" when it is incapable of receiving divine impressions. To "harden" is to make less susceptible of such impressions and change.

18b "Now it is remarkable, that of the twenty passages which speak of Pharaoh's hardening, exactly ten ascribe it to Pharaoh himself and ten to God."²¹³

9:19 Thou wilt say^{future} then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault?^{ab-present middle/passive} For who hath resisted^{perfect} his will?^c

19a **"Why doth he yet find fault?"** The question then comes up "Why did God punish Pharaoh for something God did to him? If God elected him (and other sinners) to reprobation, then why and how can God condemn him?" A supposedly reprobate sinner could ask the same thing. "Why is God mad at me? If I am reprobate and have no chance to be saved, then why is God angry with me if I am living the way He (negatively) elected (or reprobated) me to? God made me this way so I can't help it (the excuse of the homosexual!)" But since there is no "decree of reprobation", the sinner has no excuse to live as he pleases. He could be saved, like the Pharaoh of Exodus had chance after chance to obey God yet would not due to his pride. Pharaoh dug his own hole and God simply shoveled in the dirt. He could have avoided it but God knew Pharaoh would resist so He hardened His heart in order to make an example out of him. Pharaoh hardened his own heart in Exodus 8:15. Sinners are in the same boat with Pharaoh, with no excuse. And if they go to hell, they will not be able to blame the "reprobation" or God. They will be forced to blame themselves at the Great White Throne Judgment because there, God will show them every witness they received and every chance they had to be saved, and will also demonstrate their rejection of that witness. They will then be forced to condemn themselves and agree that God's judgment on them is just. They will not be able to reply against Him at all.

19b "The men who ask why God finds fault with them are men justly condemned, as Paul proved in Romans 1:18; 3:20, for their own sins, whom God might justly destroy at once. To do so, would manifest His righteous anger and great power. But so great is His longsuffering that He permits them to live, and uses means for their salvation. He spares them because He has purposes of mercy, because He wishes to prepare men whom He will cover with His own abundant glory. Therefore He prolongs the world's probation. Can men whose life is spared only because God forbears to act on principles of mere justice, and forbears because of His purpose of mercy to mankind at large, can such men reply to God when He declares what He will do with them? With more justice might a prisoner who but for the king's respite had been put to death complain of prison fare (Joseph Beut)."²¹³ The point here is those men who complain the most about the justice of God are those who usually the most deserving of God's wrath. A righteous man knows his corruptions and freely acknowledges he deserves the wrath of God and does

²¹³ John Phillips, *Exploring Romans*, page 150.

not complain about it, but rather, thanks God for his mercy and grace in sparing him. But the ungodly man, like Cain, complains about his just punishment, thinking that he is righteous or that God is unrighteous for executing His wrath against him.

19c **"Who hath resisted his will?"** Or who could? Who would be able to? What wise man would want to? Many want to and most try but it all ends in vain and in failure.

9:20 Nay but, O man, who art^{a-present} thou that repliest against^{present middle/passive participle} God?^b Shall the thing formed say^{future} to him that formed^{aoist active participle} it, Why hast thou made^{aoist} me thus?^c

20a Emphatic.

20b **"who art thou that repliest against God?"** The other translations rendering of "disputest" is stronger than the Geneva Bible's "pleadest".

The tone of Paul's question is: "What are you doing asking such questions? You think God was unfair to Pharaoh? God owed him nothing and would have been righteous to give Pharaoh no chance at all and to let him go to hell. God was righteous in His dealings despite what some pea-brained man thinks or imagines. No doubt some objected and though God was unfair. Paul answers "Who art thou that repliest against God?" God can do as He very well pleases with His creation." Paul's attitude here is not that he is dealing with an honest inquirer or seeker who is having difficulty understanding this, but rather to a smart-aleck critic who is using these doctrines and examples as an excuse not to be saved or submit to God. You deal with different groups in different ways. With an honest seeker, you are patient and explain everything. To the big-mouth critic, you ream him out. Cavilers are to be reprehended rather than reasoned with. But man must have a human answer to such questions and Paul's answer, while correct, will probably not satisfy the critics. Even Christians are bound to have difficulty with it unless they are completely submitted to the Holy Spirit while considering these matters.

We think about how Job answered back to God. Throughout that book, Job is struggling to understand why God brought all that evil on him, not knowing it was Satan who did it. God allowed it but Satan maneuvered God into it. God allowed Satan to put Job to the test and in the end, Satan was defeated as Job did not sin nor charge God foolishly. Yet Job came close! God never explained to Job why this was happening. Job had to struggle in silence, without a Bible. In frustration and despair, Job did question God and did reply against Him. God deals with this in Job 38-41. God does the same with us as we struggle to learn why God hated Esau, why He hardened Pharaoh's heart, why He chose Israel above all other nations, and so on. God never tells us the "why". He never fully explains Himself. He is under no obligation to do so. It is our part to accept the workings of God and to be confident that there is a reason and a plan behind it all. But it is never easy. If your child is stillborn or if your wife is crippled for life after a crash or if your house burns down, you will naturally ask "why?" of God. More than likely, He will not explain it now. He will in the next life. But man's desires to pry into the secret counsels of God has given rise to unorthodox theological systems and teachers that imagine they can understand and explain the will of God.

Consider this thinking in human terms. If your boss makes a business decision, is he under some obligation to get your approval or to explain it to you, especially if you are a "low-level" employee? Were your parents under an obligation to explain all of their family decisions to the children? Is a military leader expected to explain his orders to a buck private, or to any subordinate officer?

20c **"Why hast thou made me thus?"** Isaiah 29:16. The question is probably asked in an

unbelieving, accusatory tone. If a person was born blind, deaf or crippled, it would be natural to ask this question, in seeking what God's will is for that person that he was born in such a condition. It is no sin to ask "why" in such cases. The sin comes in the spirit in which such a question is asked.

9:21 *Hath*^{present active infinitive} **not the potter^a power over the clay,^b of the same lump to make^{aorist} one vessel unto honor,^c and another unto dishonor?^{de}**

21a For "God as potter", refer to:

1. Psalm 2:9 "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."
2. Isaiah 29:16 "Surely your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay: for shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?"
3. Isaiah 41:25 "I have raised up one from the north, and he shall come: from the rising of the sun shall he call upon my name: and he shall come upon princes as upon mortar, and as the potter treadeth clay"
4. Isaiah 64:8 "But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand."
6. Jeremiah 18:2-6. "Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the LORD. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel."

21b Paul gives the example of a potter- cannot he do what we wants with his pottery? Does the pottery talk back to the potter? So then why are you back-talking God?

21c "**honor**" For honorable purposes.

21d "**dishonor**" For meaner (less valuable), dishonorable or reprobate purposes.

21e Paul does not expressly state here that God makes vessels of dishonor, only that He has the right to as the Master Potter. He can if He wants but that does not mean He must or He has- only that He may. Paul then clearly introduces a "what if?" scenario in verse 22.

9:22^a What if^b God, willing^{present active participle} to shew^{aorist middle infinitive} his wrath, and to make his power known,^{aorist active infinitive} endured^{aorist} with much longsuffering^c the vessels of wrath fitted^{perfect passive participle} to destruction:^{defg}

22a This passage is usually used as a proof-text for the Calvinist doctrine of reprobation. In this system, reprobation is viewed as a "negative election" or "double predestination", or election to hell. The Canons of Dort (1618-1619), which are accepted by most Calvinists, defines this teaching as:

Moreover, Holy Scripture most especially highlights this eternal and undeserved grace of our election and brings it out more clearly for us, in that it further bears witness that not all people

have been chosen but that some have not been chosen or have been passed by in God's eternal election-- those, that is, concerning whom God, on the basis of his entirely free, most just, irreproachable, and unchangeable good pleasure, made the following decision: to leave them in the common misery into which, by their own fault, they have plunged themselves; not to grant them saving faith and the grace of conversion; but finally to condemn and eternally punish them (having been left in their own ways and under his just judgment), not only for their unbelief but also for all their other sins, in order to display his justice. And this is the decision of reprobation, which does not at all make God the author of sin, but rather its fearful, irreproachable, just judge and avenger. (Chapter 1, Article 15)

But if such a doctrine were true, it would make God the author of sin, as He would have created men for no other reason to be damned and to sin, with no hope of salvation. He would then have created worthless souls, with no value or desire, who can never be saved under any circumstance. This makes a man, who goes to hell, not there because of his own sin, but because God created him to go to hell and desired him to go to hell. Naturally, such a teaching will make most Calvinists squeamish and many do not want to deal with the ultimate end of so-called “negative election” but that is what holding to the Calvinistic view of election must logically lead, that God hates some men because He simply chose to hate them in passing them by and never offering them salvation and making it impossible for them to be saved. What a monstrous doctrine! The Scripture is clear that if a man is reprobate, he reprobated himself due to his rejection of the revelation made available to him and would not respond to the dealings of God with him relating to salvation. It is also Scriptural to say that if a man goes to hell, he goes to hell for his own sin, not because of any divine decree of reprobation. It is not God’s fault that the man is in hell. That damned man has no one to blame but himself for his condemnation. We do see a Book of Life in Scripture but we are never introduced to any “Book of Reprobation”. It is clear that God allowed sin in allowing Adam to sin, but He did not create sin, nor did He force Adam to sin.

Of course, this has nothing to do with God “giving up” on an unsaved man, after repeated attempts to deal with him about salvation. God will not always strive and there is a time when God will stop dealing with an unrepentant sinner, and will leave him alone. This has nothing to do with reprobation, as God desired that person’s salvation, as shown by the fact that He dealt with the sinner about his need of salvation in the first place. This is an example of a sinner “reprobating himself” in his willful rejection of the Gospel, despite God’s dealings with him. The unrepentant and unresponsive sinner bears his own condemnation, in spite of the desires and dealings of God to the contrary.

22b Notice the **what if**- a hypothetical situation and a rhetorical question. Paul does not say that God made vessels fitted for wrath (or the Calvinist idea of reprobation), but Paul, to advance his point, sets for a **what if?** question to stimulate thinking. The Calvinist notion of reprobation falls under Paul’s “what if” scenario. Paul is not saying that God has or will make men as vessels fitted for destruction, but to advance his point, he is simply saying “What if God did so....?”

“What if?” “What if God didn’t?” What then?

22c The patience and longsuffering of God in dealing with these sinners like Pharaoh is absolutely astounding. God does not hurl down lightning bolts at the first expression of rebellion or disobedience but patiently works, witnesses and even pleads with the sinner until a certain point where God “gives him up”. But it is clear to see that God certainly has more patience with His enemies that we do with ours.

22d **“vessels fitted to destruction”** This is the condition of the unsaved man, but Paul does

not say here that God created them this way. as if to support the unscriptural idea of reprobation to damnation, in a Calvinistic sense. Paul simply says they are “**vessels fitted to destruction**” but he does not mention how they got that way. We know, from other passages, that sinners got this way because of their own rejection of Christ, so they fitted themselves for their own destruction. But the “**vessels of mercy**” in Romans 9:23 were indeed prepared beforehand by God. He decrees great things for men beforehand, but He does not prepare their condemnation in a like manner.

22e C. H. Mackintosh, the “Plymouth” Brethren writer, made an interesting observation: “It is deeply interesting to mark the way in which Scripture guards against the repulsive doctrine of reprobation. Look, for example, at Matthew 25:34. Here, the King, in addressing those on His right hand, says, “Come, ye *blessed of My Father*, inherit *the kingdom prepared for you* from the foundation of the world.” Contrast with this the address to those on His left hand (v.41): ‘Depart from Me ye cursed [He does not say ‘of My Father’] into everlasting fire, **prepared [not for you, but] for the devil and his angels.**” So also, in Romans 9. In speaking of the “vessels of wrath,” it says “fitted to destruction”--fitted not by God surely, but by themselves. On the other hand, when speaking of the “vessels of mercy,” it says, “which *He had* established; the repulsive error of *reprobation*, sedulously avoided.”²¹⁴ If reprobation was a truth, then the lake of fire would have been prepared for the reprobate, as well as for the devil and his angels, but Jesus never says that. Hell had to be enlarged for unsaved men (Isaiah 5:14) but it was never prepared for them.

22f Ethelbert Bullinger²¹⁵ asks if the “**vessels fitted to destruction**”, instead of dealing with reprobation might actually deal with the type of bodies the unsaved will have when they go into hell. See Mark 9:44,46,48,49 regarding “their worm” of the damned who go to hell for some insight on this.

22g The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles use “damnation”.

9:23^a And that he might make known^{aurist active subjunctive} the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy,^b which he had afore prepared^{aurist} unto glory,

23a We are still working under the hypothetical situation of the “**what if...?**” of Romans 9:22.

23b “**vessels of mercy**” People whom God intends to show his mercy to and demonstrate His mercy upon. Every saint of God could appreciate this term!

9:24 Even us,^a whom he hath called,^{aurist} not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

24a Who is the **us**- Jews or Gentiles? I tend to think Paul is referring to saved Gentiles here.

9:25^a As he saith^{present} also in Osee,^b I will call^{future} them my people, which were not my people;^c and her beloved,^{perfect passive participle} which was not beloved.^{d-perfect passive participle}

25a Verses 25 and 26 are quotes from Hosea 1:9,10; 2:23.

²¹⁴ *The Mackintosh Treasury*, page 606 footnote.

²¹⁵ *The Companion Bible*, page 1681.

25b “Osee” Hosea.

25c “my people” God has a people and naturally, everyone else are not His people. In the context, “my people” is Israel. By larger application, this would include any born-again believer. This means (in a New Testament context) that no Muslim, Hindu, humanist, atheist...anyone who is not born again by the Spirit of God, is not part of the people of God.

25d God put Israel away (divorced) due to her unfaithfulness, yet later redeemed her. God did not have to yet did through His grace. Hosea's dealings with Gomer in Hosea 1-3 are a picture of God's dealings with apostate and backslidden Israel. Hosea married a prostitute by God's command. Gomer was faithful for a time but later relapsed into her sin. Hosea divorced her yet he redeemer her later because he loved her. Hosea did not need to redeem Gomer yet did. The same was true with Israel and God.

9:26 And it shall come to pass,^{future} **that in the place where it was said**^{aorist passive} **unto them, Ye^a are not my people; there shall they be called**^{future passive} **the children of the living**^{present active participle} **God.**^b

26a Emphatic.

26b Hosea 1:10 “Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God.”

9:27 Esaias^a also crieth^{present} **concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be**^{present} **as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:**^{b-passive}

27a “Esaias” Isaiah.

27b “a remnant shall be saved” Millions of unsaved Jews will go into the Tribulation, yet only a remnant would survive it to be saved at the Second Coming (Zechariah 13:8,9 “And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.”). All Jews who do survive the tribulation period (by “enduring to the end- Matthew 24:13 “But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.”) will be “saved” when they see the Lord returning at the Second Advent. There are about 20 million Jews in the earth today, yet despite that healthy number, only a remnant of them will survive the tribulation and make it to the millennium, due to the persecutions of the Antichrist. Also see Isaiah 10:22 (“For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return: the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness.”).

The “remnant” mentioned here is one of the verses that deal with what we like to call “Remnant Theology”, where God delights in working with and through small groups of faithful people rather than the disobedient or apostate crowds. The word “remnant” is used about 91 times in the King James, showing that it is a major consideration in God's dealing with humanity, especially in these days leading up to the rapture and the tribulation period, where there are

relatively few faithful churches and Christians. The word “remnant” usually has an Old Testament context, but it can easily be applied to a New Testament and a Tribulation application as well for there is obviously a remnant today among the Church and there shall be a remnant of faithful Jews (and probably believing Gentiles) during the Tribulation period.

9:28 For he will finish^{present active participle} the work, and cut it short^{a-present active participle} in righteousness:^b because a short^{perfect passive participle} work will the Lord make^{future} upon the earth.^c

28a “cut it short” or “bring to a speedy conclusion”. Matthew 24:22 and Mark 13:20 state that the days of the tribulation will be “shortened”, lest all fles on the earth would be destroyed, so this could refer to the shortening of the time of the tribulation period to 7 years minus some period of days.

28b “in righteousness” is missing in most modern versions.

28c “a short work will the Lord make upon the earth” Israel got the second chance after the Babylonian Captivity, and it was taken away at the rejection of Jesus. God will give Israel a third chance in the Tribulation which will not be squandered. The third time is the charm for Israel. At this third chance, Israel will accept their Messiah and will become God's people forever and that relationship will never be broken for eternity.

9:29^a And as Esaias said before^{perfect} Except the Lord of Sabaoth^b had left^{aorist} us a seed, we had been^{aorist passive} as Sodoma, and been made like^{aorist passive} unto Gomorrha.^c

29a Paul then quotes Isaiah 1:9 again concerning the believing remnant of Israel that would be saved. If it were not for this remnant, Israel would be destroyed as Sodom and Gomorrha. Israel will be devastated in the Tribulation and only the believing remnant will survive. Unless there was that remnant, Israel would be totally destroyed in the Tribulation.

29b “Lord of Sabaoth” is the same as Lord of Hosts (see 1 Samuel 1:3 [first mention, “Lord of hosts”] and James 5:4 [“Lord of Sabaoth” used]). This means “The Lord of Armies”, a military title for God that also describes His all-encompassing sovereignty.

“Sabaoth” Strong’s #4519 sabaôth, of Hebrew origin Strong’s #6635 in feminine plural); Lord of the armies of Israel, as those who are under the leadership and protection of Jehovah maintain his cause in war.

29d Paul treats the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah as historical events, not allegory or fable. Paul was a man who took his Old Testament seriously and literally.

84. Why The Gentiles Found What Israel Couldn't 9:30-32

9:30 What shall we say^{future} then? That the Gentiles, which followed^{present active participle} not after righteousness, have attained^{aorist} to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith.^a

30a Righteousness that comes by faith and on the basis of faith.

9:31 But Israel, which followed^{present active participle} after the law of righteousness, hath not attained^{aorist} to the law of righteousness.^{abc}

31a The believing Gentiles of Romans 9:30 and the unbelieving Jews of Romans 9:31 were obviously following different forms of righteousness, which lead to two very different spiritual destinations! The Gentiles found the blessing but Israel found only judgment.

31b **“which followed after the law of righteousness”** By keeping the Law. They were actively seeking the righteousness of God, but because of a bad heart and an improper seeking, they never found it. They sought it in the wrong place (the law) and sought it with a bad heart- a legalistic one.

This “law of righteousness” states that justification and salvation is only possible through the righteousness of God and cannot be attained by any “righteousness” of man.

31c AV

ESV

LSV

31 But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.	31 but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law.	31 but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not attain <i>that</i> law.
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The ESV and LSV omit the second use of “righteousness”.

9:32 Wherefore?^a Because *they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.*^b For they stumbled^{c-aorist} at that stumblingstone;^{de}

32a **Wherefore?** Where lies their mistake? Being ignorant of God’s righteousness-of his method of saving sinners by faith in Christ, Israel went about to establish their own righteousness-their own method of obtaining everlasting salvation. They devised a plan that God never approved. They attend not to the Abrahamic covenant, which is based upon grace and faith; but they turned all their energies to the law of Moses. They imagined that their supposed “obedience” to the law, mixed with their lineage as children of Abraham, gave them a right to the blessings of the Messiah’s kingdom. But, finding that the Gospel sets our special interest in God and the privileges of his Church on a very different footing, they are offended, and refuse to come into it. Add to that the fact that the hated Gentiles were also to be admitted on an equal footing with Israel into these Gospel privileges lays the ground for a double offense on the part of Israel.

32b The Coverdale Bible has the odd rendering “out of the deseruynge of workes”.

32c **“stumbled”** Strong’s #4350 proskoptō, from pros (Strong’s #4314) to, towards; and koptō (Strong’s #2875) bewail, lament; to strike against, of those who strike against a stone or other obstacle in the path, to stumble, to strike one’s foot against a stone, to meet with some harm; to rush upon, beat against, to be made to stumble by a thing, to be induced to sin

32d There are several stumblingstones for Israel:

1. Salvation by faith without the works of the law.

2. Gentile gospel privileges and the Jew/Gentile Church body.

These reasons are why the Gentiles found the righteousness which originally they did not seek for yet the Jew never found it. The key is that the Gentiles found the righteousness of God because they sought for it by faith while the Jew sought for it by works of the law.

32e “**stumblingblock**” Strong’s #4348 proskomma; a stumbling block, an obstacle in the way which if one strikes his foot against he stumbles or falls, that over which a soul stumbles by which is caused to sin.

85. Christ the Stumblingstone 9:33

9:33 As it is written,^{a-perfect passive} **Behold, I lay**^{present} **in Sion a stumblingstone^b and rock of offence:^c and whosoever believeth**^{present active participle} **on him^d shall not be ashamed.**^{ef-future passive}

33a “**As it is written**” see notes under Romans 9:13.

33b God placed a stumblingstone in Israel- the Lord Jesus Christ (Isaiah 8:14 “**And he shall be for a sanctuary; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.**”). A Jew, like any Gentile, must believe on Him in order to attain the righteousness which the Law cannot deliver. The Jews, in their blindness and pride, refused to do that, so they did not attain righteousness. The Gentiles did believe and attained righteousness. And God won’t even allow us to enjoy our new house as much as we could.

“**stumblingstone**” Strong’s #4348 proskomma; a stumbling block, an obstacle in the way which if one strikes his foot against he stumbles or falls, that over which a soul stumbles by which is caused to sin.

33c Jesus is called a **rock of offense** because He is offensive and a scandal to the Jewish mind. That rock that could be their spiritual foundation if they would only believe will also crush them if they refused to believe. But the Jew is offended by Christ- born of lowly parents under questionable circumstances, raised in a despised village, did not receive a proper priestly education, companied with sinners and common people instead of the rich and powerful of His day, and ultimately, was put to death as a criminal, crucified between two thieves. And this man is supposed to be the Messiah of Israel??? The Jews simply cannot accept it while suffering from the God-induced spiritual blindness. This is why Jewish evangelism is so difficult today and why you see few Jews converting to Christianity.

“**offence**” Strong’s #4625 skandalon; the movable stick or trigger of a trap, a trap stick, any impediment placed in the way and causing one to stumble or fall, (a stumbling block, occasion of stumbling), a rock which is a cause of stumbling, any person or thing by which one is (entrapped) drawn into error or sin. We get our English word “scandal” from this.

33d AV

ESV

LSV

33 As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth **on him** shall not be ashamed.

33 as it is written, “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and

33 just as it is written, “BEHOLD, I AM LAYING IN ZION A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE, AND THE ONE

	whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”	WHO BELIEVES UPON HIM WILL NOT BE PUT TO SHAME.”
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“on him” The Tyndale, Coverdale and Bishop’s Bibles all have “believe on him” while the Geneva Bible, Authorized Version, ESV and LSV have “believe in him”. It may seem like nitpicking, but we must acknowledge the difference between believing on Christ and believing in Christ. Believing “in” Him usually refers to faith that is involved in salvation while believing “on” Christ would generally have a reference to the faith of the believer after salvation, mainly for service and the Christian life. That is a faith that is a result of faith for salvation and is a necessary first step before one can believe “on” Christ. It would also have a reference to the security of the believer. If this is so, then the verse is not talking about faith in relation to salvation, but a faith that flows from that salvation, believing on Christ not only for salvation but for the Christian life as well. He who lives for Christ will have nothing to regret either on his deathbed or at the judgment.

33e **“whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.”** This is quoted from Isaiah 28:16, where it has the same idea as “shall not make haste, shall not fell hastily.” He who is not offended or scandalized by Christ will never be ashamed.

33f The Coverdale and Bishops Bibles have the idea of being “confounded”.

Spiritual Applications, Romans Chapter 9-11

Romans 9-11 are vital for understanding the past, current and future position of Israel in God’s plan. It is a basis for a dispensational understanding of Israel in God’s plan. These three chapters deal with Israel, not with individuals. Calvinists, Reformed Theologians and non-dispensationalists tend to stumble badly in this section in trying to prove reprobation (negative election or election to hell usually using either Esau or Pharaoh as an example), their interpretation of election, or that God is somehow finished with Israel. This is why a dispensational understanding of Scripture is so vital for a proper understanding of the Bible, and the relation between Israel and the Church. This is why I find Calvinistic commentaries on Romans 9-11 to generally be of limited value, although they may be good on the other chapters of Romans.

Romans Chapter 10

Since ten is the number of the Gentiles, we would expect Romans 10 to deal with the Gentiles, even in the middle of Paul's discussion of Israel, especially starting at verse 12 to the end of the chapter. Look at the references in verses 19-21 especially, where Paul discusses the "disobedient" and "gainsaying" people who are "not a people." This chapter will deal with Gentile salvation.

86. Paul's Burden For Israel 10:1

10:1 Brethren,^a my heart's desire and prayer to God^b for Israel^c is,^{present} that they might be saved.^{defgh}

1a **"Brethren"** Gentile brethren in the Roman church, not necessarily Jewish brethren.

1b **"my heart's desire and prayer..."** Such desires should always be transformed into prayer.

1c **AV**

ESV

LSV

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

1 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.

1 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved.

"Israel" Why do the ESV and LSV omit "Israel" and just use the pronoun?

1d **"that they might be saved"** This presupposes they are lost since they have rejected Christ. This refutes the Two Covenant Theory taught by some Christian Zionists in our day who claim that Gentiles are saved by faith but Israel is saved by keeping the law and thus, Christians do not need to be evangelized for they are already saved. The Roman Catholic Church and Billy Graham also believe this. But Paul did not. He states Israel is lost and hell-bound and their unique status as God's covenant nation or their keeping of the law will not prevent their condemnation. They, like the Gentiles, must be saved by faith in Christ without the works of the law. Thus, there is only one salvation in this dispensation, not two. There is not a plan of salvation for Israel and another one for the Jew. There is one plan of salvation for all men, regardless if he is a Jew or a Gentile.

1e Just because Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles never changed or affected the fact that he was also a Jew who carried a crushing burden for the salvation of his own countrymen. Paul does not curse his persecutors, but rather prays for their salvation, as a Christian should. If you can't pray for your enemies and for those who curse you and who spitefully use you (Matthew 5:44), then your "Christianity" isn't worth much.

1f This prayer by Paul also shows that God is not finished with Israel. If God had finished with Israel and had no further use for them in His plan, based on their rejection of Christ during His first coming, then why this prayer? If the historicists, postmillennialists, covenant theologians and preterists (and other groups that teach that the Church replaced Israel) are correct, then such a prayer is improper. God has turned from Israel to the Gentiles and the Church is now Israel. Israel has no use in God's program as a nation anymore so to pray that God would reverse Himself and return to Israel would be a violation of that theological system. Of course,

we would reject any notion that the Church has replaced Israel. Many teach this today, including some study Bibles as the *Thompson Chain Reference Bible*.²¹⁶ Israel is Israel and the Church is the Church, and they are two separate groups in God's program. Israel is "in trouble" with the Lord for their (multiple) rejection of the Kingdom and are "on the shelf" in this dispensation where God is using the Church to extend His program. After the rapture, God returns to Israel and brings them "off the shelf" and we return to a Old Testament-type of dispensation. In a dispensational system, it is still right and proper to pray for Israel and for their salvation, in a very special way. Under a Covenant Theology system, it would not be as proper to do so.

1g If the false doctrine of universalism were true, Paul would have re-worded this as "realize they are saved".

1h The Gentiles owe the Jews a spiritual debt that cannot be repaid, but how little prayer or effort there is among the believing Gentiles for their salvation! "To the Jew first" still shows God's desire for the evangelization of His covenant people.

87. Israel's Zeal 10:2

10:2 For I bear^{present} them record that they have^{present} a zeal of God,^{ab} but not according to knowledge.^{cd}

2a "**zeal of God**" Zeal must not only be for God but also of God. Paul does not say Israel had a zeal for God but a zeal of God. They were zealous at whatever religious duty and work they did but it was more for their traditions, rituals and culture than it was for God Himself in their blindness. We must be very careful that we do not fall into the same trap, mistaking our zeal for the church, the "Baptist Distinctives", our fellowship, our theological systems, etc., to be the same thing as a zeal for God.

A zeal without knowledge produces fanaticism; knowledge without zeal produces dead formalism. Thus, there are two great evils in the world: zeal without knowledge and knowledge without zeal. Zeal for God has become a rare quality in our land. You see plenty of zeal where politics are concerned. Fashion, art, sports and literature—each one evokes zeal of a certain kind, but we are not overdone with those who are zealous in the matter of the faith. Yet we will call such zealous believers fanatics while lauding the man who is zealous for football or politics or making money.

Simply because someone may be busy for God and is active in divine work does not mean that this person is saved. Work is not a certain fruit of salvation, as any unsaved man can knock on doors or pass out tracts...or preach! Their zeal may not necessarily be according to righteousness but rather, to the flesh. Israel was certainly zealous for their religion, but they were in spiritual blindness and were not saved.

2b The Tyndale Bible has "a fervent mind". The other translations all use "zeal".

2c "**but not according to knowledge**" Good intentions and religious knowledge will not save if apart from saving faith in Christ. Israel was very zealous for the law (Acts 21:20) but without saving faith in Christ, such zeal is vain. Even today, religious Jews are among the most zealous for their faith that you will find anywhere. Get one converted to the gospel and he'll do the work

²¹⁶ Look especially in the Psalms and in Isaiah at the page headings and you'll see the Church mentioned in sections where the Church is not the subject.

of ten Gentiles. Just see how much work the 144,000 in Revelation 7 will get done within the span of about 3 years in the tribulation period.

2d Israel had a desire to serve God but they were doing so in ignorance:

1. Ignorance of the work of Jesus Christ
2. Ignorance of salvation by grace apart from the law
3. Ignorance of God's plan for the Church and for the Gentiles

Zeal without knowledge will lead into all modes of fanaticism.

88. The Ignorance of Israel 10:3

10:3^a For they being ignorant^{present active participle} of God's righteousness, and going about^{present active participle} to establish^{aorist infinitive} their own righteousness,^{bc} have not submitted themselves^{d-aorist passive} unto the righteousness of God.^e

3a Israel was God's covenant people (and still are), with the Scriptures and the prophets, and yet they were still ignorant about how to obtain the righteousness of God. This is because their legalism, formalism and rejection of the Scripture and the message of the prophets had blinded their minds so that they could not understand the correct way to attain it.

3b **“establish their own righteousness”** This is understandable and it is an undeniable facet of fallen human nature. This is what human religion is about- allowing the sinner to establish his own righteousness through works but without God. Israel desired the righteousness of God, yet in their self-induced blindness, they could not understand how to attain it, so they had to do the only thing anyone in that situation could do- go about to establish their own righteousness and create a plan of salvation that somehow fit into their misunderstandings of the righteousness of God. This self-established righteousness was nothing more than legalism, and the Jews are not the only ones guilty of it, as Christian Gentiles do it all the time too.

Man is very good at justifying himself and establishing his own form or righteousness. Even Christians can excel at this. No one wants to think himself a heathen or a loser or a failure in spiritual things so men are continually justifying their sins, apologizing for their shortcomings and wallowing in their self-induced ignorance. Good luck finding a man who will honestly confess that he is a sinner without reservation or hesitation! In 1993-1994, I pastored in Mebane, North Carolina, a typical southern town that was totally dominated by all forms of Southern religion, tradition and “churchianity”. In my year in that town, I met one lady who did not tell me she was a Christian, but she was a Jehovah Witness. She may have been the most honest sinner in that town! Everyone will proclaim and testify to his own goodness, even a murderer or a rapist will not hesitate to do this. But a faithful man, who can find?

To summarize it, a man pits his righteousness against God's righteousness, and when he does that, he will lose every time. Man thinks he is just as righteous as God, if not more, so he sees no need of having the righteousness of God imputed to him through the death of Christ. The sinner may admit he is a sinner and needs help, but at the end of it all, he thinks he is good enough to stand before God in his own righteousness and that God won't have “that much” problem with him.

3c AV

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3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and

3 For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and

3 For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and

going about to establish their own righteousness , have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.	seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.	seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.
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The ESV and LSV omits the second use of “righteousness”.

3d **“not submitted themselves”** A willful, deliberate rejection of truth is implied here. What Israel did they did not do ignorantly but they did knowing that they had rejected God’s way. Their blindness was their own fault due to their deliberate rejection of the Scripture and the prophets and their replacement of them with traditionalism and formalism.

3e This is the problem with unsaved men- they pit their own righteousness against the righteousness of God and they will not accept the righteousness of God on their behalf for justification because they think they don’t need it. This is something both Jew and Gentile are guilty of. He thinks he is good enough to be justified and get to heaven without God, His religion, his morality, his self-righteousness are sufficient (in his mind) to “earn” his way into heaven to the point where he does not need any of the redemptive work of Christ on the cross on his behalf. He thinks he is okay where God says he is filthy, rotten, dirty and worthless without His Son. So we have this sinner calling God a liar and despising the blood of Christ shed on his behalf. The question that cuts to the heart of this matter is “If you can earn it, then why did He die?”

89. Christ- The End of the Law 10:4

10:4 For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness^{abc} to every one that believeth.^{def-present active participle}

4a Christ is the goal, or the **end, of the law**, as it points to Him. To fail to see Christ in the law is to suffer from spiritual blindness. It points to Him as He is the fulfillment of the law, something He did on the cross as He not only perfectly kept the law but also took its punishments in His own body vicariously. Would to God that Seventh Day Adventists and other modern Galatians would grasp this fact that the Law is fulfilled, completed and no longer has any spiritual bearing on Christians,

4b It can be said that Christ is the end of the Law for them that believe in the same way that George Washington was the end of British Law over America after the Revolutionary War.

4c The Tyndale Bible defines “righteousness” with “justify all that believe”.

4d Again, faith is the foundation for righteousness, not law or law-keeping or being water baptized.

4e “The Law cannot curse a Believer, it does not know how to do it. It blesses him, yes, and he shall be blessed, for as the Law demands righteousness and looks at the Believer in Christ—and sees that Jesus has given him all the righteousness it demands—the Law is bound to pronounce him blessed. “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputes not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no

guile.” Oh, the joy of being redeemed from the curse of the Law by Christ, who was “made a curse for us,” as it is written, “Cursed is everyone that hangs on a tree.”²¹⁷

4f “Righteousness springs out of the finished work of Christ (verses 3, 4), and there can be no ‘finished’ work while man is endeavoring to be saved by law, for this would be virtually to undo what Christ has done (A.C. Gaebelien, *The Annotated Bible*).

90. The Righteousness of the Law 10:5

10:5^a For Moses describeth^{present} the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth^{aorist active participle} those things shall live^{future middle} by them.^b

5a Quoted from Leviticus 18:5. If a man could keep the law perfectly, then he would live in it and by it. But since it is impossible for a sinner to keep the law perfectly (since no man ever has- what about your sins before you decided to start keeping the law?), no man can live in the law or by it, unless he desires to condemn himself.

5b “**the man which doeth those things shall live by them.**” A good summary of the law- “do and live.” The problem is that no man do the law and thus, no man can live by the law without being condemned by that law. The Old Testament saint did not have the indwelling Holy Spirit, nor did he have the righteousness of Christ imputed to him yet, as Christian do. He then has to maintain his relationship and obedience to the law if he does, he will live in them. They will not serve for his justification, but they will make his relationship to God possible.

91. The Righteousness of Faith 10:6-8

10:6 But the righteousness^a which is of faith speaketh^{present} on this wise, Say^{aorist subjunctive imperative} not in thine heart,^b Who shall ascend^{future middle} into heaven?^c (that is,^{present} to bring Christ down^{aorist} from above:)^d

6a There are two kinds of righteousness:

1. By law- which on God has and only Christ could attain via His perfect life
2. By faith- the only way for the sinner to receive the imputed righteousness by Christ since it is impossible for him to obtain it by law

6b “**Say not in thine heart**” As if to say that salvation was unattainable.

6c It is not necessary to literally search to the ends of the universe to find the righteousness of God- it is right in front of you. Yet the natural man, in his blindness and/or rejection of the imputed righteousness of God by faith, misses it and seeks heaven and earth for that right is practically right in front of him.

Man is obsessed with space travel and ascending into the heavens and e has been since Genesis 11. The idea is not so much to “explore space” or to “do science” but it is to find life (even a few microbes) on Mars or Europa. If they found life out there, they would immediately proclaim the Bible is false. But that is illogical as the Bible has already told you there are other forms of life in the universe that are not human (angels, cherubim, etc.).

²¹⁷ Charles Spurgeon, “Christ the End of the Law”, *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, volume 22, sermon 1325.

6d **“to bring Christ down from above”** It is not necessary to go back into heaven and bring Christ down again (in the Roman Catholic mass, where the Church of Rome drags Christ out of heaven daily and re-nails Him to the cross) or go into the deep and bring Him back again from the dead.

10:7 Or, Who shall descend^{future middle} into the deep?^a (that is, ^{present} to bring up Christ again^{aorist} from the dead.)

7a You need not ascend to heaven to find this salvation, nor descend into hell either. No doubt some in Paul’s days were asking such questions, but Paul shoots it down quickly, saying that even if you could bring Christ back from the dead (discounting the resurrection), it would not be necessary.

AV	ESV	LSV
7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep ? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)	7 “or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).	7 “or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).

“deep” The traditional translations all use “deep” while the ESV and LSV use “Abyss”.

10:8^a But what saith^{present} it?^b The word^c is^{present} nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, ^{present} the word^c of faith, which we preach;^{d-present}

8a This verse quotes Deuteronomy 30:11-14.

8b **“what saith it?”** What saith the Scripture? The gospel of salvation is not something that must be searched or hunted for, but is made plain and simple, and easy to obey for those who wish to do so.

8c The gospel is the **word of Faith** since it relies on faith and is founded upon faith, not works or law. This is the only appearance of this phrase in Scripture.

There are groups of Pentecostal heretics, who hold to the “creative word” theology have hijacked this phrase **word of faith**. They teach that you can create whatever you want by speaking it, and that we literally have the creative spoken-word power of God at our disposal. “Name it and claim it”- or “blab it and grab it”. This is “prosperity theology” where you can write out your own ticket with God by declaring something to be true. This then would compel God to create it for you. Naturally, the Scripture is against such foolishness. But it upsets the Bible believer that such heretics would steal a good Bible phrase and slap in on their heresy. One basis for this position is the use of “rhema” instead of “logos” in this verse, which the prosperity preachers think means something special.

8d AV	ESV	LSV
8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, <i>even</i> in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach ;	8 But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim);	8 But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim);

“which we preach” The true Bible preacher preaches faith, not works or law, for salvation. The ESV and LSV don’t like the “preach” here and uses “proclaim” instead. That is another unnecessary change.

There is an interesting chain of construction in Romans 10:9-17²¹⁸

<u>Statement</u>	<u>Scripture</u>
9,10	11
12	13
14,15a	15b
16a	16b
Conclusion	17

92. The Plan of Salvation 10:9-11

10:9^a That if thou shalt confess^{aurist subjunctive} with thy mouth^{bcd} the Lord^e Jesus,^f and shalt believe^{aurist subjunctive} in thine heart that God hath raised^{aurist} him from the dead,^g thou shalt be saved.^{h-future passive}

9a This is one of the classical evangelistic verses in the Bible. Notice how simply the plan of salvation is presented here, that even a child can understand it, although it may confound some of the learned Th.D.’s there who are offended by its simplicity.

My oldest son Patrick was saved as I preached from the verse on the evening of Sunday, September 29, 2002 at Grace Baptist Church in Smyrna, Delaware, when he was 5 years old. This will make this verse always special to me, and hopefully, to him.

9b **“confess with thy mouth”** But a mere mouth profession or a prayer without heart belief will not bring salvation. Such a confession would be a lie. We must notice the conjunction “and” which ties the **“confess with thy mouth”** to **“believe in thine heart”**. Both the confession and the belief must go together if there is to be a genuine salvation. A heart salvation experience will result in some for of public, verbal witness and testimony of the great things Christ has done for the soul. How could one be saved, have his sins forgiven, be made a child of God and receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and be silent about it? Paul expects that if there is heart belief, a verbal and public witness will follow.

9c “Now some of you draw back from the thought of making a profession. “No,” you say, “we will believe and be secret Christians.” Hear you this, then—“If any man be ashamed of Me and of My Words in this generation, of him will I be ashamed, when I shall come in the glory of My Father, with all His holy angels.” I will repeat a truism. Not one of you in your lives ever knew a secret Christian and I will prove it to you. If you knew a man to be a Christian, it could not be a secret. For if it had been a secret how came you to know it? Then, as you never knew a secret Christian, you are not justified in believing there is such a one. You must come out and make a profession.

“What would Her Majesty think of her soldiers, if they should swear they were loyal and true, and were to say—“Your Majesty, we prefer not to wear these regimentals. Let us wear the dress of civilians! We are right honest men and upright. But we do not care to stand in your

²¹⁸ James Dunn, *Word Biblical Commentary*: volume 38B, Romans 9-16, page 619.

ranks, acknowledged as your soldiers. We had rather slink into the enemy's camp and into your camps, too, and not wear anything that would mark us as being your soldiers!"

"Ah, some of you do the same with Christ. You are going to be secret Christians, are you and slink into the devil's camp and into Christ's camp, but acknowledged by none? Well, you must take the risk of it, if you will be so. But I should not like to risk it. It is a solemn threat—"of him will I be ashamed when I come in the glory of My Father and all His holy angels with Me"! It is a solemn thing, I say, when Christ says, "Except a man take up his cross and follow Me, he cannot be My disciple."²¹⁹

9d This public confession could also take the form of a public prayer at salvation, where the person publicly repents of his sins and asks Christ to save him. There is nothing wrong with such a verbal prayer but it is not a prayer itself that saves, for nowhere in Scripture are we told that we much pray in order to be saved. To pray a prayer like this means that you are already saved, else you would not make such a prayer. It is not the prayer that saves, but the faith that motivates that prayer. It is so very vital to see this as there are far too many professing Christians who "prayed a prayer" or who repeated a prayer on a tract or who repeated what some soul-winner or preacher told him to say, and then think that they are saved because they prayed. Prayer would be a work and we cannot be saved by works. This is why we must be very careful when dealing with a sinner that we do not get him to "repeat after us" or mouth some written prayer. We dare not give him a false assurance, that he would say "I am saved because I prayed a prayer" when he is to be saved by faith and belief. Also beware of using tracts that contain a text of some "prayer of salvation" for they lead to the same error. But what about the "sinner's prayer" of Luke 18:13? Is that not a "prayer for salvation?" No, for 1) that brief prayer is never called "the sinner's prayer" in Scripture, and 2) nothing is made about confessing Christ in that brief prayer. All that publican was doing was asking for mercy. But the reason he went down to his house justified was because of the heart work that preceded and motivated that prayer. It was not that very brief prayer that saved him, but the faith that motivated him to pray it was what saved him.

9e This verse promotes "Lordship Salvation"²²⁰ for we are told not to believe merely on "Jesus" but on the "Lord" Jesus, thus acknowledging his lordship and deity. And his confession must involve more than a mere head, or intellectual belief in the historical personal and representation of Christ, for even the devils believe that but that does not save them (James 2:19 **"Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble."**). It must be a confession of faith, based on a saving faith that has already been exercised in the heart. But there must be at least some recognition and acknowledgment of the lordship of Christ in salvation, else, why is the sinner calling upon Him in the first place? Just for salvation? Not for forgiveness and acknowledgment that Christ is God and should be recognized are such? Naturally, the hyper-evangelists hate this as it would reduce the numbers of their converts if they demanded something more than a simple "repeat this prayer after me" or "raise your hand". Anything that might reduce the number of professions is bad in their view, no matter how Biblical it might be. In this context, we would hold to some form of "Lordship Salvation". If you are not acknowledging Jesus as Lord (and as God), then how can He save you?

219 Charles Spurgeon, "A Simple Sermon for Seeking Souls", *New Park Street Pulpit*, volume 3, Sermon 140.

220 So-called and so hated by hyper-evangelicals and neo-and pseudo-fundamentalists.

9f AV

ESV

LSV

9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus , and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.	9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.	9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.
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“Lord Jesus” The ESV and LSV blunder badly by changing “the Lord Jesus” to “Jesus is Lord”. The ESV and LSV have the convert believing merely on “Jesus” who is Lord instead of the “Lord Jesus”. Jesus is Lord but that would leave open the possibility of other “Lords” that one could also believe on.

9g **“God hath raised Him from the dead”** If a man denies the resurrection, he cannot be saved, despite and profession or confession he might make. A belief in the historical fact of the resurrection of Christ is required for salvation.

9h Notice two things not mentioned for salvation here:

1. **Prayer.** We are never told to pray to be saved. Confession could involve prayer, but after the saving belief has been exercised. Those who are continually telling sinners to “pray this prayer” or “pray after me” or “just say the Sinner’s Prayer” are not practicing Biblical evangelism.

2. **Water baptism.** Nothing is said about baptism in one of the greatest verses regarding salvation and it was not that Paul “forgot” to mention it. Paul never made water baptism a condition for salvation in any of his writings.

Fulfilling two conditional clauses (if you confess and if you believe) results in a declarative result (you will be saved).

10:10 For with the heart^a man believeth^{b-present passive} unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession^c is made^{d-present passive} unto salvation.

10a **“with the heart”** Salvation is a heart matter more than a head matter.

10b **“believeth...confession is made”** Why are these two verbs in the passive? We would expect them to be active, as we are the ones who are actively believing and confessing. But the passives suggest that someone else is believing and confessing for us and through us, probably through the imputed faith of Jesus Christ that is imputed to us at salvation. Remember, we are not saved through our faith, nor do we live through our faith, but rather, through the faith of Jesus Christ (Galatians 2:20 **“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”**).

10c **“confession”** To agree with someone or to speak the same thing as someone. In this context, it is agreeing with the Scriptural revelation of Jesus Christ, as laid out by the Father.

Notice that believing comes before confessing. You first believe, then you confess. This “confession” is not a legalistic requirement for salvation but is a natural consequence and act that follows salvation. Once you have believed and accepted Christ, you will naturally confess Him.

You have belief first, then salvation, then confession. Among its various errors, Calvinism gets the order of salvation wrong, in trying to put the salvation (or rather, the

“sovereign election of God”²²¹) before the belief and confession! They maintain that a dead sinner cannot exercise saving faith, so God must first save the sinner²²² But Paul clearly puts the act of believing first in salvation, showing that Paul was not a Calvinist. His teachings and doctrines cannot be reduced so easily into a single uninspired, human theological system.

10d **“confession is made”** Here is where prayer could be invoked in salvation, but again, it comes after the salvation and new birth experience has taken place through the exercise of saving faith. You do not pray to get saved but you pray because you have already been saved.

10:11^a For the scripture saith,^{present} **Whosoever believeth**^{b-present active participle} **on him^c**
shall not be ashamed.^{de-future passive}

11a Yet another anti-Calvinist verse. Paul says **“Whosoever...”** and leaves it at that, not “whosoever of the elect who is sovereignly elected...” Thus, we hold to the universal offer of the gospel and the universal application thereof for all mankind, and utterly reject any attempt to limit the extent or scope of the gospel offer. The extent of this offer must be interpreted in the broadest terms possible. What if a “reprobate” called out to God for salvation? Would God save him. even though he was not elect?

11b **“believeth”** Not “worketh”, overthrowing all works-based salvation systems.

11c **“on Him”** On Christ and no one else, as there is no other name on which we must believe on in order to be saved (Acts 4:12 **“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”**). Believing on any other name, any pope, preacher, prelate or person, is a sure ticket to condemnation.

11d **“shall not be ashamed”** This is quoted from Isaiah 49:23.

11e **“shall not be ashamed”** The passive indicates that we do not shame ourselves by our belief and confession, but that someone else attempts to make us ashamed of it and by it. The Coverdale and Bishops both use “confounded”.

93. There Is No Difference Between Jew and Gentile 10:12,13

10:12 For there is^{present} **no difference between the Jew and the Greek:**^{ab} **for the**
same Lord^c over all is rich^{present active participle} **unto all that call upon**^{present middle/passive}
^{participle} **him.**

12a **“there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek”** This completely overthrows the “Two Covenant Theory” that some Evangelicals and Charismatics hold to, including Billy Graham²²³, John Hagee,²²⁴ Billy Graham and the Roman Catholic Church (in believing that their Church is spiritual Israel). This heresy teaches that Jews do not need to be saved as Gentiles need to be. The Jew is practically already saved because he is a Jew, has the law and the

221 Their definition.

222 Without the sinner knowing about it or even asking for it! And then the sinner will be able to believe since he is already saved..

223 In his belief that Jews do not need to be “born again” as Gentiles do. Graham died a universalist.

224 (And his “Christian Zionism”, although he publicly denies holding to the “Two Covenant Theory”).

covenants. Gentiles need to be saved by faith but not Jews. Therefore, there is no need for evangelization to the Jews. To do so would be “disrespectful”.²²⁵ But this is heresy. A Jew who dies without faith in Christ will go to hell just as quickly as will a Gentile who dies without saving faith. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile in this regard- both must be saved the same way, by the same gospel. There is only one plan of salvation in this age, not two, and that plan of salvation is the same for all men, Jews or Gentiles.

12b The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles both use “Gentile”.

12c **“the same Lord”** in the sense that there is only one Lord over both the Jews and Gentiles, not two Lords. Since there is only one Lord, there is only one plan of salvation for both groups.

10:13^a For whosoever^b shall call^c upon^{aorist subjunctive middle} the name of the Lord^d shall be saved.^{efg-future passive}

13a This is the summary of the doctrine of salvation, which involves believing and calling. How simple it is! Even a child can understand it and one need not be educated to understand it or do it. But such a spiritual simplicity invites many corruptions and perversions. How many “plans of salvation” (so-called) are floating around out there! They are too many to list but we know that the false outnumber the good and it can be confusing and discouraging to dig through the rubbish of human religion to find the diamond of the truth. We could just briefly list such false gospels as including, but not being limited to:

1. Salvation by works
2. Salvation by church membership
3. Salvation by morality
4. Denial of any need of salvation, such as a denial of any kind of afterlife
5. Universalism, that all men will eventually be saved
6. Salvation by sacrament

All versions of false gospels can be classified under one, or more, of these categories. There are only a few versions of it but an infinite number of variations and combinations.

13b **“whosoever”** This is yet another refutation of the Calvinist error of limited atonement, just as in 10:11. Paul does not say “whosoever of the elect” but “whosoever”, and that includes “whosoever” of all mankind. “Whosoever” simply doesn’t mean “all kinds of men” but “all men”.

13c **“shall call”** Here is where the prayer element of salvation could (but not necessarily) be brought in. But again, we emphasize that you would not call upon the name of the Lord for salvation unless you were believing first. The calling (in whatever form it takes) is a result of saving faith, not the cause of it. It may take the form of a prayer or it may not, but it does involve asking God to save. It may be a literal, verbal, loud “crying out” or it may be a quiet and secret “crying” from the heart.

13d **“upon the name of the Lord”** You must call upon the one, true God to be saved, not just ☐God☐ or any god, but rather, Jehovah, the God of Israel, as revealed by the Bible. Only calling upon His name may one be saved. Calling on the false “god” of the Muslims “Allah” or one of the Hindu or New Age “gods” or secular gods like “science (falsely so-called) or any manifestation of humanism or the occult cannot save, since those are all false gods. And so-

225 The late pope Francis taught this. He didn’t like evangelism of any kind!

called "lordship salvation" rears its ugly head again, as we must call upon the name of the "Lord", not just upon the name of Jesus. There must be an acknowledgment of the Lordship of Christ in order to be saved.

13e **"shall be saved"** An absolute promise with no exceptions. Saved from what? Hell, the lake of fire, condemnation and judgment of your sins, eternal separation from God, and related results from dying without saving faith.

13f **"shall be saved"** A quote from Joel 2:32 but with a bit of difference. Old Testament "salvation" had a context of deliverance from enemies while New Testament "salvation" has a spiritual meaning.

13g **"shall be saved"** Notice the passive voice of the Greek verb. We do not save ourselves but someone else saves us, and that someone else is not the "soulwinner" who "leads us to Christ" but rather, that someone else is God and God alone, who saves the soul.

94. The Divine Need of a Preacher 10:14,15

10:14^a How then shall they call on^{future middle} him in whom they have not believed?^{aorist} and how shall they believe in^{future} him of whom they have not heard?^{b-aorist} and how shall they hear^{future} without a preacher?^{cd}

14a Since Christ died for all that all may be saved, this good news of the gospel thus must also be proclaimed to all. And what an honor God gives to preachers and the gospel they preach here! Even if the preacher is weak, despised and halting in his presentation, God will still honor that Word if it is faithfully preached.

No one is saved in a vacuum, without or apart from the word of God. To believe, they must hear. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Thus, the word must be transmitted to them somehow, either in a written or verbal form.

14b **"how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?"** This is an obvious question. How can you believe on someone of whom you are totally ignorant? Unless someone tells them of the problem and the cure and the Savior, how will they know how to respond? The Greek construction of the question assumes an impossibility- they can't.

14c **"and how shall they hear without a preacher?"** This shows the need of a preacher. The preacher is the channel of divine communication and revelation to the sinner. God does use the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe and He uses the weakest instrumentalities in creation to preach that Word- human beings. Angels do not preach and creation itself can preach in a limited manner (Psalm 19) but God still uses redeemed men and women to make known His Word. This preacher can be either a man or even a "paper preacher" such as the Scripture itself (as it can preach- Romans 9:17; Galatians 3:8 **"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed."**) or a gospel tract, which can preach the gospel as effectively as a man can.

14d AV

ESV

LSV

14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher ?	14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?	14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?
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“**preacher**” What is it with the ESV and LSV and preaching or preachers? Instead of “preacher”, both versions use “someone preaching”. What is wrong with preachers? There is no justification for this change.

10:15 And how shall they preach,^{future} except they be sent?^{a-aorist subjunctive passive} as it is written,^{b-perfect passive} **How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel^{present middle/passive participle} of peace,^{cd} and bring glad tidings^{present middle/passive participle} of good things!**^e

15a The preacher is sent out by another, usually, the local church in which he is a member. No preacher calls himself, nor does he ordain himself or send himself out. God does it and that call and ordination are confirmed by Spirit-filled men and the local church. Beware of a self-called and a self-sent man who acknowledges no authority but himself and who will submit to no authority other than his own. That man is a rebel at heart and cannot be trusted with spiritual things.

15b “**as it is written**” Greek perfect tense- it has been written and remains written, not to be changed or altered. It is a completed action with continuous results, or the continuance of an act completed in the past. The components are always a past action and continuous results. References to the Scriptures like this are often presented in the perfect tense. “The just shall live by faith” is one of those unalterable truths of Christianity. This perfect tense in reference to New Testament references to Old Testament texts is used 62 times in the New Testament, 16 times in Romans (1:17; 2:24; 3:4,10; 4:17; 8:36; 9:13,33; 10:15; 11:8,26; 12:19; 14:11; 15:3,9,21). This usage of the perfect is a strong argument for the verbal and plenary preservation of the Scripture, as the written Old Testament word stands forever and continues to.

15c “**How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!**” Isaiah 52:7. Feet tend to be the ugliest part of the body, but become beautiful when they are used to carry the gospel.

15d “**gospel of peace**” Not a pacifist gospel or a social, liberal gospel, but a gospel that details and expounds how by the death, work and resurrection of Christ, peace is re-established between God and man. Nor is this “another gospel” or a new gospel, different from what Paul had been preaching (the gospel of grace). It is simply a term showing the peace with God that comes from acceptance of this good news that Paul was preaching.

AV

15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the **gospel of peace**, and bring glad tidings of good things!

ESV

15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"

LSV

15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"

The ESV and LSV omit **gospel of peace**. The ESV and LSV make hash out of the last part of the verse. Where is the gospel here?

15e **"good things"** The gospel is full of good things and good news, including salvation from sin, eternal life, re-establishing of fellowship and reconciliation with God, reception of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, sonship, available promises and covenants to the new believer, promises of answered prayer, fellowship with the saints. The gospel is the best news anyone can possibly hear!

95. Who Has Believed Our Report? 10:16

10:16 But they have not all obeyed^{aorist} the gospel.^{ab} For Esaias saith,^{present} Lord, who hath believed^{aorist} our report?^{cd}

16a **"But they have not all obeyed the gospel"** Very few Jews have- a remnant at best. This can also be applied to Gentiles- anyone who has heard a presentation of the gospel and has not responded. Most have not, and will not, obey the gospel.

16b **"But they have not all obeyed the gospel"** The gospel is not just something to be believed, but also obeyed.

16c **"Who hath believed our report?"** What preacher doesn't express this lament at times! He preaches and prays and witnesses- and sees only a handful of tangible, physical results. Paul could certainly sympathize with Isaiah, as all of us can. Both Moses (Deuteronomy 32:21 **"They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation."**) and Isaiah (Isaiah 53:1 **"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?"**; Isaiah 65:1 **"I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name."**) predicted Israel's rejection of the Gospel.

16d AV

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our **report**?

ESV

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?"

LSV

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?"

“our report?” Or “our preaching and teaching?” The preacher is “reporting” the Good News and the things of God as a faithful witness of what he has heard and been told, much like a news reporter would.

The ESV and LSV have very clunky readings.

96. The Generation and Source of Faith 10:17

10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing,^a and hearing by the word^b of God.^{cd}

17a “**faith cometh by hearing**” True saving faith does not exist in a vacuum, nor does it exist independently from the word of God. In order to generate faith unto salvation, one must be exposed to the word of God.

17b “**word**” here is the Greek word “rhema” again, showing that it is the spoken Word, through preaching and witnessing, that does the work. The printed page is not to be despised for that is simply another way to “speak” the Word- through ink and paper, as that written Word will speak as loud as a verbal witness. But that Word has to be thrown out there into the marketplace in one way or another for sinners to be converted.

17c The more you are exposed to the **word of God** (either by reading or hearing it preached or studying it) the more faith is generated. The amount and quality of one’s faith is directly related to how much of the word of God that a person is exposed to. Much exposure equals much faith. But little Bible results in little faith, with the resulting problems of coldness, carnality, backsliding and spiritual ignorance. All the great men of God of the past had one thing in common- they spent much time with the Book and were either preaching or under the sound of preaching as often as they could.

17d AV

ESV

LSV

17 So then faith <i>cometh</i> by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.	17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.	17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.
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Many modern versions change “**of God**” to “of Christ”, such as the ESV and LSV. They also change “by the word of God” to “through the word of God”.

97. Israel’s Lack of Excuse 10:18

10:18 But I say,^{a-present} Have they not heard?^{b-aorist} Yes verily, their sound^c went^{aorist} into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.^{de}

18a The Tyndale Bible’s use of “axe” is funny since so many uneducated young people will say “Can I axe you something?”²²⁶ instead of “Can I ask you something?”. Maybe they don’t know they are following the Tyndale Bible rendering when they slip into their modern slang dialect! The Coverdale Bible does the same thing in Romans 10:20.

18b “**Have they not heard?**” A negative answer is assumed- “surely it is not true that they did not hear”, a double negative giving the idea that Israel has indeed heard.

226 Ebonics!

18c **“their sound”** This word gives the idea of the beauty of the gospel sound, like a great and beautiful piece of music.

18d Israel had absolutely no spiritual excuse for their spiritual ignorance. Paul anticipates an objection that Israel cannot be faulted because they have not heard, but Paul refutes it. Israel certainly could not plead any sort of ignorance for their sins, for they had the word of God as its custodian, so they knew it and had heard it enough to know.

18e **“unto the ends of the world”** See Psalm 19:4. This shows the universal knowledge of the Bible. It wasn’t just confined to Israel or Europe, but it was known throughout the entire known world, from Babylon and Persia (by the exiles) to even North America, taken there by Jewish traders centuries before the birth of Christ (as Hebrew-like writings have been found in New Mexico that have been dated centuries before the birth of Christ). The full extent of the distribution of the knowledge of the word of God will probably never be seen or known as such records are scant and what ones did survive have been lost, but we are confident that the geographical extent of this verse is true.

98. God’s Provocation of Israel 10:19-21

10:19 But I^a say,^{b-present} Did not Israel know?^{c-aorist} First Moses saith,^{present} I will provoke you to jealousy^{future} by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation^d I will anger^{future} you.^e

19a Emphatic.

19b The Tyndale, Geneva and Bishop’s Bibles use “demand”, probably trying to bring out the emphatic pronoun.

19c **“Did Israel not know?”** Yes, they do know. They had no excuse for not knowing.

19d **“no people...foolish nation”** Gentile nations, called “no people” because they had no national covenant with God and were not considered a people by the Jews, but rather, were considered dogs. The Gentiles were also called “foolish” since they did not have the law and did not know the mind of God as Israel did. And this verse has been literally fulfilled as there has been much Jewish anger and resentment over Jesus Christ and Christianity. There is still much hatred against both, especially among the orthodox Jews, even to this hour.

19e Although apostate and blind, Israel was not forsaken by God. He entirely intended to reclaim Israel, just as Hosea reclaimed the harlot Gomer as his wife (Hosea 1,2). To reclaim Israel away from her legalism and back to God, God intended to use the powerful emotion of jealousy by working through the Gentiles (Acts 8 onward). What! God using dogs! God using a nation that are not even counted as a people! God’s dealings with the Gentiles in the Church Age are designed to provoke Israel to jealousy in order to bring them back to a right relationship with Him. It has yet to fully work or be realized, but if Israel would only stop and consider that God is using the Gentiles in the manner that He wanted to use them instead, wouldn’t (or shouldn’t) that cause a strong desire for Israel to return to a right relationship and obedience to the God whom they have wandered away from? The Jew couldn’t stand the thought of God

using a Gentile to do a Jew's job in witnessing of God to an unsaved and fallen world. Yet this jealousy only made the Jews more stubborn than ever in their rebellion and blindness.

10:20^a But Esaias is very bold,^{present} and saith,^{present} I was found^{aorist} of them that sought^{present active participle} me not;^b I was made^{aorist middle} manifest unto them that asked^c not after^{present active participle} me.

20a Verses 20 and 21 are quoted from Isaiah 65:1,2.

20b **“Found of them that sought me not...”** The Gentiles, who originally had nothing to do with God, found Him through faith while the Jews, who knew God, could not find him after lapsing into dead ritualism and formalism. Yet the “lost” Gentiles found God while the “found” Jews lost Him in their religious formalism.

20c See note 18a above.

10:21 But to Israel he saith,^{present} All day long I have stretched forth^{aorist} my hands^a unto a disobedient^{present active participle} and gainsaying^{b-present active participle} people.^c

21a **“All day long I have stretched forth my hands...”** And he had very little to show for it- a murdered Son, persecuted prophets and a rejected gospel. Yet God had not given up on Israel. Israel had rejected and continued to reject Him even after the Church was formed.

21b **“gainsaying”** Strong’s #483 antilegô, from anti (Strong’s #473) against; and legô (Strong’s #3004) to speak; to speak against, gainsay, contradict, to oppose one’s self to one, decline to obey him, declare one’s self against him, refuse to have anything to do with him. “Gainsay” is a combination of the Old English *gegn* ‘against’ and say. Hence, ‘to gainsay’ is to speak against, contradict, oppose or hinder.²²⁷ This shows that one trait Israel had was a constant “backtalking” to God. When God revealed Himself to Israel in a certain form, the Jews would fight it and argue against God, almost as a spoiled child sassing his parents.

AV	ESV	LSV
21 But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.	21 But of Israel he says, “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.”	21 But of Israel he says, “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people.”

“gainsaying” The Tyndale, Coverdale and Bishop’s Bibles all use “speakeeth against”. The ESV and LSV are inferior with “contrary”.

21c **“disobedient...gainsaying people”** This is quoted from Isaiah 65:2. The Jews were, and still are, an argumentative, contradictory people. Israel has always been famous for wrestling and striving with God, starting with Jacob. The idea is Israel would backtalk God- God would say something and Israel would argue with God over it- they simply refused to submit to what

²²⁷ Laurence Vance, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*, pages 158-159.

He has said. And they liked to argue with God over the smallest points of theology. This really hasn't changed even to this day, as Israel is still in spiritual blindness.

Romans Chapter 11

In Romans 11, Paul shows that although the Jew forfeited his national religious privileges and covenant when he rejected Christ as his king ("We have no king but Caesar!"), God will reactivate those promises and bring them to fulfillment. Chapters 9 and 10 record Israel's sad history and present, but their future is bright and full of hope, as Paul will demonstrate that God has not cast them off and that their greatest days are still ahead.

99. Has God Cast Away Israel? 11:1-4

11:1 I say^a then, Hath God cast away^{aorist middle} his people?^b God forbid.^{c-optative} For I^d also am^{present} an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham,^e of the tribe of Benjamin.^f

1a The Geneva Bible uses "demand" instead of "say" here and in Romans 11:11..

1b The Greek structure of this question assumes a negative answer. Paul proves God has not cast away Israel on the fact that God called an Israelite to minister to the Gentiles- Paul himself. If Israel had been rejected, Paul would not have been called. He also re-establishes his Jewish heritage and lineage here.

Now it is true that God temporarily turned away from Israel to the Gentiles to establish the Church, but even that does not mean that God has forsaken Israel totally or finally. He simply has placed them on the shelf temporarily until the fullness of the Gentiles is come. The early church was primarily Jewish in Acts 2-7 until Israel had used up it's "three strikes".

The kingdom is offered in the gospels by Christ and Israel refuses it. **Strike one.**

The kingdom is offered again by Peter in Acts 3:19,20 and the leadership of the nation rejected it, although many individual Jews accepted it. **Strike two.**

Stephen offers it again in Acts 7 and is murdered for it. **Strike three** and Israel, as a nation, is out, although individual Jews will still continue to be saved.

In Acts 8, God visits the Samaritans with a revival. In Acts 9, Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles is saved. In Acts 10 comes the Gentile Pentecost at the house of Cornelius. In Acts 13 is the first preaching mission to the Gentiles. Israel slips into the role of persecutor of the church after this point because God has turned His attention to the Gentile people who will respond to the same gospel that Israel rejected. This state of affairs will continue until the rapture. As we move into the tribulation, we clearly see God turning back to Israel as He calls out 144,000 Jewish male virgins to preach to the tribulation peoples in Revelation 7.

AV

1 I say then, Hath God **cast away** his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, *of* the tribe of Benjamin.

ESV

1 I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin.

LSV

1 I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin.

"cast away" The Coverdale Bible has "thrust out" His people while the ESV and LSV use "rejected".

1c **"God forbid"** Paul emphatically states that despite Israel's apostasy and unbelief, God has

not cast them off. The Abrahamic Covenant of Genesis 12 and 15 was an unconditional promise- God would fulfill His covenant with Israel regardless of how faithful Israel was or what anyone else did or didn't do.

This "God forbid" response nullifies "Replacement Theology" which teaches that the Church has replaced Israel and that the modern Jew is not a true seed of Abraham. We'll have a special section on the errors of Replacement Theology at the end of this chapter. But no Bible-believing Christian can accept or believe the teachings of Replacement Theology.

1d Emphatic.

1e **"the seed of Abraham"** This is a very high privilege. Jews enjoy it by birth and faith while Gentiles can access it by faith.

1f **Benjamin** is the smallest tribe numerically, showing that not only has God not forsaken Israel, but that He is still using them, even down to the most insignificant tribe. God was using a rabbi and a Pharisee to write about Israel's present state and future condition, showing that God was still using Israel.

11:2^a God hath not cast away^{aorist middle} his people^b which he foreknew.^{c-aorist}
Wot^{present} ye not^d what the scripture saith^{present} of Elias?^e how he maketh
intercession^{f-present} to God against Israel, saying,^{present active participle}

2a In verses 2-10, Paul will divide Israel into two groups- a believing minority and an unbelieving majority.

2b **"God hath not cast away his people"** This ends all debate on the matter. Paul refutes postmillennialists and the preterists who believe that God has cast away Israel and has turned to the Church and that the Church is Israel now. Also see Paul's three divisions in 1 Corinthians 10:32- Jew, Gentile and Church. That three-fold division of humanity is church-age doctrine and relates to this current dispensation. What a very gross error it is to believe that God has abandoned His covenant people once and for all and that He has transferred all of Israel's kingdom promises to the church! If God is finished with Israel, then why did He go through all of the trouble of re-establishing the State of Israel in 1948, after over 1900 years with the Jew out of the land? That fact alone should be sufficient to destroy any notion that God is finished with Israel.

This distinction and separation of Israel and the Church is one of the key foundations in interpretation of Scripture as well as of dispensationalism. We must be very careful and diligent to make that distinction every time we can because they are not the same people. Failure to make that distinction will lead to all manner of theological error and it has even been used as an excuse for anti-Semitism and persecution of the Jews. This is why dispensationalists have always been the best friend of the Jews among Christians.

2c **"which he foreknew"** Notice the foreknowledge in connection with Paul's discussion of election in 11:5. Election of a person or nation is at least partially based on God's foreknowledge (1 Peter 1:2). God knew Israel would get themselves in the mess they would yet chose them anyway because He also knew they would eventually respond. Thus, election and divine foreknowledge are always associated with each other. The foreknowledge of God is an important element in God's dealings and His elections.

2d **"Wot ye not..."** Or "know ye not" or "don't you know...?" . "The verb **wit** occurs twenty-one times in the Authorized Version. 'Wit' is from the Old English *witan*, 'to know'. The present tense **wot** appears ten times. None of our modern versions contain any form of these words. The word **wit** is used in the AV three times as an infinitive meaning to know. **Wit** also appears seventeen times in the expression 'to wit' that means indeed, that is to say, namely, or that is."²²⁸

2e **"Elias"** Elijah.

2f The Geneva Bible has "communeth".

11:3 Lord, they have killed^{aorist} thy prophets, and digged down^{aorist} thine altars;^a and I^b am left^{aorist passive} alone,^c and they seek^{present} my life.^d

3a **"digged down thine altars"** Elijah is being quoted here. For Israel to neglect altars for worship is bad enough. To attack them and destroy them is even worse. Israel simply didn't neglect and forsake the worship of God but militantly attacked both it and those who remained faithful to God in persecution, especially of the prophets. Stephen would ask in Acts 7:52 **"which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?"** And Matthew 23:35 shows the Jews have much righteous blood to account for (**"That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar"**)

3b Emphatic.

3c **"left alone"** Has the idea of "utterly alone" from the Septuagint. See 1 Kings 19:10,14 **"And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away... And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."**

3d "The time of Elias was one of the darkest periods of their history. It seemed as if the whole nation had apostatized from God. Elias had this conception when he complained in his despondency. "They have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life." The Lord told him then that there were seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. The apostasy of Israel was not a complete apostasy. The Lord had preserved a faithful remnant. Even so at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. In the beginning of this present age there was in existence a distinctive Jewish remnant. This Jewish- Christian remnant in the beginning of the dispensation was an evidence that God had not cast away His people. A similar remnant of believing Jews will be called for a definite work and testimony during the end of the age. And throughout this Christian dispensation it has been abundantly demonstrated that God has not cast away His ancient people, for thousands of them have been saved by grace and have become members of the body of Christ."²²⁹

228 Laurence Vance, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*, page 381.

229 A. C. Gaebel, *The Annotated Bible*.

11:4 But what saith^{present} the answer of God^a unto him? I have reserved^{aorist} to myself seven thousand men,^b who have not bowed^{aorist} the knee^c to the image of Baal.^d

4a **“answer of God”** Strong’s #5538 chrêmatismos; a divine response, an oracle, from a root meaning “to warn.” It is used only here in the New Testament.

4b There is no reason to spiritualize the number 7,000 away- God meant that He had a literal 7000 faithful men besides Elijah yet remaining in Israel.

4c **“bowed the knee...”** or worshipped the various idols of Baal.

4d Despite Israel’s sin and apostasy, God has reserved for Himself a remnant of Israel just as He did in Elijah’s day. This is quoted from 1 Kings 19:18 where Elijah thought God might have cast Israel away for their idolatry, but God said He had reserved unto Himself a remnant of 7000 men who had not served or kissed Baal. Elijah got his math wrong- there were over 7000 in the remnant, not just one! The majority of men (and prophets) had but not this small group that God had reserved unto Himself. So has it always been as it seems God is always working through remnants. God will always have someone on the earth who remains faithful, even if that number is very small.

God has always had remnants, from Noah to Abraham to 120 in an upper room to the Donatists, Waldensians, Anabaptists to remnant saints today. A “remnant” is something that is left over and is often unwanted. We are familiar with an example of a piece of carpet. You may buy an area of carpet to carpet a room. If you end up with too much that you do not need, the leftover carpeting is a remnant. It is usually put aside because it is not needed. But a “remnant” has a more honorable presentation in the Word of God. The word itself is used over 90 times in Scripture and it has the idea of people that are small in number and weak in power.

The condition of God’s remnant today is that they are also in great affliction and reproach in the religious world. It has always been like this. Many of them came out of various denominations and churches because of the apostasy in those organizations. The contemporary Christian came in and captured these organizations. These people had to leave as they no longer had a home there. But generally, only a small percentage of people ever leave these compromised churches. Many may stay in with more of a puritan heart, with a hope to somehow rescue the churches and denominations that they love. They acknowledge the falling away but they stay behind in hopes of somehow rescuing it. When these people finally come to the inevitable realization that such hopes or rescue and restoration are futile, they will leave and take on a pilgrim heart to replace their puritan heart. I had to do that when I was in the Roman Catholic Church. I was saved when I was 13 years old, but I remained within the Church of Rome until I was 18 years old. I had no real hopes for any sort of reform, but I was too naïve and ignorant of the true depths of the apostasy within the Church of Rome. When it finally dawned on me that the Church of Rome was beyond any hope, I left. When people leave such churches, they become part of the remnant. Then people tend to talk against them, attacking them for their attitudes and stand. Legal action is even brought against them at times by the churches they have separated from, especially if property and church buildings are involved.

In Romans 11:5, Paul mentions that **“even at this time, there is a remnant according to the election of grace.”** That refers to the nation of Israel theologically, but practically, it could refer to any group of people who have developed a pilgrim heart and a pilgrim attitude.

As we go on toward the Second Coming and as the apostasy deepens, “remnant” is becoming an increasingly desirable word. It is being embraced more and more, even with the

reproach that goes with it. “Remnant Christianity” and “remnant churches” are becoming more honorable.

The Lord did ask “When the Son of Man returneth, will He find faith on the earth? (Luke 18:8)” The implied answer was “no, except for a very small number”. At both the rapture and the advent, there will be only a very few people who will be faithful and who will be “staying by the stuff”. There are many on the “broad way” but very few on the “narrow way”, only a remnant of people are to be found there.

100. The Election of Grace 11:5-7

11:5 Even so then at this present time also there is^{a-perfect} a remnant^b according to the election^c of grace.^d

5a “**is**” is in the perfect tense, showing the absolute certainty and assurance of the existence of this remnant. It exists and nothing shall be able to change that.

5b “**there is a remnant...**” The use of the perfect shows this election of a remnant is a settled fact, already established and fixed in the mind of God.

5c AV

ESV

LSV

5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.	5 So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace.	5 So too at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace.
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The ESV and LSV omit “election” and replace it with “chisen”.

5d “**election of grace**” This election is national- God chose Israel as His chosen people based on His grace and not upon any merit or goodness that Israel had at that time (for they had none). This is not an individual election unto salvation. And this election would seem to be based on grace, not sovereignty or anything else here. God chose Israel through this election basically because He wanted to.

11:6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace^{is^{present middle}} no more grace.^a But if it be of works, then is^{present} it no more grace:^b otherwise work is no more work.^{cd}

6a “**And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace**” It no longer has the character of grace. Once works are mixed in with grace, it ceases being grace and degenerates into a mutant-hybrid theological system.

6b The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles basically define “grace” here in their use of “deserving”.

6c “**otherwise work is no more work.**” The basis of this election is by the grace of God and not the basis of Israel's merit. If God had chosen Israel by some merit of his own, God's election would have been by works and not by grace. Ezekiel 16 is a recounting of God's election of Israel.

6d AV

ESV

LSV

6 And if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

6 But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.

6 But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.

Many modern versions omit the last 18 words of this verse.

11:7 What then?^a Israel hath not obtained^{aorist} that which he seeketh for;^{present} but the election^b hath obtained it,^{aorist} and the rest were blinded.^{c-aorist passive}

7a **What then?** If God has not cast away His people, then how do we explain the current spiritual state of Israel?

7b **“the election”** Believing Israel, which was a remnant in Paul’s day and that is an even smaller remnant today.

7d Israel has not obtained that which they sought for (the blessing of God) but the elect of Israel (the remnant) did. Those who did not find God’s blessing were looking to earn it by works, but the remnant by election and grace found it by believing without works.

AV

ESV

LSV

7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were **blinded**

7 What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened,

7 What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened,

“blinded” The Geneva Bible, LSV and ESV use “hardened” for “blinded”.

101. The Fact of Israel’s Blindness 11:8-10

11:8^a (According as it is written,^{present infinitive passive} God hath given^{aorist} them the spirit of slumber,^b eyes that they should not see,^{c-infinitive} and ears that they should not hear;^{infinitive}) unto this day.

8a This verse is quoted from Isaiah 6:9,10 and 29:10.

8b **“God hath given them the spirit of slumber”** Israel’s blindness to the truth is sent by God . The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles use “quietness”.

8c **“the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see”** This is the veil of 2 Corinthians 3:14 that Paul mentions while discussing Israel’s spiritual blindness. This was caused by their hard heart and rebellious spirit. The Jew has always been like this, since Moses’ day to Paul’s day and even to our day.

11:9^a And David saith,^{present} Let their table be made^{aoist passive} a snare,^b and a trap,^c and a stumblingblock,^d and a recompence unto them:^e

9a Paul quotes Psalm 69:22,23. God did this to Israel by confounding them spiritually and by sending them spiritual blindness. Their table is their blessing which God has laid out as a feast. You could say that Israel has been cursed by a blessing. God's blessings rejected come back as a boomerang of judgment and light rejected becomes lightening. The context of Psalm 69 is the death of Christ and His sufferings, so this is applied to Israel's rejection of the Messiah as being the reason for their blindness. Israel was recompensed for rejecting the Messiah. They crucified Him so at the siege of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., 500 Jews were crucified a day by the Romans. It was said that the Romans ran out of crosses to use, else more Jews would have been crucified. See also Matthew 27:25 where they declared "His blood be on us and on our children". They asked for it and for the past 2,000 years, they've been paying for it. And Paul also ascribes the authorship of Psalm 69 to David.

9b **"snare"** Strong's #3803 pagis; snare, trap, noose, of snares in which birds are entangled and caught, implies unexpectedly, suddenly, because birds and beasts are caught unawares.

9c **"trap"** Strong's #2339 thêra; a hunting of wild beasts to destroy them. It is used only here in the New Testament.

9d **"stumblingblock"** Strong's #4625 skandalon; the movable stick or trigger of a trap, a trap stick, any impediment placed in the way and causing one to stumble or fall, (a stumbling block, occasion of stumbling), a rock which is a cause of stumbling, any person or thing by which one is (entrapped) drawn into error or sin.

9e The covenant blessings that were given to Israel to be a blessing to them instead became a curse to them because of their unbelief and spiritual stubbornness. They were **"cursed by a blessing"** (Malachi 2:2).

11:10 Let their eyes be darkened,^{aoist imperative passive} that they may not see,^{a-infinitive} and bow down^{b-aoist imperative} their back away.^c

10a Israel's blindness is seen, for example, in their accepting the absurdities in the Talmud, going through the empty ritualism of synagogue worship and accepting as divinely inspired rabbinical decrees and traditions, as crazy as many of them are.

10b **"bow down their back"** in hard servitude and slavery, as Israel did in Egypt, making and hauling bricks.

10c Quoted from Deuteronomy 28:43.

102. The Reason for Israel's Blindness 11:11-16

11:11 I say^{present} then, Have they stumbled^{aoist} that they should fall?^{aoist subjunctive} God forbid:^{optative} but *rather* through their fall salvation *is come* unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.^a

11a God has not dealt so with Israel so that they might all fall, but rather to bring salvation to the Gentiles. This result would provoke Israel to jealousy with the aim of resorting them to fellowship. Israel has yet to respond and will not until Revelation 19, when they see the Lord returning in the clouds in the Second Coming.

11:12 Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them^a the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?^b

12a **“diminishing of them”** Think how Israel was “cut short” since her glory days under David and Solomon. By the Paul’s day, Israel was nothing more than a backwater Roman province. Then they were driven out of the land by 135 A.D. and left to scatter among the nations. They did come back into their land in 1948 but still only controls a small amount of territory. Spiritually, genuine Judaism has waned in this present day as liberal versions of Judaism grow as well as the numbers of “non-observant” Jews. As the Jews have waxed weaker and weaker in their judgment under God, the Gentiles and Christianity has spread.

12b Consider how the Gentiles have been blessed through the fall of Israel by the establishment of the Church. Then consider how much more of a blessing all the world will receive when Israel is restored in the Millennium. This is a reference to the Millennial blessings that Israel, when restored, will bring to the world.

11:13 For I speak^{present} to you Gentiles,^a inasmuch as I^b am^{present} the apostle of the Gentiles,^c I magnify^{present} mine office:^d

13a **“I speak to you Gentiles”** Paul, in a personal note to his Gentile Roman readers, points out that he, a Jew, is the apostle to the Gentiles, thus foreshadowing what a blessing Israel is and shall be to the Gentile.

13b Emphatic.

13c **“the apostle of the Gentiles”** not “an apostle...” This suggests that Paul was the only one, as the other apostles ministered more to Israel. The Gentiles had only one apostle to work with them- Paul. The pope styles himself as an “apostle of the Gentiles” but as with all of his claims, they are illegitimate.

13d **“I magnify mine office”** Paul does not magnify himself personally but rather his call and his office. He then is, in effect, magnifying the Lord who called him into the office of an apostle. His office as an apostle, missionary, church-planter, teacher and preacher is a glorious one. Do not magnify the man for all flesh is as grass and all men fail. But the office is of God and should be exalted and respected, especially among Christians. The unsaved used to have a basic respect for the ministerial office in better days, but with the immorality, compromise, apostasy and general failure of modern “ministers”, the world has just about lost all respect for such offices. If it is not Jim Bakker being blackmailed by women he fornicated with, then it is Tammy Faye Bakker under a ton of horrible make-up, or Jerry Falwell sliding down water slides at PTL Theme Park or Jimmy Swaggart getting caught multiple times with prostitutes or Oral Roberts claiming God would kill him if he doesn’t raise \$8 million or Gene Scott chewing on a big black cigar and cussing on television as he “preached”. The list can go on and on.

11:14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation^{a-aorist subjunctive} them which are my flesh, and might save^{aorist subjunctive} some of them:^b

14a Paul also understood his ministry to be the means to provoke Israel to jealousy (or **emulation**) (Romans 11:11) in order that some might be saved. The Tyndale, Geneva and Bishops Bibles do not translate “to emulation”, leaving it merely to “provoke” them. The Coverdale Bible has this as “provoking them to zeal”.

“**emulation**” Same word as “**provoke to jealousy**” in Romans 11:11. Strong’s #3863 *parazeloō*; to provoke to jealousy or rivalry, to provoke to anger. It is borrowed from Latin *aemulātiōn-*, *aemulātiō*, from *aemulārī* “to vie with, rival, imitate” + *-tiōn-*, *-tiō*, suffix of verbal action.

14b “**save some of them**” Paul knew that most of his countrymen would reject the gospel. He did hope for some harvest among the Jews, even if it was only a first-fruits kind of ingathering, anticipating the larger harvest to come.

11:15 For if the casting away^a of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?^b

15a The Coverdale Bible uses “the loss of them” which is not as good as “casting away”.

15b Consider what a blessing Israel has been to the entire world even in their blindness, disobedience and judgment. How much more of a blessing will their obedience and restoration bring to the earth! When they are restored in the Millennial Kingdom, Israel will be able to bless the nations as she has never been able to do in her times of blindness and rebellion.

11:16 For if the firstfruit^a be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.^b

16a AV	ESV	LSV
16 For if the firstfruit <i>be</i> holy, the lump <i>is</i> also <i>holy</i> : and if the root <i>be</i> holy, so <i>are</i> the branches.	16 If the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, so is the whole lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches.	16 If the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, so is the whole lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches.

“**firstfruit**” The Coverdale Bible has “beginning” instead of “firstfruits”. The ESV and LSV resort to more commentary than translation by adding “the dough offered” which is not in the text and which is not a good rendering.

16b If the first-fruits of a lump of dough is holy, so is the entire lump. If the roots are holy, so are the branches. This would be a reference to the “first-fruits” of Israel (patriarchs, prophets, believers) making the rest of the Jewish nation partakers of this holiness (the lump) and allowing the Gentiles to benefit by it (by being engrafted into the olive tree).

103. A Warning to the Gentiles 11:17-25

11:17 And if some of the branches be broken off,^{aorist passive} **and thou,**^a **being**^{present}
^{active participle} **a wild olive tree,**^b **wert grafted in**^{c-aorist passive} **among them,**^{de} **and with**
them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;^{fg}

17a Emphatic.

17b The Gentiles, as a **wild olive tree**, is like a tree that bears no fruit or that acts more like a weed than a fruit-bearing tree. Yet God grafted this worthless vine unto an olive tree so that the olive tree (Israel) could nurture the wild olive tree (Gentiles) by her sap (blessings). Grafting bad branches from a wild, uncultivated olive tree (Gentiles) into a good, cultivated olive tree (Israel) is contrary to reason since the bad branches would contaminate the tree. It is usually the other way around but God seldom works according to man's reasonings. One would think that grafting Gentiles into the tree of the Church would ruin the Church and contaminate the Jews, but this fear proved to be unfounded, as the Gentiles have been a great blessing to the Church.

17c **"grafted in"** Olive trees were an agricultural and commercial mainstay in the Middle East and Mediterranean areas, and still support a valuable industry today. Olive trees can live for hundreds of years, but as they age, they become less productive and produce fewer olives. In order to restore fruitfulness, branches from younger trees are grafted to old ones. When a branch ceased to produce olives, a younger one was grafted in its place.

When were the Gentiles grafted in? Not before the Lord Jesus died on the cross! The cutting off of the natural branches (Israel) is the same thing as their fall (Romans 11:12) and their being cast away (Romans 11:15). This is what gave occasion to Gentile blessing and privilege. So the cutting off took place in connection with their stumbling, their rejection of Messiah. The cutting off of the natural branches synchronizes with the grafting in of the Gentiles. Verse 30 also shows this. It is the Gentiles verses Israel as a nation, but really professing Gentiles. Just as the cutting off of natural branches and the graft from the wild olive denote a change, so does the grafting in again of natural branches represent a change. The remnant of believing Israel, through the election of grace (Romans 11:5), always remains in the good olive.

17d The **them** refers to Israel as a cultivated olive tree, as opposed to the wild, uncultivated olive tree that represents the Gentiles. The olive tree is a national symbol for Israel, or even a burning bush that is not consumed, more so than the so-called "Star of David".

17e Although the Gentiles were grafted into the olive tree with Israel, this does not mean that the Gentiles became Jews or part of the nation of Israel. The Gentiles were grafted into that olive tree but still remained distinct from Israel. Even today, there is still Israel, the Gentiles and the Church of God and that distinction will not change. The Gentiles were grafted into the vine to share in the divine blessings with Israel but the vine was never replaced. A grafting is a mechanical joining, not an organic one.

17f There are a few Old Testament passages that picture Israel as an olive tree:

1. Isaiah 17:6 **Yet gleaning grapes shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive tree, two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof, saith the LORD God of Israel.**

2. Isaiah 24:13 **When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people,**

there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done.

3. Hosea 14:6 His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon.

These verses deal with Israel as an olive tree in an eschatological sense, mainly in the “shaking” of the olive tree in the tribulation and its eventual restoration.

17g There Are two olive trees.. There is a good olive tree, Israel (Romans 11:24) and a wild olive tree, the Gentiles (Romans 11:17,24). This refers to the fact that Israel was in the place of privilege and specially under the scrutiny of God. The Gentiles did not occupy such a place of privilege. There is a good olive tree and a wild olive tree. There is a position of privilege on the earth and there is a position outside of this privilege. Gardeners take a branch from a good tree and graft it to a wild tree. In Romans 11 the opposite takes place, in that what was cut out of the wild olive tree was grafted into a good olive tree (Romans 11:24) and we are told that this is contrary to nature (Romans 11:24).

The **fatness** of the olive tree represents the privileges and blessings granted by God to Israel, through their relation to Abraham and the grace and election of God on their behalf. These are external and national blessings, not necessarily spiritual.

11:18 Boast^{present imperative} not against the branches. But if thou boast,^{present middle} thou^a bearest^{present} not the root, but the root thee.^b

18a Emphatic.

18b The Gentiles are not to boast in their position in relation to Israel. If God pruned the olive tree (Israel) in judgment, what would He do to the wild olive tree if it got too high-minded? The only reason the Gentiles have the privileges they do is because of Israel's fall, not in any merit the Gentiles might have had. And as God judged Israel, He would also judge the Gentiles if they got proud or high-minded.

11:19 Thou wilt say^{future} then, The branches were broken off,^{aorist passive} that I^a might be grafted in.^{b-aorist subjunctive passive}

19a Emphatic. This emphatic attitude on the part of the Gentile does reveal pride against Israel, for which Paul is condemning in this passage.

19b Was Israel judged just for the spiritual benefit of the Gentiles? Not at all. The Jews were judged for reasons independent of the Gentiles. The Gentiles simply received some associated benefits from Israel's plight. It is not that God removed the Jews only to replace them with Gentiles. God has no intention of “replacing” the Jews with the Gentiles. No sort of “replacement theology” can be considered orthodox. This also undermines a central presupposition of Covenant Theology, that God turned from Israel after the death of Christ and is now working through the Gentiles, and that He will not return to the Jews, as the Church replaced Israel permanently. Israel still literally exists and is still very much in the land as of this hour. Spiritually, they are separate and distinct from the Gentiles. God has separate plans for both people as God has not forsaken them or abandoned them. It is true that Israel has “been on the shelf” since they rejected Christ, but even that is temporary, as they will be called back into service and will again take center stage during the tribulation period and into the millennium.

This heresy can usually be seen in books like (but not limited to) the Thompson Chain Reference Bible. If you check out the chapter headings in certain Old Testament chapters (especially in Psalms or Isaiah), you'll see the Church being mentioned as the subject of the chapter instead of Israel. The New Testament Church is not in view in the Old Testament and must not be confused with Israel when studying Old Testament prophecy.

11:20 Well; because of unbelief they were broken off,^{a-aorist passive} and thou standest^{perfect} by faith. Be not highminded,^{b-present imperative} but fear:^c

20a “**because of unbelief they were broken off**” This judgment came because not of a lack of works or the wrong works, but rather, through a lack of faith.

20b “**highminded**” Strong’s # 5309 hupsêlophroneô; from hupselos (Strong’s #5308) high, lofty; and phren (Strong’s #5424) understanding, the heart; to be high minded, proud. It is used only here and in 1 Timothy 6:17 in the New Testament.

20c “**Be not highminded, but fear**” Some Gentiles (even today) would use Israel’s setting aside because of their apostasy as an excuse to vaunt the Church against Israel or to try to steal their Kingdom promises or as an excuse for anti-Semitism. All three unchristian and unbiblical attitudes are condemned and warned about by Paul, that we are not to build ourselves up spiritually (or in any other way) at Israel’s expense.

11:21 For if God spared^{aorist middle} not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare^{aorist middle subjunctive} not thee.^a

21a The warning to the Gentiles is that they face being "cut off" from the blessing they could receive from Israel. It is like a branch that is pruned away. As soon as it is cut off from the sap of the tree, it dies. This is not a reference to losing salvation (impossible for the Christian) but this is addressed to the Gentiles as a whole, not individually. God could cut off a people as a whole (withdrawing national privileges God grants to certain nations) while still saving individuals. Application today would include God not sparing a local church if it apostatized. A good example of this would be the 7 Churches of Asia in Revelation 2,3 which do not survive to this day. They fell away and there is no trace of them today as local churches.

11:22 Behold^{aorist imperative} therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell,^{aorist active participle} severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue^{aorist subjunctive} in his goodness: otherwise thou^a also shalt be cut off.^{b-aorist middle subjunctive}

22a Emphatic.

22b Behold both **the goodness and the severity of God** here- goodness that He even bothered to engraft Gentiles into Israel's olive tree but severity in judgment for those who get high-minded as a result of God's blessings toward them. After all, if God was so severe in His judgments upon His own covenant people, how much harsher would He be in judging the Gentiles?

11:23 And they^a also, if they abide^{aorist subjunctive} not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in:^{future} for God is^{present} able to graff^{aorist infinitive} them in again.^b

23a Emphatic.

23b Israel's current spiritual unbelief does not affect God's future plans for them.

11:24 For if thou^a wert cut^{aorist passive} out of the olive tree which is wild by nature,^b and wert grafted^{aorist passive} contrary to nature into a good olive tree:^c how much more shall these, which be the natural *branches*, be grafted^{future} into their own olive tree?

24a Emphatic.

24b Gentile nations.

24c "Good olive tree" - Israel (but Isaiah 5 might make one wonder!)

11:25 For I would^{present} not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant^{present infinitive} of this mystery,^a lest ye should be^{present subjunctive} wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened^{perfect} to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles^b be come in.^{aorist subjunctive}

25a Paul calls this revelation about the judgments on Israel and the fullness of the Gentiles a "**mystery**" - something hidden that is now revealed and expounded. This mystery is the engrafting of the Gentiles into the blessings of Israel.

25b "**Fulness of the Gentiles**" is a reference to the Church Age (which is primarily Gentile), not to be confused with the "**Times of the Gentiles**" which is the domination of the Gentile nations in world affairs (Luke 21:24).

104. All Israel Shall Be Saved 11:26,27

11:26^a And so all Israel shall be saved:^{b-future passive} as it is written,^{c-perfect passive} There shall come^{future passive} out of Sion the Deliverer,^{present middle/passive participle} and shall turn away^{future} ungodliness from Jacob:

26a This verse and verse 27 quotes Isaiah 59:20,21.

26b God clearly states that all Israel will be saved.

1. Isaiah 66:8 "**Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.**"

2. Zechariah 12:10-14 "**And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one**

mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart."

3. Zechariah 13:9 "And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God."

The passive indicates that an outside force (God in this case) saves Israel and that they do not save themselves. This will occur at the Second Coming and refers only to Israel. All surviving Jews who make it through the tribulation and live to see the Second Coming will be saved for they shall all accept Christ. This is why it is necessary for a Jew to survive the tribulation in order to be saved. Otherwise, if he dies, he dies lost and perishes (Matthew 24:13 "**But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.**").

This does not mean that the Jews can't go to hell or do not need to be born again (in this dispensation) or receive Christ at the Second Coming or fulfill Matthew 24:13. After all, we see Jews going down alive into hell in Numbers 16:33 ("**They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation.**"). The Jewish "rich man" was in torments in Luke 16. The unbelieving Jewish religious leaders were called "children of hell" by the Lord in Matthew 23. Jesus told a Jewish religious leader that he had to be born again in John 3:7. This verse had to do with Jews who survive the tribulation period to see the Lord coming in the Second Advent. Every Jew who survives to that point will accept Christ and will be saved. That is what Matthew 24:13 is referring to!

26c "**as it is written**" Greek perfect tense- it has been written and remains written, not to be changed or altered. It is a completed action with continuous results, or the continuance of an act completed in the past. The components are always a past action and continuous results. References to the Scriptures like this are often presented in the perfect tense. "The just shall live by faith" is one of those unalterable truths of Christianity. This perfect tense in reference to New Testament references to Old Testament texts is used 62 times in the New Testament, 16 times in Romans (1:17; 2:24; 3:4,10; 4:17; 8:36; 9:13,33; 10:15; 11:8,26; 12:19; 14:11; 15:3,9,21). This usage of the perfect is a strong argument for the verbal and plenary preservation of the Scripture, as the written Old Testament word stands forever and continues to.

11:27 For this *is* my covenant^a unto them, when I shall take away^{aorist middle subjunctive} their sins.^b

27a This is a reference to the New Covenant made in:

1. Jeremiah 31:31-34 "**Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this shall be the**

covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

2. Hebrews 8:8-13 “For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.”

27b “when I shall take away their sins” Israel's sins shall also be taken away at this same time of the Second Coming, when they will start with a “clean slate” with God.

105. Israel's Position With God 11:28-31

11:28 As concerning the gospel, *they are* enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, *they are* beloved for the fathers' sakes.^a

28a The Jewish persecution of the Church allowed the Church to grow, define its doctrine, and spread through the Roman Empire. In that sense, the Jews did more to advance the cause of the Gospel than anyone else by their hatred and persecution. The Jews were enemies and persecutors of God's people, but they were still the Beloved of God, even in their blindness and ignorance.

11:29 For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance.^a

29a God never changes His mind in His dealings with His covenants. Covenants may be stalled or postponed, but they are not cancelled. Due to Israel's sin, God may have regretted (at times) entering into covenants with Israel, but He keeps His promises regardless.

11:30 For as ye^a in times past have not believed^{b-aorist} God, yet have now obtained mercy^{aorist passive} through their^a unbelief:^{bc}

30a Emphatic.

30b AV

ESV

LSV

30 For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief:	30 For just as you were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience,	30 For just as you were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience,
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“not believed” The ESV and LSV use “disobedient”.

30c The Gentiles, at one point in their history, were atheistic and idolatrous, yet God forgave them, even if they were not the covenant people of God and had no covenants with God. Yet God forgave them through His grace. If God did that for Gentiles, how much more will re forgive and redeem His covenant people, Israel?

11:31 Even so have these also now not believed,^{aorist} that through your mercy they^a also may obtain mercy.^{b-aorist subjunctive passive}

31a Emphatic.

31b Israel is in unbelief yet are not cast away but there is hope for them by the mercy extended to the Gentiles. If God has dealt with a people who are not a people the way He has, we may expect Him to do even greater things for Israel.

106. A Concluding Doxology 11:32-36

11:32 For God hath concluded^{aorist} them all in unbelief,^a that he might have mercy^{aorist subjunctive} upon all.^b

32a AV

ESV

LSV

32 For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.	32 For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.	32 For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.
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“concluded” The Tyndale and Bishops Bible use “wrapped all nations in unbelief.” The Coverdale Bible uses “closed up all under unbelief”. The Geneva Bible is similar God “shutting them up”. The ESV and LSV have the worst reading with “consigned”.

32b In order to qualify for God's mercy, you need to be a hopeless sinner. God does not extend mercy or grace to good people (those who are self-righteous). God has concluded all under sin so that He may have mercy upon all. That means if you are a sinner, God will have mercy on you. No “reprobation”, no “limited atonement”- just free grace and free mercy extended to all who will believe.

11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!^a how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!^{bc}

33a Why does the Coverdale Bible makes this a question?

33b A doxology as Paul summarizes the faithfulness of God's ways and dealings with both Israel and the Gentiles.

33c AV

ESV

LSV

33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable <i>are</i> his judgments, and his ways past finding out!	33 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!	33 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!
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The ESV and LSV use a harder and longer word of "inscrutable", which it also did in verse 32. The critical translations are usually harder to read with its use of longer words. Compared to the modern translations, the Authorized Version is the easiest translation to read.

11:34^a For who hath known^{aurist} the mind of the Lord? or who hath been^{aurist middle} his counsellor?^b

34a This verse quotes Isaiah 40:13,14.

34b The sovereignty of God is the ultimate answer as to why God does what He does in the way that He does it, including His dealings with Israel and the Gentiles. There may be some reasons that can be understood by human reason, but not necessarily, as God often works in ways that cannot be understood by human reason.

11:35 Or who hath first given^{aurist} to him, and it shall be recompensed^{future passive-a} unto him again?^a

35a Basically, Paul is saying that God owes no one anything, whether it be Jew or Gentile. God deals with all mankind on the basis of His grace and love, nothing else.

11:36^a For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory for ever.^b Amen.

36a Isn't it interesting how one of the loftiest and most sublime verses in Scripture that expresses such praise to God is made up of some of the the simplest words in the English language?

36b The glory of God is another reason why God does what He does (see note 34b for the other reason). God works in ways that are designed to glorify Him in the greatest way possible.

See Appendix 4 for the Errors of Replacement Theology

Romans Chapter 12

Structure for Romans 12:

I. The Burnt Offering 12:1,2

II. The Burnt Offering Life 12:3-21

We have sanctification followed by service. Service always flows from sanctification, not the other way around! Simply because you may be busy for the Lord does not necessarily mean that you are right with the Lord, contrary to what was taught by the hyper-evangelistic wing of fundamentalism, mainly by Jack Hyles and his followers.

Romans 12:1,2 is holy ground for the believer, the ultimate goal of his Christian life and walk, the exhortation by Paul to fully and totally dedicate himself to the will of God and to the service of God by offering his body and life as the equivalent of the Old Testament burnt offering. The companion Old Testament passages are Genesis 22, Leviticus 1 and 6.

The Book of Romans leads the sinner, step by step, from his most wretched state into the highest burnt offering life (Romans 1-8, 12-16). In Romans, Paul starts at the lowest level of humanity, with the universal sin of mankind in chapters 1 and 2. He then deals with the cures of sin in chapters 3 and 4. Once salvation has been settled, the doctrines of sanctification are dealt with in chapters 5-8, culminating in the highest expression of the Christian life in 12:1,2, the burnt offering and the subsequent life that results from it. We are now at the capstone of Romans. After this comes the practical exhortation of Romans, dealing with the Christian life. But these practical commands can only be carried out after the burnt offering.

107. The New Testament Expression of the Burnt Offering 12:1,2

12:1 I beseech^{a-present} you therefore,^b brethren,^c by the mercies of God,^d that ye present^{e-aorist infinitive} your bodies^{fg} a living sacrifice,^h holy,ⁱ acceptable^j unto God, which is your reasonable^k service.^{lmn}

1a **“I beseech”** Paul makes a very strong request regarding the burnt offering life. He cannot command this but he can strongly plead for the burnt offering life. In light of the great truths Paul expounded in chapters 1-8, shouldn't this move the Christian to consecrate himself to God? And since the burnt offering was a voluntary offering and a sweet savor offering (as the voluntary offerings were) (Leviticus 1:3), Paul cannot command it, even with all of his apostolic authority. No man can command spirituality and devotion of another, as it must be a willing thing if it is to be a sweet-smelling savor unto God. There is no thunder here as there was at Mt. Sinai.

1b **“therefore”** This plea for the burnt offering is based on all the great doctrinal truths of Romans 1-8. Seeing we now accept and hopefully understand this doctrine, what effect will it have on our lives in a practical sense? Seeing how good God has been to us and how good He shall continue to be, what should our proper response be? Doctrine must have a practical side to it and correct doctrine should affect how we live and act and should lead to a fuller dedication

and consecration to Christ.

1c **“brethren”** The unsaved cannot engage in the burnt offering life because they have no holy offering to bring. The burnt offering life is solely for the saint.

1d **“mercies of God”** Newell, in his commentary on Romans, lists some of these mercies already mentioned by Paul in Romans:

1. JUSTIFICATION,--including pardon, removal of sins from us, trespasses never to be reckoned, a standing in Christ,--being made the righteousness of God in Him!
2. IDENTIFICATION--taken out of Adam by death with Christ,--dead to sin and to law, and now IN CHRIST!
3. UNDER GRACE, NOT LAW--Fruit unto God,--unto sanctification, made possible.
4. THE SPIRIT INDWELLING--"No condemnation," freedom from law of sin; witness of Sonship and Heirship.
5. HELP IN INFIRMITY, and in any present sufferings, on our way to share Christ's glory.
6. DIVINE ELECTION: Our final Conformity to Christ's image as His brethren; God's settled Purpose,--in which, believers already glorified in God's sight!
7. COMING GLORY--beyond any comparison with present sufferings!
8. NO SEPARATION POSSIBLE--God loved us in Christ.
9. CONFIDENCE IN GOD'S FAITHFULNESS confirmed by His revealed plans for national Israel.

The burnt offering is given to us as a privilege through the mercies of God. We are allowed and invited to approach and offer ourselves and all we have to the service of God and He will accept it. Other “world religions”, like Islam, have nothing like it.

1e **“present”** “A technical term for offering a sacrifice (Josephus, *Ant.* IV. 6, 4), though not in the Old Testament. Used of presenting the child Jesus in the temple (Luke 2:22), of the Christian presenting himself (Romans 6:13), of God presenting the saved (Ephesians 5:27), of Christ presenting the church (Colossians 1:28).”²³⁰

This presenting of the body assumes a deliberate and volitional act on our part. Just as the Old Testament saint had to deliberately load up his cart with the animal, take it whatever distance to the tabernacle and deliberately offer it, so must we also deliberately go through those same actions as we present our bodies and our lives as a living sacrifice.

1f **“present your bodies”** offer them, yield them, surrender them. Instead of bringing animals for sacrifice, we are now to bring ourselves and present ourselves to God. Our physical body is the most valuable earthly possession we have for through it we both live and serve God. The Lord does not force us to make this self-offering (it would not be a “sweet savor” offering if He did) but strongly encourages us to do so. Our bodies are the instruments of service for the Lord while we are on earth, and as such, needs to be set first offered to Him and then set apart for His use. Our bodies are our most prized earthly possession for they are our physical life. A heifer or goat may have some value but what is more valuable than ourselves, our very bodies? Paul begs us to offer up that thing that is the nearest and dearest to us- ourselves. In 6:16, we were to present our bodies as instruments for the warfare. Here, we are to present them as sacrifices unto the Lord.

The bodies must be deliberately presented unto the Lord because it is the lowest part of our natures and the part of us that gives us the most trouble. It often hinders our soul and seduces it to sin. Therefore, it must be brought under the controlling power of the Spirit of God

230 A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*.

if we expect our souls and spirit to be of any use to God or to be acceptable unto Him.

1g **“bodies”** The Greeks only cared about the Spirit and had nothing but contempt for the body. But we realize the importance of the body, as the outlet for our earthly life and service for Christ. It cannot be ignored and should not be despised. The physical body belongs to God and it should be put to His service. It is the temple of the Holy Spirit and should be given the respect due to it based on that. Christ took a literal human body on earth, so He was not ashamed of His body, just as we should despise ours.

1h **“a living sacrifice”** You can do more with a living sacrifice than you can with a dead one. Many people say they would be willing to die for the Lord but what He really wants are people who will live for Him. Shall the dead praise God? Will He do wonders for the dead? Dead sacrifices don't accomplish much except rotting in a grave.

There were three forms of bodily sacrifice practiced under the Mosaic Law:

1. **Sin offering**- type of Christ as substitute and sin-bearer. The burnt offering is showing Christ accomplishing the will of the Father in the way He died.
2. **Burnt offering**- type of Christ in His active and passive obedience
3. **Peace offering**- sign of peace established between God and man

We are concentrating on the burnt offering here, as laid out in Leviticus 1 and 6. The Hebrew word is “olah” which means “ascending.” The whole sacrifice was consumed by fire, and was regarded as ascending to God while being consumed. Part of every offering was burnt in the sacred fire, but this was wholly burnt, a “whole burnt offering.” It was the most frequent form of sacrifice. The law of Moses afterwards prescribed the occasions and the manner in which burnt sacrifices were to be offered. There were “the continual burnt offering” (Exodus 29:38-42; Leviticus 6:9-13; “the burnt offering of every sabbath,” which was double the daily one (Numbers 28:9,10); “the burnt offering of every month” (Numbers 28:11-15); the offerings at the Passover (Numbers 28:19-23); at Pentecost (Leviticus 23:16); the feast of Trumpets (Leviticus 23:23-25); and on the day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:1ff.). Free-will burnt offerings were also permitted (Leviticus 1:13). These offerings signified the complete dedication of the offerers unto God.

The burnt offering was a “whole” offering, showing that the offerer is offering himself totally and completely to God without reservation and without holding anything back from God.

The burnt offering was also a continual offering (Exodus 29:42; Numbers 28:3-31). It is a way of life, not an occasional thing. The burnt offering life is something that is lived and practiced 24/7.

The burnt offering is a voluntary offering (Leviticus 1:3). It was not commanded. God does not force anyone into a burnt offering life. It must be desired on our part.

If was offered at the door of the tabernacle, at the brazen altar (Leviticus 1:6). In order to go into the holy place for the deep communion and fellowship, you first had to pass the brazen altar and were confronted by the need of offering a burnt offering sacrifice in dedication and consecration before you could enter those doors and go into the inner chambers.

1i **“holy”** is the only kind of offering that is presentable to the Lord and is the only kind that He will accept. The sacrifice is unacceptable if the body is being used for fornication or some other sin at the time of offering. This sacrifice is to be holy (the Christian's positional standing) and set apart for service (sanctification). “Holiness unto the Lord” ought to be inscribed on our bodies. Make sure that we are possessing our vessels in holiness and are not defiling them with the sins of our generation.

The Old Testament animal sacrifices were to be without blemish or defect (Exodus 12:5; Leviticus 1:10; Deuteronomy 15:21). Our living New Testament sacrifices should be just as perfect in that regard.

1j **“acceptable”** Strong’s #2101 euarestos; from eu (Strong’s #2095) well, and areskô (Strong’s #700) to please; well pleasing, acceptable.

Six things that make this sacrifice acceptable:

1. Present your bodies as a living sacrifice
2. Make it a holy offering
3. Make it an acceptable offering
4. Render reasonable service
5. Do not be conformed to this world
6. Be transformed from this world

1k **“reasonable”** Strong’s #3050 logikos; pertaining to speech or speaking, to the reason or logic, agreeable to reason, following reason, reasonable, logical. The word is only used only here and in 1 Peter 2:2 in the New Testament. This was a favorite word of the Greek philosophers, especially the Stoics. It marks that distinction of reason that separates men from beasts.

1l **“service”** This is our reasonable service. It makes sense and is logical for the Christian. It should be the natural desire for the Christian to want to present his body to the Lord. This is what constitutes real worship. It is not just liturgy or an “order or worship”. Genuine worship is the life (both body and spirit) offered up to God in service.

1m “As the ordinance of the Red Heifer was provided to help the Christian deal with his sin when he is in the lowlands of holiness, the burnt offering is provided to help the Christian deal with potential sin when he is in the highlands of holiness. There are dangers for the Christian in both areas of his life. There are dangers in the lowlands; there are dangers in the highlands. There is the danger of temptation in the lowlands leading the Christian into actual conception of sin in the heart. There is the danger of works in the highlands leading the Christian to pride in the spirit. There is the danger of trials in the lowlands leading to despair without prayer. There is the danger of manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the highlands leading to self-righteousness without submission. There is the danger of thoughts and imaginations in the lowlands leading to lawlessness and iniquity. There is the danger of zeal in the highlands leading to error in our theology. There is the danger of sufferings in the lowlands leading to doubts of God's Word. There is the danger of phenomena in the highlands leading to exaltation in spirituality. We must not despair in the lowlands; we must not shout away the Spirit in the highlands. We may fall through discouragement and sin in the lowlands; we may rise through self and pride in the highlands. You can fall in the lowlands, and you can fall in the highlands. The Christian has the Ordinance of the Red Heifer for the lowlands (Num. 19), and he has the Burnt Offering for the highlands (Lev. 1).”²³¹

1n Some Old Testament revelations regarding the burnt offering:

1. It was offered in the morning (9 AM) and in the evening (3 PM).
2. It was offered every Sabbath, on the first day of every month, during the seven days of unleavened bread and on the Day of Atonement.
3. It was offered at the consecration of the priests, Levites, kings, sacred places, the purification of women, Nazarites, lepers, after great mercies, before war and with the sounding of trumpets at the various feasts.
4. The first burnt offering may have been made by Noah in Genesis 8.

231 O. Talmadge Spence, *The Quest For Christian Purity*.

5. It is mentioned at least 6 times in Genesis 22 in the account of Abraham offering up Isaac (22:2,3,6,7,8,13).
6. Jethro and Moses were familiar with it before the giving of the law (Exodus 10:25; 18:12).
7. It is referred to only once in the New Testament, in Mark 12:23.
8. It was considered to be a continual offering (Exodus 29:42; Numbers 28:3,6,10,23,31 etc.)²³²

12:2 And be not conformed^{a-present imperative} to this world:^b but be ye transformed^{c-present imperative} by the renewing^d of your mind,^{ef} that ye may prove^{infinitive} what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

2a **“conformed”** The idea of “fashioning yourself” is shown in the pre-Authorized Version translations, while both the Authorized Version and ESV use “conform”.

2b **“world”** This world system and its philosophies, not the physical earth. Don't let this world-system and its philosophies (or your current generation) that is under the control of Satan pour you into its mold but rather resist it. This world is evil because it is fallen and is under the control of Satan, the god of this age. The world, or generation, in which we live, delights in trying to control your thinking and mold your attitudes to follow the fashions of the world. It seeks to take your mind and literally re-cast it in the image of itself. The world is very good at this and it will take all the infilling power of the Holy Spirit and dedication to God to fight it.

Being conformed to this world is what Satan tries to get every Christian and Christian ministry to do. To be conformed to the world erases any distinction between God and Satan. The world system can offer us nothing that God can and everything the world can offer us is not to be compared to what God can offer is, so why pledge any allegiance to the world system of our generation?

2c The burnt offering should transform our lives as Christ was transfigured on the Mount of Transfiguration in Matthew 17:2 **And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.**

2d **“renewing”** Strong's #342 anakainôsis; a renewal, renovation, complete change for the better. This word is only found in Christian literature. Our mind is renewed by the Holy Spirit at salvation. Our thought processes are worldly, carnal and not godly in our natural state. When we are saved, the Holy Spirit takes our minds and energizes them so that we may think the thoughts of God after Him, understand the Scriptures and spiritual things and desire to live for God. Unsaved men do not have this renewed mind.

In order to resist the lure of the world, the mind must be renewed by the power of the Holy Spirit. We cannot resist the world on our own for it is too strong and its allurements are simply too enticing for us to resist. The mind is where this battle against the world system is fought.

2e There are three “wills” of God:

1. **Good.** This is starting point and the minimum for every Christian, to do what is “good”. Being good is not salvation but it should be the desire for every Christian to discern what is good and what is sin within the will of God, and then to do the good and to avoid and shun the sin. Luke 17:10 would apply here (**“So likewise ye, when ye shall have**

²³² O. Talmadge Spence, *Foundations Bible Commentary*: The Pentateuch, page 372,377.

done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.”). Once you have done everything God expects of you, you are to consider yourself as an “unprofitable servant.” You did that which was your duty to do, but you don’t get praised for that and there are no rewards for that. Christians ought to do right, go to church, witness...God expect that out of us.

2. **Acceptable.** This goes beyond doing your bare duty but involves trying to go above and beyond what God wants you to do. If you tithe, that is “good”. If you give 20% of your income, that is “acceptable”.

3. **Perfect.** This is what we strive for, to know exactly what the will of God is for us and to do it completely, without compromise or hesitation. It involves sacrificial living and giving on the part of the Christian. This is what makes the Christian a spiritual success.

A. Six things in this passage then can be said to make up the “perfect” will of God:

- i. Presenting our bodies as a burnt offering sacrifice
- ii. Making such a sacrifice a holy one
- iii. Make such an offering an acceptable one to God
- iv. Render reasonable service
- v. Do not be conformed to this age
- vi. Be transformed by the renewing of the Holy Spirit

The will of God for us is always good, acceptable and perfect. It is always for our good, yea, for our best, and for the glory of God. It is also perfect, as it must be, seeing it is the will of a perfect God. Our will, that we concoct for ourselves, is seldom good or acceptable and it certainly cannot be said to be perfect since it comes from an imperfect sinner, motivated by the lust of his eyes and flesh, as well as by the pride of life.

2f The Tyndale Bible uses the old idea of “mind” with “renewing your wits”.

108. The Burnt Offering Life 12:3-21

12:3 For I say, ^{present} **through the grace given** ^{aorist passive participle} **unto me, to every man**
that is ^{present active participle} **among you, not to think of himself^a** **more highly than he**
ought ^{present} **to think;** ^{b-present infinitive} **but to think** ^{present infinitive} **soberly,** ^{c--infinitive} **according as**
God hath dealt ^{aorist} **to every man the measure of faith.**

3a The Tyndale, Coverdale and Bishops Bibles use “esteem himself”. The Geneva Bible does not have a good rendering at all, that starts with “presume to understand above that which is meet”. That could have been improved upon.

3b Humility is enjoined here, not to exalt ourselves or to think more of ourselves than we ought to. A spirit-filled man is a humble man. He knows exactly what he is and what his limitations are. And nothing is more revolting than a proud preacher, who thinks that he is the greatest thing since sliced bread and that the Church revolves around him.

3c “**soberly**” Strong’s #4993 *sophroneô*; to be of sound mind, to be in one’s right mind, to exercise self-control, to put a moderate estimate upon one’s self, think of one’s self soberly, to curb one’s passions. In popular Greek philosophy, it referred to modesty and restraint. In other words, think like a Christian and not as an unsaved man. Let no man think himself more or

greater than God has made him; and let him know that whatever he is or has of good or excellence, he has it from God; and that the glory belongs to the giver, and not to him who has received the gift. "that is, either not to arrogate to himself what does not belong to him, and detract from others, who may have equal, if not superior, abilities to him; or not to glory in what he has, as if he had not received it, and as if it was altogether owing to his own sagacity, penetration, diligence, and industry; or not to search into things too high for him that are out of his reach, and beyond his capacity; though this is not to be understood as discouraging a search into the Scriptures of truth, the more difficult parts of it, and the more knotty points of controversy; but as forbidding inquiry into things not lawful to be searched into, or, if lawful, as requiring such a scrutiny to be made with modesty, and an humble dependence on superior light and assistance, and a discovery of it with humility and lowliness of mind."²³³

This would also include having a balanced temperament and think process. Do not get extreme in your thinking. Avoid hyper-Calvinism and hyper-Arminianism. Don't hang out on the fringes of anything. Live a balanced Christian life, not neglecting any area or compartment of your life. Don't get so wrapped up in the ministry that you neglect your family or your secular job, if you have one. Don't preach hobby horses but preach on the whole counsel of God. I monitor my preaching in that I have a record of every sermon I have preached since my first message in May, 1986. That's over 9,450 sermons to date (April, 2025). I review it occasionally to make sure I am not neglecting certain truths or doctrines or books, but also that I am not over-emphasizing any of them either to the exclusion of others. I have known men who can only preach on prophecy or soulwinning or missions or faithfulness or tithing, but little else. That is an unbalanced ministry and does not reflect sober thinking.

The Tyndale, Coverdale and Bishops Bibles use "discreetly" for "soberly".

12:4 For as we have^{present} many members in one body, and all members have^{present} not the same office:^{ab}

4a The body of Christ, or the universal church, which is made up of all saved people since Pentecost (Acts 2) regardless of denomination. The universal church is likened to a human body. This picture breaks down if applied only to local churches as Landmark Baptists insist, since some local churches are too small to have enough people that possess all the spiritual gifts. But the universal church has them all. This great spiritual body, like a physical body, has many members, or parts, to it, like a head, arms, legs, ears, etc. All these elements are part of the same body, but they do not all have the same function. The eye and ear are in the same body, but their offices are quite different. But one is just as valuable as useful as the other. As long as each part does its job the way it is supposed to, there is harmony in the body. In the Church, different people have specialized ministries according to the various spiritual gifts given to them by the Lord. Some can sing and have musical ability, so they gravitate toward the musical ministry. Some are really good dealing with people, so they specialize in evangelism and personal work. Some can teach and are true scholars, so they take up the teaching ministries. Some are good with money and numbers, so they oversee the financial activities. The handymen will take up maintenance. The prayer warriors do the bulk of the intercession work. These are all different offices, but they all work to promote the same body and its united interests.

And I am fully aware that there are several flavors of Baptists who would call my use of the term "universal church" above heresy and non-Baptist doctrine, a holdover from Protestantism and Catholicism. But such is not the case, as the Body of Christ is not a Baptist body but it is a Biblical body, made up of all truly born again saints, regardless of theological

²³³ John Gill.

system or denominational distinctives.

There is no such thing as an unimportant ministry in the Church. You have a specific ministry the Lord gave you and only you can do it for you are fitted for it by the Lord. If you neglect it or aspire to a ministry the Lord didn't call you to, your ministry doesn't get done. We all can't pastor or be nationally-known evangelists. God determines who does what. Wherever God places you, fulfill that ministry until He moves you into a different one.

1 Corinthians 12 expands on these thoughts as to ministries within the Body of Christ and our place and gifts within it, which see.

4b “**office**” Strong’s #4234 praxis; a doing, a mode of acting, a deal, a transaction, a thing to be done, business. We get our English suffix “-praxy” from this, such as “orthopraxy” which means “straight or right doing”.

12:5 So we,^a *being* many, are^{present} one body in Christ,^b and every one members one of another.^c

5a Believing Jews and Gentiles make up this “one body”. Paul, a converted Pharisee, includes himself in that body and identifies himself with believing Gentiles.

5b The “one body” concept destroys Baptist Bride-ism, which teaches that every local Baptist church (their kind of Baptist church) is a body of Christ in itself. They believe there is no universal church, only local Baptist (their kind) of churches. But this is illogical. There must be several thousand, if not tens of thousands, Baptist churches in America. Are each one a separate body of Christ? Does Christ have 10,000 bodies in America? And if this is true, what a monstrosity of a body we have here- one head (Christ) and thousands upon thousands of “bodies”. What sort of a creature is this?

I believe in a “universal church” that is made up of every saved person regardless of denomination. It is not a “Catholic” teaching, nor a “Protestant” teaching and I don’t care if some Baptists don’t hold it, I do and I do because I believe it to be Biblical.

5c The Tyndale Bible seems to add the idea of these members “serving” at the end of verse 5, but I’m not sure where he would have gotten that idea as none of the other traditional text translations have that idea.

12:6 Having^{present active participle} then gifts^a differing according to the grace that is given^{aorist passive participle} to us, whether prophecy,^{bc} let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;^d

6a Every Christian has at least one spiritual gift for ministry and some have multiple gifts. These gifts are listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 as:

1. Word of wisdom
2. Word of knowledge
3. Faith
4. Healing
5. Working of miracles
6. Prophecy
7. Discerning of spirits
8. Tongues

9. Interpretation of tongues

My spiritual gifts are different than yours since my ministry is different from you. Also, there are differences for the sake of variety, for who needs a church with 100 bricklayers but no teachers or no one gifted to hand the finances?

6b **“prophecy”** Strong’s #4394 prophêteia; prophecy, a discourse emanating from divine inspiration and declaring the purposes of God, whether by reproving and admonishing the wicked, or comforting the afflicted, or revealing things hidden; especially by foretelling future events. A prophet then is not just one who foretells the future but also is a man who serves as a mouthpiece for God as He speaks that which He wanted the people to hear. Today, we have preachers who (should) function as prophets to speak the Word of God from God directly. A preacher who declares the Word of God without making future predictions is as much of a prophet as an Old Testament Elijah or Isaiah would be. And since the predictive office of a prophet is in suspense during this age, the application would solely be to the preacher during the Church Age. But we will probably see the predictive aspect of this gift and office return in the Tribulation.

“By “prophesying” is meant, not foretelling things to come, though this gift was bestowed upon some, as Agabus, and others in the Christian church; but this, as it is of an extraordinary nature, so it is not stinted and limited according to the proportion of faith; but preaching the Gospel is here designed, which is the sense of the word in many places of Scripture, particularly in 1 Corinthians 13:2 (**“And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.”**). Now such who have this gift of prophecy, or of opening and explaining the Scriptures, ought to make use of it, and constantly attend to it: “let us prophesy”; diligently prepare for it by prayer, reading and meditation, and continually exercise it as opportunity offers; nor should any difficulty and discouragement deter from it...(John Gill).”

Prophets, in the wider Biblical definition, are thus preachers, who see the Word of God, understand it in the context of his generation, and applies it to his hearers through the help of the Holy Spirit to enable the hearer not only to hear and understand the truth but to also be able to correctly apply the outworking of that truth in his life, in the generation in which he lives. The prophet then is a declarer of the Word of God, with a special divine insight and understanding of it. Any true Bible preacher can be said to be a prophet, especially if God gives him those very unusual and applicable insights and understandings of divine truth that his hearers so desperately need to hear.

6c This is the only mention of “prophecy” in Romans. In this context, it is not foretelling future events, but preaching and declaring the truth of the Word of God.

6d The idea of Romans 12:6-8 is that whatever ministry God has given for you to do, do it. Concentrate on it. Find out what God wants you to do and throw yourself into it. And don’t worry about someone else’s ministry. You have all you can handle just worrying about the will of God for you instead of worrying about it for someone else. Some people claim to be very good at figuring out what the will of God is for other people, but Paul would have little time for these busybodies. Oftentimes, they have little idea what the true will of God is for them, much less for anyone else.

**12:7 Or ministry,^a let us wait on our ministering:^a or he that teacheth,^{present active}
^{participle} on teaching;^{bc}**

7a **“ministry”, “ministering”** Strong’s #1248 diakonia; service, ministering, especially of those who execute the commands of others. We get our English word “deacon” from this, literally, one who serves (not rules!) in a local church. While the work of a deacon may be in view here, I don’t think is talking about deacons, but rather, those who serve and minister in the church, regardless if he is a deacon or not.

7b **“teaching”** The office of a Bible teacher is a valid one, as laid down here, although teachers don’t impress people today in our anti-intellectual day. People want some black guy who claims he is an “anointed servant of God for these last days” and then watch him do a buck-wing dance. But teaching is hard work and especially teaching the Word of God is a terrific spiritual ministry and gift.

“The gift of prophesying or preaching is subdivided into "teaching" and "exhorting"; the one belongs to "teachers" or doctors, the other to "pastors"; as the distinction is in Ephesians 4:11 not that different officers and offices are intended, but different branches of the same office; and one man's talent may lie more in the one, and another man's in the other; and accordingly each should in his preaching attend to the gift which is most peculiar to him: if his gift lies in teaching, let him constantly employ himself in that with all sobriety and "teaching" does not design an office in the school, but in the church; it is not teaching divinity as men teach logic, rhetoric, and other arts and sciences, in the schools; but an instructing of churches and the members thereof in the doctrines of the Gospel, in order to establish and build them up in their most holy faith; see 1 Corinthians 12:28, it chiefly lies in a doctrinal way of preaching, in opening, explaining, and defending the doctrines of Christ, as distinct from the practical part of the ministry of the word, and the administration of ordinances, in which the pastor is employed as well as in this.”²³⁴

7c I don’t think the Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles are correct with rendering this as “let him take heed to the doctrine”. It is the act of ministry itself that Paul is dealing with here, not an exhortation regarding the doctrine taught or that he should make sure that true doctrine is being taught. The other translations follow the Authorized Version.

12:8 Or he that exhorteth, ^{a-present active participle} **on exhortation: he that giveth,** ^{b-present active participle} **let him do it with simplicity;** ^c **he that ruleth,** ^{d-present middle/passive participle} **with diligence;** ^e **he that sheweth mercy,** ^{present active participle} **with cheerfulness.**

8a **“exhortation”** The old-time Methodists used to have an office of exhorter. He was not a full-time preacher but was usually a “layman” who usually had little theological education. They would usually, as the name said, exhort, or encourage their congregation in basic theological truths or in practical instructions. They tended to be quite emotional and not always theologically accurate. But Paul is not talking about that but rather, is talking about a ministry of encouragement.

8b **“giveth”** People with money can use their money to minister to help the poor or to help aid and promote the work of the ministry. This can include tithing, but Paul probably is thinking of one who goes beyond the tithe to sacrificial giving. Give to the Lord's work and to the Lord's people without worrying about tax-exemption, interest rates or repayment. This kind of giving must be free from pretense and hypocrisy, not self-seeking, openness of heart manifesting itself by generosity. If you give, you give as unto the Lord, not for show or the praise of men. If you are going to give, be honest, up front and transparent about it, not as Ananias and Sapphira

²³⁴ John Gill.

were in Acts 5. They gave hypocritically, for the praise of men, and God struck them dead for it. This has the idea of giving with a single-minded heart and not as a hypocrite.

8c **“simplicity”** Strong’s #572 haplotês; singleness, simplicity, sincerity, mental honesty. The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles render this as “singleness”, as in “singleness of heart” and “not with a double heart” or as a hypocrite or as one who has an ulterior motive for giving.

8d **“ruleth”** Those with ruling authority in the church- pastors and elders, those heading up specific ministries in the church, like a Sunday School Director, but it could also apply to any station of authority in life where the Christian may find himself.

8e AV	ESV	LSV
8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, <i>let him do it</i> with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence ; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.	8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.	8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

“diligence” The ESV and LSV use “zeal”.

12:9 Let love be without dissimulation.^a Abhor^{b-present active participle} that which is evil; cleave^{c-present middle/passive participle} to that which is good.

9a **“without dissimulation”** Let your love and Christian charity be real, genuine and honest, not a put-on show. “This English word is from a French word of the same spelling. It is ultimately derived from the same Latin root as ‘dissimuler’ which gave us ‘dissembled’. These words are also remotely related to ‘similar’, from the Latin ‘simulare’, ‘to pretend’. ‘Dissemulation’ is duplicity, hypocrisy or deception.²³⁵ I would expect a modern translation like the ESV to update this rather archaic word as “be genuine”.

Strong’s #505 anupokritos; from a (Strong’s #1) without, and hupokrinomai (Strong’s #5271) to pretend, simulate; unfeigned, undisguised, sincere.

9b **“abhor...”** Don’t just hate that which is evil, but loathe it and avoid it at all costs.

Strong’s #655 apostugeô; from apo (Strong’s #575) from, or an intensive; and stugew stugeô, to hate; to dislike, abhor, have a horror of. Used only here in the New Testament.

9c **“cleave...”** Firmly adhere, or glue yourself, to that which is good. This would be the opposite idea of “abhor”. You would not cleave to something you abhor but would push away from it in revulsion.

12:10 Be kindly affectioned^a one to another with brotherly love;^b in honor preferring^{c-present middle/passive participle} one another;^c

10a **“kindly affectioned”** This is not divine love but rather a brotherly, human affection. This is distinguished from charity. Charity involves actions while brotherly love implies more of attitude. This word is used for love within and between members of a family.

235 Laurence Vance, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*, page 106.

10b This is a human based love, as love toward the brethren. Although this is lower than the “agape” love that God loves with, “brotherly love” is not to be despised.

10c **“in honor preferring one another”** The Christian is not a selfish or self-centered person, but instead puts the interests of his brother ahead of his own, and honors his brother before himself. How alien this is to the philosophy of the world, which is “Me first, you last”! Stop promoting yourself! Stop thrusting yourself forward! Stop trying to build your personality cult and making yourself something! Let God drag you kicking and screaming into the limelight. But don’t you dare seek it on your own or for yourself.

12:11^a Not slothful^b in business;^c fervent^{present active participle} in spirit;^d serving^{present active participle} the Lord;^e

11a The post-Coverdale Bible translations really tighten up the wordy renderings of the Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles.

11b **“not slothful...”** Laziness should be foreign to the nature of a Christian. You certainly should have something to do, either secularly or for the Lord?

The Bishop’s Bible has the odd word “lither” here, maybe related to “lethargic?”

11c **“business”** Not just business as in commerce, but whatever it is that you are doing (that is not sinful)- throw yourself into it. **Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do with all thy might** (Ecclesiastes 9:10).

11d **“fervent in spirit”** Whatever you find to do or what the Lord gives you to do, do it with all your might. Don’t be halfway or lukewarm about it. Lukewarmness was the condemnation of the Laodiceans (Revelation 3:16 **“So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.”**). All divine service should be diligent and fervent, as the Lord deserves only the best from His people, as the **“king’s business requires haste”** (1 Samuel 21:8). What a poor testimony it would be if Paul’s tents were the worst in the store and Lydia’s purple of the poorest dye.

11e The Lord should always be served with a fervent spirit. To serve Him any other way, or “slothfully” is to dishonor our Master, Who is certainly worthy of our best and our highest zeal.

12:12 Rejoicing^{present active participle} in hope;^a patient^{present active participle} in tribulation;^b continuing instant^{present active participle} in prayer;^c

12a **“Rejoicing in hope”** Always doing what we can to avoid discouragement, both in ourselves and in the brethren. This hope is the prospect of glory that is before every believer.

12b **“patient in tribulation”** What good is Christianity, with over 13,000 promises in the Bible (as I counted them one year as I read the Bible through) and the indwelling Holy Spirit if we cannot do this? If Christianity is of any value, then it should be at its greatest use during the challenging and dark times.

12c **“continuing instant in prayer”** This has an idea of striving, a fixed determination to continue on in a thing and not quit. This is a very fitting admonition to prayer. You can’t

continue in something that you have never started. And once we've started, we are not to quit.

Patience in tribulation is supported by prayer. It is difficult to imagine enduring tribulation properly without much fervent prayer.

"Master Brooks says that the word is a metaphor taken from hunting dogs which will never give up the game till they have got it. A hunting dog, when in pursuit of its victim, works itself into full motion, using every limb and muscle to follow as fast as possible. If you catch a glimpse of it, you will see that it throws itself forward with intense eagerness—the whole body and soul of the dog is in motion towards one objective—no portion of him lingers. Not so much as a *glance* is given to anything else. The whole creature is instant after the game which it pursues, urgently pressing—hot foot—as we say, to overtake the prey.

"Now, this is the way in which we are to pray. Prayer as a mere form is but a mockery. Prayer in a languid, halfhearted manner may be more dishonoring to God than honoring to Him—we ourselves may be rather injured by lukewarm prayer than benefited by it. Prevalent prayer is frequently spoken of in Scripture as an agony—"striving together with me in your prayers." We frequently speak of it as wrestling and, we do well, for so it is. In wrestling a man has all his mind as well as all his body occupied with the desire to overthrow his opponent. Now he bends and twists and then he strains and stretches—now he uses one foot and then another. He tries his arm and now his leg. He shifts his ground; he takes up another position and he keeps his eyes perpetually open lest he should be caught unaware. He has both his hands eager for a grip; his whole body ready for a throw—the *whole man* is in his wrestling.

"After such a manner should you pray. The whole of your mind, your memory, your judgment, your affection, your hopes, your fears and even your imagination must be concentrated upon this labor of prayer. May the Holy Spirit work in you this comprehensive ardor, this energy of the whole man! We must go with our whole soul to God or He will not accept us. It will be ill for us if we are half-hearted, for it is written, "Their heart is divided; now shall they be found faulty." "The kingdom of Heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by force." We are exhorted to "knock" and, as our model, we are directed to him who at midnight awakened his slumbering friend. We are exhorted to be importunate like the widow with the unjust judge. We are to pray as if all depended upon our praying, though after all, that praying is, in itself, an effect of a cause which has existed long before! We are to be as importunate as if God were unwilling and to plead as earnestly as if He did not already know far better than we do what things we need. Earnestness must be present in all our prayers, or they will return to us unanswered—this is reasonable enough. Shall God be expected to give to us that which we do not value? If we do not value the blessing sufficiently to be eager in seeking it, is it not right that He should withhold it until we are in a better mind? Are we to worship God with a divided reverence? Are we to treat Him as though it were quite enough for Him if we gave Him a stray thought or a halfhearted desire, now and then, as a sort of compliment? Can we expect that He will receive our sacrifice if we lay no fire under it? If we have no impetuous earnestness of spirit, can we expect that we shall be accepted? He loathes the lukewarm! Will He not loathe our prayers?

"See how we deal with our fellow men—if they ask a favor of us and we see that they care but little about it, we are in no great haste to put ourselves about to do them the turn. But if they are very pressing, we yield to their entreaties—and so does God, in His mercy, yield to the entreaties of His people."²³⁶

12:13 Distributing^{present active participle} to the necessity of saints,^{abc} given^{present active} to hospitality.^d

236 Charles Spurgeon, "Constant, Instant, Expectant" in *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, volume 25, sermon 1480.

13a This involves a willingness to help out the brethren with needs that have (materially and economically). Notice that this obligation extends only to the saints, not to those outside the church. This is something that has always bothered me, where the unsaved will contact the local church to ask the church to help them pay the rent or the fuel bill or whatever. Yet I find myself wondering:

1. Where do you go to church?
2. Why isn't your church helping you?
3. When is the last time you went to church?
4. Are you a Christian? If not, what obligation do you think God's people have toward you?
5. You want us to help you, but you would never think of visiting us, attending here, or helping us out.

13b The unsaved see the local church as little more than a soup kitchen or a welfare agency, if not an ATM. I have no problem with helping out people who have a genuine need, but there are so many lazy people out there who waste what little money they have on lottery tickets, beer or cable television, that I have no real desire to help them. And these same people will never think of darkening the door to your church if you help them- no gratitude at all. They want help from the church, but they would never offer their help to the church. With all the con artists and scammers out there who do nothing but solicit churches all day, it really makes you cynical. You hate to be but you have no choice today. I remember in 1994, while pastoring in Mebane, North Carolina, a brother and I were at the church one Saturday when a car pulled up in our parking lot. Two men got out and gave us their story. They were going from Georgia to New Jersey, had very little money, and asked if we could give them money for gas and food. Now since we were the first church off the interstate as you went into town, they would have naturally hit us first. Why were they making such a long trip with no money? So we took them up the street and bought them a tank of gas and I told the brother to go down to McDonalds and buy them some food with church funds. They grumbled a "thank you". They wanted the *money*, not the gas or food. That's why in our church in Delaware, we put in our constitution that you must be a member in good standing for 6 months to receive any monetary aid from the church.

If there is a genuine need in the church, then the church, and God's people, are obligated to do what we can to relieve that need. 1 Timothy 5:8 is very clear about our obligation to the brethren in these matters (**But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.**). We now maintain a "trustee's fund" (we'd call it a "deacon's fund" except we currently have no deacons in our church- we are that small) to help out church members in their financial need. We also maintain a food pantry for brethren who are running low on food.

13c **"necessities"** This includes what we need, not the object of our greed. If a brother has a genuine need of help to pay the electric bill, that is included in his "necessities". If he is looking for help to make payment on his beach house or his 42-inch plasma television, he ought to look elsewhere for such relief.

13d **"given to hospitality"** This is a qualification for spiritual leadership (1 Timothy 3:2). The "harbor" of the Tyndale and Coverdale are probably older renderings of "hospitality".

12:14 Bless ^{imperative} **them which persecute** ^{present active participle} **you:** ^a **bless,** ^{imperative} **and** **curse** ^{present middle/passive imperative} **not.** ^b

14a This verse assumes the Christian will endure persecution (2 Timothy 3:12). It should be

thought as an odd thing if a Christian has no persecution to endure.

14b **“bless and curse not”** A hard, but necessary command, as human pride and ego will often interfere with the fulfilling of this. We are to treat our enemies better than they treat you! When the Darwinists flame and insult and hurl all manner of insult at you, do not respond in kind, but smile and bless. Why stoop to their level? When the world hits you with both barrels, do not respond as a worldling would, but rather, as a Christian. No grace is involved or needed to respond with the old nature. You can’t help it if persecution does come your way, but you can do something about your response toward it and your attitude in it. After, Romans 3:14 tells us that mouth full of cursing is the mark of an unregenerate man, and not a characteristic of a Spirit-filled Christian. This injunction also reminds us of the Lord’s command in Matthew 5:44, **But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.** The Lord may be able to get angry and “curse” without sin since His anger is always a righteous anger and His judgments are always just, but we have a very difficult time in avoiding sin and a bad or selfish attitude in these circumstances.

12:15 Rejoice^{infinitive} that do rejoice,^{present active participle} and weep^{infinitive} with them that weep.
^{ab-present active participle}

15a Not the other way around- rejoice when they weep or weep when they rejoice. Proverbs 25:20 certainly applies here to the man who sings songs to a heavy heart. Sympathy is called for here. When a brother is down, you are right there with him, trying to help him out. Conversely, when they are up and shouting on the mountaintop, you get right up there with them and share in their blessing.

15b This verse has the idea of “rejoice with rejoicing people, weep with weeping people”.

12:16 Be of the same mind^{a-present active participle} one toward another. Mind^{present active participle} not high things, but condescend^{present middle participle} to men of low estate.^{bc}
Be^{present middle/passive imperative} not wise in your own conceits.

16a **“Be of the same mind...”** Try to strive for a unity of heart, belief and purpose. Of course, we will not all think the same way or believe the same things for we cannot and should not be identical as robots. There will always be disagreements among us. But when it comes to the things that really matter, we should strive for a unity for the sake of peace in the Church. That is most important. Must we fight over the color of carpets or what kind of meat to serve at the next church social? If we cannot agree on the little, unimportant stuff, then how can we hope to agree on the important things?

16b **“mind not high things but condescend...”** Ambition would also be involved here, a worldly, carnal, sinful, proud case of ambition. Of course, this would also forbid spiritual ambition as well, to get the next biggest church, or to make a name for oneself or to attain some measure of spiritual fame amongst the brethren.

This goes double for preachers who are busy “building their own empire” and “promoting their ministries” to the hilt. God never called a man to build an ecclesiastical empire or to build a super-humongous “church” in order to get his name and face on the front page of every Christian magazine in the country, but to simply be faithful where he was planted. This attitude among these preachers sickens God for it speaks of the desire to promote self instead of the

Christian virtue of humility.

16c **“men of low estate”** Those who are below you socially, intellectually and academically may have better insights and answers on issues and topics than you. We should not be ashamed to associate with men who are below us on the social scale. After all, God Almighty lowered and humbled Himself to associate with sinners for 33 years. “Don’t get above your raising” as they say back in the mountains. Don’t try to impress people and make a name for yourself by dabbling in things that are way above your head. What’s the point? It’s all you can do to understand your Bible without trying to be an intellectual big-shot. Humility is required in scholarship. Come down off your high-horse. Too many weak-minded men let their “learning” get to their heads and they end up getting vain and puffed up. They then tend to look down upon and belittle anyone who is “not up to their level”. This is a wicked heart which must be avoided at all costs in the church. Also enclosed here is a warning to beware of worldly ambition, for this desire for ambition and to make a name for oneself should also have no place in the Church.

Strong’s #5011 tapeinos; not rising far from the ground, lowly, of low degree, brought low with grief, depressed, lowly in spirit, humble, in a bad sense, deporting one’s self abjectly, deferring servilely to others.

12:17 Recompense^{present active participle} to no man evil for evil.^a Provide^{present middle participle} things honest in the sight of all men.^{bc}

17a **“Recompense no man evil for evil”** For the reason why, see Romans 12:19. The **“eye for an eye”** of Exodus 21:23,24 is designed for the civil magistrate and the civil law, not for personal or individual use. We should not be avenging or revenging ourselves because when we do it, we do so for selfish motives, as our pride or ego were hurt, or the offending party did not properly respect us. These are selfish reasons that do not glorify God. What we do must be for God’s glory, not for our ego. If we cannot “recompense” to the glory of God, then we must not do but rather turn that situation over to God and ask Him to do the recompensing for His glory.

“The motto of the royal arms of Scotland is in direct opposition to this Divine direction - *Nemo me impune lacesset*, of which ‘I render evil for evil to every man,’ is a pretty literal translation. This is both antichristian and abominable, whether in a state or in an individual.”²³⁷

17b **“Provide things honest”** No shady "under-the-table" or "back-room" deals but be open and above-board in all you do. A Christian should do no less.

17c **“in the sight of all men”** All men means just that- before both saint and sinner, for a good testimony before both. We should treat the brethren well because they are brethren. We should treat the sinner well for a good testimony.

12:18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you,^a live peaceably^{present active participle} with all men.^{bc}

237 Adam Clarke.

18a AV

ESV

LSV

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

The ESV and LSV miss the idea (as usual!). It is not “as far as it depends on” us to live peaceably with all men, but that we should be doing everything we can to live peaceably with all men. We do our part, but we often cannot control the attitude of the other party. Of course, this “as much as in you is” of the King James Bible also speak to our heart attitude as to whether we want to live peaceably with some people because it will often depend on our forgiving someone or overlooking a fault, which is something we do not always want to do.

18b Paul realized this may be difficult to do at times, not only among the unsaved but even in the Church! This is why he inserted “**if it be possible...**” How difficult it can be at times to dwell at peace with the “brethren”. The old saw rings true:

To live above with saints above
Oh, that will be glory
But to live below with saints we know
That’s a different story

But how good it is when brethren dwell together in unity (Psalm 133:1)! This is to always be our goal.

18c “**all men**” With both sinner and saint- it makes no difference. Christians should not be stirring up trouble. Instead, the blame for trouble and “disturbing the peace” should always fall on the head of the unsaved, not us.

12:19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves,^a but rather give place unto wrath;^{bc} for it is written,^d Vengeance is mine; I^e will repay, saith the Lord.^f

19a “**avenge not yourselves**” See remarks under Romans 12:17. This would have no application to matters of self-defense, where you must make split-second decisions as to your actions. This applies more to issues of revenge after the fact, not during. After you have been wrong, how should you react? You may defend yourself while the crime against you is in progress, but when it is finished, you are not to take matters into your own hands to punish the guilty party after the fact.

19b Precepts as to conduct under a sense of injury (Romans 12:19-21):

1. Passive duty- what not to do when wronged, Romans 12:19
2. Active duty- what to do when wronged, Romans 12:20
3. General duty- think of the evil done to you as an enemy to be vanquished by charity, Romans 12:21.²³⁸

19c “**give place to wrath**” This is an extremely difficult thing to do because we must act upon our wounded pride or the perceived slight that made us angry in the first place. Forsake your wrath and leave it instead to the Lord. Let judgment flow from God, not you. This passage may have two possible interpretations though:

1. Forsake your wrath and make no place for it in your heart (the interpretation I hold to).

²³⁸ H.P. Liddon, *Explanatory Analysis of St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans*, page 243.

2. Get out of its way and let it do its work. This is a dangerous interpretation and runs contrary to the overall spirit of this chapter.

Adam Clarke would make an application that we should not avenge ourselves but rather give place for the civil magistrate to do his work of punishing the wrongdoers with the sword. But sometimes, such offenses and wrongs are personal and would fall within the authority of the civil magistrates.

19d **“as it is written”** Greek perfect tense- it has been written and remains written, not to be changed or altered. It is a completed action with continuous results or the continuance of an act completed in the past. The components are always a past action and continuous results. References to the Scriptures like this are often presented in the perfect tense. "The just shall live by faith" is one of those unalterable truths of Christianity. This perfect tense in reference to New Testament references to Old Testament texts is used 62 times in the New Testament, 16 times in Romans (1:17; 2:24; 3:4,10; 4:17; 8:36; 9:13,33; 10:15; 11:8,26; 12:19; 14:11; 15:3,9,21). This usage of the perfect is a strong argument for the verbal and plenary preservation of the Scripture, as the written Old Testament word stands forever and continues to.

19e Emphatic.

19f **“Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord** “Quoted from Deuteronomy 32:35,41. Vengeance belongs to the Lord and not to us. We have no license to seek out revenge or to avenge ourselves but we are to allow the Lord to plead on our behalf instead. If we were to take vengeance on our own volition, we would no doubt sin in so doing since our motivations would be pride, hate and wounded ego, not divine justice or the glory of the Lord. We may not take God’s place in such matters and we have no need to, either. Besides, the Lord can always do a much better job “pleading our cause” to our enemies that we can and He can do so without sin, something we cannot do. Even this vengeance must be for the glory of God and not to soothe our pride and our ego, both of which usually demand some form of satisfaction.

“Vengeance is only safe in the hands of a holy God (Revelation 15:4).”²³⁹

12:20^a Therefore if thine enemy^b hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap^c coals of fire on his head.^{de}

20a Proverbs 25:22 is a good parallel verse to this, **“For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee.”**

20b It is assumed a Christian will have some enemies, if he is living godly. There is something very wrong with a professing Christian who has made no enemies for the gospel’s sake.

20c **“heap”** Strong’s #4987 *soreuô*; to heap together, to heap up, to overwhelm one with a heap of anything, to load one with the consciousness of many sins. It is used only here and in 2 Timothy 3:6 in the New Testament.

20d Such acts of charity against our enemies will do more to convert him than your lashing into him and treating him as an enemy or by taking vengeance. This is also a test of Christian character and maturity. Any sinner can treat his enemy as bad as he treats him, but only a Spirit-filled Christian can return good for evil. These coals of fire will melt him down and make

²³⁹ Thomas Robinson, *Studies in Romans*, 2:195.

him ashamed. Such kindness will either remove his hatred or demonstrate how irrational it is. Kindness shown to an enemy is the best revenge.

20e Our Biblical duty to our enemies:

1. Love them

A. Matthew 5:44 **"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;"**

B. Luke 6:27 **"But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,"**

2. Bless them

A. Matthew 5:44 **"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;"**

B. Luke 6:28 **"Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you."**

3. Do good to them

A. Matthew 5:44 **"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;"**

4. Pray for them

A. Matthew 5:44 **"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;"**

B. Luke 6:28 **"Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you."**

5. Lend to them

A. Luke 6:34-36 **"And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful."**

6. Be kind to them

A. Luke 6:35,36 **"But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful."**

7. Be merciful unto them

A. Luke 6:36 **"Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful."**

Remember- this applies to our enemies, not God's. We have no such license to love God's enemies, like Satan. Instead, our attitude towards God's enemies should be as David's; **"Do not I hate them that hate thee, O Lord?"** (Psalm 139:21,22). David did not hate those who hated him but rather hated the enemies of his God. To hate our own enemies is a sign of pride but to hate God's enemies shows that we are jealous for His glory.

12:21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.^{ab}

21a We are to overcome the force of evil with an even stronger force- that of good. It was said of Thomas Cranmer, "To get a favor, do him a wrong." Cotton Mather was never content till he had bestowed a benefit on every man who had, in any way, done him an injury."

We must either overcome evil or it will overcome us. Warfare is declared and there is no cease fire, so we must do battle. But this is an odd war. We overcome the evil not by evil or by the normal weapons of warfare but by doing good and being good. "Good" is the only weapon available to us in this conflict for we are not to stoop so low as to use the same weapons and strategies as our foe. Worldlings confront evil with evil but we must fight a magnificent battle, with a song in the heart and a sword in the hand (Psalm 150). We cannot fight as a natural man but rather, as a saint under the banner of "holiness unto the Lord". We are to be militant, but we are to also be magnificent! We must take care not to lose our hearts as we win the battles.

It is only to these overcomers are the promises of Revelation 2 and 3 (to **"he that overcometh"**) given.

21b **"overcome evil with good"** This verse summarizes the rules for the Christian in his daily intercourse with general society around him, being chiefly pagan (Romans 12:14-21). Again, all of this flows out of his sanctification from Romans 12:1,2. When we are right with God, we will be right with our brethren and with our fellow man. The carnal Christian and the backslider is not in such a state of grace with God or man and the unsaved man is contrary to both God and man.

Spiritual Applications, Romans Chapter 12

Verses 1 and 2 are the classic verses dealing with yielding the body and the life as a burnt offering sacrifice. The phrase "burnt offering" is used 543 times in the Bible, showing how important it is. It ranks right up there with John 17 as those passages on sanctification that cannot be exhausted. There can be no real Christian life or ministry if the offering up of the body and life has not taken place,

Romans Chapter 13

The burnt offering life also involves being a good citizen and having a right relationship with and understanding of human government. This is part of the practical elements of the Christian life that can only be fulfilled after a personal burnt offering of the life has been made.

This is one of the most important chapters in the Bible in a practical sense since it deals with our relationship with the State. Human government is usually anti-Christian and evil, yet we Christians must live under such governments. How do we? How do we deal with an evil government? Is resistance to the State ever justified? If so, under what circumstances? When can we disobey government without sinning?

The Christian must be involved, or at least interested in politics if he is to be a good citizen and be a good witness in the public arena. I know politics is dirty and defiling business, but as long as we have human government on earth, we must involve ourselves in it. We must be fully educated on the various political questions and philosophies, as well as the politicians and parties in our day. Too many Christians simply withdraw totally from politics, piously mouthing “We have no continuing city here, but our citizenship is heavenly”, or something like that. Then they complain when the government legalizes homosexual marriage, transgenderism or when they draft our sons to go fight in one of their wars. Politics will not save us and it is not a means of grace or salvation, but we, as citizens, cannot afford to be ignorant of the issues of our day or to simply stand on the sidelines and watch the world go to hell when we could be salt and light in both the public and political arenas. And one day, we may have no choice but to be involved in politics, whether we want to or not. We must do so without compromise or sin, based on Biblical principles.

There are many Christians who, when confronted with dealing with an oppressive government, just bleat out “Romans 13! Romans 13! We have to obey our government in everything because of Romans 13!” These people show:

1. They have never studied Romans 13.
2. They have never considered the dozens of examples in Scripture of believers opposing the king and the government and God approving of their actions.
3. They are not good students of Church History, which gives us an almost unlimited sources of examples of resistance against civil authorities.
4. They have not read anything regarding Christian political philosophy.

We could outline this section as follows:

1. Human government established by God, Romans 13:1
2. Our relationship to human government, Romans 13:2,5-7
3. Government’s obligation toward us, Romans 13:3,4

A Summary of 13:1-7 regarding Christian Political Theory:

1. Civil government is ordained by God and is supported by Him. Thus, government in and of itself is not evil as it comes from God. There is no real indication of any organized human government before the Flood. Human government, as we would

recognize it today, was initiated after the Flood in Genesis 9 when capital punishment was authorized, a penalty that is executed only by the State. Government usually degenerates into a evil when it forgets its ordained role and responsibility and when it forgets to acknowledge God.

2. Government is one of the three spheres of human activity:

A. Home. This is the highest as it was the first one established, in the Garden of Eden when Eve was created.

B. Government, which was next instituted after the Flood.

C. Church. You can include the synagogue or tabernacle/temple services here, as we will not limit this only to the New Testament church.

3. Fallen man must have some form of government. Man cannot rule himself without law. The book of Judges illustrates what happens when “there is no king in Israel” and when “every man does that which is right in his own eyes”. The depravity of fallen man guarantees that any form of self-rule will end in failure. Fallen man has enough difficulty ruling over himself. How much more these difficulties if he was left to his own devices and was made a law unto himself.

4. God ordains government, both good and bad (as He often gives people the kinds of government they deserve, such as the last 5 American presidents and just about every Congress)

A. Pharaoh and Egypt

i. Romans 9:17 **“For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.”**

B. Old Babylon in the book of Daniel

C. Darius/Cyrus of Persia

A. Isaiah 44:28 **“That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.”**

B. Isaiah 45:1 **“Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut;”**

D. The Philistines oppressing Israel.

E. The various Canaanite nations oppressing Israel in the book of Judges.

F. The Assyrians, who carried the Ten Northern Tribes captive

G. The Roman Empire

i. At no time did either Jesus or Paul ever suggest that the Roman Empire was not a legitimate government, nor did either one advocate revolution of that the Church attempt to overthrow Rome. Neither of them got involved with the politics of the day. The closest the Lord ever got to it was when He was asked whether it was lawful to give tribute to Caesar. Even then, He did not initiate the discussion.

a. Christians are to be in submission to the civil authorities for as long as they are able to. We are not to be looking for a fight or excuses to rebel. Generally, those reasons will soon manifest themselves if we are living under an unscriptural government.

ii. Christ did acknowledge Rome's ruling authority in Matthew 22:21, **"They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's."**

iii. Peter wrote in 1 Peter 2:17, **"Honour the king."** The "king" to whom Peter referred was Nero. He was one of the worst emperors Rome ever had. He certainly was no friend of Christians. But Peter commanded the Christians of his day to give him his necessary honor.

5. Rebellion against government is forbidden except under certain circumstances, when obeying it would result in sin, or would pit the State against God, or if we are forced to choose between the State and God. God does not expect us to obey every government and every law it passes without any reservation, despite some misinterpretations and misapplications of Roman 13. Examples of such resistance:

A. Abram refusing to recognize the King of Sodom

i. Genesis 14:21-24 **"And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself. And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, That I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich: Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion."**

B. The Hebrew midwives disobeying Pharaoh in his order to kill the Hebrew baby boys at birth, and God approving of it.

i. Exodus 1:15-21 **"And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, of which the name of the one was Shiprah, and the name of the other Puah: And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see them upon the stools; if it be a son, then ye shall kill him: but if it be a daughter, then she shall live. But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive. And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing, and have saved the men children alive? And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them. Therefore God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty. And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses."**

C. Moses opposing Egyptian slavery in Exodus 4-13.

D. Resistance to tyrants in the book of Judges by:

i. Othniel

a. Judges 3:8-11 **"Therefore the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Chushanrishathaim king of Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served Chushanrishathaim eight years. And when the**

children of Israel cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer to the children of Israel, who delivered them, even Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out to war: and the LORD delivered Chushanrishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand; and his hand prevailed against Chushanrishathaim. And the land had rest forty years. And Othniel the son of Kenaz died."

ii. Ehud

a. Judges 3:12-30

iii. Shamgar

a. Judges 3:31 **"And after him was Shamgar the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox goad: and he also delivered Israel."**

iv. Deborah and Barak

a. Judges 4

v. Gideon

a. Judges 6-8

vi. Jephthah

a. Judges 11,12

vii. Samson

a. Judges 13-16, especially see Judges 15:11 **"Then three thousand men of Judah went to the top of the rock Etam, and said to Samson, Knowest thou not that the Philistines are rulers over us? what is this that thou hast done unto us? And he said unto them, As they did unto me, so have I done unto them."**

ix. Every one of the rebelled against the "powers that be" in their day.

E. Samuel had to oppose Saul after Saul's disobedience in 1 Samuel 15.

F. David respected Saul even as Saul was trying to kill him, but David did not "obey" Saul by turning himself in to be executed. Later, David refused to submit to Absalom's revolution (2 Samuel 16-18).

G. Elijah before Ahab and Jezebel. Elijah was actively opposed to their rule.

i. 1 Kings 17-19.

H. Elisha had no respect for Jehoram in 2 Kings 3:14 although he did respect Jehoshaphat. He also had no respect for Ahaziah in 2 Kings 1:9-13 in disobeying his commands

I. Rebellion against wicked Queen Athaliah by Jehoiada.

i. 2 Chronicles 22:10-23:15.

J. Daniel had no respect for Belshazzar in Daniel 5 and disobeyed Darius' foolish edict against prayer in Daniel 6.

K. Esther and Mordecai resisting Haman, who was acting under approval of the king to kill all the Jews in the Book of Esther.

L. Amos did not stop preaching, despite orders to go preach elsewhere in Amos 7.

M. Jeremiah was in constant conflict with the civil authorities during his ministry.

N. The Lord constantly disobeyed the sabbath laws imposed by the Pharisees during His earthly ministry.

O. The early church was in constant conflict with the Jewish religious leaders in Acts 4 and 5.

i. Acts 5:29 **"We ought to obey God rather than man"** That would mean disobeying the Jewish authorities as the early church could not obey both at the same time.

P. Christians are to resist the "prince of This World", who is Satan, who controls and rules this age.

i. John 14:30 **"Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."**

ii. James 4:7 **"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."**

Q. There was a time when Christianity was illegal in the Roman Empire, yet the Church ignored that law and continued their activities. It is obvious in this case that the State over-stepped its authority. This would be repeated throughout modern Church History, as the Roman Catholic states and later some of the Protestant states during the Reformation would outlaw (Ana)Baptist activities. We would even see this in Colonial Massachusetts. Did they have a Biblical right for forbid Baptist churches or activities in their colony? What about in Virginia, where the Anglican Church State required Baptist preachers to be licensed? What shall we say of the Underground Churches in the old Soviet Union, where it was illegal for them to even exist?

i. Baptists were ordered, by law, to have their children baptized in Massachusetts in the 17th and 18th centuries. They disobeyed in Massachusetts and in European countries that were under the control of either Catholic or Protestant authorities. Were these (Ana)Baptist people justified in their opposition?

ii. Baptists were ordered to obtain a license to preach from Anglican authorities in colonial Virginia. They did not, believing that no Anglican authority had any authority in licensing a Baptist ministry. Were the Virginia Baptists justified in opposing an unjust law from the "higher powers"?

iii. Consider the American Revolution. Was it Biblical under Romans 13? It was the preachers that led the drive for independence. If they had followed this incorrect interpretation of Romans 13, the American colonies would not have become independent in 1781.

a. It has often been the preachers and the pulpits that have been the most active and most effective agents of liberty. Why abandon that in the 21st century?

iv. Many Southerners supported succession in 1861 from the Union. There was even talk of the New England states leaving the Union in 1814 because of the War of 1812. Would this have been supported by Romans 13?

v. The Civil Rights movement of the 1960s was an uprising against the powers that were in that day.

R. The pre-Baptist groups (Donatists, Albigenses, Lollards, Waldensians) suffered greatly because they refused to obey the civil authorities and the popes in their attempts to regulate and control the church.

S. The Reformation and pre-Reformation groups (like Wycliffe and the Lollards) were uprisings against the Roman Catholic Church and the governments they controlled.

T. Should Christians in Communist or Islamic countries obey the laws designed to prevent or severely limit Christians and their church activities? They didn't in the Soviet Union. The Underground Church operated for the full 70 years of Soviet Communism, in opposition to the anti-Christian laws that they were under. Were they right or wrong in disobeying their governments?

U. How many martyrs went to the stake because they could obey the unjust laws regarding worship?

V. God makes it clear that He does not recognize as His "ordinance" or as His "minister" every magistrate that sits upon a throne, for in rebuking the northern kingdom of Israel for their wickedness, He declares: **"They have set up kings, but not by me: they have made princes, and I knew it not"** (Hosea 8:4).

6. We are to obey the State in all lawful commands (where do not have to sin in giving such obedience), including paying taxes.

A. For example, If the state asks you to install so many fire extinguishers in your building to meet the fire code, that is something legitimate and should be obeyed.

B. Jesus rendered unto Caesar, despite the fact that Rome was not a godly empire- Matthew 22:21. The Lord was no tax dodger or protester. If He said to pay the taxes to a heathen ruler like Caesar, then we are to pay our taxes to the even more wicked IRS.

i. The key here is "lawful". When rulers start making unlawful demands, our obligations to them cease.

ii. You are to pay your taxes but you are also free to try to get the taxes lowered by lawful means. You also can refuse to support a tax hike if you have a chance to vote on it. In Delaware, we still have the ability to approve or disapprove tax hikes by the various school districts. I always vote against tax hikes, not because I am anti-education (although I am anti-public education) but because my attitude is "what right do I have to raise my neighbor's taxes?"

7. Christians may serve in an ungodly State without sin. In this case, I believe the old Anabaptist groups were wrong when they opposed any Christian serving in the government for any reason. Their reason was that no Christian should serve a government that was involved in religious persecution (namely against them) and they had a good point. But overall, it is no sin for a Christian to serve in a government.

A. Nehemiah- Media/Persia

B. Esther- Media/Persia

C. Daniel- Babylon and Media/Persia

D. Cornelius- Rome

E. Offices may be held by Christians as long as sin or unfaithfulness to God is required

i. See Daniel 1,3,4,6

ii. There may arise a problem if the taking of an oath is required. This would also involve serving in the military, where one must swear an oath to the Constitution, despite the fact that the American Constitution is not a Christian document.

a. Christians are forbidden from swearing such oaths.

(i). Matthew 5:34-36 **"But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black."**

(ii). James 5:12 **"But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation."**

iii. How long a Christian can remain faithful in such an ungodly environment will depend of the circumstances. Every situation will be different.

8. Characteristics of a Godly, Biblical State

A. Built on Biblical law

B. Godly leaders

i. Exodus 18:21 **"Moreover, thou shalt provide out of all the people, able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers."**

a. Able (qualified)

b. Fear God

c. Men of truth

d. Hate covetousness. This is not just coveting money but also coveting power and position.

ii. He is to be a diligent student of the Law of God. Deuteronomy 17:14,15,18,19 **"When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me; thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother. . . . And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them. . . ."**

iii. 2 Samuel 23:3 **"The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God."**

a. Must be just

b. Must rule in the fear of God.

c. This is a reason why I am not a supporter of Donald Trump (in 2024 as I write this) and did not vote for him in 2016 and will not vote for him in 2024. He has some good policies and I agree with some of them, but he is not a Christian. He is an unrepentant adulterer and fornicator, and he surrounds himself with apostate “spiritual advisors” like Paula White.

iv. Isaiah 10:1 **“Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed.”**

v. The civil ruler is supposed to be a minister **“for good”** in Romans 13:4. If he is being a minister for evil, then he forfeits any divine authorization he has to rule.

B. Acknowledges Lordship and Kingship of Christ (this the United States does not do as there is no acknowledgment of God whatsoever in the Constitution. The mention of “nature and Nature’s God” by Thomas Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence is so vague that it could apply to any “god”.

C. Punishes evildoers

D. Keeps the peace

E. Requires its magistrates to be good ministers of God

9. If it comes to the point where we as Christians and the Church must take a public stand against our governments, we must make sure we do so with much prayer, fear and trembling, discerning the mind of God if we are right or not. We must consider our public testimony and watch our attitudes, that we do not suffer as a wicked man but for righteousness’ sake. We must also keep a respectful attitude, even in front of those who would take away our rights and even who would kill us. Notice Jesus in His trials- always respectful, and He never got nasty.

A. Our position is not to necessarily actively rebel against the State but to resist, to refuse to obey sinful laws, not to overthrow the State. God set them up, God will take them down. It is our spiritual duty to respectfully decline to obey and law or decree that would go contrary to the revealed revelation of God or that would cause us to sin.

i. The key idea is resistance, not rebellion.

B. We have a responsibility to our rulers but our rulers also have a responsibility toward us.

i. Their responsibilities include:

a. Maintaining order

b. Punishing wrongdoers

c. Protecting the lawful citizens

d. Advocating and promoting Biblical law

e. Let us alone so we may enjoy a quiet and peaceable life (1 Timothy 2:2)

ii. When government fails in its responsibilities, then we have the right to resist and to attempt to peaceably change it.

iii. Our responsibilities include:

a. To submit and obey all lawful decrees

b. To pay our taxes

c. To pray for those in authority

"A Christian must resist all unlawful commands of the civil magistrate (whether the one issuing the command is a lawful king or an unlawful tyrant): "We ought to obey God rather than men" Acts 5:29.

It is the duty of Christians both to testify against tyrannical civil government and to affirm the moral duties of civil magistracy and subjects under God's law. Civil reformation within a nation cannot occur without a faithful proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. For it is the truth of Jesus Christ that sets people free from sin, from ignorance, and from tyranny. Thus, the position of civil government espoused and defended herein strongly affirms that the primary resistance offered by Christians against tyranny in civil government is by means of moral persuasion accomplished in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Christians should resist tyrannical civil governments by earnestly praying that God would destroy the throne established by wickedness, that He would be pleased to convert unlawful magistrates who presently are His enemies, and that He would hasten the day when righteousness would shine forth from the scepter of the civil magistrate... It is affirmed by our reformed forefathers that resistance by means of force in cases of self-defence is not contrary to biblical commands which call Christians to be subject to lawful magistrates (and not to resist them), or biblical commands which call Christians to suffer patiently under harsh rulers. Samuel Rutherford has faithfully expounded such biblical passages (as those found in Romans 13:1,2 and 1 Peter 2:13-20), and clearly demonstrates that these passages cannot be made to contradict the rest of God's Word (where resistance by means of force in self-defence is approved), and that these texts themselves do not contradict biblical resistance (whether resistance without force or resistance by means of force).²⁴⁰

The more I consider it, the more cynical I become about human government under fallen man and (especially) political parties, and that includes the pseudo-Christian and pseudo-conservative "Republican" party. With age comes political wisdom, I guess. The Republican Party is really a Progressive/Socialist Party, if you study its history from 1912 and Theodore Roosevelt onward. So many Christians give almost an idolatrous allegiance to the Republicans because they are under a mistaken impression that it is both conservative and Christian, when in reality, it is neither. I gave up on the Republicans after the 1996 presidential election as they are not a Christian or a truly "conservative" party. They are little different than the very liberal Democratic Party. There are not too many places for the Bible-believing Christian to put his support when it comes to politics, especially party politics. I have always said that the Republicans treat Christian voters the same way Democrats treat Black voters, both parties take these groups for granted. Christians in other countries will find themselves in a similar, if not worse, predicament. What is a Canadian or a German Christian to do with regards to participation in his country's politics? When it comes to presidential elections, I haven't voted for a "winner" since 1992 since I mainly vote third party now, when I vote at all.

240 Greg Price, *Biblical Civil Government Verses the Beast*, pdf version, pages 24-26.

109. The Christian and the State 13:1-7

13:1 Let every soul^a be subject^{b-present imperative} unto the higher powers.^{cd} For there is^{present} no power^d but of God: the powers^d that be^{present active participle} are^{present} ordained^{e-perfect passive participle} of God.

1a **“every soul”** Every person- Christian and non-Christian, citizen and non-citizen. The “clergy” are not exempt from the civil magistrate, nor are they elevated over it. In civil matters, the civil magistrate outranks the preacher, but in moral and spiritual matters, the preacher has more authority.

1b **“be subject to”** Be in submission to. This does not mean that you must agree with them or support their policies. Rather, it deals with obeying them as long as you do not need to sin in so doing.

1c **“higher powers”** These “powers” are human civil government, by the context of this chapter. Government is called a “higher power” since it is the strongest common authority established among men to govern their society and interpersonal relationships and conduct. Government is a “higher” power but not the “highest”, for it must also answer to God and be conformed to His laws.

There is a chain of command regarding authority on earth. Christ is the Head and He is the King. His law is supreme, even over the constitution of the United States (which was NOT given by inspiration). Any human law which violates divine law is invalid, as is any ruler who usurps the ruling authority granted to him by Christ. Then after the divine law of Christ comes human government, which must be in submission to divine law in order to be valid.

Human government is ordained of God because sinful man must be ruled. He cannot be left to his own devices, to do that which is right in his own eyes as he was doing in the book of Judges. This is because man is a sinner and does not have the nature, the character or the knowledge to rule himself properly under God. Libertarianism can only go so far, politically. The foundations of civil government are laid down in the Noahic Covenant in Genesis 9 and are greatly expanded upon in the case laws of the Pentateuch. God allows man to rule himself to some degree, but along the lines of divinely revealed laws and principles. God sets up these human rulers and grants them the authority they need to keep the peace, maintain order and punish evildoers. These three actions are all that God authorizes for human governments. When human government goes beyond these duties, trouble is the result. In Romans 13, Paul defines what qualifies as a godly government and a godly ruler and what the responsibilities of believers, yea, all men, are to such governments.

Governments that are ordained of God automatically become responsible to be God’s civil ministers in the earth. This obligates them, as such ministers, to obey and enforce the laws of God that they have been entrusted with. Any “ordained minister” of governmental authority that fails in this becomes a poor steward who will have his stewardship removed and will be judged accordingly. There are many Biblical examples of this:

1. Moses refused to obey Pharaoh.
2. Elijah refused to obey Ahab.
3. Elisha had no respect for Jehoram in 2 Kings 3:14 although he did respect Jehoshaphat.
4. Daniel had no respect for Belshazzar in Daniel 5.
5. Amos did not stop preaching, despite orders to go preach elsewhere in Amos 7.
6. Jeremiah was in constant trouble with the authorities.

7. The apostles refused to stop preaching, although ordered to by the Sanhedrin in Acts 4 and 5.

A Christian's obligation to obey such an unfaithful minister is limited. He is still to obey all Biblically-lawful commands but since the Christian finds himself under the authority of a rebellious and unfaithful minister, his obligations would end right there. Overall, a Christian is not to support such a governmental authority and he would be justified in doing all he can to overthrow such an authority (by lawful and Biblical means and methods) and to give only limited (or the bare minimum required) support and allegiance to it. This is why so few genuine Bible-believing Christians would vote or would support their governments (regardless of level- state, federal, county...). Nearly all human government on earth is unfaithful and rebellious to the law of God today and this is especially true in the United States and in Canada. Why vote? You are only encouraging and offering support for an unfaithful minister. When you vote for an unbiblical government, you are offering your recognition of such an establishment. You wouldn't support an unfaithful pastor in your church, so why support an unfaithful civil magistrate? I began to learn this lesson after the presidential election in 1996. That was the last year I voted Republican. I realized that both Democrats and Republicans were grossly corrupt and unfaithful to the law of God. Why vote for either one? Vote for the "lesser of two evils?" The lesser of two evils is still evil. Why vote at all? How many genuinely Christian candidates are there on your ballot? Voting is, in essence, a validation on the part of the one voting of the process, the Constitution that sanctions that process (and the Constitution is not a Christian or a Biblical document) and the candidates running. If there was a genuine Christian candidate running for office, he ought to be supported, but 99.9% of the time, the Christian has no such option. His choices are between the Democratic Heathen and the Republican Heathen.

I would summarize this as "When the Government tries to take away what God has given, to forbid what God has allowed or allows what God has forbidden, it is then time to pray about how you will react against your magistrates, even to the point of disobedience."

It makes no difference if we are under a "good" or "bad" government. The government we find ourselves under was installed by God and are ordained of Him. This includes any form of government- communistic, democratic, socialistic, dictatorship, monarchy. You obey it as long as you do not have to sin in so doing. You obey it as long as they do not try to usurp the authority of God and the Bible in the life of the Church and the Christian. The point of contention then is "What do we do when the State does cross that line? Do we resist? What form will that resistance take? And how far do we take it?"

The slave must, of necessity, do the bidding of his master. The power is unjust. It may be tyrannically exercised. It is, in its very nature, despotic. But the victim of wrong has, for the time, no alternative. By obedience alone can he secure exemption from greater suffering. So the unhappy subject of arbitrary civil rule. He is beneath the iron heel of the despot. He must obey. But it is a forced obedience, wrung from him by the irresistible might of the tyrant's scepter. So also, the Christian may be compelled to yield a kind of submission to overwhelming power. He is in its hand. The sword is ready to enforce the mandates of unholy authority.

Why is government called a "higher power?" There are three spheres of human activity- Church, Home and State. Is Paul placing the State above the Church and Home? This is very unlikely. But humanly speaking, the government does tend to wield the most secular power and only it has the sword by which to punish evildoers. The State tends to have more earthly authority than does the Church of Home.

To give an idea of the arrogance of government and its own sense of deity, ask yourself what mechanism is in place for the calm and orderly shutdown of a government. Every corporation has provisions for the shutdown of the company if it goes out of business or decides to cease operations. Every state has laws which addresses that. But look at the U. S. Constitution. In what article does it deal with how to shut down the current American form of government if the various states decide to dissolve the union? It isn't there. This means the

American government believes itself to be divine in origin and authority and that it will not cease operation and that no one has any authority to attempt to change it. I don't believe any country's constitution is any different. But God never hesitates to bring down states and empires if He deems it necessary to do so and the United States will not fare any different than Rome or Babylon.

1d **“higher powers”** In this context, the higher power was the anti-Christian Roman empire.

“higher powers” and **“power”** Strong's #1849 exousia; power of choice, liberty of doing as one pleases, leave or permission, physical and mental power, the ability or strength with which one is endued, which he either possesses or exercises, the power of authority (influence) and of right (privilege), the power of rule or government (the power of him whose will and commands must be submitted to by others and obeyed), the power of judicial decisions, of authority to manage domestic affairs, jurisdiction, one who possesses authority, a ruler, a human magistrate, the sign of regal authority, a crown

1e **“ordained”** This is in the Greek perfect tense, showing they were ordained in the past and remain so ordained now. That situation will not change as God will always ordain some form of civil government among men.

God has set up, established and empowered human government on earth, even ungodly and persecuting ones, for a reason. Even communist governments or dictatorships are allowed to rule only according to the will of God. God could destroy such governments in a heartbeat (as the rapid downfall of the Soviet Union in 1991) or he could allow them to continue for a season (Soviet Union, 74 years, Nazi Germany, 12 years...). Why He allows such governments to even exist, or continue, is not always revealed to us, but verses like this assure us that they continue only within the will of God and do so for a purpose. To suppose otherwise is to question the wisdom of God as well as His political plans for man during these Times of the Gentiles.

“The necessity for this section is traceable to the widespread feeling of irritation against the Roman government among the Jewish populations. To the Jew the theocracy seemed to be the only legitimate form of government...The Messianic promise, as understood by the Jews, was hostile to the claims of any pagan government...Judas the Gaulonite had founded a sect which held that it was unlawful to obey earthly rulers...some converts from Judaism may have brought with them their revolutionary sympathies and projects into the Church of Christ...But probably the reason for the paragraph is to be found more precisely in the Ebionite conception that the power that governs the world, and acts through the civil magistracy is devilish. The belonged to the dualistic tendency in Ebionism.”²⁴¹ The Jews believed they had no king but God and thus were not accountable to human kings. The Pharisees promoted and defended this view.

**13:2 Whosoever therefore resisteth^{ab-present middle/passive participle} the power,^c resisteth^{b-}
^{perfect} the ordinance^d of God: and they that resist^{perfect active participle} shall receive^{future}
^{middle} to themselves damnation.^e**

2a **“resisteth”** Resistance by:

1. Disobedience
2. Refusal to support by paying taxes and tribute
3. Attempting to overthrow

²⁴¹ H.P. Liddon, *Explanatory Analysis of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, page 246.

It is rebellion against a God-ordained authority if a Christian refuses to submit to his government in lawful things. The question then arises "What if in obeying my government I am forced to sin against God?" If a choice develops between obeying God or man, the choice is clear- we should obey God rather than man (Acts 5:29). Whenever government tries to force a Christian into sin, it crosses over the boundaries God set for it and strays into the authority of the Church or the family. But if you set yourself against a God-ordained authority, you had better have a very good reason for doing so. Such reasons and justifications exist, but you had just better understand what they are.

2b Two Greek words are used for the two uses of the English word "resisteth" in this verse:

1. First usage- Strong's #498 *antitassomai*; from *anti* (Strong's #473) against, or in the stead of, and *tassô* (Strong's #5021); to range in battle against, to oppose one's self, resist

2. Second usage- Strong's #436 *anthistemi*; from *anti* (Strong's #473) against, or in the stead of, and *histemi* (Strong's #2476) to cause or make to stand, to place, put, set; to set one's self against, to withstand, resist, oppose, to set against

2c "**power**" Strong's #1849 *exousia*; power of choice, liberty of doing as one pleases, leave or permission, physical and mental power, the ability or strength with which one is endued, which he either possesses or exercises, the power of authority (influence) and of right (privilege), the power of rule or government (the power of him whose will and commands must be submitted to by others and obeyed), the power of judicial decisions, of authority to manage domestic affairs, jurisdiction, one who possesses authority, a ruler, a human magistrate, the sign of regal authority, a crown

2d "**ordinance**" Strong's #1296 *diatagê*; a disposition, arrangement, ordinance. This is a late Greek word, used in Romans 13:2 and in Acts 7:53.

2e "**receive to themselves damnation**" Because rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft (1 Samuel 15:23). This is a judicial sentence, but a divine condemnation would surely follow.

13:3 For rulers^a are^{present} not a terror to good works, but to the evil.^{bc} Wilt^{present} thou then not be afraid^{present middle infinitive} of the power?^d do^{imperative} that which is good, and thou shalt have^{future} praise of the same:^e

3a Verses 3 and 4 list the Civil Magistrate's obligations and responsibilities toward the people to whom they have been placed over:

1. They are to terrorize evil doers, not lawful citizens 13: 3

2. They are to be God's minister for good 13:4. I wonder how many politicians realize this? They are "servants", or "diakonos", in the Greek, the same word as for "deacon". Government is supposed to serve its citizens, not the other way around!

3. They are to execute wrath in God's stead against him who does evil. Government is to reward the law-abiding citizen by ministering unto him for good (best done by leaving him alone) and to punish the criminal who disturbs and threatens both society and the law-abiding citizen. This principle is first given back in Genesis 9:6

3b Thus, an unfaithful and evil government can be identified by:

1. It terrorizes the good, law-abiding citizens and rewards evildoers

2. They minister evil, not good.

3. The magistrates do not function as the ministers of God for good

The first sign of an evil state is where the good law-abiding citizens are persecuted while the evil lawbreakers are unmolested. Any state that persecutes Christians falls into the category of an evil state, since Christians tend to make the best and most productive citizens, even in non-Christian and anti-Christian societies.

But this verse is a double-edged sword, for it would also condemn "Christian" states (sacral states actually) that persecute other Christians. Calvin's Geneva and Puritan Massachusetts are prime examples. These "Christian" sacral states persecuted other Christians who disagreed with them theologically. The murder of Michael Servetus is an eternal blot on the name of Calvin. The persecution of the Baptists by Massachusetts and colonial Virginia was evil and unscriptural. The Reformation states in Europe that persecuted the Anabaptists can never be justified. Maybe that's one reason why such persecuting states did not endure for long, as no doubt God would have judged such an evil "Christian" state. The persecuted groups simply desired the right to worship and believe as they pleased, but their non-conformity was a threat to the sacralistic governments and so they must either conform to the State Church monstrosity or be destroyed, for the good of the "unity" of the "Church".

This is where the real issue boils down to- what exactly is the role of the State? Governments are instituted among men. That fact cannot be denied. Thus, human government in and of itself is not evil or sinful. But that government has very specific limits imposed on it in terms of its authority. Basically, the State is to maintain order, punish evildoers and generally keep the peace. That's about it. The modern idea of the leviathan state is totally foreign to the Bible (either testament). Sinful man must have some degree of government over him, but 99.99% of the time, it will be other sinful men, who are not in submission to the Word of God, who will be in authority over those men. And when that happens, the fallen nature of man takes over and what might start as a limited, biblical government turns into an iron-fisted dictatorship. The modern State is based and founded upon power and such power always corrupts. The Biblical model was that civil service was exactly that- service. The magistrate served God first and then the people second. It was a ministry more than a career. That was radical idea in the early years of the American republic. One reason why those who served in the House of Representatives (the "people's body" of government) for only two years was that the Founding Fathers assumed that Representatives would only serve for a few years and then voluntarily step down. They did not anticipate career politicians who served only to build and further their own power and that of the State.

So what do we do when we have a State that is bent to evil? One that is obsessed with expanding its own power and bringing its population under its iron heel? A State that devolves into a Nanny State that is intent on micromanaging your life? One that is taking away your liberties rather than defending them? That State is a minister of evil, not of good. The State then becomes an unfaithful minister. That is when the Christian would have a basis to resist such a government.

I hold to a minimalist government and State, the smallest form of government required to fulfill its Biblical mandate is the best. The smaller the State, the more Biblical it is and the more likely that the people living under such a government will enjoy personal liberty. I am not anti-State in the concept of the State for God established human government and we must have some form of it as fallen man simply cannot rule over himself properly.

3c **"For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil."** When you fear your government for doing well or for following God and His law, then you are living under an unbiblical government that is unfaithful to the God that ordained it! In those cases where Christians have been able to withdraw from intolerable situations, no sin is involved. The Huguenots fled from France to England, and the Puritans from England to America, for freedom of conscience. Christ said, "If they persecute you in one city, flee to another." Escape is sometimes possible, and is not rebellion, but merely self-preservation. But where could

persecuted Christians flee today?

When your government starts rewarding evil and punishing good, then it ceases to be a Biblically-ordained institution. In America, our government gives millions of dollars a year to Planned Parenthood, which does nothing but operate abortion mills. In the Pandemic Scare of 2020, many states continued to fund Planned Parenthood and allowed them to stay open (as an “essential” service) while forcing churches to close. Governments that did that forfeited any divine authority for being a recognized organization in the eyes of God.

3d **“be afraid of the power”** Evildoers should fear the sword of the magistrate, since the godly magistrate will act as God’s appointed agent on earth to bring judgment to that offender. The peaceful law-abiding citizens should have nothing to fear in a godly society. The operative word is “should” since it doesn’t always work out that way.

3e **“do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same”** In an ideal, godly state, this would be the case. But all bets are off in an ungodly state, or in a state that does not identify with the Bible and that does not base its government or legal code on Scripture (like the United States),

13:4 For he is^{present} the minister^a of God to thee^b for good.^c But if thou do^{present} subjunctive that which is evil, be afraid;^{imperative} for he beareth^{present} not the sword^d in vain: for he is^{present} the minister^a of God, a revenger^e to execute wrath upon him that doeth^{present active participle} evil.^f

4a **“minister”** (both uses) This is the same word as “deacon”, showing that the civil magistrate is a minister of God who is to serve his people, not to rule over them as a lord. This shows that the civil magistrate is appointed by God and serves at God’s pleasure. What an awesome responsibility this is, then, for God will certainly judge an unfaithful minister/civil magistrate.

A minister of God! We must note the context when Paul wrote that- Nero was Caesar! Nero was a “minister of God” and was to be obeyed and honored in all lawful commands and laws. How difficult that can be, especially with the devil incarnate on the throne. But God put him there and maintains them there within his will, and to rebel against that is to rebel against God’s will. A very fine line must be walked if the Christian finds himself having to take a stand against such a ruler. Yes, he is to “obey God rather than man” but there are times when to obey man is to obey God, if that context is governmental. If Paul could urge Christians to recognize Nero as a “minister of God” and obey his laws and pay his tributes, then can’t we do the same today for our governors and presidents, who, as bad as they might be, are nowhere near as horrible as a Roman Caesar was?

4b **“to thee”** The magistrate is to minister to us for our good and be the servant of the people, not the other way around.

4c **“for good”** the mark of a godly magistrate, where an unfaithful one would be promoting and doing evil to those in his charge.

The other traditional translations all render this “For he is the minister of God for thy wealth” but I would think more than economic issues are at stake here unless “wealth” has a larger, classical, definition here.

4d **“sword”** Only the State has the sword by which to punish evildoers. Neither the Family nor the Church may punish wrongdoers in such a manner. The sword here represents the divinely

ordained authority-sphere of the State, including the authority to inflict punishment for civil offenses, especially capital punishment, a right that neither the State or the Family possesses.

4e **“revenger”** The magistrate is thus called, for he is to avenge the wrongs and injustices committed upon the victim, the weak, the poor, the widow, the orphan, anyone. Instead of the victim playing vigilante and taking justice into his own hands, he is supposed to turn his case over to the magistrate, who would exact justice for him.

4f **“to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.”** The duty of a faithful magistrate- to punish evil and to serve as a deterrent to evildoers. A magistrate becomes unfaithful and unbiblical when good men and law-abiding men are afraid of him or when he persecutes such men.

13:5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject,^{present passive infinitive} **not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.**^{abc}

5a We are to obey government not just to stay out of trouble but also to preserve a clear conscience. It's a bad testimony for Christians to be opposing the government every time it tries to do something. The Jehovah Witnesses are a perfect example as they refuse to give allegiance to any government, good or bad. They got so bad and annoying at one point that Kenya expelled them for their anti-government activities. The Jews were often terrible citizens in the lands they dwelled. This soured the Romans concerning the testimony of the Jews.

The Authorized Version may be the one translation that is the least clear here, since they did not expand on the “wrath”. The other translations correctly bring out the idea that one reason why we obey the governmental authorities for fear of punishment if we do not.

5b **“for conscience sake”** The Jews knew of no other motivation for submission to the Roman government other than fear of punishment. Christians were told submit because it was the right thing to do. Most of the time, we obey our governments out of fear of arrest and imprisonment. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had a government we could obey because we actually respected it?

5c Subjection to magistrates to be made a matter of conscience:

1. As subjection to God's institution and His own command
2. As enjoined and exemplified by Christ Himself- Matthew 22:21; 26:63,64
3. As a due return for benefits received
4. As an example to others and for the benefit of society
5. As a testimony in favor of Christianity.”²⁴²

13:6 For for this cause pay^{present} **ye tribute**^a **also: for they are**^{present} **God's ministers,**^b **attending continually**^{present active participle} **upon this very thing.**^c

6a **“pay ye tribute”** Taxation was such a hot topic in Paul's day that he devotes two verses to it- must a Christian pay taxes to support a pagan government that is not fulfilling its God-appointed duties by persecuting Christians? Paul says "Yes", as does the Lord (Matthew 17:24-27; 22:17-21). Christ recognized Caesar's authority in collecting taxes despite his ungodly government and He paid them. Taxation is due to government because they are God's ministers, even if they are ungodly and are unaware of their “deacon” status before God. We

242 Thomas Robinson, *Studies in Romans: Expository and Homiletical Commentary*, volume 2, page 206.

may have to render unto Caesar, but the Bible is very clear about how Caesar is to behave and fulfill his office.

The Christians in the Roman Empire had a good reputation in this context in that they did pay their taxes.

We pay our taxes because we don't want our property taken from us by the government and we want to stay out of trouble with the IRS. There is nothing "patriotic" about paying taxes. I simply pay them because I have to and because I want to keep a good conscience before God and so I don't "**offend**" (Matthew 17:27). I also fear the consequences if I don't pay them.

"tribute" Strong's #5411 phoros; tribute, the annual tax levied upon houses, lands, and persons, property taxes

6b **"ministers"** Strong's #3011 leitourgos; from laos (Strong's #2992) people and ergon (Strong's #2041) work; public minister, a servant of the state, a minister, servant, one who works for the people. This is a different word for "minister" as used in Romans 13:4, as this has more of a governmental/public servant meaning and not so much religious.

If they are God's ministers, why do so few even acknowledge God at all? They obey the dictates of their political party and government with an eye to their re-election. They may invoke God to try to justify their policies, but most will say they rule through "the will of the people". They do not acknowledge that God allowed them to come into that position because they must then acknowledge that they are accountable to God for how they rule. If God put them in that place of authority, they must also realize that God can remove them just as easily as He placed them there. Look at the rapid fall of Belshazzar in Daniel 5 and Zimri's short reign of seven days in 1 Kings 16:15-20.

6c The taxation and tribute are used to support the magistrate in the administration of his duties. Unfortunately, the State today uses taxes as a form of social engineering to affect behavior and economic and social activity.

13:7 Render^{ab-aorist imperative} therefore to all their dues:^{cd} tribute^d to whom tribute^d is due; custom^d to whom custom;^d fear^d to whom fear;^d honor^d to whom honor.^{def}

7a **"Render"** has the thought of paying taxes out of public obligation as a citizen and not as a show of support for the government. Taxes are something we pay because we have to, not because we want to.

7b Not only taxes but we are also to render:

1. Tribute, your standard tax.
2. Custom, which is tax on merchandise, commerce and business transactions
3. Fear, reverence and respect to those in positions of authority
4. Honor. You may not necessarily honor the man but you must honor the office.

7c Unfortunately, Paul doesn't directly deal with the thorny issues about government, such as:

1. What should the Christian do in times of revolution?
2. Must a Christian submit to the State if the State commands activities that go contrary to the Word of God?

We certainly wish that Paul would have expounded more on these matters!

7d As Christian citizens of whatever nation we find ourselves, we are liable by the apostle to render the following to the civil rulers:

"dues" Strong's #3782 opheilê; that which is owed, a debt. Not found in Classical

Greek. The older traditional translations render this as “duty”.

“tribute” Strong’s #5411 phoros; tribute, the annual tax levied upon houses, lands, and persons, property taxes

“custom” Strong’s #5056 telos; from “teleô”, meaning “to pay”; end, termination, the limit at which a thing ceases to be (always of the end of some act or state, but not of the end of a period of time), the last in any succession or series, toll, custom, indirect tax on goods and merchandise that is used for public ends.

“fear” or respect for the office.

“honor” for those in the office. We do not honor them personally or individually, for they may be moral reprobates, but they are still entitled to the honor due their office.

7e Summary of the Christian’s duty to the State:

1. Be subject to civil government
2. Fear and respect the civil rulers
3. Do good
4. Pay your taxes
5. Render dues to all men
6. Honor the civil rulers
7. Pray for civil rulers
8. Obey the laws
9. Do not curse the rulers (Ecclesiastes 10:20 **“Curse not the king, no not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.”**)
10. Work for peace

7f Daniel is the best Biblical example of how to conduct oneself under a heathen and anti-Christian government as he fulfilled these commands very well in a difficult situation under several ungodly administrations.

110. The Christian and Debt 13:8

13:8 Owe^{present} no man any thing,^a but to love^{infinitive} one another:^b for he that loveth^{present active participle} another hath fulfilled^{perfect} the law.^c

8a This is an exhortation to stay out of debt as much as is possible and to stay out of non-monetary debts to other people. In other words, try to live without these kinds of entanglements as much as possible. This is very difficult to do in our day, age and economic system, but avoidance of debt when possible is always the wisest course. This also goes for churches. Blessed is that congregation that can say they owe no man anything!

8b **“love one another”** Love is the only thing that we should owe one another. This should be our debt to each other. Paul does not say “loveth himself”. It takes little grace to love yourself but divine help to love your neighbor. This is one debt we are all in but that we can never fully discharge.

8c **“for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.”** How many people don’t understand this! When they see the Law, all they can see is “Can’t do this, don’t do that”. Most people look at the Law negatively, as if God gave it to us to punish us or to make us unhappy. But Paul sees the Law in a different light, that it is founded upon and fulfilled by love, not duty or works. All the Ten Commandments are based on love. The first four commandments deal with our love

toward God while the final six deal with our love for our neighbor. A man who loves God properly and who thus loves his neighbor properly, is doing more to fulfill the law than any legalistic works-based Pharisee.

And notice the perfect tense, signifying a once-and-for-all finished action. Fulfilling the law is done not by ritualistic and legalistic observances, but by manifesting love and putting the commandments into action in our everyday lives. Do this and you will have fulfilled the very spirit of the law once and for all.

Also see Galatians 5:14 regarding this, **“For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”**

111. The Christian and the Law 13:9

13:9^a For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery,^{b-future} Thou shalt not kill,^{c-future} Thou shalt not steal,^{d-future} Thou shalt not bear false witness,^{e-future} Thou shalt not covet;^{f-future} and if *there be* any other commandment,^g it is briefly comprehended^{h-present} in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love^{future} thy neighborⁱ as thyself.^{jk}

9a Notice that Commandments 6-10 are repeated here (although not in the order given in Exodus 20/Deuteronomy 5), showing that they are still valid in the New Testament dispensation. The only Commandment not to be repeated in the New Testament is the Fourth, about keeping the Sabbath. This makes sense, since the Sabbath is a sign for Israel, was never given to the Gentiles and is part of the ceremonial law, which was fulfilled by Christ on the cross. The Sabbath would still be binding on a Jew today, since it was given to him as a covenant sign that has not been repealed, but it was never binding on a Gentile. And obviously, the Sabbath is not Sunday- it never has been and never will be. It is Saturday. In reality, the New Testament gives no regulations regarding “Sunday observances” except by giving the historical example of the church meeting on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7) and giving our offerings on the first day of the week (1 Corinthians 16:1).

9b **“adultery”** Prohibiting extra-marital affairs and any other form of sexual impurity. This is a repeat of the 7th commandment (Exodus 20:14). It is also the first such sin mentioned here and in Galatians 5:19 in relation to the works of the flesh.

9c **“kill”** Any form of pre-meditated homicide or murder is forbidden, but not killing in self-defense or in time of war. This is a repeat of the 6th commandment (Exodus 20:13).

AV	ESV	LSV
9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if <i>there be</i> any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt	9 For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”	9 For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

love thy neighbour as thyself.		
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“kill” The ESV and LSV render this as “murder”.

“false witness” Omitted in the ESV and LSV.

9d **“steal”** Private property must be respected. This one sentence completely overthrows both socialism and communism, which are based on theft of private property. This is a repeat of the 8th commandment (Exodus 20:15).

9e **“false witness”** Lying and slander prohibited, especially in a court of law. This is a repeat of the 9th commandment (Exodus 20:16).

9f **“covet”** This is the root of just about all sin, covetousness and selfishness. A repeat of the 10th commandment (Exodus 20:17). The Tyndale Bible renders this as “desire” (probably in a very strong way) and the Coverdale and Bishop’s Bibles have “lust”, so this is a very strong word.

9g **“any other commandment”** Paul is not limiting his remarks just to the Ten Commandments, but to any other Biblical and divine command and law that is out there.

9h Or “summed up”.

9i **“thy neighbor”** In reality, this includes all men, as seen in the Parable of the Good Samaritan. This is repeated from Matthew 19:19; 22:39, Mark 12:31 (the second “Great Commandment”). Paul also mentions this in Galatians 5:14 as does James in James 2:8.

9j The Law is not a collection of “don’t do that and don’t do this” given by God to make us miserable, but is rather a way to show our love for God and our neighbor. By fulfilling these commandments, we are showing our love for God and man. In the first 4 commandments, our love for God can be demonstrated by not worshiping idols, acknowledging Him as the only true God, not taking His name in vain and respecting His day. The last 6 commandments are all directed at demonstrating love toward our horizontal, human relations. Thus, when we break a commandment, we are demonstrating our hatred for either God or man by harming them in one way or another. Thus, the whole duty of man is to love God and then to love our neighbor.

9k **“love thy neighbor as thyself”** Every man loves himself. We are to love God and our neighbor more than we love ourselves. This is unnatural and is not easy, and is only made possible by the indwelling power and love of Christ.

112. The Christian and Love 13:10

13:10^a Love worketh^{present middle} no ill^b to his neighbor: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law.^c

10a This verse sounds very much like 1 Corinthians 13 in a nutshell, so much so that the Bishop’s Bible used “charity” instead of love but the other translations use “love”.

10b **“no ill”** Does not inflict harm or damage.

10c “**love is the fulfilling of the law.** Not in or by the legalistic keeping of the commandments, Pharisee-style, but rather by putting the commandments into effect in our everyday lives by displaying love toward God and our neighbor.

113. Exhortation to Soberness 13:11-13

13:11 And that,^a knowing^{perfect active participle} the time, that now *it is* high time to awake^{aoist passive infinitive} out of sleep:^b for now *is* our salvation^c nearer than when we believed.^d

11a Emphatic.

11b “**sleep**” Spiritual sleep, slumber and stupidity. We are to be aroused out of our slumber just as the Roman soldier was awakened early every day by the blast of a trumpet. This spirit of spiritual sleep is the natural condition of the sinner, who is oblivious to his damnation and judgment. Evangelism is the attempt to awaken the sinner so he may rectify his situation, standing and state with God. But many Christians, ones who are backslidden and indifferent, are also needing to be awakened so that they may prepare themselves for the bema judgment. This spirit of slumber manifests itself by:

1. Unconsciousness as to one’s real circumstances
2. Unconcern as to one’s present and eternal state
3. Inactivity in regard to the interests of eternity
4. Indulgence of fleshly appetites and desires
5. Delusive dreams as to one’s real condition
6. Helplessness and exposure to danger.”²⁴³

11c “**salvation**” Our full, complete, consummated eternal salvation in heaven. We are already saved as it is a present possession, but we will not come into our full and complete salvation, our consummated salvation, until we reach heaven.

Also notice that Paul says our salvation is nearer than when we first **believed**. He does not say since we were first baptized, confirmed, joined the church, went to Mecca or took communion. None of these acts of religion contribute to salvation, only believing does.

11d “**now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.**” It is one day closer today than it was yesterday, and getting closer with every passing minute! The coming of the Lord and the truth of the Bema Judgment are to serve as our motivations for holy living.

13:12 The night is far spent^{a-aoist} the day is at hand:^{b-perfect} let us therefore cast off^{c-aoist subjunctive used as an imperative} the works of darkness,^d and let us put on^{aoist subjunctive} the armor of light.^e

12a “**far spent**” Or “has made a lot of progress”. Referring to the night of sin and evil, in which time we currently are living in. If the night was “far spent” in Paul’s day 1,900-2,000 years ago, how much truer is it today?

243 Thomas Robinson, *Studies in Romans: Expository and Homiletical Commentary*, volume 2, page 214.

12b **“the day is at hand”** That great millennial day of righteousness and holiness that is fast approaching and for which all of God’s people are eagerly waiting. We are currently in a night season in this world’s history, which won’t be lifted until the millennium.

12c **“cast off”** As we would a filthy, soiled garment. Our Old Man of sin is just as a filthy, stinking garment that no one in his right mind would want to wear. We also cast off our night clothes when we arise in the day. We wear different garments when we sleep and when we are awake during the day. And these **“works of darkness”** are not just to be “taken off” but cast off and tossed away, as an unwanted garment.

The Apostle says, “cast off.” Let the habits of “your sinful nature be from now on regarded as castoffs—cast them right away and say, “I have done with them! There will not be another night for me and, therefore, I shall not need them. Bury them, burn them—they are my castoffs.”

“The old garments of our sins and lusts must be put off if we are to put on Christ. To wear two sets of clothes at the same time is as difficult as it is foolish. “It will be an idle attempt to try and wear religion as a sort of celestial overall over the top of old sins. The King’s daughter is all glorious within, or she would never have received her clothing of worked gold. The vision of Zechariah teaches us the way of the Lord—when he saw Joshua clothed with filthy garments, the Lord did not put upon him a goodly vesture over these—but He first said, “Take away the filthy garments from him.” And then He added, “Behold, I have caused your iniquity to pass from you, and I will clothe you with change of raiment.” You must be cleansed in the blood of Jesus before you can be clothed in the white linen which is the righteousness of the saints! See to it that, being awakened out of your sleep, you cast off all the garments of the night!”²⁴⁴

12d **“works of darkness”** Works of sin and unrighteousness, which belong to the old nature and are usually practiced in the night seasons.

12e **“armor of light”** Of righteousness and holiness.

Straighten up and fly right! Cast off those sins that we are allowing to bind us and drag us down. Get working on your sanctification and on developing that strong and deep relationship with God. We haven’t much more time before the bema seat judgment (Romans 14) and the millennial day, so we must get out spiritual house in order now, while it is yet day and while we still have opportunity.

13:13 Let us walk^{a-aorist subjunctive used as an imperative} **honestly,^b as in the day;^c not in rioting^{de} and drunkenness, not in chambering^f and wantonness,^g not in strife and envying.^h**

13a Conduct ourselves, or live.

13b **“honestly”** Let us live and behave in a decent, moral and respectable manner.

13c **“in the day”** We generally put off clothes when we sleep at night. This may explain why so many unsaved people have so little use for clothing- they are asleep in the night! But since the day is dawning (referring to the millennium), we must do spiritually what we do physically at the dawn of every day- cast off our bedclothes of the night and put on our daily apparel to meet the day. We do notice a most irritating habit of some, especially girls, to wear pajama bottoms in public, This only speaks to the slob culture and low living that is so popular in our day.

244 Charles Spurgeon, “Dressing in the Morning” in *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, volume 27, sermon 1614.

13d The 6 sins listed in this verse are generally night sins, not practiced in the full day of the sun's shining but rather in the hidden dens of iniquity of the night.

AV	ESV	LSV
13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.	13 Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy.	13 Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy.

13e **“rioting”** Strong’s #2970 *kômos*; a revel, carousal, a nocturnal and riotous procession of half drunken and frolicsome fellows who after supper parade through the streets with torches and music in honor of Bacchus or some other deity, and sing and play before houses of male and female friends; hence used generally of feasts and drinking parties that are protracted till late at night and indulge in revelry.

The ESV and LSV use “orgies” here. Christians certainly have no business partaking in riots or street demonstrations that are so popular today, especially among certain liberal racial groups and instigated by rabble-rousers.

13f **“chambering”** Strong’s #2845 *koitê*; a place for laying down, resting, sleeping, of adultery, cohabitation, whether lawful or unlawful, sexual intercourse. It is used only here in the New Testament.

The ESV and LSV use “sexual immorality”. “Although ‘chambering’ is formed from the noun ‘chamber’, it means sexual indulgence or lewdness.”²⁴⁵ The word is related to the English “bedchamber”, showing that “chambering” has something to do with sexual sins in the bedroom.

13g **“wantonness”** Strong’s #766 *aselgeia*; unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence. “The word is from the Middle English ‘wantowen’ literally meaning ‘untrained’, as it is from ‘wan’ ‘lacking’ and ‘town’, ‘to train’. Thus, ‘wanton’ originally meant undisciplined, untrained, uneducated or unruly. It later came to mean malicious, reckless, merciless or unprovoked; extravagant or excessive, also lewd or lascivious.”²⁴⁶ The ESV and LSV use “sensuality”.

13h **“strife”** There was no good reason for the ESV and LSV to change “strife and envying” to “quarrelling and jealousy”. Everyone knows what “strife” and “envying” is. The ESV might be excused for updating “chambering” and “wantonness” but they went too far with these last two words.

114. Put On The Lord Jesus Christ 13:14

13:14^a But put ye on^{bc-aorist middle imperative} the Lord Jesus Christ, and make^{imperative} not provision^d for the flesh,^e to fulfill the lusts^e thereof.

245 Laurence Vance, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*, page 63.

246 Laurence Vance, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*, page 370.

14a This is a verse listed by O. Talmadge Spence in his *Quest For Christian Purity* that he lists as a “guiding verse” for that quest. This is a verse that deals with some aspect of the Christian’s growth and pursuit of God.

14b **“put ye on”** As one would put on a clean, fresh garment. Christ is not only our food and our life, but is also our dress.

14c The believer’s dress casts every other into the shade. It is:

1. Costly- cost the King of glory His life- Philippians 2:6-8
2. Comfortable- fills the soul with peace and joy- Romans 15:13
3. Complete- leaves no part of the body or soul exposed- Colossians 2:10
4. Comely- in the eyes of God, men and angels- Ezekiel 16:14
5. Glorious- the image of Christ- 2 Corinthians 3:18
6. Durable- never wears out or waxes old- Hebrews 13:8
7. Divine- Jehovah our Righteousness- Jeremiah 23:6.”²⁴⁷

14d **“make no provision”** Give it no quarter, nor give it any opportunity to manifest itself, even for a minute.

The Geneva Bible renders this as “give no thought to the flesh” which is also good, but the Authorized Version’s use of “no provision” is sharper as it has the idea of not giving the flesh (old nature) any supplies or provisions- starve it!

14e The Geneva Bible has a weaker reading of “take no thought for the flesh”. The reading “make no provision” is better as it has the idea of giving nothing to the old nature that would encourage it or assist it in exerting its lusts. Even the ESV uses “provision” here.

14f **“lusts”** All the flesh has are lusts and none of them are good. They are all hurtful and damnable. Most of what the flesh wants is based on lusts. The idea of “lust” is a very strong and driving desire to have something that is forbidden to it. Thus, most lusts are sinful and motivated to do nothing more than to fulfill the appetites of the old man and our fallen nature.

Spiritual Applications, Romans Chapter 13

I expanded my notes on the section about the Christian’s obligation to the government in 2020 during the Covid lockdowns, when the government started expanding its authority through “mandates”. When churches were starting to be harassed, the question came up regarding just how far the State could go before the churches should resist. I was reminded just how many times in Scripture and in church history that believers resisted and outright disobeyed the government. Most Christians have the idea that the Church has to obey every law and dictate handed down and they always chirp “Romans 13! Romans 13!” These people who always default to “Romans 13!” show that they have not really studied the issue or examined all the verses. The history of the Baptist people would make a good study of these principles as well as a study of the Scottish Covenanters.

²⁴⁷ Thomas Robinson, *Studies in Romans: Expository and Homiletical Commentary*, volume 2, page 225.

Romans Chapter 14

115. The Weaker Brother 14:1-9

The companion section to this is found in 1 Corinthians 8, which especially deals with the food issue, which was a major one in Corinth.

14:1 Him that is weak^{present active participle} in the faith^{ab} receive^{c-imperative} ye, but not to doubtful disputations.^{de}

1a The "weaker brother" ("**weak in the faith**") is a man who is not well-grounded in truth or doctrine. He is not very advanced or mature or settled in the faith and in his walk with God. Naturally, he is more likely to be "knocked off his pins" by a doctrinal issue or a false teacher.

The weak Christian is:

1. Not firmly settled
2. Not fully enlightened
3. Not far advanced
4. Not very mature

This term was often applied to Jewish converts to Christianity who, due to their legalistic upbringing, would have had trouble in this area, especially with regards to foods and the observance of certain "holy" days. It is a somewhat pejorative title. But we should not automatically assume that all weaker brothers were Jewish, and all stronger brothers were Gentile, for the Gentile believers certainly had their problems and offenses.

1b "**The faith**" the Biblical faith that is, the only one that is true for it is the only one sent down and endorsed by God.

1c "**receive**" Admit to fellowship, both personally and into the fellowship of the local congregation.

1d The "**doubtful disputation**" is that problem that is staggering the weaker brother. There is usually no real problem with doctrine unless it involves a weaker brother who gets suckered into some unimportant doctrinal or practical controversy, thus causing division in the church. These "doubtful disputations" usually get started when a young Christian gets carried away with some new wind of doctrine. Because it sounds good, he picks it up. He may not be mature enough in the Book to be able to check the issue out on his own. Examples are the problems young Christians may have concerning Sabbath-keeping, Freemasonry, Bible versions, television and television preachers, eating meat, shopping on Sunday and so on.

"Many new converts in Paul's day were converted out of paganism that had been practiced by their forefathers for many years. Many of them were saved without knowing anything whatsoever about Christianity. During Paul's day converts came from ex-idolaters, ascetics, legalists, and Judaism. The new converts are to be received without **doubtful disputations**; that is, "judging unmercifully," or "for purposes of debate. (John Gregson)."

"**disputation**" The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles have this as not troubling his conscience. The other versions have the idea of not starting controversies being involved in bringing this brother into the church.

1e "Of course, you will never make it through the Christian life without offending someone. The goal is to let the offence come from doing what God wants you to do, the way He wants you to do it, when He wants you to do it. Avoid offending others through your sin and willfulness. If you have a doubt about what you do, here are some basic rules by which to judge your actions that are questionable:

1. Does it please God? If it can't pass that criteria, it can't pass anything.
 2. Would I like to have the Lord find me doing it when He returns?
 3. Can I ask God's blessings on it? Those three tests are the tests that deal with God. If something can't pass those tests, then it isn't right. The next two rules have to do with those around you.
 4. Would it cause a weak Christian to stumble?
 5. Would it cause an unsaved person to reject the Gospel?
- Those are five good tests for judging a thing."²⁴⁸

14:2^a For one believeth^{present} that he may eat^{aorist infinitive} all things:^{bc} another, who is weak,^{present active participle} eateth^{present} herbs.^d

2a Paul gives an example of one of these "unimportant" doctrinal problems that plague weaker Christians: "Should a Christian eat meat or be a vegetarian?" Paul calls the "herb eater" the weaker one in this case for he feels himself to be under the bondage of some unwritten scriptural command that he should not eat meat. He doesn't know about (or ignores) Genesis 9:3 ("**Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.**") Leviticus 11 or Luke 24:42,43 (where the Lord ate fish, "**And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them.**").

The issue here was also "Should Christians eat meat offered to idols?" (1 Corinthians 8). Meat was offered to idols in the pagan temples. The priests could not eat all of it so it was sold in the marketplace. Christians shopping in the marketplace had no way of knowing what meat had come from the temple and what hadn't. The stronger Christians didn't care where the meat came from and ate it anyway, giving God thanks for a good meal (1 Corinthians 8:4 "**As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.**"). The weaker Christian, ignorant of that principle (1 Corinthians 8:7 "**Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.**"), didn't eat any meat- just to be safe from eating heathen meat. He would worry himself to death over the issue. He also would be offended by the "stronger brother" eating what he did. Paul says that each side is not to judge the other in cases like this. If the weaker brother feels more "spiritual" in not eating meat, let him at it and don't condemn him. The weaker man should not condemn the meat eater for not accepting his code of conduct in the matter just because the meat-eater doesn't believe the same way.

2b "**may eat all things**" Without respect to:

1. The Mosaic/ceremonial distinction of meats- Leviticus 11
2. Where the meat came from- 1 Corinthians 10:25,28 "**Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake...But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof:**"

²⁴⁸ Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer's Commentary on Romans*, page 544.

2c Paul does not condemn the man who believes he may eat all things since the ceremonial law was fulfilled in Christ, thus freeing the Jewish believer from observing it, and because it was never given to the Gentiles and is thus, not binding on them. Many Christians may not choose to eat some meats for health reasons, or simply because they do not like meat, and there is no problem with that. But to refuse meat for a theological reason has little Scriptural support and probably shows an ignorance of dispensational distinctives, in that the Mosaic dietary laws are not binding of Gentiles and were fulfilled by Christ on the cross. A practicing Jew will still want to observe the dietary laws, but the Gentile has no Scriptural reason to do so.

2d **“herbs”** Could Paul have had in mind any certain party or sect of “militant vegetarians” in Rome?

This verse does not place vegetarianism or any form of asceticism in a very good light, for by definition of this verse, these people are spiritually weak. Vegetarianism for health's sake or because one simply doesn't like meat is not condemned. Placing a spiritual reason behind vegetarianism is condemned. Many New Agers and other spiritualists and nature-worshippers are guilty of this and thus are deemed to be spiritually weaker than a Christian who is strong enough to eat meat. This also includes the Christian ascetics who were popular in the early church times up to the Reformation, who would move into the desert and eat bugs and twigs in an effort to “purify” their bodies and soul.

14:3 Let not him that eateth^{present active participle} **despise**^{a--imperative} **him that eateth**^{present active participle} **not;**^{present active participle} **and let not him which eateth not judge**^{imperative} **him that eateth;**^{present active participle} **for God hath received**^{aorist middle} **him.**^b

3a **“despise”** We have no license to look down on our brother in this fashion for any reason. Strong's #1848 exoutheneō; to make of no account, despise utterly, to throw out as nothing.

3b The thing eaten might be condemned but not the person eating it, since nothing that enters a man from without can defile him- including the eating of “unclean meats” (Matthew 15:11,20 **“Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man...These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.”**).

14:4 Who art thou that judgest^{a-present active participle} **another man's servant? to his own master he standeth**^{present} **or falleth.**^{b-present} **Yea, he shall be holden up:**^{future passive} **for God is**^{present} **able to make him stand.**^{cd-aorist infinitive}

4a **“Who art thou that judgest”** This is the language of rebuke, aimed at the weaker brother. Who do you think you are, imagining that you are qualified or spiritual enough to judge a brother in this situation? Do you think you are the Holy Spirit? And would you be willing to submit yourself to a similar judgment on that same basis on which you are judging?

4b **“to his own master he standeth or falleth”** God does the judging of Christians, not “the brethren”. And the man doing the judging is not the “master” of the brother he is judging. God is his master, so leave that judgment to God. One servant should not be judging another servant. Only masters judge servants.

4c **"God is able to make him stand"** Someone else (God) is holding him up- he does hold himself up by the power of his beliefs, spirituality or convictions.

4d Principle: If a doctrinal issue arises that falls into one of two categories:

1. Does not affect any "major" doctrine (salvation, God/Trinity, Christ, Second Coming...)
2. Where the Scripture gives no clear revelation. Don't judge your brother over it. Your "preference" in such a matter is not a sufficient basis for judgment.. If that Christian is in the wrong over a matter, the Lord will straighten him out- that's His job, not yours. A Christian may render a judgment if the issue is clearly dealt with in Scripture and if the position of the weaker brother is clearly wrong (For example, denying the Trinity or that Sunday-worship is the mark of the beast"). We are forbidden to judge issues that are not clearly dealt with in Scripture. Examples:
 1. Where did Cain get his wife?
 2. Who are the Sons of God in Genesis 6?
 3. Can a woman wear earrings and makeup?
 4. Shopping or going out to eat on Sunday
 5. Should a Christian watch television or go to the movies?

14:5 One man esteemeth^{present} one day above another: another esteemeth^{present} every day alike.^a Let every man be fully persuaded^{imperative} in his own mind.^b

5a The Jewish Christians were still observing the Sabbath while the Gentile believers were observing Sunday. Hence, there was contention in the churches. This could also apply to the Jewish feast days, which the Jewish Christians would still probably observe, but that would mean nothing to the Gentile believers. But doubtless some Gentiles were attracted to sabbath-keeping, as Seventh-Day Adventists and even the Seventh-Day Baptists (stronger in the American colonial days than today) are even today. Messianic groups still observe the Sabbath, even those that are populated by Gentile believers.

There are no "Christian holy days" besides Sunday for worship. Most denominations have numerous "holy days" for Christians to observe. The Roman Catholic church is full of them. Almost every day is some sort of feast day or Holy Day of Obligation. But Scripture knows nothing of this. Israel had their feasts which were obligatory, such as Passover or the Feast of Tabernacles, but none were carried over to the church. Paul is saying that if, for some reason, you want to observe the Sabbath or Advent or Catfish Saturday Night, you have liberty to do so and we cannot judge brethren who do. But they also have no spiritual basis to judge those of us who do not observe such days. The most obvious example is Christmas. Do you observe "Christ Mass"? Do you believe it to be Romanist and pagan in origin? Then ignore it and go to work on December 25. But other Christians have no real problem with it and can observe it with a clear conscience without any compromise, so there is no real basis to judge them.

5b **"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind "** You should have a rational, reasonable and Scriptural basis for everything you believe and for every conviction you hold.

14:6 He that regardeth^{a-present active participle} the day, regardeth^{a-present} it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not^{a-present active participle} the day, to the Lord he doth not regard^{present} it. He that eateth,^{present active participle} eateth^{present} to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks,^{present} and he that eateth not^{present active participle} to the Lord he eateth^{present}

not, and giveth God thanks^{bc-present}

6a “**regardeth**” Strong’s #5426 *phroneô*; to have understanding, be wise, to feel, to think, to have an opinion of one’s self, think of one’s self, to be modest, not let one’s opinion (though just) of himself exceed the bounds of modesty, to be of the same mind i.e. agreed together, cherish the same views, be harmonious, to seek one’s interest or advantage, to be of one’s party, side with him (in public affairs).

6b The issue here is two-fold:

1. Should I worship on Saturday or Sunday? There is no direct command that Christians must worship on Sunday. We do have the example of Sunday worship of Acts 20:7 but that’s about it. If he wants to worship on Saturday, let him (he sets a bad example in so doing for he is gravitating Judaism, but that’s his business- and liberty.)

2. Should I observe Easter, Christmas, Groundhog Day...? Some Christians like to celebrate Easter and Christmas while others denounce it as pagan holidays. The Bible does not come right out and forbid such activity (although it does discourage it)

A. Pagan background of Christmas

B. Easter- Acts 12:4 and its association with Herod. Easter is NOT the same as “Resurrection Sunday!”

6c Some versions push the last part of the verse into verse 7.

14:7^a For none of us liveth^{present} **to himself, and no man dieth**^{present} **to himself.**^b

7a The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles have different verse numbers in verses 6-8.

7b Since we are bought with a price, our lives (and deaths) are not our own but we belong to the Lord.

14:8 For whether we live,^{present active subjunctive} **we live**^{present} **unto the Lord; and whether we die,**^{present active subjunctive} **we die**^{present active subjunctive} **unto the Lord: whether we live**^{present} **therefore, or die,**^{present active subjunctive} **we are**^{present} **the Lord's.**^a

8a Since we do not live or die to ourselves but rather to the Lord, and since we are the Lord's, all such activity must be judged on the basis of "What does the Lord think about this?" and "How will this affect my testimony?" Our actions and attitudes will influence others (especially weaker Christians, Romans 14:7) and that must also be taken into consideration (Romans 14:15,16,21). God must be consulted first on these things since it is He who will ultimately judge us for what we decide. Our "brethren" may condemn us for certain actions, but they are not the ones we will be standing before at the Judgment Seat.

14:9 For to this end Christ both died,^{ao} **and,**^{ao} **rose,**^{ao} **and revived,**^{ao} **that he might be Lord**^{ao} **both of the dead and living.**^{b-}
present active participle

9a “**rose and revived**” A double-barreled reference to the resurrection, where two witnesses are given.

9b If the "weaker brother" is truly saved, he is still the Lord's, regardless of what we might judge about him. He is the Lord's (Romans 14:8b,9), not ours. He is not ours to judge. We didn't die for him and we didn't rise from the dead for his justification, so he is not ours to judge.

116. The Bema Seat of Christ 14:10-12

14:10 But why dost thou judge^{present} thy brother?^a or why dost thou set at naught^{present} thy brother? for we shall all stand before^{future middle} the judgment seat of Christ.^{bcd}

10a Paul asks why we are even judging our brother in the first place. Why do we waste time judging others when we should be worried about the fact that we ourselves will be judged by God. We (Christians) shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. This is not the Great White Throne Judgment of Revelation 20 since Paul is addressing and dealing with saints, not sinners.

10b **"judgment seat"** Strong's #968 bêma; a step, pace, the space which a foot covers, a raised place mounted by steps, the official seat of a judge. Herod built a structure resembling a throne at Caesarea, from which he viewed the games and made speeches to the people.

10c Facts about the Judgment/Bema Seat

1. All Christians will stand there, Romans 14:10. It is a universal judgment that no Christian can avoid.
2. Every knee shall bow, Romans 14:11. All will give the Lord the honor and reverence due Him and honor him as their Judge!
3. Every tongue shall confess to God, Romans 14:11. Confess what? Our stewardship as Christians
4. Works will be examined upon the basis of the holiness of God. Good works shall endure, rejected works shall be burned.
 - A. 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 **"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."**
5. Rewards will be given out here.
 - A. 1 Corinthians 3:14 **"If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward."**
 - B. These rewards will involve our status in the Millennial Kingdom and in the eternal state.
6. Many will suffer loss here.
 - A. 1 Corinthians 3:15 **"If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire"**

B. They will still be saved, as though by fire, but will have little to show for a reward of a life of Christian service.

i. 1 Corinthians 3:16 **"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"**

7. It is also called the Day of (Jesus) Christ.

A. Philippians 1:6 **"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:"**

B. Philippians 2:16 **"Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain"**

C. 2 Thessalonians 2:2 **"That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand."**

8. The **terror of the Lord** is associated with it.

A. 2 Corinthians 5:11 **"Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences."**

9. Takes place immediately after the rapture

A. Revelation 4:1-3 **"After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald."**

10d AV

ESV

LSV

10 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the **judgment seat of Christ**.

10 Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God;

10 But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you view your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.

Some commentators and modern versions change this to "Judgment Seat of God". The manuscript evidence supports "Christ". Besides, Christ is the One Who will be doing the judging of His saints, so theologically, "Christ" is also correct.

14:11 For it is written,^{a-perfect passive} **As I^b live,**^{present} **saith**^{present} **the Lord, every knee shall bow**^{c-future} **to me, and every tongue shall confess**^{d-future middle} **to God.**

11a **"For it is written"** Greek perfect tense- it has been written and remains written, not to be changed or altered. It is a completed action with continuous results or the continuance of an act completed in the past. The components are always a past action and continuous results. References to the Scriptures like this are often presented in the perfect tense. "The just shall live by faith" is one of those unalterable truths of Christianity. This perfect tense in reference to New Testament references to Old Testament texts is used 62 times in the New Testament, 16 times in Romans (1:17; 2:24; 3:4,10; 4:17; 8:36; 9:13,33; 10:15; 11:8,26; 12:19; 14:11; 15:3,9,21). This usage of the perfect is a strong argument for the verbal and plenary preservation of the Scripture, as the written Old Testament word stands forever and continues

to.

11b Emphatic.

11c **“every knee shall bow”** See Isaiah 45:23 (**“I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.”**), at both the Bema Seat (context) and further extended, at the Great White Throne Judgment of Revelation 20.

11d The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles have the idea of making an acknowledgment to God.

14:12 So then every one of us shall give^{future} account of himself to God.^{abc}

12a **“shall give account of himself”** Account not of our brother but of ourselves.

12b Account of what? Again, our stewardship as Christians. Not of sin, for that has been paid for at Calvary by the blood of Christ. Rather, we will be judged by how we worked for God as well as our motivations. This account is described in 1 Corinthians 3:12-15 as God examines the foundation on which we built our lives as Christians.

1. Gold, silver, precious stones

A. 1 Corinthians 3:12 **“Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble”**

B. These are Christ-honoring works done with the motivation to honor and glorify God.

2. Wood, hay, stubble, 1 Corinthians 3:12.

A. Works for Christ done for the wrong motivations and for the wrong reasons.

3. All of our work for Christ will be tested by fire (made manifest, shown openly as to what sort it is 1 Corinthians 3:13). The gold, silver and precious stone works will survive survives this furnace will the basis or foundation for our heavenly reward (if we have any left at all!) (1 Corinthians 3:14,15). With all this in mind, we should be concentrating on our own spiritual condition and be preparing for our own judgment instead of nitpicking over our brother's faults.

12c We give account of ourselves **“to God”**. Since we do this at the **“judgment seat of Christ”** in Romans 14:12, this is another proof that Jesus is God. The modern versions that use “God” for “Christ” in Romans 14:12 are making an attack on the doctrine that Jesus Christ is God.

117. Dealing With The Weaker Brother 14:13-21

Section 117 There are three exhortations in this section:

1. Consider the weaker brother, Romans 14:13-15

2. Take account of the effect of such controversies on the testimony of the church, Romans 14:16-18

3. Edify each other, Romans 14:19-21

14:13 Let us not therefore judge^{aorist subjunctive used as an imperative} one another any more:^a but judge^{aorist imperative} this rather,^b that no man put^{infinitive} a stumblingblock^c or an occasion to fall^d in his brother's way.

13a **“Let us not therefore judge one another any more”** There was obviously too much of this going on in the church- just like today. It is not a profitable exercise and it helps no one nor does it edify the church or glorify God, so there is no good reason to continue in it.

13b **“judge this rather”** If you insist on judging, here is something worth your judgment! Instead of judging our brother's faults ourselves, we should rather be concerned that we are not our brother's problem! Am I putting stumblingblocks before my brother in my pride?

13c **“stumblingblock”** Strong's #4348 proskomma; a stumbling block, an obstacle in the way which if one strikes his foot against he stumbles or falls, that over which a soul stumbles, by which is caused to sin

13d **“occasion to fall”** Strong's #4625 skandalon; the movable stick or trigger of a trap, a trap stick, any impediment placed in the way and causing one to stumble or fall, (a stumbling block, occasion of stumbling), a rock which is a cause of stumbling, any person or thing by which one is (entrapped) drawn into error or sin.

14:14 I know,^{present} **and am persuaded**^{a-perfect passive} **by the Lord Jesus,**^b **that there is nothing unclean of itself:**^{cd} **but to him that esteemeth**^{present middle/passive participle} **any thing to be unclean, to him**^e **it is unclean.**

14a The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles have the idea of being “certified”, another way of saying that Paul was “persuaded”.

14b This was not Paul's own opinion but he said **“I am persuaded by the Lord Jesus...”** It is a triple affirmation:

1. I know
2. I am persuaded
- 3...by the Lord Jesus Christ

14c **“there is nothing unclean of itself”** Paul seems to be taking the side of the Stronger Brother here and numbers himself with the strong, which he also does in Romans 14:20.

14d Paul says there is **nothing unclean in itself** (Romans 14:14,20), but only that we judge as unclean. By saying that something that the weaker brother is doing is unclean when it really isn't is putting stumblingblocks in the path of the race he is trying to run.

Matthew 15:17-20 says that the things that go into a man (meats in this context) do not defile the man. The context is there is no food that is in of itself unclean, an obvious reference to the ceremonial Mosaic dietary laws (Leviticus 11) not being binding on a Christian. Oliver Greene once said “You can eat a turkey buzzard, as long as you gave God thanks for it!” But the principle here is that if you're offended by me eating that turkey buzzard, I won't eat it as long as you're around.

14e Emphatic.

14:15^a But if thy brother be grieved^{present middle} **with thy meat, now walkest thou not**^{present} **charitably. Destroy**^{imperative} **not him**^b **with thy meat, for whom Christ**

died. ^{aorist}

15a We could also be putting stumblingblocks in our brother's path by creating situations in which he might be offended. Example- my brother won't eat meat. That is his conviction (like Lester Roloff, who used to complain about "that dirty ol' hog meat!"). I invite him to my house for dinner and serve up pork chops, ham and steak. Instead of respecting his convictions and beliefs, I just placed him in a very difficult situation. His beliefs are not to blame but rather my thoughtlessness!

15b Emphatic.

14:16 Let not then your good^a be evil spoken of: ^{b-imperative}

16a The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles use "treasure" and the Geneva Bible has "commodity". They seem to understand the word in an economic way.

16b Don't allow your convictions to ruin another Christian simply because they don't share them. You are to judge other believers according to revealed and clear Biblical principles, not your convictions.

14:17 For the kingdom of God^a is^{present} not meat and drink;^b but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.^c

17a The "**Kingdom of God**" is the spiritual aspect of heaven (John 3) while the "Kingdom of Heaven" is the literal, earthly, political aspect of the government of God (entire book of Matthew).

17b The basis for the Kingdom of God is not **meat and drink** (or the carnal things of this life) but rather righteousness, joy and peace. What a man eats or drinks won't exclude him from heaven, but rather is he born again?

17c There are three elements of the spiritual aspect of God's kingdom:

1. **Righteousness**- imputed by Christ to us
2. **Peace**- with ourselves, our fellow brethren and with God
3. **Joy in the Holy Ghost**. There is something very wrong with a miserable Christian or a joyless Christian life. This joy is from the Holy Ghost and is from the Holy Ghost and is centered around the things of God and is based upon them. All born-again men who are a part of this spiritual kingdom partake of these benefits.

14:18 For he that in these things serveth^{present active participle} Christ is acceptable to God,^a and approved of men.^b

18a If he is "**acceptable to God**", then why not to the judging Christian?

18b "**approved of men**" Especially by good men and by spiritual men.

14:19 Let us therefore follow after^{present subjunctive active} **the things which make for peace,^a and things wherewith one may edify another.**

19a **“the things which make for peace”** This is “*irenics*”, which is the theological attempt to reconcile differing theological systems and interpretations. This is a very honorable heart and activity but very few take this hope up as their ministry. This peace does not come naturally but must be worked for, pursued and desired after to achieve. It will require the swallowing of theological and human pride, a genuine love for the brethren and truth, and a desire for the glory of God which would result from a more united front to the unsaved world.

14:20 For meat destroy^{present} **not the work of God.^a All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth**^{present active participle} **with offense.^b**

20a **“meat destroy not the work of God”** Eating ceremonially unclean foods does not cause a man to lose his salvation, lose his sanctification or to be disqualified from the ministry or to lose favor with God. Control your appetite for the spiritual welfare of your weaker brother! Don't let your appetite contribute to his spiritual problems.

20b **“it is evil for that man who eateth with offense”** The only time something “pure” (Romans 14:13,20) becomes “evil” is when it is eaten with offense, or eaten in order to offend a Christian who has a conviction against what you're eating.

14:21^a It is good neither to eat^{eat aorist infinitive} **flesh, nor to drink**^{drink aorist infinitive} **wine,^b nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth,**^{present} **or is offended,**^{present middle} **or is made weak.**^{cd-present}

21a This verse is a maxim for the strong.

21b **“eat flesh...drink wine”** These are two major points of contention for the weaker brother.

21c Principle: Don't make your brother stumble. If you want to eat something that he has a conviction about, don't do it (at least while he is around). The same principle can be applied to any other situation that may arise between two Christians. You need to make sure that in this issue, you are not wrong. Is what I'm doing sin? Is that why my brother is offended? If it is sin, I must stop it. If I am not sinning, then I need to accommodate my brother. The issue is also one of pride. Are you going to accommodate your weaker brother or are you going to insist he “shape up and fly right” and try to drag him up to your “level” spiritually?

21d AV

ESV

LSV

21 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

21 It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble.

21 It is good not to eat meat or to drink wine, or *to do anything* by which your brother stumbles.

The last five words of this verse are omitted in most modern versions.

118. Whatsoever Is Not Of Faith Is Of Sin 14:22,23

14:22 Hast^{present} thou^a faith?^b have^{imperative} it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth^{present active participle} not himself in that thing which he alloweth.^{c-present}

22a Emphatic.

22b AV	ESV	LSV
22 Hast thou faith? have <i>it</i> to thyself before God. Happy <i>is</i> he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.	22 The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves.	22 The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Blessed is he who does not judge himself in what he approves.

The ESV and LSV remove the question and makes it a statement.

22c If you are spiritual ("Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God"), don't flaunt it before your brother to make yourself look good or to down him. That is motivated not by your brother's best interests but by spiritual pride. Stop trying to impress everyone with your learning, where you went to school, or how high your standards and convictions are compared with your brethren. This is a high and a haughty attitude that irritates the Lord and men, edifies no one and sets you up for a major fall.

14:23 And he that doubteth^{present middle/passive participle} is damned^{present passive} if he eat,^{aorist} ^{subjunctive} because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever *is* not of faith *is*^{present} sin.^{ab}

23a The condemnation in eating or drinking comes when it is not done on a basis of faith but of accommodation or doubt. He does not eat or drink because he has a Biblical conviction that he may, but for some other reason that is not based on Scripture. He does not drink with a moral and spiritual certainty that he is right.

23b This goes in context with the Judgment Seat of Christ and how we will be judged according to our methods and motivations in our Christian lives and service. We will not be judged just on if we did something, but how we did it (whether we used Biblical methods and means or worldly ones) and why we did it- what our motivations were. A man may preach. Why does he preach? What is his motivation? Because momma and daddy want him to? Because others expect him to? Because it's an easy job? Then he will be damned (condemned) for it at the Judgment Seat because he did not do it of faith. He did not do it because God called him and he was serving God, but rather, for carnal reasons. The same could be said for missionaries, Sunday School teachers, deacons, etc. What about soulwinners? You claim you lead 5,000 souls to the Lord and baptized 2,500 of them? Why? What were your motivations for your "soulwinning?" To glorify Christ or self? Did you do it because you loved those souls or so that your pastor or other pastors wouldn't think ill of you, or to impress someone with your "zeal"? If your methods or motivations were anything but Godly or Biblical, you will be damned at the Judgment Seat for it- you will not be commended and you will receive no rewards for that service since you did do it "of faith".

Spiritual Applications, Romans 14

Do not let convictions become doctrines. Convictions are things or ideas we develop, usually based on a scriptural basis, that may not be entirely scriptural or that should be a basis for fellowship. An example is going out to eat in restaurants on Sunday. Some people have such a strong conviction that Sunday is some sort of a Christian sabbath that they believe that Christians should engage in no economic activity on Sunday, including shopping or buying gasoline. Other Christians, who are just as spiritual, see no problem with the activity. These differences of opinion are not to be used as a basis for fellowship. Weaker, less mature Christians will break fellowship with a Christian who has a television set. The weaker Christian may believe having a television set is sinful (while they may have a radio!) and will break fellowship with anyone who does not agree with their conviction. This is the “weaker brother” principle that Paul deals with in this chapter. Stronger Christians should accommodate the convictions of weaker brethren as much as they can. If the weaker brother thinks it is a sin to eat meat, then do not invite him to your house and serve him a steak. Respect his beliefs as much as you are able to without compromise. Sometimes this becomes very difficult if the weaker brother is belligerent about his convictions and if he publicly judges everyone according to his convictions. Then he becomes a proud and arrogant Pharisee, and attempts to deal with him or even to fellowship with him becomes very difficult, if not impossible.

Christian judging can be a tricky thing because we often do not have all the facts and we do not know the heart of the other person. Immature Christians are quick to jump to conclusions and to make dogmatic judgments. They are also quick to condemn, are harsh in their criticisms and are slow to forgive. More mature Christians are slower and more careful in their judgments because they take Paul’s warning in Galatians 6:1 seriously. They consider their own sins and weaknesses before passing judgments on the actions of others. They do not ignore these sins, they simply tread carefully, lest they make a wrong and hurtful judgment, and they tend to try to give the offending party the benefit of the doubt.

Romans Chapter 15

119. Bearing the Infirmities of the Weak 15:1-3

15:1 We then that are strong^a ought^{present} to bear^{present middle/passive participle} the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.^b

1a **"We then that are strong"** Paul classifies himself as a spiritually "stronger" brother in the context of Romans 14.

1b Seeking **to please ourselves** is selfish. The genuine Christian spirit is to think more highly of our brother than of ourselves and seek to serve and minister unto others rather than self.

15:2 Let every one of us please^{present imperative} his neighbor for his good to edification.^{ab}

2a We should do this not to make ourselves look good or to give us an excuse to show off spiritually, but for the good of our neighbor, whom we are supposed to love as we love ourselves.

2b This is not a contradiction with Galatians 1:10 (**"For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ"**), where Paul said he did not seek to please men. Naturally, there are two different contexts here. In Galatians 1, Paul is talking about preaching so as to please men instead of pleasing God, or preaching for approval, advancement, fame and/or money. Here in Romans 15, Paul is still talking about accommodating the "weaker brother" of Romans 14 and making sure we do not needlessly offend his over-sensitive conscience.

15:3 For even Christ pleased^{aorist} not himself:^a but, as it is written^{b-perfect passive} The reproaches of them that reproached^{present active participle} thee fell^{aorist} on me.^c

3a **Christ pleased not Himself** but concentrated His ministry toward others. He took the form of a servant and servants serve others, not themselves (Philippians 2:7 **"But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men"**). He sought to please the Father and to fulfill His will on the earth, not His own will. That attitude should be ours as well. Do you want to talk about bearing the burdens of the weaker brother? Christ did it during His earthly ministry as He trained twelve very weak men. And He does it with us on a constant basis, for how weak and easily offended are we!

There was a book published in 1970 by Gale Sayers, a running back for the Chicago Bears, entitled *I Am Third*. The idea was "God is first, my friends are second and I am third". That's a good attitude for the Christian to have, except it is not just "my friends" that are second but my neighbor, whether they are my friends or not.

This Biblical philosophy of humility is not popular today. Many people hold to the Objectivist philosophy of the atheist philosopher Ayn Rand. She taught the virtue of selfishness, where you should look out for yourself first and not worry about other people unless there was some profit in it for you to do so. "Me first, you next" is this philosophy and it is entirely unscriptural. There can be no such thing as a "Christian Objectivist"!

3b **"as it is written"** Greek perfect tense- it has been written and remains written, not to be changed or altered. It is a completed action with continuous results, or the continuance of an act completed in the past. The components are always a past action and continuous results. References to the Scriptures like this are often presented in the perfect tense. "The just shall live by faith" is one of those unalterable truths of Christianity. This perfect tense in reference to New Testament references to Old Testament texts is used 62 times in the New Testament, 16 times in Romans (1:17; 2:24; 3:4,10; 4:17; 8:36; 9:13,33; 10:15; 11:8,26; 12:19; 14:11; 15:3,9,21). This usage of the perfect is a strong argument for the verbal and plenary preservation of the Scripture, as the written Old Testament word stands forever and continues to.

3c The last part of the verse is quoted from Psalm 69:9,20. "He took the most trying place in the whole field of battle; he *stood* where the fray was hottest. He did not seek to be among his disciples as a king is in the midst of his troops, guarded and protected in the time of strife; but he exposed himself to the fiercest part of all the conflict. What Jesus did, that should we who are his followers do, no one of us considering himself, and his own interests, but all of us considering our brethren and the cause of Christ in general."²⁴⁹

120. The Purpose of the Old Testament 15:4

15:4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime^{a-aorist passive} were written^{aorist passive} for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have^{present subjunctive} hope.

4a **"whatsoever things were written aforetime"** A reference to the Old Testament as none of the New Testament may have yet been written. Paul says we are to study the Old Testament because the things that are contained in it were written for our learning. To neglect the study, preaching and teaching of the Old Testament is to disobey the verse. We need the Old Testament and we cannot understand or properly apply the New Testament without a proper understanding of the Old Testament.

These things in the Old Testament were **written for our learning**, for two main reasons:

1. To help us better understand the New Testament. You cannot understand the New Testament without a mastery of the Old Testament.
2. The Old Testament histories give us examples of how the saints of old handled the spiritual challenges and trials in their lives, how they met their own generations, and how God dealt with them.
3. The benefits of the study of Scripture (including the Old Testament, which is as much Scripture as is the New Testament) are hope through patience and comfort. Only the Bible can give both hope and comfort, as no other book can. This is what Paul means when he says **that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope**.

121. Unity Enjoined 15:5-12

15:5^a Now the God of patience and consolation grant^{aorist active optative} you to be likeminded^{b-present middle/passive participle} one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

²⁴⁹ Charles Spurgeon.

5a Two titles of God here:
1. God of patience
2. God of consolation
Also see Romans 15:13.

5b **“likeminded”** Unity of heart, doctrine and purpose are requirements for a successful church. God knows we will not agree on every single jot and tittle and there will always be some level of disagreements in a local church, but overall, we should be unified as to the great fundamental doctrines of the faith, our vision and how we do what we do in the church. This is repeated in Romans 15:6.

15:6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth^{ab} glorify^{present subjunctive} God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

6a **“one mind...one mouth”** as in Romans 15:5. This is divine unity of heart, mind, soul and purpose, that all genuine believers ought to have.

6b “People generally make one of two mistakes concerning Christian unity. First, that there must be absolute unanimity of opinion on all points of doctrine; and second, that there must be external unity of all so-called “Christian bodies.”

We have alluded to the second of these ideas as of Satanic origin, and deluded human consent. But now, as to the first, the desire of the apostle in verse 5, that the God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of the same mind one with another according to Christ Jesus does not have reference to opinions or views of doctrines, but does have reference to gracious dispositions of spirit; for God is not spoken of here as the God of wisdom and knowledge, but as the God of patience and of comfort. It is God's acting in these blessed graces toward the saints that will enable them to be “of one mind together according to Christ Jesus.”

When the Spirit of God is freely operating among a company of believers, the eyes of all of them, first, are toward Christ Jesus. They are thinking of Him, of His love, of His service, and of what will please Him. They are conscious of their blessed place in Him. Then follow, naturally, patient dealing with one another, comforting one another. Some of the company may know much more truth than others; many may hold varying judgments or opinions concerning particular matters. But this does not at all touch their unity--their conscious unity, in Christ; and it does not in the slightest degree hinder their being of one mind, and working together with one accord, and, in the vivid words of Scripture, be with one mind together according to Christ Jesus.

Rome has undertaken to compel unity in both these evil senses (for she knows not the blessed unity of the Spirit): and rivers of martyrs' blood have flowed because they dared to express an opinion contrary to the edicts of “the Church.” The doctrine, too, is constantly promulgated, that to be outside “Mother Church,” outside the fold of Rome, is to be without the pale of salvation!”²⁵⁰

15:7 Wherefore receive^{present middle imperative} ye one another, as Christ also received^{aorist middle} us to the glory of God.^a

7a This is a plea to receive each other in Christ, to accept each other's persons and ministries

250 William Newell, *Romans, Verse by Verse*.

in Christ and to acknowledge each other's role and position in the Body of Christ. We should be snobbish, elitist or practice a legalistic form of hyper-separation from someone simply because they don't do something exactly the way we do it or because they won't do something that we insist they do or because their doctrine does not line up exactly as ours. This is a non-Christian narrow-mindedness. When pastors do it, it is because they are proud, think too highly of themselves and are trying to build an ecclesiastic empire around themselves.

15:8 Now I say^{present} that Jesus Christ was^{perfect passive} a minister^a of the circumcision^b for the truth of God, to confirm^{aoirist infinitive} the promises *made* unto the fathers.^c

8a AV

ESV

LSV

8 Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises <i>made</i> unto the fathers:	8 For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs,	8 For I say that Christ has become a servant to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the promises <i>given</i> to the fathers,
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"minister" The ESV and LSV mistranslate this as "servant". "Minister" is the proper and better reading. A servant may serve but he does not necessarily minister.

8b "**minister of the circumcision**" The Lord's earthly ministry was to Israel (Matthew 10:6 "**But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**"; Matthew 15:24 "**But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**"). His ministry was also to fulfill the Scriptures that prophesied about Him (Matthew 5:17 "**Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.**"). Christ was always very concerned to fulfill prophesies about Him, even while He hung on the cross in His agony. Paul was primarily a minister to the "uncircumcision", or to the Gentiles, although he certainly never neglected any opportunity to witness to the Jews.

8c "**fathers**" The ESV has "patriarchs" which is longer and wordier and is another unnecessary change. The Authorized Version uses the shorter and easier-to-understand word when possible where the modern translations tend to use longer words that are harder to understand. This is an example of that practice. This is why the critical text translations have a higher readability than the Authorized Version in that it requires more education to read the modern translations than it does the Authorized Version.

15:9 And that the Gentiles might glorify^{aoirist infinitive} God for his mercy; as it is written,^{a-perfect passive} For this cause I will confess^{future middle} to thee among the Gentiles, and sing^{future} unto thy name.^b

9a "**as it is written**" Greek perfect tense- it has been written and remains written, not to be changed or altered. It is a completed action with continuous results, or the continuance of an act completed in the past. The components are always a past action and continuous results. References to the Scriptures like this are often presented in the perfect tense. "The just shall live by faith" is one of those unalterable truths of Christianity. This perfect tense in reference to New Testament references to Old Testament texts is used 62 times in the New Testament, 16

times in Romans (1:17; 2:24; 3:4,10; 4:17; 8:36; 9:13,33; 10:15; 11:8,26; 12:19; 14:11; 15:3,9,21). This usage of the perfect is a strong argument for the verbal and plenary preservation of the Scripture, as the written Old Testament word stands forever and continues to.

9b The last part of the verse is a quote from Psalm 18:49. We have been glorifying God better than Israel has been over these past 2,000 years!

15:10 And again he saith,^{present} **Rejoice,**^{aurist passive imperative} **ye Gentiles, with his people.**^a

10a This is from Deuteronomy 32:43. We may rejoice in the things of God right along with Israel, seeing that we are in the same Body now and are the objects of God's love and covenants.

15:11 And again, Praise the Lord, all ye^{present imperative} **Gentiles; and laud**^{aurist middle} **him, all ye people.**^a

11a It just had to be said again- repeated from Romans 15:10 and quoted from Psalm 117:1 because it bore repeating since the Gentiles have a reason and the authority to rejoice right along with Israel. This would presuppose that the Gentiles would have had no authority for such a rejoicing and little reason for such rejoicing before the death of Christ and the creation of the Church.

15:12 And again, Isaiah saith,^{a-present} **There shall be**^{future} **a root of Jesse,**^b **and he**^{present middle participle} **that shall rise**^{to reign}^{present middle/passive participle} **over the Gentiles;**^c **in him shall the Gentiles trust.**^{d-future}

12a Isaiah 11:10 "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious."

12b "root of Jesse" Christ.

AV	ESV	LSV
12 And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.	12 And again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles; in him will the Gentiles hope."	12 And again Isaiah says, "THERE SHALL COME THE ROOT OF JESSE, AND HE WHO ARISES TO RULE OVER THE GENTILES, IN HIM SHALL THE GENTILES HOPE."

12c "reign over the Gentiles" In the millennium. This reign does not happen during the "times of the Gentiles", which started with the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem. It is during this period where the Gentile nations are basically left to rule for themselves and over themselves. The ESV just has "rule the Gentiles" and "not rule over the Gentiles". The traditional rendering implies more of a forced rule over the Gentiles in the millennium, something the ESV misses by omitting the "over".

12d “in him shall the Gentiles trust” And the Gentiles have! From Acts 2 onward (and even before), multitudes of Gentiles have trusted in the name of Christ for salvation, which is something Israel has not done.

The ESV and LSV mistranslate “trust” into “hope”.

122. Paul's Prayer Request for the Roman Church I 15:13

15:13 Now the God of hope^a fill^{aorist active optative} you with all joy and peace in believing,^{present middle/passive participle} that ye may abound^{present middle/passive participle} in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.^b

13a A title for God here- **the God of hope**. He is the source and the object of our hope.

13b Paul's desire for the Roman Christians is that they would be:

1. Filled with all joy
2. Filled with peace
3. That they would abound in hope. Without hope, all is despair and there is no joy or peace. Joy, peace and hope all depend upon each other to exist.

123. Paul's Ministry Among the Romans 15:14-22

15:14 And I^a myself also am persuaded^{b-perfect passive} of you, my brethren, that ye also are^{present} full of goodness, filled^{c-perfect passive participle} with all knowledge, able^{present middle/passive participle} also to admonish^{present middle/passive participle} one another.^d

14a Emphatic.

14b The Tyndale and Coverdale Bibles use “certified”.

14c There is a lot of “filling: in verses 13,14,19,24 and 29 including being filled with:

1. Joy
2. Peace
3. Goodness
4. Knowledge
5. Fully preached the gospel (Romans 15:19)
6. Filled with your company (Romans 15:24)
7. The blessing of God (Romans 15:29)

14d Can we police ourselves and watch over each other in love and compassion? Are we mature enough and spiritual enough to do that?

15:15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written^{aorist} the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind,^{present active participle} because of the grace that is given^{aorist passive participle} to me of God,^a

15a Paul realizes he has written a strong letter but only because of the grace of God that was

given him. If Paul hadn't been an apostle, he probably wouldn't have been so bold with the Romans.

15:16 That I should be^{present infinitive} the minister^a of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles,^b ministering^{ac-present active participle} the gospel of God,^d that the offering up^e of the Gentiles might be^{aorist middle deponent subjunctive} acceptable, being sanctified^{perfect passive participle} by the Holy Ghost.

16a “minister” and “ministering” are different Greek words, used in verse 16:

1. “minister” Strong’s #3011 leitourgos; from laos (Strong’s #2992) people; and ergon (Strong’s #2041) work; public minister, a servant of the state, a minister, servant, one who works for the people. This can be used in a secular sense. Christ would minister both in a spiritual and secular manner to the Gentiles.
2. “ministering” Strong’s #2418 hierourgeō, from hieron (Strong’s #2411) temple and ergon ergon (Strong’s #2041) work; to minister in the manner of a priest, minister in priestly service, of those who defend the sanctity of the law by undergoing a violent death, of the preaching of the gospel. Used mainly in a religious sense. This word is used only here in the New Testament.

16b Paul saw his ministry as preparing the Gentiles as an offering that the Lord would find acceptable. Paul would take his work among the Gentiles and present it to God as an offering, hoping God would be pleased to accept it.

16c AV

ESV

LSV

16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.	16 to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.	16 for me to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, so that <i>my</i> offering of the Gentiles may become acceptable, having been sanctified by the Holy Spirit.
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“ministering” The ESV and LSV have “priestly service” and “minister as a priest” for “ministry” here.

16d The Tyndale Bible has “glad tidings of God”, defining the “gospel” here.

16e “offering up” Strong’s #4376 prosphora; the act of offering, a bringing to, that which is offered, a gift, a present. In the New Testament, used as a sacrifice, whether bloody or not: offering for sin, expiatory offering.

15:17 I have^{present} therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.^{ab}

17a If it pertains to God and is of God or for God, then man has no business to glory in it or to try to take the glory. There may be some secular instances where this may be permissible, but never in the spiritual realm. But a godly man will always hesitate to glory in anything, even if he

has any justification to do so.

17b AV

ESV

LSV

17 I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.	17 In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God.	17 Therefore in Christ Jesus I have reason for boasting in things pertaining to God.
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The ESV has Paul being “proud of his work for God” instead of “glorying through Jesus Christ”. The LSV is slightly better as it does not have Paul boasting in or about his work. The ESV is just horrible here. Paul took no human pride in his accomplishments but rather gave all the glory to God! This is a major error by the ESV.

15:18 For I will not dare^{future} to speak^{present middle/passive participle} of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought^{arist middle} by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,^a

18a This should be the proper policy for any preacher, lest we go beyond the revelation God has given us and start speculating and theorizing too wildly about things that God has shed no light on. This is a danger in preaching on prophecy, and prophecy preachers tend to go far beyond Biblical revelation in their speculations. A good preacher has to know when to stop and say “I don’t know. I am at my limit. From this point on, everything I say is pure speculation”. That way, the congregation will be warned that we have left the realm of revelation and have entered into speculation.

15:19 Through mighty signs^a and wonders,^b by the power of the Spirit of God;^{cde} so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum,^f I have fully preached^{perfect active infinitive} the gospel of Christ.^g

19a “**signs**” Strong’s # 4592 sêmeion; a sign, mark, token that by which a person or a thing is distinguished from others and is known, a sign, prodigy, portent, an unusual occurrence, transcending the common course of nature, of miracles and wonders by which God authenticates the men sent by him, or by which men prove that the cause they are pleading is God’s.

19b “**wonders**” Strong’s #5059 teras; a prodigy, portent. miracle

19c Paul’s ministry had been accompanied by apostolic signs and wonders by the power of the Spirit of God. This is the mark of an apostolic ministry, used to confirm the apostolic message in the absence of written revelation.

19d Paul’s miracles (recorded in Acts)

1. Causing a sorcerer to go blind, 13:11,12
2. Miracles in Iconium, 14:3,4
3. Healing a cripple in Lystra, 14:8-18
4. Casting out a devil in Philippi, 16:16-18
5. Healing and casting out devils in Ephesus, 19:11,12
6. Raising Eutychus, 20:9,10

7. Healings on Malta, 28:8,9

19e AV

ESV

LSV

19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

19 by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ;

19 in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so that from Jerusalem and all around as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

“spirit of God” "Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the SPIRIT OF GOD...I have fully preached the gospel of Christ." Textually speaking, this is a very interesting verse in that it reveals a great deal about the mindset of the men behind the multitude of conflicting modern versions. The reading of "the Spirit OF GOD" is that of the Majority of all texts, including Sinaiticus and P46, which is about 200 years older than Vaticanus. "Spirit of GOD" (pneumatou theou) is found in Tyndale Bible, Geneva Bible, Authorized Version, New King James Version, and Lamsa's translation of the Syriac Peshitta. The modern versions of the New Revised Standard Version, English Standard Version, International Standard Version, and the Holman Christian Standard all read "Spirit of GOD", just as the King James Bible. When Westcott and Hort first came out with their totally revised Greek text in the 1881 Revised Version, their text read: "power of the HOLY SPIRIT" (pneumatou hagiou) and so read the Revised Version of 1881, the American Standard Version of 1901, and the Revised Standard Version of 1952.

I have in my possession three different Nestle-Aland Greek texts, which is basically the Westcott-Hort text that underlies most modern versions since 1881. All three of these are different here in Romans 15:19. The one from 1934 (4th edition) says: HOLY Spirit. The one dated 1962 changed this to simply "the SPIRIT", thus omitting "Holy" and "God". This reading comes from only one manuscript and that is Vaticanus. The New American Standard Version and the New International Version both follow only one Greek manuscript here and read: "through the power of the SPIRIT".

Then sometime between the 1962 edition and the 1993 edition, the Nestle-Aland text changed for the third time and now reads: "the Spirit OF GOD", as has the King James Bible for almost 400 years now. We can clearly see here the constantly changing opinions of the noted scholars behind the modern versions.

Here is a brief chart showing the conflicting readings of just this one phrase.
 "power of the SPIRIT OF GOD" - AV, NKJV, NRSV, ESV, ISV, Holman Christian Standard Bible
 "power of the HOLY SPIRIT" - RV, ASV, RSV
 "power of the SPIRIT" - NASB, NIV, LSV.²⁵¹

19f **“from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum”** Paul lists his "parish"- Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum (a province on the Adriatic Sea, including the modern-day Balkans).

19g **“fully preached”** Paul was confident that he had fully preached the gospel of Christ, that he had left nothing out and had delivered the entire message faithfully. Paul really couldn't have done any better than he had already done in his ministry. Would to God every preacher could say this with a clear conscience, to fulfill the will of God for the life fully and perfectly, without remorse! I know I cannot make any such claim about my ministry since I started preaching in November of 1985!

Paul is not preaching some Charismatic “full gospel” when he says this, as that gospel (if

²⁵¹ Will Kinney.

it is one at all) would doctrinally apply to the Tribulation period, with it tongues and healing. That is not the gospel for this church age. The Charismatics have the right gospel but the wrong dispensation. This is the problem with most false doctrinal systems- a failure to discern and apply dispensational distinctives.

Some of the English translations are weak on this. The Tyndale, Coverdale, Geneva Bibles and the ESV all omit any idea of preaching. Only the Bishops Bible, LSV and the Authorized Version retain it.

15:20 Yea, so have I strived^{a-present middle/passive participle} to preach^{present middle infinitive} the gospel, not where Christ was named,^{aorist passive} lest I should build^{present subjunctive} upon another man's foundation:^{bc}

20a **“strived”** Strong’s # 5389 philotimeomai; from philos (Strong’s #5384) friend; and time (Strong’s #5092) value, honor; to be fond of honor, to be actuated by love of honor, to be ambitious, to strive earnestly, make it one’s aim. What unsaved men will do for personal glory and honor (like an Olympic athlete training or a man starting his own business so he can make a million dollars), is how Paul worked at preaching the gospel, for the glory of God and not his own glory.

The other traditional translations all use the very clunky “I have enforced myself” for “I have strived”. The Authorized Version is the first to use “strived” as it is clearer than “enforced”. I makes it sound like Paul preached as he did through his own willpower but the word may have an archaic meaning that the Authorized Version translators thought it best to update. The ESV reads similarly to the other translations as it being an object of Paul’s ambition. But it was not merely Paul’s “ambition”, he actually did it and worked hard at it, labored intently at it and realized that he was still not finished. In that context, the Authorized Version rendering is the best and clearest one.

20b Paul had strived to be a church-planting/missionary pioneer- to preach where the gospel had never gone. Paul did not want to build upon another man's foundation but desired to lay his own foundation. Tradition says Jude preached in Idumea, Syria and Mesopotamia; Mark in Egypt and parts of Africa; Matthias in Ethiopia; Matthew in Parthia; Peter in Pontus, Galatia and Asia; Philip and Andrew in Scythia; Bartholomew in Asia; Thomas in Persia and India. Paul tried to avoid these areas and concentrate on areas in Europe. There was enough of the world that had not been evangelized for Paul to concentrate in without overlapping the work of the other apostles.

This is not my ministry. I have no problem building on another man’s foundation. I tried a “pioneer” ministry in 1989-1990 in planting Queen Anne’s Baptist Church in Centreville, Maryland. But my next two churches in Mebane, North Carolina (1993-1994) and in Smyrna, Delaware (1998-present) were built on foundations laid by other men. Other men started those churches, not me. There is nothing wrong with that. Not every preacher is called to start a local church from scratch for that is a daunting task, even under the best of situations.

20c This again shows that Peter was not in Rome at this time, or at any time. Peter was certainly not ruling as the first “bishop of Rome” this time. If Peter was in Rome at this time, Paul would not have come to Rome as he had no interest in building on another man’s foundation. If Peter had been building in Rome over the last 15 years, Paul would not have wanted to come to Rome and compete with another apostle. If Peter was in Rome, was he not building any sort of spiritual foundation or preaching Christ? If Peter was in Rome, why did Paul think he had to go there?

15:21 But as it is written,^{a-perfect passive} **To whom he was not spoken**^{aorist passive} **of,**
they shall see:^{future middle} **and they that have not heard**^{perfect} **shall understand.**^{bcd-future}

21a **“as it is written”** Greek perfect tense, it has been written and remains written, not to be changed or altered. It is a completed action with continuous results or the continuance of an act completed in the past. The components are always a past action and continuous results. References to the Scriptures like this are often presented in the perfect tense. "The just shall live by faith" is one of those unalterable truths of Christianity. This perfect tense in reference to New Testament references to Old Testament texts is used 62 times in the New Testament, 16 times in Romans (1:17; 2:24; 3:4,10; 4:17; 8:36; 9:13,33; 10:15; 11:8,26; 12:19; 14:11; 15:3,9,21). This usage of the perfect is a strong argument for the verbal and plenary preservation of the Scripture, as the written Old Testament word stands forever and continues to.

21b **“To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand”** This involved Paul's going into Gentile areas that had no knowledge of the gospel. This verse is a quote from Isaiah 52:15.

21c Summary- Christ's Ministry Romans 15:1-13

1. It is a sacrificial ministry Romans 15:3
2. It is a suffering ministry Romans 15:3
3. It is a scriptural ministry Romans 15:4
4. It is a sharing ministry Romans 15:7
5. It is a sure ministry Romans 15:8
6. It is a spirited ministry Romans 15:9,10

21d Paul's Ministry Romans 15:14-21

1. His ministry Romans 15:16
2. His miracles Romans 15:19
3. His mission field Romans 15:19
4. His methodology Romans 15:20
5. His motivation Romans 15:21

15:22 For which cause also I have been much hindered^{a-imperfect passive} **from coming aorist infinitive to you.**^{bc}

22a The other traditional translations all use “let”, which the Authorized Version also occasionally uses, but it used “hindered” here.

22b Also see Romans 1:13. Just what this hindrance was we are not told, but no doubt, Satan was doing what he could to throw stumbling-blocks in Paul's path every chance he got. Paul wanted to come to Rome and fully intended to but circumstances kept getting in the way. This happens all the time with busy men, especially preachers, although it frustrates everyone in the end. Eventually, Paul did get to Rome but not in the way he envisioned. Paul was not a slave to his plans but remained flexible and allowed the Holy Spirit to make any necessary changes as were needed. This is hard for a preacher, who often lives and dies by his date book.

22c “**much hindered**” is in the imperfect tense, showing an uncompleted, temporary action or condition. Satan had hindered Paul in the past, but he would not do so forever, and Paul saw Satan’s hindrance from his going to Rome as coming to an end. Had this been in the perfect tense, then Satan’s hindrance of Paul’s going to Jerusalem would have been permanent, final and irreversible, but thankfully, it was not!

123. Paul's Future Plans 15:23-29

15:23 But now having^{present active participle} no more place in these parts,^a and having^{present active participle} a great desire^b these many years to come^{aorist infinitive} unto you;

23a Paul’s ministry was finished in the area where he currently was and he was looking for new fields and opportunities for usefulness.

23b “**great desire**” Strong’s # 1974 *epithia*; longing. The *epi-* prefix makes the word an intensive. It is used only here in the New Testament.

15:24 Whosoever I take^{present middle/passive subjunctive} my journey into Spain,^a I will come^{future middle} to you: for I trust present to see^{aorist middle infinitive} you in my journey,^{present middle/passive participle} and to be brought^{aorist passive infinitive} on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled^{aorist passive subjunctive} with your company.

24a “**Spain**” After his first Roman imprisonment (after 1 Timothy), tradition says Paul got to preach as far as maybe the British Isles and Wales before being re-arrested. He says in 2 Timothy 4:7 that he finished his course so we assume he did get as far as Spain. Spain was just about as far west as you could go in the known world in Paul’s day. Once Paul got to Spain, he literally would have gone to the end of the known earth and would have preached the gospel in “the regions beyond” in the fullest sense of the word. The Welsh Baptists believe Paul made it as far as the British Isles as well. Paul did get to Rome but it was on a Roman prison ship instead of arriving in “first class”. If Paul had not gone to Jerusalem and been arrested as he was, no doubt he still would have gone to Rome, but as a free man instead of as a prisoner of Rome.

15:25 But now I go^{present middle subjunctive} unto Jerusalem to minister^{present active participle} unto the saints.^a

25a Paul did not want to go to Jerusalem to be ministered unto but to minister. Instead, he got arrested and almost killed.

15:26 For it hath pleased^{aorist infinitive} them of Macedonia and Achaia to make^{aorist middle} a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.^a

26a Before going to Rome, Paul was going to Jerusalem to minister unto the saints and to deliver a gift from the churches in Macedonia and Achaia to the poor saints in Jerusalem. The

Jerusalem church was probably under heavy Jewish persecution which was causing economic hardship to both the church and to its membership. Here is a good example of one church giving an offering to help the believers in another church. This does not violate or threaten the independency of these local congregations at all. I think Paul was looking for any excuse to go to Jerusalem to again preach to his countrymen, even if it meant delivering an offering. The debate is why Paul was even doing in Jerusalem in the first place, seeing he was the minister to the Gentiles. Was Paul out of the will of God by going to Jerusalem?

This is the same offering Paul refers to in 1 Corinthians 16:1-4 and 2 Corinthians 8,9.

15:27 It hath pleased^{aorist} them verily; and their debtors they are.^{present} For if the Gentiles have been made partakers^{aorist} of their spiritual things, their duty is^{present} also to minister^{aorist infinitive} unto them in carnal things.^a

27a The obligation that congregations have to provide for their ministers is given here. If a man of God ministers to you in spiritual things, then he has a right to expect some remuneration in return, to provide for his carnal (bodily- not a bad word in this context) needs, like food, clothing, housing. The labor is worthy of his hire and congregations do have the responsibility to do what they can for the support of their ministers. Woe to them the congregation that throws nickels at their pastor and then expects a dollar's worth of work!

15:28 When therefore I have performed^{aorist active participle} this, and have sealed^{aorist middle participle} to them this fruit, I will come^{future middle} by you into Spain.^a

28a We're not sure if Paul ever made it to Spain, but very reliable tradition has Paul making it to the British Isles, at least according to the Welsh Baptists.

"About fifty years before the birth of our Savior, the Romans invaded the British Isle, in the reign of the Welsh king, Cassibellanus; but having failed, in consequence of other and more important wars, to conquer the Welsh nation, made peace with them, and dwelt among them many years. During that period many of the Welsh soldiers joined the Roman army, and many families from Wales visited Rome; among whom there was a certain woman of the name of **Claudia**, who was married to a man named **Pudence**. At the same time, Paul was sent a prisoner to Rome, and preached there in his own hired house, by the space of two years, about the year of our Lord 63 [See Acts of the Apostles, 28:30]. Pudence and Claudia his wife, who belonged to Cesar's household, under the blessing of God on Paul's preaching, were brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and made a profession of the Christian religion [2 Timothy 4:21, Fox's *Acts and Monuments*, p. 137. See also Dr. Gill and Matthew Henry, on 2 Tim. 4:21. Godwin's *Catalogue*. Crosby's *History of the English Baptists*, preface to vol. 2. *Drych y prif oesoedd*, p. 179.]

"Whether any of the apostles ever preached in Britain cannot be proved, and though it is generally believed that Joseph of Arimathea was the first that preached the gospel in that part of the world, we must confess that we are not positive on that subject. The fact, we believe, is this: the Welsh lady, Claudia, and others, who were converted under Paul's ministry in Rome, carried the precious seed with them, and scattered it on the hills and valleys of Wales; and since that time, many thousands have reaped a most glorious harvest. They told their countrymen around, what a dear Savior they had found; they pointed to his redeeming blood, as the only way whereby they might come to God. The Welsh can truly say: if by the transgression of a woman sin came into the world, it was through the instrumentality of a woman, even painted Claudia, that the glorious news of the gospel reached their ears, and they felt it to be mighty through God, to pull down the strong holds of darkness.

“How rapidly did the mighty gospel of Christ fly abroad! The very year 63, when Paul, a prisoner, was preaching to a few individuals, in his own hired house in Rome, the seed sowed there is growing in the Isle of Britain. We have nothing of importance to communicate respecting the Welsh Baptists, from this period to the year 180, when two ministers by the names of **Faganus** and **Damicanus**, who were born in Wales, but were born again in Rome, and there becoming eminent ministers of the gospel, were sent from Rome to assist their brethren in Wales. [See Dr. Heylin’s *Cosmography*, lib. 1, p. 257. *Drych y prif oesoedd*, p. 190].”²⁵²

15:29 And I am sure^{a-perfect} that, when I come unto you,^{present middle/passive participle} I shall come^{future middle} in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel^b of Christ.^c

29a “**sure**” Paul uses the perfect tense here, as he now has no doubt that he will visit Rome, despite the attempts of Satan to hinder him.

29b AV	ESV	LSV
29 And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ .	29 I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.	29 I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

“**of the gospel**” is missing in most modern versions, including the ESV and LSV.

29c This was Paul’s desire- to be a blessing to the Roman church and to bring spiritual blessings with him. What other motivation should a preacher have, besides glorifying God?

124. Paul's Request For Prayers 15:30-33

15:30 Now I beseech^{present} you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together^{a-aorist middle infinitive} with me in your prayers to God for me;^b

30a Paul is always recruiting diligent and hard-working co-laborers!

30b “**strive together in your prayers**” Not just “pray” or “say your prayers” for Paul, but strive earnestly in your prayers on his behalf and for his ministry. A good ministry like Paul’s is worthy of Christians really putting some effort into our prayers regarding. Really, any ministry worth praying for is worth praying earnestly for.

This is also work. It is one form of labor to preach, visit, canvass, do the “hands on” labor of the ministry. It is also labor to pray in a similar manner. As the physical worker would be tired after his labor at the end of the day, so should the prayer warrior also be tired at the end of his prayer sessions, if he is “**striving**” in prayer.

15:31 That I may be delivered^{aorist passive subjunctive} from them that do not believe^{a-present active participle} in Judea;^b and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may

²⁵² From David Cloud’s Way of Life Literature website <http://www.wayoflife.org/fbns/early.htm>.

be^{*aorist middle deponent subjunctive*} **accepted of the saints;**^c

31a The Geneva Bible uses “disobedient”.

31b Paul realized the chance he was taking by going back to Jerusalem and the threat the Jews posed, so he asks for prayers that he would be safe and that God would deliver him from any harm they might do to him.

31c **“my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints”** But more importantly for Paul, than his own personal safety, would be that his trip to Jerusalem would be successful in the sense that the saints in Jerusalem would receive the gift he bore in the spirit that it was sent by the other churches that took up this collection.

15:32 That I may come^{*aorist active subjunctive*} **unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.**^{*a-aorist middle subjective*}

32a Paul got to Rome, which was the will of God, but the debate is how Paul got to Rome. Was the method of his travel to Rome in the will of God? Should he have gone to Jerusalem despite three warnings by the Holy Spirit not to go? Paul got to Rome but he didn't go first class- he got there soaking wet. I believe Paul had no business going to Jerusalem in Acts 21 as he was the Apostle to the Gentiles, but he let his burden interfere with the revealed will of God for him. God let him go and Paul still got to Rome and it still worked out alright in the end, but how much grief might Paul have avoided if he had just followed the Spirit's warnings and stayed away from Jerusalem?

15:33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.^a

33a This is Paul's first conclusion. More will follow in chapter 16 and he tacks on a lengthy post script. Like any preacher, Paul has a hard time concluding his message!

Spiritual Applications, Romans Chapter 15

We don't know much about Paul's activities between his imprisonments. He stated his intention to go to Spain. We don't know if he made it but there are reliable traditions among the Welsh that he made it to the British isles. Regardless, we see the gospel was widespread throughout Europe during the first century. We may have the idea that the gospel was somewhat limited in its geographic spread, known and preached only in a few limited areas during the first century. But the facts reveal that the gospel was being preached all over Europe and into northern Africa and the Middle East. The Scriptures were translated into Greek, Gothic, Syriac and Latin by the end of the first century, and this list may not be complete. The gospel is always in more places than we know, and believed by more people than we are aware of.

Romans Chapter 16

Notice throughout the entire chapter that Peter's name is not mentioned. Roman Catholic traditions state he was "reigning" as pope from A. D. 42-67 and thus should have been in Rome as Paul wrote. Why did then Paul not mention him unless Peter was not in Rome at the time of this writing. Imagine a missionary writing a letter to a local church and greeting 30 members by name and yet not mentioning the pastor! Any Bible believing Christian will reject the assertion by the Church of Rome that Peter was ever in Rome at all, and we certainly reject any idea that he was ruling as the first "pope" during these years. Scripture lends absolutely no support for this false teaching.

125. Commendation to Phebe 16:1,2

16:1 I commend^{present} unto you Phebe^a our sister, which is^{present participle} a servant^{bc} of the church which is at Cenchrea:^d

1a **Phebe** She may have been the messenger who delivered this letter to the Roman church.

1b **"servant"** The Greek word is diakonon, meaning deacon, but Phebe was not a deacon since no woman can be a deacon (1 Timothy 3:11). She did a deacon's work without being a deacon. Wives of deacons do deacon's work right along with their husband without the women actually being in the office. Phebe (and others like her) may have supervised the baptism of female converts and maybe teaching them. They fulfilled an important function in the early church, such as instructing the women and girls. Visiting and ministering to the women in the congregation, maintaining order in the "women's side" of the congregation during services, among other duties. Most of them were widows and elderly married ladies. The "Apostolic Constitutions" lays down the requirements and duties for the ordination of "deaconesses" but since the Constitutions is not inspired scripture but merely an early church manual, it's recognition of "deaconesses" is not binding or inspired. Why run to some early church document to overturn inspired Scripture?

Strong's #1249 diakonos; one who executes the commands of another, a servant, attendant, minister, a deacon, one who, by virtue of the office assigned to him by the church, cares for the poor and has charge of and distributes the money collected for their use, a waiter, one who serves food and drink.

1c **"Deaconesses in the Apostolical Church.** — The title (usually rendered *minister* or "deacon") is found in Romans 16:1, associated with a female name (Phoebe) and this has led to the conclusion that there existed in the apostolic age, as there undoubtedly did a little later (Pliny, *Ep. ad Traj.*), an order of women bearing that title, and exercising, in relation to their own sex, functions which were analogous to those of the deacons. On this hypothesis it has been inferred that the women mentioned in Romans 16:6, 12, belonged to such an order (Herzog, *Real-Encykl.* 3, 368). The rules given as to the conduct of women in 1 Timothy 3:11; Titus 2:3, have in like manner been referred to them (Chrysostom, Theophylact, Hammond, Wiesinger, *ad loc.*). Some writers (e.g. Rothe; Schaff, *Apost. Church*, § 135) suppose that the "widows" of 1 Timothy 5:3-10, were deaconesses. Herzog, on the other hand, holds that the passages in Timothy cannot be applied to "deaconesses." Dr. W. L. Alexander, in Kitto's *Cyclopaedia* (s.v.), maintains that Romans 16:1, does not show that Phoebe held any official relation to the Church; for all that appears, she may have been simply the doorkeeper or cleaner of the place of worship. Plumptre (in Smith's *Dictionary*, s.v. says that "it seems hardly doubtful that writers

have transferred to the earliest age of the Church the organization of a later. It was of course natural that the example recorded in Luke 8:2, 3, should be followed by others, even when the Lord was no longer with his disciples. The new life which pervaded the whole Christian society (Acts 2:44, 45; 4:31, 32) would lead women as well as men to devote themselves to labors of love. The strong feeling that the true service of Christians, consisted in 'visiting the fatherless and the widow,' would make this the special duty of those who were best fitted to undertake it. The social relations of the sexes in the cities of the empire (comp. Grot. on Romans 16:1) would make it fitting that the agency of women should be employed largely in the direct personal application of Christian truth (Titus 2:3, 4), possibly in the preparation of female catechumens. Even the later organization implies the previous existence of the germs from which it was developed. It may be questioned, however, whether the passages referred to imply a recognized body bearing a distinct name. The 'widows' of 1 Timothy 5:3-10, were clearly, so far as the rule of ver. 9 was acted on, women who were no longer able to discharge the active duties of life, and were therefore maintained by the Church, that they might pass their remaining days in 'prayers night and day.' The conditions of ver. 10 may, however, imply that those only who had been previously active in ministering to the brethren were entitled to such a maintenance."

II. *Deaconesses in the early Church.* — The Apostolical Constitutions distinguish "deaconesses" from "widows" and "virgins," and prescribe their duties. A form of ordination for deaconesses is also given (bk. 8, c. 19, 20), in which the bishop prays as follows: "Eternal God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Creator of man and of woman; thou who didst fill with thy Spirit Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, and Huldah; thou who didst vouchsafe to a woman the birth of thy only-begotten Son; thou who didst, in the tabernacle and in the Temple, place female keepers of thy holy gates look down now also upon this thy handmaid, and bestow on her the Holy Ghost, that she may worthily perform the work committed to her, to thy honor, and the glory of Christ" (Chase, *Constitutions of the Apostles*, p. 225 (N. Y. 1848). In the Eastern Church the notices of deaconesses in the first three centuries are few and slight, although Origen († 253) speaks of the ministry of women in the Church as both existing and necessary. In the Western Church the notices are fuller and more clear. Pliny the younger (about A.D. 104) appears to refer to deaconesses in his letter to Trajan, in speaking of the question by torture of "two maids who were called ministers". Tertullian (220) speaks of them often, and prescribes their qualifications. In the fourth and fifth centuries all the leading Eastern fathers refer to deaconesses; e.g. Basil († 379), Gregory of Nyssa († 396), Chrysostom († 407), Theodoret († 457), Sozomen (cir. 439). Theodoret (*Eccl. Hist.* 3, 14, p. 652) calls Publia, who lived at the time of Julian. Sozomen (4. 14, 59) speaks of a certain deaconess who had been excluded Church fellowship because of having broken her vows. It was a rule that the deaconesses must be widows. Tertullian (*ad Uxorem*, 1:7; *de Virgin. veland.* c. 9) says, "The discipline of the Church and apostolic usage forbid that any widow be elected unless she have married but one husband." Virgins, it is true, were sometimes admitted, but this was the exception. The widows must have borne children. This rule arose from the belief that no person but a mother can possess those sympathizing affections which ought to animate the deaconess in her duties. The early Church was very strict in enforcing the rule which prohibits the election of any to be deaconesses who had been twice married, though lawfully and successively, to two husbands, one after the other. Tertullian says, "The apostle requires them to be (*universae*) the wives of one man" (*ad Uxorem*, 4:7). Others, however, give the words of the apostle another meaning. They suppose him to exclude those widows who, having divorced themselves from their former husbands, had married again (see Suicer, *Thesaurus*, 1:864, 867). It is disputed whether they were ordained by the imposition of hands, but the Apostolical Constitutions (8. 19) declare that such was the case, and the 15th canon of Chalcedon (sess. 15) forbids the ordination of a deaconess under forty. Still they were not consecrated to any ministerial function; so Tertullian, *De Praescript*, 41, "Let no woman speak in the Church, nor teach, nor baptize, nor offer" (that is, administer the Eucharist), "nor

arrogate to herself any manly function, lest two should claim the lot of the priestly office." Their duties were to take care of the sick and poor, and to minister to martyrs and confessors in prison, to whom they could more easily gain access than the deacons; to instruct catechumens, and to assist at the baptism of women; to exercise a general oversight over the female members of the Church, and this not only in public, but in private, making occasional reports to the bishops and presbyters. How long this office continued is uncertain. It was not, however, discontinued everywhere at once. It was first abrogated in France by the Council of Orange, A.D. 441. It continued in the Roman Church for some time after this, and gradually disappeared; but in the Greek Church it did not become extinct till the twelfth century.

III. *In the modern Church.* — It must ever be regarded as a misfortune in the Reformation that this early office was not restored. "Is it not remarkable that the office, which is so well adapted to the matronly character of the female sex, should be wholly excluded from our list of assistants in the Church?" (Robinson's *Calmet*, p. 336.) Its restoration was, however; seriously thought of, and even attempted, in the Reformed Church at an early period of the Reformation, namely, when the Netherland "churches under the Cross" were founded through the synod at Wesel and Emden, 1568 and 1571. Its restoration in the Reformed Church was urged on the synod the more as it already actually existed at the time among the Bohemian Brethren and the strict Anabaptists, at least in the large congregations. The subject came before the synod from the congregation at Wesel through the Classis of Wesel. That congregation had decided to restore it had, in fact, restored it in its bosom, and now asked the indicators for approval. The Classis of Wesel, before which the matter first came, decided that the restoration of the office as inaugurated in the congregation at Wesel shall stand till the final decision is had, but deferred final action until their next meeting. In 1580 the same classis decided that "if this office, which had fallen into disuse and decay in the Church of God, is again to be restored, then it shall be established in the same form, and with the same character belonging to it, as described by the apostle Paul, namely, widows, and not married women, shall be chosen for that purpose." Classis favored the restoration of the office, and referred the matter to the next provincial synod, that by its authority it might also be restored in other localities. Accordingly, by the proper course, it came before the General Synod at Middleburg in 1581, which synod unfortunately decided against it "on account of various inconveniences which might arise out of it; but in times of pestilence, and other sicknesses, when any service is required among sick women which would be indelicate to deacons, they ought to attend to this through their wives, or others, whose services it may be proper to engage" (Max Gobel, *Geschichte des christ. Lebens in der rhein-westphälischen Ev. Kirche*, 1:413, 414). Here this interesting movement seems to have ended, as there is no further historical trace of it. The Puritans in England in the sixteenth century recognized deaconesses, as appears by the following extract from the "Conclusions" drawn up by Cartwright and Travers, and given by Neal, *History of the Puritans*, vol. 1, ch. 6: "Touching deacons of both sorts, viz. men and women, the Church shall be admonished what is required by the apostle, and that they are not to choose men of custom or course for their riches, but for their faith, zeal, and integrity; and that the Church is to pray in the mean time to be so directed that they may choose them that are meet. Let the names of those that are thus chosen be published by the next Lord's day, and after that their duties to the Church, and the Church's duty towards them; then let them be received into their office with the general prayers of the whole Church."

There is a movement going on at present for the introduction of the order of deaconesses into the Church of England" (Chambers, *Encyclopedia*, s.v.). Its prospects of success would be greater but for the monastic tendencies of the so-called "sisterhoods" organized by the Puseyites, e.g. Miss Sellon's. This subject has been lately revived in the German Reformed Church in America. On Christmas, 1866, Hon. J. Dixon Roman, of Hagerstown, Maryland, gave to the congregation of that city \$5000, and with it sent a proposition to the Consistory that, according to his wish, "three ladies of the congregation shall

be chosen and ordained to the order of deaconesses in this congregation, with absolute control of the income of said fund, for the purses and duties as practiced in the early days of the Church." This, and the action of Lebanon Classis, which in 1867 requests the synod "to take into consideration the propriety of restoring the apostolic office of deaconesses," will bring this plain question before the highest judicatory of the Church.

In the Roman Catholic Church there are various sisterhoods answering in some degree to the ancient order of deaconesses, but without ordination; such as the Beguines, the Gray Sisters, the Sisters of Charity, Sisters of Mercy, etc.

The first modern reorganization of the work of deaconesses on a large scale was begun in 1835 by pastor Fliedner, of Kaiserswerth, Prussia. An infirmary was established, to be served by Christian women, unmarried or widows. He required of all who would become deaconesses that they should be "willing" to 'be servants of Christ alone, to devote their time and faculties entirely and exclusively to him, and not to look fore ward for pecuniary emoluments or honors of the World, nor yet to merit salvation by their works, but to do the work of charity and self-denial out of gratitude to him who hath redeemed their souls, and merited their salvation. After their probationary period they engage themselves to serve at least five years. But even during this time they are allowed to leave if nearer personal or family duties should make them wish for a change of situation." Many women obeyed the call, the infirmary grew rapidly into importance, and auxiliary societies were formed throughout Prussia. The institution spread into other parts of Europe, and there are now orphan homes and hospitals under its charge at Berlin, Dresden, Frankfort, Worms, Cologne, Elberfeld, London, and other places. The mother institution has (1) a seminary to train young females as teachers for infant and other schools; (2) an orphan asylum; (3) a training-school of nurses, and for visitors to prisons, etc. The whole expense is borne by voluntary subscriptions. A branch was established at Pittsburgh, Pa., in 1849 by pastor Fliedner in person. Mrs. Fry, after a visit to Kaiserswerth, established in Bishopsgate, London, an "Institution for Nursing Sisters," which still exists. A deaconesses' institute was organized at Paris in 1851, and others followed in France and Switzerland (see Ludlow's article in the *Edinburgh Review*, 1848, p. 223). In 1888 the Genesis Conference of the M. E. Church created the order of Deaconesses, who now have "homes" in the larger cities of the U. S.²⁵³

This above article only shows that the apostasy on this issue crept into the primitive church early and it never was purged, but is maintained to the current day in some denominations. It provides no scriptural or doctrinal justification for an office of "deaconness". Simply because it was done and has some historical basis does not make the practice Biblical.

It is true that Paul does give the qualifications for the wives of deacons in 1 Timothy 3:11 but he never talks about the wives of bishops. The deacon was expected to have a wife who would be an asset and a helper to him in his ministry of service to the church. Thus, a deacon's wife would do the work of a deacon along with her husband without ever being an "official" deacon. But the wife of a bishop/pastor cannot help her husband in the ministry in the same way since women are not allowed to have ruling authority in the church. That is why "husband-wife" pastoral teams, which are so common in Charismatic churches, is unbiblical. But it is biblical to see women doing the work of a deacon, just as long as they are not formally ordained to the office. A woman can certainly do the work of a deacon without actually being a deacon, as can anyone. But it is distressing to see people justify some office of deaconess for no other reason than the early church may have practiced it, in clear disregard to the clear teaching of Scripture on the matter. Where church history or the church "fathers" or some church or denomination says or does one thing, and the Word of God says something else, you ALWAYS take the Scripture and discard everything and everyone else.

253 McClintock and Strong's Cyclopedia.

1d **Cenchrea** was a port east of Corinth. It had 2 harbors as it was located on an isthmus. "Paul sailed from Cenchreae (Acts 18:18) on his return to Syria from his second missionary journey; and when he wrote his epistle to the Romans, in the course of the third journey, an organized church seems to have been formed here (Romans 16:1), probably a branch of that in Corinth. The first bishop of this church is said (*Apost. Const.* 7:46) to have been named Lucius, and to have been appointed by Paul. The distance of Cenchreae from Corinth was seventy stadia, or about nine miles."²⁵⁴

16:2 That ye receive^{aorist middle subjunctive} her in the Lord,^a as becometh saints,^b and that ye assist^{aorist active subjunctive} her in whatsoever business she hath need^{present} of you: for she^c hath been^{aorist passive deponent} a succourer^d of many, and of myself also.^e

2a This is Paul's personal recommendation to the Roman church to receive Phebe and the letter she carried. But it does make you wonder why a woman was chosen to carry an epistle halfway across the Roman Empire. Yes, travel on Roman roads was relatively safe but one would think such a task would have been given to a man or a team of men.

2b **"as becometh saints"** Receive Phebe as a Christian would, with full hospitality and acknowledgement of her ministry.

2c Emphatic.

2d **AV**

ESV

LSV

2 That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.	2 that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well.	2 that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well.
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"succourer" A helper, especially one who helps strangers. The Geneva Bible has this as rendering hospitality. The ESV and LSV have a very inferior reading "she has been a patron". What exactly is that supposed to be and how is that supposed to be clearer than the Authorized Version readings?

Middle English speakers adapted "socour," the predecessor of "succor," from the Anglo-French sucors, which essentially had the same meaning as our modern word. "Sucors," in turn, derives from the Medieval Latin succursus, itself a derivative of the Latin verb succurrere, meaning "to run to the rescue or "to bring aid." That Latin verb was a composite of the prefix sub- (meaning "from below") and the verb "currere" (meaning "to run"). "Succor" has been saving the day in English (as both a noun and a verb) since at least the 13th century.

2e **"and myself also"** Phebe was not only a helper to the church but she obviously also worked with Paul and assisted him in his ministry.

²⁵⁴ McClintock and Strong's Cyclopedia.

126. Various Greetings 16:3-16

16:3 Greet^{aorist middle imperative} **Priscilla and Aquila**^{ab} **my helpers in Christ Jesus:**^c

3a Notice that Paul does not simply say "Greet everyone at Rome" in lumping everyone together, but names specific names and greets them as individuals. We need to adopt a similar attitude in praying for churches or praying for missionaries. We shouldn't pray "Bless all the missionaries" but list them, single them out and pray for the individually and specifically. This also applies in praying for the individual members in our church as well as in other churches.

3b "**Priscilla and Aquila**" We read of this husband-and-wife team working closely with Paul in Acts 18. They are also mentioned in 1 Corinthians 16:19 and 2 Timothy 4:19. "This pious couple had been obliged to leave Rome, on the edict of Claudius, see Acts 18:2 and take refuge in Greece. It is likely that they returned to Rome at the death of Claudius, or whenever the decree was annulled."²⁵⁵

It is interesting that Priscilla, the wife, is mentioned by Paul before Aquila, her husband.

3c "**my helpers in Christ Jesus**" Not only helpers in the ministry but they were also tentmakers and Paul no doubt worked with them in his "secular vocation" (Acts 18:3). Today, we would call Paul "bi-vocational", as many pastors are.

16:4 Who have for my life laid down^{aorist} **their own necks:**^a **unto whom not only I**^b **give thanks,**^{present} **but also all the churches of the Gentiles.**^c

4a They had "**laid down their own necks**" for Paul's sake, probably risking their own lives to both help and protect Paul. But just what they did on Paul's behalf is not recorded in Acts. Paul then mentions that all the churches were grateful for their unselfish service, not just him.

4b Emphatic.

4c Consider the following information that the New Testament provides about this husband and wife team:

1. Aquila and Priscilla were **industrious**. They were diligent and occupied in a good way. They were tentmakers (Acts 18:2-3) and they worked hard at their trade. We should note that Aquila was a Jew (Acts 18:2). Although Paul first met these two believers in Corinth, they were originally from Rome (Acts 18:2).
2. They were **hospitable** (Acts 18:3). They opened their home to the Apostle Paul who was also a tentmaker. They opened not only their home to Paul but also their hearts.
3. They were **teachable**. Aquila and Priscilla were probably converted under Paul's ministry. We have no record that they were saved prior to their encounter with Paul in Acts 18. They not only received Paul into their home but they received Paul's Christ into their hearts. With all eagerness and readiness of mind they received with joy the message that Paul preached. They were disciples of Paul. They absorbed the doctrine and the truth which the Apostle gave them.
4. They were **Bible orientated** (Acts 18:24-26). Not only were they teachable, but they were able to teach others also. Apollos was a great preacher who was mighty in the Old Testament Scriptures, but he was ignorant of the essential facts of the gospel (and weak

²⁵⁵ Adam Clarke.

on dispensational truth). With a godly concern for this man, Aquila and Priscilla took Apollos aside and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. It is possible that Priscilla may have taken the lead in this session with Apollos because in some manuscripts her name is mentioned first. Some wives are better able to explain Bible doctrine than their husbands, and in the right setting it is permissible for the woman to take the lead (though certainly not in a local church teaching situation). She knew God's Word and she was able to deal with these kinds of doctrinal matters. This husband and wife team was well grounded in God's truth and able to minister that truth to others.

5. They were **local church orientated** (1 Corinthians 16:19 and Romans 16:5). Both of these passages speak of the church that was in their house (both in Rome and in Ephesus). Their home was a place for believers to assemble—a place for worship, singing, preaching, fellowship, prayer and the breaking of bread.
6. They were a **husband and wife team**. Priscilla's name is mentioned six times in the New Testament and in each place her husband's name is found as well. She is always mentioned with him. This implies harmony in their relationship and unity of purpose. She worked with her husband, not against him. They functioned as a team in the service of the King.
7. They were **rightly orientated to God's gifted man** (Romans 16:3). In this verse they are described as Paul's "fellow workers". As Priscilla and Aquila came to Paul's mind, he was able to say, "These dear believers are my helpers, my fellow workers." Can your Pastor say the same thing about you? What kind of relationship do you have with God's gifted man (compare Ephesians 4:11)? Are you a help or a hindrance to your Pastor? Are you working with him or against him? Does he see you as a plus or a minus? Paul certainly considered this husband and wife team to be a great PLUS to his ministry and service for Christ.
8. They were **courageous** (Romans 16:4). Apparently Paul owed his life to this brave husband-wife team. We are not told any of the details, but they somehow risked and hazarded their lives for Paul's sake. They laid down their own necks in order to save Paul's life, and as a result Paul and all the churches of the Gentiles owed them a debt of thanks. Paul was God's special apostle to the Gentiles, and if Priscilla and Aquila had not intervened, Paul might have died and his ministry to the Gentiles might have come to an abrupt end. Priscilla and Aquila manifested a genuine love for Paul in the spirit of 1 John 3:16. Whatever incident Paul was referring to, it is possible that Priscilla played the more significant role in light of the fact that her name is mentioned first in Romans 16:3. This brings us to our next point.
9. Priscilla was **submissive** but she was not **suppressed**. In the six New Testament references where this husband/wife team is mentioned, Priscilla's name comes first in three of these places. Since it was customary to list the husband's name first, why did Priscilla's name come first in these passages? We are not given the reason why and we can only surmise. Was it because she was the more energetic of the two? Did she have the stronger character? Did she have superior zeal? Did she have superior ability in certain areas? Did she play a more significant role in risking her own neck for Paul's sake?²⁵⁶

16:5 Likewise greet the church^a that is in their house.^b Salute^{aorist middle imperative} my wellbeloved^c Epaenetus, who is^{present} the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ .^d

²⁵⁶ <http://www.middletownbiblechurch.org/romans/romans16.htm>

5a The Tyndale Bible only has “company” here, instead of either “congregation” or “church”.

5b AV

ESV

LSV

5 Likewise *greet* the church that is in their house. Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.

5 Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia.

5 Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia.

The ESV and LSV only have him as “beloved”, not “wellbeloved”. Both versions demote Epaenetus!

5c “**church that is in their house**” There were no dedicated church buildings until Constantine's time, so Christians met in member's houses. Many modern churches were started like this. If there is no good church in your area, there is nothing wrong with starting a church in your house.

House churches are also mentioned I

1. 1 Corinthians 16:19 “**The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.**”
2. Colossians 4:15 “**Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house.**”
3. Philemon 2 “**And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house:**”

5d Epaenetus was the first convert to Christianity from that area (which included Corinth).

16:6 Greet^{aorist middle imperative} **Mary,^a who bestowed much labor^{aorist} on us.**

6a This is the only Hebrew name on this list. Which Mary this was is impossible to tell. This is a very common name so there many women who bore this name. Of course, there is no reason to think this was the mother of Jesus. What business would she have in Rome?

Mary was a very common name in New Testament times and several different women had this name:

1. Mary the mother of Christ (Matthew 1:16).
2. Mary Magdalene (Luke 8:2).
3. Mary the mother of John Mark (Acts 12:12).
4. Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha (Luke 10:42).
5. Mary the *wife* of Clopas (John 19:25; note that in this verse three of the four women mentioned had the name "Mary").
6. Mary who is mentioned in Romans 16:6.

6b “**much labor**” Labor to the point of exhaustion.

16:7 Salute^{aorist middle imperative} **Andronicus and Junia,^a my kinsmen,^b and my fellowprisoners,^c who are^{present} of note among the apostles,^d who also were^{perfect} in Christ before me.^e**

7a **“Andronicus and Junia”** Probably a husband and wife. Paul calls them his fellow-countrymen, showing that Andronicus and Junia were from the same general area as Paul was.

7b The pre-Authorized Version translations all render this, interestingly, as “cousins”.

7c **“fellowprisoners”** Were they imprisoned with Paul? Or does this mean that they, too, did time in jail for preaching the gospel, as Paul had?

7d The Coverdale Bible renders this as “ancient Apostles”, probably in the sense that they were apostles before Paul was. The Tyndale and Bishops Bibles has this as “well taken”.

7e **“in Christ before me”** Saved before Paul was.

16:8 Greet^{aorist middle imperative} Amplias my beloved in the Lord.^a

8a He was a man highly thought of by Paul.

16:9 Salute^{aorist middle imperative} Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.

16:10 Salute^{aorist middle imperative} Apelles approved in Christ. Salute^{aorist middle imperative} them which are of Aristobulus’ household.

16:11 Salute^{aorist middle imperative} Herodion^a my kinsman. Greet^{aorist middle imperative} them that be of the household^b of Narcissus,^c which are^{present participle} in the Lord.

11a **“Herodion”** Was he related to the infamous Herod family?

11b AV	ESV	LSV
11 Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the <i>household</i> of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.	11 Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus.	11 Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus.

“Household” is superior to the ESV’s and LSV’s “family” as there have been members of the household of Narcissus who were not family related, such as servants or even friends.

11c This poor brother does not have a good name as we get our word “narcissistic” from this. A man can’t help what kind of name he was given by his parents but we can be sure that if he was a true saint of God, he was not living up to the meaning of his name!

16:12 Salute^{aorist middle imperative} Tryphena and Tryphosa,^a who labor^{b-present active participle} in the Lord. Salute^{aorist middle imperative} the beloved Persis, which labored^{b-aorist} much in the Lord.

12a **“Tryphena and Tryphosa”** Could they have been twin sisters? The Tyndale and Geneva Bibles add the fact that they were women.

12b **“who labor”** Labor to the point of exhaustion.

16:13 Salute^{aoist middle imperative} **Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.**^a

13a **“his mother and mine”** Not Paul's maternal mother for we have no record that Rufus and Paul were brothers. Rufus' mother and Paul were very close as were Paul and Rufus and Paul considered her his mother as well. We know nothing of Paul's mother, but Rufus' mother must have been quite a Christian lady to Paul to “adopt” her as his own.

16:14 Salute^{aoist middle imperative} **Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas,^a Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them.**^b

14a Not necessarily (and probably not) the author of the “Shepherd of Hermes”.

14b Several Greek names appear in this chapter, even in Rome, the seat of Latin. It shows that the Gospel was very successful with the “cultured” and “intellectuals” in Rome- the Greeks.

16:15 Salute^{aoist middle imperative} **Philologus, and Julia,^a Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.**

15a **“Philologus, and Julia”** Possibly another husband and wife.

16:16 Salute^{aoist middle imperative} **one another with an holy kiss.**^a **The churches of Christ^b salute**^{present middle passive} **you.**

16a **“holy kiss”** This would be our equivalent of shaking hands although the French and some Arabs practice this.

16b **“The churches of Christ”** Campbellites (the various Church of Christ sects who follow the teachings of Alexander Campbell) cite this verse as justification for naming their churches as they do and claim this is the only true name for a New Testament church. However, they can't read English. Paul mentions the **“churches of Christ”** (plural) nor “the” or “a” “Church (singular) of Christ”. Paul is not referencing a denominational organization but is referencing all churches that are true to the faith. The Church of Christ would not qualify as such a church as Paul wouldn't have anything to do with their baptismal regeneration heresy or their odd mix of Romanist exclusivism and Baptist-brideism (or Landmarkism).

If the Campbellites (Church of Christ sect) continue to insist they are the One True Church That Christ Founded merely because they hijacked this phrase before anyone else did, we ask them this question. The Bible also mentions the “Church of God” in Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 10:32; 11:22; 15:9; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Galatians 1:13 and 1 Timothy 3:5. Why wouldn't the Pentecostal denomination “Church of God” (and all of its various cognates, such as the “Church of God In Christ”) also have a claim to be The One True Church That Christ Founded because the name of their denomination is in the Bible? And wouldn't The Church of God denomination have a stronger claim to be The One True Church That Jesus Founded than the Church of Christ since the “church of God” is used 8 times in the New Testament but there is no mention of the “Church of Christ” and the “churches of Christ” is only used once? If so, the Campbellites had better change the name of their denomination as fast as they can!

127. A Concluding Exhortation to Unity 16:17-20

16:17 Now I beseech^{present} you, brethren, mark^{a-present infinitive} them which cause^{present}
active participle divisions^b and offences^c contrary to the doctrine which ye^d have
learned;^{e-aorist} and avoid^{f-aorist imperative} them.

17a Paul said to "mark them" that cause divisions and offences that are contrary to sound doctrine. Apostates and troublemakers are to be publicly identified and avoided. No fellowship is to be extended to them. False teachers are not to be listened to or heard or given an audience but are to be rebuked and avoided.

Titus 3:10 says that a heretic is to be rejected after two or three admonitions.

Matthew 18:15-17 says after two or three tries at bringing an erring back into right doctrine, he is to be shunned and is to be treated as a "heathen man and a publican".

1 Corinthians 5:9-11 commands us not to keep company with men who are causing such troubles

They are not to be coddled but rebuked. This rebuke is to condemn their false doctrine to discourage others from falling away into the same sin and to make the erring party ashamed enough (by his disfellowshipping) to repent and get right with God and the local church.

AV

ESV

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17 Now I beseech you, brethren, **mark them** which cause divisions and **offences** contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

17 I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them.

17 I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them.

The ESV and LSV drop the "mark them" and simply has "watch out" for them, removing the command to public identify these people.

17b "**divisions**" These doctrinal and practical divisions would intensify over time through early church history, making Rome the center of apostate Christianity.

17c "**offences**" The ESV has "create obstacles". An "obstacle" does not offend.

17d Emphatic.

17e What were these false teachers doing?

1. Causing divisions, Romans 16:17a
2. Teaching false doctrine, Romans 16:17b
3. Upsetting the faith of the saints, Romans 16:17c

17f "**avoid**" The Amish and Old-Order Mennonite groups (probably some German Brethren groups as well) take this very literally when they practice the "ban", where they totally shun a disciplined believer, will not acknowledge him and have no dealings with him whatsoever.

16:18 For they that are such serve^{present} not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly;^{ab} and by good words and fair speeches deceive^{present} the hearts of the simple.^c

18a Such men who do fall away are not serving God but rather their own **belly**. They love themselves and would do anything to feed their belly, even forsake the Lord. They are creatures of the flesh, not the spirit. This is the motivation of the false teachers and apostates- to fill their belly and to amass power and influence over the saints. See Philippians 3:19, **Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.**

18b The operations of these apostates:

1. **They use good words.** They can talk like Bible-believers and use all the right language yet not mean a word of it. They even present to be concerned for your welfare but they really only care for their own belly.

2. **They use fair speeches.** They can preach and preach well! They are like a Jesse Jackson or an Al Sharpton (or some other racist rabble-rouser) in their homiletics. Yet while they are entertaining to listen to, they are using their oratorical skills to poison you with their damnable doctrines. Neither Jackson nor Sharpton know enough Bible combined to teach a third grade Sunday School class (if they are even saved). Hitler excelled at this. Strong's #2129 eulogia; praise, laudation, panegyric: of Christ or God, fine discourse, polished language, in a bad sense, language artfully adapted to captivate the hearer: fair speaking, fine speeches.

3. In this way, they "**deceive the hearts of the simple**" as less-mature Christians are suckered into their errors and also fall away. For example, most converts to Mormonism and Jehovah Witnesses are backslidden/carnal Baptists who wouldn't know which end of a Bible to hold. These spiritual troublemakers prey on these simple Christians and lead them astray which is why strong Christians need the discernment to spot these heretics and the courage to rebuke them "come hell or high water"

18c "**the simple**" This has the idea of an innocent or inexperienced person, not a stupid one.

The Tyndale, Coverdale and Bishops Bibles all have "the innocent". That is not as good as "simple" or even "the naïve".

16:19 For your obedience is come abroad^{aorist middle} unto all men.^a I am glad^{present} therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have^{present} you wise unto that which is^{present infinitive} good, and simple concerning evil.^b

19a The Roman church had a good testimony among the other churches. The Tyndale has "your obedience extendeth to all men", missing the idea of the good reputation of the Roman Church abroad.

19b "**simple concerning evil** " Or be inexperienced and unfamiliar on how to do evil things. Be well-versed in that which is good and godly but be a simpleton and an idiot when it comes to the things that are evil or to doing evil. Be experienced with good but be totally untrained and unfamiliar with that which is evil or how to do evil.

16:20 And the God of peace^a shall bruise^{b-future} Satan under your feet shortly.^c The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

20a **“The God of peace”** “Who neither sends nor favors such disturbers of the tranquility of his Church (Adam Clarke).”

20b **“bruise”** This is a reference back to Genesis 3:15. This did not take place at Calvary for Paul, 30 years after the death of Christ, still speaks of this event as future. This will take place at the end of the Millennium after Satan's final rebellion against God when he will be defeated and cast into the lake of fire forever (Revelation 20:10).

AV	ESV	LSV
20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ <i>be</i> with you. Amen.	20 The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.	20 The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

The Authorized Version is the only translation that uses “bruise”. The other traditional text translations use “tread” and the ESV and LSV use “crush”. But when you bruise something, you injure it, not crush it.

20c **“Shortly”** How? Satan has been in business for at least 6000 years and is still going strong at the time of this writing. Satan’s ultimate defeat is still 1007 years away. To God, existing outside time, 1007 years means nothing, especially since a day with Him is as a thousand years. To man, Satan’s defeat will not happen “shortly” since we exist in and are bound to the dimension of time. Yet to God, this is nothing in terms of time.

This did not happen at the cross, since Paul is still referencing this event as being yet future.

16:21 Timotheus^a my workfellow, and Lucius,^b and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute^{present middle passive} you.

21a **“Timotheus”** The well-known Timothy.

21b **“Lucius”** Luke the Physician and companion of Paul who wrote his gospel and Acts?

16:22 I^a Tertius,^b who wrote^{aorist active participle} this epistle, salute^{aorist middle imperative} you in the Lord.

22a Emphatic.

22b Tertius, the one who penned the epistle, tacked on his greeting.

16:23 Gaius^a mine host, and of the whole church,^b saluteth^{aorist middle imperative} you. Erastus the chamberlain^c of the city saluteth^{aorist middle imperative} you, and Quartus a brother.

23a **“Gaius”** There is no way to tell if this is the Gaius of 3 John. The name is common enough, appearing in Acts 19:29; 20:4; 1 Corinthians 1:14 and 3 John 1.

23b **“of the whole church”** The Corinthian church was probably meeting in Gaius' house. The whole church (probably at Corinth) also sends greetings.

23c **“Erastus the chamberlain”** Paul even got one of the "town fathers" involved in sending these greetings! Erastus was saved, although we do not know if Paul had led him to the Lord.

Strong's #3623 oikonomos; from oikos (Strong's #3624) house(hold); and nomos (Strong's #3551) law; the manager of household or of household affairs, a steward, manager, superintendent (whether free-born or as was usually the case, a freed-man or a slave) to whom the head of the house or proprietor has entrusted the management of his affairs, the care of receipts and expenditures, and the duty of dealing out the proper portion to every servant and even to the children not yet of age, the manager of a farm or landed estate, an overseer, the superintendent of the city's finances, the treasurer of a city (or of treasurers of kings), the apostles and other Christian teachers and bishops and overseers The Geneva Bible has this as the “steward of the city” while the ESV uses “city treasurer”.

16:24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.^{abc}

24a This is Paul's standard apostolic conclusion, although he does not have such a lengthy and personable conclusion in any other of his recorded epistles.

24b “We have dropped, to a great extent, the custom of having the benediction pronounced by the minister upon the people. The minister, as a rule, rather turns it into a prayer than pronounces it as his own personal blessing. I am not certain that it is a great improvement. The dread of anything like preterism has led us to this custom. It may be, however, that in avoiding an evil we have missed a good. Are benedictions sinful or vain? Are the blessings of good men of no value? Can we no more say, "Peace be to this house," and hope that our peace shall rest upon it? May no Jacob nowadays bless the two sons of a beloved Joseph? Will it be a mere form if an Isaac should invoke a blessing on his descendants, or a departing servant of God, like Moses, pronounce a benediction on his people? I confess I would not treat lightly my father's blessing or the benediction of my mother; and though neither father nor mother can by their mere wish confer anything upon us, yet who would wish them to depart this life without having bequeathed us the legacy of their blessing? Like Joseph, you may bring your lads to receive their grandsire's blessing if the old man be yet alive, nor need you suspect yourself of being superstitious. Many there are who have had no other heritage than a father's blessing, and have counted themselves rich therein. Now, if the blessing of a natural father and mother may be considered valuable without attributing too much to men, so I think may the blessing of those spiritual parents who have been made useful to our souls.”²⁵⁷

24c “This entire verse is found in the Majority of all texts, as well as the Old Latin, the Syriac, and all English Bibles from Wycliffe to Tyndale and the Geneva Bible. Vaticanus and Sinaiticus omit this entire verse and so do the RV, RSV, NIV, and ESV. However though the NASV omitted the verse from 1960 to 1972, in 1977 and again in 1995 the NASV now includes the

257 Charles Spurgeon, “The Pastor's Parting Blessing” in *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, sermon 988.

verse in its text and so does the 2003 Holman Christian Standard Version, but the ISV does not. So I guess we can all confidently rest in the findings of our present day noted scholars, huh?"²⁵⁸

16:25^a Now to him that is of power^{present middle/passive participle} to stablish^{aoist infinitive} you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery,^b which was kept secret^{perfect passive participle} since the world began,

25a Paul, like many preachers, had a very difficult time ending an epistle- or a sermon (Acts 20:9)! He tries to finish but then keeps tacking on more material.

25b Paul doesn't disclose what the "**mystery**" is unless it involved some of the doctrines Paul discussed in Romans (justification by faith, Israel's future...). But it was kept secret by God through all the ages until revealed to Paul and expounded by him. But Romans was not the epistle for this mystery to be expounded. That would be done, in large measure, in Ephesians.

16:26 But now is made manifest,^{aoist passive participle} and by the scriptures of the prophets,^a according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known^{aoist passive participle} to all nations for the obedience of faith:^b

26a AV

ESV

LSV

26 But now is made manifest, and by the **scriptures** of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

26 but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—

26 but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—

"Scriptures" The ESV and LSV have "prophetic writings", making no mention of the Scriptures at all.

26b This was done through evangelism and the circulation of the Scriptures in all the languages of humanity.

16:27 To God only wise,^a be glory through Jesus Christ for ever.^b Amen.

27a **"God only wise"** And to no one else as no one else is worthy to receive this sort of praise or adoration.

27b **"forever"** There is no time limit as to how long the Lord is worthy to receive this sort of praise, glory and adoration.

²⁵⁸ Will Kinney.

Spiritual Applications, Romans Chapter 16

The church at Rome must have been a good-sized church if Paul mentioned so many people in this chapter. The church must have been very close to Paul if he was on such good terms with so many of these members. The corruption of this church from the church at Rome to the Church of Rome is one of the saddest events in history and it should serve as a warning to all churches. When you get so large and so prominent in an important city, it can fuel compromise and apostasy.

We wish we could have known more about these early saints and how these churches (most of them were house churches) operated.

Appendix 1: Archaic Words Defined

“chambering” “Although ‘chambering’ is formed from the noun ‘chamber’, it means sexual indulgence or lewdness (Laurence Vance, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*, page 63).” The word is related to the English “bedchamber”, showing that “chambering” has something to do with sexual sins in the bedroom.

“dissimulation” “This English word is from a French word of the same spelling. It is ultimately derived from the same Latin root as ‘dissimuler’ which gave us ‘dissembled’. These words are also remotely related to ‘similar’, from the Latin ‘simulare’, ‘to pretend’. ‘Dissemulation’ is duplicity, hypocrisy or deception (Laurence Vance, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*, page 106).”

“emulation” It is borrowed from Latin aemulātiōn-, aemulātiō, from aemulārī “to vie with, rival, imitate” + -tiōn-, -tiō, suffix of verbal action.

“gainsaying” is a combination of the Old English gegn ‘against’ and say. Hence, ‘to gainsay’ is to speak against, contradict, oppose or hinder (Laurence Vance, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*, pages 158-159).”

“implacable” “It is from a French word of the same spelling and it is the opposite of “placable”, meaning “appeasable.” Therefore, “implacable” means “unappeasable, irreconcilable or that which cannot be mitigated” (Laurence Vance, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*, page 190).” No one can please you, no one or nothing is good enough for you. It also includes a stubborn and inflexible attitude that will not accept any apology or forgiveness.

“reprobate” “The word appears four times in the Authorized Version in the singular and three times in the plural. It is from the Latin *reprobates*, from *reprobare*, ‘to reject’. This was a compound verb based on *probare*, ‘to test’. To be *reprobate* is to fail a test, to be rejected, condemned or unapproved. In the Bible, a reprobate is someone or something that is unapproved and therefore rejected. The word later came to be applied to anyone who was depraved, worthless or otherwise worthy of condemnation (Laurence Vance, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*, page 288)”

“sacrilege” “The English word comes from a French word of the same spelling. It means stealing or misappropriating what is consecrated to God’s service or profaning anything held sacred (Laurence Vance, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*, page 296).”

“succor” A helper, especially one who helps strangers. Middle English speakers adapted “socour,” the predecessor of “succor,” from the Anglo-French sucors, which essentially had the same meaning as our modern word. “Sucors,” in turn, derives from the Medieval Latin succursus, itself a derivative of the Latin verb succurrere, meaning “to run to the rescue or “to bring aid.” That Latin verb was a composite of the prefix sub-

(meaning "from below") and the verb "currere" (meaning "to run"). "Succor" has been saving the day in English (as both a noun and a verb) since at least the 13th century.

"wantonness" "The word is from the Middle English 'wantowen' literally meaning 'untrained', as it is from 'wan' 'lacking' and 'towen', 'to train'. Thus, 'wanton' originally meant undisciplined, untrained, uneducated or unruly. It later came to mean malicious, reckless, merciless or unprovoked; extravagant or excessive, also lewd or lascivious (Laurence Vance, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*, page 370)." "Commend" comes from a Middle English word "commenden", from the Latin "comendare", meaning "to commit, enjoin, entrust". This is the same etymology as "command". "Commend" means "to confidently deliver something into the hands of another". (Steven J. White, *White's Dictionary of the King James Language*, volume 1, pages 250-251)."

"wit", "wot" "The verb "wit" occurs twenty-one times in the Authorized Version. 'Wit' is from the Old English witan, 'to know'. The present tense wot appears ten times. None of our modern versions contain any form of these words. The word wit is used in the AV three times as an infinitive meaning to know. Wit also appears seventeen times in the expression 'to wit' that means indeed, that is to say, namely, or that is (Laurence Vance, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*, page 381)."

Appendix 2: Summary of Justification

JUSTIFICATION--A REVIEW

I. What It Is Not

1. It is not regeneration, the impartation of life in Christ; for although it is "justification of life"—meaning God will give life to the justified, he is justified as ungodly.
2. It is not "a new heart," or "change of heart,"—indefinite expressions at best, but having in them no proper definition of justification.
3. It is not "making an unjust man just," in his life and behavior. The English word justified, as we all know, comes from the Latin word meaning to make just or righteous; but this is exactly what justification is not, in Scripture.
4. It is not to be confused with sanctification; which is the state of those placed in Christ,—"sanctified in Christ Jesus"; and consequently the manner of their walk in the Spirit.

II. What It Is

1. It is a declaration by God in heaven concerning a man, that he stands righteous in God's sight.
2. God justifies a man, on the basis or ground of the "**redemption that is in Christ Jesus**" (Romans 3:24). See Romans 5:6: We are "**justified by His blood**";--the blood the procuring ground, or means; God the acting Person.
3. God who has already acted judicially, in pronouncing the whole world guilty (Romans 3:19), now again acts judicially concerning that sinner who becomes convinced of his guilt and helplessness, and believes that God's Word concerning Christ's expiatory sacrifice applies to himself; and thus becomes "of faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:26,): God's judicial pronouncement now is, that such a believing one stands righteous in His sight.
4. Justification, or declaring-righteous, therefore, is the reckoning by God to a believing sinner of the whole value of the infinite work of Christ on the cross; and, further, His connecting this believing sinner with the Risen Christ in glory, giving him the same acceptance before Himself as has Christ: so that the believer is now "the righteousness of God in Him" (Christ). Negatively, God in justifying a sinner reckons to him the putting away of sin by Christ's blood. Positively, He places him in Christ: he is one with Christ forever before God! (William Newell, *Romans Verse-by-Verse*).

Ten Aspects of Justification

1. The Need of Justification

A. Isaiah 64:6 **"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."**

- i. We are unclean,
- ii. Our natural righteousness is as a filthy rag.

B. Romans 3:10 **"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:"**

- i. None are righteous.

C. 1 Corinthians 6:9,10 **"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."**

2. The Meaning of Justification.

A. "To Justify" means "to declare or to pronounce righteous."

B. It is a judicial term

C. The opposite of justification is condemnation.

- i. Deuteronomy 25:1 **"If there be a controversy between men, and they**

come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them; then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked.”

ii. Romans 5:16-19 **“And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”**

3. The Problem of Justification-

A. How can God be just and holy and still justify a sinner? Apart from Christ's work on Calvary, there can be no solution.

i. Romans 3:26 **“To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”**

ii. Romans 4:5 **“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”**

4. The Basis of Justification

1. The blood of Christ

i. Romans 5:9 **“Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.”**

2. The substitutionary death of Christ

i. Isaiah 53:6 **“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”**

ii. 2 Corinthians 5:21 **“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”**

iii. 1 Peter 3:18 **“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:”**

3. All the demands of Divine justice have been fully satisfied by the finished work of Christ on the cross. God judged His Son so that He might justify the believing sinner.

i. Romans 4:5 **“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”**

ii. Romans 8:3 **“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:”**

iii. 2 Corinthians 5:21 **“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”**

5. The Source of Justification

A. The grace of God

i. Romans 3:24 **“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:”**

B. Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus

i. Romans 3:24 **“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:”**

6. The Channel of Justification

A. "Justified by faith"

i. Romans 3:28 **"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."**

ii. Romans 5:1 **"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:"**

B. How does a sinner get this perfect righteousness? It is received by faith. The sinner is justified by the death of Christ as to the basis and through faith as to its appropriation. The free gift of God's righteousness must be personally received.

i. Romans 5:17 **"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)"**

7. The Example of Justification

A. Abraham is the prime example used by both Paul and James.

i. Genesis 15:6 **"And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness."**

ii. Romans 4

iii. James 2

8. The Result of Justification

A. God's perfect righteousness is put to my account and thus I am perfectly righteous, not in myself as I am still a sinner), but "in Christ Jesus). God now sees me just as righteous as Jesus Christ. Being justified I now have peace with God and no condemnation.

i. Romans 4:3-5 **"For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."**

ii. Romans 5:1 **"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:"**

B. We are saved from the wrath of God.

i. Romans 5:9 **"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."**

9. The Evidence of Justification.

A. James says that Abraham was "justified by works". This is how we "show our faith" and this is how we prove to others the reality of our justification.

i. James 2:14-22 **"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?"**

10. The Hope of Justification

- A. Glorification is guaranteed and in the mind of God it is already done!
 - i. Romans 8:30 **"Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."**

Appendix 3: Summary of Reconciliation

Summary of Reconciliation:

1. Predicted
 - A. Isaiah 53:5 **"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."**
 - B. Daniel 9:24 **"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy."**
2. Blotting out of legalistic requirements necessary
 - A. Ephesians 2:14-16 **"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:"**
 - B. Colossians 2:14 **"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross,"**
3. Effective for those who believe:
 - A. By God in Christ
 - i. Romans 5:11 **"And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."**
 - ii. 2 Corinthians 5:19 **"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."**
 - B. By Christ as High Priest
 - i. Hebrews 2:17 **"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."**
 - C. By the death of Christ
 - i. Romans 5:10 **"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."**
 - ii. Ephesians 2:16 **"And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:"**
 - iii. Colossians 1:21,22 **"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled. In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight:"**
 - D. By the blood of Christ
 - i. Ephesians 2:13 **"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."**
 - ii. Colossians 1:20 **"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."**
 - E. While we were alienated from God

- i. Colossians 1:21 **“And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.”**
- F. While we were yet sinners without any spiritual strength.
 - i. Romans 5:6-10 **“For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”**
- 4. The ministry of reconciliation given to believers
 - A. 2 Corinthians 5:18-20 **“And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.”**

Appendix 4: Summary of the Atonement

1. Explained

A. Romans 5:8-11 **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."**

B. 2 Corinthians 5:18,19 **"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."**

C. Galatians 1:4 **"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:"**

D. 1 John 2:2 **"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."**

E. 1 John 4:10 **"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."**

2. Foretold

A. Isaiah 53:4-6,8-12 **"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.... He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."**

B. Daniel 9:24-27 **"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that**

shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

C. Zechariah 13:1,7 “In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness... Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.”

D. John 11:50,51 “Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;”

3. Effected by Christ

A. John 1:29,36 “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world... And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!”

B. Acts 4:10,12 “Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole... Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

C. 1 Thessalonians 1:10 “And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.”

D. 1 Timothy 2:5,6 “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”

E. Hebrews 2:9 “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”

F. 1 Peter 2:24 “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”

4. Was voluntary

A. Psalm 40:6-8 “Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.”

B. John 10:11,15,17,18 “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep... As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep... Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.”

C. Hebrews 10:5-9 **"Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second."**

5. Exhibits the:

A. Grace and mercy of God

- i. Romans 8:32 **"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"**
- ii. Ephesians 2:4,5,7
- iii. 1 Timothy 2:4 **"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."**
- iv. Hebrews 2:9 **"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."**

B. Love of God

- i. Romans 5:8 **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."**
- ii. 1 John 4:9,10 **"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."**

C. Love of Christ

- i. John 15:13 **"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."**
- ii. Galatians 2:20 **"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."**
- iii. Ephesians 5:2,25 **"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour... Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;"**
- iv. Revelation 1:5 **"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,"**

6. Reconciles the justice and mercy of God

- A. Isaiah 45:21 **"Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me."**
- B. Romans 3:25,26 **"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time**

his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

7. Done but once

A. Hebrews 7:27 **"Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself."**

B. Hebrews 9:24-28 **"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."**

C. Hebrews 10:14 **"For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."**

D. 1 Peter 3:18 **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:"**

8. Acceptable to God

A. Ephesians 5:2 **"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour."**

9. Access to God by

A, Hebrews 10:19,20 **"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;"**

10. Remission of sins by

A. John 1:29 **"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."**

B. Romans 3:25 **"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;"**

C. Ephesians 1:7 **"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;"**

D. 1 John 1:7 **"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."**

E. Revelation 1:5 **"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,"**

11. Justification by

A. Romans 5:9 **"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."**

B. 2 Corinthians 5:21 **"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."**

12. Sanctification by

A. 2 Corinthians 5:15 **"And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."**

B. Ephesians 5:26,27 **"That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."**

C. Titus 2:14 **"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."**

D. Hebrews 10:10 **"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."**

E. Hebrews 13:12 **"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate."**

13. Redemption by

A. Matthew 20:28 **"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."**

B. Acts 20:28 **"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."**

C. 1 Timothy 2:6 **"Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."**

D. Hebrews 9:12 **"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."**

E. Revelation 5:9 **"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;"**

14. Delivers saints from:

A. Power of sin

i. Romans 8:3 **"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:"**

ii. 1 Peter 1:18,19 **"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:"**

B. Power of the world

i. Galatians 1:4 **"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:"**

ii. Galatians 6:14 **"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."**

C. Power of the devil

i. Colossians 2:15 **"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it."**

ii. Hebrews 2:14,15 **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death,**

that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

15. We are to glorify God for

A. 1 Corinthians 6:20 **"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."**

B. Galatians 2:20 **"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."**

C. Philippians 1:20,21 **"According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."**

16. We are to rejoice for

A. Romans 5:11 **"And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."**

17. We are to praise God for

A. Revelation 5:9-13 **"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."**

18. Faith in, indispensable

A. Romans 3:25 **"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;"**

B. Galatians 3:13,14 **"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."**

19. Commemorated in the Lord's Supper

A. Matthew 26:26-28 **"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."**

B. 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 **"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye**

drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."

20. Ministers should set forth

A. Acts 5:29-31,42 "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins... And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."

B. 1 Corinthians 15:3 "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;"

C. 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

21. Typified

A. Genesis 4:4 "And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:"

B. Genesis 22:2 "And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."

C. Exodus 12:5,11,14 "Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats...And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S passover...And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever."

D. Exodus 24:8 "And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words."

E. Leviticus 16:30,34 "For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD...And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And he did as the LORD commanded Moses."

F. Leviticus 17:11 "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

G. 1 Corinthians 5:7 "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:"

H. Hebrews 9:7,12,20,22,28 "But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people:... Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us...Saying, This is the blood of the testament which

God hath enjoined unto you...And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission....So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

I. Hebrews 11:4,17,19 "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh...y faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son...Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure."

Appendix 5: The Errors of Replacement Theology

Sources:

A Refutation of Replacement Theology, March 1, 2018, by David Cloud
https://www.wayoflife.org/reports/a_refutation_of_replacement_theology.php

Proof Texts of Replacement Theology, December 11, 2017 by David Cloud,
<https://www.wayoflife.org/reports/proof-texts-of-replacement-theology.php>

The Coming Apocalypse by Renald Showers

The Error of Replacement Theology, Clarence H. Wagner, Jr.

Plus original material by the author, Dr. John Cereghin

Replacement Theology (also called Supersessionism) is the doctrine that the church has replaced Israel in God's plan and that the Church is now Israel. This is held by many Protestant groups, Puritans, Amillennialists, Postmillennialists, non-dispensationalists, the Roman Catholic Church and the self-styled "New IFB", the cult led by Steven Anderson of Phoenix, Arizona.

Any commentator who sees the Church in the Old Testament prophets (especially Isaiah 40-66) holds to some form of Replacement Theology. The *Thompson Chain Reference Bible* is guilty of this. On the chapter and page headings in the Prophets, Thompson often makes the prophecies refer to the Church and not to Israel.

Replacement Theology was introduced to the Church shortly after Gentile leadership took over from Jewish leadership. Its main teachings are:

1. Israel (the Jewish people and the land) has been replaced by the Christian Church in the purposes of God, or, more precisely, the Church is the historic continuation of Israel to the exclusion of the former.
2. The Jewish people are now no longer a "chosen people." In fact, they are no different from any other group, such as the English, Spanish, or Africans.
3. Apart from repentance, the new birth, and incorporation into the Church, the Jewish people have no future, no hope, and no calling in the plan of God. The same is true for every other nation and group.
4. Since Pentecost of Acts 2, the term "Israel," as found in the Bible, now refers to the Church. The promises, covenants and blessings ascribed to Israel in the Bible have been taken away from the Jews and given to the Church, which has superseded them. However, the Jews are subject to the curses found in the Bible, as a result of their rejection of Christ.

Verses showing that God will never cast away His people Israel

1. Leviticus 26:44 And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God.

2. Jeremiah 30:11 For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.

3. Romans 11:2 I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew.

4. 1 Corinthians 10:32- Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God.

A. If God was done with Israel, then why does Paul mention Israel as a separate entity?

5. A literal interpretation of all the Old Testament prophets and the Book of Revelation makes it clear that after the Rapture, God returns to Israel and starts dealing with them again (which He stopped doing in A.D. 70 after the destruction of the Temple). He calls out 144,000 literal Jews in Revelation 7 and we know they are literal Jews as their tribes are mentioned.

6. Where in Scripture does it say that the covenants to Israel have either been nullified or transferred to the Church? Has the Abrahamic Covenant ended? Or have the Kingdom Promises been transferred to the Church? No verse of Scripture gives any indication of this.

7. The resurrection of the modern nation of Israel in 1948 is also strong proof that God is not finished with Israel. Here is a nation that had its capital and temple destroyed by the Romans in A.D. 70 and the people driven from the land. Yet for 1,900 years, they maintained their culture, religion and language in their exile. In 1948, God did the unthinkable and re-established them in their own land. If God was finished with Israel, why would God go through all the trouble to re-establish the nation?

History of the teaching:

In the first century A.D., the church was well-connected to its Jewish roots, and Jesus did not intend for it to be any other way. Jesus was Jewish and the basis of His teaching is consistent with the Hebrew Scriptures. In Matthew 5:17-18 He states: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished."

Separation between Judaism and Christianity began as a result of religious and social differences. There were several contributing factors: 1) the Roman intrusion into Judea, and the widespread acceptance of Christianity by the Gentiles, complicated the history of Jewish Christianity; 2) the Roman wars against the Jews not only destroyed the Temple and Jerusalem, but also resulted in Jerusalem's relinquishing her position as a center of Christian faith in the Roman world; and, 3) the rapid acceptance of Christianity among the Gentiles led to an early conflict between the Church and Synagogue. Paul's missionary journeys brought the Christian faith to the Gentile world, and as their numbers grew, so did their influence, which ultimately disconnected Christianity from its Jewish roots.

Many Gentile Christians interpreted the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem as a sign that God had abandoned Judaism, and that He had provided the Gentiles freedom to develop their own Christian theology in a setting free from Jerusalem's influence. After the Second Jewish Revolt (A.D. 133-135) put down by the Roman Emperor Hadrian, theological and political power moved from Jewish Christian leaders to centers of Gentile Christian leadership such as Alexandria, Rome, and Antioch.

As the Church spread within the Roman Empire, and its membership grew increasingly non-Jewish, Greek and Roman thought began to creep in and completely change the orientation of Biblical interpretation through a Greek mindset, rather than a Jewish or Hebraic mindset. This would later result in many heresies, some of which the Church is still practicing today.

Once Christianity and Judaism began to take separate paths, the chasm became wider and wider. Judaism was considered a legal religion under Roman law, while Christianity, a new religion, was illegal. As Christianity grew, the Romans tried to suppress it. In an attempt to alleviate this persecution, Christian apologists tried in vain to convince Rome that Christianity was an extension of Judaism. However, Rome was not convinced. The resulting persecutions and frustration of the Christians bred an animosity towards the Jewish community, which was free to worship without persecution. Later, when the Church became the religion of the state, it would pass laws against the Jews in retribution.

As the apostasy grew during the early centuries after the apostles during the era of the "church fathers," the clear apostolic teaching about Israel was rejected. Following is a brief survey of this from *The Coming Apocalypse* by Renald Showers:

1. Quotes from the Church Fathers

- a. Justin Martyr (A.D. 100-166), in *Dialogue of Justin Martyr with Tropho a Jew*, said that Christians 'are the true Israelitic race.' He also asserted that the biblical expression 'the seed of Jacob' now referred to Christians, not Jews.
- b. Tertullian (A. D. 160-220) wrote an anti-Semitic discourse titled *An Answer to the Jews*.
- c. Origen's (A. D. 185-254) allegorizing method of interpretation permitted him to read almost any meaning he desired into the language of the Bible. It allowed him to claim that the word Israel in the Bible can mean the church, not national Israel.
- d. Cyprian (A. D. 195-258) wrote *Three Books of Testimonies against the Jews*. He stated that in this work, he 'endeavoured to show that the Jews, according to what had before been foretold, had departed from God, and had lost God's favour, which had been given them in past time, and had been promised them for the future; while the Christians had succeeded to their place. Like Tertullian, he interpreted God's statements to Rebekah concerning the twins in her womb (Genesis 25:23) allegorically Esau representing the Jews and Jacob representing the Christians. The implication is that the Christians have inherited the birthright that the Jewish people have forfeited. He declared, 'The Gentiles rather than the Jews attain to the kingdom of heaven.

e. Constantine (A. D. 272-337), the first Roman emperor to declare himself a Christian, became sole ruler of the entire empire in A.D. 323. He began an increasingly hostile policy toward the Jews. In A. D. 329 'the death penalty was ordained for those who embraced the Jewish faith, as well as for Jews versed in the Law who aided them.'

i. In A.D. 306, Constantine became the first Christian Roman Emperor. At first, he had a rather pluralistic view and accorded Jews the same religious rights as Christians. However, in A.D. 321, he made Christianity the official religion of the Empire to the exclusion of all other religions. This signaled the end of the persecution of Christians, but the beginning of discrimination and persecution of the Jewish people. Already at the Church Council in Elvira (Spain) in A.D. 305, declarations were made to keep Jews and Christians apart, including ordering Christians not to share meals with Jews, not to marry Jews, not to use Jews to bless their fields, and not to observe the Jewish Sabbath.

ii. In A.D. 321, Constantine decreed all business should cease on "the honored day of the sun." By substituting Sunday for Saturday as the day for Christian worship/rest, he further advanced the split. This Jewish Shabbath/Christian Sunday controversy also came up at the first real ecumenical Council of Nicea (A.D. 325), which concluded Sunday to be the Christian day of rest.

f. Sylvester, bishop of Rome from A. D. 314-335, incited the inhabitants of the Roman Empire against the Jews.

g. John Chrysostom (A. D. 347-407) delivered messages *Against the Jews*.

h. Ambrose (A. D. 340-397) used the Jewish people as 'a type of the infidel.' He regarded the Jewish soul to be 'irrevocably perverse and incapable of any good thought' and asserted that 'burning a Jewish synagogue was not a crime.'

i. Hilary of Poitiers (A.D. 291-371) wrote: "Jews are a perverse people accursed by God forever."

j. Gregory of Nyssa (died A.D. 394), Bishop of Cappadocia: "the Jews are a brood of vipers, haters of goodness..."

k. Jerome (A.D. 347-407) describes the Jews as "... serpents, wearing the image of Judas, their psalms and prayers are the braying of donkeys."

l. Augustine (A. D. 354-430) influenced the future direction of organized Christendom more than any person since the apostle Paul. Augustine's *Tract Against the Jews* was so influential that derogatory arguments against Jewish people throughout the Middle Ages were usually called 'Augustinian.' Augustine applied the allegorical method of interpretation to the prophets and Revelation. He interpreted the first resurrection and millennium of Revelation 20 as salvation of the soul at the new birth. Augustine developed the idea that the church is the kingdom of God foretold in such Scriptures as Daniel 2 and 7 and Revelation 20. In *The City of God*, Augustine was the first person to teach that the organized

catholic church is the Messianic kingdom and that the Millennium began with the first coming of Christ. 'Therefore the Church even now is the kingdom of Christ, and the kingdom of heaven. Accordingly, even now His saints reign with Him.'

m. Cyril, bishop of Alexander (A. D. 378-444) drove the Jews from the city. 'He assembled the Christian mob, incited them against the Jews by his excessive fanaticism, forced his way into the synagogues, of which he took possession for the Christian,' and handed over the Jews' property 'to be pillaged by the mob, ever greedy of plunder.'

n. In the early 4th century, Eusebius wrote that the promises of the Hebrew Scriptures were for Christians and not the Jews, and the curses were for the Jews. He argued that the Church was the continuation of the Old Testament and thus superseded Judaism. The young Church declared itself to be the true Israel, or "Israel according to the Spirit," heir to the divine promises. They found it essential to discredit the "Israel according to the flesh" to prove that God had cast away His people and transferred His love to the Christians.

2. Imperial Rome, in A.D. 313, issued the Edict of Milan, which granted favor to Christianity, while outlawing synagogues. Then, in A.D. 315, another edict allowed the burning of Jews if they were convicted of breaking the laws. As Christianity was becoming the religion of the state, further laws were passed against the Jews:

- a. The ancient privileges granted to the Jews were withdrawn.
- b. Rabbinical jurisdiction was abolished or severely curtailed.
- c. Proselytism to Judaism was prohibited and made punishable by death.
- d. Jews were excluded from holding high office or a military career.

These and other restrictions were confirmed over and over again by various Church Councils for the next 1,000 years.

3. This became the official doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church. The view that God is finished with Israel was behind the persecution of Jews by the Catholic churches, such as during the Crusades.

4. Replacement Theology was brought out of Rome by the Protestants in the 16th to 18th centuries. Martin Luther became extremely anti-Jewish toward the end of his life and called for the princes to persecute them and mobs to set upon them, 'even as Moses did, who slew three thousand of them in the wilderness.' He called for their synagogues to be destroyed, their houses pulled down, and their books burned.

5. Covenant Theology also adopted Replacement Theology within its theological system. It taught that since Israel rejected Christ as Messiah, God has forever rejected the nation of Israel as His people and replaced Israel with the Church. The Church is now the Israel of God and inheritor of the blessings God promised to national Israel. Thus, most Protestant churches hold the same doctrine that the Roman Catholic Church does in regard to the Jews.

Most of this doctrine came from frustration over Jewish persecution of the Church and their later rejection to convert to the Gospel. Since they refused to convert to Scripture,

the idea was that God must have rejected them and if He did, then the Church must have replaced Israel.

Proof Texts Considered

Replacement Theology takes a few verses out of context to try to establish their doctrines.

1. Matthew 21:43 - Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

A. If this verse were isolated, it could teach that God was finished with Israel and that the church has replaced Israel, but it cannot possibly teach that since Christ Himself said that He is not finished with Israel. He said they would not see Him TILL they repent (Matthew 23:39).

B. Jesus says that the Kingdom of God shall be taken away from the nation of Israel, NOT the Kingdom of Heaven. Some of the spiritual aspects of the Kingdom would be taken away from Israel during the Church Age as they continue in their blindness, but the Lord never said anything about the Kingdom of Heaven (the literal and political Kingdom which is instituted after Revelation 19) would ever be taken away from Israel. Since most who hold to Replacement Theology reject a dispensational understanding of Scripture, they miss the distinction between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven and many do not even believe in a literal Millennial kingdom.

2. Acts 1- Christ taught that the kingdom of Israel will be restored.

A. Christ had taught the disciples about what was the kingdom that was promised in Old Testament. He had not taught them that the Church has replaced Israel, because just before He ascended, the disciples asked, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). They believed that Israel's kingdom would be restored, they just didn't know when. Christ's reply makes it clear that they were all on the same page about the future of Israel's kingdom. He said, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." (Acts 1:7,8).

B. If the disciples had still misunderstood Christ's teaching about Israel's kingdom, this would have been the perfect time to have corrected their thinking. But Christ didn't say, "You are confused; there is no restoration of Israel's kingdom." Instead, He told them that the timing of the re-establishment of the kingdom is God's business, and they need to focus on their own business in this present time, which is preaching the gospel to the ends of the earth.

3. Romans 2:28-29 - For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

A. Paul was showing the Jews of his day that their outward conformity to the law was not true righteousness and could not save them. Romans 2:28-29 is a simple statement that the true Jew, meaning the Jew that pleases God, the Jew that God intended when He made the Jews, is not one who merely observes the outward rituals of the Old Testament. Rather, he is one who is circumcised in the

heart and loves God and His Word, as Abraham, Samuel, David, Deborah, Jeremiah, and Mary and Joseph.

B. This is not saying that an unsaved Jew is not a Jew or that unsaved Israel is not Israel. It is certainly not saying that a Christian is the true Jew and that the Church is Israel. All such things have to be read into the passage.

4. Romans 9:6 - Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.

A. The context of this statement is found in Romans 9:1-8. Paul is expressing his love for Israel even in her unbelieving condition. He recounts her great benefits in having the covenants and the law and the fathers and chiefly as being "of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came."

B. Since the question would arise how could God's promises to Israel be reconciled with her present rebellion, Paul answers this. He says, "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." He is simply saying that a Jew is not saved because he is born into Israel and is of the physical seed of Abraham. Just because someone is born into Israel or converts to Judaism doesn't mean he automatically inherits the promises of God. The promises of God are not through the law of Moses.

C. Paul proves this by pointing out that not all of Abraham's children inherited his promises (Romans 9:6-8). This is what Paul had already stated in Romans 2:28-29.

D. In this passage, Paul uses the term "Israel" in two ways. First, he uses it to refer to all Jews and to all the nation Israel (Romans 9:4). Then he uses it to refer to the true Israel which is the saved Israel (Romans 9:6).

E. Romans 9:6 does not say that a Jew is not a Jew or that an Israelite is not an Israelite. It is not saying that the true Israel consists of New Testament Christians. Paul says nothing here about the church replacing Israel. He is simply explaining what a true Israelite or Jew is before God. He is saying that salvation is not by being a physical descendant of Abraham.

5. Romans 11:16-24 - For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?"

A. This passage is used by those who hold to Replacement Theology to teach that the Church and Israel are one tree. But the context of Romans 11 itself

teaches that the Church is not Israel and that Israel has a future in God's plan and that her Old Testament covenants will be fulfilled.

B. Romans 9:15 says that as there is a casting away of Israel, which is what we see in the current dispensation, so there will be a receiving of Israel which will be associated with the resurrection of the dead (Romans 11:15).

C. What we see in Romans 9:16-24 is that the Church, though different from Israel, is closely associated with Israel (Romans 11:16-24). The root is not Israel herself. The root is Abraham's covenant and Abraham's Seed Jesus Christ. Both the church and Israel are connected with this Root. There is one tree but different branches. An Old Testament saint like Samuel and a New Testament saint like Apollos are both children of Abraham, one literally and one spiritually. Some of the natural branches growing from the root were broken off because of unbelief, and when they repent they will be grafted back in.

D. In Romans 9:25-27, Paul summarizes the issue of the Church and Israel. Israel is in spiritual blindness today, and that is what we see in modern Israel, but God isn't finished with blind Israel. She will be saved and converted, and God's covenants with her will be fulfilled. Words could not be plainer. When Paul says that "all Israel shall be saved," he is referring to Israel as a whole Israel and not to every Israelite. This is clear in comparing Scripture with Scripture. All Israel will be saved in the sense of the 12 tribes. Ezekiel tells us that God will restore Judah and Israel and they will be one (Ezekiel 37:15-20). But Zechariah tells us that only one-third of individual Israelites living in that day will be converted (Zechariah 13:8,9). Paul stated that a remnant of Israel will be saved (Romans 9:27).

6. Galatians 3:16 - Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

A. Paul taught that Abraham's covenant is fulfilled in and by Christ. He is the promised Seed. He inherits the promises and distributes the blessings. But Paul nowhere says that Jacob's seed, the 12 tribes of Israel, have ceased to be the seed of Abraham. In the context, he is contrasting the covenant of Abraham with the covenant of Moses. He is proving that the law of Moses was temporary, and the blessing of Abraham and the salvation of God does not come through the law of Moses. It comes through Jesus Christ. See Galatians 5:17 - And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

7. Galatians 3:26-29 - For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

A. This passage is speaking about Christ and those who are in Christ. In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek. All are saved the same way and all become part of the same body today. But this passage does not say that there is no Jew or Greek today. There are still Jews and Greeks in the flesh, but they must be

saved in the same way through faith in Jesus Christ. Paul made this clear elsewhere, when he said that the gospel was to be preached to “the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16) and when he divided men into three major groups: Jew, Gentile, and the church of God (1 Corinthians 10:32).

B. New Testament believers are the seed of Abraham in Christ (Galatians 3:7).

They are the children of God. But they are not the nation Israel and they have not replaced the nation Israel, and God is not finished with the nation Israel.

8. Galatians 4:21-26 - Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

A. The allegory of Galatians 4 cannot support the allegorical interpretation of prophecy, because Paul never interpreted Bible prophecy allegorically, always literally. He described a literal tribulation (1 Thessalonians 5:1-3), a literal Antichrist (2 Thessalonians 2:8-12), a literal resurrection (1 Corinthians 15), a literal return of Christ with His saints (1 Thessalonians 3:13; 4:14), a literal kingdom to come (2 Timothy 4:1), a literal fulfillment of national Israel's promises (Romans 11:25-27).

B. Paul's allegory is different from the allegorical method of interpreting prophecy, because in Galatians 4 Paul assumes the literal existence of Hagar, Sarah, Mount Sinai, Jerusalem, etc. He cites them as allegories only for the purpose of illustration. Those who interpret prophecy allegorically, though, say that Zion is not Zion and that the 144,000 in Revelation 7 is not 144,000 and that the 1,000 years in Revelation chapter 20 is not 1,000 years. This is not what Paul was doing in Galatians 4.

9. Galatians 6:15-16 - For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

A. Those who believe in salvation by grace through Christ Jesus are the ones who are accepted by God and are the true Israel. Paul is saying here the same thing as he said in Romans 2:28-29; 9:6. This is not to say that an unsaved Jew is not a Jew or that unsaved Israel today is not Israel or that the church is Israel. Only by isolating Scripture and proof texting and spiritualizing that which can only be literal can one come to such conclusions.

B. Paul is using the term “Israel” in a different and broader way than he usually does, but elsewhere he plainly says that Israel is Israel and Jews are Jews. He taught that a remnant of Israel will be saved (Romans 9:27) and that God's covenants with her will be fulfilled (Romans 11:25-27).

10. Philippians 3:3 - For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

A. New Testament saints are the true circumcision, meaning they fulfill the true spiritual meaning of circumcision, which points to the circumcision of the heart, to

knowing and loving God from the heart, to a rejection of self-righteousness for the true righteousness in Christ, rather than mere external ritual and confidence in religion and ritual.

B. The verse does not say that New Testament believers have become the true Israel and replaced Israel. It doesn't say that God's covenants with Israel are fulfilled in the church.

Appendix 6: Servants or Slaves?

"Citing material confiscated and turned over to the police in Orange, California, as part of an investigation into Satanic group crime, *New Age Bible Versions* documents that Satanists mockingly call Christians 'slaves' of Christ (pp. 221-225). The word 'slave' has very negative connotative associations, ranging from its well-known historical applications to its current debauched meaning among sodomites. Webster defines a slave as, "A person held in bondage...One who has lost control of himself...a drudge..." *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language* states that the words (e.g. slave, slothful, slain, slack) convey a "downward movement...or position." Becoming a servant of Jesus Christ is certainly an upward move (*The Language of the King James Bible*, p. 68). The word *slave* was first suggested for use in the bible in 1890 by Westcott and Hort's *Revised Version* and *American Standard Version* Committee member, James Strong. He buried his opinions about how words should be translated in his *Strong's Concordance*, in its *A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Greek Testament*, hidden in the back. Few realize he created this otherwise useful concordance for "one great object," which was to "index" the changes made to the "Authorized Version" [KJV] by the "Revised Version" of Westcott and Hort, and the "American revisers only" (*Strong's Concordance*, General Preface, Directions and Explanations, pages not numbered). He admits in item 4 of his "Plan of the Book" that the first Greek so-called 'definition' he gives, is his *own*; in *Strong's Concordance*, *Preface to the Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Hebrew Bible*, Strong admits his Old Testament work is based on Gesenius (a Bible critic) and his definitions are merely his own suggestions for "correcting" the KJV's so-called "wrong translation." His lexical definitions were merely *his opinions* about how words should be translated in his upcoming ASV, later published in 1901. Some of his ideas were incorporated into this corrupt version; some were not. The word 'slave' was not used, and rightly so. Strong denied the inspiration of the Bible. The Preface of the ASV went so far as to state that the original "Hebrew text is probably corrupt..." (p. vii)...The first time the word 'slave' was actually chained to a bible was in 1961 in the *New World Translation* of the Jehovah Witness sect. The Catholic *New American Bible* fell prey to it in 1970. The NIV and NASB submitted to the yoke immediately. The NKJV has a galley of "slaves," including "slaves of God" (Rom. 6:22) and "Christ's slaves" (1 Cor. 7:22). The *New Living Translation*, *Today's New International Version* and the *Holman Christian Standard Bible* were the most recent to sell their readers into slavery (Gail Riplinger, *In Awe of Thy Word*, pages 264-265)."

Appendix 7: Summary of Election

1. Election takes place “before the foundation of the world”
 1. **Ephesians 1:4** According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:
 2. **2 Thessalonians 2:13** But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:
2. The goal of election is that “we should be holy and without blame before him in love”.
 1. **Ephesians 1:4** According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:
3. Election is necessary as the first step in salvation
 1. **John 6:44** No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.
4. Election is also based on the foreknowledge of God
 1. **1 Peter 1:2** Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

Election in Biblical Theology (focused on the words “elect” and “election”)

1. People referred to as “elect”
 - A. Christ
 1. Isaiah 42:1 **Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, *in whom* my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.**
 2. 1 Peter 2:6 **Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.**
 - B. Believers
 1. Romans 8:33 **Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.**
 2. Colossians 3:12 **Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;**
 3. 1 Thessalonians 1:4 **Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.**
 4. 2 Timothy 2:10 **Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.**
 5. Titus 1:1 **Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;**
 6. 1 Peter 1:2 **Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.**

7. 2 Peter 1:10 **Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:**

8. 2 John 1,13 **The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth... The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen.**

C. Angels

1. 1 Timothy 5:21 **I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.**

D. Local churches?

1. 2 John 1,13 **The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth... The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen.**

E. Gentiles

1. Romans 11:7 **What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded**

2. Nations referred to as "elect"

A. Israel

1. Isaiah 45:4 **For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me.**

2. Isaiah 65:9,22 **And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there... They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.**

3. Matthew 24:22,24,31 **And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened... For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect... And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.**

4. Mark 13:20,22,27 **And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days... For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if *it were* possible, even the elect... And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.**

5. Luke 18:7 **And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?**

6. Romans 11:28 **As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes.**
2. Election related to the purposes of God
 - A. Romans 9:11 **(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)**
 - B. Romans_11:28 **As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes.**
3. Election not related to works
 - A. Romans 9:11 **(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)**
4. Election based on grace or by grace
 - A. Romans 11:5 **Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.**
5. We can know if we are elect
 - A. 1 Thessalonians 1:4 **Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.**
6. We can make our election sure
 - A. 2 Peter 1:10 **Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:**
7. Based on God's foreknowledge
 - A. 1 Peter 1:2 **Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.**

Appendix 8: A Summary of Imputation

1. Men can impute things to other men
 - A. 1 Samuel 22:15 **Did I then begin to enquire of God for him? be it far from me: let not the king impute any thing unto his servant, nor to all the house of my father: for thy servant knew nothing of all this, less or more.**
2. Men can impute iniquity to other men
 - A. 2 Samuel 19:19 **And said unto the king, Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me, neither do thou remember that which thy servant did perversely the day that my lord the king went out of Jerusalem, that the king should take it to his heart.**
3. God can impute sin to men

- A. Romans 4:8 **Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.**
4. Negative imputation
- A. Leviticus 7:18 **And if any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offerings be eaten at all on the third day, it shall not be accepted, neither shall it be imputed unto him that offereth it: it shall be an abomination, and the soul that eateth of it shall bear his iniquity,**
- B. Psalm_32:2 **Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.**
- C. Romans_5:13 **(For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.**
5. God can impute "blood" to men
- A. Leviticus 17:4 **And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD; blood shall be imputed unto that man; he hath shed blood; and that man shall be cut off from among his people:**
6. God can impute righteousness to men/Abraham
- A. Romans 4:6 **Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,**
- B. Romans 4:11 **And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:**
- C. Romans 4:22-24 **And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;**
7. Imputation through belief
- A. In the resurrection of Jesus
- i. Romans 4:24 **But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;**
- B. James 2:23 **And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.**
8. Imputation without works
- A. Romans 4:6 **Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,**

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Cranfield, C. E. B, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, volume 1, Romans 1-8*
Dake, J. F., *The Dake Study Bible*
Darby, John, *Collected Works*
Dunn, James D. G., *Romans 1-8, Word Biblical Commentary, volume 38A.*
Gaebelein, A. C., *The Annotated Bible*
Gill, John, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*
Haldane, Robert, *An Exposition of Romans*
Harrison, Everett, *Romans* in volume 10 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*
Henry, Matthew, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*
Hoffman, David Allen, *The Common Man's Reference Bible*
Hole, F.C., *Commentary and Notes*
Huenber, R. A., *John Nelson Darby: Precious Truths Revived and Defended*
Hueber, R. A., *Thy Precepts*
Kinney, Will, <https://brandplucked.webs.com/kjbarticles.htm>
Knox, James, *A Christ Honoring Commentary on the Book of Romans, volume 1, Romans 1-3*
Knox, James, *New Testament Survey*
Liddon, H. P., *Explanatory Analysis of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*
Lloyd-Jones, D. M., *Romans*
MacDonald, William, *Believer's Bible Commentary*
Manton, Thomas, *Collected Works*
Mackintosh, C. M., *The Mackintosh Treasury*
McElroy, Jack, *Bible Version Secrets Exposed*
McElroy, Jack, *Which Bible Would Jesus Use?*
Moo, Douglas, *The Epistle to the Romans, New International Commentary on the New Testament*
Morris, Leon, *The Epistle to the Romans, Pillar New Testament Commentary series*
Newberry, Thomas, *The Newberry Reference Bible*
Newell, William, *Romans, Verse by Verse*
Paisley, Ian, *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans*
Phillips, John, *Exploring Romans*
Price, Greg, *Biblical Civil Government Verses the Beast*
Poole, Matthew, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*
Riplinger, Gail, *In Awe Of Thy Word*

Riplinger, Gail, *Hazardous Materials*
 Riplinger, Gail, *The Language of the King James Bible*
 Robinson, Thomas, *Studies in Romans*
 Ruckman, Peter, *The Bible Believer's Commentary on Exodus*
 Ruckman, Peter, *The Bible Believer's Commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Romans*
 Ruckman, Peter, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*
 Ruckman, Peter, *The Ruckman Reference Bible*
 Ruckman, Peter, *The Salient Verses*
 Scroggie, W. Graham, *Salvation and Behaviour*
 Scroggie, W. Graham, *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption*
 Showers, Renard, *The Coming Apocalypse*
 Spence, H. T., *The Epistle to the Hebrews*
 Spence, O. Talmadge, *The Quest For Christian Purity*
 Spence, O. Talmadge, *Straightway*
 Sproul, R. C. *The Righteous Shall Live By Faith: Romans*
 Spurgeon, Charles, *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*
 Spurgeon, Charles, *Morning and Evening*
 Spurgeon, Charles, *The New Park Street Pulpit*
 Trench, R. C., *Synonyms in the New Testament*
 Vance, Laurence, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*
 Vincent, M. R., *Word Studies in the New Testament*
 Wagner, Clarence, *The Error of Replacement Theology*,
https://therefinersfire.org/replacement_theology.htm
 White, Stephen, J, *White's Dictionary of the King James Language*
 Wuest, Kenneth, *Romans in the Greek New Testament*
Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible
McClintock and Strong's Cyclopedia
 -----, *The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible: Romans*

About the Author

Dr. John Cereghin was saved on February 9, 1978 at the age of 13 after being raised in the Roman Catholic church. He was saved after listening to a program on missionary shortwave radio station HCJB from Quito, Ecuador. He left the Catholic church in 1983 and joined Maranatha Baptist Church in Elkton, Maryland in 1985. In 1986, she transferred from the University of Maryland to Maryland Baptist Bible College, earning the first doctor's degree awarded by the school in 1995. Dr. Cereghin also earned his Master of Theology degree from Foundations Theological Seminary in 1994.

Dr. Cereghin's ministry background includes working at Radio Station WOEL in Elkton, Maryland (1986-1998), teaching in various capacities at Maryland Baptist Bible College in Elkton, Maryland from 1988-1998, also serving as Dean of Men, Registrar and Academic Dean, and pastoring Queen Anne's Baptist Church, Centreville, Maryland (1989-1990), Charity Baptist Church, Mebane, North Carolina (1994-1995) and Grace Baptist Church in Smyrna, Delaware (1998-present). He is married to his wife Teresa and they have four children and four grandchildren.

Booklist for Romans

The following remarks and reviews are from:

* Charles Spurgeon, *Commenting and Commentaries*
D. Edmond Hiebert, *An Introduction to the New Testament*
\$ Stewart Custer, *Tools For Preaching and Teaching the Bible*
% Cyril Barber, *The Minister's Library*
^ D. A. Carson, *New Testament Commentary Survey*
@ From a website of John MacArthur's campus ministry at UCLA
! *The Master's Journal*, from the Master's Seminary
+ From The Discerning Reader website (www.discerningreader.com)
< Website of Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org>
? *Biblical Viewpoint*, Bob Jones University, April 1988
/ Website of Still Waters River Books, <http://www.puritandownloads.com/swrb>
!! Will Timmins, The Gospel Coalition at
<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/review/the-epistle-to-the-romans-a-commentary-on-the-greek-text/>
@@ Reformation 21 https://www.reformation21.org/blog/another-commentary-on-romans?fbclid=IwAR2Vd-MuQ427yMgyZKzTtLPav44fxmVA-Th7FGowUd_v6cTLtMsbffQldk
\$\$ <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/review/the-wycliffe-exegetical-commentary-romans-1-8/>

Those entries without marking are evaluated by the author, Dr. John Cereghin.

Comments are that of the reviewer and not necessarily those of the author nor are such reviews automatically endorsed. Not all commentaries are that useful despite these reviews. As always, discernment in choosing commentaries is required. This list does not cover one-volume commentaries, like Matthew Henry, but generally dedicated volumes. Recommended commentaries are in **bold**.

* Adam, Thomas. *Paraphrase on Romans I to XI.*, 1774. A poor paraphrase; very correct and evangelical, but thin as Adam's ale. We are disappointed, for the *Private Thoughts* of the same author are highly esteemed.

? Alford, Henry, *Romans in The Greek Testament*, 1877, 161 pages. Concise comments on the Greek text. He argues powerfully for the deity of Christ in Romans 9:5; on Romans 5:12 he attacks Pelagianism, defends the Augustinian doctrine of generically inherited corruption.

? Archer, Gleason Leonard, Jr, *The Epistle to the Romans*. 1959. A brief outline of Romans which gives the main argument. He holds to the Federal headship view of Romans 5:12, strongly maintains the deity of Christ in Romans 9:5.

% Achtemeier, Paul J., *Romans. Interpretation*, 1985. Traces Paul's thought as he lays before his readers his understanding of the gospel and describes the power

of God to change and transform the believer. The comments on the text seek to make clear Paul's thought, but on occasion the writer's presuppositions mar his exposition. Because Paul's argument is cumulative, Achtemeier has included summaries at strategic places.

! Anderson, Norman. *Freedom under Law*, 1988. A biblical scholar who is also a professor emeritus of legal studies shows how law relates to true freedom. Various types of freedoms flourish under protection by laws. Later, the author examines law in the spiritual life according to Scripture. He argues in Matthew 5:17-20 for fulfillment of the law in the appropriate sense God has designed for it to have (p. 121). God purposed that Mosaic rules and regulations on ceremonial cleanness have their place in Old Testament times, but also look forward to moral cleanness such as was realized in Jesus's spiritual life and teaching and spiritual power. The Mosaic law was not designed to be a way to merit salvation by obeying but revealed ways God willed for saved people to live for their well-being (p. 155). The law could speak of the need for life but could not impart the life God gives in grace through Christ in the gospel. In the gospel-way God supplies power to obey God's will as portrayed in the moral principles of the law, etc.

* Anderson, Robert. *Exposition of Romans.*, 1837. After the manner of Charles Bridges. Full of holy unction and devout meditation.

? Barmby, J and Radford Thomson, *Romans* in volume 18 of The Pulpit Commentary, 1950, 498 pages. Homiletical material of unequal value by six different preachers. Parts are very helpful; some verses are omitted completely. It supports the deity of Christ in Romans 9:5.

? Barrett, Charles Kingsley, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 1957, 302 pages. Liberal, often precise in thought. On Romans 5:12 he seems to express a Pelagian view of sin; he removes the deity of Christ in Romans 9:5, adding that Paul's calling Christ God is unlikely, but not "impossible" (p. 179).

^ Bartlett, David Lyon, *Romans*, Westminster Bible Companion, 1995. He focuses on several of Paul's grand themes (the oneness of God, God's righteousness, Paul's use of the Hebrew scriptures, and the emergence of the new age in Jesus Christ) and manages to read the entire epistle in these terms.

% Barth, Karl, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 1933, 568 pages. This landmark book first appeared in German after World War I. In it Barth showed the failure of liberalism and used the epistle as a platform from which to launch his own "new orthodoxy". Not a good exposition, but an epochal work of historical significance in the study of theology.

? On Romans 5:12, he says "Adam has no existence on the plane of history".

^ Barton, Bruce B., *Romans*, Life Application Bible Commentary, 1992. In short compass he develops the themes of Romans along traditionally Reformed lines.

Beet, Joseph Agar, *A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, 1902, 406 pages. An interpretation by a Wesleyan. Contains many helpful insights but manifests some doctrinal weakness in handling the deity of Christ. The doctrinal summaries offer a distinctive feature.

Black, Matthew, *Romans*. New Century Bible, 1973. Based on the Revised Standard Version. A concise scholarly treatment. Especially valuable for its frequent reference to sources for further study.

% This brief, exegetical commentary's uniqueness lies in its bibliographical notes, which are included in the text.

! Boice, James M., *Romans, an Expositional Commentary. Volume I, Justification by Faith, Romans 1-4*, 1991. This Philadelphia preacher expounds the text, highlighting doctrinal points and their application to human life. This will be another multi-volume commentary. It is full of teaching that will build up the believer.

* Brown, John. *Exposition of Romans*, 1766. By a Calvinist of the old school. Heavy, perhaps; but precious.

/ 616 pages. John Brown of Wamphray's commentary on Romans has been called, "perhaps the best exposition of the Epistle yet to be found" (J.W.C., cited in the Johnston's *Treasury of the Scottish Covenant*, p. 341). At the very least it should be considered a classic Scottish Covenanter's commentary.

John Brown of Wamphray was one of Samuel Rutherford's favorite students. He was ejected in 1662, imprisoned and cruelly treated until he suffered exile to the Netherlands -- all for steadfastly maintaining the principles of the Covenanted Reformation. In fact, A.N. in the preface to this volume notes that, among other things, "the particular grounds and causes why he was thus inhumanly and barbarously treated, was his strict attachment to, and maintaining the binding force and perpetual obligations of the nation's solemn vows and covenants; his refusing acceptance of the then sinful Indulgences; ... his public and zealous testifying against licentious tolerations," etc.

While in exile he wrote thirteen books. Johnston notes that Brown of Wamphray "has been regarded the most important theologian of the second period of Scottish Presbyterianism" (*Treasury of the Scottish Covenant*, p. 339). This commentary on Romans gives us a good indication as to why Brown is so highly regarded among Calvinists, historians and numerous commentators.

* Brown, John, *Analytical Expositions of Romans*, 1857. Brown's work must be placed among of the first-class. He is a great expositor.

? Bruce, F. F. *The Epistle to the Romans*. The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, 1963, 288 pages. Perceptive comments from a Reformed viewpoint, manifesting a wide knowledge of literature and the theological writers. Occasionally too brief (Romans 3:21), often marvelously full (Romans 3:25). He holds that Paul taught the deity of Christ in 9:5; but urges moderate feelings toward those who disagree.

? Brunner, Emil, *The Letter to the Romans, A Commentary*, 1959, 168 pages. Neo-Orthodox. He removes the deity of Christ from 9:5 and rejects Augustine's interpretation of Romans 5:12, coming close to a Pelagian view of sin.

^ Byrne, Brendan, *Reckoning With Romans: A Contemporary Reading of Paul's Gospel*, 1986. Surprisingly good. One raises eyebrows here and there, but many old truths are set out in fresh ways. The 40 theses at the end of the book are worth pondering. This book is of greater value than his commentary.

^ Byrne, Brendan, *Romans*, 1996. A Sacra Pagina contribution whose approach is literary-rhetorical and who views the epistle as a call to inclusivism mediated through rhetorical persuasion, is suitably faddish but too often misses the point. A Catholic commentary.

Calvin, John, *The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans and to the Thessalonians*. Calvin's Commentaries. On Romans the great Reformation expositor was at his best; still of value in spite of its age.

* Challis, James. *Translation of Romans with Notes*, 1871. The translation is made in the current language of the day. The notes are mainly critical.

* Chalmers, T. *Lectures on Romans*, 1827. Our preferences as to expositions lie in another direction; but we cannot be insensible to the grandeur and childlike simplicity which were combined in Chalmers.

Cloud, David, *The Book of Romans*, The Way of Life Advanced Bible Study Series, 2004, 172 pages. An expanded study guide, based on the Authorized Version and written from a separatist and dispensational viewpoint, mainly for use in Baptist churches or Bible institutes. In the format of an extended expository outline with notes. Somewhat safe and dull, not giving too many "new" or "original" observations. Not very deep, as Cloud does not provide verse-by-verse comments.

? Coltman, William G., *An Exposition of Romans*, 1950, 268 pages. A devotional and practical commentary. He defends the deity of Christ in Romans 9:5 and teaches the restoration of national Israel in Romans 11.

Constable, Thomas, *Notes on Romans*, 2006, 177 pages. Self-published commentary on the internet. Generally useful but uses many different English versions. As always, we would prefer that commentators stick to one main "reference" commentary and base his remarks on that. Many quotes are offered from other authors which adds to the value of the work.

^ Cottrell, Jack, *Romans*, 1996-1998, 2 volumes. He is more of a theologian than an exegete and sometimes that shows. The strand of Arminian tradition to which Cottrell belongs is more comfortable with the concept of "original grace" than "original sin". In the Campbellite tradition, water baptism is necessary for salvation.

@ Cranfield C.E.B. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 2 volumes. Requiring a strong Greek knowledge, it is the best technical commentary on Romans. Cranfield is liberal and offers some neo-orthodox views, but it does not hinder this commentary very much.

^ Occasionally Cranfield seems more influenced by Barth than by Paul, but for thoughtful exegesis of the Greek text, with a careful weighing of alternative positions, there is nothing quite like it. An abbreviated (320 pages) edition is also available that makes fewer demands on the reader.

< Anyone doing serious in-depth study of the book of Romans will need to consult Cranfield's technical two-volume commentary. This is one of the most thorough commentaries on this book, and because it deals with every aspect of the Greek text, it does require a working knowledge of the original language. Readers should also be aware that Cranfield at times takes a somewhat Barthian approach to Romans, so the commentary should be used with care. For those who do not require the detailed exegetical information an abridged version is also available.

% This indispensable work takes its place among the foremost works on Romans. Though it does not displace the renowned contribution by Sanday and Headlam, which has admirably served the needs of students since 1895, Cranfield's magisterial handling of the grammar and syntax is of such quality as to immediately accord these volumes a place in every preacher's library. Those who take the time to study these volumes carefully will find themselves amply rewarded.

+ Cranfield, C.E.B., *Romans: A Shorter Commentary*, 388 pages. A nontechnical abridgment of Cranfield's highly acclaimed two-volume commentary on Romans in the International Critical Commentary series. Following a brief introduction, Cranfield provides section-by-section and verse-by-verse commentary on Romans, based on his own translation. While no substitute for the original 2-volume work, this short abridgement gives us the meat of Cranfield's masterful work.

? Denney, James, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*. The Expositor's Greek Testament. Volume 11. 1907, 170 pages Greek Text. He denies the deity of Christ in Romans 9:5 and mentions that the connection between sin and death was common in Jewish writings "resting apparently on a literal interpretation of Genesis 3".

Dodd, C. H., *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*. The Moffatt New Testament Commentaries, 1932, 281 pages. Prints the Moffatt translation. The work of an able Liberal British theologian, using a psychological approach to Paul and his teaching. Dodd does not hesitate to disagree with Paul's views on occasion.

^ Has been declared as a classic, although on many passages it is hard to see why. Perhaps it is for no other reason than that he writes well. Sadly, however, he consistently flattens future perspectives into present perspectives and pushes his own theories at the reader: he is uncomfortable unless he can have a domesticated cross.

? A very influential Neo-Orthodox commentary. He says frankly "Sometimes I think Paul is wrong and I have ventured to say so (xxxv)." On Romans 5:12 he says,

“Adam is a myth (though for Paul he *may* have seemed real) (p. 79).” He removes the deity of Christ from Romans 9:5.

! Dunn, James D.G., *Romans*. 2 vols.; Word Biblical Commentary, 1988. Dunn, professor of divinity, University of Durham, Scotland, has resorted to critical theories more than some conservatives would like, but he certainly reflects a massive amount of study in the work. He has much on viewpoints and their supports, word meanings, grammar, and bibliography on each pericope. His interaction with other scholarship makes this one of the best on Romans in that regard.

^ More up-to-date bibliographically and is certainly worthy of diligent study. Nevertheless, one of its controlling foci- the thesis that Paul and his readers are wrestling over the *signs* of membership in the people of God- is overdone and is in general too indebted to E. P. Sanders.

% Gives evidence of the author's extensive research and thorough acquaintance with Paul's thought. Dunn has provided all that a commentary should offer: Wide acquaintance with current research, careful linguistic comparisons and evaluations, a bid to set the document in its historical milieu, and an endeavor to interpret the biblical writer on his own terms. Dunn does appear to confuse Israel and the Church, and this is lamentable. He evidences, however, a love for Paul and a deep empathy with his teaching. A challenging, stimulating work.

(When I was a graduate student at Foundations Theological Seminary in Dunn, North Carolina, my teacher, Dr. O. Talmadge Spence, wanted us to be familiar with this commentary. He didn't recommend it but he wanted us to read it, or to at least have some familiarity with it).

^ Edwards, James, *Romans*, New International Bible Commentary, 1995. Useful to laypeople.

* Edwards, Timothy. *Paraphrase, with Annotations, on Romans and Galatians*, 1752. Watt calls this a judiciously compiled work from the best comments. We judge it to be as poor as poverty itself.

? Erdman, Charles Rosenbury. *The Epistle to the Romans*, 1925, 160 pages. A devotional and practical commentary. He maintains the deity of Christ in Romans 9:5; he teaches election in Romans 8:30, but also teaches free will (p. 94).

* Ewbank, W.W. *Commentary, with Translation and Notes*, 1850. A sound evangelical comment, very good and gracious. In condensed thought this work is not rich; it is adapted for general reading.

^ Fitzmyer, Joseph A., *Romans*, Anchor Bible, 1993. A Catholic contribution whose exegesis is often magisterial. In many of the crucial passages, this work sounds far more Reformed than Catholic. A weakness of the work is that it does not interact seriously with much of the “new perspective”: Fitzmyer simply ignores it. Some of his short excursions are worth the price of the volume.

* Forbes, John, *Analytical Commentary, tracing the Train of Thought by the Aid of Parallelism, with Notes, &c*, 1868. We think Dr. Forbes carries the idea of parallelism farther than it should go. It can only be applied strictly to poetical books, which Romans is not. He tries to bring out the other side of the truths taught in Hodge, Edwards, and Calvin; but we confess our preference of those authors to himself. The work will greatly edify those whom it does not confuse.

* Fry, John, *Lectures*, 1816. Having no theory to serve in this instance, Fry writes to edification.

^ Gamble, Harry, Jr., *The Textual History of the Letter to the Romans*. He ably defends the unity of the epistle.

? Gifford, E. H., *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans*, 1886, 238 pages. A very thorough exposition. He defends the deity of Christ in 9:5. He also demonstrates that this is the unanimous interpretation of the Ante-Nicene Fathers (p. 178).

Greene, Oliver, *The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans*, 1962, 334 pages. A conservative commentary of some value, not technical but not very devotional. Greene has a tendency to rely too much on the Scofield notes, "Greek scholars" (which Greene was unable to critique) and Albert Barnes, whom he quotes almost word-for-word in some places without giving Barnes credit. It is also dangerous for a man who knows no Greek to rely on the opinions of Greek scholars, for without a working knowledge of Greek, how will he be able to evaluate them and determine if they are right or wrong? Greene should have left the Greek alone if he couldn't handle it and stuck to the English.

? Godet, F. L., *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 1883, 544 pages. An exhaustive and technical commentary. He surveys and refutes a great number of theological writers. He defends the deity of Christ thoroughly in Romans 9:5, holds that death in Romans 5:12 refers to physical death.

^ He is not at his best on Romans but is worth skimming.

% One of the most satisfying of all the nineteenth-century commentaries on Romans. Recommended.

* Godwin, John H., *New Translation, with Notes*, 1873. Such a book as students need while studying the Greek text in college.

? Gore, Charles. *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, 1899, 2 volumes. A commentary with a number of liberal views. On Romans 5:12 he denies imputed guilt and man's total depravity, adding that Paul assumed Genesis 3 was true. He does defend the deity of Christ in Romans 9:5.

^ Grayson, Kenneth, *Romans*, 1997. The style is frequently abrasive and his positions too often eccentric.

Haldane, Robert, *Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans*, 1835-1839. This commentary is marred by constant interruptions in opposing various teachings by Macknight, Tholuck and Moses Stuart. The commentary would read much smoother without these constant digressions. I am interested in what Haldane thinks. I don't need him constantly telling me about what Macknight, Tholuck and Stuart think. This is a constant distraction from an otherwise good commentary. Peter Ruckman writes in a similar manner and he spent most of some of his commentaries doing the same thing, although Ruckman did not do so much that in his Romans commentary.

Hamilton, Floyd E., *The Epistle to the Romans., An Exegetical and Devotional Commentary*, 1958, 235 pages. A thorough and strongly conservative exposition in the Reformed tradition. Aims at combining "grammatico-historical" exegesis with doctrinal and devotional methods.

? States his belief in the verbal inspiration of the autographs. He holds to the Federal headship of Adam in Romans 5:12, the deity of Christ in Romans 9:5.

^ Harrison, E. F., *Romans*, in *Expositor's Bible Commentary*, volume 10. He is responsible in his comments but provides little interaction and not much spark.

% Harrison, Norman Baldwin. *His Salvation*, 1926. An expository gem. Warmly devotional, and ideal for use with laymen's groups.

* Hinton, J. Howard. *Exposition*, 1863. Not believing in the constant parallelism of the Epistles, we care very little for this treatise, much as we esteem the author.

Hodge, Charles, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, 1888, 462 pages. A weighty and learned verse-by-verse analysis of the text with frequent reference to the Greek. Doctrinal summaries and remarks appear at the end of each major section.

^ He has been eclipsed by Murray, who has been eclipsed by Moo.

< Although written well over one hundred years ago, Charles Hodge's commentary on Romans should still be required for those doing serious study of the text. Hodge was a systematic theologian, but contrary to what many today think, this was no hindrance to doing good exegetical work. This commentary is rich in exegetical and theological insight.

? Although not easy reading, it is immensely helpful. He vigorously defends the deity of Christ in Romans 9:5. In an unusually lengthy treatment of Romans 5:12 (pp. 142-155, 178-190) he advocates the Federal Headship view.

% Hort, Fenton John Anthony. *Prolegomena of St. Paul's Epistles to the Romans and the Ephesians*, 1895. Brief and to the point. Focuses on the founding of the church of Rome and the purpose of the epistles. Includes a helpful analysis of Paul's letters.

? Hoyt, Herman A., *The First Christian Theology: Studies in Romans*, 1977, 187 pages. A brief conservative commentary. Each chapter has study questions. He defends Pauline authorship (p. 11); claims that Paul cited 61 Old Testament passages in Romans (p. 30); identifies three acts of God in saving men: justification, sanctification,

preservation (p. 60); warns against the danger of continuing in sin (p. 75); teaches God's sovereign election (p. 102); stresses the importance of submission to God's will (p. 133); concludes with a bibliography on the life of Paul as well as on commentaries on Romans (pp. 183-187).

! Hughes, R. Kent. *Righteousness from Heaven*, 1991. 339 pages. This very readable exposition explains Romans, section-by-section, and frequently introduces items from broader reading to stimulate the user. Hughes is diligent in researching and communicating winsomely and pointedly what the text says, and then realistically applying it to daily life. His studies are broad and will be more useful for lay people desiring a quick and interesting escort through Romans.

? Hunter, Archibald Macbride. *The Epistle to the Romans*, 1955, 134 pages. Brief liberal commentary. He removes the deity of Christ in 9:5; on 5:12 he says "Paul of course took the Genesis story as literal history." Anyone who does so now Hunter calls "Fundamentalist" (p. 59). To him the Genesis story is a "true myth" (p. 60). Sometimes he manifests real insight into Paul's thought (on Romans 7:14-25).

% Ironside, Henry Allan. *Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans*, 1951. A clear, direct exposition. Recommended to new Christians and lay discussion groups.

Johnson, Alan F., *The Freedom Letter*, 1974. Treats chapters 1-11 as the doctrinal foundation for Christianity, with chapters 12-15 setting forth the Christian life. The work of a competent evangelical scholar accepting a moderate premillennial position.

^ Johnson, Luke Timothy, *Romans*, 1997. His "literary and theological" commentary is sometimes helpful in untangling the flow of thought but is too brief for close exegesis- and in any case it is not one of his best efforts.

^ Käsemann, E., *Romans*, 1978. Käsemann is brilliant and infuriating, alternating theologically between insightful and tradition-bound (he writes as a deeply committed modern Lutheran). No one who reads him can remain neutral about anything he says.

Kelly, William, *Notes on the Epistle Of Paul the Apostle to the Romans With A New Translation*, 1873, 374 pages. Reflects the evangelical, premillennial views of this voluminous Plymouth Brethren scholar of the past century.

Kelly, as well as Darby, would be more useful if they based their comments on a more verse-by-verse format instead of commenting on the paragraphs in the text. It can be difficult to locate the required material in the commentary text. This style makes their commentaries harder to use than they should be.

? Kirk, Kenneth Escott, *The Epistle to the Romans*, The Clarendon Bible, 1937, 245 pages. Brief liberal notes but with a thorough introduction (135 pages). He is helpful on "the Main Ideas of the Epistle". He removes the deity of Christ from Romans 9:5, calls the statement in Romans 5:12 a "rabbinic" argument (p. 195).

* Knight, Robert, *Commentary*, 1854. Not at all to our mind. The author often seems to us rather to becloud the text than to explain it.

Knox, James W., *A Christ Honoring Commentary on The Book of Romans*, volume 1, Romans 1-3, 2023, 356 pages. First volume of a proposed multi-volume set. Fundamentalist, dispensational, based on the Authorized Version, full of practical applications and good observations. One issue is that Knox seems to downplay the need of spiritual fruit as evidence of salvation, linking such doctrine to a “works based salvation” on page 79 of the Kindle version (notes under Romans 1:17). This is the error that plagues many Fundamental Baptists today, in their rejection of repentance and fruit as evidence of salvation. It is because of this attitude that I cannot mark this commentary as “recommended” although it is very useful otherwise. Regardless, we eagerly await future volumes.

? Knox, John, and Cragg, Gerald R., *The Epistle to the Romans*, The Interpreter's Bible, 1954, 315 pages. The usual liberal exposition. On Romans 5:12 it manifests a Pelagian view of sin (p. 463). They remove the deity of Christ from Romans 9:5, but they admit there are other interpretations.

Prints the King James and Revised Standard versions at the top of the page.

! Kreloff, Stephen, *God's Plan for Israel: A Study of Romans 9 – 11*, 1995. 112 pages. The exposition contained in this book originally appeared as articles in *Israel My Glory* magazine from October 1987 through January 1990. The author and publisher have done the Christian public a great service in making these articles available in this book.

The author has endeavored to present an exposition of Paul's teaching in Romans 9-11, showing particularly the righteousness of God in His dealings with the Jewish people (p. 11). To fulfill this purpose, Kreloff gives a simple, but not simplistic, verse-by-verse explanation of this crucial section of Romans. The basic premise of the work is that God is going to fulfill the salvation promises made to Israel through spiritual Jews, those of faith in God from the physical line of Abraham. The present unbelief of Israel in Jesus as Messiah does not negate a future fulfillment of God's past promise to Israel. The existence of a remnant of believing Jews in every generation throughout the church age indicates that God has not permanently cast away His people.

Kreloff traces this basic premise through Romans 9-11. He especially deals with the OT passages Paul cites and explains how the apostle uses them in his argument. In his exposition, Kreloff states only his own interpretive positions, sometimes with added support. He never presents another interpretive viewpoint and interaction with it. For example, Kreloff states that Paul's use of Hosea in Romans 9:25-26 is a “promise of mercy reserved only for a remnant within the nation of Israel” (pp. 44-45). Because some dispensationalists argue that Paul is applying the Hosea passage to Gentile believers here, a stronger explanation for Kreloff's preferred view would be helpful. Further, the author makes some insightful comments concerning the evangelization of Jews during the present age. He writes, “During the church age God's primary method for bringing Jewish people to Christ is through godly Gentile Christians...While most Jewish people look on Hebrew Christians with suspicion, they are intrigued by the testimonies of Gentiles who have come to embrace a Jewish Messiah revealed in a

Jewish book” (pp. 82-83). An extended discussion of this point and its present implications would be very beneficial.

For the expositor working his way through Romans 9–11, *God’s Plan for Israel* provides a well-organized discussion that, when used in conjunction with a major exegetical commentary, will help the preacher present Paul’s teaching clearly and accurately.

< Kruse, Colin, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans*, Pillar New Testament Commentary, 2012. Colin Kruse’s commentary on Romans in the Pillar series replaces the original excellent work by Leon Morris. For those who need a solid evangelical commentary on Romans but do not need something exhaustive, Kruse is the place to start. It’s difficult to say that Kruse’s work is “better” than Morris’. They are both very good commentaries, and if you can get both, do so. Each has its own strengths. I’ve moved Kruse’s commentary to this spot and placed Morris among the “Runner Ups” only because Morris’ work will likely become more difficult to obtain in coming years now that it has been replaced in this series.

Lange, John Peter, and Fay, F. R., *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*. Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, 455 pages. The material on Romans in this massive volume (over 400 double column pages) falls into three parts: exegetical and critical; doctrinal and ethical; homiletical and practical. The additions by Schaff and Riddle add to its fullness and value. Still offers much help to those willing to dig into its closely printed pages.

? Conservative. He teaches original sin and guilt on Romans 5:12, the deity of Christ in Romans 9:5, holding that the words are a synagogue liturgy applied to Christ.

? Lenski, R. C. H., *The Interpretation of St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans*, 1938, 933 pages. Amillennial, conservative, militantly Lutheran. He uses the Greek extensively, defends the deity of Christ in Romans 9:5; on Romans 5:12 he comments on the question “What if Eve had sinned and Adam had not”: “...every well-trained ass keeps off the hypothetical ice to avoid breaking a leg!”.

? Liddon, H. P., *Explanatory Analysis of St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans*, 1897, 317 pages. Thorough, technical commentary in outline form, often striking in insight, especially in its analysis of logic and structure. He upholds the deity of Christ in 9:5 vigorously.

\$ Lloyd-Jones, D. Martyn, *Romans* (1970-1974), 1729 pages. Wordy messages on Romans 3:20-5:21 with much good exposition and many digressions. He stresses the need for conviction of sin (Romans 3:21); gives clear word studies (Romans 3:25,26); dares (though a reformed expositor) to disagree with John Calvin on Romans 5:12; plainly rejects Karl Barth’s teaching on Romans 8:3,4.

^ Probably not the model most preachers should imitate, but the set is easy to read and Lloyd-Jones sometimes offers material one is hard-pressed to find elsewhere—in addition to the wealth of practical application of Scripture.

Lloyd-Jones did not have the proper respect for the Authorized Version as he corrects it frequently, usually with the Revised Version or the Revised Standard Version. There “corrections” mar the value of his otherwise excellent comments.

% Loane, Marcus Lawrence, *The Hope of Glory*, 1968. Provides a rare combination of accurate exegesis, capable biblical exposition and conservative scholarship.

!! Longenecker, Richard, *The Epistle to the Romans*, volume 43 in The New International Greek Testament Commentary. Given its length, depth of argument, and breadth of coverage, Longenecker’s contribution to the NIGTC series takes its place alongside the most significant and valuable English-language commentaries on Romans. In part, this is because it represents the fruit of a lifetime of study of Paul and his letters. Some of the seeds for this present work were sown in Paul, Apostle of Liberty (New York: Harper & Row, 1964 [rev. ed. 2015]), and the groundwork laid in Introducing Romans: Critical Issues in Paul’s Most Famous Letter (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011). It is best read alongside the latter, since the introductory section is relatively brief for a commentary of this size (39 pages), in many cases summarizing what Longenecker deals with at much greater length in Introducing Romans. The commentary divides the letter up into ten major sections, with various subsections therein. Each subsection of the letter is discussed under the following headings: “Translation,” “Textual Notes,” “Form/Structure/Setting,” “Exegetical Comments,” “Biblical Theology,” and “Contextualization for Today.”

A flow diagram is not given, but Longenecker’s understanding of the letter’s structure is readily discernable from the “Contents” and the beginning of each section. Notable here is that he understands the letter body to start at Romans 1:13 (pp. 132–34), and Romans 1:16–17 to function as the thesis statement of Romans 1:16–4:25 (and not of the whole letter, pp. 155–57). This opens the way for Longenecker’s main thesis (reiterated at various points), that Romans 5:1–8:39 functions as a discrete contextualization of the gospel, distinct from, rather than a development of, Romans 1:16–4:25. Writing to a church that had its theological roots in the Jerusalem church (pp. 9, 267), Paul presents his “spiritual gift” (Romans 1:11) in Romans 5:1–8:36, namely his contextualization of the gospel to gentile audiences, which he otherwise refers to as “my gospel” (Romans 2:16; 16:25; pp. 16–18, 27, 283). By contrast, in Romans 1:16–4:25 and Romans 9:1–11:36 Paul presents a Jewish contextualization of the gospel, referencing ideas already familiar to the believers in Rome. There are other notable theses and emphases: in terms of its genre, the letter is a “protreptic message” (logos protreptikos, “word of exhortation,” pp. 14–15, 41), the apostle filling “this ancient form of rhetoric with Christian content” (p. 768); Paul had two “primary” purposes (giving of the “spiritual gift” and seeking support for the Spanish mission), a “subsidiary” purpose, and two “further” purposes in writing Romans (pp. 10–11); Romans 9:1–11:36 is an example of a “christianized version of remnant rhetoric” (p. 769); and there is a pervasive interest in rhetorical conventions and oral patterns, which Longenecker sees as key to unlocking various parts of the letter.

The commentary has a number of significant strengths. The foremost in my view is that each passage is interpreted within the context of the history of interpretation, from the patristic period to the present day. Longenecker often summarizes this history

in a remarkably full manner. For example, the excursus on “The Righteousness of God” (pp. 168–76) references Plato, Aristotle, Tertullian, Cyprian, Minucius Felix, Arnobius, Lactantius, Erasmus, Ambrosiaster, Augustine, Simplicianus, Aquinas, Cajetan, Luther, Cremer, Stuhlmacher, Sanders, Dunn, Ziesler, and Fitzmyer. Second, Longenecker presents a wealth of suggestive information, enriched by decades of studying Paul’s letters. For example, the discussion of the phrase καθὼς γέγραπται (“just as it is written”) in Romans 1:17 is accompanied by an overview of Paul’s use of scriptural citation formulas (pp. 180–82), and the interpretation of Romans 5:13 is informed by the pattern of Paul’s use of οὐ (“not”) and ἀλλά (“rather,” “nevertheless”) in 2 Corinthians (pp. 592–93). Numerous other examples of the breadth and depth of Longenecker’s knowledge of Paul’s letters could be cited. Third, he has a keen eye to the apologetic force of some of Paul’s statements. This fits with his understanding of Paul’s “subsidiary purpose,” which was to defend against criticisms of his person and misrepresentations of his message (pp. 11, 283). Although several scholars have argued convincingly for an apologetic purpose behind Romans, arguably few commentators have been as attentive as Longenecker to the apologetic import of various parts of the letter.

There are weaknesses. First, the cost of the breadth of Longenecker’s coverage is a prose style that is typically discursive rather than precise, and is, therefore, quite different in presentation from, say, Cranfield on Romans. The effect of this is that it is sometimes difficult to access what Longenecker thinks about a particular verse. Second, I would have appreciated more weighing of interpretive options and validating of exegetical decisions. To give just one example, Longenecker argues that understanding ἐφ’ ᾧ (Romans 5:12) to mean “on the basis of which” is “more accurate linguistically and makes better sense contextually” than the other options (pp. 589–90), but he does not explain why this is so. Third, there is a certain unevenness of coverage, with some parts of the letter receiving much more attention than others. For example, although 48 pages are given to the treatment of Romans 2:1–16, 6:1–14 is covered in merely 11 pages. Fourth, I am unpersuaded by Longenecker’s main thesis, which to my mind underplays the significant linguistic, theological, and biblical connections between Romans 1:16–4:25 and Romans 5:1–8:36.

These strengths and weaknesses combine to suggest that Longenecker’s commentary is better suited to some applications than to others. Among the major English-language commentaries on Romans it will not serve the pastor or preacher as well as some others. But any scholar, pastor, or student will learn much from the wealth of scholarship contained within this volume. When it comes to outlining the history of interpretation of Romans, it has very few peers.

% Luther, Martin. *Lectures on Romans*, 1961, 444 pages. This indispensable work contains lectures first delivered to his students in 1515-16. Shows the process through which Luther went as he grappled with the problems of Catholic dogma versus justification by faith.

? He cites Augustine and Chrysostom after the manner of Scholastic commentators.

* Martyr, Peter. *A most learned and fruitful Commentary on Romans*. Folio, 1568. Being in black letter and very long, few will ever read it; but it contains much that will repay the laborious bookworm.

@ MacArthur, John, *Romans*, MacArthur's New Testament Commentary. MacArthur summarizes his 121-sermon series on the book of Romans which he gave in 1981. Like his other commentaries, it is expository and provides technical analysis when appropriate to substantiate his point. 2 volumes.

% *Romans 1-8*. The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1991. This is a work of unusual merit. From the opening Preface to 8:39 the author holds his readers' attention as he discusses NT theology and its relevance to the Church. This is also a remarkably lucid exposition of the fundamentals of the faith, and MacArthur has something good to offer on every section. Unafraid to take on those whose views disagree with his own, he champions the cause of evangelical Christian (from within the Reformed tradition), and ably defends the faith that has been handed down from Bible times to the present.

% *Romans 9-16*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1994. Concludes MacArthur's exposition of Romans. Skillfully handles the controversies surrounding chs. 9--11. Contains some surprises in the discussion of spiritual gifts. Concludes with weighty discussions of important issues found in the remaining chapters. The author's illustrations are pertinent, and the quotations (often from Reformed writers) are well-chosen.

% McGee, John Vernon. *Reasoning Through Romans*. Plain, practical studies by a famous pastor and Bible teacher.

? Mills, Sanford C., *A Hebrew Christian Looks At Romans*, 1971, 507 pages. An exposition by a converted Orthodox Jew. He stresses the importance of the local church (p. 19) and the eternal sonship of Christ (p. 23); refers to the Jewish law of circumcising an infant who had died (p. 62); attacks New Evangelicalism (p. 63) and Arminianism (p. 289, 218, 403); argues that Scripture contradicts Jewish thought (p. 110); teaches believer's baptism (p. 120, 173f); defends the pretribulation rapture (p. 151); makes the virgin birth the foundation for the deity of Christ (p. 239-240); stresses predestination and the sovereignty of God (p. 276, 284, 302, 306, 318, 321, 326, etc); urges the deity of Christ (p. 296); objects to some of Scofield's interpretations (p. 384-385); concludes with a brief biography (p. 493-494).

@ Moo, Douglas, *Romans 1-8*, Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary. 1991, 591 pages. Moo's commentary is very precise in its analysis, very thorough in all his arguments; many are anxiously awaiting the second half of this masterpiece.

! Moo thoroughly analyzes each passage, interacting with various viewpoints and their supports and usually sifting out clearly his own preferences. His 21-page bibliography and citations are copious. His major sources are twelve in number: Barrett, Calvin, Cranfield, Dunn, Godet, Ksemann, Kuss, Michel, Murray, Nygren, Sanday and Headlam, and Wilckens. He is so cautious that at times it is difficult to determine his viewpoint. Whether agreeing with Moo or not, one will find reward in a careful reading of

his discussions of controversial issues. In commenting on the Greek and discussing theological ramifications, the work must rank as one of the top evangelical treatments, along with Cranfield and Murray.

^ Probably the best Romans commentary now available in English. Its introduction is thin, but Moo exhibits extraordinary good sense in his exegesis. No less important, his is the first commentary to cull what is useful from the “new perspective” on Paul while nevertheless criticizing many of the perspective’s exegetical and theological stances.

\$\$ Persuading readers that yet another commentary on Paul’s Epistle to the Romans is really needed may be an impossible task, but at least one may say that Doug Moo’s commentary is a welcome addition. Like several other recent commentaries on Romans, this one will be two large volumes and will provide discussions of most of the theological and exegetical issues of the epistle. As would be expected in this series and from a NT professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, the explanation of Romans offered here is conservative and evangelical in its approach. Although granting that Romans is not a systematic theology, this volume describes itself as ‘a reassertion of the Reformers’ theology in light of current scholarship and contemporary challenges to that interpretation’.

The author has done his research well, as is evidenced by the 21 pages of helpful bibliography. Twelve major commentaries were selected as ‘sparring partners’ with whom most of the discussions take place (those by C.K. Barrett, John Calvin, C.E.B. Cranfield, James D.G. Dunn, Frederic Louis Godet, Ernst Käsemann, Otto Kuss, Otto Michel, John Murray, Anders Nygren, William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, and Ulrich Wilckens).

Thirty-one pages of the commentary are given over to discussion of introductory issues. After the introduction, each passage of the epistle is given an initial general treatment (usually brief), a translation by the author, a section on exegesis and exposition (the main focus of the commentary), additional notes for more technical material and, for most passages at least, one excursus on specific terms. Footnotes are kept to a minimum. First occurrences of Greek and Hebrew are translated, except for the additional notes. Little attention is given to application of the text. Seminary students and pastors will both find this commentary useful, but other resources must be used for broader theological questions and application.

Moo understands Romans to have been written about 57 A. D. to a mixed group of Jewish and Gentile Christians, with the majority of them being Gentile. With respect to genre, Romans is a ‘tractate letter’ with its main component being a general theological argument. Further definition of genre is viewed as ‘perilous’. With regard to the purpose of Romans, the most debated introductory issue, Moo is rather cautious. One purpose is to provide a letter of introduction for Paul to a church he hopes to add to his list of sponsors for his trip to Spain. Paul did have his eye on specific problems in Rome between Jews and Gentiles, but that is not the reason for the letter. Moo concludes that several purposes must be listed in explaining why Paul wrote this letter, including Paul’s necessity to defuse rumours about himself. Moo also warns against over-historicizing the letter so that ‘we miss the larger theological and philosophical concerns of the biblical authors. While granting that a single theme ought not to be imposed on Romans, Moo suggests that the theme of the epistle is the gospel. In

addition, he lists Christology, salvation history, the new age in the old, justification, and concern for Jews, their law and their relation to God as issues of major importance in the letter. While this list of theological concerns is legitimate, one questions whether the biblical authors focused on philosophical concerns.

The explanations offered in the commentary are clear and helpful, even though, as with any commentary, choices made in interpretation are not always convincing. Indication of some of the decisions may give insight into the approach of the commentary.

In Romans 1:5 'the obedience of faith' is understood so that both words are mutually interpreting, i.e. 'obedience always involves faith, and faith always involves obedience'. In this way, obedience is given proper emphasis.

In Romans 1:17 the question of whether the righteousness of God should be understood as a status given to people by God (either an objective genitive or a genitive of source) or as the saving activity of God (a subjective genitive) is resolved by accepting both. The righteousness of God is seen as equivalent to the verb 'to justify' and is understood as a forensic expression. It refers to righteous standing, not the infusing of moral righteousness. In this context also Moo discusses the arguments of people like Albert Schweitzer and E. P. Sanders that justification by faith is not the centre of Paul's theology. Moo hesitates to place justification by faith at the centre of Paul's thought, but retains it as 'a central, driving force in Paul's thought'. He adds that the Reformers were not far wrong in giving to justification by faith the attention they did. This is, of course, not surprising in a commentary that describes itself as a reassertion of the Reformers' theology.

The discussion of Romans 2 is not very satisfying, but then few discussions of Romans 2 are. Moo views Romans 2:1–16 as addressed to Jews, even though Paul does not explicitly address Jews until Romans 2:17. His view is not impossible, but neither is it convincing. Of the possible explanations of the positive statements in chapter 2 (where eternal life is granted to those who 'work the good'—see vv. 7, 10, 13), Moo says they refer to Gentile Christians or that the statements are not realizable. He prefers the latter and argues strangely that Paul is not speaking hypothetically, even though the promise held out in Romans 2:7, 10 can never become operative because of human sin. Similarly, Romans 2:14,15 are understood to say only that Gentiles do some parts of the law, but are not saved. This is in keeping with the discussion in Romans 1:19–21 which accepts the legitimacy of natural revelation, but sees it as having only a negative result.

The discussion of the genitive expression in Romans 3:22 ('faith of Christ') is interpreted as an objective genitive: faith in Christ. Many will find the arguments against the subjective genitive ('the faithfulness of Christ') unconvincing.

In Romans 3:25 the debate over the meaning of the Greek word *hilasterion* is decided with the translation 'new propitiatory sacrifice'. While the word almost certainly includes the idea of the removal of God's wrath, the use of a word like 'propitiation' does little to foster understanding. Surely some better term can be found, and surely greater focus should be placed on the fact that it is God himself who deals with his own wrath.

One of the decisions that readers may have difficulty following is the suggestion that the 'I' in chapter 7 is to be understood not of Paul personally, nor of Adam, but of Israel. Moo agrees that there are autobiographical elements in the chapter, but Paul is

seen as describing himself in solidarity with the experiences of Israel. As elsewhere, the author has chosen a combination of two opposing views as a solution to the debate. The understanding of Paul's various statements about the law, especially in Romans 7, is debated and difficult, but I find the suggestion that Israel is in view in the statements made unconvincing and hard to believe.

As one reflects on the decisions made in the commentary, apart from the interpretation of chapter 7, most of the conclusions drawn are 'traditional'. That is not a critique, but a recognition that this commentary does not provide a great deal of new insight into the letter. With all the works available on Romans, possibly that would be expecting too much. Still, this commentary will provide insight to students and pastors and merits close study. It will reward serious reading.

< Moo, Douglas, *The Epistle to the Romans*. New International Commentary on the New Testament, 1996. Douglas Moo's commentary on Romans is judged by many to be the best all-around evangelical commentary on this epistle. It is thorough, but it is not overly technical. Moo presents his exegetical arguments carefully and cogently. This reader is especially impressed by his treatment of Romans 11. In terms of intermediate-advanced level commentaries, this one is the best place to begin.

+ Moo, Douglas, *Encountering the Book of Romans*, 230 pages. Moo begins his study with a clear, concise, and helpful survey of the two broad contemporary options for understanding Romans: the "Reformation approach" and the "new perspective approach," pointing out that how one approaches the book inevitably affects how one interprets it. He encourages students to decide which approach best fits with the actual teaching of the letter, and as a help in this process, often indicates how the two opposing views would interpret key texts. Moo goes on to address other introductory matters that are necessary for understanding Romans-the first-century context, the situation in Paul's life as well as the situation in the lives of his readers. After laying the groundwork for reading Romans, Moo leads readers through the weighty argument of this book, highlighting key themes and clarifying difficult passages. Throughout, he also helps students to see the continuing relevance of Romans. As with other volumes in the Encountering series, *Encountering the Book of Romans* is designed for classroom use and includes a number of helpful features, including a bibliography, key terms, chapter objectives, chapter outlines, sidebars, and illustrations. An excellent supplement to Moo's outstanding commentary on this massive book. A must have resource for classes working through Romans.

! Morris, Leon, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 1988. xii + 578 pp. Morris in his retirement has completed one of the best exegetical works of his career. This commentary is quite thorough in most places and will undoubtedly be one of the most consulted treatments of Paul's epistle, useful to professors, pastors, and other serious students. Morris demonstrates a mature and profound grasp of issues that need to be resolved and a wide awareness of literature helpful in viewing Romans from various angles, and then makes many perceptively judicious comments. He writes from the perspective of Reformed theology. The work includes endorsements by Philip E. Hughes and Donald Guthrie on its dust jacket. It uses the New International Version but sometimes

furnishes the writer's own renderings, and has a plethora of long and short footnotes dealing with Greek words, grammar, and other types of issues. Additional excursus on the righteousness of God, truth, the law in Romans, justification, judgment, and sin appear in the body of the commentary. Morris is an amillennialist. Most of his discussions are quite good or at least adequate. All in all, this commentary is worthy of a place on the shelf alongside works by C. E. B. Cranfield, William Hendriksen, and John Murray.

^ A workmanlike commentary in traditional mold. Its strength is the seriousness with which it takes the text; its weakness is its failure to grapple with the tenor of Pauline studies since E. P. Sanders.

? Moule, H. C. G., *Romans*, Cambridge Bible Study Series, 1879, 220 pages. Brief notes by a Calvinistic Anglican, richly devotional, careful and reverent. His introduction includes parallels between Romans and Galatians (pp. 29-30) and Old Testament quotations (p. 31).

? Moule, Handley Carr Glynn, *Romans* in The Expositor's Bible, 1896, 453 pages. Probably the finest, most helpful exposition of Romans in print. He is intensely devotional but writes with real scholarship and insight. His sympathy with the thought and phraseology of Paul is remarkable.

^ Mounce, Robert H., *Romans*, New American Commentary, 1995. Sensible and workmanlike, but not exciting.

^ Murray, John, *The Epistle to the Romans*, New International Commentary, 1960. He will guide you stolidly with the heavy tread of the proverbial village policeman (though with more theology; and not especially the useful appendices and notes).

+ 760 pages. Careful scholarship and spiritual insight characterize this enduring commentary on Romans, generally considered to be Paul's most profound letter. In *The Epistle to the Romans* John Murray offers an exposition of Romans deeply penetrating in its elucidation of the text yet accessible to scholars, pastors, and students alike. In his introduction to the commentary proper, Murray discusses the authorship, occasion, purpose, and contents of Romans and provides important background information on the church at Rome. Murray then provides a verse-by-verse exposition of the text that takes into account key problems that have emerged in the older and newer literature. In ten appendices that close the volume Murray gives special attention to themes and scholarly debates that are essential for a full-orbed understanding of Romans. This combined edition of Murray's original two-volume work, formerly published as part of the New International Commentary on the New Testament series, will hold continued value as a scholarly resource in the study of Romans for years to come. A standard commentary from the leading Reformed theologian of the 20th century.

Presents a post-millennial view of chapters 9-11.

< Originally part of the NICNT series, until it was replaced by Moo's work in 1996, John Murray's commentary on Romans remains a valuable work well worth consulting. Like Hodge, Murray was a systematic theologian, and like Hodge, this did not in any way hinder his exegetical work.

Newell, William R., *Romans Verse by Verse*, 1948. Newell has an annoying habit of correcting the Authorized Version far too much, basing his remarks on uncertain modern critical Greek scholarship. His changing of the traditional text adds nothing to this work. Newell is also weak in chapters 6 and 7 and the doctrines relating to sanctification that Paul lays out. I do think this work is better than his companion work on Hebrews.

? Practical and devotional, although at times his explanations lack clarity. He assumes that Romans 9:5 refers to the deity of Christ, cites Alford for proof.

% Newman, Barclay and Eugene Nida, *A Translator's Handbook on Paul's Letter to the Romans*, 1973. The syntax of this volume is of particular importance and the authors attempt to resolve some of the problems inherent in the text. As will all volumes in this series, the thrust is to meet the need of translators. Pastors and seminarians may also find these works helpful.

Norris, J. Frank. *Lectures on Romans*, 228 pages. A series of sermon outlines and thoughts used as a textbook in Norris' seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. Not very deep or useful.

North, Gary, *Cooperation and Dominion; An Economic Commentary on Romans*, 2000, 2003, 246 pages. A part of North's economic commentary on the Bible. North focuses on economic applications he finds in Romans, so this is a "niche" commentary that will be of limited value to the general student. North was deeply involved in Christian Reconstruction, so he will be post-millennial, anti-dispensational, Calvinistic and will freely use other English versions besides the Authorized Version.

Nygren, Anders, *Commentary on Romans*, 1949, 457 pages. A fresh, provocative treatment by a Lutheran scholar in the Lundensian school of theology and reflecting that viewpoint.

^ Everyone who can do so should grasp his general introductory remarks on pages 16-26. Unfortunately, however, the book is inadequate as a verse-by-verse commentary.

? Neo-Orthodox presuppositions, but often manifesting brilliant insight into Paul's thought. He makes Scripture conform to his philosophical understanding of the two Aeons.

* Olshausen, Hermann., *Commentary on Romans*, 1850. Nobody seems very enthusiastic to Olshausen, but some have borrowed from his pages more than they have confessed. Personally, we do not care for him, but many prize and all respect him.

^ He sometimes offers independent interpretations that are worth pondering.

^ O'Neill, J. C., *Romans*. He is so eccentric in his source theories, arguing that Paul did not write about one-third of Romans, that this is unlikely to be the first commentary to which students and preachers turn.

? Paisley, Ian R. K., *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans*, 1968, 191 pages. A fervent exposition in the form of alliterative outlines. They were prepared while Paisley was in prison for conscience sake. He identifies the baptism of Romans 6:3-5 as spirit baptism (p. 87); holds that the old nature is not sent to a hospital to be cured but to the cross to be crucified (p. 94); argues that covetousness violates all ten commandments (p. 112); emphasizes sovereign election (p. 141).

* Parr, Elnathan, *A Short View of the Epistle to the Romans*, 1651. The style is faulty, but the matter is rich and full of suggestions. We regret that the work is not complete and is seldom to be met with except in fragments.

Phillips, John, *Exploring Romans, The Gospel According to Paul*, 1969. An extensive, popular exposition by a contemporary Bible teacher, rich in illustrations and quotations. The presentation is organized around a detailed alliterative outline; various word studies help to bring out the meaning of the text. The work of a gifted teacher.

Good, practical, useful, as, as his commentaries are, based on the King James Bible. His outlines are also very good and are alone worth the price of the book. He does quote from other English versions a few times.

^ Piper, John, *The Justification of God: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Romans 9:1-23*. This book is regrettably out of print. This is the best exegetical and theological discussion of Romans 9.

I have never really been impressed with Piper or his Calvinism or his adherence to contemporary Christianity and I still haven't figured out what all the fuss is about his ministry.

* Plumer, William, *Commentary with Introduction on the Life, Times, Writings, and Character of Paul*. Plumer is a laborious compiler, and to most men his works will be of more use than those of a more learned writer.

* Pridham, Arthur, *Notes*, 1862. Sound and gracious, but somewhat dull.

* Purdue, E., *Commentary on Romans*, 1855. Not important.

? Richardson, John R., and J. Knox Chamblin, *The Epistle to the Romans*, Proclaiming the New Testament, 1963, 166 pages. Homiletical comments on selected portions of Romans. In some ways useful, but on the whole, rather shallow. Ignores romans 9:5.

* Robinson, Thomas, *Suggestive Commentary on Romans*. Van Doren Series of Commentaries, 1871. A good book in a good style. Worth any amount to preachers.

I think very highly of the format of this and similar commentaries. This is not a traditional commentary but Robinson gives numerous "seed thoughts" that the reader is expected to develop into complete thoughts. Useful critical material is in the footnotes. This is one of my favorite commentaries on Romans, very suggestive and useful and may be the best of the lot.

Ruckman, Peter, *The Bible Believer's Commentary on Romans*, 2003, 610 pages. Generally orthodox with some good practical material but Ruckman is known for several unusual interpretations and a very confrontational attitude with modern commentators and those who are not supporters of the Authorized Version or with his interpretations. This commentary does not include nearly as many of Ruckman's usual criticisms against other commentaries or against those who do not hold to the level of support of the Authorized Version that he would find sufficient, which is refreshing, much like his commentary on Revelation and unlike his commentaries on the Psalms and Pastoral Epistles. This is probably because this book reads like sermon or teaching transcripts instead of a commentary written from scratch. Strongly dispensational, premillennial and anti-Calvinistic, but not one of his better commentaries but it does fill a gap in the Bible Believers Commentary Series. His older commentaries are better.

Sanday, William, and Headlam, Arthur C., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. The International Critical Commentary, 1895, 562 pages. A very thorough commentary on the Greek text from a strongly Arminian view. In an exhaustive discussion of Romans 9:5 they defend the deity of Christ (p. 232-238). On Romans 5:12 they hold that all men sin because they inherited tendencies from Adam (p. 132); the Fall transmitted the liability to sin (p. 132). Probably the most helpful commentary on the Greek.

^ Schlatter, Adolf, *Romans*, 1995, translated from German. A cause for great thankfulness that this has been translated into English. Obviously, it is dated (Schlatter died in 1938), but it is still good at tracing the epistle's line of argument.

+ Schreiner, Thomas, *Romans*, Baker Exegetical Commentary of the New Testament, 944 pages. In the latest addition to BECNT, Schreiner presents a fresh analysis of the substantive Book of Romans.

* Sclater, W., *A Key to the Key of Scripture; or an Exposition, with Notes, upon the Romans*, 1639. An antique but precious book.

Shedd, William G. T., *A Critical and Doctrinal Commentary on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans*, 1879. Greek text. An exhaustive exegetical treatment by a conservative and Calvinistic teacher of the past century. Intended for the theological student and clergyman.

Sightler, Harold, *Romans*, 1983, 379 pages. Fundamentalist, dispensational and pre-millennial but somewhat sparse on the deeper, doctrinal discussions and technical matters. Popular, with some good practical material.

+ Sproul, R.C., *The Gospel of God: Romans*, 256 pages. An outstanding, popular exposition focusing on the essential teaching of this grand epistle. As always, Sproul is crystal clear presenting Biblical Christianity through this masterful letter. Highly recommended.

Sproul, R. C., *The Just Shall Live By Faith: An Exposition of Romans*, 2019, 661 pages. I am unimpressed with this, but then again, I never got much out of Sproul's writings. He is too Calvinistic to be useful and most of his interpretations are rather "boilerplate" Calvinism. He's all over the place in trying to determine which Bible version he wants to use.

Stam, Cornelius R., *Commentary on the Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, 1984, 331 pages. Hyper-dispensational commentary but still some good material if discretion is used.

? Steele, David N., and Curtis C. Thomas, *Romans: An Interpretive Outline*, 1963, 214 pages. Brief outline, strongly Reformed. They defend the deity of Christ in Romans 9:5; stress the Bible as the inspired, inerrant Word of God (p. 1). Sometimes, the work lacks clarity.

* Stephen, John. *Expositions on Romans*, 1857. Sound in doctrine, practical in tone; above mediocrity.

Stifler, James M., *The Epistle to the Romans*, 1960. A lucid and informative exposition, the result of years of study and teaching by a conservative Baptist professor of the past century. The treatment is verse by verse. Premillennial.

! Stott, John R. W., *Romans: God's Good News for the World*, 1994. 432 pages. Stott had a previous work just on Romans 5-8, *Men Made New* (1966). Now with treatment of the whole book, he has one of the best overall popular and highly readable expositions of Romans. He includes a brief introduction and a clear outline throughout. At the end David Stone has added a study guide (p. 408-32) for Stott's commentary. He repeats the outline and lists key questions on many issues. Stott's labor is along lines readers have learned to expect of him. He keeps his writing quite orderly, vital, clear, often arresting in expression, conversant with views, seasoned with choice quotes, aware of Greek word-meanings, often supplying reasons for interpretations. As expected, any reader knowing exegesis and exposition will agree with Stott at times and disagree at others. The work will be strong or weak depending not only on Stott's diligence and detail but on the direction he takes on many verses. For serious lay readers and to some degree for pastors, much is informative, provides competent review, pulls salient things together with a refreshing vigor and style, and puts matters cogently. Yet the work is overly general on some things and passes over others where clear-cut comments would help. As to its value on most passages, the commentary rates highly among popular, vigorous expositions of Romans for the general reading audience. For diligent expository pastors and teachers, it will retain value at many points, but they will need to turn to other works besides.

% An exemplary work in which Stott expounds Paul's magnum opus with his usual skill. He divides the letter into four major sections prefaced by an introduction and concluding with a statement about the providence of God in the ministry of Paul. His treatment of chapters 9--11 is decidedly amillennial, yet allows for "Israel's future" in "God's long-term design." Recommended. (Caveat - As superb an expositor as Stott is, he sadly held to an aberrant belief on hell which allowed for annihilationism).

^ Stowers, Stanley K., *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews and Gentiles*, 1994. He argues that Romans is not concerned with categories like sin and salvation, but rather, Paul is concerned in trying to persuade Gentiles that Christian Judaism will give them the self-mastery they seek; and that this form of Judaism, based on the faithfulness of a Messiah who adapted his approach to meet the needs of Gentiles, offers more hope than a Torah-based form of Judaism. There are so many things wrong with this position that it is hard to know where to begin, but at least the book nicely presents one form (but only one) of the so-called new perspective on Paul.

* Stuart, Moses. *Commentary on Romans*. Moses Stuart is judged to have been at his best in Romans and Hebrews. The present work is in some points unsatisfactory, on account of certain philosophico-theological views which he endeavors to maintain. Haldane denounced him as by false criticism "misrepresenting the divine testimony in some of the most momentous points of the Christian scheme." The charge was too true.

^ Stuhlmacher, Peter, *Romans*, 1994. Now available in English and provides one of the best contemporary Lutheran readings of Romans.

% Taylor, Vincent. *The Epistle to the Romans*, 1955., 100 pages A brief analysis with some rather obvious comments. Arminian.

? On Romans 5:12 he characterizes the whole Genesis account as "this mythology" (p. 39). He also removes the deity of Christ from Romans 9:5.

* Terrot, C. H., *Romans [in Greek] with Introduction, Paraphrase, and Notes*, 1828. Anti-Calvinistic. Why do not such writers let Romans alone?²⁵⁹

< Thielman, Frank, *Romans*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, 2018. The Zondervan Exegetical Commentary series is relatively new compared to some of the other standard series with which readers of this blog are familiar. With each section of the text in the ZECNT series, the commentator provides 1). Literary Context, 2). The Main Idea, 3). Translation of the Greek, 4). Structure, 5). An Exegetical Outline, 6). A verse-by-verse explanation of the text, and 7). A Theology in Application section. There are also often "In-Depth" excursus where the author deals with a particular issue at length. Thielman's commentary on Romans in this series will be very helpful to pastors and teachers. It is easy to read and follow.

? Thomas, W. H. Griffith, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. A Devotional Commentary*, 464 pages. A very helpful, practical and devotional commentary. He defends the deity of Christ in Romans 9:5, gives different views on Romans 5:12, stressing the reference is not to guilt, "but to an evil nature which he inherited from Adam" (p. 156)."

259 Why? Did Spurgeon think that Romans belonged to the Calvinists and that only Calvinists had any business or right to comment on Romans? "Anti-Calvinists" have just as much right to write commentaries as do Calvinists.

* Tholuck, A. F. *Exposition of Romans*, 1842. Moses Stuart confesses his great obligations to this eminent divine, who far exceeds the most of his German brethren in spirituality and is not far behind him in scholarship; yet even he is none too orthodox nor too reverent in his treatment of Holy Scripture.

* Vaughan, Charles John. *Romans. The Greek Text, with English Notes*, 1874, 327 pages. Very valuable to students of the Greek. The result of independent study and honest labor.

Ventura, Rob, *Expository Outlines & Observations on Romans: Hints and Helps for Preachers and Teachers*, 2023, 448 pages. Listed on Amazon with the Kindle price being the same as the print edition price. Why? Not even a free sample or preview is offered.

@@ If you walked into any pastor's study and started looking through his library, you would find that his section on Paul's letter to the Romans takes up more bookshelf space than any other book of the Bible. There are so many commentaries on Romans. And there are so many good commentaries. Whether it is Luther and Calvin, or Shedd and Hodge, or Schreiner and Moo, or Murray and Lloyd-Jones, not to mention more recent commentators such as Garland and Kruse, the breadth and depth on Romans is unsurpassed. Seriously, why do we need another commentary on the book of Romans? I am preaching through Romans right now and I cannot get to every commentary on my shelf, let alone all the really good ones. I must be selective. As I start my preparation and get to the commentary stage, I have limited time and so I have my usual batting order. I have my leadoff hitter, I have my 2 and 3 spots, my cleanup hitter, and my 5th spot. When necessary, I go deeper into the bench. My starting lineup is filled with some time-tested All-Stars and the bench is deep. How is one more commentary on Romans going to help me in my sermon preparation?

Fair question! My friend Rob Ventura has provided an answer with his *Expository Outlines and Observations on Romans: Hints and Helps for Preachers and Teachers* (Mentor, 2023). If Rob was simply attempting to have a place next to Calvin, Murray, Schreiner, or Moo, then it would have been a fool's errand. But Rob aimed at something different, and he achieved his goal.

Expository Outlines is a wonderful primer on each passage in Romans. First, it primes the pump on approaching the text. Rob lays out a general theme for the section. For example, the general theme of Romans 2:1-16 is "God's indictment against the deceived moralist" (p. 65). Then Rob provides a homiletical outline of the text with the verses embedded in the outline. I found this to be incredibly helpful since it keeps the text before you. Then there is a summary of the section. As I have read through several sections, I think the summary works both as a conclusion after developing the outline, but it also works as an introduction and could easily be read first. This can help prime the pump for the Sunday School teacher, the Bible study leader, or the preacher, in seeing the big idea of the passage.

Rob then gives exegetical and practical insights and observations. This section reminds me of some of the older commentators, especially Matthew Poole. The observations are concise, and the text of Scripture is in bold, so it reads well. In my estimation, this section is most helpful for the layman who wants an exegetical digest of

the text. It is exegetical without being too technical. Rob footnotes throughout with grammatical information, more exegetical detail, and support from other more academic commentaries. The interaction with the text is thorough, but not exhaustive. It is not bogged down with textual details or higher critical concerns. It flows. It struck me at one point, going through Romans 10:14-21, that these observations could be used for one's devotions or even family worship with older kids.

For the pastor who has already exegeted the text, he can interact with the exegetical insights as a dialogue partner. One does not have to agree with Rob's exegetical insights to benefit from them. We don't read commentaries to just find agreement, we read to better interact and engage with the text. Rob is faithful to his Reformed and Confessional standards, but he is supremely faithful to the text. This makes him an excellent dialogue partner in the exegetical process.

Often, after laborious exegesis, outlining, and commentary work, we have a good grasp on the meaning of the text, but the well of ideas for application may be dry. If a pastor is struggling with application, these practical insights are marvelously helpful. For instance, Rob's first observation on Romans 10:14-15 brings together Paul's conviction of the sovereignty of God and Paul's insistence that the Gospel be preached to the lost, followed up by some heart-stirring quotes from Spurgeon.

What Rob has done in Expository Outlines is unique. It is not simply a devotional commentary, nor is it strictly an exegetical commentary. It is a wonderful, edifying blend of exegetical digest with theological and devotional reflection. Rob has a gift of taking the modern scholars and the old masters and using them in a complementary manner. His citations of Matthew Henry, Charles Spurgeon, and others give some useful, useable juicy quotes that assist in making the point.

There are two distinct reasons that I believe vindicate the writing of Expository Outlines. The first is the value it provides in application; I know that I frequently need help in this area. Rob's pastoral experience as a preacher shines through in the practical insights. But the second reason is that this book is a prime text for the laymen, the Bible Study leader, the Sunday School teacher, or the dad who is leading his family. I would not hesitate to put this work into the hands of small group leaders, or others, who are taking a group through the majestic book of Romans.

Expository Outlines and Observation on Romans serves a different purpose than a standard exegetical or expositional commentary. The word that continually comes to mind as I go through various section is "helpful."

Where in the Line-Up?

To continue the baseball analogy, we come to game time. The manager needs to turn in his line-up card. He has strategically thought through the defensive positions and the batting order. Where does Ventura fit in the batting order of a full Romans roster?

In my own sermon preparation process, I make it a habit not to look at commentaries until I have adequately exegeted and worked through the text. I cannot interact with the commentaries unless I know what the issues and questions are. But once I get to commentary study, where does Ventura fit?

I could see many placing Expository Outlines in the leadoff spot in the lineup. The leadoff hitter needs to get the game going, he needs to get on base. A leadoff

commentary must be one that orients me to the text. But I could also see Ventura in the 8th spot (before the National League went to the Designated Hitter!). Before someone objects and thinks the 8th spot is for less talented kids, anyone who knows baseball knows the 8th spot hitter is the guy who makes good contact at the plate, he has the ability to move runners, but he also knows how to get on base. The 8th batter can be the spark to get things going later in the lineup. *Expository Outlines* may spark ideas for application, or how to preach the text more effectively. There is a steadiness and reliability about *Expository Outlines* that demands it be in the lineup. This is its value for pastors who can exegete the text for themselves and who benefit from the heavy hitter commentaries.

But what about the layman, who does not have the tools acquired in seminary, Ventura is in the leadoff position. *Expository Outlines* provides the layman with plenty of insight into the theme, the flow, the meaning, and the application of the text. This for many will become their “go-to” book on Romans. As they prepare a Bible lesson, this will be the first book they pull off their shelf. It will serve to get one’s mind and heart moving in a solid direction as they prepare to teach the text.

Rob Ventura is a pastor. He is a seasoned pastor. He writes from a pastor’s perspective. Rob is no ivory-tower scholar. He strives to help the people of God and to serve them. *Expository Outlines* is an excellent contribution in serving the people of God. Pastor, put this book on your shelf and consult with it regularly. It is edifying. Laymen, get this book and use it to help you teach Romans in whatever venue God has opened to you.

Why another commentary on Romans? Well, if that commentary was unique in its goal, easy to use, solid in content, helpful in format, rich in application, and sprinkled with the spices of the old paths, then you don’t have just another commentary on Romans, you have *Expository Outlines and Observations on Romans: Hints and Helps for Preachers and Teachers*.²⁶⁰

Vine, W. E., *The Epistle to the Romans, Doctrine, Precept, Practice*, 1948. A phrase-by-phrase treatment by a British Plymouth Brethren scholar noted for his *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*. Concise, rewarding, warm and clearly evangelical in tone. Brings out much of the force of the Greek for the English student.

* Walford, W. *Curea Romans*, 1846. Walford makes comments of considerable value; he does not stand in the front rank, but his mediocrity is respectable.

* Wardlaw, Ralph. *Lectures on Romans*, 1861. Wardlaw interprets with great sobriety and spirituality, and we never consult him in vain, though we do not always agree with him.

* Williams, H. W., (Wesleyan Minister). *Exposition*, 1869. This epistle has a fascination for Arminian writers; it affords them an opportunity for showing their courage and

260 As with many books, the most useful part of this commentary are the footnotes. He sounds too much Stewart Custer [see any of his commentary annotations, especially in Biblical Viewpoint from Bob Jones University] when he quotes other writers. He slips into a surgery presentation which gets nauseating after a while. He is also Calvinistic.

ingenuity. Mr. Williams's book is instructive.

Wilson, Geoffrey B., *Romans, A Digest of Reformed Comment*, 1969. A concise verse-by-verse interpretation; skillfully culls and blends views drawn from many Reformed interpreters. This digest provides a valuable introduction to a Reformed exposition of Romans.

* Wilson, Thomas (Puritan). *Commentary on Romans*, 1614. Intended for the less-instructed among the preacher's hearers, and put into the form of a dialogue. It is very solid but does not contain much which is very striking or original.

% Wuest, Kenneth Samuel. *Romans in the Greek New Testament*, 1956. Of value to those with little or no understanding of the Greek

^ Ziesler, John, *Romans* in Trinity Press International New Testament Commentaries, 1989. Writes with clarity and frequently takes independent stands that provoke reflection.

