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# ROMANS BIBLE STUDY

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FOR GROUPS OR  
INDIVIDUALS



WITH PERSONAL  
STUDY SUPPLEMENTS

A devotional look into Romans - bedrock of the New Testament!

*Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man,  
unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,  
Romans 4:6*

JAMES P. STEEL

# ROMANS BIBLE STUDY

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### WITH PERSONAL STUDY SUPPLEMENTS

BY JAMES P. STEEL

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## Dedication

This book is dedicated with gratitude to my loving wife, Anne, whose role as a helpmate has enabled me in all my endeavors for Christ during the past 50 years. Her constant encouragement, wise input, and helpful assistance have affirmed our full partnership in all of our endeavors.

# WELCOME!

Welcome to Romans Bible Study. The guide is suitable for *personal* study – simply by reading the outline and the lessons with your Bible open to Romans. This guide is especially suited for use in *adult study groups* and includes extra insights for leaders. This is an enriching study for both young and seasoned believers.

The book contains both Sessions and the Session Supplements which may be assigned *prior* to the study of the respective lessons. Leaders who enjoy using Student Supplements are encouraged to substitute their own supplements or modify the ones which are provided. These Session Supplements should be treated as prototypes to help the instructor accomplish his or her own objectives. Leaders are free to modify *both* lessons and supplements at will (As described in the copyright notice). The Supplements are included in each chapter and they are also available in a single PDF file that allows for easier printing and distribution.

*Special Note: Although this Romans Bible Study addresses the leader directly at times, it also serves as the basis for everyone's study. We strongly recommend that all participants look over Session Supplements prior to studying the Session Material. Sessions and Supplements share the same identifying number. In other words, look over Supplement 1 before reading Session 1.*

**Session Organization.** With the exception of the first study session, the remaining ones follow a similar format which begins with headers such as Text, Lesson Goal, Highlights From our Last Study, Lesson Overview, and Today's Lesson.

**Supplement Organization.** *Supplements are included in the second half of the book.* Supplements are NOT uniform. Some are basic and some are more challenging. Some are in the form of an exercise while others simply tackle subjects which are not in the notes. Their purpose is to challenge growth in a wide range of areas.

*Group leaders who are distributing notes and supplements (from Internet downloads) will want to remember that each Supplement should be distributed a week earlier for use on the first day of class when this is possible. We recommend that the first session be used for the purpose of getting to know each other, setting any class goals or discussing calendar issues. The class can then work on the Session Supplements together during the remainder of the available time.*

*We strongly urge the instructor to refer to these Supplements in actual class sessions in order to underscore the importance of using them and to complement the study.*

## A FINAL WORD.

When this material is used in group sessions its main purpose is to provide a *learning model* by raising important points for study and discussion. While this author is always available for additional comment or assistance, students should be reminded that the instructor will not always agree with this author. In this author's opinion all local church Bible studies should be under the guidance and direction of your pastor. When in doubt about your church's stance on a given area, be sure to seek his biblical insight.

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# WELCOME TO ROMANS

## HOW YOU CAN HELP YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Your study guide is designed to help you help your leader. When you take the time to read the scriptures, answer the questions, and read the extra reference materials which we provide you will be a blessing to your leader and fellow class members. And just as importantly, you will grow in your own knowledge of the Word of God.

## A BRIEF NOTE ABOUT THIS STUDY:

The verses in this study are taken from the King James Version of the Bible. This author likes the KJV (sometimes referred to as the AV, or Authorized Version) because he personally favors the manuscripts it uses, and because it makes for fewer international licensing and distribution issues.

Some questions in the Supplements have only one answer. Other questions leave room for our opinion. A few questions are private in nature and are for your own consideration only. We will never intentionally embarrass you in class. If you are not comfortable answering questions, try answering simple ones which require one word answers. That will prepare you to answer more difficult ones later.

## NOTICE THIS SAMPLE QUESTION:

**1.1** (Matthew 28:19,20) Please explain in your own words the command which our Lord gave to His disciples. Do you think it applies to us today?

Please notice three things about this question. 1.) The above question is numbered 1.1 because it is the first question in the first lesson. 2.) When a scripture ref-

erence is placed ahead of the question we assume you will look up the reference before answering the question. 3.) Many times a question will require more than one answer. It is good to re-read your question to make sure you have answered every part.

Notice that, where practical, many of the scripture references are typed out fully. This is to facilitate those using devices with Bible software on them.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP YOURSELF IN THIS STUDY:

Consider reading over Supplement 15 before beginning. Pay special attention to the section which describes *how to use resources*.

May God bless you as you study God's Word with us!

## TODAY'S LESSON:

### 1. Learn how the study works.

Each session contains the following headings: Text, Lesson Goal, Highlights From the Last Lesson, Lesson Overview, Today's Lesson.

Each session works best when we have filled out the Session Supplement before arriving. Please do not be embarrassed if you have not been able to do so. Just understand that even partially filled out supplements greatly enhance our learning.

**2. Settle on meeting times and session length.** Conflicts arise any time God's people become serious about studying His Word. Please make every effort to be committed to the class times we agree upon, while being patient with those who struggle with difficult schedules.

**3. Please understand that we will be dealing with controversial subjects from time to time.** Please respect those who disagree and try to avoid monopolizing the conversation when you are passionate about a theme!

Now, let's go to work on Supplement 1!

# WHO IS THIS PAUL

# WHO IS THIS JESUS?

## LESSON TEXT:

Romans 1:1-5

## LESSON GOAL:

To lay the foundation for our study in Romans by gaining a clear understanding of who Jesus Christ really is and how we should respond to that knowledge.

## LESSON OVERVIEW:

1. Who is this Paul? (the servant, the separated, the apostle)
2. Who is this Jesus? (He is the Son of God, His name is Jesus, His title is Christ, He is Lord)

## ADDITIONAL MATERIALS OR RESOURCES

### NEEDED:

There is a prototype student guide included at the end of this lesson. If possible, please distribute it in order to assist your students with some advanced preparation.

## TODAY'S LESSON:

“Surfing on the Internet” has become a pastime for thousands of home computer users who happily socialize with other computer users and groups of users around the world. Many times, these “surfers” use false identities so that they can act sinfully or deceive others. Other’s hide their identities simply to protect themselves and avoid being “followed home.” When it comes to our Christian faith, there should never

be an effort to hide our true identities. Christians do not need to play games with masquerades. In these first seven verses of Romans we find straightforward answers about who Paul was and who Jesus Christ was. There is to be no mistaking - this is no false apostle - and no false Christ!

### 1. The Writer Identified 1:1 - Who is this Paul?

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called [to be] an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

**a. Paul - the man.** His name was Paul. [The Student Guide indicates who Paul was, and what his name meant - try not to spend more than a minute or two re-viewing who Paul, the man was. What did Saul mean? What did Paul mean? When was Paul converted?]

### b. Paul - the servant.

The term servant, as it is generally used in the New Testament, is in reference to the bondslave. The bondslave was a freed slave who chose to indenture himself to his master out of love. A true servant does the will of his master. He is characterized by humility. He loves his master, he is obedient to his master, he is proud of his master and loyal to him.

The greatest servant who ever lived was the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our example of servanthood. Paul instructed the Philippians 2:1-8:

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death,



even the death of the cross.

True servanthood is exemplified in a spirit. It is the mind of Christ - it was the spirit He exemplified in His ministry. It is the spirit of humility - Vs. 7a. True servanthood expresses itself in action - Christ became obedient unto death. The servant of Christ does what others will not do. He places the needs of others above his own. He also knows, that servanthood is a select tool for evangelism. Paul said "...I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more." (1 Corinthians 9:19b).

When was the last time some other person exemplified the servanthood of Christ to you? When was the last time you served someone else? Why not take time out of today's class to plan a conspiracy - a conspiracy to serve someone this week?

**c. Paul - the apostle.** Paul saw himself as a servant of Jesus Christ. He also saw himself as an apostle. The word apostle means "sent one." It can be used in a general sense (Acts 14:14), but in almost all biblical instances, it refers specifically to the disciples who were specially selected by Christ to be the first missionaries to the Jews and the Gentiles and the first leaders of the church. Apostles had special authority from the Lord and were given freedom to work special signs and wonders, (2 Cor 12:12). Unfortunately, because Paul was called by Christ after the ascension of Christ, (or perhaps because Mathias should not have been selected to replace Judas) Paul's apostleship was challenged - sometimes by the very ones he led to Christ. It became necessary for Paul to defend and assert his apostleship.

Note: Paul was both a servant and an apostle. Sometimes folks get humility and authority confused. Although Paul was a humble servant of Christ, he spoke and taught with great authority - just as the Lord Jesus Christ exercised both humility and the authority which His Father had given Him. Christians are not apostles in the sense that Paul was an apostle, but we have been given authority to preach the gospel of Christ. (Matt. 28:18-20) and we should always do so with great boldness!

**d. Paul - the separated.** Paul announced that he had been "... separated unto the gospel of God." Why do you suppose Paul chose to announce that he had been separated unto the gospel?

In the Jewish age of the Law, God instituted a system of worship which was administered, not by apostles, but by priests and Levites. These priests and Levites were separated out from the rest of the people to their holy task. (Lev. 22:2).

Note: Separation, in the Bible, always speaks of separating from something to something. For example, we do not simply separate ourselves from sin. That would leave a vacuum, and soon we would be in worse condition than when we started. Instead, we separate ourselves from sin unto God. (1 Thessalonians 1:9). It is not enough to resolve that you are going to turn away from a sin in your life. You must replace it - with obedience to God.

So, we have seen that the Old Testament priests and Levites (and Nazarites, Numbers 6:2) separated themselves unto God. The Pharisees (the sect in which Paul shared lifetime membership) were also proud of their separation. In fact, the word Pharisee means separated. Pharisees were separated unto the law. As a Pharisee, Paul had been *separated* unto the law of Moses.

Ah, but now, Paul has been separated unto the gospel of God. By using this phrase, every Jew who read these words would know instinctively, what Paul meant.

Of course the word gospel is most important. This word which means glad tidings or good news can indicate several things. [Refer to the Student Supplement and ask for four ways in which the word gospel is used in the New Testament.] In general, when Paul speaks of the gospel, the gospel of the grace of God, the gospel of God, the gospel of Christ, or my gospel, Paul is referring to the plan of salvation. The good news is that Jesus Christ came and was crucified and raised again from the dead according to the

scriptures, so that all may have eternal life. (1 Corinthians 15:1-4) The terms, gospel of the kingdom, and the everlasting gospel carry different meanings.

Note: Even though the gospel is called by many synonyms, it is simple enough for the youngest child to understand. If you have not made the decision to receive Jesus Christ as your Saviour, do not put it off. You do not need to have all of your problems settled and all of your questions answered. Simply come to Christ as a lost sinner who needs forgiveness. Place your hope in what Jesus Christ did for you - instead of what you are trying to do for Him.

Please notice, in verse 2, that this gospel is a *scriptural* gospel. By that we mean that God promised it in Old Testament times. He described it. He told of the coming day when Messiah (Jesus Christ) would provide this gospel for us.

## 2. The Subject Identified. 1:3 – Who is Jesus?

When Paul wrote: “Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord,” he spoke tomes. Four important facts concerning Jesus Christ are revealed:

### a. He is the Son of God

Jesus Christ is called God’s Son in verse 3. In verse 4 we read that He was “...declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.”

There is a general sense in which we can say that all of God’s created beings are His sons (even angels) - simply because He created them. (Job 1:6, Gen. 6:2). The Bible also uses the term sons of God to contrast believers with unbelievers - (Romans 8:14). In this sense, unbelievers are neither the children nor the sons of God. But there is another important sense in which the term son of God was used. If you will read passages such as Daniel 3:25, Matthew 4:6, 8:29, 14:33, 16:16; Mark 15:39, Luke 1:35, John 1:34, 3:16-18; and many other passages you will see that the Old Testament believers, the demons, the disciples, and the Lord Jesus all knew and taught that

there was A son of God who was THE Son of God - a unique Person to whom this title alone belonged. This was, of course, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Jews knew that, to claim to be the Son of God was to claim to be equal (one and the same) with God Himself. That is why they hated Christ. That is why they crucified Christ. The Bible says:

**John 5:18** Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

**John 19: 7** The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

*The mistake which cultists make.* Many cultists miss this point. They reject the deity of Christ (the fact that Jesus Christ is God) - saying that Jesus never claimed to be God. Not only did Jesus claim to be God, but He was crucified because of that claim. Every Jew knew that to claim to be the Son of God was to claim to be God. It is true that the Bible clearly states that Jesus Christ is God - both in the Old Testaments and the New Testament. (See Hebrews 1:8 for an example). It is true that Jesus exercised the privileges which could only belong to God (for example, He accepted worship.) But, it is also true - if you really want to understand the biblical arguments for Christ’s deity - you must understand that they are rooted in his title: Son of God!

*The mistake which some Christians make.* Because some Christians do not understand the close link between the sonship of Christ and the deity of Christ they are prone to make other mistakes concerning Christ. For example, one well known Bible teacher mistakenly led thousands of Christians to believe that Jesus Christ was NOT the Son of God before He came to earth! As a result many still teach that this is an earthly title and that, whatever His name was in eternity - it was NOT the Son of God. One verse which they use to argue this point is found right here - verse 4 - You will want to read it carefully.

**And declared [to be] the Son of God with power,  
according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection  
from the dead:**

A careless reading of this verse could lead some to teach that:

1. Jesus Christ was given the title Son of God at His resurrection.

2. The Holy Spirit gave Him this title at the resurrection.

*Both statements are incorrect.* We know that Christ already had this title. The angel said that He would be called the Son of God. The Father said, at his baptism, "this is my beloved Son." (Matt 3:17.) Jesus called Himself the Son of God. (John 11:4). So we see that Jesus already had this title and that the Holy Spirit is nowhere seen giving it to Him.

What *is* Paul saying in verse 4? Paul is explaining that the official proof the legal declaration that Jesus Christ is not an impostor, but truly the son of God can be found in His resurrection. Notice that the word spirit is NOT capitalized in your Bible! Paul is not referring here to the Holy Spirit. Paul is referring to Jesus' own spirit. If Jesus had had ANY SIN - even one "speck of sin" - He could NOT have been raised from the dead! He had to be absolutely sinless! absolutely holy! (...the wages of sin is death - Rom 3:23). Absolute PROOF that Jesus is the Son of God - lies in His resurrection!

Consider the cultist's dilemma. He insists that Jesus Christ is not God. If He is not God - if He is just a man - He could not have been holy. He must have sinned. The Bible says that every child of Adam has sinned. Only God has not sinned. Jesus could have only been God.

But, wasn't Jesus Christ also a man?

#### **b. His name is Jesus.**

The name Jesus means Saviour. We say that Jesus

was the human or the earthly name of Christ. We don't sing of baby Christ in the manger, we sing of baby Jesus. The Bible not only says that Jesus was the Son of God, He was also Son of Man. Why was it necessary for God to become man? It was necessary for Christ to do this in order to bear our sins. It was also necessary for Christ to do this in order to encourage us. He was tested in all points, just as men are tested. He suffered, thirsted, wept, and rejoiced as man with men. He was Immanuel - God with us!

Note: When we speak about the fact that Jesus Christ is completely man and completely God at the same time (the hypostatic union) we are approaching a truth which is impossible for us to fully understand and explain. The Bible says "...the Word became flesh and dwelt (tabernacled) among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the father." We do not need to understand this wonder - we only need to marvel at it!

#### **c. His title is Christ**

Christ was His Kingly or messianic title. By using it He laid claim to all of the Old Testament prophecies concerning the coming Messiah who would save Israel - from her sins and from her enemies. In order to be the Messiah, He had to meet some biblical requirements. One of these was that He must be "...of the seed of David."

#### **d. He is Lord.**

If Jesus Christ is all that Paul has said He is in these verses - it stands to reason that He has the right to rule us. He has absolute authority.

### **3. The Recipients Identified 1:6-7**

*This will be covered in Supplement 3, so you will want to be sure to read it before beginning the next session.*

# PAUL'S BURNING PRAYER AND DESIRE

## LESSON TEXT:

Romans 1:8-17

## LESSON GOAL:

To encourage the student to begin to understand the heart and passion of the apostle Paul as he begins to lead these Romans into the riches of Christ. To observe Paul's ministry skills as he seeks to minister to a church he had never visited. To strengthen our own ability to meditate upon a passage.

## LESSON OVERVIEW:

We have been studying Paul's introductory remarks:

1. Preliminary remarks 1-15
  - a. The Writer Identified 1:1
  - b. The Subject Identified 1:2-5
  - c. The Recipients Identified 1:6-7  
(*This was covered in Supplement 3.*)

Today's lesson adds a fourth ingredient:

### **d. Paul's Intentions Clarified 8:1-15**

## TODAY'S LESSON IS DESIGNED DIFFERENTLY.

It is in simple outline form. *One option* is to follow the outline along with the students, asking the students to comment on the verses, based on the outline. Example: Why does the author use the entry "healthy hearts," and why does he speak of Paul the participant and Paul the praiser? What can we learn and apply from this? This option is preferred.

*Another option* is simply to lecture from the outline. It is very intuitive and needs little explanation, especially for leaders who have been meditating on the chapter.

## ADDITIONAL MATERIALS OR RESOURCES

### NEEDED:

The Student Supplement included at the end of this lesson. Again, when possible, please distribute ahead of time in order to assist your students with some advanced preparation.

Remember to keep a concordance handy because several of the questions in this Student Supplement are concordance dependent.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

In our last study we asked - Who is this Paul? And, Who is this Jesus? We explained the terms servant, separated, and apostle as they related to Paul, and we explained the terms, Son of God, Jesus, Christ, and Lord as they related to Jesus. We covered verses 1-5 only in class.

**NOTE 1:** Verses 6 and 7 were covered in the Student Supplement only - where heavy emphasis was placed on the words, beloved, called, and saints. Please review the importance of understanding the difference of our position and our practice, (or, our standing and our state). Do not fail to do this. It is fundamental to understanding all of the letters of Paul.

**NOTE 2:** Question 3.2 in the Student Supplement is designed to encourage thought and deliberation. While statements b. and c. are both correct, statement c. is the best answer because it best fits in with the terminology yet to come in Romans where Paul is contrasting obedience to the law with obedience to the gospel.

## Today's Outline For Discussion:

### d. Paul's Intentions Clarified 1:8-15

#### 1. Healthy Hearts 1:8

- a.) Paul the Participant
- b.) Paul the Praise

#### 2. Wholesome Prayers 1:9

- a.) It is good to pray.
- b.) It is good to focus your prayers on others.
- c.) It is good to tell others that you are praying for them.
- d.) It is good to mean it when we say we pray for others.
- e.) It is good to pray fervently and without ceasing.
- f.) It is good, when praying, to ask for specific things.
- g.) It is good to seek the will of God in our prayers.

#### 3. Hindered Plans 1:11-13

- a.) Spiritual People Involve Plans - 1:10
- b.) Spiritual Plans Involve People - 1:11,12, 13b
  - 1.) The Plan Expressed - "I long to see you"
  - 2.) The Motives Impressed
    - 2a. He wanted to care - 1:11 (It was an unselfish ministry)
      - the goal...to impart a gift
      - the end... to establish the believer
    - 2b. He wanted to share - 1:12 (It was a reciprocal ministry)
      - the danger of receiving and not giving
      - the danger of giving and not receiving
      - He wanted to bear - 1:13 (It was Paul's divine obsession)
- c.) Spiritual People and their Plans operate with God's Permission 1:13
  - 1.) Present duties may hinder future plans.
  - 2.) Plans may be hindered by physical obstacles and illness.
  - 3.) Our plans may be hindered by Satan himself.
  - 4.) Our plans may be hindered by the Holy Spirit.

### 4. Heavy Debts 1:14

- a.) I am debtor 1:14
  - 1.) What is owed?
  - 2.) Who owes the debt?
  - 3.) Why is the obligation placed upon us?
    - The Judgment Seat of Christ constrains us.
    - The plight of the lost constrains us.
    - The beauty of the gospel constrains us.
    - The love of Christ constrains us.
  - 4.) To whom do we owe?
  - 5.) Are we ready to pay our debts?
- b. I am ready 1:15
  - 1.) Paul was ready
    - See his intensity - "As much as is in me"
    - See his spontaneity - "I am ready"
    - See his priority - "To preach the gospel"
    - See his consistency - "To you...also"
  - 2.) Are we ready?
    - There must be spiritual fire in our bones
    - Our Elders must lead us through open doors
- c.) I am not ashamed (1:16)

## e. The "Big Statement of Romans" 1:16-17

### 1. Paul's Pride Declared

### 2. Paul's Pride Defended

- a. He is proud because of what it is
  1. It is the gospel - glad tidings of good news.
  2. It is the gospel of God - not our gospel.
- b. He is proud because of what it does
  1. It produces salvation
    - Salvation from the guilt of sin
    - Salvation from the power of sin
    - Salvation from the pollution of sin
    - Salvation from the penalty of sin
  2. It is energized by God
    - It is the power of God with respect to its personality
    - It is the power of God with respect to its authority
    - It is the power of God with respect to its durability
    - It is the power of God with respect to its capability
    - It is the power of God with respect to its integrity
- c. He is proud because of who it reaches
  - This gospel is available to the Jews
  - This gospel is available to you.

# GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

## VERSUS GENTILE GUILT

### LESSON TEXT:

**Romans 1:18-32**

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

In our last lesson we focused on the ministry of Paul himself. We saw his love for those to whom he ministered, his own spiritual desires and plans, and a grand and glorious statement of the gospel. It is that "big statement" in verses 16 and 17 of Romans 1 which form the basis for the whole book. Paul is now beginning a process of describing just exactly what that gospel is and why it is needed.

In chapters 1-3 the whole world is declared guilty before God.

### LESSON GOAL:

To shed light on the utter sinfulness of sin and to remind ourselves of God's anger against sin.

### LESSON OVERVIEW:

#### Gentile Guilt Expressed

- a. Knowledge Suppressed 1:18-20
- b. Knowledge Rejected 1:21-23
- c. Knowledge Perverted 1:24 - 32

### ADDITIONAL MATERIALS OR RESOURCES

#### NEEDED:

If possible, please distribute the Student Supplement in order to assist your students with some advanced preparation.

### TODAY'S LESSON:

Today's lesson begins the first in a series of charges which will level the whole world before God. Paul's first target - the pagan Gentiles. Later, Paul will bring in the self righteous Gentiles and the Jews.

**Introduction:** The issue has always been the same. It has never changed. The issue has always been the issue of knowledge - knowledge in general, and the knowledge of God in particular. That was the issue in Eden - "...hath God said?" And that is the issue now. Truth and lie in continual combat. That is the issue of the verses in front of us.

Before we study Romans 1:18- 32 we need to read it one more time. As you read the verses over, challenge your students to take a pen and jot down each reference and phrase which has to do with the words knowledge, truth, wise or understanding. Included in your list should be some of the following:

- 18 - "who hold the truth in unrighteousness.."
- 19 - "because that which may be known of God is manifest.."
- 20 - "being understood by the things that are made.."
- 21 - "Because, when they knew God.."
- 22 - "professing themselves to be wise.."
- 25 - "who exchanged the truth of God"
- 28 - "...retain God in their knowledge"
- 31 - "without understanding"
- 32 - "who knowing the judgment of God"

#### a. Knowledge Suppressed 1:18-20

We all know that sin is disobedience - lack of conformity to the holy character of God. But Romans enhances and expands our understanding of how sin works. We know that Adam's race was infected, that

we all sin and that our pride is at the root of it. But how did sin “play out” in the human race? How does it work in our lives on a day to day basis. The Bible says that it is in the contest between truth and lie. It is a contest over knowledge.

### The Charge Expressed:

When Paul made his great propositional statement of Romans, he spoke of the righteousness of God being revealed. Someone may well ask - so what? Why do we need the righteousness of God anyway? The answer is found in the verse in front of us - because the wrath of God has been revealed against all unrighteousness and ungodliness.

Note: The word “wrath” is from the Greek *orge* {or-gay} [Strong’s 3709] and is used as follows in the KJV - wrath 31x, anger 3x, vengeance 1x, indignation 1x; for a total of 36 times.

While we often associate the Old Testament with the wrath of God and the New Testament with the grace of God, nothing could be farther from the truth. In fact the actual term “wrath of God” occurs once in the O.T. and 10 more times in the N.T!


### God’s wrath.

- God’s wrath is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. God is not partial or selective. God does not let “little sins” pass.
- His wrath is revealed against them because they hold the truth in unrighteousness. The idea behind the word “hold” - is suppression - holding back - retaining.
- The charge is the charge of concealing evidence, holding back the facts. No one is more guilty of this than the modern scoffer.

You may wish to have your class examine 2 Peter 3:3-10 in depth, listing some of the things about which the scoffers are willingly ignorant.

### The knowledge of God.

1. *What knowledge, in particular is being suppressed?*  
The answer is in 1:19 and it is very important: “...that which may be known of God.” It is the KNOWLEDGE OF GOD which is being suppressed. This is the ultimate issue.



*Make a note of this!*

- a. *God is truth.*
- b. *All wrong thinking is wrong thinking about God. No matter how small the error, you can be sure it can be traced back to a wrong conception of God.*
- c. *All wrong thinking results in wrong behavior. No exceptions! The issue is, and has always been - the knowledge of God!*

2. *Where is the knowledge of God being suppressed?*

- 1:19 The knowledge which is in them is being suppressed. “..that which may be known of God is manifest in them..”
- 1:20 The knowledge which is around them is being suppressed. “The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, even his eternal power and godhead.”

The evidence for the existence of God is within us (it is innate) and it is around us (it is observable). It must be consciously denied. The question remains why is it in our natures to deny the knowledge of God?

### **b. Knowledge Rejected 1:21-23**

Romans 1:21-23 places special attention on the heart and the mind - the *mental* rejection. The important thing to notice is that the path of regression is a path of retrogression (to retrogress means to fall backward, to slip to an inferior condition). It appears as though there are seven steps in this process:

1.) They knew God. They knew him as creature to creator. They knew him in their heads, but not in their hearts.

2.) They glorified Him not as God. They did not acknowledge or respond to the things they knew to be true of God.

3.) Neither were thankful. Thanklessness is always an indicator of apostasy. (2 Timothy. 3:2, Romans 1:21). Thankfulness is always the sign of a healthy Christian walk. Consider these references in Romans - 6:17, 7:25, 14:6 and 16:4. Paul makes references to thanks between forty and fifty times in his epistles!

4.) Became vain in their imaginations. Their reasoning and speculations became useless, empty, and foolish. Read Saturday's religion page in any paper for a refresher course in vain imaginations! Consider the foolishness of men in their religion and mythology - from the stories of the ancient gods to the worship of beetles and birds - all the way to modern times with the use of crystals and other new age paraphernalia. Some folks even wear special underwear to protect themselves while others believe God will curse them if they hold their holy books in their right hand instead of their left hand!

Note: the word vanity means empty - as in empty soap bubbles. There is no substance to their great and complicated systems - conjured up in foolishness.

5.) Their foolish hearts were darkened. Foolish means senseless. Once the judgment of men becomes corrupted he is willing to entertain any nonsense. When the truth has been removed nothing remains to sort out the lies. Cicero once said: "Nothing so absurd but has been maintained by a philosopher."

6.) Professing wisdom, they became fools.

In the old west it was a common practice to build small buildings with large facades on the front of them in order to convey a "bigger than life" image. Modern philosophers and educators are often guilty of the same thing. It is common for men to feign wisdom in the absence of it. There is an arrogance which

often surrounds the academic community which is unequaled in any other discipline - especially in its rebellion against God.

Note: A not too distant news story described a psychology professor at Sacramento State University whose sexual depravity in the classroom was so offensive that it motivated one student to charge her with harassment. Rest assured, the university and her student rushed to the instructor's defense. Professing wisdom, such professors are fools.

7.) They exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God into an image like corruptible man.

Incorruption: "that which cannot decay, change or perish." (Psalm 102:25-27). Prudential is not the rock - in fact the Rock of Gibraltar (Prudential's Logo) is badly decaying!

Man will worship. If he does not worship God he will worship himself.

Man cannot stand a vacuum. He will replace the truth of God with vanity and the glory of the incorruptible God with his own glory.

### c. Knowledge Perverted 1:24 - 32

1:24 - "Wherefore, God also gave them up..."

1:26 - "For this cause God gave them up..."

1:28 - "...God gave them over .."

Please notice what the Bible does NOT say. The Bible does not say that God gave up on them. Many believers, for example, have given up on winning homosexuals to Christ, based on Romans 1. God has not given up on homosexuals. Many have been won to Christ and purified.

When God gives someone up in scripture - He gives them over to something. He gives them what they were lusting for. When Hezekiah called his people to repentance in 2 Chronicles 30:7 he said:



And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the LORD God of their fathers, [who] therefore gave them up to desolation, as ye see.

Stephen admonished the unbelieving Jews who were about to martyr him in Acts 7:42:

Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices [by the space of] forty years in the wilderness?

Note: While it is true that these first paragraphs in Romans concentrate on the pagan Gentile it is equally as true that any Jews who were reading this verse in Romans knew that God had also given many of their own people up - He have given them up to the desires of their heart. In fact, it is sad to note - that many of mankind's greatest ills have been perpetrated upon us by the same people who have given us mankind's greatest blessings - the Jewish people.

To what did God give these truth rejectors up?

- 1.) Terrible filthiness. - 1:24
- 2.) Unthinkable idolatry - 1:25
- 3.) Unspeakable vices - 1:26-27
- 4.) Absolute and Complete Depravity 1:27-32

We are often very naive. We are shocked at the unbelievable moral bankruptcy of the Roman Emperors, and at the "Hitlers" and all the thousands who followed them. How could such atrocities be accepted by so many? How could man stoop so low? How could others stand by and not even reprove it? We forget that God graciously hinders the outworking of our natures sparing us from experiencing the full truth about ourselves. And, when God gives men up to their true desires, giving us a glimpse of human nature without God - the whole world gets a small taste of the hellish

capabilities all of mankind has.

This kind of behavior is latent in all of us. We must not presume upon our own righteousness. Any man or woman who rejects the knowledge of God and exchanges the truth of God for lies swims at his own risk. The steps are always downward. They always lead to hell.

## OVER A CUP OF COFFEE!

Homosexuality is in the forefront of the news. Many churches and organizations are clarifying their positions with new documents. We have supplied a typical statement from one such parachurch group for your serious consideration. After reading this statement carefully, ask yourself, 1.) What are some good things that can be said about it? 2.) What should be changed and why? 3.) Is it truly a biblical statement? Be considerate, respectful, and *above all, biblical*, in your discussion:



"As to homosexuality, (name of group) shares the same historic and biblical stance taken by Evangelicals and Catholics that sex is a good gift from God to be enjoyed in the context of heterosexual marriage. (Name of group) also recognizes that homosexuality is a complex and potentially polarizing issue. There is a great debate surrounding its environmental and genetic origins, yet as an organization we believe that homosexuals are men who need the same support, encouragement, and healing we are offering to all men. While we have clear convictions regarding the issue of homosexuality, we are sensitive to and have compassion for the men who are struggling with these issues. We therefore, support their being included and welcomed at all our events."

# GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

## VERSUS JEWISH GUILT

### LESSON TEXT:

Romans 2:1-16

c. Knowledge Perverted 1:24 - 32

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

The whole world has been called into the court room before a holy God. The first division of Romans (Condemnation - 1:1-3:20) is living up to its name. The whole world is being declared guilty before God. We saw that the knowledge which God has revealed has been suppressed, rejected, and perverted. We saw that this is a progressive process of denial. In other words, when men suppress the truth they will inevitably reject it, and ultimately pervert it.

One need to go no further than today's study in order to argue the point that suppression, rejection, and perversion of God's truth is rampant today. God has given men over to their own desires and natures. The judgment of God is fast approaching.

### LESSON GOAL:

- To gain a deeper understanding of the doctrine of the wrath of God.
- To better prepare ourselves to deal with morally self righteous men who do not see their need of the gospel.
- To increase our own appreciation of God's wonderful saving grace.

### LESSON OVERVIEW:

*In our last study we saw....*

#### Gentile Guilt Expressed

- a. Knowledge Suppressed 1:18-20
- b. Knowledge Rejected 1:21-23

*Now we see...*

#### God's Judgment Revealed

- a. Its Abuse. 2:1-4
- b. Its Certainty. 2:5-6
- c. Its Demands. 2:6-10
- d. Its Impartiality. 2:10-13

Please be sure to have a copy of your current Student Supplement on hand.

### TODAY'S LESSON:

The overall focus of Romans 1 and 2 is the wrath of God. (1:18). In chapter one we see God's wrath expressed in the context of knowledge, knowledge rejected. Now, in chapter two we see God's wrath expressed in the context of God's judgment, judgment revealed.

Consider first,

#### **a. God's Judgment: Its Abuse. 2:1-4**

In these verses we see God's judgment rationalized.

Note: In this context, to *rationalize* is to devise a reasonable, but untrue explanation. We usually rationalize in order to explain or excuse behavior which would not otherwise be considered acceptable. A young man may say, "It's OK for me to date an unsaved girl, because the last unsaved girl I dated got saved." He has provided an apparently reasonable explanation for his behavior. In reality he has said that he is willing to risk setting a bad example before others, is willing to risk losing control of his own emotions, and is willing to place himself in the presence of the temptation to sin

and disobey God by becoming unequally yoked with an unbeliever. He has reasoned that his past success validates his present disobedient behavior. This reordering of our priorities in order to accomplish our objectives is called rationalism.

How were these moral Gentiles rationalizing the facts? How were they abusing the judgment of God?

### 1. First, they shifted the blame.

1. Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another...

- The first rule of self defense is to shift the blame --

Adam did it - (Genesis 3:12)

Our children do it - "Look what you made me do."



*The singularly most important task of the parent is to teach his child to accept responsibility for his own behavior. If you fail at this, you will lose your child. If you succeed at this, you will win your child. Never let a disciplinary encounter pass before you have gained admission of responsibility. Set the example in your own acceptance of personal responsibility.*

We do it - the sins of others are always more grievous than our own.

God's grace teaches us to do the opposite. Consider the different responses of the publican and the Pharisee - Luke 18:10-14.

When looking at Romans 2:1, the strongest emphasis should be placed on the word "whosoever." Our behavior is inexcusable, no matter who we are or where we hail from. We are all without any excuse for dis-

obeying God in the slightest manner. The most dangerous words we can utter are: "God knows my heart" They are dangerous because God does know the heart much better than we know it.

- Why is it useless to try to shift the blame? Part of the answer is in the last half of verse 1: "...thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things."

We often tell our children (and with good reason): When you point one finger forward, three fingers are always pointing back at you.

While we may not commit the exact same act, we are guilty of the same kinds of sins which we accuse others of doing. (Matthew 5:22, 28; 1 John 3:15, Ephesians 5:5.) None of us can afford the luxury of righteous indignation. Read also how Nathan confronted David, appealing to his own righteous indignation in 2 Samuel 12:1-7.

- Why is it useless to try to shift the blame? The rest of the answer is in 2:2.

**But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.**

It is useless to try to shift the blame because God judges us according to the standard of truth - and that same standard applies to all of us. God judges us according to the truth - not according to how well we measure up to our neighbors.

*Illustration:* Men have a great deal of difficulty applying justice and accepting justice. In the O. J. Simpson trial, blacks who believe in his innocence outnumber whites who believe in his innocence by 2 to 1. Some blacks pointed out that the very fact that convictions for similar crimes are higher among blacks than whites it is clearly evident that whites are prejudicial in the application of justice. Some whites said that if Simpson were white the number of blacks and whites who believed in his innocence would probably be equal. Men will always have difficulties in the fair

application of justice and in accepting what is just. God does not have this difficulty because He judges all men according to the same standard, *truth*.

- We can be sure, the Bible says, that God judges according to truth. There is no confusion about the integrity of the evidence.

## 2. Secondly, they miscalculated their odds. 2:3

And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

- The key to understanding this verse is found in the word thinkest. This is the same Greek word which is also translated impute, reckon, and account. (3049 logizomai {log-id'-zom-ahēe}. This is accountant's terminology.

### *Building brick by brick...*

The concordance says: "This word deals with reality." If I "logizomai" or "reckon" that my bank book has \$25 in it, it has \$25 in it. Otherwise I am deceiving myself. This word refers to *facts* not *suppositions*.

What normally happens to the person who fails to keep accurate records in his check register? Usually, we end up writing a bad check. This is because it is in our natures to believe that we have more than we really do. In other words, it is easier to remember our deposits than the checks we have written.

We may imagine that our accounts are good. We may be calculating that we will escape the judgment of God, but we are only dreaming.

- The Jews thought that they could escape the judgment of God because they thought they were riding in on Abraham's coat tails. They were crediting righteousness to their own accounts because they had the law and were circumcised. They had the heritage, the temple, and the feasts. These were deposits which they

thought would offset their expenditures. In God's eyes, they were wooden nickels.

The Gentiles were no better. Because some of them had not slipped all the way to the bottom, they assumed a reasonable chance of success. Like men today who think that their church attendance, their activism for charity, their faithfulness to their wives, and their honesty with their customers will all go well for them.

Notice also:

## 3. They presumed on God's goodness. 2:4

Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

One cannot write bad checks with God and assume that because He is a loving banker He will overlook his overdrafts.

- They presumed on God's goodness. Whatever makes men think God owes them any kindnesses? Yet daily they use them up without the slightest acknowledgment of their source.
- They presumed on God's forbearance. See Ecclesiastes 8:11 and 2 Peter 3:9

Question: We have all seen and heard of failed escape attempts. Is there any way to escape the wrath of God? (Acts 4:12). Thomas Robinson said "The guilty flee, the pardoned alone escape the judgment of God."

## b. God's Judgment: Its Certainty. 2:5-6

Consider the bottom line of this profit and loss statement in 5-6:

But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

Have you ever been in a position where you have had

to collect money from overdue creditors? Collectors can usually expect some typical responses. Sometimes the debtor tries to shine them on. He promises them that the check is, well almost, in the mail. He assures them that the problem will soon be fixed. Other times, there is genuine regret for the problem and an honest attempt is made to remedy it. Many times the collector gets an earful. The angry debtor somehow manages to place full responsibility for all of his difficulties right at the feet of the creditor. In other words, he has a hard and impenitent heart.

God continually confronts us with our sin and our sinfulness. In the end, we either shine Him on, truly repent, or harden our hearts. God's convicting Word always accomplishes the purpose for which God has sent it. (Isaiah 55:10,11)

- Are you guilty of deficit spending? Paul says that we are treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath. Paul is still using accounting terminology as he explains that our indebtedness to God is increasing on a daily basis. The California State Lottery is progressive. The jackpot keeps growing on a daily basis until there is a winner. Man's indebtedness to God is progressive..the counter clicks on and on and on. But the payoff will be in wrath.

- When is the day of wrath? The day of wrath is not necessarily one day long. It is simply that appointed time when God settles His accounts with men. It is the day when the books are opened. God has accounts to settle with the whole human race, He has accounts to settle with Israel. He has accounts to settle with those who have touched Israel. He has accounts to settle with each individual. The day of wrath is appointed most particularly to the tribulation period when the whole world will be brought under God's wrath. For unbelievers, the day of the Great White Throne Judgment, rest assured, will be their day of wrath. (Revelation 20:11-15).

The following Brick by Brick notes from a typical source (Strongs - See Supplement 15) have been pasted in to help both leader and student see what a great emphasis the scriptures places on this theme.

## ***Building Brick by Brick...***

### **“treasurest up”**

What an awful idea is here expressed -- that the sinner himself is amassing, like hoarded treasure, an ever-accumulating stock of divine wrath, to burst upon him in the “day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God!” And this is said not of the reckless, but of those who boasted of their purity of faith and life.

### **# Romans 9.22 \* “vessels of wrath fitted for destruction;”**

# Lu 16.25 \* “thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.”

### **“in [the] day of wrath”**

The prophets from Amos onwards to John the Baptist, taught that the day of the Lord would be a day of judgment:-

# Amos 5.18 Isa 2.12 13.6 24.21 Jer 46.10

Zeph 1.7,8 Ezek 7.7 30.3 Joel 2.1

# Zech 14.1 Matt 3.7 Luke 3.7

This same expectation is continued in the N.T.:-

# Luke 17.30 Acts 2.20 1Cor 1.8 5.5 2Cor 1.14

1Thess 5.2 2Pe 3.10,12 Re 6.17

# Re 16.14

The judgment of God is certain. God will render it.

### **c. God's Judgment: Its Demands. 2:6-10**

*(Please read Romans 2:6-10 in your Bible now.)*

We saw that the judgment of God is according to truth in 2:2. Now, we see that it is according to deeds in 2:6. God will render to every man *according to his deeds*.

- In these verses we see the path and reward of the

righteous and the path and reward of the unrighteous. The promise of eternal life is given to all who by patient continuance lead the life of perfect well-doing.

The logical question remains “why did Paul place the gospel on these terms? Doesn’t it sound as though he is offering salvation by works?” That is not the purpose of these verses. The purpose of these verses is to establish the fact that God judges all men on the same basis. He makes the exact same demands on every man. These are the demands. These are the requirements. Whether anyone can meet these demands is a question yet to be answered by Paul (Romans 3:23). The point is that these are the demands which must be met.

- Consider the story of the rich young ruler who came to Christ and asked what he should do to gain eternal life. Notice what the Saviour did not say. He did not say. “Just ask me to forgive your sins.” The rich young man thought he had no sins. He thought he had kept all of the commandments from his youth. When the Saviour told him to sell all that he had and give it to the poor and then follow Him, the rich man went away with sadness. He did not see that he really had broken the commandments. Among other things he was a coveter. (Mark 10:17-22).

- We must get persons lost before we can get them saved. The Lord Jesus practiced this as well. He repeated over and again “Moses said...but I say” - His standards were always higher than Moses’ - and they related to the heart - not just the behavior. NONE of us have ever fulfilled according to 2:7. *None* of us have, by patient continuance in well-doing sought for glory, honor, and immortality.

#### **d. God’s Judgment: Its Impartiality. 2:10-16**

(Please read 2:10-16 in your Bible now.)

It is in our nature to see ourselves as exceptions to exception-less rules. Our fathers used to say “The mills of God grind slowly, but ever so surely.” The Bible says, “...whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” (Galatians 6:7).

### ***Building Block by Brick...***

(Strong’s)

#### **- “no respect of persons”**

- 4382 prosopolepsia {pros-o-pol-ape-see’-ah}
- from 4381; TDNT - 6:779,950; n f AV - respect of persons 4; 4

1) respect of persons

2) partiality

The fault of one who when called on to give judgment has respect of the outward circumstances of man and not to their intrinsic merits, and so prefers, as the more worthy, one who is rich, high born, or powerful, to another who does not have these qualities.

- *God’s judgment is impartial.* All men are partial. Only God is impartial. We are all biased. We all filter information through our prejudices, perceptions, and the amount of knowledge available to us at the time. We cannot even conceive of a God whose mind is so perfect, so accurate, so unbiased, that He can dispense justice wisely.

- *God’s judgment is appropriate.* God will judge both Jew and Gentile (Jew first, Romans 2:9) and His judgment will be appropriate to their respective contexts. Those who have the law will be judged by the law, those who do not have the law will be judged without the law, Romans 2:12)

- *God’s judgment is truthful.* It is based on the facts. Vs. 13. Not the hearers, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

- *God’s judgment is thorough.* It is based on all the facts. 2:16 God knows the secrets of men’s hearts.- *God’s judgment is righteous.* It is according to the gospel. 2:16.

Remember the three “according tos” of God’s judgment:

- According to truth - 2:2
- According to deeds - 2:6
- According to the gospel -2:16

2:3

**And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?**

There is no *escape!*

Have you ever heard a little boy talk about what he would do if a robber came into his home? In his little mind he thinks that he could run so fast and hide so well that the robber would never be able to catch him. He thinks he can flee. That is the thought behind this word escape. No one will be able to flee or hide from the wrath of God.

The Bible says that, in the tribulation period - the great day of His wrath - men will ask the mountains and rocks to fall on them and hide them from the face of Him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of God. But, there will be no escape (Revelation 6:16).

*Are you prepared for the wrath of God?*

FOR ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION:

As time allows:

It has been said that the Puritans overemphasized the wrath of God and the sinfulness of man - to the point of obscuring the love and salvation of God.

Do you think the pendulum has swung too far the other way? When we present the gospel, should we speak first about what God can do for man, or should we speak first about what man has done against God? Do you feel we have the proper balance of emphasis in our church fellowships? Be kind.

***Next: As usual, please read Supplement 6 in the back of your book before doing Session 6.***

# GREATER PRIVILEGE, GREATER JUDGMENT

## LESSON TEXT:

Romans 2:17 - 3:8

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

Two studies ago we saw *truth* perverted. - Men did not like to retain the truth of God, and God, in turn gave them over to their vanity.

In our last study we saw *God's judgment* perverted. We saw unbelieving men try:

- 1.) to shift the blame of sin on others, and;
- 2.) to calculate their own odds for success with God based on the performance of others, and;
- 3.) to presume on the riches of God's goodness.

We have focused especially on the decadent Gentile and the civilized Gentile. It is now time to really set our sights on the self righteous Jew.

## LESSON GOAL:

To understand how the Jews in Jesus' time were guilty of hypocrisy and misappropriation of the blessings of God, thus blinding themselves to real salvation. We want to examine our own hearts in order to avoid hypocrisy in our lives.

## LESSON OVERVIEW:

Here's the broad argument (outline.) Statements A, B, and C on this page combine to make one statement: *False assumptions* based on *false foundations*, always lead to *false conclusions*. The Jews assumed that their special place of privilege made them exceptions to the application of God's justice which applied to all others.

## A. False Assumptions... (Jewish Hypocrisy Exposed) 2:17-24

1. The Jews saw themselves as:
  - a. Possessors of the Truth. 2:17
  - b. Protectors of the Truth. 2:18
  - c. Providers of the Truth. 2:19-20
2. In fact the Jews were disobedient to the truth.
  - a. The teacher was not a learner. 2:21
  - b. The preacher ignored his own message. 2:21
    1. Great contradictions (Stealing / Adultery / Sacrilege / Lawbreaking)
    2. Great consequences. 2:24

## B. ...Based on False Foundations... (Circumcision Misunderstood) 2:24 - 29

1. If...
  - a. The value of circumcision lies in the obedience of its owners, verse 24; and
  - b. The value of circumcision is voided in the disobedience of its owners, verse 24;
2. Then...
  - a. The uncircumcised who are righteous shall be counted as circumcised, verse 26; and
  - b. The uncircumcised who so fulfill the law may judge the circumcised who do not.
3. Because real Jewishness is inward, not outward. Verses 28-29

## C. ...Always Lead to False Conclusions. (You Cannot Reason With God) 3:1-8

1. The truthfulness of God cannot be preempted by privilege 3:1-2
  - a. The Question: Was being Jewish and circumcised of no value? Verse 1.



- b. The Answer: Jews were at great advantage because they had the truth. Verse 2.
- 2. The truthfulness of God cannot be negated by unbelief 3:3-4
- 3. The truthfulness of God cannot be obligated by patronization 3:5-7
- 4. The truthfulness of God cannot be intimidated by propaganda 3:8

Are we trying to deal with God on our own terms?

## TODAY'S LESSON

**Introduction:** I will never forget the surprise I experienced while walking home from school one day as a teenager. As I approached our house I looked up at the siding and realized that the paint was faded, blistered, and peeling. What surprised me was how long it took for me to notice it. Going in and out of that same house every day made it easy to overlook its faults. I had grown accustomed to its decay on a daily basis. The Jewish people needed a paint job. Their conceptions of God and His Word had decayed and blistered year after year until the time finally came when the religion they practiced had no correspondence to the truth. Religiosity had slowly replaced true religion - ever so gradually. Like the man who watched his hair fall out daily and then, on that fateful day when the last hair fell, cried out "Oh no, I'm bald!" - these folks had no conception how bad things had gotten.

Hindsight is better than foresight. As we study the hypocrisy of these Jews we must ask ourselves are we guilty of the same sin? How can we protect ourselves from our own blind spots and presumption?

### A. False Assumptions... (Jewish Hypocrisy Exposed) 2:17-2

#### 1. The Jews saw themselves as:

##### a. Possessors of the Truth. 2:17

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

Called in *this* verse means "surnamed." Pride in our family names, in our heritage, and even in our race is not wrong, so long as it is the kind of pride which results from thankfulness to God for His gifts to us, and embraces a humble acceptance of the privileges which God has provided. Pride becomes sin when it is bigoted, censorious, and exclusive. There is a fine line, for example: Being proud to be an American, and thinking that Americans are somehow superior to other nations, represent *two* kinds of pride.

It was an honor and a privilege to be called a Jew and it is to this very day.

The point which we believe Paul was making was this: When one is proud of his name and his heritage, one has an obligation to live up to it. A man with a title should behave in a manner that brings honor to his title. In past years the British monarchy came under great stress because that generation of royalty lost its perception of what it meant to live up to a royal title. The morality which once was expected of royalty is no longer required. No one is quite sure how royalty should behave anymore. If you call yourself an American, live like one. If you call yourself a Jew, live like one. If you call yourself a Christian live like one!

#### What it meant to be a Jew.

There is a little misunderstanding concerning the term Jew, and cultists, who love to major over minors sometimes make mountains over molehills when discussing this term. The word Jew is simply a reference to anyone who is of the tribe of Judah, or a Judean. Earlier in history, the term *Israel* was used as a broad term referring to all the sons of Jacob, and the word *Jew* was used for the tribe of Judah in particular. This was the most respected of the tribes because it was to be the tribe from which the Lion, Messiah would come. In later years, however, Israelites from the remaining tribes were commonly called Jews, as they are to this day.

At the present time, of course, we have no way of distinguishing the members of the tribes of Israel. While

it is okay and proper to use the terms interchangeably, you will want to remember (for purposes of Bible history and prophecy) that it may be necessary to make the technical distinction at times.

Note: While most Jews were not members of any sect, there were three well known sects. The Pharisees comprised the largest sect. It prided itself on its strict adherence to both the written law and the oral traditions which were also respected as law.

The Sadducees had fewer members but were wealthier and held greater political power. They were the liberals of the day who often denied, among other things, the idea of a resurrection. They held mainly to the inspiration (of sorts) of the books of Moses.

The third group, the Essenes, are still an enigma to us. They were a small sect and were reclusive, rejecting temple worship at Jerusalem. Bible archaeologists are still debating their true characteristics.

### **The Jew rested in the law.**

In general, the term law was a reference to the Ten Commandments (Exodus) in particular, and the five books of Moses in general. The books of Moses are the first five books in your Bible. Jewish children didn't need fairy tales to capture their imagination. Every Jewish child, before he was five years old, sat wide eyed on the knees of his parents while listening to the great stories of their traditions and their heritage. They had the greatest heritage of any nation on earth and the only nation which could authenticate their heritage. And the greatest story...the greatest story of all, was how God came down to Mt. Sinai! How it trembled and filled with darkness and smoke as the glory of God was revealed and the laws of God were given, not just to any people, but to the Jews alone.

### **The Jews made their boast of God.**

It is not a sin to be proud of God. It is a sin to be proud because God chose to reveal Himself to you instead of to others. Their joy was not in God (Psalm 34:2). Luke 12:48 reveals a vital principle:

“...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.”

Great advantages bring great liabilities with them. Instead of being proud that the living God had revealed Himself unto them, the Jews should have been broken in humility.

### **The Jews were the sole possessors of the truth.**

With that possession of the truth came great obligation. If you know Christ as Saviour, you are a possessor of the gospel, and incumbent upon you is a duty even greater than theirs!

#### **b. Protectors of the Truth. 2:18**

And knowest [his] will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law;

- The Jew knew he had an intimate acquaintance with the will of God...or so he thought. In terms of the Gentile nations around him, he certainly did have a greater knowledge of the will of God.

- The key to understanding this verse is linked very closely with the word *approvest*. The word signifies the ability to prove, test, and examine. It speaks of discernment. These Jews, who often prided themselves in making great hair-splitting determinations of little consequence had, at the same time, omitted the “weightier,” more important issues. Jesus said:

Matthew 23:23

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier [matters] of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

Fundamentalists sometimes pride ourselves in being discriminating and discerning. We have not been innocent of all the charges made to us, that we are often more concerned about answering questions which people aren't asking while ignoring the questions people are asking. We too have the Word of God. We

too know the will of God. We too are discerning. Are we guilty of the same self righteous sins to which these Jews fell? It is not wrong to have the truth; to protect the truth. It is wrong to pervert the truth to our advantage and to omit the matters of law, judgment, mercy, and faith while arguing over the exact length of someone's hair or hemline or the music to which they listen, when those discussions take themselves away from the Word of God.

Thomas Robinson has pointed out:

### The Jews:

- Boasted of God as their lawgiver and King.
- Boasted of God as giving them the law on Mt. Sinai
- Boasted of God as delivering them from Egypt and Babylon

### Believers:

- Boast in God who in Christ their Law-fulfiller and Savior.
- Boast in God who in Christ satisfied that law on Calvary.
- Boast in God as delivering us from sin, Satan and hell.

That kind of boasting is just fine. When it comes to the subject of boasting, our best advice comes from Paul who said in 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. Providers of the Truth. 2:19-20**

- This Jew to whom Paul referred saw himself as a guide and an instructor. A guide was a leader of the ignorant and uneducated. An instructor was one who

taught by discipline and chastising. There is nothing wrong with being either a guide or an instructor. However, the sin of arrogant presumption is, regrettably, associated with teaching. Often, the more gifted a teacher is the more arrogant he becomes.

These teachers saw their students as fools (ignorant, and senseless). They saw them as babes. One of the first indications that a teacher has been infected with arrogant pride can be found in the treatment of his students or his congregation. When we begin condescending to our listeners we are on dangerous ground.

So we see that, these Jews saw themselves as the possessors, protectors, and providers of God's truth...

### **2. In reality, the Jews were disobedient to the truth.**

- a. The *teacher* was not a learner. 2:21

**Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?**

The ministry of the Word of God is a serious matter. It is serious because there is a heart exercise which the teacher of the Word of God must go through each time he or she opens the Book. We are either humbled by the truth we encounter and prompted to confess our failure to obey this Book each time it shows our true character, or we become dishonest in the handling of the Word of God. We begin emphasizing the things which do not convict us personally, all the while ignoring the things which do convict us. The Bible is a fearful book to handle because it is a living book.

- b. The *preacher* ignored his own message. 2:21

- 1). Great contradictions (Stealing / Adultery / Sacrilege / Lawbreaking)

**Stealing.** Much of the Jews' disobedience to God's Word came from their ability to rationalize their way around the teachings of scripture. They were particularly adept at hating the Gentile dogs - and because they viewed the Gentiles as almost subhuman and as dirt in their eyes, they shared no compunctions about mistreating them, swindling and stealing from

them. Professed Christians justified taking Indians and Blacks into slavery, again, by seeing them as less than human. We are thankful that many Christians, however, not only saw these races as human, but defended them and shared the gospel with them.

**Adultery.** It is difficult to understand how a people who so prided themselves in the law could so openly and blatantly defy the Ten Commandments. At the time of Christ there were three rabbis in particular who had managed to rationalize adultery. The permanence of marriage had been reasoned away.

**Sacrilege.** As a result of the captivity, it was, of course, in fashion to abhor idolatry. At the same time, when money was to be made, compromising exceptions could also be made. It is not unlike some modern Jews who, while hating Christ, have no compunctions about making and selling Christmas gifts and trappings. It was quite one thing to abhor idolatry within the inner walls of the synagogue, and another to abhor it in business life.

Sacrilege is temple robbing. It could well mean that Paul was suggesting that these people who prided themselves in hating idols, were still robbing the temple of the living God - by not giving God what is rightfully His and by assisting others to default from their obligations to give to God. (Malachi 3:8-11). Modern Christians who are quick to argue that tithing is an Old Testament practice and that we are to give as God has prospered - are often guilty of giving precious little to Christ because they have excused themselves. It is not the purpose of today's class to deal with "to tithe or not to tithe", but it is our purpose to remind ourselves that we can still rob God of what belongs to Him - and that grace does not absolve us from obeying God.

**Law breaking.** It is not simply that these folks broke the law. The issue is that these are the very ones who were boasting in the law.

2). Great consequences. 2:24

**For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you,**

When we sin, we do not just sin against ourselves, we bring shame to the *name* of Christ. These Jews, who were originally commissioned to be God's missionaries to the Gentiles were so disobedient that they were the cause of God's mockery and blasphemy.

When the believer succumbs to sin, alcohol, fornication, and divorce, he brings a mockery to the name of Christ and he blasphemes the *name* of God. God hates double standards.

**False assumptions...**

**B. ...Based on False Foundations... (Circumcision Misunderstood) 2:24-29**



OVER A CUP OF COFFEE

*Consider what would happen if we all had crosses tattooed on our foreheads! Properly done, there might be some advantages.*

*There would also be some disadvantages. One disadvantage would be that some folks would soon think that they were Christians because they had a cross tattooed on their foreheads and not vice versa. This same thing happened with circumcision. People soon assumed that because they were circumcised they were right with God and were recipients of His special favor. One rabbi even taught that father Abraham sat at the gates of hell and would let no Jew who was circumcised through its doors!*

1. If...

a. The value of circumcision lies in the obedience of its owners, 2:24; and,

b. The value of circumcision is voided in the disobedience of its owners, 2:24;

2. Then...

a. The uncircumcised who are righteous shall be counted as circumcised, 2:26; and,

b. The uncircumcised who do fulfill the law may judge the circumcised who do not.

3. Why? Because real Jewishness is inward, not outward. 2:28-29

Finally,

### False assumptions, based on false foundations...

#### C. ...Always Lead to False Conclusions. (You Cannot Reason With God) 3:1-8

1. The truthfulness of God cannot be preempted by *privilege*. 3:1-2

a. The Question: Was being Jewish and circumcised of no value? 3:1

b. The Answer: Jews were at great advantage because they had the truth. 3:2

- Being a Jew, having the law, and having circumcision did not save, but it put men at a great advantage to be saved. It is a wonderful thing to have truth, but truth obligates us to obey it.

2. The truthfulness of God cannot be negated by *unbelief*. 3:3-4

- Our unbelief has no impact on God. Facts are facts whether we deny them or not. If every man on earth doubted the truth of God, He would be the One who speaks the truth.

3. The truthfulness of God cannot be obligated by *patronism*. 3:5-7

- Not only is it not possible to deny the truthfulness of God, it is not possible to assist it. God needs no help from us and is not obligated to treat us any differently because we are rooting for His truth. God will still

judge us impartially and fairly whether we are against Him or for Him!

4. The truthfulness of God cannot be intimidated by *propaganda*. 3:8

- While we have not yet listened to Paul's great concluding remarks which place the whole world under the judgment of God, we know enough to understand what Paul has been doing. He has been removing everyone's hope. He has shown that we are all culpable and guilty. The only answer is to provide another source of hope, another source of justification - justification by faith and not by our works.

It is this writer's personal opinion that Paul's enemies, upon hearing the doctrine of justification, rejected it as an insult to God. They thought that Paul was suggesting that, because a man is not saved by works he must think that he can sin in order to be saved, or that he can do evil that good may come! I believe Paul is saying, you can even insult the doctrine of justification by faith and insult God by suggesting that He is promoting evil by saving men, but in doing so you won't intimidate God!



*Friend, it is an insult to God to think we can do anything to earn our salvation. We are all guilty before God. And, Christian friend, it is an insult to God to think that we can do one thing to keep our salvation. We are all totally dependent upon the grace of God. Upon what are you basing your salvation - your righteousness, or His?*

Note: Do not be concerned if you do not complete all the material in a given lesson and have to spread it out over two sessions. Alternately, if the second half of a continued lesson is too short, you can also spend time discussing that Student Supplement.

This lesson's Supplement provides background concerning how we reason and how Paul used reason and logic as it related to the cultural mood of his time.

*As usual, please read Supplement 7 before doing Study 7.*

# DEFENDANTS ALL RISE - THE VERDICT IS IN

## LESSON TEXT:

Romans 3:9-20

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

Previously, we were in the courtroom as the prosecuting attorney argued his case against the self righteous Jew who thought he was exempt from the rigid standards of God's justice placed upon Gentiles. These Jews, who saw themselves as possessors, protectors and the providers of truth were guilty of disobeying their own commandments. Their misplaced confidence in their circumcision and their twisted sense of righteousness had made them guilty of assuming that the righteousness of God could be bent in their favor. God's truth and justice cannot be negated by its denial, obligated by flattery, or intimidated by self righteous arguments. God's justice will stand.

## LESSON GOAL:

It's time to hear the closing argument and verdict, hopefully, leaving a long lasting impression in our minds. The Bible is describing the utter sinfulness and hopelessness of mankind without God. Believers need to be reminded what we have been saved from, and unbelievers need to flee the wrath to come.

Today's lesson follows the format of a *suggestive commentary* and relies heavily on Robinson's suggestive commentary on Romans for a pattern, (designed specifically for this kind of use) without requiring constant citing by a writer. We recommend this commentary as an addition to your library: Studies in Romans, Thomas Robinson - Kregel Publications. It may also be accessed without cost on the Internet.

This is a *light* lesson, designed specifically so that the leader can encourage group discussion of the phrases in the chapter. Take your time and enjoy!

## LESSON OVERVIEW:

The apostle is resting his case as he presents all the world, Jew and Gentile, guilty before God.

### A. The Verdict Announced. 3:9,10

1. We are all guilty. 3:9
2. We are guilty of all. 3:10

### B. The Evidence Documented 3:11-18

- 1.) Sins of character. Verses 11,12
- 2.) Sins of speech. Verses 13,14
- 3.) Sins of conduct. Verses 5-17
- 4.) Sins of conscience. Verse 18

### C. The Case is Closed. 3:19-20

## TODAY'S LESSON:

### A. The Verdict Announced. 3:9-10

There is a fable concerning a scorpion and a frog who met by the side of the pond. The scorpion asked the frog if he could hop a ride on his back to the other side of the pond. The frog was quick to refuse, and said to the scorpion "Why would I let you get on my back - you would sting me and kill me!" To which the scorpion replied "No, I wouldn't kill you. If I stung you while we were crossing, you would die and I would drown!" So, the frog reluctantly agreed to give him a life. Half way across the pond, the scorpion stung the frog. The frog cried out "Why did you do that? Now, we'll both die!" The scorpion replied "I couldn't help it! It's just my nature." This has been the essence of Paul's argument. It is the nature of fallen man to sin and to rebel against God. It is in our nature, it is in our blood. It is our *nature* which requires the solution.

## 1. We are all guilty. 3:9

What then? are we better [than they]? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;

The “we / they” problem has been with us from the beginning. While Paul was referring to the Jews (we) and the Gentiles (they), the truth remains that we all have a “we/they” problem. There is a tendency in us all to see ourselves as somehow better than the other. Our race is the best, our team is the best, our community is the best. The problem of superiority just doesn’t go away. Whether it is tension between Chinese and Japanese or Japanese and Koreans or tension between whites and blacks is irrelevant. The scholar will often condescend to the tradesman who, in turn, overcharges him at the shop because he doesn’t know how to change out the battery on his car. Mountain folks smile knowingly at flatlanders and Swedes will always joke about Norwegians (or is it the other way?). It is in our nature to want to feel superior.

In reality, there is really only one thing which separates men and that is grace. It is God’s grace which is provided for us, not on the basis of what we brought to the table, but simply on the basis of God’s choosing.

1 Corinthians 4:7

For who maketh thee to differ [from another]? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive [it], why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received [it]?

Those of us who are willing to recognize that this tendency is in all of us, will make every effort to follow Paul’s admonition in Philippians 2:3:

[Let] nothing [be done] through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

Look at the rest of verse 9: “No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are

all under sin. The word “proved” is a legal term. Paul has made his case. What does it mean to be “under sin”? To be under sin means to be under its domain, its bondage. Remember, we have already explained that the first principles of the world always bring bondage. Sin, at any level binds us. Paul says later in 7:14:

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

- To be sold under sin is to be placed in slavery to it. When men break the laws of God they become the servants of sin by default. False teachers would have us believe that to be free from God’s laws is to be free to make our own choices. The Bible warns us about them in 2 Peter 2:19:

While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

The fly moving about in the car may think he has a great deal of freedom. He only understands that he is in bondage when he crashes against the windows.

- To be under sin is not only to be under its power, but it is to be under its penalty, 1 Corinthians 15:56:

The sting of death [is] sin; and the strength of sin [is] the law.

When the guilt of sin is removed, its power and penalty are also removed. Paul will be explaining this later in Romans - but first, he must make his case. We are *all* born under sin.

## 2. We are guilty of all.

3:10

As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

Notice the constant repetition in all of these verses:

9 -all under sin

10 -none righteous, no, not one

11 - There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God

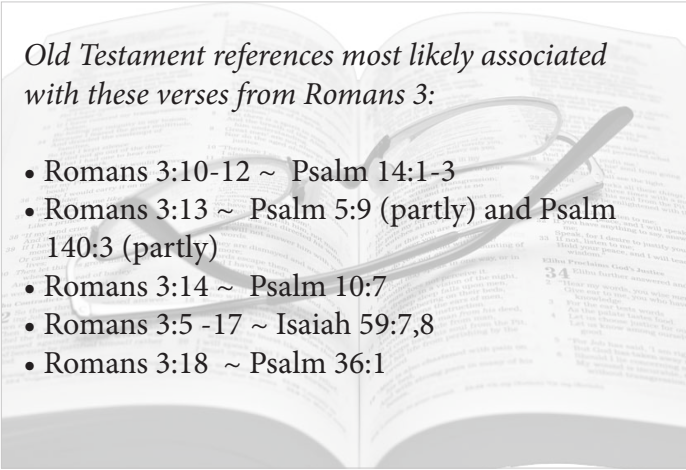
12 - They are all gone out of the way. They are together become unprofitable. There is none that doeth good, no, not one.

19 - all the world...guilty

20 - no flesh justified

This is a universal, all-inclusive condemnation. One of the commitments in the 1994 Republican Contract with America was a commitment to require congress to obey the same laws they write for everyone else! It is in our nature to write exception clauses for ourselves. We are all condemned, everyone of us! No exceptions! No, not one!

• “As it is written...” Men cannot be convicted in court on the basis of subjective opinion or hearsay. The facts must be substantial and documented. When Paul inserts the words “as it is written” it always means the same thing. It means that he is about to cite the Old Testament scriptures as his authority. Paul is about to provide us with written proof which supports the charges he has made. He is supplying evidence which these Jews can find for themselves in their own Bibles.



*Old Testament references most likely associated with these verses from Romans 3:*

- Romans 3:10-12 ~ Psalm 14:1-3
- Romans 3:13 ~ Psalm 5:9 (partly) and Psalm 140:3 (partly)
- Romans 3:14 ~ Psalm 10:7
- Romans 3:5 -17 ~ Isaiah 59:7,8
- Romans 3:18 ~ Psalm 36:1

## **B. The Evidence Documented. 3:11-18**

Paul's list of 14 charges can be broken down as follows:

### **1.) Sins of character. 3:11-12 (Charges 1-6)**

- None righteous. Righteousness is uprightness. The Bible says that the imaginations of man's heart is evil from his youth, (Genesis 8:21) and that there is no man who does not sin (1 Kings 8:46). No man can purify his own heart (Proverbs 8:29) and there is not a just man upon the earth that does good and does not sin (Ecclesiastes 7:20).

- None understands. No man has a correct understanding of who God is and what God expects of men. While men glory in their wealth and might, God challenges men to glory in their knowledge and understanding of Him. (Jeremiah 9:23, 24).

- None seeks God. To seek God is to seek His favor, to seek His blessing, to seek His approval, and most of all, to seek to know Him. (Philippians 3:10). Someone has said “Two men please God; he who loves Him with all his heart because he knows Him; and he who seeks Him with all his heart because he knows Him not.” There is nothing in man which causes him to seek God. There is no divine spark which needs to be fanned into a fire. There is no little part of God in us. What causes men to seek God? In John 6:44 Jesus said:

**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.**

Any longings, any promptings which we have to seek after God have been placed there by His Holy Spirit.

- All gone out of the way.

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.**

- All are unprofitable. The basic idea behind this word is the thought of rotten fruit, dead carcasses, or spoiled meat. We are all unusable. We are unsuited to the purpose for which we have been created.



- None does good. No one habitually does good because men must be good in order to do good. Men can only do good in a relative sense. The good we do is usually selfishly motivated and not truly for God's glory (even when altruistic), it is sporadic and not habitual, it is done partially and with partiality. In contrast, consider the Lord Jesus Christ - Acts 10:38. Isaiah said that all of our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. (Isaiah 64:6).

## 2.) Sins of speech. 3:13-14 (Charges 7-10)

- Throat an open sepulcher.

Luke 11:44

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over [them] are not aware [of them].

According to the Law, any one who touched a grave was rendered unclean. Jews would whitewash graves once a year so that they could avoid contact.

This uncomplimentary comparison with the hearts of the pharisees exposed their true hypocritical nature and the defiling effect it has on the unwary! We see much of this in media ministries today.

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.

There are few odors as offensive as a decaying human body. The utterances of hypocrites are reminiscent of such gaseous odors emanating from their throats. Would to God we had more men and women willing to expose such offenses today. We have allowed Christ's sheep to be defiled by a steady stream of hypocrisy flowing from our pulpits and TV ministries.

- Tongues used deceit. These tongues are a great part of what separates us from the animals (not our thumbs, as evolutionists say!). These tongues were given to us to bless God and our fellow man. Instead, James 3:8 says:

**But the tongue can no man tame; [it is] an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.**

For a full commentary on the tongue, read all of James 3:1-12

- Poison of asps under lips. Poisonous asps or adders have their poison concealed in sacs. While honey may be on the lip, poison is under the tongue. When we understand the seduction of Eve in the Garden we can understand how appropriate it is that the venomous serpent and his bite is used to symbolize the work of Satan. The entire contest between light and darkness begins - and ends with words.

- Mouth full of cursing and bitterness. [See Student Supplement]

Someone has said that blessing is the language of heaven and cursing is the language of hell. Bitterness is anger nurtured.

## 3.) Sins of conduct. 3:15-17 (Charges 11-13)

- Murder "Their feet are swift to shed blood" Feet can be the instruments of doing good or evil. Most murders are done suddenly and in fits of passion. Once a man has committed one murder he can commit a second and a third with less hesitation. When the restraints of God are removed from a society, man has no compunctions about shedding blood. Consider the mass graves which both Hitler and communism have left.

God's grace, on the other hand, teaches our feet to walk in the way of God's commandments (Psalm 119:32) and compels us to spread the gospel of Christ (Isaiah 52:7, Ephesians 6:15).

- Destruction and misery in their ways. Lit: bruising and wretchedness. It is in the nature of man to be unspeakably inhumane and cruel. It accompanies man wherever he goes.

- The ways of peace unknown. We have had more wars, more wanton destruction of human life in our century than in any century of recorded history.

#### **4.) Sins of conscience. 3:18 (Charge 14)**

- No fear of God. It is not in the nature of man to fear or respect God. When there is no fear of God there is no fear of consequence. To fear God is to have deep reverential respect for Him. This fear is a loving reverence, not a slavish dread. Modern preaching has placed such a diminished emphasis on the wrath and judgment of God, that very few flee from the wrath to come. (Matthew 3:7) Their only conception of God is a misconception.

#### **C. The Case is Closed. 3:19-20**

- ...whatever things the law saith. Paul is speaking about the law in its broadest sense, in other words, the Old Testament scriptures which he has been bringing to bear upon the issue. Paul is, in effect, saying, I have convicted you using your own scriptures. I have stopped your mouths with the Word of God. You are not arguing against me, you are arguing against your own scriptures. These believers who were so proud of their law were being condemned by it.

- ...by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified..

The flesh is vain because of the illusions it creates in us and because of the demands it makes upon us. It is the law which shows us the true nature of our flesh. No one was ever saved by keeping the law. The purpose of the law is to make us aware of our sin. (Galatians 3:24). This ends our section of Romans which focuses on the guilt of man and the wrath of God. Stop and think about how far we have come in our presentation of the gospel. The apostle Paul had no fear or hesitation about speaking of the judgment of God. He did not

hide the facts. He was not afraid of offending newcomers who might be scared away by such a weighty message. Until we see ourselves as we really are and until we see God for who He really is, there can be no genuine conversion. Thank God for the words "But now" in Romans 3:21!

*As usual, please read Supplement 8 before doing Study 8.*



# THE SOLUTION

## REVEALED

### LESSON TEXT:

Romans 3:21-31

3) It excludes the boasting of men. 3:27

4) It establishes, yet supersedes the law. 3:28

5) It demonstrates the equity of God. 3:29-30

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

We sat in the courtroom and heard the guilty verdict pronounced upon all mankind - good and evil, Jew and Gentile, moral and depraved. We saw the utter hopelessness of mankind in the eyes of a holy God.

*Please be sure to have a copy of your current Student Supplement on hand if you are not working out of the full book.*

### LESSON GOAL:

To help our students understand, appropriate, and then articulate the wonderful doctrine of justification by faith.

### TODAY'S LESSON:

Careful students will want to pay attention to the fact that we have come to a major change in the book of Romans:

### LESSON OVERVIEW:

- By now, it is easy to see why we label the first three chapters of Romans **Condemnation**. We are now moving into the second section of Romans - **Justification**

- Today's Outline

#### A. Justification - Its Provision

1. Its Autonomy. 3:21a
2. Its Authority. 3:21b
3. Its Availability. 3:22, 23
  - a. By faith in Jesus Christ. 3:22a
  - b. Available to all men. 3:22b
  - c. Required for all men. 3:23
4. Its Attributes. 3:24-30
  - a. It is free because it is by grace. 3: 4a
  - b. It is redemptive in its scope. 3:24b
  - c. It is just because:
    - 1) It satisfies the wrath of God. 3:25
    - 2) It vindicates the integrity of God. 3:26

#### I. Condemnation - 1:1-3:20

#### II. Justification - Its Provision - 3:21-5:21

#### III. Justification - Its Application - 6:1-8:39

#### IV. Vindication - 9:1-11:36

#### V. Application - 12:1-16:27

A considerable amount of time could be devoted to the question "What are the most beautiful words in the Bible?" At the top of the list of this pastor's favorite would be the words in the form of a question found in Genesis 3:9 "Adam...where art thou?" Can you picture the scene? Adam is shamed and hiding, trembling before a God whose holiness he had only taken for granted until now. And then he hears, "Adam...where art thou?" G. Campbell Morgan wrote that that was not the cry of a policeman, it was the wail of a father.

Having perused the shame of the human race and the perverseness of our natures in this study of Romans the only question which remains for us to ask is "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" What kind of God is this who could love such a race as we? The Bible tells us that God Himself fashioned those coats of skin for Adam and Eve—those initial coverings. And, ever since, as the precious Spirit of God has led seeker after seeker into the light, we have learned, one after another,

er, that those coats of skin only typified a new robe which God would provide for His own in a future day. That robe, the robe of righteousness, is what Romans 3-5 is all about. “What wondrous love is this, O my soul?!”

### A. Justification - Its Provision

3:21

**But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;**

The ten verses which follow provide a veritable gold mine of Bible terms and truths. Words such as righteousness, law, sin, justified, grace, redemption, and propitiation are the bread and butter terminology of sound Bible doctrine. These words are more than just the building blocks of Paul's letters, they are the building blocks of our salvation – rich, powerful, colorful, and inexhaustible in their implications.

Two of these words, have virtually the same meaning and are used interchangeably (as much as the laws of grammar will allow) They are the words righteousness and justification.

The Greek word for righteousness is:

1343 dikaiosune {dik-ah-yos-oo'-nay} from 1342; TDNT - 2:192,168; n f  
AV - righteousness 92; 92

The Greek word for justified (for example, Vs. 24) is:

1344 dikaiouo {dik-ah-yo'-o} from 1342; TDNT - 2:211,168; v  
AV - justify 37, be freed 1, be righteous 1, justifier 1; 40

The words are similar because their meanings reflect the same thing. Righteousness is a condition acceptable to God. To be righteous is to be blameless in God's eyes. A righteous man, in general, is perfect in all his ways. A man can also be declared righteous

with respect to a specific action or situation. When we say that a man has been justified we can mean we mean we have found him out to be just with respect to his actions. (You were justified in driving your car to church because you own it and have a license.). God says that no man has ever been found out to be just or righteous when compared with His standards. For this reason, God has made the righteousness of Jesus Christ available to us, in place of our own.

Righteousness then, is right standing. To be justified is to be declared to have right standing. But, please notice, we are not just talking about righteousness in a general sense. Paul is speaking particularly about the righteousness of God being made available to us. Paul first introduced this term in Romans 1:17. When we speak of the righteousness of God, we are speaking about a righteousness which is unique to God:

- It is proprietary: God alone possesses this righteousness.
- It is accessible: God provides this righteousness for us.
- It is revolutionary: God replaces our righteousness with His.
- It is obligatory. No man can approach God who has not received it.

#### 1. Its Autonomy. 3:21a

**But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested,**

When something is autonomous, it stands alone. It is independent and self contained. Paul is explaining that this righteousness which comes from God is free standing. It does not require the law (the law of Moses, condensed in the Ten Commandments and expanded in the books of Moses) for its application.

Keep in mind, what seems elementary to us was revolutionary to these readers. The Jews had been

conditioned, all their lives, to associate their righteousness with the law of Moses. Paul is explaining that God's righteousness has always been available but was never made available through the law.

3:21

**But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested,**

"But now..." In other words, at this time. What was taught all along in God's Word was not understood all along. As children we were taught very early that we could go to the sink and draw a glass of water. We did not understand the earth's reciprocal water cycle, the concept of water reservoirs, wells, pumping stations, and pipelines, much less the fact that our fathers may have paid the water bills. We just went and got the water. Later the mechanics were manifested. In the Old Testament men were justified by faith in the Word of God, but they did not understand how God could do it. They just trusted Him. Now we understand the mechanics of salvation. We understand how God can provide His righteousness.

## *2. Its Authority. 3:21*

**...being witnessed by the law and the prophets;**

We must not think that men used to be saved by keeping the law and that now they are saved by the grace of God. Men have always been saved by grace. Even the Old Testament scriptures taught that men must receive the righteousness of God by faith. It was important for these early Jews to understand that this doctrine which Paul was teaching was scriptural and was based upon the Old Testament scriptures.

Bible teachers have continually struggled with false teachings which have resulted from those who have misunderstood the purpose of the law. Paul taught us very clearly in Galatians 3:24-25:

**Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster [to bring us]**

**unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.**

**But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.**

The Puritans, on the one hand, went to one extreme. They taught the importance of doing their "law work" before bringing a man to Christ. Their desire was to bring the full weight of the law down upon unbelievers so that they would see their utter lost condition before coming to Christ. They would often hinder their own children from coming to Christ until they came to a great time of crisis in their lives and came to a full understanding of their lost condition.

Modern Christians have gone entirely to the other extreme. We expect men to agree that they have sinned only in the slightest intellectual sense – and then rush to offer them the solution for their sins. Men who are not aware that they have offended a Holy God do not place much value on their salvation. Bob Dylan and the editor of Hustler Magazine, and a raft of others are examples of men who had a born again experience without coming under conviction about their sins.

## *3. Its Availability. 3:22,23*

The concept that God is offering His righteousness to us is foreign in most gospel presentations. Keep in mind those levels of salvation awareness which we talked about earlier: restitution (God has forgiven me and I am reconciled), substitution (God can do this because Jesus died in my place), and identification (Because I am in Christ God sees me as having the righteousness of Jesus Christ).

a. By faith of Jesus Christ. 3:22

**Even the righteousness of God [which is] by faith of Jesus Christ...**

Faith is not faith unless it is in an object. It is not enough to say "I have faith." Our faith is in a person, not simply a doctrine.

b. Available to all men. 3:22

**...unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:**

I have a framed quotation about fishing, written by Herbert Hoover, in my home. Hoover said that one reason why he loved fishing is that all men are equal before fish. Regardless of our status in life, all men are treated the same when they go fishing! This is the beauty of faith – all men are equal before it. It is available to the wise and the foolish, the rich and the poor, the yellow skinned or red skinned, the communist or the capitalist. Faith places us all on the same ground.

My mother used to be particularly irritated with other parents who would play favorites with their children, making, as she would say “flesh of one and fish of the other.” God will not be accused of playing favorites. The beauty of faith in Christ is that anyone can exercise it.

c. Required for all men. 3:23

**For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;**

Equal opportunity also means equal responsibility! Just as all men have the same opportunity - to receive Christ by faith, so all men have the same obligation - because all have sinned. In other words, faith in Christ is not an option, it is an obligation because we have all sinned.

A man standing in Death Valley trying to reach out and touch a star does not look any more foolish than a man standing on Mount Denali trying to touch that same star. Both look very foolish. Both have fallen far short of the star, though one may be miles higher than the other one. All men, good and evil, have fallen short of the glory of God. That is why all men are eligible to receive His righteousness and all men are obligated to receive it.

*4. Its Attributes. 3:24-30*

A child may ask what the sun is and a busy father may respond “The sun is a ball of fire burning in space.” The father’s answer may be correct, but it is simplistic. In a few years that same child will ask his Dad, “But, if there is no oxygen in space, how can the sun burn?” Then, the father will be obligated to explain how that the gravitational effect on the elements of the sun compress them and create the phenomena which we call fusion. It is fine to say “I am saved because Christ died for my sins.” It is correct, it is biblical but it is just the beginning. The plan of salvation reflects the magnificent wisdom of God. The closer one examines it, the more amazed he becomes at the dynamics of salvation. In these verses Paul is explaining the wisdom and wonder of this offer of righteousness which God is making to all men.

a. It is *free* because it is by grace. 3:24

**Being justified freely by his grace...**

Salvation must be free if it is to be offered freely. It is a sad thing to note that the free offer of salvation is what offends men the most. Men who are still relying on their own righteousness find it offensive that they cannot work in order to please God. The real assuring evidence that a man has received Christ can be found when he understands that he can do nothing to please God and that God has done it all for Him. See Ephesians 2:8-10.

b. It is *redemptive* in its scope. 3:24

**...through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:**

Our salvation has not been given to us freely because it was free. It was bought and paid for at great price.

Note: This would be an excellent time to go over the three basic words which the bible uses for redemption. See your Scofield notes or other study Bibles.

c. It is *just* because:

1) It satisfies the wrath of God 3:25

**Whom God hath set forth [to be] a propitiation through faith in his blood**

*Remember who did the sending.* The Father sent the Son. We must never nurse some foolish imagination that the Son saw this problem and cooked up a way to stave off the Father's anger in order to save us. The plan of salvation begins with the first person of the trinity - God.

*Remember who was sent.* Notice that He was the Son when He was sent, not, as some would have us believe, when He got here or when He was resurrected!

*Remember why He was sent.* He was sent to be a propitiation for our sins. He satisfied the father's righteous demands.

Remember how He satisfied God's demands—through His blood. There are some who teach that the value of Christ's blood was limited to:

1. Its fulfillment of the Old Testament sacrificial symbolism, and
2. Its ability to show the violent nature of the death of Christ...

But, Paul shows us here that it was that actual blood of Christ which was the propitiation or satisfaction for our sins. The blood of Christ saves us as much as the death of Christ saves us. One does not point to the other. Both save us.

Please notice also that the blood of Christ provided universal forgiveness for all believers of all ages:

**...to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;**

In the Old Testament, God patiently atoned for the sins of believers who trusted Him by faith, until the day came when the blood of Christ would remit those sins. We do not need to worry about those Old Testament saints who lived before the death of Christ.

2) It vindicates the integrity of God. 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.**

God cannot exercise one attribute at the expense of another.

Simple careless minds still think that God can forgive men on no basis other than His life. In the words of one famous song “..and though it makes Him sad to see the way we live, He'll always say ‘I forgive.’” God cannot do that. God cannot overlook sin. God had to provide a way to forgive men which would be just. God has to live with Himself. This ingenious plan to send His Son to pay the penalty for our sins and to allow us to be placed in Christ so that God sees us in His Son – satisfies the justice of God.

3) It excludes the boasting of men. 3:27

**Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.**

4) It establishes, yet supersedes the law. 3:28

**Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.**

5) It demonstrates the equity of God. 3:29-30

**Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.**

*“Oh the love that drew salvation's plan,  
Oh the grace that brought it down to man,  
Oh the mighty gulf that God did span,  
At Calvary!”*





The gods of the ancient religions consistently represent their deities as moody, arbitrary, and appeasable through sacrifices or acts of humility which demean mankind.

The God of the Bible is none of the above. He is consistent with His character and He deals with us justly. He neither accuses nor excuses men arbitrarily. While He has clearly established the principle of sacrifice in the Bible, those sacrifices all point to the One sacrifice, the ultimate sacrifice for our sin - the Lord Jesus Christ (Isaiah 53:10-12). Do not be deceived by Satan into grouping Jehovah God with the false deities of our age!

*As usual, please read Supplement 9 before reading Session 9.*

# THE SOLUTION

## DEFENDED

### LESSON TEXT:

Romans 4:1-25

### LESSON GOAL:

To expand our knowledge of the doctrine of justification by arguing:

1. That justification by faith is separate from our works, not in addition to them, and;
2. That justification by faith saved Abram, and David and precedes both circumcision and the law.

We want to help each student personally understand and appropriate this righteousness which comes by faith apart from works.

### LESSON OVERVIEW:

In our last study we saw the solution revealed (see highlights below). In this study we see the solution defended as Paul takes on the challenge of authenticating the doctrine of justification by faith using typical Rabbinical logic.

### JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH DEFENDED

#### I. The Primacy of Justification by Faith. 4:1-15

- A. It was the basis of Abraham's righteousness. 4:1-5
- B. It was the basis of David's righteousness. 4:6-8
- C. It preceded and validated the seal of circumcision. 4:9-12
- D. It preceded the law. 4:13-15

#### II. The Purpose of Justification by Faith. 6:-24

- A. It was provided so that grace could be revealed. 4:16a
- B. It was provided so that all the seed could obtain righteousness. 4:16b-18
- C. It was credited to Abraham, (not earned). 4:19-22
  1. The belief of Abraham and Sarah produced works, 4:19-21, but;
  2. The righteousness was *credited*, not earned. 4:22.

#### III. The Promise of Justification by Faith. 4:23-25

- A. It was not for Abraham's sake alone. 4:23
- B. It was also provided for our benefit. 4:24
- C. righteousness must now be obtained through the risen Christ. 4: 24-25
  1. Notice that our belief is in the One who raised up Jesus (the Father)
  2. Notice that Christ was delivered for this specific purpose
  3. Notice that Christ was raised as proof of our justification.

### TODAY'S LESSON:

Intro: The doctrine of justification by faith is the great watershed of the Christian faith. It separates the truth from the lie and from it there is no retreat. The Mormon missionary carries a special compendium

in the back of his materials - devoted to refuting justification by faith. If you attend an annual Greek Food Festival and browse the book tables you will likely find books warning the reader against the doctrine of justification by faith. The Roman Catholic Council of Trent declared that all who teach this doctrine (you and me) are apostates and anathematized. That declaration still stands.

The irony is that all of the above mentioned groups give lip service to holding the Bible to be the Word of God. When we read the plain and simple statements of Romans 4 we scratch our heads and wonder how anyone could miss the point. Part of the answer lies in the fact that the Mormons, the Orthodox churches, and the Roman church share the same error as did the very Jewish people to whom Paul wrote this letter. Each of these groups see faith as a work.

False teachers hold that *Faith + Works = Salvation*. The Bible teaches that *Faith=Salvation, and Salvation produces works*. Note: By *faith*, here, we are referring to faith in Christ's finished work on Calvary's cross.

Paul is about to dismantle the rabbinic thinking on this issue as he takes the Jewish thinkers back into the Old Testament scriptures and proves justification by faith.

## I. The Primacy of Justification by Faith. 4:1-15

4:1

What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?

Imagine sitting in a room with a bunch of scholarly bearded rabbis as the sole representative of Christ. How would you approach them?

In our culture it is assumed (sometimes at great expense) that newer is better and older is obsolete. The biblical Jew would not reason that way. He reasoned that there is One God and that He is truthful. Any new information must correspond

with what is already known about God. Paul was being cast as the leader of a new sect with new ideas. His work has been cut out for him. He must convince these Jews that he represented the old ways which were taught all along and that, if anyone had moved from the truth, it was the modern Jew of his day.

As we will soon see, Paul was up to the task as he turns our attention to antiquity and demonstrates that justification by faith has been God's way all along. He starts with father Abraham.

### A. It was the basis of Abraham's righteousness. 4:1-5

Consider these statements one at a time...

- The Example Presented. 4:2

For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath [whereof] to glory; but not before God.

This was the attention-getter: The Jews would most likely have said the opposite! They would have said, "If anyone gets to heaven, it will be Abraham, because of his many works, and especially his works of faith."

- The Scripture Cited. 4:3

For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

By citing this passage Paul was doing two things. He was referring to an undeniable authority - the scriptures. They were bound to listen. He was referring to the ultimate example, their father. He was referring to one of their favorite passages, Genesis 15:6. You must not think that Genesis 15:6 was new to these Jews. What would be new to them was Paul's treatment of the verse.

The key word in this verse is counted, or reckoned. This word occurs as counted, reckoned, and imputed over and over in this chapter. In our terms,

what Paul is saying to these Jews is this: If Abraham had earned his righteousness by exercising his faith God would *not* have imputed or credited it to his account. Watch as Paul drops the bomb:

- The principle explained. 4:4

**Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.**

Some folks read this passage and they say, “You see, the harder you work to earn your salvation, the more debt you incur.” That may be true, but that is not what Paul is arguing here. Paul is arguing an important principle: *When a man works for another man he puts that man in debt to himself.*

Consider the possibility that you have hired me to come and work in your fields at harvest time. I report faithfully each day and help you bring in your harvest. At the end of the harvest you get out your check book and you say, “Friend, you have been such a help to me I am going to give you a gift. I hope you will accept it with gratitude.” I might be inclined to say, “Friend, I do not want your gift, I want the wages which you owe me.” When an employer hires a worker he is indebted to him until he pays his wages.

So, what is Paul arguing? Paul is arguing that God does not obligate Himself to anyone. God does not pay anyone for their good works.

How then can a man receive the righteousness of God? 4:5

**But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.**

God credits His righteousness, *not* to those who work for it, but to those who believe God.

So, we see that the first mistake these Jews were

making was to assume that the exercise of Abraham’s faith was a meritorious work. Paul now draws our attention to King David...

**B. It was the basis of David’s righteousness. 4:6-8** (Please read this in your Bible)

**C. It preceded and validated the seal of circumcision. 4:9-12**

Observe two important arguments:

- 1) Justification by faith preceded circumcision and was already in effect; and,
- 2) circumcision was the seal of the righteousness of faith - 4:11. In other words, its very outward purpose was to validate the justification by faith which occurs inwardly.

**D. It preceded the law. 4:13-15**

**For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.**

The argument of precedence is based on the very nature of God who cannot change. If He cannot change, His Word cannot change. Therefore, if the promise of God to Abraham and his seed came before the law, there would be nothing in the law that could nullify it. In fact, the law must be based upon it in the end.

**II. The Purpose of Justification by Faith. 4:16-24**

**A. It was provided so that grace could be revealed. 4:16a**

**Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace;...**

Justification by faith is the only equalizer. Faith has

been instituted so that all men approach God on the same basis. It was His means of revealing the character of His grace.

### **B. It was provided so that all the seed could obtain righteousness 4:16b-18**

...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, ( As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.



There is a great river of teaching which comes to light on the basis of these verses, a river which begins in Genesis and ends in Revelation.

We might call it the Bible's *seed* doctrine. The doctrine of seed begins in Genesis 3:15, and it is always associated with the great promises of God called covenants. God makes all of His promises to men and their seed. This means, if you are not part of a seed line which carries a promise, you are in deep trouble. When a man comes to faith in Christ, he is placed in Christ, and becomes an inheritor of the promises made to Christ. In the end, believers actually inherit the promise of God made to Abraham because of our position in Christ!

By all means, take the time to read Galatians 3:13-18. We will be investigating this in greater detail as we move through Romans.

### **C. It was credited to Abraham, (not earned). 4:19-22**

And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: 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. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

If you miss the following point, you will miss the whole argument!

1. The belief of Abraham and Sarah did produce works! True faith produced works. That is a fact, but...
2. Their righteousness was credited, (not earned) according to verse 22. You cannot have it both ways. Something credited is *not* something earned.

God's math: The product of faith is works.  
Men's math: The product of works is faith.

The world wants us to believe that we can add to what Christ has done for us. We want to add our works to God's requirement for faith. We will come back to this in Romans 11.

### **III. The Promise of Justification by Faith. 4:23-25**

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; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

#### **A. It was not for Abraham's sake alone, verse 23.**

#### **B. It was also provided for our benefit, verse 24.**

- Have you taken advantage of this wonderful offer?

Please understand, that the rules have changed in one respect:

### **C. Righteousness must now be obtained through the risen Christ 24-25**

Abraham believed God and acted upon His Word. Now, we must believe what God says *about His Son*. Justification by faith can come only through the risen Christ.

1. Notice that our belief is in the One who raised up Jesus (the Father)

The biblical emphasis is on the fact that the Father raised Him from the dead. Never neglect this emphasis.

2. Notice that Christ was delivered for this specific purpose.

3. Notice that Christ was raised as proof of our justification.

He was raised literally *on account of our* justification. The proof that Christ's sacrifice was sufficient is found in His resurrection.

*As usual, please be sure to do Supplement 10 before beginning Study 10.*

NOTES OR QUESTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN WE GET TOGETHER:

# THE SOLUTION

## APPLIED

### LESSON TEXT:

Romans 5:1-5

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

Our last lesson provided the biblical and logical support for the doctrine of justification by faith by showing us its historic primacy. It was the basis of Abraham's hope and David's hope. It was in effect before circumcision and the law and was not nullified by either. Therefore, justification by faith is not a new doctrine. The gospel of Christ provides the explanation as to how God can justify men by faith and still be righteous.

### LESSON GOAL:

To help the student appreciate the benefits of the doctrine of justification by faith - especially, the certainty which it brings into the Christian walk. This foundation of safety and certainty is vital to a healthy, growing walk.

### LESSON OVERVIEW:

#### **The Certainty of Justification By Faith - 5:1-11**

##### **I. The Benefits of Justification By Faith. 5:1-5**

###### A. A New Position

- 1.) Peace with God. 5:1
- 2.) Access into Grace. 5:2a

###### B. A New Perspective

- 1.) We rejoice in our new hope. 5:2b
- 2.) We rejoice in our tribulations. 5:3
  - a. We understand the process of tribulation. 5:3b-4
  - b. We understand the product of tribulation. 5:5

*In the following session we will cover:*

#### **II. The Assurance which Justification By Faith provides us. 5:6-11**

##### A. Consider how far God went while we were yet enemies: 5:6-9

1. In the timing of God's provision. 5:6
2. In the greatness of the One who provided our justification. 5:6b
3. In the distance to which Christ stooped to reach us. 5:6b -7
4. In the level to which His love extended. 5:8

##### B. Consider how much more God cares for us now! 5: 9-11

If God did so much for us before we were justified, consider how committed He is to us right now!

### ADDITIONAL MATERIALS OR RESOURCES

#### NEEDED:

None are specified. Instructors who enjoy additional reading on Romans will find nothing finer than Martin Lloyd-Jones' volume on Romans 5. He devotes one entire book (26 lessons) to this chapter alone. You will do yourself and your family a great service by securing (and reading) this 8 volume set.

### TODAY'S LESSON:

#### **The Certainty of Justification By Faith. 5:1-11**

##### **I. The Benefits of Justification By Faith 5:1-5**

**Intro:** We all remember some of the first times we were allowed to exercise new privileges and rights. I remember my first official "date" and how my family carefully prepared me for it. I remember the first time I drove my own car and the tremendous feel-



ing of freedom which it gave to me. Most of all, I remember getting married and all the privileges associated with beginning a new home and a new life and a new ministry - all within the space of a few months. When folks receive Christ as Saviour they become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ to a full complement of blessings, rights, and privileges - privileges and blessings which are available to us right here and now.

Paul has been explaining the dynamics of justification by faith, its integrity and its legality. But amidst all of this discussion Paul does not want us to lose sight of its personal benefits and all the joy which it brings into our lives. Study these ten or eleven verses with us and taste again, the riches which belong to us as a result of justification by faith.

#### **A. A New Position. 5:1**

**Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:**

It is very important to notice those words “being justified by faith” and to make a little note in our Bibles concerning them. In the original language, the word “being” which we encounter here is a participle in the *aorist passive*. Sound exciting? Actually, it is. Simply stated in English, it would be better to render this “having been justified by faith.”

This is no small issue. Our Roman Catholic friends believe that justification is an ongoing (and therefore, tenuous process.) When the Bible speaks of our justification it consistently uses this aorist tense. The idea of the aorist tense is what grammarians refer to as “point action.” In plain English, the aorist indicates that the action is *once and for all*. Our justification before God, was once and for all.

Again, we are not bantering about words when we make this important distinction. The person who receives Christ as Saviour, *has been* justified

by faith. This is not an ongoing process which can be interrupted, this is a stated fact of history which happened once and for all at a single point of time. Again, justification is not an ongoing process which must be maintained through the sacraments. God’s Word teaches us that this justification is a one time - for all time - event. 1 John 5:11-13 reads:

**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.**

You can know you have eternal life! Now, notice the specific benefit which we receive from justification by faith:

1.) Peace with God. 5:1

**Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:**

*Consider peace with God from God’s point of view.* Please take a moment to understand where we are in modern history. There has been a major shift in the presentation of the gospel in the last fifty years. Historically, it has been the work of the evangelist to establish the existence and nature of God, then to help the unbeliever understand the separation which has come about between God and men because of our sinfulness. Unbelievers who then saw the wrath of God, the eternal consequences of rejecting Him, were shown how to be reconciled to God, how to have peace with God. While it is true that some groups (such as the Puritans) overemphasized the wrath of God, almost hiding the solution from the seekers, believers in general did not.

In the late nineteen-fifties and early sixties a new genre of Christians rose up who were discontented

with the evangelistic dearth among fundamental churches. Groups such as Youth for Christ, Campus Crusade, and later, InterVarsity rose up with the stated objective to rekindle the evangelistic fires in spite of, and without the guidance of local churches.

With these new groups and their new emphasis on evangelism rose a new style of evangelism, patterned much more after Fifth Avenue marketing than biblical preaching. Instead of warning about the wrath and judgment of God in order to prepare men's hearts for salvation, these folks began with the message "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life..." In other words, instead of placing the emphasis on the need for *reconciliation*, these groups promoted the gospel, based first, on the benefits which it offers. The discussion of sin was often added (almost ) as an afterthought, and the message of eternal damnation was inserted as obscurely as possible in their evangelistic literature.

We have now lived for many years with the results of this evangelistic style, this excessive back-pedaling on the wrath of God and eternal damnation. In contrast to early Americans, for example, who were obsessed with the wrath of God to a fault, modern evangelism often obscured this message.

Now, the most important benefit of the doctrine of justification by faith is the fact that through it men can have *peace* with God. Through justification by faith men can be reconciled to God. This has always been the issue. Of course, our purpose in evangelism is to save men from their sins (1Thesalonians 2:16) but this message of reconciliation to God is integral to the message of salvation.

2 Corinthians 5:18:

**And all things [are] of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;**

By the way, there is no other avenue for man to find peace with God. The man who rejects the teaching of justification by faith cannot be reconciled to God.

*Now, consider the peace with God from our point of view.* If we believe that we have been justified by faith, as we explained earlier in the text, it has great impact on the way we think and behave. For example, when someone asks us if we think we will go to heaven we can respond "Of course! That issue was settled a long time ago. It was settled the day I was justified by faith!" Very often, you will find that the more strongly a person or church argues that one can "lose his salvation" the less likely it is that those folks really understand justification by faith. One who has been justified once and for all cannot lose what God did once and for all.

The devil does not want you to know that God is pleased with you. The devil wants you to cower in fear before God, secretly wondering if you have really crossed the line from darkness into light. He does not want you to bask in the joys of being reconciled to a God who will remember your sins no more - a God who forgave your past, present, and future sins in one fell swoop - the day you were saved. There can be no real growth, no real healing, no real forward movement in your life until you realize how completely delighted your Heavenly Father is in you! He loves you, warts and all. He cares for you and dotes over you with greater attention than any earthly father devoted to his infant. Christian friend, do not let the accuser of your soul place you once again in bondage and fear (Hebrews 2:15).

The short of it: One cannot have the peace of God until one has had peace with God, and that peace comes from justification by faith.

There is another wonderful benefit which belongs to the justified. We have:

2.) Access into Grace. 5:2a

**By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand,**

A friend recently told me about a computer program which he had been using for years on a daily basis. Quite by accident he discovered a labor saving feature which had been there all along. He was frustrated because he had used the program so long and had been ignorant of this wonderful feature. His story reminded me of so many Christians who don't understand the dynamics of grace. They know that God expressed His grace at Calvary and that we are saved by grace, but they do not know the secret. They do not know about living grace. They do not know that we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand. You see, Paul is really telling us two things here:

- First, he is telling us that justification by faith gives us a *standing in Grace*. We have a position before God which can never be altered. We have a standing which is ours in Christ. That is salvation. That is saving grace. But that is not all...

- Paul is also telling us that we can *access this grace*. We have the rights and privileges of enjoying this grace in our daily walk. This is living grace. If you will take your concordance and look up all of the uses of the word grace in the New Testament you will discover that the Bible speaks as much of living grace, divine enablement, as it does of saving grace!

Another way to say it is that family members get family privileges. You are not unfair when you do special things for your children which you do not do for your neighbor's children.

A while back I was admitted to a hospital. Because I wear a robe of flesh I had to suffer right along with everyone else. Christians and non Christians have the same surgery which I had. But I had some distinct advantages. God's timing in placing me in the hospital was impeccable. The pain which I experienced after surgery was negligible. A hundred other details came together, details which the world attributes to luck and chance. The believer knows better. I know that God's people were pray-

ing for me and that, as a result, there was special grace available to me.

God's grace is constantly working on our behalf - sparing us from unnecessary danger, heartache, and trauma. But, we regret to note what the old song writer once said:

*"Oh what peace we often forfeit, Oh what needless pain we bear,*

*All because we do not carry - everything to God in prayer!"*

When I was in the hospital I had a button by my bed which allowed me to dose myself with a pain killer. If I suffered pain it was because I neglected to use the remedy. Are you using the remedy God has provided? Are you accessing His grace? It is one of the rights and privileges which comes to the justified. Take advantage of it!

The author of Hebrews said this in Hebrews 4:16:

**Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.**

## **B. A New Perspective**

The believer who has been justified by faith finds two new and unexpected sources of joy and pleasure.

1.) We rejoice in our new hope. 5:2b

*...and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

Look at the three essential words in this phrase:

*Rejoice* – literally, this means boast or glory!

*Hope* – this is not wishful desire, but confident expectation!

*Glory* – the exalted condition of splendor and

brightness which belongs to God.

When we string the words together I believe Paul is saying this: Now that we are justified by faith we glory and boast in the confident expectation of the glory of God which is going to be ours. There is a curtain which hides the reality of eternity from us, and from all of our efforts to peer through and around it one thing stands out above all others. That day of reunion with Christ will be a glorious day which will usher in for us a glorious eternity spent in the presence of His glory. Already, the quiet confident expectation is growing. Already, our ties to earth are weakening and we long more and more for our heavenly home.

*“When all my labors and trials are o’er, and I am safe on that beautiful shore,*

*Just to be near the dear Lord, I adore, that will be glory, be glory for me!*

*Oh, that will be, glory for me, glory for me, glory for me,*

*When by His grace, I shall look on His face, that will be glory, be glory for me”*

There is a bumper sticker which can be seen now and then that says, “Now that I have given up all hope, I feel better.” That is the best the world can offer. The believer boasts in his great confidence that he has just begun his journey into the presence of God where he will spend eternity – in glory!

So we see that justification by faith changes our perspective. It replaces the depression of mankind with the hope which can be found only in Christ. Only a born again believer has a right to the promise “the best is yet to be!” For unbelievers there is only a fearful looking for judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. (Hebrews 10:27).

Now, notice the second area where our perspective changes...

2.) We rejoice in our tribulations. 5:3

**And not only [so], but we glory in tribulations also:**

The new believer soon learns that he not only “glories” in the glory of God, but he also “glories” in tribulation. In contrast to the suffering which unbelievers experience, his suffering is for an eternal purpose. He is no longer the victim of meaningless chance, he is part of a process which God is working out in his life.

a. We understand the process of tribulation.  
3:3b-4

**...knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope:**

Be aware that Paul does not specify exactly what *kind* of tribulation benefits us. We may suffer for a variety of reasons. We may suffer simply as a result of the fall and because we live under the curse. We may suffer because of our own sin and the Lord may be disciplining us. We may be privileged to suffer for the sake of Christ and the gospel. The Bible places a heavy emphasis on this kind of suffering. Paul is not concerned with the source of our suffering at the moment, he is concerned with the benefit.

Paul wants us to see that when we are justified by faith our understanding of how God works in our lives begins to change. We begin to see that “all things,” not just some, work together for “the good” for those who are “the called” in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:28.) This means that we no longer cringe in fear when difficulties enter our lives, but that rather, we welcome them as a sure sign that God is working out His plan for us.

How does this process work?

- Tribulation produces patience
- Patience produces experience
- Experience produces hope

Tribulation produces patience. This statement reminds us of the message of James, who also talked about tribulation and patience. James 1:2-4:

**My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing [this], that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have [her] perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.**

*Tribulation produces patience.* It accomplishes at least two purposes. It roots the young sapling and prepares it for greater stress. That same tribulation destroys the false professor who withers away with the heat of persecution. (Matthew 13:21). Testing removes the dross and tempers the steel. It is a priceless and wonderful thought that God devotes Himself to our testing.

*Patience produces experience.* By this Paul means proof of soundness. It tempers the soul. Job understood this. Job 23:10:

**But he knoweth the way that I take: [when] he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.**

This pastor has heard many testimonies of God's wonderful blessing and care over the years, but he has not heard as many folks stand up to rejoice that they finally have some trials in their lives after a long period of blessing!

*Experience produces hope.* I remember my first bee sting and my first encounter with an angry dog. I remember the great fear that coursed through my body the first time when, as a night watchman, I knew someone else was in the building I was guarding. After that first sting I thought I would fear bees more than ever, but the truth is, while I respected them, I feared them less because I knew that a bee sting was not that bad. I learned not to fear dogs the same way. Tribulation produced patience and patience produced confident expectation. First grade prepared me for second grade. This process continues on as God builds us. But

what is the end result of all of this?

b. We understand the product of tribulation. 5:5

**And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.**

What does Paul mean when he says that hope makes not ashamed? Does he mean that I will have more boldness for Christ as a result of going through trial? Paul means more than that. Once the mission I was with asked me to study for a ham radio license. My friend encouraged me and told me that if I would follow his instructions I would be able to get a license. He taught me what I needed to know. He disciplined me in my study. The day came when I was to take the test. Before the test, I had confidence, because of his discipline. After the test I received my grade and I was not ashamed.

Probably the most exciting part about testing in our lives is the new awareness of the love of God which fills us. Paul said that hope makes us unashamed because of the love of God which is shed abroad by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Just as children who are not disciplined feel unloved, so it is the dark times, the times of trial, when we sense and feel the love of God. Those dark hours of trial are the promise of a new day and a closer walk with the Lord – when we willingly submit to God's discipline.

All of these things are benefits of justification by faith. They are things which the world can never understand. Peace with God, access into His grace, hope in His glory, glorying in tribulation as we watch the plan of God worked out in our lives – and a new personal awareness of the love of God in our lives.

*As usual, please do Supplement 11 before studying Session 11.*

# THE SOLUTION OFFERED

## LESSON TEXT:

Romans 5:6-21

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

In our last lesson we placed heavy emphasis on the benefits of justification by faith. It anchors us in a new peace with God and it gives us access into His grace. Justification by faith changes our perspective, giving us biblical hope. It changes our whole approach to the circumstances and trials of life. When troubles come, we no longer fear an angry God, but rather, rejoice in the great purpose He will accomplish in our lives through tribulation. Only Christians can truly say, “No fear!”

## LESSON GOAL:

To help the student understand fully the total contribution which God makes to our salvation and the lack of any contribution which we make toward it, and that salvation is simply the out-working of justification by faith. People are not justified because they have been saved. People are saved because they have been justified. Once this is truly understood by the student he realizes the full certainty of his salvation which was provided in Christ.

## LESSON OVERVIEW:

*We covered this in our last session:*

### **The Certainty of Justification By Faith - 5:1-11**

#### **I. The Benefits of Justification By Faith. 5:1-5**

##### A. A New Position

- 1.) Peace with God. 5:1
- 2.) Access into Grace. 5:2a

##### B. A New Perspective

- 1.) We rejoice in our new hope. 5:2b
- 2.) We rejoice in our tribulations. 5:3
  - a. We understand the process of tribulation. 5:3b-4
  - b. We understand the product of tribulation. 5:5

*We'll begin with the second point in this session.*

### **II. The Assurance which Justification By Faith provides us. 5:6-11**

A. Consider how far God went while we were yet enemies. 5:6-9

1. In the timing of God's provision. 5:6
2. In the greatness of the One who provided our justification. 5:6b
3. In the distance to which Christ stooped to reach us. 5:6b -7
4. In the level to which His love extended. 5:8

B. Consider how much more God cares for us now! 5: 9-11

If God did so much for us before we were justified, consider how committed He is to us right now!

### **III. The Answer which Justification By Faith provides for Adam's sin. 5:12-21**

A. Adam infected the whole human race. 5:12-14

B. Christ provided the cure for the whole human race. 5:5-21

## TODAY'S LESSON:

### An Excessively Long Introduction:

Many remember the Cold War of the last century and the infamous Berlin Wall. From the point of view of the West, one side of that wall represented freedom, and one side represented bondage to a dangerous political system. We rejoiced when Germans were reunited.

We have already alluded to a great wall which has separated God's people for centuries. On the one side, we have Arminians and on the other side we have Calvinists. Please keep in mind that there is a third group which cannot comfortably claim either title, but most believers are known as either Calvinist or Arminian. Neither group, by the way, fully embraces the teachings of its founders, Calvin and Arminius. It's never a good thing to name either your theology, your church, or your school after a man, though sometimes it seems to be practical.

Who are the Arminians? All Roman Catholics and a great majority of those whom we loosely call Protestants today are Arminian in persuasion. Charismatics in general and the Assemblies of God in particular, represent the largest group of Arminians.

Examples of Calvinists include Reformed churches and Presbyterians. In addition there is a significant number of Baptists, and Bible Church folk who are Calvinistic primarily in their doctrine of *salvation*.

What is the wall, and why are the issues so divisive? One reason lies at the foot of Arminianism's erroneous view of man's fall and the subsequent view of salvation. Along with all cultists, a true Arminian who knows his doctrine, holds that we are identified with Adam's sin, *but not with his guilt*. The Bible clearly teaches that death passed upon all men because all men have sinned personally.

Most Calvinists, on the other hand, teach that

Adam was our *federal head* and that God *sees us as having been in Adam* when he sinned and that we are personally responsible, not only for our own sins but also for participating vicariously in Adam's sins. Please understand that there is an error here as well. When the Calvinist speaks of Adam's federal headship, he is usually speaking of Adam as a figurative, or representative head. He does not really believe we were actually *in Adam*. We were merely *represented* by Adam.

Both of these views fall short of the biblical position. The roots of these errors can be traced back to the common father of both Arminians and Calvinists whose name was Augustine.

Romans 5 roots out the errors of both Arminians and Calvinists. In a word, these men were wearing the wrong set of glasses when they read their Bibles, most likely, because they learned to read from their common father, Augustine.

What are the glasses about which we speak? They are the glasses of allegorical or spiritual interpretation, a practice we will explain in more detail as we go forward. The important thing to underscore right now, is that *we must take this book of Romans literally*. We must take it exactly for what it says. When we take Romans 5 literally, we discover that neither Arminian nor Calvinistic theology can withstand the heat of literal interpretation.

We now continue our outline from the last session:

## II. The Assurance which Justification By Faith provides. 5:6-11

Remember those important words which lead off the discussion of chapter five...

**Therefore being justified by faith...**

The best way to render these words from the Greek is to say, "Therefore, *having been* justified by faith..." To miss this little change in tense is to miss what justification by faith is all about. The act

of being justified by faith, is just that. It is an act, a legal declaration by God that we have the righteousness of Jesus Christ credited to our account. It is not an ongoing process. It is a one time declaration which is made by God.

As you may have already noted when reviewing, the benefits of being justified by faith are beyond comprehension. It anchors us in a new peace with God and it gives us access into His grace. Justification by faith changes our perspective, giving us biblical hope. It changes our whole approach to the circumstances and trials of life. When troubles come, we no longer fear an angry God, but rather, rejoice in the great purpose He will accomplish in our lives through tribulation.

Now, Paul is going to lead us a step further in his logical process. He wants us to know that you and I, who have been justified by faith have great certainty and assurance. He wants us to see just how privileged we are, and how safe we are, once we are in Christ. You will be amazed at Paul's reasoning.

#### **A. Consider how far God went while we were yet enemies. 5:6-9:**

**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.**

Notice that little word "For." Paul is carrying on the subject he has just begun and he is expanding it.

May I put some words in Paul's mouth? In effect, I believe Paul is saying "Now I am going to show you how much assurance you have in Christ now that you have been justified by faith. I want you to consider just how far Christ went for you, *before*

you were saved. If He went that far for you while you were His enemy, consider how much more He will care for you now that you are saved!" Consider how far He went:

#### 1. In the timing of God's provision. 5:6

**For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.**

Follow Paul's thinking.

- "When we were yet without strength..." That's the first thought. This tells us that the action was completely on Christ's part. Paul did not say, "When you had just a spark of divine fire in you, my Spirit fanned it into a flame!" He helped you when you were dead (Ephesians 2:1-5). Dead men cannot respond to stimulus. Salvation is entirely of God. God the Father was the prime mover in setting forth salvation's plan. God the Son was the prime executor of the Father's plan. God the Spirit was the prime facilitator. When an unthinking man comes along and he says "God did His part and I did my part" he is speaking with the foolishness of a child. You and I were without strength - we were unable to contribute.

- "...in due time..." That's the second important thought. It was the appropriate time, it was the proper time, it was the best time. It might even be best to say that it was the appointed time. What did Paul mean by this term? He could have meant that it was just in time. Because no other solution was available.

He could have meant that it was at the perfect point in time. Historically, we know that was the case. Philosophy had come full circle from a promising beginning to an existential demise. The world's religions had had their day in the sun and failed to deliver. Man was not capable of saving or ruling himself. Life had no value. The mighty Roman Empire had paved its roads to the farthest reaches of the known world - so that the gospel could be easily communicated. The Greek lan-



guage was the perfect vehicle for encapsulating God's truth. Paul could have meant that this was the perfect point in time for turning the heads of a depressed discouraged world to the hope which is in Christ.

Paul could have meant the above things, but I believe that when Paul said "in due time", he meant *in God's perfect timing*. Or to state it as Paul said in Galatians 4:4:

**But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,**

And again in Ephesians 1:10:

**That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; [even] in him:**

In other words, every prophetic step had been fulfilled. Every Old Testament intimation, every part of the great redemptive process had been put in place. Had the Triumphal Entry, for example, been one day earlier or one day later, Daniel's prophecy of Seventy Weeks (Daniel 9:1-27) would have been incorrect! Christ came at the appointed time, the perfect time. And, by the way, He will return - at the appointed time - the perfect time. What a blessing it will be for us to look back at that time and see His perfect timing! God's timing is also perfect in your life!

But we are not yet finished with verse 6. Consider how far God went:

2. In the greatness of the One who provided our justification. 5:6b:

**...in due time Christ died**

This was no ordinary death. This was the Son of God Himself! This was the One who fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies. This was the sinless,

perfect Son of God of whom Paul says He did not think that His equality with the Father was a thing to be grasped, but He laid it aside and humbled Himself as a servant and became obedient to the most dehumanizing death known to man, the death of the Cross (Philippians 2:5-11). The Lord of Glory, in due time, died. Consider how far God went in the timing of our salvation, and in the greatness of the One whom He sent.

And please notice that His death was the evidence of the extent of His love! He came to die. What wondrous love is this! But that is not all. Consider how far He went:

3. In the distance to which Christ stooped to reach us 5:6b -7

**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.**

• Who are the ungodly? The ungodly are those who are not God-like. When we think of someone who is ungodly today we simply think of an immoral person, a filthy person. But, an ungodly person is more than that, he is anyone who does not think like or act like God. As the Psalmist said "God is not in all his thoughts," Psalm 10:4, and as Paul warned us earlier in Romans, the ungodly man changes the image of the glorious God into an image made like unto corruptible man (Romans 1:22-23). Men will always try to fashion God in their own image, trying to decide God's guilt and where God is remiss. We are the ones for whom Christ died, not innocents, but men and women who have rejected the truth and the knowledge of the living God and have substituted our own gods in place of Him. And still, He died. He died for unlikely candidates. Consider how far He went:

4. In the level to which His love extended. 5:8:

**But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while**

we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

The argument is going to shift, so please don't miss Paul's point. Paul has been arguing the matter of *timing*. Paul said that *when* (that is a time word) we were yet without strength...in due time... Christ died. He commended His love toward us in that *while* we were yet sinners Christ died for us. This is the love that God demonstrated to us before we belonged to Him! If God loved us as dead, stinking reprobates who were hopeless and without help before...

### **B. Consider how much more God cares for us now! 5:9-11:**

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.

Much more! Much more! Now that you have been justified by His blood, consider how much more God is committed to you. If He loved you when you were not His child, if He did all of that for His enemies, consider how committed He is to you as His child!

Here are some important points to remember...

1. Don't forget, we are justified by His blood. Don't let anyone tell you that the blood of Christ was only the fulfillment of prophetic symbolism which pointed to His death. His blood justifies the sinner.
2. Notice the words "we shall be saved from wrath through Him." Do remember that we said there is a difference between justification and salvation. Men are *not* justified because they have been saved or born again.

They are saved because they have been justified. Justification is an act of God, a legal declaration. Salvation is the process of God whereby He works out the results of justification in our lives! There is a sense in which we were saved the day we were justified. There is a sense in which we are being saved as we work out our salvation. There is a final sense when we will be saved – in that final day when our redemption is complete. This is because salvation is a process that God is working out in our lives.

By the way, it is this instructor's personal opinion that God will not allow any of His wrath to be placed upon His bride, and one reason why the church will not go through the tribulation is because the Bible refers to it as the time of the wrath of the Lamb.
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### 3. And don't forget the argument of 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.

If God reconciled Himself to you while you were His enemy, consider how much more assured you may be that you will be saved by His life. What does Paul mean by the term "saved by his life"? Does he mean that the life of Christ saves us just as much as the blood and death of Christ saves us? The answer is no! The Greek word translated "by" in verse ten is "en" in the Greek and is the equivalent of our word "in." We are saved in Christ because we are literally *in Christ* we are in the safest place in all of heaven and the universe! One cannot get any safer!

So, rejoice in Paul's argument!

If God did so much for us before we were justified, consider how committed He is to us right now!

Christian friend, stop fearing for your salvation. Stop listening to those who would always have you wondering if you quite measure up! You measure up because you are in Christ!

Now, Paul changes direction and answers another Arminian problem. Men resent the fact that they are responsible for Adam's sin. They somehow feel that God is unjust in making us accountable for something we "did not do." Is God just? Of course. He is. Paul is about to explain how that, just as the problem began with one man, Adam, so the solution was made available by one man, Jesus Christ. Isn't it strange how the very men who claim they should not be held accountable for one man's sin (Adam's) - are the same men who are willing to take the benefit of One Man's salvation? (Christ's)? There is no injustice here.

### III. The Answer which Justification By Faith provides for Adam's sin. 5:12-21

#### A. Adam infected the whole human race. 5:12-14

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: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.

- One man infected the whole human race with sin, verse 12.
- God graciously gave the law in order to help us see our sinfulness, verse 13.
- Regardless of whether or not men had the law, death reigned as a result of sin, verse 14.

#### B. Christ provided the cure for the whole human race. 5:15-21

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. 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. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

One man sinned and all died. Another died so that all can live.

**Here's an important extension to Paul's argument:** Paul wants us to know that Christ's action went further! Adam sinned once, and all died. Christ died once, and His death did not just account for one sin that occurred at one time, but for many offenses. In other words, "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," Romans 5:20. The solution was greater than the disease. It had a far greater scope, a far greater power. The consequence of Christ's action goes far beyond the consequence of Adam's action. The death of Christ covers all our sins.

*As usual, please do Supplement 12 before Session 12. Thank you!*

# OUR SOURCE OF POWER

## LESSON TEXT:

Romans 6:1-14

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

We have been meditating on the wonderful assurance and certainty which the doctrine of justification by faith provides. We reasoned that, if God did so much for us when we were His enemies, consider how much more committed to us He is now that we are His children!

## LESSON GOAL:

Our doctrinal goal: To understand that the doctrine of justification by faith does not allow for permissiveness and tolerance to sin - as some suggest.

Our spiritual goal: To understand our position in Christ and to understand the tools which God has given us for overcoming sin and temptation. (Our next lesson will expand this second goal.)

## LESSON OVERVIEW:

We will now consider how justification applies to our lives. This is the doctrine of sanctification.

*Our outline for this session:*

### Justification Extended

A. The Question Stated As It Relates to Grace. 6:1-13

1. Its Doctrinal Answer. 6:2

a.) The argument. 6:2b

b.) The evidence. 6:3-10

1.) Our union with Christ forbids its abuse 6:3

a. Our union in death frees us from sin's penalty.

b. Our union in resurrection frees us from sin's power.

c.) The application. 6:3:11-13

a. We reckon ourselves as dead. 6:11-12

b. We yield ourselves as alive. 6:13

*A glance at our next session:*

B. The Question Restated As It Relates to the Law. 6:15 - 7:24

1. Its Personal Answer. 6:15

a.) The argument. 6:16

b.) The first illustration - (the servant master relationship). 6:17-23

1.) The illustration expressed 6:17,18

2.) The illustration explained 6:19-20

3.) The evidence asserted 6:21-23

4.) The conclusion reaffirmed 6:23

c.) The second illustration (the marriage relationship). 7:1-6

d.) The purpose of the law revealed. 7:1-24

When we began our study of Romans the outline we provided is the most traditional and easy to understand outline of Romans. However, when we provided *this* outline (Session One) we explained that we would alter the outline at a later time in our study of Romans. The time has come to alter this outline.

*Here is the traditional outline:*

I. Condemnation - 1:1-3:20

II. Justification - 3:21-5:21

III. Sanctification - 6:1-8:39

IV. Vindication - 9:1-11:36

V. Application - 12:1-16:27

*Here is the suggested outline:*

I. Justification Necessitated - 1:1-3:20

II. Justification Provided - 3:21-5:21

III. Justification Extended - 6:1-8:39

IV. Justification Defended - 9:1-11:36

V. Justification Experienced - 12:1-16:27

Note that the word justification begins each heading. Why is this change important? When we speak of sanctification we are speaking of the *process* whereby God works out His plan for separating us from sin unto holiness. God already sees us as holy because of our position in Christ. He is also working our sanctification out in our daily lives (our practice) and, when Christ returns, we will be completely and finally sanctified. Sanctification can be seen in three tenses, past, present, and future. For more information on sanctification see C.I. Scofield's footnote to Revelation 22:11 or most other good study Bibles.

So, what is the problem with titling chapters 6-8 Sanctification? The problem is, that by doing this we take away from the power of Paul's argument. We break up his reasoning. In chapters 3-5 Paul has been presenting the doctrine of justification and now, beginning with chapter six, Paul has simply begun *defending it* and *applying it* to our daily lives. He is going to defend it against those who would accuse and abuse it. He is going to show us how it plays out in our daily living. Paul never changed the subject, so we want to be careful not to change it for him. Sanctification, you see, is simply the practical outworking of the doctrine of justification by faith in our lives. We must never separate justification by faith from sanctification (as many Bible teachers do). When we do so we open ourselves to all kinds of problems - as we will see later in Romans.

## TODAY'S LESSON:

**Introduction:** Let's assume you are a college professor. One day, while you are teaching a seminar with one hundred students attending, a murder is committed across town. Later the police come knocking at your door investigating you for the murder. When you are challenged, what would

your strongest defense be? Would you argue that your finger prints are not on the murder weapon, or would you argue that you were across town with 100 witnesses at the time of the murder? Obviously, your presence in class would be your strongest defense. You would strike at the heart of the issue.

We are sometimes ridiculed because we teach the doctrine of the assurance of the believer (eternal security). Folks who believe one can lose his salvation make great sport of Christians who do not. They will often say, "Are you one of those folks who believe you can get saved and then live like the devil?" When we are criticized for this, we often make the strangest and most foolish defenses instead of striking at the heart of the issue. That very accusation is the one which Paul is now going to address in Romans 6. He is going to chop the tree at its roots and remove any idea that grace suggests disobedience.

## Justification Extended

### A. The Question Stated As It Relates to Grace. 6:1-13

6:1

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

Paul has just finished a magnificent explanation of the doctrine of justification by faith. He has explained how that "...where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," Romans 5:20b. He has been explaining how God's gift of righteousness through the death of Christ not only met and compensated for Adam's sin, but it paid the penalty for all of our sins. Grace abounded much more!

An experienced teacher anticipates the questions of his class, and you can be sure that Paul knew exactly what his readers would be tempted to think about this doctrine of justification by faith. They would be saying, "Paul, if that is true and if grace

abounds more than sin, then you are guilty of teaching license. If what you say is true, the more we sin, the greater the grace would be that would be manifested for us.”

There are many who *slander*, 3:8, the doctrine of justification by faith alone by teaching that such a doctrine leads to permissiveness and disobedience. The very attack which so many make today is exactly what Paul anticipated in 6:1. Well, what about that question - What *shall* we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?



**Background note:** There are many who teach that Paul was here addressing the Antinomians – the false teachers who taught this very thing. They said that the more a man sinned the more he glorified God because more of God’s grace would be revealed. This teacher has yet to find historic justification for this idea, for it is very unlikely that the Antinomian teaching was even in existence when Paul wrote Romans. Clearly, Paul was anticipating the question – “If what you say is true, then we have permission to sin and God’s grace will abound to cover it all.” He was not likely refuting a false teaching already in existence as much as he was anticipating Jewish objections.

Well, what about this accusation? If a man is safe and secure as a result of being justified once and for all, what is to keep him from sinning while being protected under the umbrella of grace?

#### 1. Its Doctrinal Answer. 6:2

Paul responds: God forbid. The thought is repulsive and unthinkable. Only a carnal mind would want to pervert the pure and precious doctrine of salvation from sin by grace to imply permission to sin, as though sinning is something to be desired! In truth, the more one understands grace and exults in it, the more he shuns and turns away from sin and the more he desires personal holiness.

#### a.) The argument. 6:2

**God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?**

Why is such a suggestion unthinkable? Why is it repulsive? It is unthinkable and repulsive because it shows our ignorance of justification. It shows that we really do not understand what took place on that cross. In a moment, Paul is going to explain himself. For the present he is gaining our attention by announcing that it is unthinkable that a man who is dead to sin would live any longer in it. It is as foolish to entertain that thought as it is to offer a steak dinner to a corpse.

The Greek is even more definitive: “How shall we who have died to sin...” This is a very permanent arrangement. When you’re dead, you’re dead. Folks who believe that they must be saved over and over are really teaching that they can die, revive, die, revive, and die again. It just doesn’t make sense. Death is very final. The man who is dead to sin is dead to sin and cannot become un-dead to sin.

#### b.) The evidence. 6:3-10

The obvious question is, *when* did I die to sin? how did this come about? Paul produces the evidence for this claim...

#### 1.) Our union with Christ forbids its abuse. 6:3

**Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?**

When a man receives Jesus Christ as Saviour the Bible says that God sees him as being *in Christ*. The new Testament makes some 60 or 70 references to the fact that we are in Christ and it also teaches us that Christ is *in us*. (Colossians 1:24). This was the great mystery which the Old Testament saints could not see – the mystery of godlikeness. Cultists teach that we will all become gods. Christianity teaches no such foolishness. It teaches something far better. It teaches us that we are placed in Christ and He is placed in us. This is

perfect union and perfect identification.

Paul was *not* teaching that water baptism was the method by which we were placed into the body of Christ. Water baptism is merely the outward, public expression, the type or symbol, of what occurred when we were placed in Christ. Paul was not speaking of water baptism here, he was speaking of Spirit baptism. How do we know this? Paul explains just exactly what Spirit baptism is in 1 Corinthians 12:12-13:

**For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also [is] Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether [we be] Jews or Gentiles, whether [we be] bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.**

When we were placed in Christ we became identified with all that Christ ever did. Do you recall how some folks resist the fact that we are responsible for Adam's sin? They resist the idea that we were identified with Adam in his sin because we were in Adam. They do not like the idea that they are guilty of something they did not consciously do, (as though they would not have committed Adam's sin!) Keep in mind that you were not conscious of the fact that you were in Christ at the cross either, but if that fact were not true you could not be saved! You would not have died to sin. Death and sin would still have power over you. Do not foolishly reject your identification with Adam's sin and then accept the same doctrine of identification as it is expressed in Christ.

Now read 6:3-10 over carefully.

**Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of**

**his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.**

Paul stresses two ideas:

a. Our union in *death* frees us from sin's penalty.

We are buried with Him by baptism into death. The wages of sin is death, 6:23. Let's assume you had a dog named Spot. One day Spot was feeling particularly dog-like and he chose to eat your slippers. As a result of eating your slippers he inevitably died. Would you punish dead Spot? Would you scold him? Not likely. If you have been justified by faith, you died in Christ at the cross. Sin and death has no more authority to exact a penalty from you. Satan wants you to think that God is still exacting penalties from believers. God exacted the ultimate penalty on that cross. Because you are dead you are free from sin's penalty<sup>1</sup>.

b. Our union in *resurrection* frees us from sin's power.

Paul is not satisfied with leaving us in the tomb. He reminds us that we are risen with Christ as well:

6:4-5

**Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also [in the**

likeness] of [his] resurrection:

If you look closely you will see that verse 4 talks about our present response to the resurrection, and verse 5 tells us of the resurrection and our future

When Christ was raised, we were raised from the dead. Far from wanting to sin in order that grace should abound, now we can walk in newness of life, free from sin's penalty and power. And better yet, we live for the day when we will catch up with Christ and actually enjoy all the benefits of the resurrection. (Philippians 3:10-12)

Now, let's try to get this down to where the rubber meets the road. Be patient and try to follow Paul's reasoning. Remember, Paul is explaining the relationship of the believer to sin, now that he has been justified by faith. He is explaining the whole idea of union or identification. Follow the process:

1. We were in Adam when Adam sinned. Do you need more proof? Read in Hebrews 7:4-10 how *Levi* was in the loins of Abraham when *Abraham* tithed years earlier to *Melchizedek*!
2. Christ came and shed His blood, He died and was buried, and rose again.
3. We came along 2,000 years or so later and were justified by faith. (Of course, in God's eyes - He planned this in eternity past before Adam's or Christ's birth).
4. God was able to justify us legally by placing us in Christ so that, just as we were identified with Adam in his sin, we were identified with Christ in His solution.

Stay on task and follow this through:

1. Now, when we were in Adam, were our bodies in Adam? No, our bodies had not yet been created.
2. When we were in Christ at the cross were our bodies in Christ? No, our bodies had not yet been created.
3. Did our bodies die with Christ? No. They neither died nor were raised again. Did our

spirits die and rise with Christ? Yes.

4. In our spirits, we have experienced the full results of Calvary! We are free from the penalty of sin and free to walk in newness of life.
5. Our bodies lag behind. They have not yet been made in the likeness of His resurrection.

This creates a conflict in us - a conflict over sin. We have bodies which desire to sin and spirits which do not. What's a body to do?

There is a story of an old Indian who once discussed the matter of the flesh warring with the spirit. He said that there were two dogs in him, a black one and a white one, and they were fighting. He said that whichever dog heard him say "sic him" was the dog that won. That may make for a good story, but it makes for poor theology. Overcoming sin is not merely a situation of mind over matter. It is the struggle of spirit against flesh. Follow the rules and you will win. The Bible says that we must approach this struggle with sin in our lives using two important steps. To forget either of these steps is to fail utterly. It is not a matter of saying "sic him" to the white dog! Do you use these steps when confronted with sin and temptation? Pay close attention:

c.) The application. 6:3:11-13

a. We reckon ourselves as dead. 6:11-12

**Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.**

Recall what the word reckon means. It's that familiar old accounting term we saw so many times in Romans 5. It means to credit to one's account, to impute. Abraham believed God and it was credited to him for righteousness. That is what justification by faith is all about. God reckons us to be righteous, based on the death of His son. God says that we are to act upon the fact that we already know is true. We are to see ourselves as dead to sin. What



does it mean to reckon ourselves to sin? It means that we understand that it no longer has any more power over us than we have over dead Spot. We do not have to sin. We do not have to be caught up with sinful habits and lustful thoughts.

By the way, there is one little difference between God's reckoning and our reckoning. The Bible says (in the Greek structure) that when a man is saved, God reckons Him to be righteous once and for all. But when a man is commanded to reckon himself dead to sin, it is an *ongoing* command. We need to continually remind ourselves that because we have been justified once and for all sin has no power over us. Not one bit! That's the first step. But don't stop now, or you'll surely fail.

b. We yield ourselves as alive. 6:13

**Neither yield ye your members [as] instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members [as] instruments of righteousness unto God.**

We must not just see ourselves as dead to sin. We must see ourselves as alive unto God. It is not enough to turn away from something – we must turn to something. We must yield our members as instruments of righteousness.

What is a member? A member is a body part. Where has the problem been all along? Has it been with our bodies or with our spirits? The problem has been with our bodies. It is the flesh which lusts against the spirit. How then do we walk in the spirit? By offering up our bodies, our members, as instruments of righteousness.

Paul is just beginning his treatment of this great warfare between flesh and spirit. He has many more things to say. The important thing to remember is that the doctrine of justification by faith does not give us permission to sin, it gives us power over sin. How do we gain that power? We gain it by reckoning ourselves as dead unto

sin, and yielding our members as instruments of righteousness.

6:14:

**For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.**

Does sin have dominion over you? You do not have to allow it. Don't "say sic him" to the white dog. Reckon yourself dead to sin and alive unto God and yield your body members as servants of righteousness!

Remember that victory over sin is available only to those who have been justified by faith. Are you trusting in Christ for your righteousness, or are you still going about seeking to establish your own? 10:3.

<sup>1</sup>Note: This author believes that Calvinists draw some erroneous conclusions from their fundamental contention that men are dead in their sin and, therefore incapable of responding to God. This is built upon the assumption that a dead man cannot respond to stimuli. In reality, the biblical conception of death has to do with a man being separated from God, and has no reference to either his soul or body being annihilated. We agree then, that God must initiate the work of regeneration and that there is nothing in man which exonerates him, in any way, before God. At the same time, we do not believe God must perform some act of pre-salvation or pre-regeneration in order to allow men to respond to the gospel by faith.

*It's time to go to Supplement 13 before doing Session 13.*

# THE SECRET OF POWER

## LESSON TEXT:

Romans 6:15-23

## LESSON GOAL:

To apply the truths of Romans 6 in a manner which will equip the student to actively overcome sin in his life.

## LESSON OVERVIEW:

We have been addressing the practical application or extension of the doctrine of justification as it relates to our daily life.

*In our last session we covered:*

### A. The Question Stated As it Relates to Grace. 6:1-13

1. Its Doctrinal Answer. 6:2
  - a.) The argument. 6:2b
  - b.) The evidence. 6:3-10
    - 1.) Our union with Christ forbids its abuse 6:3
      - a. Our union in death frees us from sin's penalty.
      - b. Our union in resurrection frees us from sin's power.
    - c.) The application. 6:3:11-13
      - a. We reckon ourselves as dead. 6:11-12
      - b. We yield ourselves as alive. 6:13

*We begin now with point B:*

### B. The Question Restated As it Relates to the Law. 6:15 - 7:24

1. Its Personal Answer. 6:15
  - a.) The argument. 6:16

b.) The first illustration - (the servant master relationship). 6:17-23

- 1.) The illustration expressed 6:17,18
- 2.) The illustration explained 6:19-20
- 3.) The evidence asserted 6:21-23
- 4.) The conclusion reaffirmed 6:23

## FORTIFYING OUR FOUNDATIONS:

Before we jump directly into today's text we want to take a quick dip into the Greek for an extremely short but refreshing reminder about the aorist tense.

In the English language we are very familiar with three of our tenses, the past tense when we are referring to an action in the past, the present tense, when we refer to an action occurring in the present, and the future tense, addressing an action in the future.

When pastors refer to biblical Greek you will often here them refer to additional tenses, not the least of which is called the aorist. When a verb occurs in the aorist, it is usually the writer's intent for us to understand that a certain action occurs only once, at a specific point. We say it is punctiliar. This tense is far more focused on the "point action" of the verb than it is interested in its past, present, or future status. For example, when Paul says in Romans 5:1:

**Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God...**

Paul was using the aorist tense. We should properly render this "Therefore, having been justified by faith..." because Paul was referring to a single action which occurred at a single point in time, once and for all. Believers are not justified on an ongoing basis. It happened once, at the cross, when we were placed into Christ. Remember this idea behind the aorist

tense. We will be referring to it again and again.

## TODAY'S LESSON:

Romans 6 asks *one* question in *two* different ways. In verse one, we see:

### A. The Question Stated As it Relates to Grace. 6:1-13

6:1

**What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?**

The answer, of course, was a resounding “perish the thought!” How unthinkable it would be for a believer who is one with Christ in His death and resurrection to be under the dominion of sin.

We actually left off in our study with verses 11-13 of this chapter where we learned those important principles for understanding our relationship to sin and to obedience. Two key words pop out at us:

• **Reckon.** Now that we know we died with Christ, verse 11 tells us that we are to live as though we understand that fact. We are to draw upon that truth just as though we would draw upon our knowledge of our bank balance when we use the ATM. When we are dead to something, it no longer has dominion over us. That fact is of little use to us unless we appropriate it and live as though it is true.

• **Yield.** We are to yield our members - our body parts unto God as though our bodies have already been resurrected from the dead. We are to yield them as instruments of righteousness. We are going to learn a little more about this word yield in today's lesson.

We now pick up our discussion with the second question of Romans 6:

### B. The Question Restated As It Relates to the Law. 6:15 - 7:2

6:15

**What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.**

The question remains effectively the same as stated in verse 1: “Shall we sin?” When Paul first asked it, he was responding to the question as it related to *grace*. Now, he is answering the same question as it relates to the *law*. The law about which Paul was speaking was the Jewish Law – not just the Ten Commandments, but all of the laws of God as handed down through Moses. Why was Paul raising this issue? Once again, the enemies of justification by faith would have been quick to point out that if the law was done away with, men would naturally revert to permissiveness, *the kind of permissiveness which existed before the law*. It is the same argument which many still make to this day when they say, “When you teach eternal security Christians will become permissive.”

What was the problem? The problem was that these Jews often misunderstood the purpose of the law. They thought that God had given them the law in order to restrain them from doing what was wrong. But that was never the purpose of the law. The purpose of the law was to show the Jews that they could never be good enough to please God in their own effort. Do you remember Romans 5:20? It clearly explains the law's purpose:

5:20

**Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:**

Why then, did the law enter? So that the offense might abound! The law was our tutor to show us our need for redemption through Christ – to show us our need for grace!

If the purpose of the law was to restrain us, we would still need it in our age – but if the purpose of the law was to show our need for grace, then we are far better off receiving God's grace.



Note: Some folks think that law and grace are sort of opposites and that the law ruled in Old Testament times, while grace rules today.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The Bible says that sin and death ruled in Old Testament times, and that God graciously gave men the law to show them their sin. The only purpose of the law was to show us the consequences of our sin so that we would respond to the grace of Christ.

We'll be adding to this argument when we get into the last portion of chapter 7.

#### 1. Its Personal Answer. 6:15

When Paul first asked the question “shall we continue in sin..?” in verse 1, he provided a doctrinal answer for us. He explained how flawed this teaching was in light of our union with Christ. This time, Paul provides a personal answer. He wants us to see what happens to us personally when we yield to sin and when we yield to righteousness. The answer is once again “God forbid!” or, “May it never be so!” Now, Paul is going to explain how this affects us personally.

##### a.) The argument. 6:16

**Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?**

Paul first lays down the principle and then he illustrates it. To understand the principle we must look more closely at the word *yield*. We have already explained that the key to experiencing victory over these bodies which have not yet been resurrected is locked up in two words, reckon, 6:11, and yield. See

6:13 and following.

**Step One:** Reckon, or account yourself as dead to sin because you died in Christ.

**Step Two:** Yield, more specifically, yield your members or your body parts (the act of consecration.)

When we think of yielding we think of giving up a right. We might say that it is a negative idea, the idea of giving up. That's okay, but there is a little more to the idea of yielding in the biblical sense. The word yield carries with it the idea of *presenting ourselves*, of standing by (especially in the context of a royal court) ready for service at a second's notice. In other words, it is a positive idea even more than it is negative.

As believers we consciously dedicate our bodies and their respective members or limbs as standing by, being ready at a moment's notice to serve Christ. Defensively, then, we reckon our bodies dead to sin. Offensively, we present them for royal service to our great King. That is really the idea behind victory over sin.

When we say that the idea behind the word yield really means to present ourselves it has probably brought another verse in Romans to your mind - Romans 12:1. In this verse, Paul says:

**I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, [which is] your reasonable service.**

Do you see that word present? It is the same Greek word we are translating *yield* in Romans 6!

There is one more important thought about yielding. There is something which the Greek is very emphatic about and something which is vital to our walk. When the command is made to yield or present ourselves it is expressed as an *aorist imperative*. The imperative simply tells us that it is a command. The aorist (remember?) reminds us that it is to be a

single action in time, once and for all! As believers, we are to present the members of our bodies, once and for all to Christ for His immediate beck and call, ready first, last, always, and with an instant's notice to serve Him. Then we are to go on through life in that condition.

You may not have understood this when you received Christ as Saviour, and this may be the part of the formula which is missing, hindering you in your struggle with the flesh. Have you ever, as a believer, gone to Christ and presented your body and its members for His use and glory? If you have never made this once and for all decision now would be a good time to bow your head and do it. Settle it once and for all! We use many terms for this decision. We call it dedication and surrender. Some mistakenly call it being sanctified or receiving the second blessing. The Bible simply calls it presentation. The Lord is waiting for you to present yourself to Him in one final act which you can look back on and respond to accordingly for the rest of your life.

Now, let's establish the principle: The one to whom you present yourself as a servant to obey, his servant you are. Here are our options:

- You may be a servant of sin unto death
- You may be a servant of obedience unto righteousness

Do you see those words obey and obedience in verses 16 and 17? This is where the naysayers are put to silence. When a man says that we can sin because we are not under the law, he does not understand that all men are slaves, either to sin unto death or to obedience unto righteousness.

There is a great deal of misunderstanding concerning freedom today. The average American, for example, understands freedom to be the privilege of being without restraints. That is not what our forefathers intended. They understood that freedom was the privilege to govern ourselves. This is why our Bill of Rights is abused so terribly today. It is because its humanistic authors *assumed the moral goodness*

of our people. They assumed that free men would govern themselves. This was a bad mistake.

Christians who think that Christian liberty frees them from the constraints of legalism most likely know little about either. Christian liberty is simply the privilege to submit to the Word of God and the Holy Spirit instead of to a list of hard and fast rules. In the spiritual realm there is no such thing as absolute freedom. You are only free to choose your Master, Christ. You may continue to be a slave of sin or a slave of Christ.

Paul now expands his discussion about law and grace with two illustrations. First he talks about the legal relationship between the servant and his master.

In our next lesson he will present the legal relationship between a wife and her husband (his second illustration). For now:

b.) The first illustration - (the servant master relationship). 6:17-23

1.) The illustration expressed 6:17,18

*As usual, please read Supplement 7 before doing Study 7. 6:17 is one of the purest expressions of the outworking of grace in the life:*

**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.**

We often say that there are three elements which make us unique as men and women. We have intellect, sensibility, and will. That is to say, we have intelligence, we have emotions, and we have volition. Notice how grace affects all three of these areas:

- “ye have obeyed..” Obedience relates to our will. We decide to obey.
- “from the heart..” That speaks to our emotions,

our desire, our longing.

- “that form of doctrine which was delivered you.” That speaks to our minds, our intelligence.

Notice that Paul did not say “But psychology be thanked...” He said, “but God be thanked.” God, our Father, has provided us with everything that pertains to life and godliness. This is not some esoteric, theoretical principal - you can have victory over sin now, if you will *reckon* and *present*.

6:18

**Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.**

By now you know that Paul begins all of his arguments from the same place. He stresses our position in Christ. If you are in Christ your position demands that you are a servant of righteousness, not a slave of sin. Your body would impress upon you its desire to serve itself, to serve sin, but you know better. These instruments belong to God. But consider the seriousness of this. When a Christian lends out his members for sinful purposes he is aiding the enemy, and advancing Satan’s cause. He is, in effect, traitor to his cause. It is a high calling to be a servant of Christ and a soldier of Christ. One cannot switch sides and we dare not aid and abet the cause of the enemy. You are a servant of the living Christ.

2.) The illustration explained. 6:19-20:

**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. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.**

This underscores the second principle: There are only two sides. No neutral territory. You are a slave of Christ or a slave of sin. If you are the servant of sin you are free from servanthood to righteousness,

and vice versa, if you are the servant of Christ you are free from the servanthood of sin. Slaves do not have co-owners. No man can serve two masters. It is unthinkable that a slave of Christ would want to serve sin. This is why the doctrine of justification by faith does not teach permissiveness. It gives us a new Master.

3.) The evidence asserted. 6:21-23

**What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things [is] death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.**

What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?

Years ago our family had occasion to visit Hollywood and Universal Studios. It was quite an eye opener to see all those props which were designed to convey the image of substance when there was really nothing to them. I was especially surprised when we saw the set of a TV game show. Everything was so chincy and even dirty. Yet, to the eye of the TV viewer is was beautiful, sparkling, and luxurious. It reminded me of sin and the *false fruit* it represents. Television, from morning to evening glamorizes it, but there is never any good fruit. It only leads to death. What believer who has walked with Christ would ever want to go back to the foolish, empty, and lonely ways of the world? What good ever came of it? Certainly, no eternal good came from it. The end of those things is death. In 1 John 2:15-17, John said:

**Love not the world, neither the things [that are] in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that [is] in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.**

#### 4.) The conclusion reaffirmed. 6:23

Now, instead of quoting Romans 6:23 as one of a chain of verses in the Roman's road, take a second look at it in its context. Look at its argument:

6:23

**For the wages of sin [is] death; but the gift of God [is] eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

These two opposing statements are really a grand summarizing statement: For the wages of sin is death... There are no fruits, only wages. The servant of sin can only expect a lost eternity or spiritual death. But the gift of God is eternal life... What gift? The gift Paul has been talking about all along. The gift of salvation? Yes, but not directly. Paul has been talking about only one gift, the gift of righteousness.

Ephesians 2:8-10

**For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God -- Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.**

Have we been saved to sin? God forbid! May it never be! We have been saved to serve!

Have you received the gift of righteousness which is by faith?

And, if so, have you presented your members, once and for all - to God?

*As usual, please do Supplement 14 before studying Session 14.  
Thank you!*

# OUR GREAT STRUGGLE

## LESSON TEXT:

Romans 7:1-25

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

As noted earlier in Romans 6, Paul has been explaining how justification by faith makes the believer dead to sin and dead to the law. We left off answering the question "...Shall we sin because we are not under the law?" Paul then offered two illustrations to help us explain our relationship to both sin and the law. He first discussed the servant/master relationship. He wanted us to know that "...to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are..." ...Whether this is to sin or righteousness. In other words, the Christian does not hate sin because the law taught him to hate sin, he hates sin because he serves another master. We either serve sin or we serve Christ.

As we approach Romans 7, Paul sets aside his first analogy (servant/master) in favor of a new analogy, the husband wife relationship, as he continues to help us understand the interplay between sin and the law.

## LESSON GOAL:

To help the student understand the true purpose and function of the law and to warn the student of the dangers of submitting to the influences of the law.

## LESSON OVERVIEW:

In Romans 6 Paul has been explaining how justification by faith makes the believer dead to sin and dead to the law. In Roman's 7 Paul continues with

a full explanation of the purpose and influence of the law as Paul raises three questions:

### Three Questions Concerning the Law

#### I. The Question of Its Legal Authority. 7:1-6

- A. The Principle Stated. 7:1
- B. The Example Cited. 7:2, 3
- C. The Conclusion Asserted. 7:4-6

#### II. The Question of Its Moral Integrity. 7:7-12

- A. The Principle Stated. 7:7a
- B. The Example Cited. 7:7b-11
- C. The Conclusion Asserted. 7:12

#### III. The Question of its Present Influence. 7:13-25

- A. The Principle Stated. 7:13a
- B. The Example Cited. 7:13b-24
- C. The Conclusion Asserted. 7:25 (and all of chapter eight)

## TODAY'S LESSON:

### True or False?

- 1.) The main theme of Romans 7 is our sanctification. \_\_\_\_
- 2.) Romans 7 contains an autobiographical sketch of Paul and his struggles with sin. \_\_\_\_
- 3.) The "man" of Romans 7 can only be the unbeliever under the influence of the law. \_\_\_\_
- 4.) The "man" of Romans 7 is the believer in his struggle with the old nature. \_\_\_\_

If you answered "True" to any of the above questions we invite you to consider rethinking your



ideas about this chapter. It is true, for example, that we may say in the most general sense that Romans 7 concerns our sanctification, but if you will read Romans 5, 6, 7, and 8 together you will understand that they all have to do with the same theme, the doctrine of justification by faith alone. Paul has been defending this precious doctrine by explaining to us that it does not teach permissiveness, but obedience. In Romans 7 Paul is simply explaining how, that as a result of justification by faith, we are dead to the law and that we must not allow it to influence us any longer!

Please ignore your Scofield Bible notes on this chapter! This is *not* an autobiography of Paul any more than it is an autobiography of anyone else; this chapter is a trip into the laboratory. Paul wants us to see the *dynamics* of sin and the law and how the law is a catalyst which allows sin to make us exceedingly sinful.

Further, there is no *man* in Romans 7! The issue is not whether Paul is talking to saved or unsaved people. These dynamics apply equally to both! Any person, saved or unsaved, who places himself under the influence of the law will experience the dynamic interaction between sin and the law!

Paul poses three questions in chapter 7 - verse 1, verse 7, and verse 13. These three questions help us understand the three ideas which Paul is working out.

### Three Questions Concerning the Law

#### I. The Question of Its Legal Authority. 7:1-6

7:1

**Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?**

Paul's first question is possibly in the form of a mild rebuke. It was common practice for Paul to say,

"know ye not?" As noted earlier, it is quite possible that Paul is anticipating the questions he knows the opponents of justification by faith will ask. He knows they will not give the law up easily. He knows they will accuse Paul of defaming the law. So Paul, very carefully and wisely, points to principles which they should already know. He is, in effect, putting them on the defensive, perhaps intimating that they had a deficiency in their education. In any case, he has their attention.

#### A. The Principle Stated. 7:1

The principle is obvious: The law has dominion over a man only as long as he lives. It has long been said that there are two inevitabilities in life - paying taxes and death. One advantage of death, however, is that you no longer have to pay taxes! The law has no authority.

#### B. The Example Cited. 7:2-3

Paul is, of course, talking about our relationship to the law. He has already taught us that we are dead to sin, 6:2. He now wants us to see that we are dead to the law. He offers us a textbook example of teaching by analogy:

7:2-3

**For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to [her] husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of [her] husband. So then if, while [her] husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.**

Some preachers, notwithstanding, the scriptures, common sense, and the law of Moses do not allow a woman to remarry if her husband dies or vice versa. The Bible says a woman who marries another man, while her husband lives, is called an adulteress. If the man dies, the woman is free from that law, the law which required her to be *bound* to her husband.

### C. The Conclusion Asserted. 7:4-6

Based upon the above example, Paul says:

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, [even] to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. 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.

Let's get to the facts:

- **Fact:** You are become dead to the law *by the body of Christ*. Do you remember how 6 taught us we were dead to sin? How did we die to sin? We died to sin because we were in Christ at the cross. When we died the wages of sin were paid in full. We were in Christ's body. You also died to the law. It lost its authority over you!
- **Fact:** You did not have to "remain single" when you died to the law! If you have been justified by faith you are married to Jesus Christ. (By the way, this is second aorist; this event has occurred once and for all). How does this work? When you were placed in Christ you were placed in His body. The scripture is very emphatic on that point. As a member of His body you are His bride. Remember, that according to Jewish marriage customs, the espoused couple are seen as two married persons who have not yet come together, but they are seen as married. You have not been physically claimed by your groom but it would be good for you to have your wedding gown in order – because it could be today!
- **Fact:** The purpose of this marriage is to *bring forth fruit*. There are times when God, in his infinite wisdom, love, and mercy, does not bring children into a home. The normal desire for every couple, however, should be to bear fruit. In your first marriage you also brought forth fruit – unto death!

- **Fact:** When you were in the flesh, sin took advantage of the law's effect upon you and brought forth fruit unto death! "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."

This law, intended for our blessing and benefit has been our bane because it allows our sinful nature to flourish. The history of the Jewish people who lived under the law attests to this. The long sad history of the Jewish people up until the time of Christ was one continuing testimony of the power of sin to thrive under the administration of the law.

- **Fact:** We now have complete deliverance from the law in Christ! 7:6:

**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.**

Dear Christian friend, guard yourself against those who would put you back under that law today! Guard yourself against that cultic fringe element which reasons – "If those Old Testament laws were given by an all wise God for the benefit of the Jewish people, we would be foolish to ignore them today!" You have been delivered from the oldness of the letter so that you can serve Christ in the newness of the spirit. Why would you serve your dead husband who could only criticize you, while ignoring your new husband, Jesus Christ, the perfect husband who wants to nurture you? Flee from the law and let the living Christ and the indwelling Spirit guide you daily!

Well, looking at the fruit of the law we conclude that God's experiment was a total failure, and God had to figure out another way to solve our problems! Right? Wrong.

## II. The Question of Its Moral Integrity. 7:7-12

7:7a

What shall we say then? [Is] the law sin? God forbid.

The news recently reported on the terrible neglect of one of our local high schools. They had plastic sheets covering books to protect them from leaks, grass growing in the roof and yards neglected. The implication was that lack of funding was the culprit and that the people of California were depriving their children of a proper education by refusing proper funding. Other folks said, however, that that was not the real problem. The problem was that for every teacher in the classroom there were several non teachers in the system and that the layers of bureaucracy and unnecessary spending were the true reasons for this neglect. Who was really at fault? What were the real facts?

Is the law at fault because sin took advantage of it in order to have its way in us? Is the gun or knife at fault when we commit a crime, or does our sinful nature take advantage of the proliferation of guns? What are the real facts?

God was not performing an experiment. The law was not sinful because it was abused. God knew exactly what would happen. Why then did He allow it? Paul continues:

#### A. The Principle Stated. 7:7b

**Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law**

God gave us the law purposely to show us our sinfulness. It was given to show us our need of a solution, a Saviour. Without the law there is no knowledge of sin.

#### B. The Example Cited. 7:7c-11

**...for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin [was] dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which [was ordained] to life, I found [to be] unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived**

**me, and by it slew [me].**

Was Paul speaking only of himself here? No, he was simply making his experience with sin and the law personal. Any time a man places himself under the authority of the law, sin will work havoc with him.

#### C. The Conclusion Asserted. 7:12

**Wherefore the law [is] holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.**

The problem is not with the law. The law is holy, just, and good. The problem is with our sinful natures. To be against the law would be to be against God. After all, God gave us the law through Moses at Mt. Sinai. Paul is putting to rest the arguments of those who would accuse him of being against the law and thus opposing God.

### III. The Question of its Present Influence. 7:13-25

This leads us to the third question which falls logically in place.

7:13a

**Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid.**

We often speak of “shooting ourselves in the foot.” By that, we mean that our own efforts have done us more harm than good. If the law, even though it is good, allowed sin to flourish within me, then isn't the law really an instrument of my destruction? Wouldn't we have been better without it? Wouldn't Israel have fared much better if Moses had never come down from Sinai? The answer is God forbid! May it never be so! Here's why:

#### A. The Principle Stated. 7:13b

**...But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.**

What advantage did the law serve? It enabled me to see the sinfulness of my sin. If I had not seen the sinfulness of my sin I would not have sought a solution. No boy or girl, no man or woman can be saved who does not repent of sin.

- Because of this dynamic interplay of law and sin there is a large group of Christians who teach that we must restore the law for its *pedagogical* value, that we must do our “law work” before bringing men to Christ. By bringing men under the law, so to speak, they will see the sinfulness of their sin and be more prepared to come to Christ. This has its logical appeal, but it is a totally unbiblical position. It is unbiblical for some of the following reasons:

**Reason #1:** It misrepresents the fact that the law has been done away with. As glorious as this ministration of death was, it has been done away (2 Corinthians 3:11) in preference to God’s new ministration of life.

**Reason #2:** In place of the law, God has given us the Holy Spirit to accomplish the power of conviction in the life of unbelievers and show them their need for righteousness. See John 16:8-11.

The Holy Spirit uses the entire Word of God, including the Old Testament story of the giving of the law and Israel’s failure, as an instrument of showing us our need for Christ, but *we do not need to be placed under the law in order to benefit from its influence*. These things were given for our examples, so that we can learn from Israel’s experience and not suffer under the bondage of the law.

The message of the gospel of the grace of God includes its own severe warnings for those who reject it. May we use the principles of the law to *illustrate* those warnings? Yes. Paul does this for both unbelievers and believers. We cross the line, however, when we hold folks accountable to the Old Testament law in order to show them the freedom that is in the gospel.

Let’s say, for example, that we stand on the street

with the 10 Commandments and, picking one out, walk up to a stranger and ask him if he has broken it. When he agrees, we then point him to Christ. Have we used the law properly? Consider what happens when that person comes to Christ. Will he still see the law as his standard? Will he also believe he is required to be a sabbath keeper? Perhaps, if we used the same principles which are taught in the New Testament, we might avoid confusing folks. After all, the New Covenant has the same power to convict as does the Old Testament.

#### B. The Example Cited. 7:14-24

For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 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. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

In these verses Paul simply explains. on a personal basis, what happens to *anyone* who places himself under the law. Because our fleshly bodies are carnal they are still subject to the influences of sin. Sin will thrive and flourish in any man, believer or unbeliever, who allows the law to do its work in our lives. Alligators are not reasonable. If you swim with them, sooner or later you will be at a dinner party. Your flesh has not yet been glorified and its nature is still present. Your flesh will always respond in the same manner to the law.

God help those Christians who wake up every day wondering about how they measure up, worried about their performance record!

We see them struggling with the question of their acceptance before God and missing the whole point of justification by faith! The more one struggles and worries about his performance, the more he is effectually placing himself under the law! And the more one does this the more doomed he is to failure!

How *should* one begin each day? By thanking God! By thanking Him for who he is in Christ and by acknowledging once again that he is dead to sin and the law, and by presenting himself and his members for service for Christ and righteousness. Leave yesterday's failures in the bed behind you and start new and fresh under the control of the Holy Spirit. If you practice this on a daily basis, you can free yourself from the bondage of the law and you will soon see how God can use you.

C. The Conclusion Asserted. 7:25 (And all of chapter 8.)

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.**

Isn't that a strange place for a "Thank you!?" I believe Paul is saying this: "Thank God I am no longer under the bondage of the law! Thank God that I now see how my carnal flesh responds to the law! Thank God that I am dead to the law and alive unto Jesus Christ; a new life, and a new way!"

*As usual, please study Supplement 15 before studying Session 15.  
Thank you!*

# THE TRIUMPH OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

## LESSON TEXT:

Romans 8:1-13

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

In chapter six we saw our death to sin as a result of justification by faith. In chapter seven we saw our death to the law as a result of justification by faith. We saw that because we are dead to the law we are legally free to be married to Christ. The law was not evil – it accomplished its purpose. Finally, we saw that the law will produce the same results in anyone who submits to it, believer or unbeliever. It can only produce failure because it gives occasion for sin to assert itself through our flesh. The real theme of Romans 7 is not so much sanctification, but rather, an explanation regarding how justification by faith frees us from the practical influence of the law in our lives.

Old habits die hard. If you are still conditioned to think of God as you did before you came to Christ you will find it difficult to stop judging and forgiving yourself. In Christ, you are free to turn away from your past and begin walking under the momentary control of the Holy Spirit because your sins have been dealt with once and for all. Stop behaving as though you are married to your first husband!

## LESSON GOAL:

To appreciate the ultimate triumph of justification by faith and to provide us with additional grounding in the certainty and assurance of our salvation. The key phrase of Romans 8 is no condemnation! In Christ, what the law could not accomplish, the Holy Spirit can. He produces a righteousness in us which fulfills the law.

## LESSON OVERVIEW:

- I. The Revolution Announced! 8:1-4
  - A. Freedom Declared! 8:1
  - B. The Spirit Replaces the Flesh. 8:2
  - C. The Spirit Succeeds Where the Flesh Failed. 8:3-4
- II. The Revolution Explained. 8: 5-17
  - A. The Failure of the Old Regime. 8: 5-8
    - 1) The fleshly minded mind the flesh. 8:5
    - 2) The spiritually minded mind the spirit. 8:5
    - 3) Flesh minding produces death. 8:6
    - 4) Spirit minding produces life and peace. 8:6
    - 5) The fleshly mind wars against God and cannot please Him. 8:7-8
  - B. The Power of the New Regime. 8:9-13
    - 1) Your position stated. 8:9
    - 2) Your power revealed. 8:10-11
    - 3) Your practice demanded. 8:12-13

## TODAY'S LESSON:

### I. The Revolution Announced! 8:1-4

There are many who believe (and correctly so) that the first four verses of Romans 8 really belong at the end of chapter 7. They make the grand summarizing statement which sets off the victorious Christian life lived under the power of the Holy Spirit in contrast with the depressed and defeated life of the man who declares "O wretched man that I am!" because he has been under the influence of the law.

Regardless of where we make the chapter division, we have just walked from the pitch of night into the glorious light of freedom when we moved into Romans 8. It is so brilliant it is hard to view it with the naked eye! The great contrast between life and death is seen over and over, and, for the first time, we begin to get a glimpse of the workings of the Holy Spirit in

the life of the one who is justified by faith. Romans 8, like Romans 5 is one of the mountain tops of Romans, and all of the New Testament. Enjoy!

### **A. Freedom Declared!**

Here is the bold declaration!

8:1

[There is] therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

- We have just finished studying Romans 7. If we could use one word to describe our feelings after reading that chapter it would be condemnation! The man who is under the influence of the law feels condemnation – from the law, from God, and from himself! The day a man comes to Christ he steps into the sunshine and there is, “therefore”, no condemnation! No more guilt! Now this is an occasion for celebration! This calls for more fireworks than the Fourth of July! This calls for rejoicing! No condemnation!
- Remember, one must be in Christ to experience this benefit. According to Romans 6 the person who has received Christ as Saviour is in Christ. Are you in Christ or are you just a fellow-traveler with Christians? Have you received the righteousness of God which is by faith? If so, when?
- While we will not devote much discussion to it, it is good to know that there are many biblical scholars who feel that the final words of this verse: “who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” were interpolated by well meaning scholars who saw the words in verse 4 and thought they belonged here as well. The important thing to remember is that this phrase is a *descriptive* phrase, not a *qualifying* phrase. Paul is not saying that one must walk after the Spirit in order to be in Christ Jesus. Paul is saying that those who are in Christ Jesus are now under the domain of the Holy Spirit. You will see this as we go further into the text.

So, we have seen the bold declaration! Our freedom has been declared! We rejoice even more as we begin looking at the nuts & bolts of this marvelous arrangement.

### **B. The Spirit Replaces the Flesh.**

8:2

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Two regimes are being contrasted, two ways of life, two domains:

We already know that the believer died to sin when he died with Christ on that cross (Romans 6). We know that neither sin nor the law has any dominion over him. As unbelievers we had only a legal relationship with a holy God whom we had offended. As believers we have a new relationship with God. When we sin we offend a loving Father.

The news recently carried an in-depth study of a young four year old boy who was taken from his adoptive parents and placed with his biological parents. To the surprise of everyone involved, there has been no evidence of adjustment problems. Within a short time the young boy was calling his parents Mommy and Daddy and proudly announcing his new last name. Many Christians are not so quick to make the spiritual adjustment. Paul wants us to see that our old husband, our old ruler is dead and gone and we have no more obligations to him now that we are in Christ.

- At this point you may feel like we are beating the proverbial dead horse. After pastors and teachers “get men lost” and help folks to see now badly they need a Saviour, the next most difficult problem is “getting men free!” Free from guilt! Free from self condemnation! Free from oppression! If you are in Christ, you are free! You are now free to experience life in Christ Jesus.

### C. The Spirit Succeeds Where the Flesh Failed.

8:3-4

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: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

- The law has failed, not in its purpose, it failed in its product. A better way to say it is that the flesh failed. The law could not produce righteousness in us because, like feeding oxygen to a fire, it gave sin occasion to express itself in our flesh.
- What the law could not do God did! He sent His own Son (John 3:16). We are too quick to read these words and not to think on the price that was paid. And please notice that Jesus Christ was already God's Son when God sent Him. He did not become God's Son as some cultists would have us believe. God *sent* His Son!
- What the law could not do Jesus Christ did. He fought the war where the enemy was – in the flesh. Those words “in the likeness of sinful flesh” do not suggest that Jesus was a sinner. It means that He took on the likeness of sinful flesh. Hebrews 4:15 teaches us:

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as [we are, yet] without sin.

Those words “without sin” are best rendered “apart from sin.” Jesus Christ was sinless.

### II. The Revolution Explained. 8: 5-17

The law of sin and death has been conquered by the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. We now see why this was necessary.

### A. The Failure of the Old Regime. 8: 5-8

1) The fleshly minded mind the flesh.

8:5

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

In the realm of nature we have no problem understanding this. Dogs mind the things which pertain to dogs. They interpret the world through their noses, and they are not very discriminating in their selection of objects to sniff. Humans find this repugnant. It is not in our natures to go around sniffing our friends and enemies.

In the realm of the Spirit very few understand this. Folks say, “It doesn't matter *what* you believe, it matters *that* you believe!” How silly! The Bible contradicts this. The Bible says there are two classes of people, those who are in Christ and those who are not.

**Attention Leader:** It's time for a change of pace. One of our goals is to help the Bible student mine the scriptures on his own. Encourage the class to finish this lesson by making comments on each of these entries. Students who have worked their supplements should have little difficulty.

**Attention Student:** If you happen to be studying these notes privately, please jot some things down as you go through the verses:

2) The spiritually minded mind the spirit.

8:5

For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.



*What does this mean?*



3) Flesh minding produces death.  
8:6

**For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.**

*What does this mean?*



4) Spirit minding produces life and peace.  
8: 6

*What does this mean?*



5) The fleshly mind wars against God and cannot please Him.  
8:7-8

**Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.**

*What does this mean?*



## **B. The Power of the New Regime. 8: 9-13**

1) Your position stated.  
8:9

**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.**

*What does this mean?*



2) Your power revealed.  
8:10-11

**And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11But 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.**

*What does this mean?*



3) Your practice demanded.  
8:12-13

**Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.**

*What does this mean?*



*As usual, please go to Supplement 16 before doing Study 16!*

# SONS, NOT SERVANTS!

## LESSON TEXT:

Romans 8:14-25

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

We have been studying the benefits of justification by faith. In our previous lesson we learned how there can be no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. Those who have received the righteousness of Christ have been placed in Christ and have died to sin and the law. We are no longer flesh-minded, but are spirit-minded instead. Because we were raised with Christ we can be assured that the same Spirit will raise our mortal bodies. Now that we understand this we see that we are debtors, not to the flesh, but to the Spirit. As a result of this we now have the power to mortify (treat as dead) the deeds of the flesh.

## LESSON GOAL:

To help the student understand the difference between being a child of God and a son of God who has received the adoption, and to help him understand the importance of behaving as a son of God instead of behaving as a child of God.

## LESSON OVERVIEW:

### I Our Emancipation! 8:1-13

(See our last outline.)

### II. Our Adoption! 8:14-16

#### A. Adoption Means Sonship. 8:14,15

Adoption - Its Use in History

Adoption - The Greek Word

Adoption - Its Roman Use

Adoption - Its Biblical Application

Adoption - Its Biblical Definition

Adoption - Its Testimony to God's Prenatal Love

### B. Adoption Means Participation. 8:16-39

1. Adoption - Our Participation With Christ.  
8:16-25

(To be continued in the next lesson...)

2. Adoption - Our Participation With the Spirit.  
8:26-27

3. Adoption - Our Participation With the Father. 8:28-39

## TODAY'S LESSON:

### II. Our Adoption! 8:14-16

#### A. Adoption Means Sonship. 8:14,15

8:14-15:

**For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 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. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:**

Notice the three words which are highlighted, sons, adoption, and children.

Before we look at the meaning of these words and try to understand what Paul is teaching us, we want to point out some things which these verses *do not* teach:

These verses are not teaching us that a Christian who is out of God's will is no longer a son of God. Every believer has the Holy Spirit and every believer is "lead forth" by the Holy Spirit according to God's

predetermined plan for him. One of the inherent benefits of receiving the Holy Spirit is the knowledge of knowing that He begins work immediately in our lives carrying out the Father's plan for us - be that plan for discipline because of our disobedience or fruitfulness because of our submission to His will.

These verses are not teaching us that there are two classes of Christians, children (those who are not led by the Spirit) and sons (those who are led by the Spirit.)

All Christians:

- 1) have the Holy Spirit;
- 2) are led by the Holy Spirit;
- 3) are children of God;
- 4) are sons of God, and;
- 5) are adopted!

Both of the aforementioned errors are commonly taught as a result of misunderstanding the biblical doctrine of adoption. Paul is explaining to us that we have not received the spirit of bondage (as in the bondage we were under when trying to obey the law), but have received, *instead*, the spirit of adoption. How are the two spirits contrasted?

How can a believer who has already been born into God's family also be adopted into His family? Isn't that a contradiction? The Bible is not so careless in its use of illustrations and metaphors - as we will see when we take a closer look at the meaning of adoption.

Please join us as we do a little research on the word adoption and provide some generally accepted background:

#### Adoption - Its Use in History

Adoption was rarely encountered among the Jewish people. Near family members generally raised orphaned children. Moses (Exodus 2 ) and Esther (Esther 2) are examples. Adoption became more common with the Jews in Babylon. In Greece and Rome, however, traditional adoption was commonly practiced. The Romans, in particular, practiced

another form of adoption which we will notice momentarily.

#### Adoption - The Greek Word

You may remember that we said there were three key words in the verses which we cited a few moments ago - children, sons, and adoption.

**The Greek word for children is "teknion"** - It is generally used in the New Testament with reference to our birth into the family of God. It is the term which deals with our relationship as those who have been born of God, and therefore are a new creation in Christ.

**The Greek word for son is "huios"** - It is used in the New testament with reference to our position. It is a term of *position* of rank, of privilege, of responsibility. This is the word which is *always* used in combination with the word adoption.

**The Greek word for adoption is "huiiothesia"** - It is a compound word using huios (meaning son) and tithemi which means to set, or put in place. An adopted person is one who has been put in place as a son.

#### Adoption - Its Roman Use

In Roman times it was common for the children of a household to be placed under the tutelage of a slave, known as a pedagogue, who was responsible for the protection, guidance, and education of the child until he became full grown. While accounts do vary, a privileged Roman child may have been raised right along with other slave children. Paul alludes to this kind of arrangement in Galatians 3 and 4. The child had no special privileges, no special authority, no unusual recognition other than the fact that he was a child, (a *teknion*) of his father. As he matured, however, the day came when his father either took him down to the forum, or in some other way, publicly *adopted* his son. This official act was an act of recognition. This child was now a full heir with all the rights, privileges and responsibilities of an adult member of the home. He was a full partner in the

family business, so to speak.

Was the Roman born into a family always their child? Yes. Was he always a son? No, not in this sense. Not until that position was conferred upon him. With it came the responsibilities and privileges of maturity.

### Adoption - Its Biblical Application

At this point, the Christian might be tempted to say “Aha! According to that analogy the new believer must be a child, but a mature believer in Christ is the true adopted son! That would be an error of great proportion! Paul says we have *all* been adopted, and he wants us to see the impact of this truth on our lives. Please read these words in Galatians 4 very carefully:

Galatians 4:3:7

**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.**

These verses teach us that:

1. God sent His Son to redeem those who were under the law...
2. We have received the adoption of sons...
3. Because we are sons God sent forth His Spirit into our hearts crying “Abba, Father”.
4. We are no longer servants (treated like the other slaves under the tutelage of the law)
5. Now we are sons and heirs.

Wow! This is why Galatians 3:25 says the law was our schoolmaster, our teacher/slave, given to bring us to Christ. God’s people were children under the law. We are now sons in Christ! You see, because we

have been *placed in the body of Christ* God sees us in His Son and He sees us as sons! Not just as children! Is this exciting or what??

- Have you ever wondered about those words “Abba, Father”? Abba is a “baby-talk” word. It is the word for Daddy which babies and little children use. Yes, we are still God’s little children in God’s eyes in the sense of enjoying His tender care, and doting over us. But “Father,” now, that’s the adult word which adult sons use in reference to their fathers. He is not only the God of our fathers, He is God our Father!

Before returning to our text, let’s get a good definition for adoption down on paper:

### Adoption - Its Biblical Definition

*Definition:* Adoption is the act of God whereby He sees His children as having been redeemed from the law and placed in a position of full adult sonship with all the rights and responsibilities pertinent to sonship.

Remember, we do not mature into sonship, it is a position which is immediately ours at the time of salvation. Thank God that you did not have to be tutored by the law!

When Christians think of our identification with Christ we should think especially of the change in our natures, (Romans 6). When we think of our justification we should always think in terms of our legal standing before God, (Ephesians 1:6). When we think of adoption we should always think in terms of our family position! Are you excited yet? We haven’t even touched the surface of this chapter and the ramifications of adoption!

11:33:

**O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable [are] his judgments, and his ways past finding out!**

### Adoption - Its Testimony to God’s Prenatal Love

Before returning to our text in Romans we must read a few words found in Ephesians 1 about this wonderful act of adoption:

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: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,**

This, Christian friend, is prenatal care! Imagine a three year old sitting on her mother's lap listening to her mother tell her how Mommy and Daddy prayed for her, planned for her, and prepared for her birth. Imagine the tender moment when the mother tells of the baby's birth and the first time she held her in her arms. Then, imagine this same child asking her mother how it all came about and reacting angrily because she could not (at age three) understand the processes of reproduction! How foolish! It is enough for her to enjoy the love and the beauty and the wonder of it all. Yet there are many of God's children who do this very thing with God. Because they cannot understand God's processes, they do not understand predestination, and often get angry and confused. Christian friend, when you read how God planned and prepared for you and for your placement in His family as a full son, don't get caught up in the "why's and wherefore's" of it all until you have been caught up in the wonder and the love of it all! What a wonder – this loving miracle of spiritual birth! You are a child and a son of the living God!

## **B. Adoption - Means Participation 8:16-39**

Today's lesson will end with verses 16 and 17, but before we study them in detail, take a look at the remaining portion of the chapter. If you look closely you will see that each member of the trinity has a role to play - specifically as a result of our adoption. A few years ago I threw away a large notebook full of information about the privileges and benefits which were mine as a result of my employment at a com-

pany. I threw it away because I no longer shared any of those benefits. The privileges and benefits which we are going to read about in the remaining verses of Romans 8 are all there because of our position as adopted sons, and they will never run out.

### **1. Adoption - Our Participation With Christ. 8:16-25**

The first privilege of the adopted child is the privilege of participation. Let Romans 8:16-17 start us off:

**The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 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.**

- Notice that this passage clearly teaches us that a Christian can know he is a child of God! How foolish it is for people to piously announce that no one can know whether he is a Christian until he dies! The Amish suggest that such a conviction is prideful, and it would be if salvation was based on our works, but ours is based on the sure foundation of the work of Christ on the cross!
- We must go further lest some Christians despair. There are many who have truly trusted Christ who live in fear of not having salvation because they cannot point to a time when the Holy Spirit spoke to them. Just exactly how does the Holy Spirit speak to us? Does He do so through a "burning in our bosom" as the Mormons like to think? Just exactly how does the Spirit bear witness with our spirit? Does He give us the gift of tongues, in accordance with the teaching of many Charismatics who say that tongues is the proof of salvation?

There are many little indicators along the way which confirm the work of the Spirit in our lives. For example we discover a new struggle over sin as our spirit and our flesh war with each other, we discover a new interest in the Word of God and a

love for God's people. We desire to see our loved ones won to Christ. All of these little indicators may encourage us, but when we really speak of the Spirit bearing witness with our Spirit, I am convinced that he chooses primarily to work by the Word of God. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God (Rom 10:17). The Spirit bears witness with our spirit by convincing us that God's Word is true, that the gospel is real and must be believed. A Christian does not base his eternal hope on a burning in his bosom. He bases it upon the Word of God.

- Please don't stop now or you will miss the progression of Paul's logic. The Spirit bears witness that we are the children of God, (not sons). Then, Paul says, "And if children, then heirs;"

Every child of God is an heir. Remember, heirs and sons are equivalents. Paul may just as well have said, "and if children, then sons." He did not need to do this because heirship and sonship are equivalent terms of position. (Remember Galatians 4:7? If you are a son you are an heir.) So, the Spirit confirms our "childship" and if we are children we are heirs. Now Paul says that if we are heirs of God, we are also joint heirs with Jesus Christ - if so be that we also suffer with Him.

Uh Oh! Does this mean that I am not a joint heir with Christ if I do not suffer with Him? That is not at all what Paul means. The correct rendering is "seeing that we also suffer with Him."

What ever is Paul trying to say? We have come to the end of the lesson and it is difficult for us to concentrate, but please make a special effort to understand this precious truth.

Paul is talking about adoption. Adoption is a *positional* word. Because of our adoption, our placement as fully franchised sons, we are heirs. The Messiah (notice I changed the word from Christ to Messiah. The word Christ means Messiah or Anointed One) is also an heir of God by virtue of *His* sonship<sup>1</sup>. Hang on now, and think this through carefully. As fully placed sons we are joint heirs. Being a joint heir means we share full privileges and full responsibilities

as adult members of the family.

What is the role and task of the Christ? The Messiah? He came as the Suffering Servant. He has not yet completed His task of bringing justice to all the earth. He is still the Light to the Gentiles, the Suffering Messiah. Our task is to share now in His sufferings so that we may later share in His glory. Folks, this is what the family business is all about! This is what adoption is all about! (1 Peter 1:11, 2:21)

1Peter 4:13:

**But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.**

What is the bottom line of adoption? It is the joy of sharing full privileges as a son *and* full responsibilities! It is the privilege to share in the task of Messiah as He carries out His mandates. It is the privilege to suffer with Him now and to reign with Him later. You are not in the Rockefeller family or in the Windsor family, you are in the royal family of heaven, a full partner in the family business. You are charged with carrying out the task of your joint heir, Jesus Christ. Christian friend, if that doesn't grab your imagination and stretch you to the breaking point nothing will!

Remember, Christian, you are not Cinderella, waiting for your Prince Charming, you are fully vested with all rights and responsibilities of the royal family right now. The last thing in the world Satan wants you to see is this. He wants you wondering whose family you are in! If you are not even sure you are a Christian, how can you be about your Father's business?

Footnote:

<sup>1</sup> We will talk about the sonship of Christ at another point. He is the Son of God by virtue of His eternal role in the trinity, not merely because of His incarnation. He is also a son of God by virtue of His humanity. He is *the* Son of God by virtue of fulfilling His role as the human Messiah, and He has been *declared* the Son of God by virtue of the resurrection. Thus, we see there are numerous truths underlying this important title.



*As usual, please go to Supplement 17 before doing Study 17.  
Thank you!*

# THE BENEFITS OF ADOPTION!

## LESSON TEXT:

Romans 8:16-39

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

Adoption is the act of God whereby He sees His children as having been redeemed from the law and placed in a position of full adult sonship with all the rights and responsibilities pertinent to sonship. As adopted sons we are heirs with Christ in both His suffering and His glory. Peter said:

1Peter 4:13

**But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.**

What is the bottom line of adoption? It is the joy of sharing full privileges as a son - and full responsibilities! It is the privilege to share in the task of Messiah as He carries out His mandates. It is the privilege to suffer with Him now - and to reign with Him later.

## LESSON GOAL:

1.) To help the student understand more fully the participation of each member of the Godhead in bringing the benefits of our adoption to us; 2.) To encourage the student to appreciate God's great purpose and to revel in His great love for us.

## LESSON OVERVIEW:

### I Our Emancipation! 8:1-13

(See the last outline.)

### II. Our Adoption! 8:14-16

A. Adoption Means Sonship. 8:14,15

### B. Adoption - Means Participation. 8:16-39

1. Adoption - Our Participation With Christ. 8:16-25

- a. Adoption teaches us who we are. 8:16
- b. Adoption teaches us why we suffer. 8:17
- c. Adoption teaches us why the creation suffers. 8:19- 22
- d. Adoption teaches us to wait for its consummation. 8:23- 25

2. Adoption - Our Participation With the Spirit. 8:26-27

- a. Adoption teaches us what the Holy Spirit does for us. 8:26a
- b. Adoption teaches us how the Holy Spirit does it. 8:26b
- c. Adoption teaches us why the Holy Spirit succeeds. 8:27

3. Adoption - Our Participation With the Father. 8:28-39

- a. Adoption teaches us what the Father purposes. 8:28
- b. Adoption teaches us how the Father proceeds. 8:29,30
  - 1.) The first step is foreknowledge. 8:29
  - 2.) The second step is predestination. 8:29
  - 3.) The third step is calling. 8:30
  - 4.) The fourth step is justification. 8:30
  - 5.) The final step is glorification. 8:30
- c. Adoption teaches us why the Father protects us. 8: 31-34
  - 1.) There is no greater defender. 8:31
  - 2.) There is no greater defense. 8: 32
  - 3.) There are no rightful accusers. 8:3,34
- d. Adoption teaches us what causes the Father to preserve us. 8: 35-39

## TODAY'S LESSON:

### II. Our Adoption! 8:14-16

A. Adoption Means Sonship. 8:14,15



## **B. Adoption - Means Participation. 8:16-39**

1. Adoption - Our Participation With Christ.  
8:16-25

- a. Adoption teaches us who we are. 8:16
- b. Adoption teaches us why we suffer. 8:17

A wise old man was supposedly asked if a statement could be made which would be always and absolutely true. He replied with the words "This too will pass." His answer, of course, was incorrect. He was thinking only in terms of time, and not of eternity. Is there one statement which can be made which would always be absolutely true? There are probably many such statements, but my favorite is this: *God's purpose stands!*

God's *purpose* is the whole point of adoption. While the worldly philosopher keeps seeking truth like the proverbial blind man in the dark room looking for the cat which is not there, the believer rests in the purpose of God. And this is the surprising part, while the world berates the Christian for his seemingly blind faith, it misses the fact that God provides many answers for life's most difficult questions. Why did God allow sin to exist? Why does God allow suffering? What is His real purpose behind it all? These questions are answered in today's text as Paul provides us with an exquisite presentation of God's impeccable purpose. The backdrop for his presentation is the theme of adoption. In our study together we have already learned that:

- Adoption, in the context of Romans has little to do with God placing us into His family. Believers are born into His family not adopted. Adoption, rather, is the act of God whereby he declares that we are full sons, instead of just children. In Roman times children were not heirs until they were adopted into the full rights of sonship.

While biblical adoption first pertained to the Jewish people, (Romans 9:4) only a remnant experienced true redemption. Israel, in general, was tutored as a child under the law - under the spirit of bondage. Christians, on the other hand have received the spirit of adoption.

- The Holy Spirit bears witness (He is the legal guarantor) that we are children and heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.

- Because we are joint-heirs with Christ we share in the present suffering and future glory of Christ. We must always keep in mind that our present sufferings can in no way be compared with the glory which will be revealed to us!

So, we have already learned that adoption teaches us who we are and why we suffer. It is still necessary to dig deeper:

- c. Adoption teaches us why the creation suffers. 8:19- 22

**For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.**

Many worldlings react angrily at the thought that God could exist. They reason that a God of love could not and would not allow the suffering which we see and experience all around us.

While we do not fault unbelievers for asking the question we need to remember that it is usually asked with an air of self-righteousness which assumes there is no answer! Paul says there is an answer and that God has even allowed the creation itself to suffer the consequences of the curse. The answer may surprise you if you have not noticed it before. It is found in verse 19:

**For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.**



*Instructor's Note: Just in case you are asked, the word "creature" here is properly rendered "creation." I believe the KJV translators may have missed Paul's point here. Paul was personifying creation and, therefore, giving it personality. KJV translators may not have been willing to imagine an inanimate creation waiting for anything or groaning, so they rendered the English word 'creature.' The opposite problem occurs in 2 Corinthians 5:17!*

That this creation is in trouble is not a matter for debate. Cold, drought, fire, floods, earthquakes, storms, strange diseases - are not just a matter of man's inability to steward the earth without God and they are not simply harbingers of coming judgment. Like an aging body, the whole creation groans more and more.

But why is it suffering these great consequences? What is the creation longing to see? She is longing to see the manifestation of the sons of God, the adopted ones! the heirs! Why does the creation suffer? It suffers so that God can work out His purpose in His sons!

Illustration – A while back, a woman gave birth to a little girl at the #7 checkout lane in our local supermarket. She felt fine when she walked in the store, but within minutes she travailed and delivered. She was blessed with a short delivery. The creation has also been travailing until now - for whose delivery does it wait? Ours!

Unbelievers, on the other hand, can be thankful that this is all they are suffering for the present. The day will come when they will gladly trade for the sufferings of life on earth in comparison to the suffering of life in the Lake of Fire.

d. Adoption teaches us to wait for its consummation. 8:23-25

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. 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? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

Now that we know why the creation groans. We must not think that we are excused from the process. God could not work out His plan if we were all excused from the same suffering. The fact that we have received the firstfruits of the Spirit makes us long for the day when our redemption is complete, but it also helps us understand this wonderful process which is going on for God's glory. And "what a glorious day that will be" when the travail is over!

Please note that we have passed over several verses without comment. You may, at your option, expand this portion of the study (privately or in a group) and elect not to finish the lesson until next time. The next lesson will not be as intense.

We have seen that we are participants with Christ in this process. Now, we see *our* participation with the Holy Spirit.

## 2. Adoption - Our Participation With the Spirit. 8:26-27

- While we are looking at the part which each member of the trinity plays in our adoption, there can be no doubt that the Holy Spirit is the "key player" of Romans 8. He is mentioned many times. This is because of grace. Notice what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 3:6-8

Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written [and] engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which [glory] was to be done away: How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?

The ministration of the law (the old covenant) was called the ministration of death, written in cold unmovable stone. The new covenant is called the ministration of the spirit - because, in it, the Holy Spirit can freely work with our spirits. While we do not *focus* on the Holy Spirit (our eyes are to be first on Christ) we do know and understand that He is the One who enriches this day of grace through His constant ministry to us and through us!

a. Adoption teaches us what the Holy Spirit does for us. 8:26a:

**Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities:**

Literally, 'infirmity' not 'infirmities'. To be in the flesh is to be in infirmity. An infirmity is a weakness. Some Christians are convinced that the atonement removed all necessity for weakness in the Christian experience. They are wrong. Jesus Christ also suffered from the infirmity of the flesh, Hebrews 4:15:

**For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as [we are, yet] without sin.**

Our sins are not infirmities. Our infirmity is the natural weakness and limitation which comes because we are in fleshly bodies. We all struggle with the limitations of mind and body.

During a recent stay in the hospital I discovered that the medications which I was taking greatly affected my ability to concentrate and to pray. I did not chastise myself. I simply said, Lord, you know the problem, you know my desires, you know my needs. You will have to make up for my inability to pray and concentrate. The point which Paul is making is that the Old Testament believer did not have access to this Holy Spirit who, dwelling with us, in our infirmity, helps us!

- There is a little jewel snuggled away in the word "helpeth" in this verse. It takes a fluid tongue and

all 33 teeth to pronounce this Greek word, *sunantialambonomai*. It essentially means "to lay hold along with, *to strive to obtain with others.*" [Italics are mine.]

On the one hand, the Holy Spirit does not leave us to pray alone. On the other hand, He does not do our work for us! Rather, He prays with us. He strives with us in our striving! This advantage was not available to law keepers. This is another benefit of grace.

b. Adoption teaches us how the Holy Spirit does it. 8:26b

**...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.**

I appreciate the transliteration found in Berry's Interlinear:

**"for that which we should pray for according as it behooves, we know not.."**

I walked into an electronics store to purchase a small part. I did not even know the part existed for sure. I asked the salesman if he had something which would fill a particular need. He said "This is what you need." The Holy Spirit intercedes for us on our behalf, editing our prayers on our behalf. There was no such advantage under the law.

- There are some who teach that these groanings which cannot be uttered must be tongues. Tongues, however, are utterable. More importantly, we would be wise to look at the context. What has Paul been talking about? He has been talking about the effect which sin has had on the creation and upon ourselves. The whole creation groans waiting for her redemption and we suffer along with the infirmities imposed by the fall. Now, the Holy Spirit, sharing our infirmity - sharing with us the agony of the fall and its hindrance to our prayers, overcomes that barrier - interceding for us! Anyone who has struggled to overcome a language barrier can share a small understanding of what the great barrier be-

tween flesh and spirit is like. The Holy Spirit overcomes this in His prayer ministry with us and for us! There was no such advantage under the law.

c. Adoption teaches us why the Holy Spirit succeeds. 8:27:

**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.**

The word “Spirit” above should not be capitalized. The Holy Spirit is the heart searcher who makes intercession for us according to God’s will (He does not search His own Spirit). Because this is His task, He makes it His ministry to understand our spirits.

A perfect match! The Holy Spirit knows the mind of God because He is God. He knows our spirits because it is His task to make intercession for us according to the will of God. We never approach the throne by ourselves! We approach it in the name of Christ and with the intercessory assistance of the Holy Spirit!

I had a program on my computer which translated English into Spanish. It tried very hard, but sometimes it made some foolish mistakes. For example when I asked it to translate the passage where God breathed into Adam’s nostrils the breath of life, it translated it “God blew into the nose holes of Adam.” Very often, our prayers are just as crude from heaven’s point of view. How thankful we can be that they are polished and perfected according to the will of God - before they are presented to the Throne! Those who were under the law did not have this advantage.

### **3. Adoption - Our Participation With the Father 8:28-39**

We can be all too willing to pop our favorite verses right out of context and to quote them without understanding their place in God’s Word. Romans 8:28 is one of the most precious verses in all of the Word of God, but we actually take some of its beauty

from it when we study the diamond without its setting. Paul has been talking about our sonship, our adoption. He has been explaining that we are joint-heirs with Christ. That means we are sharing His suffering now so that we can share His glory later. Paul then explained that the whole creation groans under the results of the fall, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God - when the adoption is complete. Paul then explained that we have the personal ministry of the Holy Spirit to assist us while we suffer in this fallen creation.

8:28:

**And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to [his] purpose.**

Why is the creation groaning? It is waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. Why are we suffering? We are carrying out the role of Messiah - our task becomes His task. We continue to groan with the creation around us while God works out His purpose.

- All things “work together” (sunergo). We may rightfully say that all things work synergistically. Every event, every aspect of our existence works together for our benefit. While Paul is probably talking mostly about the suffering we go through, we need to remember that all things, good and bad work together for our good.
- “for good.” Not all things are in themselves good. If you think the pain accompanying an abscessed tooth is good, you have never had an abscessed tooth. Nevertheless, that pain is for our good. The Bible does not say “for everything give thanks,” but rather, it says “in everything give thanks.” It is not good when I stub my toe which I keep breaking. It is for my good, (just don’t ask me how!)
- “to them that love God, to them who are the called..” Notice that Paul speaks continually in the plural. He says, all things, them that love, them who are *the* called. We are all in this together. Some of

the evil we suffer may not be directly for our personal good. God simply says it is for the good of the elect, the called ones. Others suffered for me and I suffer for others.

- Pause long enough to look at the big picture. Every single event of history, every person, place and thing noted in our history books are all working together for the benefit of the called, the sons of God! The whole scenario is being played out for our benefit - for the manifestation of the sons of God! God allowed the struggle of humankind and the struggle of creation to go on -- for your benefit.

- If you are without Christ nothing works together for your good. Even the good fortune and blessings which have come into your life will one day be used in court against you because you were blind to their purpose. God gave them to you to draw you to Himself - but you did not heed. How much better it would be, for you to get under this umbrella of blessing and forgiveness which comes from repentance and faith in Christ through His shed blood, death and resurrection!

***Please go to Supplement 18 before doing Session 18! This will better prepare you!***

# HANDLED WITH T.L.C...

## TAKE, LEAVE, AND CONCENTRATE!

### LESSON TEXT:

Romans 8:28-39

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

In our previous study we learned that all the events of creation (from day one until the present time) have been carefully orchestrated to bring about “the manifestation of the sons of God.” We have learned that all things work together for the good of God’s called ones who are God’s elect. Truly, in every sense, the world revolves around God’s people as God accomplishes His purpose in us for His glory!

### LESSON OVERVIEW:

#### *Previously:*

#### **I Our Emancipation! 8:1-13**

(See the last outline.)

#### **II. Our Adoption! 8:14-16**

A. Adoption Means Sonship. 8:14,15

B. Adoption - Means Participation. 8:16-39

1. Adoption - Our Participation With Christ.  
8:16-25

a. Adoption teaches us who we are. 8:16

b. Adoption teaches us why we suffer. 8:17

c. Adoption teaches us why the creation suffers. 8:19- 22

d. Adoption teaches us to wait for its consummation. 8:23- 25

2. Adoption - Our Participation With the Spirit.  
8:26-27

a. Adoption teaches us what the Holy Spirit does for us. 8:26a

b. Adoption teaches us how the Holy Spirit does it. 8:26b

c. Adoption teaches us why the Holy Spirit succeeds. 8:27

3. Adoption - Our Participation With the Father. 8:28-39

#### *We will begin here in this session:*

a. Adoption teaches us what the Father purposes. 8:28

b. Adoption teaches us how the Father proceeds. 8:29,30

1.) The first step is foreknowledge. 8:29

2.) The second step is predestination. 8:29

3.) The third step is calling. 8:30

4.) The fourth step is justification. 8:30

5.) The final step is glorification. 8:30

c. Adoption teaches us why the Father protects us. 8: 31-34

1.) There is no greater defender. 8:31

2.) There is no greater defense. 8: 32

3.) There are no rightful accusers. 8:3,34

d. Adoption teaches us what causes the father to preserve us. 8: 35-39

### LESSON GOAL:

To help the student:

1) Revel in the great treasures which are ours as a result of our position in Christ; and to

2) Understand that the glory for all that God has done belongs to Him alone.

### TODAY’S LESSON:

**a. Adoption teaches us what the Father purposes. 8:28**

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to [his] purpose.

By now, our appreciation of Romans 8:28 should be growing. We should understand that the things which work together for our good go far beyond the events of an ordinary day -- all things, from the beginning of the creation (from the greatest detail to the smallest detail), have been working together for our good! This is because God intends to show His purpose in and through us. If the land of Tibet can rightfully be called the "rooftop of the world", then, so much more, Romans 8 should be called "the rooftop of the Bible!" - for in it are revealed the deepest secrets of God concerning His love and His plan and purpose for us!

- A few years ago my wife picked me up from work at 5 PM as she often did when she needed the car. When we left the parking area, however, she turned right instead of left. It wasn't long before I discovered that she had a special purpose in mind. She had packed our luggage and planned a mini-vacation for us. She showed her love for me by putting a plan into action which brought me great joy and blessing. Her love for me was evidenced by her special plans. The verses which we are studying today are testimony to God's great plans which He made for us in eternity past. The more we think on them, the more we will be captured by His great love for us!

- The word purpose in our Bible is a curious word because it is the exact same word which the New Testament uses for shewbread! The shewbread, placed in the tabernacle, was eaten by the priest, (See Scofield's notes on Exodus 25:30). It was a picture of Jesus Christ who is the living manna of the believer-priest. When those priests ate that bread they became identified with the person and purpose of Christ. Symbolically, they partook of Christ and their purpose and Christ's purpose became one purpose. When you and I understand that God's purposes for us are always good, we want to be willing to align our purposes with His purpose. Are you still purposing to go your own way in some of the areas

of your life or has God's purpose become your purpose? Have you accepted God's purposes in your life or is there still resentment and anger in your heart because things didn't turn out your way?

- When our children were little they loved to jump up on their mother's lap and ask about where they came from and what it was like when they were born. Their curiosity about their birth and early life was insatiable. It reassured them of our long-standing love for them. That is exactly what we are about to do with these next verses. It is as though we are sitting tenderly on our Father's lap as He tells us of what it was like before we were born - and what His plans for us were all about.

#### **b. Adoption teaches us how the Father proceeds. 8:29,30**

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. 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.

One would be hard pressed to find a passage anywhere in the Word of God which has contributed to more fireworks among God's people than these two verses. This is not God's fault. It is our fault. Satan takes great satisfaction in destroying and perverting those gifts and blessings of God which are most precious to us. Don't let Satan rob you of the beauty and blessing of these verses by getting caught up in endless deliberations which cannot be resolved.

*When approaching a difficult passage of scripture, always approach it with TLC!*

**T. - Take the passage literally.** Let God say what He means and mean what He says. If the Bible says it - believe it.

**L. - Leave the parts you cannot reconcile or understand to God.** You do not have to fully understand

all that God says in order to believe what God says.

### C. Concentrate on the main point of the passage.

In the case of Romans 8:29, and 30 you do not have to be a theological expert to understand the main point of these verses. The point is that God has a great purpose for us which has been carefully worked out from eternity past. That great purpose testifies to His great love for us. How foolish it is for us to get caught up in fighting and arguments over the very passage which the Holy Spirit intended to be used for our comfort and encouragement!

- Please do not try to sidestep the wonderful message of these verses! William Barclay looks at verses 29 and 30 and says:

“This is a passage which has been very seriously misused. If we are ever to understand it we must grasp the basic fact that Paul never meant it to be the expression of theology or philosophy; he meant it to be the almost lyrical expression of Christian experience. If we take it as philosophy and theology and apply the standards of cold logic to it, it must mean that God chose some and did not choose others. But that is not what it means.”

Barclay says, in effect, we dare not take this passage literally because the result would be unthinkable! The evolutionist reasons the same way. He says “I see order and design in creation, but I must believe in evolution because the alternative (believing in God) is unthinkable!” Please do not make the mistake Barclay makes and throw this passage away because you cannot reconcile it in your thinking. God is big enough to handle His own problems - He doesn't need us to make excuses for the way He does things!

Now, notice that God is describing the process He has gone through in providing for our salvation:

1.) The first step is foreknowledge. 8:29

For whom he did foreknow,

The very first step in God's salvation process is

foreknowing. God foreknew those who would be His own. What we understand about this one word, affects what we believe about the other four words. It is the first step in the process. What does the Bible mean when it says that God foreknew those who would be predestinated, called, justified, and glorified?

There are two ideas which are commonly taught. Some teach that foreknowing was the act of God whereby He looked down into time from eternity past and saw those who would receive Him. Based upon the fact that He saw who would be saved, He predestinated, called, justified, and glorified His own.

We must reject that definition of the word foreknowledge on the basis of the scriptural use of this word. The Greek word for foreknowledge is very similar to our English word *prognosis*. The root idea means to know beforehand. It is used in this way in Acts 26:5 and 2 Peter 3:17. The Holy Spirit, however, often took an ordinary word which was in use in Bible times and gave it an extra spiritual or biblical meaning. The Greek words for love, word, and knowledge, for example, all have biblical meanings as well as ordinary meanings. This is exactly the case with the word which the Holy Spirit uses for foreknowledge.

Because this is not a theology class, we are limiting ourselves to two biblical examples to help us understand why the biblical use of the word foreknowledge means more than just knowing something beforehand:

#### Example # 1. Acts 2:23:

**Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:**

In the original language the word *determinate* governs both the words counsel and foreknowledge. In plain English, this means that Jesus Christ was delivered by both the determinate counsel *and* the



determinate foreknowledge of God. So you see, the Holy Spirit has added a quality to God's foreknowledge which is not true of human foreknowledge. God's foreknowledge is determinate. God did not, for example, look down through the long corridors of time and see that Christ was going to be betrayed by Judas and crucified, and then decide that it should happen! God's determinate foreknowledge determined that it would happen.

One may ask "Doesn't that create a problem? How could God determine it and yet have Judas act on his own free will?" The answer is absolutely, yes, it does create a problem. But consider the kind of problem it creates. It creates a logical problem in our minds because we cannot understand it. It does not create a biblical problem. God did not look down in time and see that His son would be crucified and then decide to make it happen. God did not look down in time and see that you would be saved and then decide to make it happen.

### **Example # 2. 1 Peter 1:20**

**Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.**

The verse is speaking about the Lord Jesus Christ who was foreordained before the foundation of the world. The Greek word for foreordain is the same Greek word for foreknowledge. Foreordination and foreknowledge are the same thing.

The Jehovah witnesses reject the doctrine of the trinity simply because they cannot understand it. It seems contradictory to them. Please do not reject the doctrine of foreordination because you cannot understand it. Personally, and this is just an opinion, I believe this issue will be cleared up when we see the Lord. We'll have a much better understanding of a whole number of issues. I'm willing to believe God and wait.

One may ask "Does this mean that some are chosen to be saved and others are chosen to be lost?" There is no way we can fairly and honestly answer

that question on this side of eternity. Those who say, "yes" to this question usually cite two New Testament passages, 1 Peter 2:7,8 followed by Jude 1:4:

**Unto you therefore which believe [he is] precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, [even to them] which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.**

**For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Did God appoint and ordain these specific individuals to condemnation or did He appoint all apostates to condemnation? Again, I do not believe God's Word provides us with enough information for us to make a total pronouncement on this subject. If that were the case, we would have settled this debate centuries ago. Again, I prefer to wait until that day when the veil will be removed for all of us and the ways of God will be understood.

For the record, however, this Bible teacher rejects what is commonly called double-predestination - the idea that God specifically chose which ones would go to hell. We were all condemned to hell, and out of that pool of fallen humanity, God chose to save some by grace.

TLC - Take God's Word literally. Leave what you cannot understand to God and Concentrate on the main idea which is being taught. What is the main idea? God loved us so dearly that He laid out a plan for us in eternity past. He has a great purpose for us! Oh what love!

2.) The second step is predestination. 8:29

Careful Bible students are always amazed at how

much fuming and fussing centers around this word predestination when, in fact, there is no issue at all. The issue is not that we have been predestined. The issue is what we have been predestined to!

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.**

God's plan, from eternity past, was to make us sons - adopted sons! His purpose was to conform us to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ so that Christ Himself would be the firstborn of many brethren in God's great family! Read Ephesians 1:5 carefully:

**Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,**

\* Note: the word "children" should be rendered "sons."

What two things do we learn about predestination from this verse?

1.) We have been predestinated unto the adoption of sons,

2.) according to the good pleasure of His will...

God's purpose is our sonship! Predestination relates to our sonship. God did not just decide to make us His children; He vested us with the full rights of sonship! And He did it once and for all (aorist) before He created the world! Is this wonderful, or what?

3.) The third step is calling. 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.**

The word "called" is the Greek *kaleo*. It is akin to the word *elect*. Our calling is a beautiful theme - it implies both our selection and our naming. Paul beseeches us in 1 Thessalonians 2:12:

**That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.**

- When we see a group of young people hanging around in a gang or on the street it doesn't take very long to figure out that they have a very low self image. They have no pride in their heritage, or their families, and very little hope for the future. They simply dress and behave on the outside like they truly see themselves and feel on the inside. The believer who knows Christ, on the other hand, should have the greatest self image in the world - not because of who he is, but because of his great high calling in Christ! When the reality of who we are in Christ truly begins to dawn on us it always changes the way we look and the way we act!

4.) The fourth step is justification. 8:30

Justification is the legal act whereby God declares us to have the righteousness of Jesus Christ. When we come to Christ, by faith, we are justified.

5:1

**Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:**

- When my wife joined AAA she returned with a packet which included a description of all the benefits and services AAA offers. They all came together as a result of her one decision to become a member. When one receives Christ as Saviour, he becomes aware of all the benefits and blessings which are his. He is predestinated to become an adopted son, he is called, he is justified, and he is glorified. This expensive membership in God's family (it cost Christ's own precious blood) is free to you and me.

5.) The final step is glorification. 8:30

We have been glorified so that God can be glorified.  
Ephesians 1:11,12

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: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

Predestination always relates to God's purpose and will, and God's purpose always consummates in His own glory! We have been glorified so that God will be glorified!

- One of the most beautiful things to notice about all of these steps - (foreknowing, predestinating, calling, justifying, and glorifying) is this: They all occur in the aorist tense in the Greek. God sees them all as having already happened, once and for all! In God's eyes, the whole package is complete! All of this, and more... Such love compels us to give the Lord Jesus Christ our all!

*[The following is a worksheet of sorts. Please read and discuss remaining verses as time allows.]*

### **c. Adoption teaches us why the Father protects us. 8: 31-34**

1.) There is no greater defender. 8:31

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

2.) There is no greater defense. 8: 32

2 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?

3.) There are no rightful accusers. 8:3,34

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.

### **d. Adoption teaches us what causes the father to preserve us. 8:35-39**

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*You will want to begin your next study by going to Supplement 19. Then, go to Session 19.*

# GOD'S PURPOSE FOR ISRAEL

## - HER PAST

### LESSON TEXT:

Romans 9:1-33

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

In our previous study we were on the mountain top - reveling in the great purpose of God demonstrated on our behalf. We gained a glimpse of how God works all things together for the good of His called ones. We saw the wonderful expression of His foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification - all on our behalf! When we see how greatly God has worked in our behalf we cry out "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" as we bask in His indissoluble love for us. The world truly does revolve around God's elect because God purposed it so.

### LESSON GOAL:

- 1.) To help the student see that God is just in His dealings with all men - Jew and Gentile alike; and;
- 2.) To help the student understand God's separate and distinct program for Israel.

### LESSON OVERVIEW:

#### IV. Vindication

##### A. Israel's Position Examined. 9:1-33

1. Israel's lost majority. 9:1-3
2. Israel's great privileges. 9:4-5
3. Israel's true minority. 9:6-19
  - a. The majority rejected - They are not all Israel. 9:6-8
    - 1) The scriptures are not to be blamed. 9:6
    - 2.) The principle of promise asserted. 9:6-8
      - a) They are not all of Israel who are Israel. 9: 6

- b) They are not all of Isaac who are Abraham's seed. 9:7
- c) The children of the promise (not the flesh) are counted for seed. 9:8
- 3.) The principle of promise illustrated
  - a) Through the promise made to Sara. 9:9
  - b) Through the promise made concerning Rebecca's conception. 9:10-13
    - 1) Rebecca's child (not Hagar's) was chosen (Gen 21:12)
    - 2) Jacob was chosen over Isaac before their births. 9:11
    - 3) Therefore election is not based upon works. 9:11-13

##### B. God's Purpose Examined. 9:14-24

1. The question asserted - is God unrighteous? 9:14
2. The answer revealed - from the scriptures. 9:15-18
  - a. God claims the right to select His objects of mercy and compassion. 9:15
  - b. The decision is based upon God's mercy, not man's will. 9:16
  - c. An example may be found in God's treatment of Pharaoh. 9:17
  - d. God may choose to be merciful and He may choose to harden. 9:18

##### C. God's Purpose Defended. 9:19-33

1. God's Authority Asserted. 9:19-21
2. God's Glory Manifested. 9:22-24
3. God's Program Culminated. 9:25-29
  - a. As prophesied by Hosea. 9:25-26
  - b. As prophesied by Isaiah. 9:7-29
4. God's Program Summarized. 9:30-33

## TODAY'S LESSON:

We have come to the fourth division in our study of Romans, often called Vindication. Our suggested outline now looks like this:

- I. Justification Necessitated - 1:1-3:20
- II. Justification Provided - 3:21-5:21
- III. Justification Extended - 6:1-8:39
- IV. Justification Defended - 9:1-11:36
- V. Justification Experienced - 12:1-16:27

Outlines are simply primitive tools which help us try to follow the flow of scripture. The problem is that the Holy Spirit often moves His writers to follow and develop *several themes simultaneously*. It is as though the scriptures are in three dimensional color and we try to outline them in one dimensional black and white. For example, consider where we are in Romans. In this teacher's opinion we have never left the doctrine of justification by faith. I believe Paul has been defending it all along - especially to the mind of the Jew.

First, he *asserted* it in chapter 5 and then he began *defending* it against all of the criticism he expected to hear. For instance, in chapter 6 he defends it against those who say that **justification by faith** teaches license. We do not sin that grace may abound.

Paul then continues in the remainder of chapters 6 and 7 to defend **justification by faith** in relation to the law. It is as though his enemies were suggesting that Paul was blaspheming the law - and Paul wanted to make its role indelibly clear. This spills over into chapter 8 where Paul explains all the wonderful benefits of **justification by faith**...and explains to us how God had purposed this all along.

Paul is now mounting a defense. He is vindicating God who has purposed that these things be so. We see that Paul has answered the Arminian charge that **justification by faith** teaches license. He has answered the legalist charge that **justification by**

**faith** blasphemes the law (and therefore the wisdom of God.) Now, there is one last bastion which Paul must dismantle.

The Jew who was listening to Paul would still have one more bone to pick with him. He would say. "But Paul, there is still one thing you cannot deny! You cannot deny that the Jews are God's special people, chosen from the beginning. Now, you are spreading this gospel among Gentiles as though the Jewish people are no longer a part of God's plan! You are denying your own race and your people! Surely, you cannot be right!"

This is what chapters 9, 10, and 11 are about. They explain God's purpose for the Jews. They will show us, from the Old Testament scriptures just exactly what God has to say about the "Jewish problem." We may say in a general sense that chapter 9 focuses on Israel's past, while chapter 10 focuses on Israel's present, and chapter 11 focuses on Israel's future.

At this point you may be indulging in some selfish thinking. You may be tempted to say to yourself, "Self, what do I care about the past, present, and future of Israel? Doesn't this teacher know that I am far more interested in how this Bible applies to my life today?" Here are some reasons why that kind of thinking can hinder you:

- First, you should be interested in Romans 9-11 just because it is part of God's love letter to you. If it interests God it should interest you. The Bible says it will be profitable for you to study these chapters. (2 Timothy 3:16).
- Secondly, the Jewish people are hurting. Many make no bones about their great anger which they have toward God. Your ability to understand and grasp the truths of these chapters will directly affect your ability to talk to your Jewish friends about Christ. I suppose that if Paul loved these folks enough to trade his soul for them we would do well to care enough to understand God's purpose for them.

There are many things to learn in these chapters - facts which will increase your awareness of the greatness and glory of God, facts which will help you to properly understand Bible prophecy, facts which will help keep you humble as a Gentile, and so much more! Bon apatite!

## A. Israel's Position Examined. 9:1-33

### 1. Israel's lost majority. 9:1-3:

I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:

- We speak too seldom of the horrors of hell and a lost eternity without Christ. It is as though it is too much for us to face - more than we can bear. This is especially true when we think in terms of someone whom we dearly love.
- Paul had been cast in the role of the defender of his faith. The doctrines revealed to him by Jesus Christ have effectively begun to dismantle Judaism, piece by piece. The onus of this responsibility, no doubt, weighed heavily upon him, for while he was the key figure in setting aside the old way he dearly loved his people. Let no one misunderstand - he asserts with a triple affirmation - he loves Israel with all his heart. He loves his people so much that he would have been willing (could it be done) to trade his very soul for their salvation. You are looking at the very secret of Paul's great success. Moses may have come close, but no one was as constrained by the love of Christ as was Paul. He was a great teacher and a great lover of souls.
- God still wants this gospel to be taken to the Jews. (Romans 1:16).

### 2. Israel's great privileges. 9:4-5:

Who are Israelites; to whom [pertaineth] the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service [of God], and the promises; Whose [are] the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ [came], who is over all, God blessed for ever.

Amen.

Please notice that the above verses are written in the *present tense*, not the past. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. (Rom. 11:29) In the following verses we will learn how most of Israel failed to appropriate the blessings which were hers, but the careful Bible student must keep in mind that these precious privileges are all assigned to Israel, even to this very hour. Notice them briefly:

**Israelites** - To be an Israelite was to be the son of a prince. The very name means "God prevails." We are all proud to be citizens of our homelands, but to be an Israelite meant far more. His homeland, his race, and his religion were all connected to that proud word, and his people (above all the nations of the earth) were selected to bear the name of Jehovah. The people of Israel were chosen to be God's particular treasure (Psalm 135:4) and His select servant (Isaiah 41:8). It is not uncommon for young children to compete for the privilege to sit on the lap of their father. The church does not need to compete with Israel for our Father's love. His lap (and His purpose) is big enough for both of us.

**Adoption** - The adoption which you and I received also pertains to Israel. She could have received her Messiah and enjoyed the full privileges of sonship. One day, she will.

**Glory** - The glory to which Paul refers was the Shekinah glory which followed Israel, resided in her tabernacle and in her temple. This great glory of God authenticated His ministry to them. It separated them from the nations and confirmed their covenants. The Shekinah glory is associated with our own New Covenant in a far more powerful way (2 Corinthians 3 and 4, a passage worthy of very serious study).

**Covenants** - The Old Testament covenants were the pillars upon which all of the Jewish economy stood. This instructor likes to call the covenants the super highway of God's promises. The Abrahamic, Davidic, and Palestinian covenants are listed uniquely in the Bible and are given specifically to Israel. In them God *unconditionally* promises a perpetual King, a throne, and a land for His people, even though God has done away with the Old Covenant.

**Giving of the Law** - The commandments and all of the Law were given to the world through Israel. No other tribe or nation could boast of such things.

**Service of God** - The service surrounding the tabernacle and the temple - all of the trappings, the liturgy, and the feasts - rich in symbolism, beauty, and tradition are included. These things were a daily, ongoing testimony to the uniqueness of Israel in God's plan and His special favor on her behalf.

**Promises** - Encompassing far more than the covenants, Israelites were the people of promise with scriptures full and overflowing with the loving tender promises of a God who sought them out as the great suitor of their souls.

**Whose are the fathers** - What national history can compare with the greatness of Israel? What nation can offer up more heroes or greater ones? greater prophets? greater conquests for God? Her heritage is the richest on earth - to this very day.

**Of whom...Christ came** - The long promised Messiah who fills the pages of Old Testament prophecies and the One who is the reason for every page of the New Testament is, Himself, a Jew.

On the one hand, none of these things can be taken from Israel. On the other hand all of these made her accountable. The Bible says in Luke 12:48:

... 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.

- When we see this great list of privileges which are unique to the Jewish people and we see how few of them took advantage of these great benefits we get a terrible insight into human nature (not just Jewish nature). Am I taking lightly all the blessings and benefits God is showering upon me? Am I "despising His goodness"?

### 3. Israel's true minority. 9:6-19

a. The majority rejected -They are not all Israel. 9:6-8.

1) The scriptures are not to be blamed. 9:6:

**Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect.**

The problem is *not* with God's Word. God never expected or purposed that all Old Testament Israelites would be saved. In fact He purposed to elect only some of them.

2.) The principle of promise asserted. 9:6-8

**Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect.**

**For they [are] not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, [are they] all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these [are] not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.**

These verses teach us:

a) They are not all of Israel who are Israel. 9: 6

We may say the exact same thing of the church today. They are not all of the church who are the church. Not all who attend and are members of a church are members of Christ's church. The tares have always been among the wheat. Only a small portion of those who name Christ's name belong to Christ. Many are even performing miracles and casting out demons in His name who do not belong

to Him. (Matt 7:22-23)

b) They are not all of Isaac who are Abraham's seed. 9:7

Abraham was the father of many nations but the chosen line came down through Isaac.

c) The children of the promise (not the flesh) are counted for seed. 9:8

We simply cannot stress this enough. God has never dealt with man, except on the basis of a promise. It has, first, last, and always been about accepting the promises of God by faith. Dispensations may change, but this fundamental principle does not.

3.) The principle of promise illustrated

a) Through the promise made to Sara. 9:9:

For this [is] the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son.

Abraham and Sara thought they could help God out of His problem by providing seed through Hagar. That would have been a fleshly solution. (You may read about this story in Genesis 16 and again in Genesis 21.)

b) Through the promise made concerning Rebecca's conception. 9:10-13

Please read these verses carefully - notice how direct and dogmatic they are. 10:9-13:

And not only [this]; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, [even] by our father Isaac; (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;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As

it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

1) Rebecca's child (not Hagar's) was chosen (Gen 21:12)

God made the choice. Abraham did not choose, Isaac did not choose. Jacob himself did not choose. God chose Jacob.

2) Jacob was chosen over Isaac before their births. 9:11

Not only did God exercise His option, He did it *before* the birth of these children. His announcement was direct and unequivocal, Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated.

3) Therefore election is not based upon works. 9:11-13

Why did He do it? He did it so that the *purpose* of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him that calls.

You cannot have your cake and eat it too. If you are one of those who believes that God chose you because He knew you would choose Him then you believe God's choice was based upon works - your works. There is no other way to read this verse. God purposely chose Jacob before he was ever born to underscore the fact that God's election is based upon Himself - not upon the objects of His calling. I can thank God for that because otherwise, I wouldn't have been chosen!

Note: There are some who insist that God was dealing with nations here and not with individuals. In other words, they will allow God's election to stand regarding Israel, but do not believe that God elected *individual* believers on the same basis of that principle. This is a strange conclusion to make when you see that the verse is talking about two *individuals* - Jacob and Esau! Paul is teaching us the principle. The purpose of God stands.

**B. God's Purpose Examined. 9:14-24**



1. The question asserted - is God unrighteous?  
9:14:

What shall we say then? [Is there] unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

Perish the thought - may it not be so! Consider these words from Martin Luther:

“Who hath not known passion, cross, and travail of death, cannot treat of foreknowledge (election of grace) without injury and inward enmity toward God. Wherefore take heed that thou drink not wine while thou art yet a sucking child. Each doctrine has its own reason and measure and age.”

Your parents did not always reveal all of their purposes to you for the way they acted toward you and for the things they expected from you. There were times when it was not wise for them to do so. God has not revealed all of His purposes to us regarding the doctrine of election, but He has provided many more answers than folks realize.

Why did God only elect certain ones from all of Israel?

2. The answer revealed - from the scriptures. 9:15-18:

For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then [it is] not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. 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. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will [have mercy], and whom he will he hardeneth.

a. God claims the *right* to select His objects of mercy and compassion. 9:15

b. The decision is based upon God's *mercy*, not man's will. 9:16

c. An example may be found in God's *treatment of Pharaoh*. 9:17

When one reads the account of the hardening of Pharaoh in Exodus we see that God told Moses He would harden Pharaoh's heart - long before Moses even met with him. Exodus 4:21:

**And the LORD said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go.**

Pharaoh, by the way, participated willingly in this process. The Bible says he also hardened his own heart! (Exodus 8:32)

d. God *may choose* to be merciful and He may choose to harden. 9:18

### **C. God's Purpose Defended. 9:19-33**

9:19:

**Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?**

In our language we might ask if God elects then why does He find fault with us? We should not be responsible for our fate. Such a question is already the result of a man who is hardening his own heart. We must be careful not to harden our own hearts because we do not understand God's ways.

### 1. God's Authority Asserted. 9:19-21:

Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

God may elect men to salvation by right of creation. He is the creator. Sadly, this truth disturbs many Christians who should know better. God may rightfully and justly do as He pleases. This goes against the moral senses of the unsaved man because we were all infected with a big dose of Satan's lie. As God's created beings we are subject to Him in all things. The Judge of all the earth always does what is right. (Genesis 18:25). We could follow this paragraph with pages and pages of suggestions as to just why God does what He does, but in the end, He does not need our justification or approval.

### 2. God's Glory Manifested. 9:22-24:

What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

God may elect men to salvation in order to show His glory. Notice in verse 24 that God may do the same with Gentiles as He does with Jews, and He is doing that at this very hour!

This does not mean that there are two separate peoples of God. However, it does mean that God had said all along, that there was going to come a time when Messiah would be a light to the nations, those same

“gentile dogs” the Jewish people despised.

### 3. God's Program Culminated. 9:25-29

#### a. As prophesied by Hosea. 9:25-26:

As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.

While we are trying to understand God's reasoning regarding the election of the Gentiles, we don't want to miss the romance! We are His beloved! The once rejected, are now the children of the living God!

#### b. As prophesied by Isaiah. 9:27-29:

Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha.

This verse brings to mind an unspeakable tragedy. While God's mercy cannot be exhausted, it can be rejected. Though God would continue to save a remnant through mercy, a catastrophic rejection would follow.

Do not forget that God is still calling a remnant from among the Jewish people, and (in spite of the misunderstanding of some Bible teachers) we continue to present the gospel to the Jew first to this very day (Romans 1:16). Throughout the entire book of Acts, we see the apostles beginning with the Jews and then turning to the Gentiles, once the Jews made their rejection clear. We want to be used by God in reaching those dear remnant Jews.

Could it be that God will soon “cut short” His work among the Gentiles in this age? Has not our Gentile

world rebellion and resistance to the message of Christ exceeded Israel's?

#### 4. God's Program Summarized.. 9:30-33:

What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

**Our reminder as Gentiles:** Israel, who followed the law of righteousness did not attain righteousness. Neither can you or I attain righteousness by our vain efforts at obedience. *Israel failed because she did not seek the righteousness which comes by faith.* Most of the so-called Protestant denominations are making this same mistake at this very hour.

God prophesied that this message of salvation through Messiah alone to the Gentiles would be Israel's stumbling block.

While we may properly call this the age of grace, we need to understand that, from the perspective of our Lord Jesus Christ, this is the *age of missions*. If you are a member of Christ you are part of His body, the church. Our local churches exist for one purpose and one purpose alone, to be a light to the nations. Christ has given us pastors and teachers to teach, protect, and edify us for the all important work of the ministry, the task of reaching the nations for Christ. There is no other reason for any church to exist.

Ephesians 4:11-13:

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for

the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

This is the biblical time period during which God is calling out His church, a people for His name from among the Gentiles (Acts 15:14). If our heart beats with our Lord's heart, we will be seeking to see the nations won to Christ in what may likely be the twilight of this wonderful age.

Have you stumbled at the righteousness which is by faith alone? Has salvation by grace through faith alone become your stumbling stone? There can only be one ultimate reason why men would reject the doctrine of election: we want to see something in ourselves which makes us worthy of receiving the gospel. Has your resistance to the doctrines of election and grace blinded your eyes to your own desperate need to know Christ?

2 Corinthians 6:2:

For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)

*Please remember to go to Supplement 20 before studying Session 20!*

# GOD'S PURPOSE FOR ISRAEL

## - HER PRESENT

### LESSON TEXT:

Romans 10:1-21

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

In our last session we looked at God's purpose for Israel in the past. We saw that only a remnant of Israel were truly "saved" or called out by God. Those who were the children of promise were the true Israelites. Salvation is never based upon man's performance. It has always been based upon the promises of God. We learned that God claims and holds the absolute right to show mercy and compassion upon those whom He will. He has, in every age, called people unto Himself.

### LESSON GOAL:

- 1.) To help the student understand that God does have a plan for Israel in this dispensation, even though she is not the centerpiece in His program at this time;
- 2.) To change our attitudes toward Jewish evangelism;
- 3.) To help the student see how strongly the Old Testament scriptures support the teachings of Paul regarding Israel.

### LESSON OVERVIEW:

#### God's Present Purpose For Israel. 10:1-21

[An Introductory Overview]

#### I. Israel - The Problem Revealed. 10:1-10

- A. Israel's Great Need. 10:1
- B. Israel's Great Error. 10:2-10

- 1.) The wrong righteousness was sought. 10:2-3
- 2.) The righteousness of Christ and Moses contrasted
  - a. Christ's righteousness terminates Moses righteousness. 10:4
    - 1a. Moses righteousness was by works. 10:5
    - 1b. Christ's righteousness is by faith. 10:6-10
  - 2a. It does not need to be sought. 10:6-8
  - 2b. It is present and available by faith. 10:9-10

#### II. Israel - The Solution Related. 10:11-15

- A. The Offer Tendered. 10:11-13
- B. The Offer Transmitted. 10:14-15

#### III. Israel - The Response Recorded. 10:16-21

- A. Not all have obeyed. 10:16
  1. Isaiah's acknowledgment. 10:16
- B. But all are accountable. 10:7-21
  1. The Word of God taught the way of faith. 10:17
  2. The Word of God went to the ends of the world. 10:18
  3. Moses testified of its rejection. 10:19
  4. Isaiah testified of its rejection. 10:20-21

### TODAY'S LESSON:

#### God's Present Purpose For Israel -10:1-21

[An Introductory Overview]

When asked what kind of preaching style I employ I usually respond that I prefer to say that I am a Christological interpreter who favors thematic or thematic expositional preaching. I place stress on the word thematic because I believe that many expositional teachers can be too myopic (near sighted). They can often be so tightly focused on the grammatical detail and the Greek construction that they

tend to miss the big picture. They can miss the great themes and grand arguments of the very verses they are dissecting in the laboratory. Romans 10 is a case in point.

Before one delves too deeply into the individual verses of Romans 10 he needs to understand its grand theme. Romans 10 centers around the Jew first, and then the Gentile. For all practical purposes, contemporary Christians have written the Jews off the books. They have adopted a fatalistic approach to the Jew which goes something like this: "God has grafted Israel out of His plan and her eyes will not be opened until after the rapture...the Jewish people are very hard to deal with...so there is no real reason to extend a lot of energy and money trying to win the lost to Christ...after all, they won't be won anyway."

Such an attitude is unbiblical. While Israel *as a nation* is not front and central during this age God has not left off dealing with *individual* Jews. That is what Romans 10 is about. When you read verses 9 and 10 please remember why Paul has placed them here. Remember his argument! Paul is arguing that whosoever, Jew or Gentile, can be saved by calling upon the name of the Lord. There is no difference! The church which loves Christ will love the things He loves. The church which loves Christ will have a love for Jewish evangelism. God is still calling out a remnant from among His people. Some of us feel He is calling out more Jews than ever before! Let's examine the Jewish problem.

## I. Israel - The Problem Revealed. 10:1-10

### A. Israel's Great Need. 10:1:

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

- Israel needs to be saved. It is biblical to pray for the salvation of souls. It is biblical to pray for the salvation of Israel! It is biblical to have a great burden for Israel!

### B. Israel's Great Error. 10:2-10

#### 1.) The wrong righteousness was sought. 10:2-3:

For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

- Righteousness and how it is obtained is *always* the issue. It is always the bottom line. It is the watershed between the Christian faith and every other religious system. It separates Judaism and Christianity. The first principle of the world is that a man can exalt himself through works (Galatians 4:3,8-10). A person is either trying to establish his own righteousness or he has submitted himself to the righteousness which is provided by God. There is no neutral point.

- The word establish (*histemi*) means "to set up." Vincent is quoted by Wuest "indicating their pride in their endeavor. They would erect a righteousness of their own as a monument to their own glory and not to God's." These Jews were seeking to establish their own righteousness. They would not submit to God's righteousness.

- Submitted (*hupostasso*) is a military term which means "to arrange in order, to subordinate" - carrying with it the picture of soldiers in a battalion under the authority of a commander. It is in our natures to resist the righteousness of Christ because implicit in receiving this gift is the obligation to give thanks! We would rather say we have done our part. Someone recently pointed out what the hymn writer did not say. He did not say "Jesus paid a part! Part to Him I owe!" Rather, he said "Jesus paid it all! All to Him I owe!" It was unthinkable to these Jews that they could not contribute to their own righteousness before God. On whose righteousness are you basing your hope?

#### 2.) The righteousness of Christ and Moses contrasted

a. Christ's righteousness terminates Moses

righteousness. 10:4:

**For Christ [is] the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.**

- The Mosaic system, the Old Testament law with its commandments, ordinances, and tabernacle liturgy shed light on God's righteous requirements, but it could not and did not produce righteousness. What the law could not do Jesus Christ did. Jesus Christ consummated the law's purpose. He settled the righteousness question. Therefore, His righteousness is superior to the righteousness of the law. Verse 5 explains this.

1a. Moses righteousness was by works. 10:5:

**For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.**

What is the point of this verse? You cannot pick and choose. If you opt to live under the law you must live under the whole law. There are many "law keepers" today who like to pick and choose. They keep the Sabbath, but they mix fabrics in their clothing. They obey in one area and disobey in another. James 2:10 says:

**For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one [point], he is guilty of all.**

If one chooses to attain righteousness through law keeping he must live by it completely.

1b. Christ's righteousness is by faith. 10:6-10

2a It does not need to be sought. 10:6-8:

**But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down [from above]:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The**

**word is nigh thee, [even] in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;**

- The first thing we see is that there is a righteousness which is available by faith, in contrast to seeking righteousness by law keeping. This righteousness was available in Old Testament times, and is available now. The truth of the matter is that no one was ever saved who was not made righteous by faith.

- When Paul begins "Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend..." He is quoting directly from Deuteronomy 30:12-14. He was quoting Moses and making it relevant to Christ. What was his point? You do not need to search for justification! You do not have to make a pilgrimage to heaven or hell (the abyss) to find Christ! You do not need to personally prove or verify either His death or His resurrection. The word is right here under our noses. God's Word is a sufficient authority. The answer is basic and simple! What is the truth? Paul declares it in verses 9 and 10:

2b It is present and available by faith. 10:9-10:

**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. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.**

- You do not have to go anywhere or do a single thing to be saved. You do not have to go on a journey seeking the answers. You do not have to perform a great sacrificial act. You simply need to obey these two verses. The Bible says that a man believes with his heart unto righteousness. When that occurs he will inevitably confess Jesus as Lord. Here are some important facts to remember about these verses:

*1. Believing in the heart does not mean that you feel it to be true, it means that God's Word has convinced you it is true. When you are convinced that Jesus Christ is Lord and that He was crucified and God raised him from the dead, the inevitable proof will be that you will say it is true. The mouth speaks out*

of the abundance of the heart. Paul is not suggesting that these are steps in the plan of salvation. If that were the case, these same steps would always be listed in the same way. [If you did not go over Supplement 20 you will want to pause and do so here!]

There are many other verses which explain to us how to be saved which do not require these exact steps. The truth is, however, that no man can know Jesus Christ as Saviour who denies that He is Lord or who denies His resurrection.

Note: Now and then you will encounter someone who thinks he cannot be saved because he is afraid to “confess” Christ, as though some step needs to be taken. If you encounter someone like this simply ask him “Do you believe in your heart that Jesus is Lord?” “Do you believe that God did raise Him from the dead?” When someone confesses that they are resting in Christ alone for their salvation and that He is their only hope, their dilemma is resolved.

2. *Confessing Jesus as Lord is not to be understood as agreeing that He is your Master.* The Holy Spirit will convince the new believer of that fact soon enough, and the unbeliever is incapable of making such a confession, anyway. Rather, this a confession of the fact that *Jesus Christ is Jehovah God.* While the word “Lord” in the Greek is *kurios* and can be rendered either “Lord” or Jehovah, the very fact that Paul is quoting directly from Joel 2 provides proof that Paul is speaking of Jehovah. When the apostles used this name they were acknowledging Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, the Jehovah of the Old Testament. Jews and for that matter modern cultists who deny that Jesus is Jehovah God *cannot* be saved. *Messiah is Jehovah.*

3. *It is absolutely right and proper to use these two verses to win anyone to Christ, Jew or Gentile with this reminder:* Paul is talking here about the fact that Jews *can* be saved. That is probably why he begins with the command to confess with thy mouth, Jesus as Lord. That was the first obstacle the Jew would have to overcome. The second would be the resurrection. The Jews had no problem believing He died.

That was a fact of history.

## II. Israel - The Solution Related. 10:11-15

### A. The Offer Tendered. 10:11-13

Please do not misunderstand 10:11:

**For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.**

Paul is not saying that one must confess Christ in order to be saved or that the scriptures teach that the man who confesses Christ will not be ashamed of Christ. That is not the idea at all. The verse would be far more accurately rendered “For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be put to shame.” Such a person will not be disappointed by his choice. He will not be left holding the bag. God’s promises are true. If you, Mr. Jew, believe what the scriptures say about Jesus Christ, you will find that it is true. And, of course, Mr. Gentile, this is true for you as well!

10:12:

**For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.**

Now, remember Paul’s argument. We read this verse and we think –isn’t it wonderful, we Gentiles can also be saved! While that is true, the point which Paul is making is that Jews can also be saved! There is no difference, the same Lord is rich to all who call upon Him. This means that now God extends the offer of salvation freely to all. May God have mercy on those who hate the Jews in the name of Christ!

10:13:

**For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**

This means you. This means me. This means the

presidents of any nation. This means the Pope. This means anyone who appropriates the righteousness of Jesus Christ by faith. Paul's argument is a very scriptural argument, by the way, he is quoting from Joel 2:32.

### **B. The Offer Transmitted. 10:14-15:**

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? 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!

This wonderful passage has been the basis for many missionary sermons. The poetic beauty of this quote from Isaiah is unsurpassed! It is God's great joy to see a universal preaching of the Gospel and swift and vigorous feet scaling even the most distant mountains to get out the message "Whosoever will, may come!" If there is no higher plan there can be no higher calling or profession than the calling to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. Just remember, don't ignore the Jews when you get there!

### **III. Israel - The Response Recorded. 10:16-21**

#### **A. Not all have obeyed. 10:16a:**

But they have not all obeyed the gospel

They have not submitted to its authority and come to the foot of the cross. The picture behind the word obey is "of one who on the knock of a door comes to listen to who it is." (Strongs) That is beautiful imagery for the gospel. We obey the gospel when we give it our ear and we believe it. There are many teachers, however, who are now mixing law with grace and teaching us that the Sermon on the Mount represents the purest expression of the gospel. We do not become disciples in order to be saved. That is not what it means to obey the gospel. To obey it means listen to it and believe it.

• If you have not obeyed the gospel do not criticize Israel for her unbelief. You are even more accountable, for "to whom much is given, so shall much be required."

1. Isaiah's acknowledgment. 10:16b:

For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

The fact that much of Israel would reject the gospel was very evident to Isaiah. He prophesied his entire adult ministry without seeing any recorded response! The nation of Israel has had a long history of rejecting the truths of God's Word and substituting her own traditions in lieu of God's commands.

#### **B. But all are accountable. 10:7-21**

1. The Word of God taught the way of faith. 10:17:

So then faith [cometh] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

This is a concluding remark. Paul has been quoting Isaiah, Joel, and Moses. He has been building his case that God's way has always been the way of faith and that this can be clearly seen in the scriptures. The doctrine of justification by faith is not new. It has simply been rejected over and over by the Jewish people. Their scriptures taught the doctrine and prophesied its rejection by Israel. The evidence stands. The Jewish people are accountable for their disobedience. Their ignorance is a willing ignorance, not an innocent ignorance. The facts about faith have been there all along.

2. The Word of God went to the ends of the world. 10:18

But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.



3. Moses testified of its rejection. 10:19:

**But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by [them that are] no people, [and] by a foolish nation I will anger you.**

4. Isaiah testified of its rejection. 10:20-21:

**But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.**

God has more to say about Israel and (lest we become proud) He has more to say about the Gentiles, in chapter 10. That is another lesson. The important things to remember from today's lesson are:

- The gospel is still being offered to Israel. The Jew who acknowledges Jesus as Lord, believing that God has raised Him from the dead may be freely saved!
- The righteousness of God has been consistently made available to men of all ages and has always been received by faith. In our age, that faith is focused in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
- Just as God holds the Jews accountable for His Word which they had all along, He holds each of us accountable to His Word. Have you obeyed the gospel?

***Congratulations on completing Study 20! Please be sure to read Supplement 21 before moving on.***

# GOD'S PURPOSE FOR ISRAEL

## - HER FUTURE

### LESSON TEXT:

Romans 11:1-36

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

In Romans Paul has explained to us how the doctrine of justification by faith has been taught in both the Old and New Testaments and he has shown us how life in bondage to the Holy Spirit is superior to life spent in bondage to the law. Once he effectively removed the influence of the law, the logical question remained: What about the recipients of the law, God's chosen people, Israel? Have the custodians of the law also been set aside? Chapters 9, 10, and 11 deal entirely with that question. In our last study we studied Israel's rejection of the righteousness which comes by faith. Now, the question remains, is God finished with Israel?

### LESSON GOAL:

- 1.) To help the student understand that God has not forsaken Israel;
- 2) To remind ourselves that Israel's fall has been for our blessing;
- 3.) To remain humble at all times in our spirit toward Israel knowing that the fullness of the Gentiles will come in and God will consummate His plan for Israel.

### LESSON OVERVIEW:

#### God's Future Purpose for Israel. 11:1-36

[An Introductory Overview]

#### I. Israel - Her Present State. 11:1-24

- A. The Burning Question. 11:1-2a
- B. The Believing Remnant. 11:2b-6
- C. The Blinded Remainder. 11:7-24
  1. God's purpose
    - a. To blind the rebellious. 11:7-10
      - 1a. Isaiah's declaration (Isaiah 29:10), 11:8
      - 1b. David's declaration (Psalm 69:22, 23). 11:9,10
    - b. To bring salvation to the Gentiles. 11:11a
    - c. To provoke Israel to jealousy. 11:11b-12
  2. Paul's participation
    - a. The affirmation. 11:13-16
    - b. The analogy (the olive tree). 11:17-21
    - c. The admonition. 11:22-24

#### II. Israel - Her Future Salvation. 11:25-32

- A. Israel's blindness is short-lived. 11:25
  1. It will end when the fullness of the Gentiles comes in.
- B. Israel's salvation is sure. 11:26
  1. Isaiah asserts it. (Isaiah 59:20), 11:26
  2. God's covenant insists on it. 11:27
  3. God's plan requires it. 11:28-32
- C. God's wisdom is supreme. 11:33-36

### TODAY'S LESSON:

[An Introductory Overview]

- Several lessons ago we explained how Romans 6-8 is a *doctrinal watershed*. These chapters clearly address critical issues regarding justification by faith. For example, we learned that justification by faith does not teach us to continue in sin or cause us to sin. We saw that there was no goodness in us which caused us to receive Christ. God reached down and quickened us. We did not reach up to Him. Works based theology of all stripes finds itself in deep trouble in Romans 6-8.

Romans 9-11 also represent a doctrinal watershed - especially Romans 11. In this case, the chapter clearly addresses the issue of Covenant Theology. Covenant theology is a system which (based upon a *mix* of literal and allegorical interpretation instead of literal interpretation) insists that there is no distinction between the church and Israel. It insists that Israel as a nation has forever been set aside and that we who know Christ are “spiritual Israel” and, as such, are the inheritors of her promises. Some widely known Christian radio networks have taught this doctrine on a daily basis for many years. As you will soon see, however, the covenant theologian must walk on a bed of nails in order to get through Romans 11 and still not believe that God has a separate and distinct plan for His people Israel! God is not finished with Israel!

## **I. Israel - Her Present State. 11:1-24**

### **A. The Burning Question. 11:1-2a:**

**I say then, Hath God cast away his people?**

If this question was relevant in Paul’s time, think of how much more relevant it is in our time. Some two thousand years have passed since God and Israel have had any “communication.” These millennia have been marked with torturous antisemitism as the people of Israel have literally been scattered over the face of the earth. Their efforts to reestablish themselves in Israel have been resisted and resented by all of the neighboring nations and the United Nations itself. Has God cast away (thrust aside) His people? Paul writes in 11:1-2:

**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. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew...**

God forbid! May it not be so! Paul himself was evidence that God was not yet finished and the idea that God would “give up” on people whom He foreknew would be unthinkable. God who sees the end

from the beginning knew Israel’s past, present, and future in eternity past.

Christians must not be confused. It is true that we are the heavenly seed of Abraham (Galatians 3:29) and we partake of some of the benefits of the New Covenant which was promised to Israel because of our in-Christ position. However, we are not Israel. God’s Word explicitly states that He will not forget or forsake His own people. Psalms 94:14:

**For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.**

See also 1 Samuel 12:22.

The Old Testament scriptures are replete with promises which God made to Israel concerning her land, her King, and her future salvation. Many of these promises are unconditional. For God to leave off working with Israel would require that scores and scores of biblical prophecies would go completely unfulfilled. Well then, what is happening with Israel? We must understand that there are *two groups of Israelites*. There is a small, believing remnant and there is a large remaining group of Israelites whose eyes are blinded to the truth.

### **B. The Believing Remnant. 11:2b-6:**

**Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to [the image of] Baal. Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 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.**

- These verses teach us the principle of the remnant. No matter how bad things have been in times past, no matter how bad things will get in the future, God will always reserve unto Himself a remnant of believers. But please notice, He will not only have a remnant of believers, that remnant will include believing Jews.

- God affirmed this to Elijah when he thought he was standing alone (1 Kings 19:18).

- Even at this present time, and we may understand it to mean during this present age, there remains a remnant according to the election of grace. God is still calling out a people for His name from among the Jews as well as from among the Gentiles.

- The key word is grace. God is calling out a people for His name from among all nations (including Israel) - *not* based upon their works. He is not calling them because He saw they would make good believers. He is calling them by grace, bestowing undeserved favor upon all of us whom He has called. Works and grace simply cannot be mixed. If it is of grace it is not of works. If it is works, it is not of grace. Upon which of these two are you placing your hope, your good works, or God's grace?

### C. The Blinded Remainder. 11:7-24

1. God's purpose

a. To blind the rebellious. 11:7:

**What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded**

Please notice that these Israelites did not blind themselves, God blinded them. There is a reminder here for all of us that we cannot treat the truth of God with impunity. He dulls our ears and hardens our hearts and blinds our eyes when we reject His truth. Many Gentiles will also be blinded and will believe the lies of the coming wicked one. God will send them a strong delusion and cause them to believe the lie because they held the truth in unrighteousness. (2 Thessalonians 2:11).

teousness. (2 Thessalonians 2:11).

1a. Isaiah's declaration (Isaiah 29:10). 11:8:

**(According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day.**

Paul is quoting the prophet Isaiah when he quoted these words. He is compounding the charge against Israel by reminding them that God prophesied this very thing. Israel sleeps in a burning house.

1b. David's declaration (Psalm 69:22,23). 11:9,10:

**And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.**

Such tragedy! Such pathos! The passage which Paul quotes here is a Messianic passage. The musings of David's spirit and the spirit of Messiah are mingled. If you will look closely at this Psalm you will see a suffering Saviour bearing the reproaches of a recalcitrant people.

Israel knew that she was a rebellious and gainsaying people. She knew her fathers hated and slew the prophets. Well did our Lord Jesus say concerning Jerusalem:

Luke 13:34:

**O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen [doth gather] her brood under [her] wings, and ye would not!**

The blindness which has come upon Israel has not been placed upon her with arbitrary impunity. The prophets of old and the Lord Jesus himself plead and wept for this rebellious prodigal. Why then did God

place this blindness upon her?

b. To bring salvation to the Gentiles. 11:11a:

**I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall?  
God forbid: but [rather] through their fall salvation [is  
come] unto the Gentiles**

God blinded Israel for our benefit. Israel's blindness has resulted in our salvation. It is a sobering thought to understand that someone else's failure led the way to my success. It is not that we Gentiles are God's second choice (His plan from eternity past was to call out a people for His name from among the nations), but rather that He used Israel's downfall to raise us up. His purpose was to benefit us, and also to benefit Israel:

c. To provoke Israel to jealousy. 11:11b - 12:

**...for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of  
them [be] the riches of the world, and the diminishing  
of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their  
fulness?**

God is wooing His disaffected lover at this very hour. One day there will be a grand reconciliation. Christian friend, do not misunderstand what God is doing with Israel. His dealings with her are far from over.

2. Paul's participation

a. The affirmation. 11:13-16

**For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the  
apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by  
any means I may provoke to emulation [them which  
are] my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the  
casting away of them [be] the reconciling of the world,  
what [shall] the receiving [of them be], but life from the  
dead? For if the firstfruit [be] holy, the lump [is] also  
[holy]: and if the root [be] holy, so [are] the branches.**

Paul now speaks for himself as he describes his own role in the process. It doesn't take the reader long to see that Paul's desires reflect God's desires. As an apostle to the Gentiles (our apostle) his deep underlying purpose is to provoke and stir his own sleeping people.

We are too gentle with sleepers. When a man is sleeping in a burning building we do not nudge him and cajole him. We provoke him! We poke him we startle him. We do all that is in our power to wake him.

In verse 15 Paul reveals an additional motive for wanting to see these of his own flesh won to Christ. He tells us that if the Gentiles benefited by their stumbling, consider how much more we would benefit by their reconciliation. At the risk of sounding racist, it has often been said that there is no converted Christian like a converted Jew! Their zeal and boldness for Christ often results in many conversions – conversions of Gentiles. We have stood in a great position to benefit. By their fall, the message came to us. By their reconciliation we benefit even more.

b. The analogy (the olive tree). 11:17-21

**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.**

• The good olive tree seems to represent Israel. The wild olive is the Gentile who has been grafted into God's program. This, in itself is contrary. A farmer would never graft a wild branch on to a cultivated tree. He would graft a good branch on to a wild tree.

There is a lesson in humility here for Gentiles who look down their noses at Jews as being some kind of an out-of-step maverick tribe. God views them as the good stock and we Gentiles as the wild stock. We dare not be “high minded” in our attitude toward Israel.

c. The admonition. 11:22-24

**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 graft 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?**

- Gentiles are in a precarious position because they were the wild branches grafted in. We stand in this position by faith alone. Not only is God capable of grafting the Jewish people into the centerpiece of His plan – He will.

## II. Israel - Her Future Salvation. 11:25-32

### A. Israel's blindness is short-lived. 11:25:

**For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.**

1. It will end when the fullness of the Gentiles comes in.

When God's plan for calling out a people for His name among the Gentiles consummates, Israel's blindness will be removed. The times of the Gentiles (Luke 21:24) is that period of time described so carefully in Daniel. The mighty Gentile kingdoms

seem to have run their course. All indications seem to show that we are very close to the fullness of the Gentiles, but we may not say this with absolute authority.

### B. Israel's salvation is sure. 11:26

1. Isaiah asserts it. (Isaiah 59:20). 11:26:

**And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:**

Israel will be converted as a nation. Jesus Christ Himself is the deliverer who will come out of Zion and turn away Israel's ungodliness. What a day that will be when all of Israel weeps and mourns for the one whom they pierced and God pours out the spirit of grace upon them!

Zechariah 12:10 :

**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.**

Note: For an excellent summary of God's plan read the Scofield Bible Study notes on verse 26 and follow the cross references.

2. God's covenant insists on it. 11:27:

**For this [is] my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.**

God always does what He says He will do!

3. God's plan requires it. 11:28-32:

**As concerning the gospel, [they are] enemies for your**

sakes: but as touching the election, [they are] beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God [are] without repentance. For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

### **C. God's wisdom is supreme. 11:33-36:**

O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable [are] his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, [are] all things: to whom [be] glory for ever. Amen.

Amen, and amen!

*Don't forget! You will want to cover Supplement 22 before doing Session 22.*

# LIVING SACRIFICES

## PART I

### LESSON TEXT:

Romans 12:1-8

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

In chapters 9-11 Paul explained the place of Israel in relation to the covenants. We have seen her utter failure and we have seen the wonderful promise of her future glorification. Most importantly for us, we have heard the warning that we too must take heed, for, if the wild branch was grafted into the tree, how much more appropriate it would be for God to re-graft the natural branch back into the tree. Gentiles must not presume upon God's great grace!

### LESSON GOAL:

To help the student appreciate the tremendous responsibilities which befall him as a result of all the wonderful blessings and privileges which are his in Christ Jesus.

### LESSON OVERVIEW:

#### **V. Justification Experienced. 12:1-16:27**

- A. Living Sacrifices. 12:1-21
  - 1. In Service Toward God. 12:1-2
    - a. Your Presentation. 12:1
    - b. Your Prohibition. 12:2a
    - c. Your Provision 2b

*Our next session will continue with:*

- 2. In Service Toward the Body of Christ. 12:3-8
  - a. Your Position
    - 1.) Personal Estimation. 12:3
    - 2.) Proper Differentiation. 12:4
    - 3.) Perfect Integration. 12:5

#### b. Your Performance

- 1.) Recognize your role. 12:6a
- 2.) Realize your duty. 12:6b-8
  - a.) Prophecy. 12:6
  - b.) Ministry. 12:7a
  - c.) Teaching. 12:7b
  - d.) Exhortation. 12:8
  - e.) Giving. 12:8
  - f.) Ruling. 12:8
  - g.) Showing mercy. 12:8

- 3. In Service Toward Individual Believers. 12:9-16

### TODAY'S LESSON:

We have come to the fifth and final division in our study of Romans where Paul, in his typical fashion, applies the truths which we have learned to our daily walk. The same pattern can be seen in all of Paul's epistles. First, he shows us our position in Christ, and then he shows us how our practice should correspond to our position. For this reason, we have taken the liberty to rename our last point, just as we renamed the previous two points. Our suggested outline now looks like this:

- I. Justification Necessitated** - 1:1-3:20
- II. Justification Provided** - 3:21-5:21
- III. Justification Extended** - 6:1-8:39
- IV. Justification Defended** - 9:1-11:36
- V. Justification Experienced** - 12:1-16:27

Now,

#### **V. Justification Experienced. 12:1-16:27**

##### **A. Living Sacrifices. 12:1-21**



Paul begins appropriately in 12:1:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, [which is] your reasonable service.

- You can quote the cliché with me: *Whenever we encounter the word therefore in Scripture we do well to stop and see what it's there for.* This is especially important here, because Paul is referring to everything he has said up until now! He has built his case with sound doctrine and now he is ready to drive home his purpose for writing the book.
- "I beseech you, therefore, brethren." Beseech is, of course, that familiar Greek word *parakaleo*. Paul does not command us as a sergeant would, he comes alongside as an older brother and urges us to do God's will just as the Holy Spirit, our great paraclete does.

This precious word is worthy of a special word study as it appears in so many ways in our New Testament. I like to call it *the Bible's love command*.

- "by the mercies of God." What greater argument can be made? In times of war some men are conscripted against their will. They have no love of country, no patriotism. Others see service for their country as a high and noble cause. Our Lord is recruiting us on the basis of the great mercies of God. In our Romans study we have seen how God justified us and gave us a new standing before Him. We have seen how we have been freed from the bondage of the law and placed as sons before Him and that all things have worked toward this end. We have seen and experienced the intimate involvement of the Holy Spirit in our lives and the unspeakable love of God which has been expressed on our behalf. Unspeakable love, unsearchable riches! He has taken us from the mire, placed us in the choir, and bestowed the crown jewels upon us! The old chorus argues:

After all He's done for me,

After all He's done for me,  
How can I do less than give Him my best,  
And live for Him completely?  
After all He's done for me!

Only a hardened derelict could revel in all the treasures which are ours in Christ Jesus and not respond out of a heart of love and gratitude asking God, what can I do for you?

Here's what we can do...

### 1. In Service Toward God. 12:1-2

#### a. Your Presentation. 12:1b:

...that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, [which is] your reasonable service.

- Paul is offering a metaphor to help us understand our role and responsibility as grateful believers. Just as Old Testament saints knew and understood what it meant to present an animal sacrifice, we are to present ourselves as living sacrifices.
- Careful Bible students will remember that we have already encountered this word *present* earlier in our study of Romans. We read in 6:13:

Neither yield ye your members [as] instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members [as] instruments of righteousness unto God.

The Greek word for *yield* in Romans 6:13 is the same word we encounter here. It means to stand alongside - ready, at a moment's notice for immediate service.

- It does not surprise us that Paul tells us to present our bodies as living sacrifices because this has been the whole discussion of Romans, the war between flesh and spirit. When we talk about our sin natures we are really talking about our fleshly natures. The body has been redeemed at Calvary, but God hasn't *collected on it* yet. It is the seat of our spiritual war-

fare. It is that part of us which makes those unholy demands upon us. It is only when we reckon our bodies to be dead to sin, that we can see ourselves as alive unto God and present our members to Him.

Many young people come forward and rededicate their lives at revival services. They want to give themselves wholly unto God. They want to give their all to the Lord. While we all understand what they mean, the important thing to understand is that God asks us to give our bodies as *living* sacrifices. This includes each body member separately and the ongoing presentation of our whole bodies in active service for Christ while awaiting His every command every moment of every day.

- Wuest quotes Vincent, who quotes Chrysostom (an early church writer) who said:

“How can the body become a sacrifice? Let the eye look on no evil, and it is a sacrifice. Let the tongue utter nothing base, and it is an offering. Let the hand work no sin, and it is a holocaust. But more, this suffices not, but besides we must actively exert ourselves for good; the hand giving alms, the mouth blessing them that curse us, the ear ever at leisure for listening to God” [Webster gives as a definition of holocaust, a sacrifice wholly consumed by fire.]

We speak too much in generalities. It is wonderful to dedicate our lives to Christ. It is even better to understand that such a dedication includes our eyes, ears, lips, hands, feet, and all the rest of us. This is the biblical doctrine of consecration. The meaning behind consecration is that we are giving our bodies to Christ. “Take my life, and let it be, consecrated, Lord to thee - my hands, my lips, my feet, etc...” When we do this, the checking account, the family car, the home, and everything else we own becomes consecrated automatically. Have you ever actually presented, officially presented, your body to Christ as a living sacrifice?

- “holy and acceptable unto God.” If you have paid attention in our study of Romans you already know that the word holy means to be set apart. As with

many words, there is a secular meaning and there is a biblical meaning. That is, the Bible often takes secular words and embellishes and enriches their meanings by giving them greater spiritual content. The word holy is such a word. Originally it means set apart as an animal or an offering would be set apart for sacrifice. Biblically, of course, it speaks of much more, especially when we talk about the sinless and aggressive righteousness of our God. Not just any animal could be used in sacrifice. It had to be the best or it would not be an acceptable offering. The word acceptable does not just mean approved, it means well approved! God doesn't want our leftovers. He doesn't want the end of our week after we've done everything else we wanted to. He wants the beginning of our week! He doesn't want what is left over in your schedule. He wants the first part of your paycheck, not the last! He wants the best you have to offer, not the mediocre and the leftovers.

Christ's church is limping along. Folks seem to love serving Christ when it doesn't interfere with family gatherings, multiple weekend trips and camp outs, business and entertainment. We give God what is convenient. We serve God as it is convenient and does not conflict with the rest of our lives. “After all, we are living under Grace”, we say. The average Christian is only barking at the moon when he nurtures the idea that he is presenting his body as a living sacrifice. Frankly, his offering is simply *not acceptable*. When the wood, hay, and stubble are burned away precious little will stand. Christians who are quick to bask in the wonderful fact that they have been accepted in Christ must confront the reality that their service for Christ can be rejected. Is your body consecrated?

- “which is your reasonable service.” The word reasonable in the Greek is *logikos*. It is akin to our word logical. God is not saying that He only demands what is reasonable from us. He is saying that it is only logical that we would present ourselves as living sacrifices! Why is it logical that we present our bodies? It is logical because we are already dead to sin. We are already in Christ. We have already been quickened

in Christ. We already have the Holy Spirit. It is only logical that we live according to our position and not according to our location! It just makes sense.

#### b. Your Prohibition. 12:2a:

**And be not conformed to this world...**

- The idea behind the word conform is the idea of masquerading, of representing ourselves to be what we are not. We are not of this world (literally: age), and we should not behave in such a way which makes folks think we are. There is a popular belief among Christians that the goal for believers is to look and behave as much like worldlings as we can so that we are better positioned to reach them for Christ. In practice, this obscures and hides our true identities. The following is a twenty year old, but typical, news clipping from a Baptist newsletter:

*Falwell Pulpit-Shares With Campolo. Tony Campolo was Pres. Clinton's "friend in Philadelphia" and they both promoted homosexuality. Jerry Falwell has been selling videos that accuse Clinton of adultery and covering up murder. Campolo and Falwell are scheduled to speak at Atlanta Fest '95, the big Christian Rock Festival at Six Flags June 14-17. It is sponsored by World Vision, Youth for Christ, and CCM Magazine. The music is rap, rock, and pop alternative. It features 32 different individuals or groups, also including Andy Stanley and Josh McDowell.*

We do not include this quote in order to ask where we stand on the Baptists who wrote the newsletter, on the late Jerry Falwell, on CCM (the contemporary music magazine) or on anyone else. The purpose is to point out that any hope of drawing lines between contemporary Christianity and the world has been virtually impossible for decades! We are conforming to this age. When "the Rev. Jerry Falwell" had "the Rev. Jesse Jackson" founder of the Rainbow Coalition (whose current head was then Angela Davis) in his pulpit (9/1/85) few Christians even took notice. Very few ask "What fellowship hath light with darkness?" The Bible says "...and be not conformed to this age". Unequivocal acceptance,

regardless of behavior or obedience to the Word of God, is the order of the day.

Of course, we must also look into our own backyards, our own conduct at work and school, and our demeanor in dress and entertainment. When our values, goals, hopes and dreams are the same as the ideals reflected on the networks and in the theaters we have become hopelessly conformed to this age. This is not becoming to one who has been justified by faith. The Bible says "and be not conformed to this age." Period!

#### c. Your Provision 2b:

**...but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what [is] that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.**

- When God calls, God enables. When the serious Christian meditates on what God really expects of us, on what it really means to become a living sacrifice - he may be tempted to give up in despair. We know the power of our flesh. We know the demands it can make upon us. We know how weak and helpless we are. We want our bodies to be acceptable sacrifices, but we know how vulnerable we are. Is there any help? When God commands, God empowers. When God tells us to go He always points the way. What is the secret? We can be transformed *by the renewing of our minds.*

When the Lord Jesus was on the mount with Peter, James, and John the Bible says (in Mark 9:2) that He was transfigured in front of them. His body was transformed or transfigured. Wuest makes a point which is too important to pass by. He says "The word is *metamorphoomai* which speaks of the act of a person changing his outward expression from that which he has to a different one, an expression which comes from and is representative of his inner being"

How do we make the outward conform to the inward? We do it by the renewing of our minds. When we habitually feed on the Word of God and

seek to be under the control of the Holy Spirit we change the way we think. When we change the way we think, we change the way we behave. The world says if you change the way you behave it will change the way you think - so they set about with great psychological programs to effect behavior modification. The Bible says, change your mind and it will change the way you live. Your outward appearance will correspond to your inward condition. Spiritually, as well as physically, you are what you eat. Are you feeding on the things of God? renewing yourself in His Word? living in the fellowship of others who love Christ? Are you praying? All of these things contribute to the renewal of our minds and enable us to become living sacrifices.

...that ye may prove what [is] that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

How can I know if my sacrifice is good, and acceptable and the perfect will of God? Do I just sit tight and wait until the judgment seat of Christ? Do I cross my fingers, burn a few candles, and hope like crazy that I at least got a "C" in the school of life? Not on your life. The Bible says that it is our responsibility to confront ourselves, to test and evaluate ourselves against the standards He has given us so that we will not be ashamed in His presence.

The word prove (dokimazo) is a familiar word in our Bibles. It means to test, usually for the sake of approval. It carries with it the picture of a man testing ancient coinage to be sure it is the genuine metal and not a superficial alloy. Test! Test! Test! Part of this process occurs before we share at the Lord's table.

In 1 Corinthians 11: 28 Paul says:

*But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of [that] bread, and drink of [that] cup.*

- The word for examine is this same Greek word (dokimazo). We are to test and evaluate ourselves so that we will be found as pure vessels and living sacrifices.

- In 2 Corinthians 13:5 we are instructed to test ourselves (same word) to see whether we be in the faith.

- In Galatians 6:4 Paul instructs every man to test (same word) his own works.

- According to Ephesians 5:10,11 we are to prove (test) what is acceptable unto the Lord and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.

- In Philippians 1:9 and 10 Paul told the Philippians:

*And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and [in] all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;*

The word approve, once again, is this same word. It means we are to be constantly testing for excellence, spiritual excellence.

There is a trend in modern industry which is not entirely bad. Many have moved to a partnership and team environment where each worker is empowered to manage himself. Besides empowering the worker to control the quality of his work, the key behind this Demming Process lies in the fact that each worker keeps his own records, constantly testing and evaluating his own work, making his own decisions for self and product improvement. The Demming Process is not new. This is what God has intended for His people all along. Are you passing the test? When a man examines (tests) himself God does not have to test him. Are we proving the will of God in our daily walk?

Paul never intended that we all become little automations that worked fastidiously every day to somehow improve upon our spiritual production, so to speak, from the previous day. Paul does intend that we learn to benefit from self evaluation. When we test ourselves, we do not need to be tested by God. (1 Corinthians. 11:31.)

*Please do Supplement 23 next!*

NOTES OR QUESTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN WE GET TOGETHER:

# LIVING SACRIFICES

## PART II

### LESSON TEXT:

Romans 12:3-8

### HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

Romans 12:1-2:

**I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.**

Based on these verses we discovered a double reason for dedication:

1. “therefore” - on the basis of our unique position of being the wild branch which was grafted into the tree, we want, all the more, to present our bodies a living sacrifice.
2. “by the mercies of God.” On the basis of all He has done for us, the most reasonable, logical thing we can do is return our bodies to Him as living sacrifices.

We do this by refusing to be conformed to the world (on the outside) and by transforming ourselves *through the renewing of our minds*, in order to prove and test out the will of God in our lives.

It’s good to remember how much your Employer has invested in your training on an ongoing basis. God has been preparing you all of your life for your next opportunity for service for Him. Our goal is to present ourselves and stand ready, at a moment’s notice, fit for the Master’s use!

### LESSON GOAL:

To help us arrive at a proper estimation of our personal importance. To move us toward the proper and diligent use of our spiritual gifts.

### LESSON OVERVIEW:

*Already covered:*

- A. Living Sacrifices. 12:1-21
  1. In Service Toward God. 12:1-2
    - a. Your Presentation. 12:1
    - b. Your Prohibition. 12:2a
    - c. Your Provision 2b

*For this study:*

2. In Service Toward the Body of Christ. 12:3-8
  - a. Your Position
    - 1.) Personal Estimation. 12:3
    - 2.) Proper Differentiation. 12:4
    - 3.) Perfect Integration. 12:5
  - b. Your Performance
    - 1.) Recognize your role. 12:6a
    - 2.) Realize your duty. 12:6b-8
      - a.) Prophecy. 12:6
      - b.) Ministry. 12:7a
      - c.) Teaching. 12:7b
      - d.) Exhortation. 12:8a
      - e.) Giving. 12:8b
      - f.) Ruling. 12:8c
      - g.) Showing mercy. 12:8d
3. In Service Toward All Men. 12:9-21

## TODAY'S LESSON:

Now that we have seen that we are to be living sacrifices in service toward God Paul wants us to understand how our sacrificial service will affect our service toward the Body of Christ.

### 2. In Service Toward the Body of Christ. 12:3-8

#### a. Your Position

##### 1.) Personal Estimation. 12:3:

**For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think [of himself] more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.**

Helping folks to take proper views of themselves is one of the most difficult tasks of the shepherd. He not only has problems with others, but he has problems with his own ability to view himself realistically. A shepherd spends much of his time with two groups of people, those who think too little of themselves, and those who think too much of themselves.

Those who think too little of themselves usually have no sense of self worth because they have not understood who they really are in Christ Jesus and, more likely, they have not really been able to accept God's forgiveness. Every human being on the planet has greater or lesser problems with self worth and with identity. All the world can say is "look inside yourself. You will find something beautiful." That is a terrible remedy. God says, in effect, "I have placed a great value upon you" and He has also given us a great purpose and a great task. All of these things give meaning to life and help us to lead emotionally healthy lives.

At the same time, we can be tempted to think too highly of ourselves. Though it seems like a contradiction, the very folks who have problems with their sense of self worth and self esteem are sometimes

the same folks who are tempted to think too highly of themselves when God gives them a special gift, talent, or task. This is especially true of pastors and leaders. We can mistakenly gain our identity from our gifts and abilities instead of from who we are in Christ.

Paul wants us to know that our sense of self worth and identity comes from our *position* in Christ, not from the gifts or tasks to which He has called us. (This is one reason why Paul admonished the church not to lay hands suddenly upon any man. Deacons must first be proved.) We spiritual leaders are notorious for thinking too highly of ourselves, especially when God gives us a successful ministry. In pastoral circles we call it the "God and me syndrome." Do not be a Christian who gains his sense of identify and worth from the task or gift God has given you. He may just take your ministry away in order to help you place your real confidence in Christ.

- How should we then view ourselves? First, we are to think realistically. Paul says "to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." Whatever you have, God gave to you, and He gave you the measure of faith you need in order to accomplish His objectives. It is His gift measured out according to your need.

I once worked for a jewelry store. One day I was asked to carry a pouch with many thousands of dollars worth of jewelry to another store down the street. I was not any wealthier while I carried those jewels. I was only the messenger. My only duty was to faithfully carry out my task.

##### 2.) Proper Differentiation. 12:4

**For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:**

We are all members of one body (the body of Christ) but we do not all have the same office. There must be proper differentiation. We are all equal because we are all members of the same body. We are all equal but we do not all have the same office.

As we rode along the freeway in heavy traffic we saw a highway patrol officer come racing around us going at least 75 or 80 miles per hour, switching lanes, with no lights flashing. He then caught up with a truck going less than the speed limit, turned on his lights, and pulled him over. It was a bit of overkill. The officer's cowboy-like behavior probably saved him about 10 seconds of additional driving time and put us all at risk. I think this officer thought too highly of himself. He allowed his high position to affect his ego. On the other hand, he was still a police officer. We were still obligated to respect him, to obey him and he does not represent the majority in his profession.

Our "office" can be abused two ways. The office holder can inflate his position; the rest of the body can deflate his position. There must be proper differentiation of duties, tasks, and importance. The ministry of teaching, for example, is far more important than the ministry of music, though both are badly needed. The teacher, however, is no more important than the piano player – they are equal before God. We may differentiate in our offices but we do not differentiate in our equality.

### 3.) Perfect Integration. 12:5

**So we, [being] many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.**

Notice that the Christian view of equality is far higher than the world's view. The world says we are all equal because we were created equal. Even evolutionists (whose discipline demands inequality) still insist we are all equal.

However, Christian equality runs far deeper. We are not equal just because we have a common origin. We Christians are equal because we are all members one of another. That is a much higher level of equality. This is why we must never let what is commonly called race, or culture, or political preferences to tear us apart. And this is especially why we must not let our possession of spiritual gifts separate us. God did

not give us gifts in order to establish a pecking order in His body. He gave us gifts so that we could minister to each other and so, to minister to ourselves.

How should we then exercise our gifts? Paul continues.

### b. Your Performance

In order to properly understand the next few verses we need to read them as a unit. 12:6-8:

**Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, [let us prophesy] according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, [let us wait] on [our] ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, [let him do it] with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.**

#### 1.) Recognize your role. 12:6a

Recognize that our gifts do differ according to the grace which is given to us. You have a gift and I have a gift. Unless we have the same gifts it is unlikely that I can do the thing which you do as well as you can. This pastor has lost a number of families from his churches over the years because folks just assumed that pastors have all the gifts. After all, a good pastor must be a good teacher and a good shepherd, a good "people person" and an excellent scholar. He must preach as well as teach. He must know how to exhort, he must be liberal, a wise ruler, a great disciplinarian, but very merciful and tactful. Most of all, he should have a fifth sense for sniffing out need and meeting it. Of course a pastor should strive to do all of the above, but he will probably not be gifted in all those areas. Our point is this: When the body does not exercise its gifts the pastor's lack of gifts becomes even more apparent. When believers recognize their gifts and exercise their gifts, they make the pastor look very good.



## 2.) Realize your duty. 12:6b-8

In these next few verses Paul is admonishing us to be faithful to the gift God has given us and to be faithful with the gift God has given us.

### a.) Prophecy. 12:6

*...whether prophecy, [let us prophesy] according to the proportion of faith;*

What is prophecy? Some introduce the subject by explaining that prophecy contains two elements, that of telling forth the Word of God and that of foretelling the Word of God. They then explain that the foretelling aspect of prophecy does not exist today, just the telling forth aspect. But, in truth, we need to look much closer at the word.

1. First, the dominant meaning behind the word has to do with warning and **exhortation**. Thayer says:

“Prophecy -- in the New Testament, as in the Old, the prominent idea is not prediction, but the inspired delivery of warning, exhortation, instruction, judging, and making manifest the secrets of the heart.”

2. Secondly, prophecy has to do with **revelation** – receiving the Word of God and understanding mysteries (1 Corinthians 13:2) in order to accomplish that goal. A mystery is a secret which has been revealed.

3. Thirdly it has to do with **dispensation**. It has a special role denoting the transitions of God’s covenantal economies. To properly understand prophecy we must study it in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. We must understand that it can be given orally or in written form. We must understand the curses and warnings especially associated with its abuse. We must understand its place in the future as well as in the past. We must also understand the difference between having the gift of prophecy and the office of the prophet.

For a thorough summary of the biblical doctrine of prophecy you will need to study 1 Corinthians 12 making sure you get some input from sound Bible teachers. We can help if you need guidance. For our purposes here in Romans it would be good to understand that the office of the prophet does not exist and that, probably, most of those utterances which are being given in the name of prophecy today do not meet the biblical standards. God is sovereign and may do as He pleases, but most likely, the gift of prophecy is not being exercised today.

Even so, it is important for us to understand Paul’s admonition: “whether prophecy, [let us prophesy] according to the proportion of faith”; Paul is saying, if you have the gift, you are not only obligated to use it for God’s glory, you must use it according to the proportion of faith. Most likely Paul meant that the owner of the gift of prophecy should not *undervalue* his gift or *overestimate* his gift by adding his human insight to the revelations which God has given him. In other words, use the gift appropriately.

### b.) Ministry. 12:7a

*Or ministry, [let us wait] on [our] ministering;*

Ministry (diakonia) is a very common biblical word. We get deacon from it. A minister is one who serves. The words “let us wait” are in italics above, but they still do a good job at conveying the Greek. A servant is one who waits on his master. The word is in what we call the locative of sphere. By that we believe that Paul means the minister should minister in the sphere to which God has called him.

We often tire of the service God has given to us and sometimes want bigger and better things (or smaller and lesser ones!). We are not content with the ministries God has given to us. We try one thing for a while and then shift to another. Now, if God moves us from one ministry to another, that is just fine. He is the boss. But if *we* change tasks, just because we tire of them or because we want a *fresh beginning* we need to be a little cautious and certain that God is in our move. We need to be content to exercise our gift

within the *sphere of service* to which God has called us. Too often this pastor has seen folks despise their God given tasks, only to fail at the “bigger and better things” they thought they were worthy of. Just be careful. There is just no sweeter place to be than to be at home in the ministry God has called you to. Be it ever so humble!

**c.) Teaching. 12:7b**

...or he that teacheth, on teaching;

Once again, we have the same structure in the Greek. Wuest (on whom I have relied heavily in this chapter) translates this: “or teaching, within the sphere of teaching.” Christian friend, there is a sphere in which your gifts and abilities function well. It is good wisdom to be the best at what we do best and not to dissipate our energies in less productive efforts. Paul was a wise man. He knew that every pastor would encounter folks who wearied of using their gifts in their spheres. We all need change and variety and change is good so long as we do not “promote” ourselves to the level of our incompetency!

**d.) Exhortation. 12:8a**

Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

Yes, this (exhorteth) is that wonderful word *parakaleo*. It speaks of coming alongside others to warn and admonish and encourage them lovingly as brethren – as equals. I am so thankful for those who have honed this skill and have been able to move me in the right direction when I stubbornly insisted on seeing things the wrong way. It is a wonderful gift to be an exhorter, but it carries a terrible risk. Exhorters also need to confine their gifts *within the sphere of exhortation*. They must not use their persuasive powers for more than God intends, and they must not become discouraged by those who move so slowly. They just need to be faithful doing what they

do best for God!

**e.) Giving. 12:8b**

Some of us are willing to give, but we do not see the need and we do not properly respond to needs. Very often, we give too little, too much, or inappropriately. I believe that the key to understanding the gift of giving is in seeing that the person with this gift is not only a liberal soul, but he *measures out the appropriate gift*. He does not dole out God’s resources like the welfare department does. He applies the proper response to the proper need. But he too needs to be admonished. In the process of giving one wields a great deal of power.

The giver is to give with simplicity. He is not to be overt and ostentatious. In fact, he would do well to give secretly. Nor should he be the kind of person who calls in his favors when he needs them.

**f.) Ruling. 12:8c**

A ruler is “one who is set in front,” not one set “on top of you”. He is the one who is inclined to leadership, especially spiritual leadership. While we all know that rulers can abuse their power, that is not the greatest problem we have with rulers. Our problem is that it is hard to motivate folks who have this gift to use it, especially in our “democratic” culture. In truth, there is a price to pay for leadership, and it can be a very thankless task. The person vested with the ability to be a deacon or elder may well say, “I have done my time, now let someone else rule.” So Paul admonishes the ruler to do so with diligence, with eagerness, and carefully applying himself to his task.

**g.) Showing mercy. 12:8d**

The one who shows mercy is to do so with cheerfulness, or joyful abandon. He has managed to do the same thing over and over and still show the same compassion on those who need it as he did when he first began meeting needs. Mercy must often be bestowed on folks who have brought their problems

upon themselves. The one who shows mercy can be tempted to become hardened to those who need it. The reader has probably observed that every gift carries with it a caveat and a risk. All must be administered. Strangely, our gifts can be exercised without proper control and even while we are in disobedience.

Such a terrifying thought compels us to approach the use of our gifts with a healthy mix of joy and sobriety.

In conclusion, it is easy to understand what Paul is saying. He is saying that, regardless of the gift which God has given to us, it is our duty to be faithful to the gift he has given us and to be faithful with the gift He has given us. We are not to be “weary in well doing” but we are to be fervent in spirit while we serve Christ. Be all that you can be, in God’s army!

We must also remember that, whether we have the following gifts or not, we are *all* to be:

1. ministers or servants - Galatians 5:13
2. teachers - Colossians 3:16; 2 Tim 2:24
3. exhorters - Hebrews 3:13
4. givers - 2 Corinthians. 8:4-7
5. showers of mercy - Philippians 2:1

Because someone in the fellowship has the gift is no excuse for us not to exercise *the grace*!

***Get ready for another supplement! You will want to do Supplement 24 before doing Session 24.***

# THE SACRIFICIAL SERVANT

## LESSON TEXT:

Romans 12:9-21

## LESSON GOAL:

To understand and apply principles of the Christian walk in our daily lives. This lesson is A Potpourri of Practicality

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

We have been talking about presenting our bodies as living sacrifices (Romans 12:1-2), first, *toward God* who owns us. It is only logical that we would present ourselves for service to the One who has done so much for us. Then we saw that we are to live sacrificially *toward the body of Christ*, particularly in the exercise of our spiritual gifts. We noted that the emphasis in verses 3-8 is not so much on what our spiritual gifts are, but rather on the need for diligence in the use of our gifts. The use of our spiritual gifts requires sacrificial service.

## LESSON OVERVIEW:

Today's passage focuses entirely on a practical application of godly principles for living the daily Christian life. This teacher has not been able to outline these verses and he has never seen a good outline from any other source. This is probably true because it is not a passage to be studied so much as it is to be applied. Paul fires off command after command, not necessarily in logical order, but intended rather to barrage our senses with impressions of how the sacrificial, Spirit filled servant behaves in the daily experience.

*Previously covered:*

## V. Justification Experienced 12:1-16:26

### A. Living Sacrifices. 12:1-21

1. In Service Toward God. 12:1-2
2. In Service Toward the Body of Christ. 12:3-8
3. In Service Toward All Men. 12:9-21

*Our current Session:*

### **The Sacrificial Servant...**

- Communicates his love with sincerity. 12:9
- Clings to the good. 12:9
- Cares for the brethren. 12:10
- Consecrates his spirit. 12:11
- Continues constant in testing. 12:12
- Considers saints in need. 12:13
- Controls himself in conflict. 12:14
- Commiserates with his companions. 12:15
- Condescends to the commonplace. 12:16
- Constrains his responses. 12:17a
- Commends his integrity. 12:17b
- Commits to peace. 12:18
- Ceases from anger. 12:19
- Conquers evil with good. 12:20-21

## TODAY'S LESSON:

### **The Sacrificial Servant...**

In the early years of my Christian experience I devoted a great deal of time to the study of "deeper life" and "victorious Christian living" books. These were very helpful and rooted me deeply in the pursuit of a personal experience with Jesus Christ in my Christian walk. I discovered, however, a common thread of weakness which ran through many of these texts. I would find myself focusing on my inner life and self immolation in preference to focusing on the needs and burdens of others. When Paul fired off this list of commands between verses 9 and 21 I do not believe he intended them to be

analyzed and outlined. I believe he wanted to paint a composite picture of *how* the man who presents his body as a living sacrifice behaves on the sidewalk of life – how he serves others. Reading Romans 12:9-21 should be like reading 1 Corinthians 13. It is a grand poetic expression of the character and walk of the believer. Before we study these verses individually today we encourage you to read all of them (Romans 12:9-21) in your Bible.

### The sacrificial servant...

- Communicates his love with sincerity. 12:9

[Let] love be without dissimulation.

While we may not make this claim by studying the grammar of our passage it is this pastor's opinion that these opening words "let love be without dissimulation" were intended by Paul to serve as a header for the whole list of commands which follow. In other words, love which is without dissimulation will be a love which hates evil and clings to the good; it will be a love which cares for the brethren, and so forth.

A love which is without dissimulation is a love which is without hypocrisy. The hypocrite is the one who masks his true feelings. He wants to appear to be loving when he is not. True love is not feigned. Love is not conditional, but rather, is unconditional and accepting. Many folks like to showcase their love. They go to great ends to demonstrate their love by deeds which can be noticed by others. Cultists are notorious for this, as are some true Christians. We do not see that such love is hypocritical until conflict arises. For example, I talked to a Christian recently who paid a terrible price when he accepted Christ and left the cult he was in. He lost his friends, family and vocation. The love which had been shown to him was a hypocritical love, a conditional love. It was not genuine.

Christians can also be hypocritical in the expression of love. I once encountered a woman who had been carrying on a long standing feud with another

person. She invited that person over and gave him a gift, expressly stating her love and appreciation for him. After he left, she turned to me and said. "Did you see how he buttered me up when he thought I was going to give him something?" Her love was hypocritical. Her gift meant nothing in the eyes of the Lord. She would have done well to keep her present. Next, we see the sacrificial servant...

- Clings to the good. 12:9

Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

C.I. Scofield was preaching one day on 1 John 2:2 where we learn that Jesus Christ is the complete propitiation for our sins. He so offended an Arminian brother in the crowd that the man rose up in disgust and declared "Mr. Scofield, if I believed what you just said I would go right out from this service and get my fill of sin." Scofield replied "And just how much sin, my friend, would it take to fill you?" The Arminian, you see, had revealed the secrets of his heart. He revealed the fact that he truly loved sin and only shunned it because he feared God and the consequences of sinning. Some folks think that the only reason we do not sin is so that we can please God and go to heaven. The Christian is to abhor that which is pernicious. He is to hate the evil. As long as we feel we are being deprived of something good and that there is something attractive in sin we will be tempted to reward ourselves with sinful indulgences. The Christian who *changes his mind about sin* will find that he has already won most of the battle in overcoming sin in his life.

Like the Old Testament saint who swept her home before Passover and cleansed it from every speck of leaven so we too should seek to root out evil's influence from every area of our lives. But remember, it is not enough, however, just to abhor evil. The Bible says we must cling or cleave to that which is good as though we are stuck to it like glue. Wherever there is virtue, righteousness, purity, and wholesomeness, Christians should be there too! (Philippians 4:8). When we train our children it is just as important to commend good as it is to spurn evil. Next, we see

that the sacrificial servant...

- Cares for the brethren. 12:10

[Be] kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

Once again, we are talking about love, but just what does it mean to be kindly affectioned? The Strong's word (g5387 philostorgos {fil-os'-tor-gos}) has to do with *family* love. It is the mutual love of parents and children and wives and husbands. It has to do with *cherishing* our kin. In effect, Paul is admonishing us to love the brethren as if they were our natural brethren. We are to be kindred spirits!

This teacher had recent occasion to be with all of his family after an interval of several years. As a result of being together we concluded two things. We noticed that all of our respective peculiarities were more evident and pronounced than ever before, and we noticed how we all loved each other more than ever before. That is kindred love. That spirit should dominate every congregation.

How do we nurture this kindred spirit? How can we implement it in our assembly? Part of the answer lies in the words which follow the command: "...in honor preferring one another." That is the key. The secret is in honoring one another. When we honor someone we place a *high value* on them. That, in turn, is what changes our conduct toward them.

At home, I have a box of old papers which are not worth a nickel to anyone else but me. They are priceless to me because they are papers which belonged to my forefathers. I have placed a high value upon them and take good care of them. We do not care for and value things which we do not honor.

Honoring the brethren does not necessarily come naturally. We teach ourselves to honor others by preferring them. This means that we give them the place in line in front of us. We truly want them to be first. A man, for example, does not open the car door for my wife because she is too weak to do it.

He does it because he wants to honor her. When we place others in front of ourselves and honor them we develop kindred spirits.

Honoring someone in this regard, then, is placing them in front of yourself. We should also treat the lost this way as much as is possible. I once stood in line when an obnoxious old couple cut in front of us. My *first* response was to give them what for. My *second* response was, "Oh, if these grouchy, self-centered folks are that small and twisted, let them have it, the poor creatures." My *third* response was just to smile at them and love them. When we prefer others we also open opportunities to build relationships. Really, it's OK when someone cuts in line.

Next, we see that the sacrificial servant...

- Consecrates his spirit. 12:11

Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

There are only two things which make great men great. First, they all have a sense of urgency. Secondly, they all know their place in time. This verse reflects that sort of person. It reflects what greatness of character is about. To be slothful in business is to be slow and hesitant, to be lazy in any matter which requires diligence.

When we take this verse seriously it also means that we will put the Lord's work first! When someone asks us to sing or speak or serve we should jump at the opportunity with enthusiasm, prepare ourselves diligently for the task, and do it to the very best of our abilities – all for the Lord Jesus' sake!

The word *fervent* is similar to our word zeal and its root idea has reference to boiling something with heat. In addition, the Greek language includes this word before the word spirit in this verse. This, along with other evidence in the Greek indicates that Paul probably intended us to be zealous in matters of the Holy Spirit, not just in our spirits. It is easy to neglect the spiritual sides of our lives – to allow the

flame to burn dimly just as the logs in the fireplace die down when they are not stoked. The believer who loves Christ knows and understands that the spiritual zeal can cool down in our lives and we need to “fan the coals” and stir ourselves up for Christ when we sense this coldness coming on. The sacrificing servant also...

- Continues constant in testing. 12:12

**Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;**

The idea of rejoicing in hope probably has its origins in the musings of Messiah Himself who said in Psalm 16:9 and 10:

**Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.**

It was the Lord Jesus Christ's death which opened the way so that our flesh, too, can rest in hope, the confident expectation that all of our struggles will soon be over and we will all be raised incorruptible!

You may remember from other studies that the word patience does not simply refer to enduring our trials, it carries with it the idea of making progress in the storms and adversities of life.

One who continues instant in prayer is one who is constantly devoting attention to it. Prayerfulness among God's people should be free and spontaneous. In the computer world you will often hear someone make reference to a dedicated line. That means that an electrical wire or phone line is always available for one particular use. You and I have dedicated lines to heaven. We will never get a busy signal. The sacrificial saint also...

- Considers saints in need. 12:13

**Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospi-**

**tality.**

God's people have always been obligated to care for each other. It only makes sense when we are part of the same body. We are obligated on the basis of our kinship and our fellowship. In fact, the word *distributing* which we see in our text comes from the very familiar and loved Greek word *koinonia*. It actually means fellowshiping. We are to enter into fellowship or partnership with fellow believers in their need. This does not mean that we are necessarily obligated to pay our brother's phone bill when he gets into a tight spot. But it does mean that our first obligation is to those who are of the household of faith (Galatians 6:10). The sacrificing servant...

- Controls himself in conflict. 12:14

**Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.**

We have all stood with our backs to a mirror and tried to comb our hair while holding another mirror in front of us. We know that we must tell our hands to do the exact opposite of what they want to do. It goes against our instincts to comb our hair backwards through a mirror. It also goes against our instincts to return kind words for evil accusations. We would far rather offer the eye for eye, tooth for tooth remedy, at least verbally, to all of our personal conflicts. When God tells us to bless those who persecute us He intends that we use our *mouths* to do so. When we are told to bless our enemies we are actually commanded to speak well about our enemies at a time when it goes against all of our instincts to do so. While we must do this whether or not it heals our relationship with our enemies you can be sure that there never would have been a Hatfield/McCoy feud if this short, 9 word verse had been obeyed! The sacrificial servant also...

- Commiserates with his companions. 12:15

**Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.**

Every trend in our modern world seems to nudge us

even farther away from each other. We are raising more and more barriers that hinder intimate friendships. Each new barrier limits our opportunity to minister and witness to others. Now, more than ever, we must overcome our tendency to withdraw from folks and focus on identifying with their joys and their sorrows. So doing, we fulfill the law of Christ. The sacrificial servant also...

- Condescends to the commonplace. 12:16

**[Be] of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.**

See Luke 14:10, 11, Philippians 2:2. The most wonderful compliment that can be given you is that you are most at home with ordinary folks and are most content doing the simple tasks God has given you. Condescension and condescending are two different animals.

When we are of the same mind one with another we certainly do not look down with pity on our brother, we see him as the equal he really is. The biblical idea behind condescend carries with it much more of the idea of comfortably walking and associating with the lowly. The sacrificial servant also...

- Constrains his responses. 12:17a

**Recompense to no man evil for evil...**

Notice that there are no exceptions here, believer or unbeliever. We simply do not return evil for evil. We return good for evil. Why? First, because we have already been forgiven far more, secondly because it is God's task to balance the scales, not ours, thirdly, because we truly love our opponents, fourthly, because love covers a multitude of sins and opens the door for reconciliation. Do we need add more?

Years ago I had a friend come to me with an apology for an offense he had committed many years prior. I told him that I had never held that offense against him. His words were, "I know, and that's why

it bothered me so much." I wish I could say I have always acted that way, but his words were a fresh reminder that it is the best way to respond to offenses. The sacrificial servant also...

- Commends his integrity. 12:17b

...Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

We may not absolve ourselves just because we know that our deed is honest. It must also be perceived by others as being honest, lest the name of Christ be unjustly blasphemed among the Gentiles, 2:24. The sacrificing servant...

- Commits to peace. 12:18

**If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.**

Paul is not saying that one should live peaceably with all men as much as he is able to. He is saying that one should live peaceably with all men as much as others allow him to. On the one hand, there is no room for a believer to excuse himself because he simply cannot forgive or get along with an enemy. On the other hand, we are not answerable to God for the disobedience of others who will not be reconciled to us. When it comes to the feud over the neighborhood fence, we would do well to bite the bullet for the sake of peace and our Christian testimony, even when we just know we are right! God does not require the Christian to be a pansy, but He does require him to be a peacemaker. The sacrificial servant...

- Ceases from anger. 12:19

**Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but [rather] give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance [is] mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.**

Most Christians understand the command that we are not to avenge ourselves or give place unto wrath. Furthermore, many of us have lived long enough to see the consequences of wrath and anger nurtured



in our lives. We have seen whole lives change because of isolated incidents and angry responses. We understand that anger and wrath do not serve any purpose other than to destroy us. To avoid giving place to wrath it is important for Christians to first seek reconciliation with their offenders. When reconciliation cannot be effected a godly Christian needs to release the offender from culpability by turning the issue over completely to God. Most Christians understand these things.

What Christians do not understand is that wrath and repayment for evil which has been perpetrated upon us is not wrong for someone who is perfect. God is perfect. He is not biased. He is not self righteous. He never loses His temper or control of His emotions. And God does say "I will repay." When we assign the matter to God we can be sure that the judge of all the earth will do right by all of the parties involved! (Genesis 18:25). The sacrificial servant...

- Conquers evil with good. 12:20-21

**Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.**

There have been two long-standing interpretations of this verse. A large group of Bible teachers believe that our actions in feeding and watering our enemies will ultimately stand as a testimony in their judgment or at the least this represents "the burning shame and remorse which the man feels whose hostility is repaid by love." (Denney, cited by Wuest).

Others, including this teacher, lean more to the common explanation that heaping coals of fire on someone's head was an oriental gesture of graciousness. When a man's fire went out he was dependent upon his neighbor's graciousness. When we return good for evil our act of kindness and graciousness prompts others to lay down their differences - thus, we are overcoming evil with good.

In any case, the command stands, and the godly will make every effort to overcome evil with good.

*It's time to look at Supplement 25 before doing Session 25.*

# THE LOVING SERVANT

## LESSON TEXT:

Romans 13:1-14

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

The last portion of Romans 12 focused entirely on godly principles for living the daily Christian life. Paul was firing off practical commands in short bursts giving us a composite view of how the sacrificial servant reacts to the daily events of life.

## LESSON GOAL:

We will try to understand how the sacrificial servant behaves with respect to submission to authority, the ongoing exercise of love in his life, and how he is to be gripped with a diligence and a sense of urgency.

## LESSON OVERVIEW:

### V. Justification Experienced. 12:1-16:27

#### A. Living Sacrifices. 12:1-21

[See our last outline]

#### B. Loving Servants. 13:1-14

1. Submitting to Authority. 13:1-7
  - a. Authority Delegated. 13:1-2
  - b. Authority Defended. 13:3-4
  - c. Authority Demanded. 13:5-7
2. Settling Our Debt of Love. 13:8-10
  - a. Love Effects the Law
  - b. Love Elevates our Neighbor
3. Sensing the Urgency of the Hour. 13:11-14
  - a. It is High Time. 13:11a
  - b. It is the End Time. 13:11b
  - c. It is Daytime. 13:12-14

## TODAY'S LESSON:

As we approach chapter 13 we see that it is very much like chapter 12, only Paul concentrates on three areas where he wants us to place our focus: 1.) on submission to authority, 2.) on working out the principle of love on a daily basis and, 3.) on helping us see who we are and where we are in the march of time. We are the children of the day, not of the night! These areas will be easily seen as we go through the text together.

### B. Loving Servants. 13:1-14

#### 1. Submitting to Authority. 13:1-7

- a. Authority Delegated. 13:1-2

**Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.**

- **The command is universal**, “let every soul” - None of us are exempt from obeying those who are in authority over us.
- **The command is explicit**, “be subject.” This is the Greek word *hupostasso*. We include the whole definition of the word from Strong's because it is such an important Bible word:

5293 *hupotasso* {hoop-ot-as'-so} from 5259 and 5021; TDNT - 8:39,1156; v

AV - put under 6, be subject unto 6, be subject to 5, submit (one's) self unto 5, submit (one's) self to 3, be in subjection unto 2, put in subjection under 1, misc 12; 40

- 1) to arrange under, to subordinate
- 2) to subject, put in subjection
- 3) to subject one's self, obey
- 4) to submit to one's control
- 5) to yield to one's admonition or advice
- 6) to obey, be subject

++++

A Greek military term meaning "to arrange [troop divisions] in a military fashion under the command of a leader". In nonmilitary use, it was "a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden".

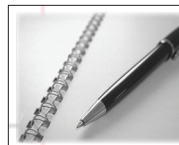
Submission is *obedience with a purpose*. When we submit, we obey because we recognize God's order. Satan is an anarchist; God is a God of order. The lawless one who is yet to be revealed (Antichrist; see 2 Thessalonians 2:8 where "wicked" means "lawless,") will further fan the flame of insolent rebellion and disorder which we already see around us in our day.

All of the institutions of God, on the other hand, are ordained by Him to reflect this order. Marriage, for example, was given to us so that there would be order in our social relationships, in child rearing, and in reproduction. It is no coincidence that when Paul tells the wife to submit to the husband (in Ephesians 5:22 and Colossians 3:18) he uses this very same Greek word, *hupotasso*. The wife arranges (or ranks) herself in order under her husband. Luke 2:51 uses this same Greek word when Luke tells us that the Lord Jesus was *subject* unto His parents. Believing women are commanded to keep silence in the church (1 Corinthians 14:34) for the purpose of reflecting this same order. Christian co-workers are also *subject* themselves one to another in service for Christ, (Ephesians 5:21). Of course, we are all to subject ourselves unto Jesus Christ, our Head, (Ephesians 1:22, 5:24).

We need to understand that ultimately, the Lord Jesus will *subject* (*hupotasso*) all things unto Himself and He, in turn will in turn, subject Himself unto His Father so that God will be all in all. (1 Corinthians 15:27, 28). God's perfect order will be established. In the meantime, the command is explicit. We are to submit ourselves to those in authority

over us and understand that the powers that be are ordained of God. The alternative is anarchy, and our God is a God of order.

• **The command is mandatory.** There is a fearful consequence for sedition and disobedience. Those who resist authority resist God. Those who resist God will receive judgment (Greek: *krima* – not damnation) unto themselves. There is always a *consequence* for disobeying the laws of God. We do not know if Paul is talking about natural consequence as disorder always bears its own fruits (read Proverbs!), about judicial consequence such as that which the rulers themselves exacting their own penalties for our disobedience, or spiritual consequence for God Himself will work His own discipline for believers and His own punishment for unbelievers who disobey man's laws. We do not know what kind of consequence will occur, but God will judge those who defy man's laws.



**Optional technical note concerning the word resist:** You will remember that the word for submit was *hupotasso*. It comes from two

Greek words – meaning to place under, and to order or ordain. The man who submits orders himself under someone else's authority. The word *resist*, on the other hand, is *antitasso*, and essentially speaks of the man who is opposed to ordering himself under another's authority. Both words have the same Greek root, but their prefixes change their meaning.

#### b. Authority Defended. 13:3-4

**For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to [execute] wrath upon him that doeth evil.**

Paul's first argument for obedience to rulers was based upon God's authority. If we resist the rulers which God puts in place we are resisting God. Paul's second argument follows suit – it only makes sense to submit to those who are working for our safety and protection.

- Understanding Rome in New Testament times helps us appreciate why Paul had such a good occasion to speak out on the matter of submitting to authority. The Jewish people despised their rulers. They had a long history of insurrection, rebellion, and guerrilla warfare against Rome. While Rome did rule with an iron hand we must also acknowledge that there were many times when Roman leaders bent over backwards to try to pacify and accommodate the Jews. The Jews, with their glorious history of the Maccabees' revolts had no intention of capitulating. In fact, based upon Deuteronomy 17:15, many rabbis taught that it was their God ordained responsibility to rebel against their pagan conquerors. Christians were also beginning to feel the persecuting hand of Rome. It would be a natural human reaction to speak evil against those in authority over them and to disobey at every opportunity. Against this backdrop, Paul asserts that we are to do exactly the opposite.

- We have not been without our own struggles in modern times. For example, do modern Christians have a right to participate in revolutions - such as our own revolutionary war (precipitated by a tax rebellion.) What about the Civil War? Did godly southern believers have a right to rebel against the law of the land when they participated in the Secession?

We (obviously) cannot devote class time to a study of these questions, (for further study read Calvin's Civil Compact, the Puritans, and others who have struggled with these issues,) but we can point out the general biblical principal which has stood the test of time. In general, God's people have held that they must always obey the authorities which God has placed over us except in areas where those authorities command us to disobey God Himself

(Acts 5:29). And, when you are making your own decisions on these matters, keep in mind the Lord Jesus who submitted Himself to some of the most evil rulers in the history of man. Remember, our citizenship is in heaven. We are only strangers who are passing through a foreign land.

- A capital truth. Please notice 13:4 again.

**For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to [execute] wrath upon him that doeth evil.**

Here we see that terror is ordained by God as a legitimate means for enforcing order. Rulers are not a terror to the obedient, but they should be to the disobedient. Those who argue against capital punishment today argue against the Word of God itself. They often cite statistics which show that capital punishment does not deter murder. This pastor believes that there is much to be desired in the way those statistics are tabulated, and that the long interval between the commitment of a murder and execution for that murder dulls the deterring effect of capital punishment, (Ecclesiastes 8:11). But, regardless of statistics and opinions, God's Word is unequivocal. The basis for capital punishment lies in God's covenant with Noah after the flood in Genesis 9:1-17. In these verses we read that:

1. God expects capital punishment to be carried out: Genesis 9:6 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man. And,

2. This is a permanent command which God intends to be carried out throughout all generations: Genesis 9:12:

**And God said, This [is] the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that [is] with you, for perpetual generations:**

Some folks argue that we are no longer under the

law, but under grace and grace demands forgiveness instead of vengeance. They forget that we are not talking about vengeance, but about maintaining God's order. In this day of grace Christians are not to avenge themselves. They are to remand that to God. (Romans 12:19). We must also remember that Noah was not under the law when God made this universal covenant. This covenant is between Himself and all of Noah's seed (you and me) and all of earth's living creatures - in perpetuity.

Christians should not jump for joy when someone is executed. They should not derive pleasure from it. They should understand that it is a necessary practice, commanded by God, to establish His order and the authority of those who protect us.

### c. Authority Demanded. 13:5-7

Wherefore [ye] must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute [is due]; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

So, we have learned that there are two good reasons to obey those in authority over us. First, we avoid the consequences of disobedience, and, secondly we do it for conscience's sake.

We need to understand that we are just as obligated to obey the laws of the land as the early Christians were. And, notice, by the way, the special emphasis on our obligation to pay taxes and customs. We should not misrepresent the price of cars in order to avoid sales taxes, we should not barter our services in order to avoid income taxes, we should not pay workers "under the counter" in order to avoid employment taxes, and we should not omit untraceable income in order to avoid Social Security and income taxes. We should not bribe officials in order to avoid paying customs at the border. It is unconscionable for Christians to be involved in tax rebellions of any

sort.

But the issue goes far beyond paying taxes and tribute. We have a greater debt to pay than that. We also owe our leaders the respect and honor which they need in order to carry out their work.

## 2. Settling Our Debt of Love. 13:8-10

- a. Love Effects the Law
- b. Love Elevates our Neighbor

13:8-10

Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. 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 [there be] any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love [is] the fulfilling of the law.

Just as we are to pay what we genuinely owe to those who are in authority over us, we are to pay what we owe to all men. We should not try to skirt or absolve ourselves from obligations which we know we hold. There are some who believe this verse teaches that we may not borrow money from anyone. We should respect the consciences of those who hold this position, but they also need to be reminded that the verse is not simply talking about money. Those who hold this position must not borrow any thing. Not even a cup of sugar.

Most of God's people, however, do not believe Paul is telling us not to borrow anything, but rather that he is telling us not to skirt our obligations and duties to others. We must repay what we are obligated for. This is much more in keeping with the context (paying taxes to rulers) and with the grammar which literally says "stop owing to even one person." Wuest makes the following comment:

'Stop owing to anyone even one thing.' That is, do not continue owing a person. Pay your debts. The language of the A.V. prohibits the Christian from contracting legal debts such as mortgages and business loans. But that is not Paul's thought here. The only thing we are allowed to owe is divine love. . . . Alford says: 'Pay all other debts: be indebted in the matter of love alone. This debt increases the more, the more it is paid, because the practice of love makes the principle of love deeper and more active.'

Once again, whether you are with those who say this verse tells us not to incur debt, or whether you are with those who say this verse tells us not to defer debt, you are obligated to treat those who disagree with you with love and respect.

A man cannot love others and not want to give them what is rightfully theirs. We should think of this anytime we pay our bills or decide the value of services we place on the work of others. It should delight us to pay our bills because when we do so, we are caring for and feeding others. We have been able to be a blessing to them.

The debate over whether we should borrow money should not overshadow the beauty of this text. We learn three great facts in these verses: First, we learn that we are hopelessly in debt – to one another – in the matter of love. We can never pay enough of it to each other.

Secondly, we learn that when we love one another we are effectually keeping the law! We do not kill people whom we love. Adultery is a sin against love, it is against our mates and against those the person with whom we sin. Bearing false witness, coveting and all the other sins of men are really – at their roots – sins against love. So, when we love people, we fulfill the intent of the law. We effect the purpose and intent of the law even though we are not under the law.

Finally, we learn that the secret of practicing true love is in valuing others as we value ourselves. We cannot truly love people whom we do not truly value. When we place the same value on others as we place on ourselves we can love them. When we love our neighbors as ourselves we have truly fulfilled the

royal law.

### 3. Sensing the Urgency of the Hour. 13:11-14

**And that, knowing the time, that now [it is] high time to awake out of sleep: for now [is] our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to [fulfil] the lusts [thereof].**

#### a. It is High Time. 13:11a

I have said repeatedly that there are really only two things which make great men great – one is that they know their place in the march of time, the other is that all great men are gripped with a sense of urgency. Both of these ideas are contained in these verses.

The Lord Jesus said to the Jews of His day in Luke 19:42

**Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things [which belong] unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.**

Could it be that one day soon we will be rushed into the presence of the Lord, embarrassed because we were sleeping, putting off our dedicated service for Christ to another day?

#### b. It is the End Time. 13:11b

#### c. It is Daytime. 13:12-14

**The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the**

**Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh,  
to fulfil the lusts thereof.**

Notice that the logical order is reversed. We normally think of working because the night is coming! Jesus said that He must work the works of Him that sent Him because the night was coming when no man could work, (John 9:4) but here, we have the exact opposite. Here we learn that the night is far spent and the day is at hand. The night of disobedience passed away when we were redeemed. The day of opportunity is upon us! Because we are children of the light and children of the day, we must no longer walk like children of the night.

This is not merely about our walk as children of light. It is about our warfare, our armor. Please be sure to read 1 Thessalonians 5:5-9!

There are many of us, however who believe that the prophetic night may well be upon us as well. It is not because we look for signs (phenomena related to the Jewish people and God's plan for them,) but rather, because we see how advanced the mystery of iniquity is on a global scale. Children of the day, this is your hour. Neither Peter nor Paul miss an opportunity to stress the urgency of the hour, and we, more than any generation in history, need to heed their plea!

(Note: Romans 13:14 is covered in the Supplement)

*Thank you for going to Supplement 26 before coming to class for  
Session 26!*

# NURTURING SERVANTS

## LESSON TEXT:

Romans 14:1-15:7

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

In our last session we sought to understand how the sacrificial servant behaves with respect to:

- 1.) submission to civil authority; and
- 2.) the exercise of love in his life; and
- 3.) his need for diligence and a sense of urgency in these last days.

## LESSON GOAL:

To understand who the weaker brother is, to change our attitude toward him, and to learn how to properly respond to his need.

## LESSON OVERVIEW:

### V. Justification Experienced. Romans 12:1-16:26

#### A. Living Sacrifices. 12:1-21

*[See earlier outline for expansion of above points]*

#### B. Loving Servants 13:1-14

*[See our last outline for expansion of above points]*

#### C. Nurturing Servants. 14:1-15:7

1. Accept Weaker Brethren. 14:1-3
  - a. Disregard his arguments. 14:1
  - b. Discern his need. 14:2-3
2. Correct Weaker Brethren. 14:4-12
  - a. Correct Him In Attitude – concerning his humility. 14:4

b. Correct Him In Philosophy – concerning his conscience. 14:5

c. Correct Him In Motive – concerning his purpose. 14:6

d. Correct Him In Accountability – concerning his Christ. 14:7-12

3. Protect Weaker Brethren. 14:13-18

a. A new criterion. 14:13

b. A new standard. 14:14

c. A new goal. 14:15-18

4. Perfect Weaker Brethren. 14:19-23

a. The purpose is peace. 14:19

b. The priority is people. 14:20

c. The privilege is to abstain. 14:21

d. The proof is a clear conscience. 14:22-23

5. Please Weaker Brethren. 15:1-7

a. Elevate the weak

1. Carry his infirmity. 15:1a

2. Cater to his need. 15:1b-2

b. Emulate the Savior. 15:3-7

1. His example was sacrificial. 15:3a

2. His example was scriptural. 15:3b-4

3. His Father will enable. 15:5-7

## TODAY'S LESSON:

In today's study we learn that the sacrificial servant is also a nurturing servant, especially with respect to weaker brethren. Please notice that our lesson actually covers 30 verses including all of chapter fourteen and the first seven verses of chapter fifteen. Most commentaries agree that chapter fourteen should have ended with verse 7 of chapter fifteen because this is where the subject changes from teaching concerning weaker brethren to the broader discussion of God's plan for the Gentiles.



## C. Nurturing Servants. 14:1-15:7

### 1. Accept Weaker Brethren. 14:1-3:

**Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, [but] not to doubtful disputations.**

Every teacher understands that Christianity is a one room schoolhouse. On any given Sunday in any given class or church service we may assemble a range of believers from newborns in Christ to old veterans who have run the race for many years. It is inevitable that all levels of conscience and understanding of the truth will come together, and a great deal of patience will be required on all our parts so that we can both understand and edify each other. If we are to survive without division in the body, we need to understand the wisdom, and follow the instructions of this passage.

- Just exactly who are the weaker brethren? The weaker brother is the man who has not yet come to fully understand all of the implications of his conversion to Christ. He has been saved (he is a brother) but he does not fully understand the implications of his salvation. Like Lazarus who came forth from the grave still needing to be freed from his grave clothes, so the new brother in Christ may be carrying some excess baggage from his old way of thinking. Weaker brethren usually have deficiencies in understanding the true nature of their salvation. This, in turn, leads to problems in their understanding of what it takes to please God. Knowing how to handle and minister to the weaker brother is a survival skill which every Christian needs.

- What should be our fundamental attitude toward the weaker brother? Above all, it must be an attitude of acceptance. We are to receive him – take him unto ourselves. We are to consider him one with us. And then, we are to set upon a course of action:

#### a. Disregard his arguments. 14:1

**[but] not to doubtful disputations.**

There is a temptation, when being confronted with a weaker brother to try to argue him down, to debate him. These debates and arguments usually produce more hurt feelings and misunderstandings than real results. The man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still. If we are not to argue with the weaker brother, how then, can he be helped? The apostle Paul continues with some good advice:

#### b. Discern his need. 14:2-3

**For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.**

- Try to understand the weaker brother's problem. It is usually a problem related to scruples. Scruples are the grave clothes, so to speak which we sometimes carry over into our new life. You will remember that we have said the weaker brother does not yet fully understand the implications and the extent of his salvation. This is because Christianity is different from all the other religions of the world with two respects. The religions of the world are works oriented and they are rule oriented. They all insist that certain things must be done in order to please God. Certain lists of rules must be followed. In effect, they say "Do good, and be blessed." Christianity says the very opposite. It says "Be blessed, and do good" It teaches us that our salvation produces good works. Our good works never produce our salvation. So, it is quite natural for the new believer to want to carry some of his old ideas about pleasing God into his new life.

- In the case before us, the weaker brother has been caught up with dietary restrictions. He believes that vegetarianism is a religious requirement. Paul's illustration serves us well in our day also, for many who come to Christ at this very time are vegetarians. They have been convinced that killing animals is morally wrong and that flesh is harmful. Before we react to their ideas, we must recognize and respond to their needs. 14:3 says:

**Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and**

**let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.**

Please notice what Paul is not saying. Paul is not saying that there is no right position on eating meats. He is not saying that a Christian should not have convictions about the matter. He is not saying that the issue should not be lovingly debated at the right time and under the right conditions. Paul is saying that both parties, the strong and the weak, have a responsibility not to judge the other one.

## 2. Correct Weaker Brethren. 14:4-12

- So, we see that the first duty of the mature brother is to receive or take the weaker brother to himself. He is not to argue with him. He is to seek to understand him. He is not to judge his motives and his character. But this is not our only duty. Some Christians think that we are to leave our weaker brother alone, and in the spirit of love, acceptance, and tolerance, let him hold to his scruples. They think that we rise above our disagreements with the weaker brother by simply ignoring the problem. Nothing could be more removed from the truth. Paul is not addressing the strong brother here, he is correcting the thinking of the weaker brother. New believers often have problems with their consciences. Some are over sensitized and some are desensitized. When we change the way a man thinks he will change his opinions on his own. We do not accomplish anything by disputing with the weaker brother over particular issues, but we can help him to think with God. That is what I believe Paul's intent is in these next verses as he seeks to correct the weaker brother:

a. Correct him in attitude – concerning his humility. 14:4

**Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.**

While it is not as easily noticed in English, the Greek is emphatic that the word *thou* in this verse is referring to the weaker brother in verse 4 who eats not. One of

the problems with having rigid scruples, you see, is that we tend to impose them on others. If I believe that a Christian should do certain things or abstain from certain things I am likely to judge another for not complying with my opinions. So we see that spiritual pride can often be associated with our need to maintain rigid scruples.

When we judge others we are usually assuming that we know their motives for not complying with our standards. We have assumed the role of Jesus Christ. Newell points out that when we are guests at someone else's table we do not correct their waiters or waitresses publicly, we leave that to our host. We each are personally accountable to the Lord regarding our motives.

b. Correct Him In Philosophy – concerning his conscience. 14:5

**One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day [alike]. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.**

- At this point the temptation is to go to the other extreme – not to hold any convictions, not to require any standards among ourselves. That is not what Paul is teaching. The only thing many Christians have convictions about is the fact that they do not believe in having convictions. Paul says we are to be fully persuaded concerning the things we allow and the things we disallow.

Take for example card playing. If we were to have taken a poll in one of my previous congregations we would probably have found that half of our people used playing cards and half did not. Among the half which did not play cards there were probably some who wished the pastor would take a stand on the issue. The pastor did take a stand on the issue. He used Romans 14:5 as his stand, "...let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Think it through. The problem is that many folks are unwilling to judge themselves by biblical criterion. Do what you do on the basis of principle, not scruple.

c. Correct Him In Motive – concerning his purpose. 14:6

He that regardeth the day, regardeth [it] unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard [it]. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

- Here we see that Paul provides more illustrations in order to argue that the real issue is the motive of the heart – not compliance to a list of orders, such as regarding days and eating or abstaining. He is probably not talking about regarding a certain day as the “day of worship” or regarding certain sabbaths. It is more likely that he is talking about the man who habitually sets aside certain days for fasting and prayer. Some in this church fast habitually, some do not. The issue is not if you fast, the issue is why you fast if you do fast. Is your motive correct? Do you do what you do as unto the Lord?

- Many Christians do not know why they do what they do. Some do not dance because their parents taught them not to. Some will not attend the theater. Some will never be seen dropping a quarter in a slot machine or purchase a lottery ticket. Some will not touch alcoholic beverages. If you do not do these things because you have been taught that good Christians don't do these things, you may just be a weaker brother. You are scruple, or rule oriented.

If, on the other hand, you do not do the above things because you are fully persuaded in your own mind and because you do what you do for the glory of the Lord, the chances are that you are a stronger brother who has properly educated his conscience. You have willingly restricted your conduct for the glory of Christ.

d. Correct Him In Accountability – concerning his Christ. 14:7-12

For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and

whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. 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. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

- When Paul says “no man liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself” he is not suggesting that all of our lives are somehow intricately interwoven and that no man is an island. Those things may be true but that is not what Paul is teaching here. Rather, Paul is explaining that our accountability does not end with ourselves, it ends with the Lord. We all live and die unto Christ. We are not our own. We are bought with a price. We do not have control over our lives or over our deaths. We live and die unto the Lord and Christ lived and died in order to assert His Lordship over both the living and the dead.

I continue to be amazed by the flippancy of so many on these issues. We are all accountable before Christ. We want every action to be *pleasing* to Him, not our peers. We want every action to be *protective* of our brethren. We want every action to *posture* us to win the lost. That is what true liberty is. It is the privilege to weigh and judge these things ourselves while under the control of the Spirit, instead of running out to find a rabbi or fearing that we will cross some Maginot line in the pecking order of our unique fellowship.

### 3. Protect Weaker Brethren. 14:13-18

The apostle John wrote in 1 John 2: 7:

Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

It is as though John is contradicting himself. He says that he writes no new commandment, but an old commandment, and yet he writes a new commandment. I believe Paul is doing the same thing in these verses. The old commandment, the law, was really fulfilled in two commands, we are to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, and we are to love our neighbors as ourselves. Yet, try as they would, Jewish believers would focus on the rules and the laws instead of fulfilling the intent of the law. Paul does not want us to fall into this same trap.

a. A new criterion. 14:13

**Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.**

Instead of judging whether we have kept or broken a rule, let us judge our actions on the effect we are having on others. Have we been a stumbling block or a stepping stone? Have we been an impediment to their growth or a complement to their growth? Let this be our new criterion for deciding whether or not we are obedient.

b. A new standard. 14:14

**I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.**

Let us understand that things and objects are not in themselves unclean. They are only clean or unclean depending upon the value we place upon them. Let us be sure we place the proper value upon them so that Christ will be glorified. The marijuana plant in itself is not dirty. What is done with the marijuana plant is what defiles it. We who live in Colorado experience this consequence first hand.

c. A new goal. 14:15-18

**But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest**

**thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. Let not then your good be evil spoken of: For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.**

The issue is not what we eat or drink, the issue is what affect will this have on my brother, especially, my weaker brother?

4. Perfect Weaker Brethren. 14:19-23

Remember, it is not enough to *tolerate* the weaker brother. Our duty is to edify him, to help change the way he thinks on the one hand and to avoid offending him with our liberties on the other hand.

a. The purpose is peace. 14:19

**Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.**

The goal of all our actions and conduct is to produce peace in the body and to edify or mature one another.

b. The priority is people. 14:20

**For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.**

The issue is not what we can and cannot do. The issue is, who will be hurt or injured by my actions? The priority is people, not rules. It should give us pause to know that while some claim to come close, no world religion known to man adopts this high standard!

c. The privilege is to abstain. 14:21

**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.

Mothers give up privileges by the basket full every day. It wouldn't occur to them to do otherwise. It is a small thing to give up a few privileges in order to protect a brother or sister from backsliding. It is a wonderful privilege to give something up for Jesus' sake.

d. The proof is a clear conscience. 14:22-23

**Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.**

How can we know for sure whether we should do something? We know we cannot rely upon our consciences alone. We have learned that something we think is good can be bad and something we think is bad could be good. We do not rely on our instincts or feelings. We do not do something or abstain from something because we 'have peace about it'. How can we know what to do?

1. Determine our position as best as we can, based on our prayerful consideration of the Word of God.

2. Based on the best information we can gather from scriptures, act on faith.

We may even discover later that humanly we have made the wrong decision, but our actions will not be judged if the effort to obey God was made in faith, based upon His Word.

5. Please Weaker Brethren. 14:15:1-7

a. Elevate the weak

1. Carry his infirmity. 15:1a

**We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak...**

Carry him as you would a younger brother who cannot carry his own weight. Devote the extra time and attention he needs. Restrict your privileges until he has matured. At the same time, there is a caveat here for all of us. The reason why we please the weaker brother has to do with his edification. When pleasing becomes pandering we have gone beyond the intent of scripture. Pandering edifies no one. Paul is not arguing for the kind of permissiveness which "spoils" the young believer.

2. Cater to his need. 15:1b-2

**and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please [his] neighbour for [his] good to edification.**

We are not men pleasers who capitulate to whiners. We are Christ pleasers who put the needs of weaker brethren ahead of our own. In so doing, we teach them the principles of real Christian conduct - as we watch the old grave clothes fall away and the new believer step forth! We do not argue the weaker brother to liberty, we lead him there by example.

b. Emulate the Savior. 15:3-7

1. His example was sacrificial. 15:3a

2. His example was scriptural. 15:3b-4

**For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.**

3. His Father will enable. 15:5-7

While our chapter has taught us that we certainly will give account for how we have treated these dear "black sheep" in our flocks, the truth is, the heart which beats with the love of Christ seeks these dear souls out, caring not if he must endure a little misunderstanding along the way.

*There is no Supplement for Session 27.*

# THE EXAMPLE OF A SERVANT

*You will notice that there is no Supplement for this Session. Our desire is that the student will take time before this session to do a personal study of Isaiah 42:1-7 and Isaiah 61:1-4, comparing them with Luke 4:16-21, and identify the traits which make up the True Servant!*

## LESSON TEXT:

Romans 15:8-33

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

Our study began in Romans 14:1 with the words “Him that is weak in the faith receive ye.” and it ended with 15:7 “Wherefore receive ye one another...” The emphasis on the passage was on how we accept one another in Christ, in spite of our difference in spiritual maturity, in spiritual backgrounds and spiritual views. There is a fine line between having honest differences among the brethren and judging one another. Our goal in Christ is to follow after the things which make for peace, and things with which one may edify another, (Vs. 19). We accomplish this goal by accepting, correcting, protecting, perfecting, and pleasing our weaker brethren.

## LESSON GOAL:

To take a firsthand look at the dynamics which made Paul such an effective servant of the Lord Jesus Christ so that we can apply those same practices to our lives and ministries.

## LESSON OVERVIEW:

In chapter fifteen we gain a wonderful insight into the life and ministry of the Apostle Paul. We see him setting the example of a godly servant in his own life and outreach. Concerning his ministry, we see that it was:

- A. A Prophetic Ministry. 15:8-12
- B. A Personal Ministry. 15:13-14
- C. A Priestly Ministry. 15:15-16
- D. A Powerful Ministry. 15:17-19

- E. A Planned Ministry. 15:20-29
  - 1. It was an aggressive plan. 15:20
  - 2. It was a biblical plan. 15:21
  - 3. It was a flexible plan. 15:22-23
  - 4. It was a purposeful plan. 15:24-28
  - 5. It was an affirming plan. 15:29
- F. A Prayerful Ministry. 15:30-33
  - 1. Why we pray. 15:30a
  - 2. How we pray. 15:30b
  - 3. What we pray. 15:31-33

## TODAY'S LESSON:

The beautiful part about the life of Paul is that Paul spent as much time in the laboratory as he did the classroom. Unlike many servants of Christ who choose one room or the other, Paul was a great teacher and a great minister in his own right. We often find Christian leaders excusing themselves from this obligation. If they are great teachers, they are often cool and aloof and weak in interpersonal skills. If they are great “people persons” they are often weak in their teaching skills. One can be a great theologian and a great servant of Christ. Paul is about to show us by example how this can be done.

## Concerning Paul's ministry, we see that it was:

### A. A Prophetic Ministry. 15:8-12

Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises [made] unto the fathers: And that the Gentiles might glorify God for [his] mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people. 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.

When we say that the Apostle Paul had a prophetic ministry we are not suggesting that he was a great teacher in Bible prophecy, though he certainly was. We mean that Paul was rooted in the prophetic Word. Paul understood God's Plan. He understood in great depth and he knew exactly where he was in the march of time, the march of God's program. It was this rooting in the prophetic Word which gave Paul his sense of urgency and his sense of direction. Paul saw the big picture. In contrast to many Christians today who cannot see much beyond the Great Commission, this great servant of God grasped the warp and woof of the entire Word of God.

- But, just exactly what was motivating Paul? What aspect of the Old Testament Word was he emphasizing. Why was he quoting these particular verses? Read verses 8-12 again and follow Paul's line of thought:

**1. Prophecy starts with Jesus Christ.** He wants us to know that this Messiah was a minister of the circumcision (the Jews), for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers. Those promises were very important to the Jews and they are also very important to us. Many Christians, for example, are not aware that our entire system of Bible prophecy and the understanding of future events is based on the promises made to the Jewish fathers.

When we speak of Old Testament promises the covenants come to mind immediately. All of Bible prophecy, you see, is based on God's covenants which He made with Israel. But, we must go further than just the study of the covenants. To properly understand Old Testament promises, we must also understand that many of them belong specifically to one Person! Many promises were made only to the Jewish Messiah Himself! He is the only One who can "cash in" on these wonderful promises.

**2. Prophecy focuses on two recipients.** We may rightfully say that the two major recipients of God's promises were 1.) Abraham and his offspring, Israel, and, 2.) through Abraham's seed, the Messiah. And what do those Old Testament promises reveal? They reveal that Messiah's ministry would not only be to Israel, but also to the nations. The word *nations* and the word *Gentile* are synonymous. You and I are the nations.

**3. Prophecy includes the nations through Messiah.** Again, and again, and again, Paul reminds us in these verses that God has a plan for the nations.

This is the time during which God is calling out for Himself a people from among the nations, the Gentiles. (Acts 15:14, Romans 1:5). The Bible also teaches that part of Messiah's role as a light to the nations is directly linked to His title as the Root of Jesse. For further study on this important fact, read Scofield's note # 2 on Isaiah 42:6 in any Scofield Study Bible.

**4. Messiah's task is now our task.** We have seen that Messiah's task is to reach the nations, the Gentiles. That is the great purpose and character of this age. The other Apostles saw this transition coming, and they understood an important fact. They understood that because you and I are in Messiah, His task now becomes our task. As the Apostles began turning the lions share of their evangelistic emphasis toward the Gentiles Paul said in Acts 13:47:

For so hath the Lord commanded us, [saying], I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

Notice the words "commanded *us*." Now, you and I share the same responsibilities Paul shared. We share the same responsibility Christ shares. Our first and foremost focus must be to reach the ends of the earth; to be a light for salvation among the Gentiles. A Christian who truly understands the prophetic nature of his ministry will be a Christian whose heart is first, and foremost, in worldwide outreach

for Christ!

### **B. A Personal Ministry. 15:13-14:**

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost. And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

It is not enough to teach truth. The purpose of our teaching is to change lives. I believe Paul wanted these believers to share the same grand conviction he had, the same hope, and to have the same power of the Holy Spirit flowing through them. And notice that his approach is affirmative. He says, in effect: "I believe in you! I am persuaded that you are not only capable of growing in this truth, but you are capable of passing it along to others as well." He was holding his sheep accountable. He was expecting the best from them. He did not stop with teaching, he infected them with his doctrine and his vision! It was a personal ministry – not just a professional ministry. He wanted God's best for them.

Pastors, teachers, and all believers need to be constantly aware that folks who listen to their message have an inner sense. People know when we care only for the material we are trying to get across, and we do not care for them. We fail when we do not connect. We must communicate our passion for God's plan and program and try to infect others with it.

### **C. A Priestly Ministry. 15:15-16:**

Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, 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.

• What does Paul mean when he says "I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort"? I believe Paul was saying that he could be more frank and direct with these folks because of the level of their spiritual maturity. These Romans were not the same sort of folks which we find at Corinth. Judging by our study of Romans 16, and the kind of letter which Paul has written to these folks, we know that they were capable of handling good meat. They could listen to straight talk.

Both Paul and the believing Romans benefited from this freedom which they shared. It was a freedom based upon the mutual confidence which they had in each other. Are you the kind of Christian who can accept bold speech, or do you prefer to be treated like a nursing child? If your pastor and teachers seem to be too direct with you at times, be thankful that they view you as a mature Christian who can handle good, straight from the shoulder, teaching!

### **Please consider these three important thoughts:**

**First, Paul wants us to see how God viewed his ministry.** Paul wants us to know that he ministers by grace. (Romans 15:15b). His ministry, his gifts, his calling were all by grace. It is God who graciously enables us to serve Him, and what a delight it is when this privilege is placed in front of us. We must also understand the nature of Paul's ministry and the nature of our ministries as well. We must never despise our calling by forgetting that it is only God's grace which allows us to serve Him. We do Him no favors.

**Secondly, Paul shows us how he wants others to view his ministry.** He is asserting the authenticity of his position as a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. His ministry was to focus on this part of Messiah's plan and program. He was the ground breaker. There was no false humility on Paul's part. He announced the task which God had given him to do and he set about doing it.

**Thirdly, we need to see how Paul viewed his task personally.** Paul wants these Romans to understand



the sacred, priestly nature of this task. When Paul speaks about being a minister of Jesus Christ he is not using the ordinary word for service and ministry, (the word from which we get deacon). Rather, Paul is using the priestly word for service and ministry. He saw himself presenting a great priestly offering before God.

Paul wants us to know that our service for Christ is of a very high order in God's eyes; it is a priestly service. And please notice his personal concern about the quality of his service. His prayer is that "the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit." Much of the service we perform before Christ we perform with unclean hands, hearts and motives. Our service is not sanctified by the Spirit. Yes, God may accomplish His own purpose in it, but it does not qualify as an acceptable offering in God's eyes. Our effort has been fleshly and in vain.

What about your service for Christ, friend? Do you see it from God's point of view, a privilege He graciously gives you, though you do not deserve it? Do you take it seriously and want your fellow Christians to know that you take your task for Christ seriously? And does your service for Him represent a sacred, priestly offering on your part, an offering which represents the best you can give him, always offered up with a prayer that God will accept? These are the attitudes which true servants of Christ nurture.

#### **D. A Powerful Ministry.** 15:17-19:

*I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God. For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, 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.*

While there is much which we must leave unsaid about these verses there is an emphasis which we

dare not miss. Paul knew he had spiritual power or authority, and he knew where that power came from. In fact, the very secret of Paul's power was in the quick acknowledgment that it came from God. In times past we have made reference to Corrie Ten Boom's reference to the woodpecker which was pecking on a tree when lightning struck. The woodpecker exclaimed "My, what power I have in my beak!" A lot of Christ's servants get confused about the power source. When we do, God may just stop using us.

#### **E. A Planned Ministry.** 15:20-29

The world relies on organization, plans, and objectives. Sometimes their planning is unbiblical because it relies on human strength and does not give the glory to God. Sometimes Christians too, can be world-like in their planning. It seems as though we are going through a wave of the "growth through planning" mentality in our present, CEO type ministry structures. This is shameful.

Even so, this does not mean that Christians and churches should not be planners, as some teach. There are many who teach us that planning is worldly and fleshly while depending on the Lord is the only spiritual way. Yet, when we look at the character of God we see that He is a planner. We see that His entire plan for mankind was written in what we call eternity past. Furthermore, we see that the Apostle Paul, this great Spirit led servant of Christ, was one of the greatest examples of a detailed planner that we can find. Paul not only had a calling, he was always working out a plan to fulfill his calling. Do you have a plan for serving Christ?

##### **1. It was an aggressive plan.** 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:

All plans should begin with a broad purpose and then narrow themselves down to specific steps. This is not a worldly device, this is how God works. This

is how God's servants work. Paul had the big picture, the larger goal. His goal was to preach the gospel not where Christ was named, lest he should build upon another man's foundation. God has called all believers to preach the gospel though He has not called all of us to do what He called Paul to do. He has a plan, He has a niche just for you. It may be a cliché, but it is a reality, the person who aims at nothing usually hits his target. Are you aggressively seeking to fulfill God's plan for your life or are you sitting on a park bench?

## 2. It was a biblical plan. 15:21

**But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.**

Paul begins with the words "But as it is written..." Paul wanted his service for Christ to be in perfect keeping with God's prophetic plan and program. He knew and understood what that meant. He understood that this required him to focus on those who have never heard the gospel. In the vocabulary of our day this means worldwide outreach for Christ. It means missions. It means that our top biblical priority, our first priority, is to reach the unreached with the gospel of Christ. It means that, whatever needs to be laid aside must be laid aside in order to get this gospel out. Paul was experiencing the beginning of the church's window of opportunity - we are at the very end. The prophetic winds are blowing, change is coming upon us. Biblical servants of Christ will be focused on this biblical task of reaching the nations.

## 3. It was a flexible plan. 15:22-23

**For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you. But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you;**

Because we have a plan for serving Christ does not mean that our plan will work out. We are not responsible for that. We are responsible for being obe-

dient to the moment. Some of the things which we envision for Christ never materialize. We are hindered. Other times, God takes away our fruitfulness in a given area, our task is accomplished. We have "no more place in these parts". We cannot control God's variables.

Many servants of Christ have strayed from the perfect will of God because they thought their plans were somehow inspired. They committed to what they perceived was the will of God and God changed their plans. Instead of humbly accepting God's change, they turned away in anger, doubting their ability to determine God's will anymore. They did not understand that our plans must be flexible.

There is a hint of sadness in this verse, and an unanswered question which we must all face. Paul said that he was much hindered from filling out his plans. Was he hindered by the Holy Spirit, or was he hindered by Satan? And if he was hindered by Satan was it because Satan had more power than God? Not likely. It is more likely to suspect that even the Apostle Paul's great spiritual power was hindered by the prayerlessness of God's people. Do you pray for your pastor? for your missionaries? Prayerless pews mean powerless pulpits and empty harvests in the fields of the world.

## 4. It was a purposeful plan. 15:24-28

**Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company. But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things. When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain.**

Paul's plans were full of specifics, and full of rational, logical thinking. He had objectives and goals which came from them. He lead and taught by example. Notice also that he made others accountable to him as he filled out his plans. He expected the material gifts of the Gentiles to be a blessing to the believing Jews who had provided their spiritual blessing through Christ. And he spoke of sealing this fruit, making this spiritual goal flesh out in reality. He planned to finish what he had started – by God's grace.

#### 5. It was an affirming plan. 15:29

**And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.**

Please notice that Paul *assumed* that these Romans would cooperate with his leadership! When we expect the best from God's people we often get the best from them. When we say "the folks in my church are a bunch of slackers!" we usually get a bunch of slackers. This is not the supposed *law of affirmation*. This is the proven *principle of expectation*. When we believe and expect the best out of the Lord's servants we will find that many will come alongside us in service for Christ. We are not manipulating folks when we do this, we are honoring and respecting them. (Read Philemon, especially, verse 21)

#### F. A Prayerful Ministry. 15:30-33

**Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in [your] prayers to God for me; That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which [I have] for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed. Now the God of peace [be] with you all. Amen.**

#### 1. Why we pray. 15:30a:

**Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's**

**sake, and for the love of the Spirit,...**

We pray for Jesus' sake and for the love of the Spirit. Believers who are not caught up in God's plan have a difficult time praying. Believers who have attached their hearts and hopes to God's purpose and plans are quick to be prayerful.

#### 2. How we pray. 15:30b

**...that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;**

We strive – the word from which we get agonize – in prayer. Our hearts are truly in it. We strive together in prayer. It is a good thing to tell someone you will pray for them. It is a better thing to tell someone you will pray with them. You will agonize with them in their spiritual warfare and service for Christ. Our spiritual leaders and missionaries desire this from us more than anything else. Is your heart in it?

#### 3. What we pray. 15:31-33

**That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed. Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.**

Note the specifics - for deliverance from the opposition on the outside, for acceptance of his service from the Jewish saints on the inside, for a joyous reunion, for the will of God, for mutual refreshing... It's not enough to say "God bless the pastor and the missionaries." Let your prayers be specific, relevant to their needs and ministries, and really from your heart!

*There is no Supplement for Session 28*

# CONTAGIOUS SERVANTHOOD

*You will notice that there is no Supplement for this final Session. Our desire is that the student will take time before the final session, to look over all the notes, and jot down any loose ends or questions that could be covered in a group.*

## LESSON TEXT:

Romans 16:1-27

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR LAST STUDY:

In many ways, Romans reminds us of Hebrews. It begins as a treatise and ends as an epistle (letter.) We saw the shift begin in Romans 12 and build to where we are. Romans 15 provided us with much sound teaching, with the focus on ministry – ministry to the weaker brother in particular.

## LESSON OVERVIEW:

### Servanthood in Shoe Leather

A servant is one who makes his Master's will his own will. A *biblical servant* is one who understands his in-Christ position, adopting both the posture and the mission of The Servant, our Lord Jesus Christ. That's the *theology* of servanthood. Romans 16 will give us a glimpse into the day to day *practice* of servanthood in the church at Rome.

We'll keep our outline as simple as possible so that we can focus on the tone, and leave a more thorough exposition for another time.

#### I. Cooperation. 16:1-16, 21-23

#### II. Separation. 16:17-20

#### III. Confirmation. 16:24-27

## TODAY'S LESSON:

Romans 16 provides a full blown immersion into

the day to day experience of what it means to be a true servant of Christ. Paul, the cherished servant of Christ, (along with whomever ministered to these saints) has managed to imprint this same mindset on his Roman counterparts, and the evidence is everywhere. Wherever we find Paul, we find *contagious servanthood* being modeled at very high levels.

Paul has finished writing Romans and is putting his shoes on (alright, sandals) and will soon be walking out the door. His parting words are filled with warmth, appreciation for God's people, and wise instructions. From our perspective they provide a vivid glimpse into Paul, the pastor. We almost do a disservice by analyzing this passage theologically and grammatically (as important as those practices are).

So, instead of analyzing the chapter, we'll simply soak it up a bit.

We want to soak this entire chapter in at one time in order to gain the desired effect of seeing how a New Testament church really functioned on a day to day basis. Therefore, we ask that you set the notes down at this time and read all 27 verses.

*Please read Romans 16:1-27*

### I. Cooperation. 16:1-16, 21-23

#### Paul valued his co-workers.

The list of those whom Paul knew and considered his fellow workers in this church alone is amazing. With Paul, it was always about people. It was never about "the organization," committee, team, and board meetings, growth by objective, treasurers' reports and spreadsheets, constitutions and bylaws, or five year plans. We see none of that sort of thing in the Bible. This is not to

suggest that such things are not biblical. It is to suggest that the pastor who can hardly name his people, much less know and appreciate them for the ministries in which they engage needs to do some soul searching.

The power of a church is not in its organization or its goal setting, (as valued as those things are) it is in its people. Churches are people driven. Structure should arise out of the ministry and gifts of the body, never vice versa.

When we say that Paul valued his co-workers we mean that he truly understood their importance and their roles. He knew them and loved them as much as he could from a distance. He was so in touch one would almost think he was the local pastor at Rome.

#### **Paul valued his co-workers individually.**

He seemed to know exactly what each one was doing and what they needed in order to exercise their gifts.

Phoebe needed to be received (Romans 16:2). She needed full acceptance. We like to refer to Phoebe as our first recognized church deaconess. She was a true servant. In this pastor's opinion she did not even have an office, just a burden to serve. She needed others to make room in order to do just that. She needed the recognition required to get the job done. She also needed assistance. Her previous track record in ministry evidenced her worthiness.

Priscilla and Aquila were a great blessing to Paul and they seem to be gifted in the Word.

The list goes on, and on, as Paul recognizes those faithful servants in tasks great and small. Each was motivated to serve Christ in one of the local house churches of Rome.

#### **Paul empowered his co-workers.**

Though it is a bit redundant, we need to see

that this list was for a far greater purpose than "howdying." Paul wanted these names known, he wanted these servants properly greeted and respected in their various tasks, and he wanted them enabled.

Empowerment, is a secular term so we want to be careful when using it. Biblical empowerment or authority is derived from faithfulness in the Word and in service for Christ. It is not title driven, it is ministry driven. We are not talking titles here. No one was called, reverend or doctor. Those who labored in the Word and those who labored in the body were those who earned the respect they needed to get their tasks done for Christ.

#### **Paul saw his co-workers as equals.**

Notice that no pecking order can be found in this list. They are not grouped according to task as though some tasks were more important than others or some persons were ranked in some way.

Paul saw his co-workers as full partners. 16:7

**Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.**

Focus on the word fellow prisoners. While these prisoners may have been imprisoned with Paul or they may simply have been prisoners of Christ with Paul (I prefer the former) this one thing we know, there is a bond formed among partners in service, partners in warfare, and partners in suffering which others cannot understand.

This, of course, is only one of many words Paul uses to underscore this deep ministry bond servants of Christ share. The most commonly used word, in one form or another, is the word *koinonea*, meaning "fellowship." One who fellowships is a full partner in every way. The secular world uses terms like "buying in" or "giving ownership," to a project or task. The biblical concept

is far superior. We are bonded partners, joined at the heart!

## II. Separation. 16:17-20

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil. And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

We have just marked a long list of faithful servants of Christ. We have pointed them out in the crowd and offered them our due respect and cooperation. We have valued them on the basis of their work, not on their prestige or authority. We may rightfully put these folks on the “A” list.

But, don’t forget to maintain your “Z” list as well. It may not have occurred to some that each church needs two such columns. Just as we respect faithful servants, we are to mark and note those who, in Paul’s words “serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies (or appetites). We are not ignorant of Satan and his devices. There must be, among every believer and not just pastors, a willingness to stand against disobedience which is just as fervent as our willingness to commend obedience. When your church leaders mark and expose such folks, you would do well not to pull out the old “Let he who is without sin cast the first stone,” defense!

There was nothing sappy about Paul. Now, there will always be personalities, problems, and issues among God’s people, and God has provided a multitude of approaches to these issues right here in Romans. However, the passage in front of us focuses on one area of disobedience which may never,

ever be overlooked, it is the area of sound doctrine. These interlopers have caused offenses contrary to sound doctrine. In these cases, there is no room for patience and biding our time. The cancer of false doctrine must be excised decisively.

### 2 Thessalonians 3:6

Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

This particular admonition expands our need to deal with disobedience that concerns busybodies and other types of behavior which disrupts the fellowship and service of Christ’s body.

### Titus 3:10

A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject;

### 2 John 10

If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

All of these verses need clarification, but more importantly, they need to be obeyed! Mark these men, expose them, confront them, reject them, and refuse them. To do anything less is to be a partaker of their evil deeds.

When we join hand in hand with hard working servants of Christ we partake (we are partners) in their ministries. When we join hand in hand with the disobedient, we partake (we are partners) in their disobedience. This applies to the ministries and books we recommend as well.

Finally, we see:

### III. Confirmation. 16:24-27

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Amen. Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, 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: To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

In this beautiful benediction we are reminded of the One who has the power to establish us according to the true gospel which has been fully authenticated and absolutely true. It is gospel foretold and a gospel which has now been made fully manifest. It is in alignment with the scriptures and the prophets (unlike all other revelations of men), and it is our duty to make it manifest to all nations!

Now, that is a mouthful. We have just read a full and complete summary of the entire book of Romans in just a few verses. We have just seen the whole broad purpose for teaching and studying this book restated.

Our goal: To be established firmly and squarely in a fully authenticated gospel and to join hands in partnership with those who are reaching the nations for Christ.

I once read a book on philosophy by a highly recognized American philosopher. After rehearsing the failed pursuits and cycles of philosophy, his conclusion went much like this: *We see that philosophy has contributed little more than despair, and what shall we do in order to stave off suicide? Perhaps the only answer is to begin the whole pursuit one more time.* How sad!

Hopefully, our study of Romans has produced another response. This book is so rich, so edifying, and so engaging, that the believer whose heart beats

for the Lord Jesus Christ, will more likely exclaim, We have left so much untouched, we really need to start over on Romans again!

This material was intended for no higher purpose than to be a primer, a first step into the world of sound Bible teaching. We hope and pray that the emotions stirred up in you will move you toward deeper and longer excursions into the wonderful truths of God's Word.

**THIS CONCLUDES SESSIONS 1-28**  
**THE REMAINDER OF THIS BOOK**  
**CONTAINS SUPPLEMENTS 1-26**



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

(S1) ROMANS BACKGROUND

## INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

(For distribution before the first session, if possible.)

**1.1** (2 Tim 2:15, 2 Tim 3:16 ) Why should you study the book of Romans?

**1.2** (1 John 2:27, John 16:13) According to some church traditions, lay persons should not study the Word of God because the Bible can be easily misunderstood. What does the Bible teach concerning this?

**1.3** (Rom 1:1) According to the first word of Romans, who was the human author who wrote the book? Why do we say he was the human author?

Paul's given name was Saul. His Christian name was Paul.

**1.4** (Acts 8:1 cxt.) Under what circumstances do we first encounter Saul ?

**1.5** Before Saul's conversion, the Bible says, he was intensely religious. He was zealous for God and a

great defender of the faith of his fathers - but he was wrong. If a man like Saul could be wrong, how can you be sure that you are right in what you believe?

**1.6** (Acts 9:1 ff) What were the circumstances surrounding Saul's conversion? What evidences can you find in this passage that his conversion was genuine? What evidence of conversion should we expect to find in the lives of folks who claim they have been converted in our day?

**1.7** (1 John 5:13) Are you absolutely certain that you have eternal life? On what are you basing your hope of salvation?

The Apostle Paul had been a missionary and church planter for about 25 years by the time that he wrote this letter to the Romans. Paul was probably saved around the year 33 and wrote his letter to the Christians at Rome around 57.

The apostle Paul eventually went as a Roman prisoner to Rome to meet the very persons to whom he wrote this letter. Please locate a map in the back of your study Bible and try to locate (and memorize) the following places: Jerusalem, Antioch, Tarsus, and Rome. Be sure to note their locations carefully, because you will need to use this information.





# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

## ACCOUNTABILITY SUGGESTION!

Please make an effort to read the entire book of Romans - or listen to it on tape - as soon as possible. Try to avoid stopping for detail. Instead, try to get a broad overview of the whole book.

If you do not have time to read the whole book this week, consider reading the following passages:

**MONDAY:** Begin with 1:1 and get as close as you can to chapter 3:20 before stopping. In a few words, try to summarize what Paul is saying.

**TUESDAY:** Begin with 3:21 and get as close to 5:21 as you can before stopping. In a few words, try to summarize what Paul is saying.

**WEDNESDAY:** Begin with 6:1 and get as close to 8:39 as you can before stopping. In a few words, try to summarize what Paul is saying.

**THURSDAY:** Begin with 9:1 and get as close to 11:36 as you can before stopping. In a few words, try to summarize what Paul is saying.

**FRIDAY:** Begin with 12:1 and get as close to 16:27 as you can before stopping. In a few words, try to summarize what Paul is saying.

## FOR USE IN CLASS DURING SESSION 1

**2.a.** What are the two major divisions of the Bible?

**2.b.** What are the five major divisions of the New Testament?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

**2.c** When it comes to the doctrine of salvation, the three richest books in the New Testament are Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews. Each of these books are related to the words "The just shall live by faith." Try to fill in the remaining *two words* which belong below to these book titles:

Romans: The \_\_\_\_\_

Galatians: Shall \_\_\_\_\_

Hebrews: By \_\_\_\_\_

Answers: 2.a. Old and New Testaments; 2.b. The Gospels, History, Paul's Epistles, General Epistles, Prophecy; 2.c. The *just*, Shall *live*, By *faith*.



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

(S2) ROMANS ONE PREVIEW

THIS LESSON FOCUSES ON ROMANS 1:1-7

**2.1** Please read 1:1-7 and suggest what Paul's overall purpose was in writing this book:

**2.2** Using verses 1-7 only please list at least three things you know about the human author.

a.

b.

c.

Paul was named Saul by his parents. It could be that his parents chose this name because Saul was of the tribe of Benjamin, just as Paul was. Saul was the son of Kish, the first king of Israel. The Hebrew word for Saul means "desired." He was placed in office because the Israelites desired to have a king rule over them just as the nations around them had. The word for Paul, on the other hand, means "little, or small." Where Saul was a man of great stature (1 Sam 9:2) outwardly - he was a "small" man inwardly. Paul, on the other hand, was not much to look at outwardly, but God humbled him, and made him a great man inwardly. God cannot use any of us until we become small enough for Him to use us.

=> AND THEY WERE ALL WITH ONE...CONCORDANCE! <=

Have you ever used a good concordance? Every home needs a good Strongs or Youngs concordance.

1. Look up the word servant and find out how many times it appears in the Bible:

2. Try to find its meaning:

*If you do not have a concordance your leader will be able to show you how to use one in class.*

**2.3** Using verses 1-7 only please list at least three things you know about Jesus Christ.

a.

b.

c.

**2.4** The apostle Paul took great pride in calling himself the servant of Jesus Christ. Did any other apostles take on this title? Do you think Christians today should take on this title and sign their letters this way?

=> AN ADVANCED CHALLENGE FOR STUDENTS WHO DESIRE TO DIG A LITTLE DEEPER. <=

The Bible prophesied that we would be able to recognize the Messiah because He would come as a servant. Where, in the scriptures is this prophesied, and how does the Bible say we will be able to recognize this Servant?

**2.5** In verse 1 Paul explains that God called him, and separated him unto the gospel of God. What do you think Paul meant by that comment?



## STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

**2.6** The word gospel is from the Greek word euangelion {yoo-ang-ghel'-ee-on}. Essentially, the word means glad tidings or good news. The word gospel can have several meanings in our Bible and it is actually expressed in four different ways.

a. Matthew 4:23 speaks of the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_. This gospel is the good news that Messiah will fulfill the Old Testament promises to Israel. Israel will yet have a Throne, a King, and all of her land. This gospel was proclaimed by Christ before He was rejected and will be proclaimed again in the Tribulation period (a time of great wrath yet to come). See Matthew 24:14.

b. The gospel which Paul speaks of here in Romans is not the gospel of the kingdom. According to Acts 20:24, Paul preached the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.

c. In Galatians 1:6, Paul warns us that some will bring \_\_\_\_\_ gospel which is not really a gospel. Any time men add or take away from the simple gospel of God's grace they are preaching another gospel. There are many today who are teaching false gospels - gospels which require certain terms or conditions - such as requiring the Lord's table, or baptism, or speaking in tongues as steps to salvation.

d. Finally, Revelation 14:6 speaks of \_\_\_\_\_ gospel which will be preached to earth dwellers at the very end of the Tribulation period, just before God judges men. This is neither the gospel of the kingdom nor the gospel of grace. Rather, it is a proclamation of the coming judgment. Even though it may sound strange when we first think about it - even this proclamation of God's coming judgment will be glad tidings. It will be good news to the Jews, because it will signal the end of their terrible troubles, and it is good news to all of God's people because God's justice will finally be restored in the earth.

**2.7** Paul uses other synonyms to describe this wonderful gospel of grace. Sometimes, he just calls it the gospel. Sometimes he calls it the gospel of Christ. In Romans 2:16 and in 16:25 Paul uses an especially precious term. He calls the gospel \_\_\_\_\_.

This gospel is of no value to us unless we make it our gospel. Have you received Christ?

=> FOR MY HEART.... ARE YOU PLANNING THE TRIP OR JUST COMING ALONG FOR THE RIDE? <=

Consider these suggestions as we begin our journey into Romans...

- Seek to get to know God in a more intimate way.
- Try to take a positive mindset toward Bible doctrine. Determine that you are going to be able to explain and defend the truths which you hold dear - as a result of studying Romans.
- Expand your horizons. Start using your concordance or find an additional commentary you can read along with your study of Romans. Harry Ironside and J. Vernon McGee are good starters
- Ask the leader for ideas about more advanced materials.
- Keep a journal of your study - taking special care to list questions which need to be answered. Ask these questions in class or call your leader or the pastor on the phone.
- Determine that, by God's grace, you are going to get a good grip on Romans!



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

## (S3) A CLOSER LOOK AT KEY WORDS IN ROMANS 1

We are considering two key questions: Who is this Paul? and Who is this Jesus? We saw Paul, the servant, the separated, and Paul the apostle. Concerning Jesus we said, He is the Son of God, His given name is Jesus, His title is Christ, and He is Lord.

**3.1** Looking at Romans 1:5 only please answer the following questions - based upon this verse.

- a. What did Paul perceive his task to be?
  
- b. How far did his responsibilities extend?
  
- c. What tools were given to him to complete his task?

**3.2** The term “obedience to the faith.” literally means “the obedience of faith.” In your opinion, which of these statements best conveys the meaning of the phrase “the obedience of faith.” a, b, or c?

- a. Paul was telling us we must obey God before He gives us the power to exercise true saving faith
  
- b. Paul was telling us that true saving faith always produces obedience in the life.
  
- c. Paul was saying that faith in the gospel (rather trying to please God with our works) is the true obedience which God desires.

Can you support your answer with scripture?

?? Have you obeyed the gospel??

Now, let’s look a little closer at these Romans. You can find the historical background of Rome in any Bible with study notes. *Please take a few minutes to do so.*

We wanted you to interact just a bit with our third point in Lesson 2, so we continued it here instead of in the actual lesson:

### 3. The Recipients Identified 1:6-7

In 1: 6 Paul reminds these Roman believers about a very precious truth - “Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:”

Paul says they were also called, just as he had already explained that he was called in verse 1. The Greek word for called is *kletos* (pronounced *klay-tos*). It has close associations with other New Testament words commonly used by Paul. Just for drills, circle the English words listed below which you think might be related to the word called:

*call, calling, elect, election, church, chosen, vocation*

If you circled all of these words you are correct! The church of Jesus Christ (called out ones) is made up of God’s elect (His called ones) through God’s determinative act of election. The Bible says that we have been chosen in Him before the foundation of the world.

Later, in Romans, we will grapple with some of the issues surrounding this idea of being called, or elected by God. But, before we grapple with those issues, we need to just sit back and enjoy this wonderful truth - we did not choose God - He chose us! He looked beyond our sin - and drew us to Himself!

**3.3** Skip ahead to Romans 11:29 and explain in your own words what you think Paul was teaching about our call:



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

**On the matter of our position and our practice...**

So, the first thing we learn about these Romans is that they were called of God - called to salvation and called to service!

**3.4** In 1:7 Paul uses two more words to describe these believers. What are they?

If you are “in love” with someone or you have been married, the chances are very good that you and your loved one have picked up a special name or two which you use only for each other. In our home, for example, you will hear the words honey and sweetheart thrown around quite a bit. I would never call my neighbor sweetheart, because that is a term I have reserved for my wife. (Of course, we all know that cafe waitresses are totally excepted from keeping these rules!)

God has reserved some special words for the ones whom He has called. One of the most precious is found right here in verse 7 - “beloved.” It comes from the Greek word *agape* and it means “loved of God.” You’ve probably seen a T shirt which says “Somebody loves me in Seattle” - We have a special friend - in heaven - who loves us dearly. It may have been a while since an earthly friend said he loved you - but, be assured, God does!

**3.5** Do you think we emphasize the love of God enough in our church services in our fellowship?

**3.6** Can you think of any positive (not general) steps we could take in order to better express our love to each other?

**3.7** Paul told these believers they were saints. Using your concordance, look up the word saint and try to find its meaning. If you can, locate some words which are similar to saint.

## **Where Do You Stand?**

Look again at 1:7, concentrating on the phrase “called to be saints.” If you are looking in the KJV you should notice that the words “to be” are in italics. This means that they do not occur in the original language. They were added by the translators. In this case, the words to be should not be there! You see, when one received Christ as Saviour, it is because he has been called by God to salvation, and the Bible teaches us that every Christian is already a saint - right here and now! If you know Christ, you are a saint. That is your *standing* in Christ.

## **Why is This So Important?**

Salvation is God reaching down to man, not man reaching up to God. The world’s religions all say “Do good, and be blessed.” God says, “Be blessed, and do good!” God says that when we are saved we are placed into Jesus Christ. God sees us in Christ - with His righteousness, not our own! In fact, God sees us as being seated with Christ at this very moment - in heaven! (Ephesians 2:6). Everything which has to do with our Christian walk starts in heaven. As you read Paul’s epistles you will discover that Paul always presents the scriptures in this order - first, he tells us who we are in Christ, and then he applies that truth to our lives. If we are saints who are in Christ, we should set our affections on things above, not on the earth! (Colossians 3:1)

## **Are You Walking With Your Clothes on Backwards?**

If you are always trying to be a better Christian - you may be reversing the order! You may be thinking that your practice down here can affect your position up there! That kind of thinking always leads to failure! Instead, remember your position! You are a saint - already! And then, try to make your practice match your position. It really works! Christians are never called to be saints...Christians are called saints!

***Our position can affect our practice, but our practice can never affect our position!***



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

(S4) THE SEA OF SALVATION

(The material in this Supplement is devoted entirely to the doctrine of salvation. It actually focuses on Romans 1:16, 17 - even though these verses have already been covered in a general way in class.)

## “THE SEA OF SALVATION”

When I was a young person we literally wore out some very good choruses. One of those choruses was titled “Gone, Gone, Gone!”

“Gone, gone, gone, gone, yes, my sins are gone!” the chorus continued, “buried in the deepest sea, yes, that’s good enough for me!”

But, the words in the chorus which still hold special meaning for me are “.in the sea of God’s forgetfulness, that’s good enough for me!” What a sea that must be. The sea of God’s forgetfulness. In truth, when we approach any aspect of our salvation, we soon find ourselves at the shore of a great sea. No one has every yet sounded its depth. “Oh the love that drew salvation’s plan,” we sing, and “Oh the grace that brought it down to man. Oh the mighty gulf that God did span - at Calvary!”

Let’s refresh ourselves with Romans 1:16-17:

**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. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.**

Every thesis, every sermon, every speech needs a proposition. A proposition is usually a short statement which offers a subject for discussion. It is usually offered for the purpose of changing someone’s mind.

Romans 1:16 and 17 is Paul’s proposition for the entire book of Romans. It is his “big statement.” In a word, the subject is the gospel or salvation. When Paul says that he is not ashamed he is probably using a figure of speech, an understatement. Both Luke and Paul made special use of understatement.

**4.1** Read the following references and locate the understatement:

Acts 12:18

Acts 20:12

Acts 26:19

**4.2** When Paul said that he was not ashamed he was really saying that he could not be more proud of the gospel. Look at 1:9-20 again and list some of the reasons why Paul took great pride in the gospel:

It is not unusual for Christians, especially new Christians, to feel shy and awkward when presenting the gospel to others. One way to overcome this shyness is to be fully caught up in what the gospel is. The more we appreciate its wonder and beauty the more difficult it is for Satan to intimidate us. You will notice your pride in the gospel grow as we study Romans together.

**4.3** There are many things which we can learn about God from nature. We can learn of His majesty, His power, His Wisdom, and His might - just to name a few. But, it took the gospel to reveal something about God which nature does not reveal. According to verse 17 what is it?



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**4.4** Using your concordance, please look up the word revealed as it is found in Romans 1:17 and explain its meaning here:

Why is the gospel so wonderful? Why is it so necessary? What is the real essence of the gospel? With what does it have to do? It has to do with the righteousness of God. That is the bottom line.

Why is this a critical issue? In our terms, our God is inconceivably holy and sinless. He cannot abide the presence, much less the whisper of sin. Conversely, mankind is inconceivably and unthinkably wicked. We do not usually see ourselves in this light because we do not understand how God has graciously kept us from playing out our capacity to sin. He has built natural restraints into us (our consciences, for example) to protect us - not just from others - but from ourselves. As a result, we are capable of nursing an illusion - the illusion that the gap between us and God is not all that great.

Some of the most miss-spoken words of all time are: "What you don't know won't hurt you." Our ignorance of the **RIGHTEOUSNESS** of God has kept us from dealing with our sinfulness. It blinds us to our need of a Saviour. We assume that as long as our performance is as reasonable as the performance of the next person, God will accept us as we are. Jeremiah said:

**"The heart [is] deceitful above all [things], and desperately wicked: who can know it?" 17:9**

We are not sinful because we happen to get near the stuff and it rubs off on us. We are sinful because the black stuff exudes from our very pores. Jesus said in Mark 7:18-23:

**18 And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, [it] cannot defile him;**

**19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?**

**20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.**

**21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,**

**22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:**

**23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.**

Herein lays the irony. Some men, as they begin to sense the need for "something more," as they begin to try to fill the void in their lives, it is almost as though God seems to withdraw Himself even farther from them! In other words, the more a man tries to please God, the more the hope of ever pleasing God seems to remove itself from him.

Note: For a delightful reading experience, you need to get your hands on John Bunyan's classic work, *Pilgrim's Progress*. While you may not want to form all of your theology from the book, you will find great insight into the spiritual warfare associated with our salvation. Bunyan's pilgrim goes through the Slough of Despondency before he gets to the Gate of Salvation.

Martin Luther had quite a despondent experience when he began to truly seek God. In fact the very verse we are considering placed him in great despair. For, as Paul began talking about the righteousness of God, Luther knew he could never attain it. He said:

"I labored diligently and anxiously as to how to understand Paul's word in Romans 1:17, where he says that 'the righteousness of God is revealed' in the gospel. I sought long and knocked anxiously, for the expression 'the righteousness of God' blocked the way."

Luther had it in his mind that this term was nothing more than a description of God's holiness. He had already seen enough of God's righteousness revealed that he knew he stood judged before God 'in whom is no darkness at all.' He already knew that God could



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not even look upon sin. He explained:

“As often as I read that declaration I wished always that God had not made the gospel known. . .I saw it and I wished always that God had not made the gospel known, because this fuller revelation of the righteousness of God seemed to make me utterly hopeless and helpless, and I did not know what to do with myself; the ‘righteousness of God’ blocked the way.”

**4.5** In your words, what was the point that Luther was missing? Why was the righteousness of God ‘blocking the way’ in Luther’s mind?

The fact remains that, until a man has despaired of ever maintaining his own standards of righteousness, he cannot have God’s righteousness given to him. Luther’s misunderstanding came from reading only the first half of the verse. Look at verse 17 again:

**17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.**

Paul was not simply saying that the gospel exposes us to the righteousness of God; Paul was explaining that we can have the righteousness of God, it is something which is available to us by faith. Please do not make a fatal error here. The gospel does not do away with God’s righteous demands on us, but rather, it meets them by giving us God’s righteousness. This is the essence, the stuff of salvation.

Many believe in vain today because they do not concern themselves with the essence of what the gospel really is. Thousands think they are Christians who do not have the slightest awareness of what the gospel really is, and what it is about. How is your “gospel awareness?” Into which of these groups do you fit?

### SALVATION AWARENESS

What is your level of awareness?

The **RESTITUTION** level focuses on awareness of forgiveness of sins. - - I am saved because I received Christ and he took away my sins. I have been reconciled to God, (John 1:12 / John 3:16.)

At the **SUBSTITUTION** level we begin to understand how our sins could be forgiven. - I am saved because Christ died in my place. He died for ME, personally, on the cross. He satisfied the holiness of God with His shed blood on Calvary’s cross.

At the **IDENTIFICATION** level we understand that God can give us His righteousness because He has placed us in Christ. - I am saved because I have had the righteousness of God given to me. God accomplished this by placing me in Christ. I am identified with Him in His death, burial, and resurrection. His righteousness was credited to me.

\* \* \* \* \*

When Martin Luther got to those words “...the just shall live by faith” the light bulb turned on! When Luther read those words he said to himself:

“There IS such a thing, after all, as a just person, a righteous person! ... As I had formerly hated the expression ‘The righteousness of God’ I now began to regard it as my dearest and most comforting word; so that this expression of Paul’s became to me in very truth a Gate to Paradise.”

Martyn LLOYD-Jones, (the source from which this story is taken) said: “What a revelation! What a transformation! From a miserable, wretched, unhappy monk, counting his beads and fasting and sweating and praying, and yet being more and more conscious of failure, to the herald of the Reformation! to the glorious preacher of the gospel, rejoicing in the ‘glorious liberty of the children of God!’ And it came to him through understanding Romans 1:17”





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We call this doctrine of receiving the righteousness of God by faith the doctrine of justification by faith. You will see why a little later in our study.

4.6 Read Colossians 2:5-7 and answer:

- a. Using two words only, how did the Colossian believers receive Christ? \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. Now that the believer has received Christ, \_\_\_\_\_ exactly how is he to walk? \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. If a man is saved \_\_\_\_\_ how then does a man live? \_\_\_\_\_.

4.7 When a believer says, “I was saved by faith, but I will lose my salvation if I do not please God”, what is he saying about the doctrine of justification by faith?

If you understand Romans 1:17 you understand that the subject of salvation is righteousness. The man who believes God receives His righteousness in place of his own. This bedrock truth permeates Romans. Many Christians do not understand, however, that this doctrine is also the secret for victory in the Christian walk. The Christian learns that he is completely accepted by the Father (in spite of all his faults) because he has the righteousness of Christ given to him. It is in the awareness of that full acceptance of God that we can begin to grow. Have you “accepted” God’s acceptance of you???

=> ADVANCED STUDIES – FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO DIG A LITTLE DEEPER <=

*Not every student in our classes will be ready to “take on” the following matters. They are included for those who are seeking answers in these areas.*

\* \* \* \* \*

### Time to Think



### Contemporary Issue: - Easy Believism

There is a great debate running in Christian circles over what is unwisely called “easy-believism”. Shallow, cheesy presentations of the gospel and the high level of carnality in the church have led some teachers to fault Dispensationalism because of its emphasis on free grace. In the words of one contemporary Bible teacher:

“By separating faith from faithfulness, it leaves the impression that intellectual assent is as valid as whole-hearted obedience to the truth. Thus the good news of Christ has given way to the bad news of an insidious easy-believism that makes no moral demands on the lives of sinners.”

After reading the above statement, please look up Ephesians 2:8-10. Be sure to read all three verses. Then, comparing the above statement answer the following:

- a. Does verses 8 and 9 “separate faith from faithfulness?”
- b. Does verse 10 “separate faith from faithfulness?”
- c. Where has the above mentioned teacher failed in his teaching?



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The answers to questions a. and b. are below. *(If you are not familiar with some of the terminology in the following paragraphs feel free to set aside some time with the leader for further discussion!)*

a. The answer is absolutely yes. Being faithful to God in order to obtain our salvation is an offense to God. Man is saved by grace through faith, not of works (faithfulness) lest any man should boast. Man is not saved by faithfulness. Of course they must be separated.

b. The answer is yes. The man who receives Christ becomes a new creation in Christ Jesus. His faith in Christ is the key to producing works in his life. Because he is God's workmanship God can begin producing good works in his life. His own good works are still as filthy rags.

Note: Feel free to contact the author for a more advanced article on "easy-believism".



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

NOTES OR QUESTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN WE GET TOGETHER:



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(SS) YOU BE THE JUDGE!

This Supplement will provide thoughtful background for our study of the first half of Romans 2 where Paul continues his discussion of *justice* and *judgment*. Paul will be taking us to court in order to defend the absolute integrity of God while laying down charges against the hypocrisy of all men. The world's most well known religious leader recently declared "Who am I to judge?" As long as *he* refused we suggest:

"YOU BE THE JUDGE!"

**Romans 2:1 records the citation:**

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

We can all identify, (and even laugh at times) with our duplicity. When the neighbor's kid breaks the window he is a vandal, desperately in need of more structure in his life. When our child breaks the same window, it was an innocent mistake. The driver who takes his time is a hazard. When we take our time, we are driving safely. The list goes on.

To make matters worse, (I speak as an old man now) our cultural sense of justice and integrity is becoming increasingly insane. Recently a man on the West Coast left his dog in a warm car on an 80 degree day for the space of twenty minutes. Although the dog emerged unharmed, an angry crowd gathered around the car and screamed vindictively at the returning driver. Some claimed he should "die!" Others said he should be imprisoned. Their *sense of justice* had been offended.

Conservative Christians have marveled at the twisted moral standards of a culture which will gladly destroy babies in the womb, but endow them with personhood the second they are born. Our *sense of justice* has be-

come terribly skewed.

Our ambivalent amoral culture suggests that Christians with moral values must, at best, keep them to themselves, while non Christians may freely and openly assert their judgments because our Constitution defends that right. Please read the following verses and draw a brief conclusion from them. Your answers may vary a bit from someone else's.

JUDGING AS IT RELATES TO GOD.

**5:1. Psalm 7:11 and Psalm 9:8**

God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.

And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.

Please list at least three facts we can gather from the above verses.

**5:2. 2 Peter 3:9**

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

From this verse please tell us why God will judge men and why He has delayed this judgment.



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## 5:3. Acts 17:31

Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

God never apologizes for the fact that He will one day judge all men. Why do you suppose this is? Can you provide any biblical support for your answer?

**5:4. Does God judge men now?** Upon hearing of the destruction of Pompeii, Voltaire is said to have noted that God must be a very unkind father. A simple exercise in your concordance will show us how God *has* intervened in history in times past. He has caused drought, pestilence, and earthquakes, among other things. He promises even more to come!

In your opinion is God unloving when He demonstrates His wrath on a local level, before the day of His judgment? Is He an unkind Father? Why would He do such a thing?

## JUDGING AS IT RELATES TO BELIEVERS AND THE WORLD

5:5 Note John 5:22

For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all

judgment unto the Son:

While Christ did not come into the world specifically to condemn the world, (John 3:17) all judgment has been committed into His hands.

There have always been believers who feel that it is our duty to take up the sword, as it were, and prepare the world for the return of Christ, not only through social action, but through police action as well. Please spend a little time with your Bible and try to find some *biblical reasons* why this conclusion is in error. (Don't spend more than 10 minutes on this and, yes, you can ask someone for help if you desire!

This study material has been used around the world; so while the following question is directed toward Americans, it relates to us all. As we see our nation crumbling morally, Christians are responding to this by aggressively exposing political targets. Some fuel their anger by listening to "talking heads" from morning to evening and others have gone as far as to suggest arming ourselves for the coming revolution.

Please keep in mind that we may easily use righteous causes as an excuse to wrap ourselves in the silky cocoon of anger. This kind of anger is never profitable.

**5:6 What do the following passages teach us concerning our posture before the world?**

Concerning Christ's posture: Isaiah 42:1-4



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Concerning our posture: 2 Timothy 2:24-25

Concerning our duties: Hebrews 11:7

*Time to Think*

## The Chinese Finger Trap



The Chinese finger trap consists of a short woven tube of reeds. When one opposing finger from each hand is placed in the tube they are difficult to remove because any reverse force locks the woven reeds on the finger.

In a similar way, Christians who love righteousness are taught to hate oppression and to despise injustice. At the same time, we are to be gentle and submissive to those in authority over us. This is not an easy task, but we may learn from the Lord Jesus, John the Baptist, Paul, and others, that we can speak out against unrighteousness and remain humble and submissive at the same time.

## Thinking About Social Justice

Compassion for the poor, for the widow and orphan, and for the defenseless should be the first heartbeat for anyone who loves Christ:

### Isaiah 58:6

**Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?**

We also understand what the Lord requires of us *personally*:

### Micah 6:8

**He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?**

During the week when this supplement was written a woman in a nearby city drove into a pool of water on an otherwise dry street. To her surprise, her car was swallowed up in a sinkhole resulting from a broken water main. Thankfully, she escaped.

Many believers, have innocently assumed that we can join hands with unbelievers in the causes of social justice, and in so doing, win others to Christ. This has always resulted in spiritual disaster. Please keep in mind that the term “social justice,” is a secular term. For starters, you may wish to read a simple explanation entitled “Social Justice Is Not What You Think It Is” on the Heritage Foundation web site.

Social justice, in our culture, has been the buzz word for instigating both class and ethnic warfare. The Bible clearly recognizes issues between classes, and clearly delineates our responsibilities relating to rich and poor, racial tensions, and similar issues. The well meaning believer must rely on the scriptures, and guard against being a pawn in Satan’s program. The road to equality begins at the foot of the cross and continues on with sound biblical values.

Above all, know that peace among men begins with having peace with God. Believers were placed on this planet *first*, to be a light to the nations.

## JUDGING AS IT RELATES TO BELIEVERS AND OTHER BELIEVERS

Most every believer is capable of finding Matthew 7:1-5 and similar passages. The standards by which we judge others are the very standards to which we must answer.

The judgmental excesses of many believers, have provided a loophole of sorts for all of us. We have adopted



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the spirit of tolerance associated with our age. This tolerance extends to personal choices for *conduct* and it relates to *doctrinal* differences. A cursory examination of Christian publications argues our point very well. One may easily find a raft of books warning about Christian judgmentalism. That's good! They will find a host of additional books on finding God through our devotions and worship. That's also good! We can even find a plentiful supply of books on evangelism. That's very good!

Here is what we will not find, and why. As we scour contemporary literature offerings from our national Christian publishers we will soon discover a dearth of entries on sound biblical doctrine and sound exegetical teaching. That's bad. Why is this? We have been consistently taught that doctrinal discussion (beyond the so-called basics) is non productive at best and divisive at worst and should be relegated to the denizens of dusty theologians.

We will further notice a great absence of books grappling with the issues of Christian testimony and *separation from worldliness*. To suggest separation from the world in any way outside of direct activity in fornication is to brand oneself with the letter L, for legalist - a burden ever harder to bear than wearing a scarlet letter. That's also bad!

Are there divisive theologians and legalistic radicals who would control others with their own brands of hypocrisy? Absolutely, yes. In fact, they abound. But *their disobedience* does not absolve us from true *biblical obedience*.

What does the Bible actually teach?

*Concerning doctrine...*

### **2 Timothy 4:2-3**

**Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;**

*Concerning the things of this world...*

### **Ephesians 5:11**

**And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.**

Look back at the last two verses we cited:

**5:7 What word is found in both?** How are we to respond to disobedience?

**5:8 If we respond in such a way, are we being judgmental or obedient?**

**5:9 Can you think of the last time you openly confronted another believer regarding doctrinal or practical disobedience?**

### **Proverbs 29:25**

**The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.**

Summing it up: Judgmental hypocrisy can occur on many levels.

- We are hypocrites when we say one thing and do another.
- We are hypocrites when we judge others by a different set of standards than we use to judge ourselves.
- We are hypocrites when we are partial in the application of justice or when we show favoritism.
- We are not hypocrites when we faithfully teach and obey the Word of God without fear for the consequences!



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

(S6) LETTING THE BIBLE GROW OUR IQ

## LETTING THE BIBLE GROW OUR IQ

Session 6 introduces us to the last half of Romans 2:17-3:8. In our text, Paul the prosecutor is listing the charges which find the whole world, Jew and Gentile alike, guilty before God.

The Jews who were the administrators and teachers of God's Law, were the same ones who saw themselves as being exempt from its dictates because they had been specially chosen by God through Abraham. We might say the foxes were guarding the hen house.

We will not treat that text directly in this Supplement. Rather, we will take a little time to let the Bible show us how to reason. We will see how the Holy Spirit led Paul to reason with the hypocritical duplicity of the self righteous, hypocritical, Jew and the Gentile.

*This may be a challenging supplement for some. If you prefer, just try to answer questions 6:1, 6:2, and 6:3.*

### SETTING THE STAGE

We need to check out a couple of definitions in order to build our case.

#### Definition #1. Duplicity

**6:1** Take a minute to look up the word duplicitous. In your own words, what does it mean?

**Our Definition:** For our purpose, someone is duplicitous when he embraces two or more mutually contradictory values.

*Example:* Americans, who held that all men are created *equal*, were the same Americans who did not treat all men *equally*. They once held that blacks were chattel and disposable as property.

By denying the humanity of blacks they no longer had an issue with equality and were able rationalize their actions.

That was a *duplicitous* view. Duplicity, by its very nature, also involves some level of self deception or hypocrisy.

A duplicitous person is seen doing two things. First, he holds two or more self-contradicting values. Secondly, he must embrace some level of deception in order to hold his views. A duplicitous person has a flawed reasoning process.

Make no mistake. Men are from Mars, women are from Venus, and middle-schoolers are from somewhere on the opposite side of the universe. And that's just the beginning. We all process truth differently, especially Jews versus Gentiles. Truth, however, remains the same for all of us. Truth does not change because we process differently. The Bible teaches us all how to reason biblically, both by direct statement and by example.

#### Definition #2. A First Principle or Premise

Quickly, we have one more ingredient to add to the soup. When we are duplicitous it is because we begin with a faulty premise. A premise is a first principle from which we reason. [In the end, all pure premises are embraced by faith.] We all begin reasoning from a premise, though we may not sense it. A premise is *not* a conclusion, it is the *starting point* for our reasoning.

### BUILDING OUR CASE

#### The True First Principle Revealed

**6:2** Please read Genesis 1:1 and identify the premise or first principle found in this verse.





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The *first principle* in this verse is not “time” and it is not the creation. The first principle is God, who “in beginning” (lit.) created the universe. God is assumed. The existence of the universe is then based on the God who created it. The existence of God is based on nothing. He simply is. He is our first principle, our ultimate premise.

When we reason, every aspect of truth, be it religious, philosophical, scientific or any other expression, has its origin in the One who claims to be truth *and can be traced back* to Him. Any and all other truth we embrace must ultimately relate back to God. [Thinkers take note: This is why we say biblical Christianity is the only system on the face of the earth which is cohesive.]

### **APPLY THIS NOW!**

From a practical perspective: All wrong thinking, is ultimately, wrong thinking about God. Wrong thinking leads to wrong behavior, and wrong behavior, leads to wrong consequences. It's that simple.

Conversely all right thinking is right thinking about God, and it leads to right behavior and right consequences. God is our very first principle.

The Bible teaches us that both Gentiles and Jews have replaced God with other first principles. This is not to say that they do or do not believe in God. It is to say, that they do not begin reasoning from Him alone. In fact, they may not reason from Him at all. The moment we reject God as our ultimate first principle, we start reaching and grabbing for other first principles. All false religions descend from a mix of first principles. Now, if you have more than one first principle, you are going to have duplicity. You are going to contradict yourself.

It's time to learn what the Bible says specifically about first principles.

## WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT FIRST PRINCIPLES

### **Consider the biblical term.**

The biblical word for first principle is *stoicheon* (stoi-key-on). It is also translated rudiment or element. When we are tossed about with every wind of doctrine, so to speak, it is because we have not learned our first biblical principles. In Hebrews 5:12 the author chided:

**For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.**

The Jews, who thought they were the keepers of the oracles of God, (Romans 3:2) simply did not grow. Like believers today who can pick out passages here and there to make their wild interpretations fit, they did not see the full picture. They were not grounded.

### **Consider what we do before we are saved.**

When we walk down the path of rejecting the knowledge of God (who is our First Principle), we begin reasoning like Satan did. We begin adopting the rudiments (first principles) of the world. Satan's first principles can be summed up in his famous five “I will's,” notably that he would be like the Most High, and that he would “ascend above” the most high (Isaiah 14:13-14). The first principle of the world is that we have the god gene in us and we can all ascend through self improvement.

This idea of elevating ourselves by our works is the ultimate *working principle* of all false religions. Like Satan, this is how we feed our pride. Mormonism is a pristine example of this principle of self-exaltation.



## STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

Now, notice what Paul says in Galatians 4:3 and again in Galatians 4:9:

Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

...

But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

Notice the word *elements* in both of these verses, and read them in as “first principles”.

The whole purpose for the giving of the law was to reveal this underlying character flaw. We, of course cannot take the space to discuss the whole context where Paul compares being under the bondage of law with the Roman being under tutelage. The law effectively taught us that we cannot improve ourselves. Now that we are saved, it would be a fool's errand indeed to return to the first principles of the world which teaches that there is some good in all of us and we can find the inner strength to elevate ourselves.

The world repeatedly reminds us that by looking to our inner self and tapping the strength of who we really are, we can be all that we want to be. They say, if we can envision it, we can realize it. The truth is, that is a lie. But that is not the only baggage we carry when we embrace the elements of this world.

### What happens when we choose the wrong first principles?

Glance back at Galatians 4:9 one more time and notice the *dynamics* which are involved. The elements of this world always result in the same consequence, they always bring *bondage*. We are either in bondage to God (a good thing) or we are in bondage to the elements of this world. There is no middle ground. There are no exceptions. Satan would have us think that God is repressive and that those who follow Him are suffocated and stifled by His dictates. Paul speaks of these folks in

2 Peter 2:19:

While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

**6:3** Pick a false cult or, for that matter, *any* false religion. Picture it squarely in your mind. Now, look for two things which are sure to be true about it.

a. First look for some supposed “freedom” it gives you from the dictates of God's Word:

b. Now, look for some of the ways that same group puts its members into bondage:

Interestingly, those who shout “no restraints” the loudest are usually those who will pay the greatest price for their own willful disobedience to God.

### Consider a few more things we learn about the *first principles* of the world.

#### 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.

The influence of the world's first principles goes far beyond mere religion, though religious tradition (dogma) is rich in it. It also flows freely in the intellectual arrogance of the philosopher, educator, and politician.

Sadly, we all have friends who put their slant on history, their church, and their leaders and teachers, both secular and religious, ahead of God. Americans have watched their own nation flagrantly flaunt the laws of God in favor of their own government and educational systems. But this verse is not so much a castigation



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of them as it is a warning to believers that we do not get caught up in the world's reasoning. Evangelicals have never needed this warning more than now. Be on guard against the rudiments (first principles) of this world.

**6:4** Please list a few examples which you personally feel represent evangelicals have been caught up in the first principles of this world. Avoid turning this into an expose of some particular personality:

Let's add one more extremely important element into our consideration.

A few paragraphs earlier we quoted Colossians 2:8, where Paul provided the warning about worldly first principles. We now want to see the reason for the warning in verse 9. In fact, we'll quote both verses together in order to provide the continuity we need. Colossians 2:8-9:

**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. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.**

Up to this point in our study we have continually reasoned our way back to God as our first principle, our "stoicheon," as it were. But please notice what Paul has done.

Paul has argued that we either follow after the first principles of the world or we follow after Christ. He might just as well have said "and not after God," but he inserted the word Christ. The reason for this is right before us. In Jesus Christ dwells all the fullness of the godhead bodily. God has revealed His fullness bodily in the Person of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the reason why we are dead to the first principles of the world and the law (Colossians 2:20) and He is the one with whom

we died, were buried, and raised again. Jesus Christ is our "stoicheon," our first principle.



My Favorite Cap

Consider then, the foolishness of mixing and matching our First Principle, the Lord Jesus Christ with the foolishness of worldly worship.

Do other religions have something to say about worship? They certainly do, but their words are empty and perfunctory. They feign true worship.

Do other religions feign standards of righteousness and embrace taboos of various sorts? Yes, but their standards are not according to God's righteous character.

## **Colossians 2:20-23:**

**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, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.**

By this time in our study we should be well aware of what Romans is teaching. Religion is not a mix and match scenario, it is an either, or situation. We have no choice. We either make God, as He is revealed in the Person of Jesus Christ, our first principle, or we will be in bondage to the first principles of this world.

We cannot satisfy both God and our flesh.

By the time Paul has finished his closing arguments we will learn that no man has any grounds whatsoever on which to commend himself. He simply must find God's solution.



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

(S7) UNDERSTANDING SIN

## THE UTTER SINFULNESS OF SIN

By now, we are well aware of the fact that the whole world is guilty before God. We are all sinful. We are all without excuse. We title the first few chapters of Romans CONDEMNATION for a very good reason. And, Romans is only one of many New Testament books which deal with the origin, practice, and judgment of sin.

### WHAT SIN IS:

**7:1a** Sin may is often defined as disobedience or disobedience to God's laws. Those acts are surely sinful, but sin is more than that. Sin is the failure to conform to the Holy character of God.

Please read Luke 10:27 and notice that all sin may be categorized by one or both of these offenses:

a. Failure to:

or,

b. Failure to:

**7:1b** We refer to this twofold command as the royal law. Because the Law of Moses is simply an expansion of this two-fold law, we may truly say, that sin, in the end is failure to conform to God's laws. According to Psalm 51:4 and Luke 15:18, against whom do we sin?

### WHEN DID I FIRST SIN?

**7:2a:** While this teaching is offensive to many, according to Psalm 51:5 we were shaped in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in sin.

**7:2b** However, the Bible does not stop here. Our study of Romans will soon reveal that God also holds us responsible for our sin. 1 Corinthians 15:22 says we were in \_\_\_\_\_.

### THE EXTENT OF MY SIN

Most men take a very light view of sin and its consequence. Even among those who acknowledge that they are going to hell, very few understand the impact that sin has had in their lives and how utterly and totally perverse fallen man has become. There is simply no aspect of our existence which has not been twisted and perverted by our sinful natures. Romans 8:8 declares:

**So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.**

**7:3** This is why no man can ever see God who has not received the righteousness which is provided by Christ who paid the penalty for our sin. According to Philipians 3:9 how and why is this righteousness received?

**7:4** Man simply cannot please God. He is dead in his sins and must receive the righteousness which is in Christ alone. Please read Ephesians 2:4-6 and explain what happens when a man comes to know Christ:



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Note: For those who would like to learn even more about the doctrine of sin we recommend Lewis Sperry Chafer - Major Bible Themes, a Zondervan book. The 1952 version of this book is in the public domain and may be downloaded without cost from the Internet.

## THE GREAT DISPUTE OVER SIN

For generations, the body of Christ has been largely divided into two groups, the Calvinists and the Arminians. Interestingly, both trace their origin to the same church father, but that is the subject of another study. In these respective camps there have been those who have minimized what the Bible says about our sin, and those who have stretched (hyper-literalized) what the Bible says beyond its biblical intent. Therefore, we must be very careful to believe what the Bible alone says on this subject. The wisest thing is just to let the Bible speak for itself.

### MINIMIZING WHAT GOD SAYS ABOUT US AND OUR SINFULNESS

We leave the history lesson for another day, but understand that there were a number of folks who were reacting to what they felt were gross abuses of this doctrine of the sinfulness of man.

They responded with the essential argument that there is a spark of the divine, as it were, or enough of the essence of grace left in any fallen man which could be fanned into the flame of repentance and obedience. Thus, men could respond to the gospel and come to Christ, even though they were dead in their sins. This idea was *surmised* without a shred of biblical evidence.

**7:5a.** Please read Jeremiah 31:3 and John 6:44 carefully and fill in the important word: The Bible teaches us that no man can come to God unless the Father \_\_\_\_\_ him.

**7:5b.** Please read the following verses and explain what instrument God uses in drawing men to Christ and

the gospel. Romans 1:16, and 10:14-17.

Based on the previous verses, men can and do resist and reject the Word of God (John 5:40). At the same time, no man can come to Christ except he is drawn by the Father, the Spirit, and Christ through the Word of God to the gospel of Christ.

Summary. There is nothing in ourselves which commends us to God, no spark of divine life within, and no need for us to look inward in order to be saved. We simply respond to the ministry of the Word of God and the conviction He brings into our hearts - conviction that we are hopeless sinners, and conviction that Jesus Christ can and will save us through faith in His work on calvary. It is an insult to God to believe that there is anything good in us that commends us to Him!

### ADDING TO WHAT GOD SAYS ABOUT US AND OUR SINFULNESS

The Bible says that before Christ, we were *dead* in trespasses and sin. To be dead is to be separated from God and alienated from the life of God (Ephesians 4:18). Those who have hyper extended the Word of God would have us take a strange view concerning what it means to be dead. They argue that because dead men cannot respond to stimulus a man who is dead in sin cannot respond to the gospel, unless he has been *regenerated* first. Again, this was *surmised* without a shred of biblical evidence.

This may seem like a minor point to belabor, but it is a serious one. For example, many who hold this view then teach that infant baptism is that act of regeneration whereby we are made children of God and made capable of being saved.

Please read Ephesians 2:1-5:

**And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the**



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course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

**7:6a** According to this passage, were we or were we not dead in sins?

**7:6b** According to this passage, were we quickened (or made alive), while we were dead in our sins or after we were saved?

**7:6c** According to this passage, how were we saved?

**The following is very important.** There is no doubt that we were saved, *while* we were dead in our sins and we were saved by *grace*. Be very careful now. We were saved by grace through faith, (specifically, through faith in His blood. 3:25).

**7:6d** What instrument did God use to save us?

In general, 10:17:

Specifically, 1:16

Conception occurs in secret but results in a birth for all to witness. Wise believers will not speculate as to how this marvelous miracle comes together. Nor will we build our own theories, based on the birth analogy. We just want to remember two facts. There are simple facts regarding our new birth in Christ.

**Fact # 1:** No one is saved unless God draws him or her. No one is saved without the Spirit initiated ministry of the Word of God. And no one is saved by any other means than by grace. He cannot contribute to his salvation.

**Fact #2.** No one is saved who does not act upon the gospel and no one is saved by their own choice alone. Men are judged because of their sins, but in the final analysis, men are judged equally because of their unbelief (Matthew 23:37).

## OURS IS NOT TO REASON WHY

There is a difference between a contradiction and an *apparent* contradiction (a paradox.) Hundreds, if not thousands of years of debate have not provided an explanation as to how God's sovereignty and man's responsibility come together. We do know that when we minimize either of these two truths, or emphasize one at the expense of the other, we fall into deep trouble.

What God does in secret in order to bring about the new birth, is best left right there. "God said it. I believe it. That settles it!"

### What we must conclude!

John 3:7:

**Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.**

We *must* be born again, and we do not need to wait until we have gone through some great soul struggle in the middle of the night. God simply commands us to repent, but repent, we must!

Acts 27:30-31

**And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: 31Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.**

**Important note:** *If the Holy Spirit is making the gospel clear to you at this very moment, do not resist the truth you are hearing. It is God's way of drawing you to the*



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*gospel. Set this study down and settle this matter right now!*

*If you would like, jot a few things down you want to talk about in order to settle this matter, contact the author of these notes for a chat. This is the most important decision of your life.*



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

(S8) FAITH, MIGHTY FAITH!

## FAITH, MIGHTY FAITH!

Our goal in this supplement is to underscore what our study in Romans 3 teaches us about faith, and then, to add a few other biblical thoughts.

## WHAT ROMANS 3 TEACHES ABOUT FAITH

Consider two of our favorite poems about faith. One is written by the Quaker John Greenleaf Whittier and the other by the Methodist, Charles Wesley.

Whittier wrote:

*“Nothing before, nothing behind,  
The steps of faith fall on the seeming void,  
And find the Rock beneath”*

Wesley wrote:

*“Faith, mighty faith, the promise sees,  
And rests on that alone;  
Laughs at impossibilities, and says,  
It shall be done”*

Although these men were very different, both clearly understood an underlying truth about faith. They both knew that faith, (like prayer) is not a free-standing word. It is not generic. There is no power in prayer, for example, the power lies only in the God who answers it. There is no value in esoteric or romantic faith. For Whittier, his faith was in the Rock (not rock) beneath. For Wesley, faith was in the promise. He was, of course, speaking of the promises of God.

Because faith is such an important word, we began expanding on it as early as chapter one, and we will continue to learn more about it as we go through Romans. When expressing our world view to others we cannot stress this often enough: Our unchanging God has, first, last, and always, dealt with men only on the basis

of His *promises*. Faith is not faith unless it is in an object, specifically, the promises of God.

**8:1a** While reading 3:21-30 count the number of times the word faith occurs in this passage:

**8:1b** Read 3:21-22 and try to express the two fundamental truths Paul is making about *faith*.

**But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 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:**

*First:* The law itself and the prophets spoke of a righteousness which was available, not by keeping the law, but \_\_\_\_\_.

*Secondly:* This righteousness which is available through \_\_\_\_\_ is available to \_\_\_\_\_. When Paul says there is no difference, he is explaining that this righteousness is available to both Jew and Gentile.

So, we have learned two things:

**Truth # 1: The faith of which Paul speaks is not works based (It is not based on keeping the law),**

**Truth # 2: This faith is not ethnic or exclusive. It is offered universally.**

**8:1c** Now, continue reading on down to 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;**

In this case, Paul is very specific. Propitiation, righ-





## STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

teousness, and the remission of sins are available through faith \_\_\_\_\_.

**8:2** We must be very careful here. Paul is not suggesting that there is some unique property in the blood of Christ which can save us. He is talking about what the blood of Christ represents. This is a figure of speech called a metonymy. We are using a word to represent a broader range of truth. In this case the blood of Christ represents the entire sacrifice of Christ. We speak of the cross the same way. When Paul speaks of glorying in the cross of Christ, he is not suggesting that there was any merit in the wood on which Christ was placed, (Galatians 6:14).

Make no mistake. Paul is narrowing the *scope* or *focus* of our faith. In order to receive the righteousness of God our faith must be in the sacrificial work of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not enough to simply say, "I believe." Do not confuse generic faith with specific faith. On what are you resting for your salvation?

So, we add a third item to the list of truths we have learned:

**Truth # 3: The faith which produces righteousness is focused on the blood of Christ.**

Romans 3:28-30 reinforces these truths. Justification is by faith and apart from the deeds of the law and our God is the God of both Jew and Gentile, circumcised or not. We will be discussing the issue of circumcision in a little more detail in our current study.

So, what are we to make of this on a practical level? It seems to be in the nature of us all to want to imagine that we are unique. Paul will expand this in chapter four. For now, we simply want to ask ourselves, to what are we clinging? Being born into a certain race or religious background gets us nowhere with God.

### MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING?

Maybe not! There's an ongoing debate about faith which has confused many young Christians. The discussion begins with the assertion that faith is a gift from God. In the broadest sense, it is a gift from God. It is as much of a gift as is life itself. God has given all men the capacity to appropriate His promises. It would be foolish, for example, for God to command all men everywhere to be saved, if they did not have the capacity to change their minds and rest on what God has said about His Son.

So, faith, in that sense, certainly is as much a gift from God as the air we breathe. However, those who are making this assertion are saying something entirely different. They are making their argument from a careless reading of Ephesians 2:8-9:

**For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.**

We will spare the grammar lesson except to point out that Paul is talking about salvation. Salvation is the gift of God that is received through faith. Even the English makes it clear that the antecedent to "it" is "saved" not "faith."

Understand that our friends are trying to teach that we must pray for or seek the faith we need in order to have enough to be saved, (even though the Bible never commands such a thing.). Believing God and taking Him at His word is something that even a child can do.

Another favorite passage used by those who think we must receive the gift of faith before we can receive the gift of salvation is found in 2 Peter 1:1:

**Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:**



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The word “obtained” in this verse means “to receive by divine allotment.” This, again, suggests that God allots to some the ability to receive the kind of faith which enables them to receive Christ.

To say that we need a unique gift of faith in order to receive the gift of salvation just doesn't fit with the rest of what the Bible has to say about being saved. How foolish it would be to have folks say, I am hoping to be saved one day, but I have not yet received my divine allotment of saving faith! Notice how the following truths would contradict such an idea:

**8:3** Here are just *a few* of many verses for you to consider. What do these verses have in common?

John 15:3

**Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.**

John 17:17

**Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.**

Acts 11:14

**Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.**

1 Thessalonians 2:13

**For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.**

James 1:21

**Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted**

**word, which is able to save your souls.**

Please understand these two points:

a. The Bible consistently argues that it is the Word of God which brings us to Christ. It is the *instrument* the Holy Spirit uses to bring us to salvation.

b. 10:17 tells us that (saving) faith comes through hearing (the Word of God), not through some special act or prayer. In other words, the Word of God has its own power source. Hearing the Word causes us to believe. 10:17:

**So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.**

The Lord Jesus was so emphatic about this point that He intentionally obscured the truth of God with parables, lest those who mocked it would hear and believe. Read, Matthew 13:10-17. We cite only Matthew 13:10:

**Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.**

The kind of faith, then which causes us to appropriate salvation is the result of the witness of God's Word in our hearts. Nowhere, we repeat, does the Bible even hint that we should seek a gift of faith before receiving salvation. This foolishness has hindered many from receiving this like precious faith!

### WRAP UP

**Truth # 1: The faith of which Paul speaks is not works based (It is not based on keeping the law,).**

**Truth # 2: This faith is not ethnic or exclusive. It is offered universally.**

**Truth # 3: The faith which produces righteousness is focused on the blood of Christ.**



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**Truth # 4: The faith which produces salvation comes through the ministry of the Word of God. It is not a unique gift.**



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

## (S9) UNDERSTANDING CIRCUMCISION

**Romans 4** does away with two of the favorite arguments many of the Jewish people embraced for proof that God was pleased with them. One was their claim to being the sons of Abraham. The other, was their token of circumcision which set them aside from the nations. The following is a broad overview of the doctrine of circumcision, presented from four aspects, *The Physical Aspects*, *the Mosaic Aspects*, *the Spiritual Aspects*, and *the New Covenant Aspects*. Please read the scriptures in each of these boxes in the same order and the brief explanations. Jot any questions you may have for use in class. Thank you!



### Notes on Circumcision

#### The Physical Aspects

Keynote Passage:  
17:1-21

- The physical location of the procedure symbolically relates to the transmission of seed.
- This covenant is to Abraham and his Seed.

#### The Spiritual Aspects

Keynote Passage: Deut. 10:16  
and 30:1-6

- Circumcision represents "ground zero" in the flesh war.
- God will circumcise Israel's heart at the Restoration.

#### The Mosaic Aspects

Keynote Passage: John 7:22

- Circumcision became associated with the Law of Moses (the Old Covenant) 400 years after Abraham.

#### The New Covenant Aspects

Keynote Passage: Romans 2:25-3:31; Galatians 5:1-6

- Interestingly, circumcision now represents "ground zero" in the war of flesh versus Spirit.

Note: Circumcision has absolutely NO connection with Christian baptism!



## STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

### ARE CHRISTIAN BAPTISM AND CIRCUMCISION ONE AND THE SAME?

One of the results of not taking the Bible literally is the tendency to see the church which is Christ's body as spiritual Israel. We will explain why Israel and the church which is Christ's body are two entirely different entities as we go further into Romans.

For the purpose of this supplement, however, we want to try to understand why many of our brethren in Christ associate Christian baptism with circumcision, even though the Bible fails to make a single statement concerning this.

### HERE IS HOW THE PROCESS GOES.

1. If we believe we are the inheritors of God's promises to Israel and are, in fact, spiritual Israel, it would make sense to some that there would be a spiritual counterpart to physical circumcision which was done away as a requirement for God's people, according to Galatians.
2. The feeling in the hearts of many of our brethren who follow in the theological line of Augustine is that infant baptism is the spiritual equivalent to infant circumcision.
3. Much of the logic for this view is based right here in chapter 4 of Romans, specifically, 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:**

The reasoning follows:

- a. Abraham received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had while yet uncircumcised.

b. Baptism is then equated with circumcision because it too is a "sign and seal of the righteousness of faith". If then circumcision was given to infant sons before they "came to faith" why wouldn't baptism also be given to our infants?

### HERE IS WHY THE PROCESS FAILS

Now, notice what our brethren in Christ have done. First, they have taken an Old Testament commandment which had ethnic as well as spiritual meaning and imposed it on a New Testament practice, for which there is not a single instruction. Then, they have called baptism *a sign and seal of the righteousness of faith*.

1. The children of Christians are not born Christians.
2. According to Romans 6, a passage which we will soon cover, we were baptized into Christ and thus share His death, burial and resurrection. Physical baptism is a testimony of this spiritual event.
3. If we believe that physical baptism is a testimony of what happened spiritually when we came to Christ we understand that, by that one baptism, we were all placed in the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13), something which *cannot be said* of those who have not come to Christ.
4. This is why most non-Reformed doctrinal statements refer to baptism as "believer's baptism," because it is a testimony of our faith in Christ. "Baptism" as a child would not represent this truth. Acts 19 records the encounter of Paul with Apollos, who had not yet been baptized since he had come to Christ. Not even John's baptism was adequate to represent this truth. He was then baptized in the name of Christ.
5. Unlike circumcision, baptism represents *far more than a sign and seal of the righteousness of faith*. It represents what happened when we came to Christ. So, it simply does not make sense to equate circumcision and baptism.



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

(S10) IMPORTANT WORDS IN ROMANS

## WATCH YOUR TONGUE!

The careless use of words and their definitions greatly enhances Satan's cause and the spirit of antichrist which is so pervasive. The following words provide the backdrop of Romans. Below, we have provided a list of non-technical, but correct definitions or descriptions of important words in our study.

Your challenge, should you accept it, is to match the descriptions below with the words at the top of the paper. Bring your supplement to class to compare answers! Use any concordance or commentary, but only ask a friend or a study leader as a last resort! *Match as many descriptions as you can to the terms listed below them. Use the words as little or as often as needed.*

- |                 |          |                  |
|-----------------|----------|------------------|
| 1. Propitiation | 4. Faith | 7. Remission     |
| 2. Sin          | 5. Grace | 8. Justification |
| 3. Redemption   | 6. Law   | 9. Righteousness |

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. These two words come from similar Greek words: *dikaioo/* and *dikaisoune*
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. The commands of God in the Old Testament as revealed through the prophet Moses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. A rather free definition of this word could be: *just as if I'd never sinned.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. There are seven major words for this word in our Bible. In Romans 3:23, *it means to miss the mark.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ e. This word means to purchase by payment of a ransom. Forms of the word mean, 1. To buy in the market, 2. To buy out of the market, and 3. To loose, or set free.
- \_\_\_\_\_ f. This word is very much akin to *mercy seat* and can be found in Hebrews 9:25.
- \_\_\_\_\_ g. God's unmerited favor. For the Christian, it also refers to *divine enablement.*
- \_\_\_\_\_ h. Being *declared* righteous in Christ.
- \_\_\_\_\_ i. Moral purity, perfection.
- \_\_\_\_\_ j. Putting away or forgiving sin on the basis of faith in Christ.
- \_\_\_\_\_ k. The death of Christ *satisfying* the demands of God's holiness.
- \_\_\_\_\_ l. Active belief.



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

NOTES OR QUESTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN WE GET TOGETHER:



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

(S11) COMPARING IMPUTATION WITH INFUSION AND IMPARTATION

## I - RECOGNIZING IMPUTATION

**11:1** Please read the verses from Romans 4 in the middle column and state what this discussion is about in your own words:

**11:2** Notice the words in bold. If you are studying Romans in another translation, see if any of the words (in bold here) are substituted in your translation.

**11:3** Using a concordance, please look up any three of the words in bold and provide a full definition of them in the right hand column.

### **Romans 4:3-6**

3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was **counted** unto him for righteousness. 4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not **reckoned** of grace, but of debt. 5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is **counted** for righteousness. 6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God **imputeth** righteousness without works,

### **Romans 4:8-9**

8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not **impute** sin. 9 Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was **reckoned** to Abraham for righteousness.

### **Romans 4:11**

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:

### **Romans 4:22-24**

22 And therefore it was **imputed** to him for righteousness. 23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was **imputed** to him; 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;

Definition of any three of the words printed in bold:

**11:4** In these verses, what *other* word is most always associated with the word impute?

**11:5** In your words, and based on this passage, what would you say a good definition of imputation might be?





# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

## II - UNDERSTANDING IMPUTATION

From time to time, it has been necessary for God's people to invent words which are not in the Bible in order to make a point. Words such as trinity, millenium and servanthood are not found in the Bible even though their truths are clearly taught.

Sometimes, however, our penchant for coining terms has gotten us into trouble and caused much division in the body. Among these commonly used terms would be Lordship salvation, easy believism, federal headship, the various lapsarian views, soul sleep, faithworks (in contrast to meritorious works) and a host of terms have come to represent theological ideas which are not necessarily taught in the Bible. Some are downright dangerous.

Adding insult to injury is the fact that we moderns have become very careless about definitions in general, and we love to mash (or use synonymously) important words and terms such as "believer" and "disciple." For this reason, we want to be especially sure that we are clear on our definitions before we enter any doctrinal discussion. Remember Satan's question in the garden: "Hath God said?" serves as a reminder that his goal has always been to re-define and reword what God has said.

The word imputation is one such word which requires a careful look.



By now, you know that the basic meaning of imputation means "to credit to one's account."

### A Simple Definition:

When we speak of imputation in the biblical context of these verses we understand that the righteousness of God is credited to us *through* and *in* Jesus Christ.

### What this means:

Imputation is a once-for-all act on God's part which results from believing what God says about His Son. This is a legal or forensic act of God whereby He declares us to be righteous. It is a *legal* declaration.

### What this does not mean:

*This does not mean simply* that our "sin debts" were paid. The account was not merely "zeroed out" or "settled". It means that we have a credit to our account, a credit which cannot be exhausted.

*This does not mean* that this righteousness was credited because we earned it. Years ago I closed an account and found that I had an extra two hundred dollars in it. It had been credited to my account when deposited, but I had forgotten to record it. That was not imputation. That was simple calculation.

When God credits our account it is because we are receiving what we have not earned. In fact, any self effort to add to our account would have only accrued debt! (Romans 4:4)

*This does not mean* that God has imparted or infused his righteousness *into* us. We are not, as some say, as holy as God is. That would mean we are infinitely holy and to be infinitely anything would mean that we would be God. These ideas are not found in the Bible

### Why This Matters:

These terms (infused and imparted) have been added into the mix by folks who want to make more out of imputation than what it is, and they have led to some disturbing results.

When we assume we have God's righteousness infused into us we begin denying the realities of our sinful natures, or worse, we begin to think we were never saved because we have failed to realize God's righteousness in our experience. One famous Baptist



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Reformed pastor recently stated that because he treats his wife no better at age 60 than he did at age 40 he wonders if he really has salvation! That's what Satan wants. Advanced student, consider this: The doctrine of the security of the believer is based squarely on imputation. However, the errant doctrine of perseverance of the saints has its roots in confusing imputation with impartation and infusion! If, for example, I believe that justification somehow *infuses* righteousness and I don't see enough evidence of this righteousness in my life, I must doubt my salvation or justification. Ouch!

Rome takes the false idea of infused righteousness a step further and insists that we must have the righteousness of Christ infused continually into us via the sacraments. That is plain, old fashioned, salvation by works.

So then, how *does* the righteousness of Christ play out in our lives?

## III - UNDERSTANDING APPROPRIATION

Imputed righteousness is nothing more than the legal declaration on the part of God declaring that we are righteous and, therefore, without condemnation.

At first blush, this might seem discouraging, because we all need the outworking of God's righteousness in our lives. Our own self-righteousness (well named) is a fool's quest.

Rejoice! We have not only been saved from sin's penalty, we have been saved from its power!

**11:6** Now, please read the following verses, noting what they have in common:

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:**

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.)**

Romans 8:10

**And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.**

Romans 10:4

**For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.**

1 Corinthians 1:30

**But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:**

Philippians 3:8-9

**Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 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:**

2 Corinthians 5:17

**Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.**

The solution is as clear as the verses under our noses! The man or woman who is justified by faith is placed into Jesus Christ and, by the way, Jesus Christ is placed



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into Him. We overcome sin through the righteousness of the indwelling Christ. Christ *is* our righteousness! The man who is a new creation in Christ Jesus has the life of Christ flowing in him.

We will soon learn that *we too* can practice a form of reckoning. We can reckon ourselves dead unto sin and alive unto Christ. We can appropriate, in our real experience, all of the rights and privileges of our position in Christ.

There will be much more to consider in our Romans study. Paul has just begun to open the discussion of the roles of the indwelling Holy Spirit and Christ who live within us.

“Oh what a salvation this!  
Christ liveth in me!”

*Has Jesus Christ become your righteousness?*



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

(S12) ON "BALANCING" GRACE AND

## MODERN ISSUES CONCERNING GRACE

The discussion of grace may be found throughout Romans, and the careful reader has already noticed that Paul has addressed the subject numerous times in Romans 4, 5, and 6.

A full study of grace would require us to begin where all doctrines have their seeds, in the book of Genesis. The study of grace as it appears throughout the Bible is a worthy study which we recommend.

To prepare our hearts for the lesson we'll confine ourselves to dealing with some modern issues concerning grace. Take the quick quiz. No need to write down the answers and this paper will not be "handed in."

## THE CHALLENGE

Grace was the first doctrine to be maligned in the early church. Outside of the discussion of the nature of Christ Himself, it is the most hated and abused of all doctrines taught in the Bible. Grace is, at once, the doctrine most openly embraced by all "Christians," and at the same time, the most misunderstood.

*The following test is offered to help the reader determine whether he truly understands what grace is about.*

1. \_\_\_ **True or False?** God's grace was manifested in the provision of His Son to deal with original sin. We help atone for ongoing sin through our godly living.
2. \_\_\_ **True or False?** The ongoing disbursement of God's grace is available through sacraments such as baptism and communion.
3. \_\_\_ **True or False?** The Christian is saved by grace alone; however, he must keep himself under the umbrella of grace by working out his salvation with fear and trembling.

4. \_\_\_ **True or False?** The Christian is saved and kept by grace alone; however, he is essentially obligated to obey the law unless it is specifically negated by a principle of grace.

5. \_\_\_ **True or False?** Because the Christian is saved and kept by grace he is no longer under any specific rules or restraints. He is to rely on the Holy Spirit alone to guide him.

6. \_\_\_ **True or False?** We must be balanced in our teaching regarding grace and obedience. When we place too much stress on grace, congregations tend to become lax in their spiritual standards and disciplines.

## THE RESPONSES

All six statements are patently false and each represents a heresy in itself. If reader responded with a "T" to questions 1-3 the question of his own salvation is very much in question! If he affirmed question 4,5,6 he may still be struggling with a works based mindset that is robbing him victory in his Christian walk!

### QUESTION 1.

Virtually all of the cults agree with this claim. They have no problem with Christ providing some kind of general solution for sin that allows for a general resurrection of all men. Personal salvation, however, must be based on works – in direct contradiction to Romans 4:1-8, Ephesians 2:8-10, Titus 3:5, and a host of other passages. It is unthinkable to the average person that he is spiritually bankrupt, without hope, and an enemy of God.

### QUESTION 2.

This is the typical response of false religionists who believe salvation comes (or is maintained) through the church. Rome is at the top of this list, but she does not



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stand alone. If your church uses the term “sacrament” with reference to baptism, the Lord’s Table, marriage, or any other instruction, be on guard! Implicit in the word sacrament is the doctrine of sacramentalism – the erroneous teaching that grace is dispensed through sacraments. A careful Bible student will notice that the word grace is never associated with any of these church ordinances. The Lord’s Table, for example, may teach us much about grace, but it is not a *means of grace*. To make it a means of grace is to slip into idolatry and a works based system. It is to argue that salvation is secured (or maintained) by something other than the actual death, burial, and resurrection of Christ Himself. Just as Israel began worshiping the artifacts in the Ark of the Covenant, so modern Christians have turned the symbols of our salvation into objects of worship and a means of grace. The grace that saves us comes through faith (Ephesians 2:8), never through obedience.

### QUESTION 3.

The great failure of this assumption is in understanding the nature of grace itself. A works based system effectively says, “Do, and be blessed.” A grace based system says “Be blessed, and do!” God did not make the down payment on our salvation and expect us to keep up the installments. Of course God disciplines His sons when they disobey (Hebrews 12:7,8) even to the extent of taking their lives – but they remain sons. No Christian is as vulnerable to failure as the one who does not seek to finish out the work God has begun in him (Philippians 2:12). The bottom line, however, is that we have no more power to keep ourselves than we had to save ourselves. Only a foolish man would begin with grace and then try to perfect himself with works (Galatians 3:3).

### QUESTION 4.

It is popular in Dispensational, Reformed and Arminian circles to seek to salvage some aspect of the law as being applicable to the Christian walk. This is natural and understandable because so many of the principles

of the law are reaffirmed in the grace walk and are even used to illustrate grace principles. For example, Paul commands children to obey their parents (Ephesians 6:2-3) reminding them that parent honoring is the first commandment with a promise attached to it.

Two problems arise, however, when we assume that the law is binding upon us when it is not specifically negated by grace. First, these teachers fail to understand that the *entire* law was set aside. It is futile to try to distinguish between the moral law and the ceremonial law because both were set aside, done away, kaput! They were abolished! (2 Corinthians 3:11 – read the context.)

Law and grace are both *dynamics*. That is, when applied or appropriated they produce a change in behavior. They produce a fruit. Baptism and repentance, for example, are not dynamic; they are simple instructions in righteousness. As a dynamic, law keeping actually produces an effect in the life. Romans 7 tells us in the most outspoken way that law keeping actually produces *bondage* to sin in the life of anyone who submits to it. It is irrelevant whether the law keeper is saved or unsaved. The law dynamic is still effectual. Read Romans 7 carefully in preparation for our coming study on that chapter. Sin takes occasion by the commandment and enslaves us to our flesh. That was the purpose of the law, to bring out this tendency which is in us, so that we would see our desperate need for a better way, a better dynamic.

Grace is the better dynamic. Grace also works in us. Grace also produces a product, a fruit, in us. When grace abounds in us, it produces works! (2 Corinthians 9:8). We may use the law to illustrate the principles of grace, but we must never submit to it in any way.

### QUESTION 5.

This is false because providing a true answer would assume that grace does *not* teach us principles or set standards for us. Titus 2:11-13 emphatically argues that the grace which reaches is the grace which teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live



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soberly, righteously, and godly lives. The principles of Christian liberty taught by Paul, for example, do far more to limit and subject our privileges to our servanthood than they do to free us up to do things we were never allowed to do before. Grace, properly flowing in the life produces disciplined soldiers, athletes, and farmers (2 Timothy 2). Any grace which does not produce godliness is a false antinomian expression of grace. It abounds in evangelicalism.

soul as you read this, you may appropriate instant cleansing and forgiveness. Step into fellowship with Christ. Of course you are unworthy of this fellowship – that is what grace is all about! Appropriate the forgiveness and nurture the fellowship – and your walk will begin changing – instantly. Wallow in your defeat and unworthiness and the best you will do is feed your self-pity. Step into the sunshine of grace!

### QUESTION 6.

Trying to “balance” grace and obedience in order to avoid license is a confession that one does not understand the principle or dynamic of grace. Grace, properly taught, always produces works (Ephesians 2:10) and never produces laxity. When nationally known authors paint the doctrine of grace as a means to be free from the legalistic restraints of right wing extremists they skew the entire doctrine of grace. Grace is not the opposite of legalism. Grace does not free us to behave as we wish, within broad limits.

When well meaning folks seek to raise the requirements for salvation in order to stem the tide of what they call “easy believism”, they too are confessing that they do not understand the power of grace to regenerate and change the new convert. Grace puts us under the authority of another Master. It replaces the schoolmaster of the law with the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace is a dynamic which produces the fruit of godliness.

### **In conclusion:**

Satan is our accuser whose greatest desire is to neutralize us by loading us down with guilt and discouragement because we cannot attain. He wants us to live in a constant state of unworthiness. Unsaved friend, Jesus Christ wants you to accept His forgiveness, by faith, based on what He did on Calvary, not on your worthiness. You may step into new life with Christ even as you read this article.

Saved friend, we too must learn the same lesson - Be blessed and do. Regardless of the condition of your



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

NOTES OR QUESTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN WE GET TOGETHER:



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(S13) DELVING MORE DEEPLY INTO GRACE

*Each of our Lessons are designed to meet the needs of a broad range of believers, from the young in Christ to those who are a little longer in the tooth.*

*However, we use our Student Supplements to cover a more varied range of background material. Some are very basic, and some are purposely designed to stretch the reader. This is an optional supplement that addresses a common misunderstanding about the roles of Law and Grace. It asks no questions and requires no work on your part. We would like to encourage everyone to begin reading this supplement, but we do not want to make anyone uncomfortable who may not quite be ready for it. Read, according to your interest level, and set it aside for a later time if it becomes necessary! You can always discuss this supplement with the author!*

## OUR GOAL FOR THIS SUPPLEMENT:

To understand the Biblical relationships of Law and Grace.

While Paul has already introduced these themes in Romans, he will be saying even more as we approach the next few chapters. Today, we'll take one step backwards to prepare us to learn what lies ahead.

## OUR KEY PASSAGE:

Romans 5:20-21

**Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.**

We want to address three key elements found in this passage in order to do away with a common misconception:

Element # 1: The reign of sin (from Adam)  
 Element #2: The reason for the law (of Moses)  
 Element #3: The reign of grace (since Christ)

## THE BACKGROUND

Understand what Paul has been arguing in Romans 5. The essential discussion centers around grace and its relationship to the reign of sin. The argument goes this way:

1. Adam sinned, and as a result death came upon all men. 5:12.
2. Even though men sinned, there was no reckoning of personal sin in such a way that men could measure its effect. There was no Mosaic law. 5:13.

Note: Do keep in mind that men still had a word from the Lord. The Noahic Covenant, for example, was in effect. You can best understand what things were like then by reading the book of Job. Righteous men still knew of the living God, had a strong sense of justice versus injustice, and were fully convinced that God was ruling. Their consciences set up their own standards of accountability. Many such standards are mentioned by Job and his counselors.

3. Still, death reigned before the law was given and that is proof that we are sinful by nature, not simply because the law condemns men, 5:14.
4. Now, Paul extends this: The *one* sin of Adam condemned all men for all time. One sin (not many) brings death upon a man *and* his seed (because we were *in* Adam, 1 Corinthians 15:22). 5:14.
5. Adam not only caused the problem he was a figure or type of the One who would resolve it. 5:14.





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6. This is where *abounding* grace entered. In one way, Adam prefigured Christ. Adam sinned once and brought sin on all, and Christ died once and provided a sacrifice for all. However, in one way Adam *did not* prefigure Christ.

One would think that if a man sinned a second time Christ would have had to die a second time to cover the second sin. If we are accountable to God for both our sin nature *and* our personal sins, that conclusion would make sense, but that is where *abounding* grace comes in. The solution is *not* like the offense. 5:15-16.

This is because, while Adam's sin infected, Christ's sacrifice *abounded*. The key word here is abound. How did this play out? One sin is enough to produce death. Christ's one sacrifice, however, covers many offenses. If I sinned once yesterday and once again today, Christ's grace *abounded* to both sins. Two sacrifices were not needed for two offenses. In fact, this flow of *abounding* grace is ceaseless. Again, 5:15-16.

7. Don't miss the pinnacle of Paul's argument and the purpose of this supplement:

A. Sin and death *reigned*: 5:14, 17, and 21.

B. But now, grace *reigns through righteousness*: 5:21.

The reign of sin and the reign of grace are being contrasted. Grace abounds! Do we experience a consequence for personal sin in our lives? Absolutely. Do we need a fresh sacrifice for every sin? Absolutely not! Rejoice!

Why did God introduce Moses' Law? Notice 5:20 again. The law entered (Greek: entered secretly or in addition to, besides) that the offense might *abound*. The law was imposed on the reign of sin so that men might have a better standard than their own self-righteous consciences.

So, let's get down to correcting a common mistake we make when teaching on law and grace.

### THE COMMON MISUNDERSTANDING

#### A. The Problem Stated

When the discussion of law and grace come up, it is commonly said that *grace replaces the law*. We understand what folks mean because we know that the law has been done away and we do live in the time of grace. However...

When we say it this way we misunderstand the differing purposes of the law and grace. In a way we're mixing apples and oranges. We get the idea, for instance, that, if there had been no law, there would have been no need for grace. We then start viewing grace and law as opposites. "I'm not under the law, I'm under grace!"

#### B. The Problem Corrected

It is more in keeping with biblical truth to understand the differing purposes of law and grace.

1. Understand that there *is* a reign of sin which came about as a result of Adam's sin.
2. Understand that the law was brought alongside (it came in sideways or parallel to this reign of sin) in order for men to feel the full impact of this terrible reign.
3. Grace, through faith, nullifies the reign of sin.
4. Therefore, grace does not replace the law, it replaces or nullifies the reign of sin.

This is why the law is no longer necessary for men who have been made righteous through grace (1 Timothy 1:9). It has performed its function.

*Paul will soon make a striking argument. When we subject ourselves to the law it will excite our sinful natures, as it was intended to do, and thus, hinder us from enjoying abounding grace!*



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## UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP OF LAW AND GRACE

Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. – Romans 5:20-21

**Overview:** The word “entered” (Greek: *pareiserchomai*) means to come in secretly, to enter in addition to, to come in besides. The law was *brought alongside* the reign of sin to show men our sinfulness so that grace, rather than sin, could reign unto eternal life by our Lord Jesus Christ. The reign of the law did not replace the reign of sin. It only magnified it.

**A**

It is not wise simply to say that “Grace replaces Law”

LAW  GRACE

**B**

It is more in keeping with biblical truth to understand the *differing purposes* of law and grace:

1. First, understand that there is a *reign of sin* which came about as a result of Adam’s disobedience. Romans 5 explains this.

The Reign of Sin



2. Secondly, understand that the Law of Moses was *brought alongside* so that the offense (caused by the reign of sin) would abound. Romans 5, 6 and 7 expands this.

The Reign of Sin

The Law merely *magnifies* the consequence of the reign of sin.



3. Thirdly, grace through faith is *not* brought alongside the law. It nullifies both the *reign* of the law (Romans 7:1 ff) and the *reign* of sin (Romans 6:14) through Christ. Romans 8 expands this.

The Reign ~~X~~ of Sin

The Law merely ~~X~~ *magnifies* the consequence of the reign of sin.

The Reign of Grace  
*nullifies the reign of sin!*



**C**

**Conclusion:** Grace does not *replace* the law. It displaces it. Grace *nullifies* the reign of sin for those who receive it. For that reason, the law is no longer necessary. It has performed its function, to bring the hideous nature of sin and its consequences to our attention and “shut us up” unto Christ (Galatians 3:23).

The demands of the law must be eradicated completely in our Christian walk . We walk according to the law of liberty, not the law of condemnation which magnified our sins.



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NOTES OR QUESTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN WE GET TOGETHER:



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(S14) WATERSHEDS IN ROMANS 7

Calvinist and Arminian brethren have been debating Romans 7 since the Synod of Dort in 1618-19. Many attribute their falling out to the sparks this debate engendered. The question at the heart of the issue is “Who is the man in Romans 7?” Is he an unsaved person under the law, a saved person, or Paul himself? We will weigh in on this in our current lesson on Romans 7. Don’t miss it! Spoiler: *All three views are incorrect!*

Our hearts go out to those groups which infuse large doses of the law into their systems. At the top of this list are the Adventists, (whose doctrine of Investigative Judgment qualifies them as a works-based system). Many others also insist on *infusing* the law into their teaching. The works-based Amish, and many Mennonites are quick to do the same. We can even speak of some Baptist groups whose effort to command performance among their congregants has led them to place a disproportionate emphasis Old Testament teachings where the leaven of law dynamics may be generously infused.

They are not alone. Modern Calvinists have mashed the principles of law and grace so that neither can be clearly recognized, particularly in their exposition of the gospels. The motives of these groups are worthy. These teachers genuinely feel we must stem the tide of disobedience merchandised under the guise of grace. Hopefully, by pummeling their people with more guilt, they can bring them back into a pattern of holiness. “Guiltling” hasn’t worked for the Jews, it hasn’t worked for the Catholics, or even Baptists. It has never worked, and it never will.

Our purpose is not to denigrate other well meaning believers, or even, at this point to argue theology with them. Our intent is to take the same tack Paul used by setting up this challenge which we will lay down in just a bit.

## First, let’s lay the groundwork.

The proposition of this chapter is grounded in the maxim: *Dominions produce fruit*. Paul lists and com-

pares three dominions. They are summarized below.

### THREE DOMINIONS A Product Comparison

#### The Dominion of Physical Marriage

It is a dominion.  
It places married women (and men) under authority or bondage.  
It is permanent throughout life.  
It demands total attention to one mate.  
**It produces fruit. (When God ordains.)**  
It is broken by death.

#### The Dominion of the Law

It is a dominion.  
It places the marriage partner under authority or bondage.  
It is permanent throughout life.  
It demands total attention to itself.  
**It produces bad fruit (Romans 7:4-5).**  
It is broken by death.

#### The Dominion of Grace

It is a dominion.  
It places us under authority or bondage.  
It is permanent throughout life.  
It demands total attention.  
**It produces good fruit. (Romans 6:22)**  
It cannot be broken.

If you have already read Romans 7 you are going to see that Paul is going to make some very important points



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from this triple analogy. Most importantly, Paul is going to show the Jewish people that they would not be under bondage to the law if they are dead to it any more than a wife is under bondage to her husband if he is dead. By dying with Christ and being raised with Him, their marriage bond with the law was severed. We will leave that discussion for the lesson.

Instead, let's zero in on the issue of *fruit*. Dominions produce fruit. Fruit is assumed in marriage. We were born to reproduce (unless God ordains otherwise.) It is the natural, if not unstoppable order of events in healthy marriages.

**The dominion of the law produces fruit, bad fruit.** It brings out the worst in us, neutralizes us, and brings us to the conclusion that we can please neither God nor man. It is the perfect seed bed for anger and rebellion in the end, and results in no lasting eternal fruit.

**The dominion of grace produces good fruit.** We are taught about the spiritual birds and the bees in John 14 and in numerous other passages in the gospels and in the epistles. Fruit is a beautiful word. Most importantly, it comes as naturally as breathing for the believer who is walking in the principles of grace and allowing the Spirit of God to flow through him or her. We don't have to work it up, we don't have to gear up revival services to kick start it, and we don't have to guilt anyone making them wonder if they have prayed hard enough or done enough. Bearing "grace fruit" is as natural as bearing physical fruit. Both take time and maturation, but both are a simple result.

There is a caveat here. Peter explains that we must grow in grace (2 Peter 3:18) and we certainly must nurture our souls. Nonetheless, fruit will be inevitable, unless it is hindered by sin or by the imposition of our now dead former mate, the law.

Now, here is your twofold challenge:



## Look Outward

Don't take our theological word for it. Take a look into the everyday world.

Notice those groups and individuals that place heavy stress on rules and standards. They may put on a smiley face for special encounters, but you will soon notice a lack of real joy and real satisfaction.

We are not referring to the playground mentality we encounter in some gatherings where smiles are pasted over the faces of some leaders so as to gain a Pavlovian response among congregations who came for an emotional fix of one kind or another. We are speaking of the abiding joy which springs from the living water within, not externally.

The more works based people and groups are the more difficult it is to find genuinely happy people.



## Look Inward

Take a wellness check. Are you normally joyful, if not always happy?

Is there a satisfaction which emanates from within, despite dire circumstances? Don't chastise yourself if you don't have this joy. That will only make you even more despondent.

Learn the principle. The abiding life produces holy living. Holy living does not produce an abiding life. Holiness is the product of a living relationship. Holiness sought through any other means, produces emptiness and bondage in the soul.

*An unsatisfied life is an unfruitful life.*

## Bondage is good.

For those who fear we are teaching license, keep in mind, the right kind of *bondage* (such as in the dominions of marriage and grace) is a very good thing which produces a liberty all its own! We'll see this later in our study.



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

## (S15) CHOOSING YOUR TOOLS FOR MINING JEWELS

My father was very skilled with his hands and he loved his tools. I somehow missed the skill side of things in the genetic transfer, but he did succeed in passing on his love for tools. Fortunately, when it comes to Bible study, the Holy Spirit gladly provides the skill set for any who are serious about His Word. He has also provided a range of wonderful tools.

### OUR GOAL:

This particular Supplement is geared to improve our Bible study skills by focusing on the tools which are available to us. Please do not dig down too far in this study. If, however, you devote as much as an hour to it, your study leader will be ecstatic.

### OUR BURDEN:

The average Christian has been hoodwinked into thinking that study tools are for pastors, and public teaching must be kept at a childlike level. By keeping those cookies on the lower shelf, so to speak, we have nurtured up a whole generation of junk food believers who honestly think they are being nourished. Some even think their pastors are the hottest thing since sliced bread though they are being fed Pabulum!

When our spiritual hunger pangs come along, we may not even know how to nourish ourselves. We can't even "cook" - or so we think. We may begin by convincing ourselves that our pastor is a great Bible expositor (and he may well be.) We then declare that such expositional matters are too high for us and that we are, of all people, too ignorant to learn, or too busy with what the Bible calls *the cares of this world*.

Already, at this point, we have made some costly errors. Satan does not want us to know that we *can* study and understand the Word of God on our own because we have the Holy Spirit. He does not want us to know that scores of men have devoted their entire

lives in order to provide simple tools that we can all use when meditating on God's Word.

The fact that you are studying Romans and reading this material is proof that you have a hunger for God's Word. And, when you're ready, your pastor is ready to show you around the kitchen! Make his day and ask for his guidance along the way. In the meantime, we'll lay some foundations for good Bible study.

### OUR PLAN:

First, we'll provide a one page sampling of some of the many mining tools which are available to us.

Next, we'll provide a very short exercise for your use. We'll use the word righteousness from Romans 8:4, but you can choose any word from any passage you choose. You may not even choose to do the exercise at this time.

Finally, we'll show how those tools can benefit us by pasting (copying in) an example from the (free) online version of the Blue Letter Bible.

### THE TOOLS:

We have listed (on the following page) some tools or resources which are helpful for gaining good definitions of words. Remember, *definitions* are everything.

Of course, grammar is important, and there are many tools available for that study as well, but the first step in good Bible mining is to learn how to find good biblical definitions. Remember what we have already pointed out: Satan hates good definitions. He redefined what God said in the Garden of Eden and he has been twisting the words of God ever since.



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

## A Short Exercise

### Romans 8:1-4

1 There is therefore now no **condemnation** to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the **flesh**, but after the **Spirit**. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. 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: 4 That the **righteousness** of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

### Typical steps for studying the words of any passage.

*The words in bold in the passage above are just a few of the key words you would want to understand before making up your mind about this passage. We suggest using the word righteousness in 8:4:*

1. Select a word:
2. Using a concordance, find the Greek Word (write it in English) and the Strongs Number.
3. Using a concordance, provide a short definition of the word:

### 4. List on back if you choose - but mainly, just go over a, b, and c:

a. Using your concordance search for every appearance of this same Greek word:

For example, search for G1345 to find every occurrence of the word translated righteousness in our passage.

b. What other words in English are translated from this same Greek word?

c. If you can locate a lexicon (at home or online) please provide a lexical definition of the same word you looked up and comment on any differences between the concordance and the lexicon.

### Here's an example of what you will find with "righteousness."

*We highly recommend using the **Blue Letter Bible** if you need an Internet source. Listed below are some of the things we discovered as we looked at the word **righteousness** in **Romans 8:4**: Keep in mind, we found all this information with one quick check. Some entries will seem foreign at first, but just ask, ask, ask!*

**A. Greek:** δικαίωμα  
 Transliteration :dikaiōma  
 Pronunciation:dē-kī'ō-mā (Key)  
 Part of Speech :neuter noun

Root Word (Etymology)  
 From δικαίω (G1344)

### B. Dictionary Aids Vine's Expository Dictionary: (View entry online)

\*TDNT Reference: 2:219,168

**KJV Translation Count — Total:**  
 10x  
 The KJV translates Strongs G1345 in the following manner: righteousness (4x), ordinance (3x), judgment (2x), justification (1x).

Outline of Biblical Usage that which has been deemed right so as to have force of law what has been established, and ordained by law, an ordinance a judicial decision, sentence of God either the favourable judgment by which he acquits man and declares them acceptable to Him unfavourable: sentence of condemnation a righteous act or deed.

**Strong's Definitions** [?](Strong's Definitions Legend)  
 δικαίωμα dikaiōma, dik-ah'-yo-mah; from G1344; an equitable deed; by implication, a statute or decision:—judgment, justification, ordinance, righteousness.

**Thayer's Greek Lexicon**  
 G1345  
 (More online.)  
 (More online: / Phrase / Strong's Search.)

\*TDNT stands for The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. It is a primary research tool. We affectionately call this "Little Kittle" because it is a smaller version of Kittle's larger work.



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

## RESOURCES TO HELP WITH THE DEFINITION OF BIBLICAL WORDS

BASIC TOOLS FOR ALL PROSPECTORS.

### CONCORDANCES

A concordance is a listing of Bible words as they are found in your English Bible. For example, if you happen to have a King James Bible you would want a concordance *keyed* to that Bible or you might miss some words.

**Strong's Exhaustive Concordance** (in various states of improvement) is the most widely known and used concordance in the world. What makes the Strong's so helpful is its numbering system. Many tools and helps use the Strong's *numbers* for easy reference for folks who do not read Greek or Hebrews. No home should be without one.

**Young's Analytical Concordance** is just fine. It organizes its entries more on the topical side. Many prefer it.

Both Strong's and Young's concordances are reliable for good old fashioned study. However, we might call them *level one* tools. They are good for rough work, but not for "finish" work. This is because they rely more heavily on context (Biblical use of a term) than they rely upon classical, historical nuances.

### WORD STUDIES

Similar to lexicons (see below), word studies are keyed more to specific passages and appreciated much more by everyday Bible students. We might call them *level two* tools.

**Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words**, Vine

**Word Pictures in the New Testament**, Robertson (6 volumes).

**Word Studies in the Greek New Testament**, Wuest (4 volumes). Easy, but does not cover whole N.T.

### LEXICONS

Lexicons would be more like *level three* tools. Unlike a concordance, a lexicon is organized according to the Greek, Hebrew, or Aramaic words underlying the English translation. While the name sounds intimidating, Lexicons (especially when keyed to Strong's Words) are not difficult to use, but they do vary in complexity. Unlike a concordance, a lexicon derives its definitions from a wider range of historical and grammatical sources in addition to taking biblical usage into account. In short, every Bible student wants to begin with concordance, graduate to word studies, and grow into a good lexicon. They are wonderful tools. Make your pastor's day and ask him to get you started using a lexicon! Here are three lexicons, ranging from easy to advanced:

**Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament**, Thayer

**A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament**, Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich

**The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament**, Moulton and Milligan

### GOOD NEWS

Many of the aforementioned tools are freely available online and some can even be downloaded!





# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

NOTES OR QUESTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN WE GET TOGETHER:



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

(S16) RELATING JUSTIFICATION, BAPTISM, AND ADOPTION

Several of our Session notes underscore the heavy emphasis this Bible teacher places on the doctrine of Spirit adoption. Sadly, many believers limit the idea of adoption to the idea that we, as orphans, have been placed into God's family. In reality, we have been born into the family of God (John 3:3, 3:7; 1 Peter 1:23). Biblical adoption has far more to do with our forensic (legal) rights and privileges and with our family responsibilities. In this supplement, we camp on Galatians 3 and 4, and make an effort to explain just how justification, Spirit baptism, and Spirit adoption relate to each other. We will do this in three steps. (The third page will combine them all.)

## OUR KEY TRUTH

You were children, with no more rights than the slave children. Now, you have been appointed sons with all the rights and privileges of sonship! Galatians 3:23-4:28. *[Note, we are stacking these diagrams to show the flow from justification to Spirit baptism, to adoption (though these occur simultaneously at our conversion.)]*

### STEP ONE

#### The Essentials of Justification

- Scan our passage while counting occurrences for the word **faith**: \_\_\_\_\_
- Scan our passage while counting occurrences for the word **promise**: \_\_\_\_\_
- Scan our passage while counting occurrences for the word **seed**: \_\_\_\_\_

**Definition:** Justification is the act by which God declares us *righteous*.

- Justification is *promise* based.
- Justification is *faith* based.
- The promise of justification was actually made to Christ through Abraham.
- By being placed in Christ (through Calvary), we avail ourselves of this promise made to Abraham and his Seed (Christ).
- We are justified *once and for all*. It is always referred to in the aorist tense in Greek.

*Some passages in Romans which correspond directly:*

**Faith:** 1:5,8,12,17; 3:3, 22, 25,27,28,30-31; 4:5, 9, 11-14, 16,19-20; 5:1-2

**Promise:** 1:2; 4:13-14,16, 20-21; 9:4, 8-9; 15:8

**Seed:** 4:13,16,18; 9:7-8; 29

(We will move to the second step on the next page.)

*Reminder:* Our justification is a *legal* declaration based upon our reception of the promise of God by faith. Our righteousness has been imputed or reckoned to our account (Romans 4:3). This is a once-for-all declaration. The Bible does NOT teach that justification is metered out or *infused* on the basis of our obedience. In fact, the Bible warns us that if we rely on obedience (works) for our justification, we only add to our debt.

**Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. - Romans 4:4**



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

## STEP TWO

Our Justification provides for our Spirit Baptism

### 1. The Essentials of Justification - Our Justification is the result of resting in God's promise.

- a. Scan our passage while counting occurrences for the word **faith**: \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Scan our passage while counting occurrences for the word **promise**: \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Scan our passage while counting occurrences for the word **seed**: \_\_\_\_\_

*Some passages in Romans which correspond directly:*

**Faith:** 1:5,8,12,17; 3:3, 22, 25,27,28,30-31; 4:5, 9, 11-14, 16,19-20; 5:1-2

**Promise:** 1:2; 4:13-14,16, 20-21; 9:4, 8-9; 15:8

**Seed:** 4:13,16,18; 9:7-8; 29

**Definition:** Justification is the act by which God declares us *righteous*.

- a. Justification is *promised* based.
- b. Justification is *faith* based.
- c. The promise of justification was actually made to Christ through Abraham.
- d. By being placed in Christ (through Calvary), we avail ourselves of this promise made to Abraham and his Seed (Christ).
- e. We are justified *once and for all*. It is always referred to in the aorist tense in Greek.

### 2. The Essentials of Spirit Baptism - Our Justification assures our Spirit baptism

**Definition:** Spirit Baptism is the act whereby the Spirit of God places us into the body of Christ literally making us new creations (2 Corinthians 5:17). This is a spiritual work of Christ through the agency of the Spirit.

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. - 1 Corinthians 12:13

*This baptism assures:*

- (1.) Our *identity* in Christ
- (2.) Our *position* in Christ
- (3.) Our *reciprocal union* with Christ.
- (4.) Our *equal access* to the promises or covenants of God

*Note:* Our *personal* and *practical righteousness* is the result of our union with Christ and it is evidenced by our obedience.

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. - Galatians 3:26-28

Students who wish to dig deeper will want to study the Old Testament promises associated with the giving of the New Covenant. The Holy Spirit is predominant in the prophecies concerning the New Covenant and He is the key to understanding it. Compare Ezekiel 36:26 and Jeremiah 31:31-34 with 2 Corinthians 3 and 4.

This prophesied baptism of the Holy Spirit imbues each believer with divine enablement for his walk in Christ and gifts him for ministry. By all means, read and meditate upon 1 Corinthians 12.

(We now move to the third step in our study.)



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

## STEP THREE

Our Spirit baptism authenticates and effects our Spirit adoption.

### 1. The Essentials of Justification - Our Justification is the result of resting in God's promise.

- a. Scan our passage while counting occurrences for the word **faith**: \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Scan our passage while counting occurrences for the word **promise**: \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Scan our passage while counting occurrences for the word **seed**: \_\_\_\_\_

*Some passages in Romans which correspond directly:*

**Faith:** 1:5,8,12,17; 3:3, 22, 25,27,28,30-31; 4:5, 9, 11-14, 16,19-20; 5:1-2

**Promise:** 1:2; 4:13-14,16, 20-21; 9:4, 8-9; 15:8

**Seed:** 4:13,16,18; 9:7-8; 29

**Definition:** Justification is the act by which God declares us *righteous*.

- a. Justification is promised based.
- b. Justification is faith based.
- c. The promise of justification was actually made to Christ through Abraham.
- d. By being placed in Christ (through Calvary), we avail ourselves of this promise made to Abraham and his Seed (Christ).
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*Note:* Our *personal and practical righteousness* is the result of our union with Christ and it is evidenced by our obedience.

**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. - Galatians 3:26-28**

### 3. The Essentials of Spirit Adoption - Our Spirit baptism into Christ places us as adult sons.

**Definition:** Spirit adoption is the work of the Holy Spirit whereby we are officially placed as sons, an action that begins with our placement in Christ and consummating with our full redemption. Romans 8:15-23

#### Spirit Adoption

- (1.) Frees us from bondage to the elements (first principles) of the world. Gal. 4:1-4
- (2.) Redeems us unto the adoption of sons. Gal. 4:5
- (3.) Frees the Holy Spirit to administer the Father-son relationship in us. Gal. 4:6
- (4.) Gives us immediate access to the inheritance. Gal. 4:7
- (5.) Demonstrates the insanity of returning to the bondage of the world's first principles. Col. 2:8,20



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

NOTES OR QUESTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN WE GET TOGETHER:



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

(S17) THE BIBLE AND WESTERN COSMOLOGY

Don't be intimidated by the strange sounding title. When we speak of cosmology we are discussing the study of the origin and development of the universe. *While this supplement is entirely optional and requires no work we hope you'll take the time to get a handle on this all important subject.*

## OUR COSMOLOGICAL FIRST PRINCIPLE

It is appropriate to lay our "cosmological" foundations at this point in our study of Romans, because Paul addresses a fundamental point in Romans 8:21-22:

**Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travailleth in pain together until now.**

Pay particular attention to the words we have underlined. Our entire creation is in a state of "together change" moving forward (as in the travail of a mother in delivery) toward the coming Day of the Lord. The term "beginning of sorrows" (Matthew 24:8 and Mark 13:8) are also unique terms which refer to the birth pangs associated with delivery.

When the Bible speaks of the creation, both directly and metaphorically, it makes it clear that sin has actually permeated the creation itself. Bildad commented that even the moon and the stars are not pure in God's sight (Job 25:5). A close study of the doctrine of the Kinsman Redeemer will reveal that this whole creation is under the curse, and will one day be judged (Revelation 4-19). While God will never again destroy the earth by water, it will certainly be destroyed. Peter announces that this destruction will be at the elemental level. The elements (or first building blocks) of the entire creation will melt or be dissolved with a fervent heat: 2 Peter 3:10-13:

**But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise,**

**and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?**

Some Bible teachers believe that "new means new" and that God will annihilate the old creation and provide us with an entirely new, unrelated creation. Others, like myself, are called by the unseemly title "renovationists." In a word, we see the creation as going through the redemptive process and experiencing its own resurrection (so to speak) from the seeds of its destruction, just as Paul described that we ourselves in our own physical redemption, will be resurrected from a seed of our bodies (1 Corinthians 15:42ff). We believe that, just as sin infected the whole creation, so God's redemption will restore it after its abysmal destruction.

We hope you do not toss and turn, losing a night's sleep over this issue. We see through a glass darkly. But, of this, all parties in the discussion should be very sure, this creation, just like our bodies, is waiting for the grand *adoption!* (Romans 8:21-22)

When looking at this passage and 2 Peter 3 we realize another very important point, concerning which we cannot be so tolerant. We must permanently do away with the pervasive idea that there is a *constant* of any kind in the creation. Only God is constant.

## THE WORLD'S COSMOLOGICAL FIRST PRINCIPLE: UNIFORMITARIANISM

In an effort to free Greece from the existential despair into which it had plunged the ancient philosophers sought to rebuild their epistemology (system of knowing)



## STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

by embracing a single basic assumption or *first principle*. They declared that somewhere, at some level, there was a constant in the creation and that from that constant we could build all of our disciplines of learning. Our entire western scientific mindset is based on this uniformitarian premise, and to this day, we are chasing the ever elusive “god particle” in the effort to locate that constant.

What, in actuality, has science experienced? It has discovered that the entire universe, both organic *and* inorganic, is in varying degrees of change at all times. Only God is unchanging. The processes the Lord Jesus Christ uses to carry the universe forward are often consistent and predictable, but they are not, by any means etched in stone. Jesus Christ is upholding (carrying forward as in a birth) all things, both physical and spiritual. (Hebrews 1:3).

Science, so called, has fabricated the theory of evolution in order to accommodate this otherwise inexplicable change. In one fell swoop, it observes changes in living things and, pronounces that they are all driven through natural selection, a mystical force that drives all species forward.

Scientific postulations in the world of inorganic evolution are even more preposterous. For example, no generation has been subjected to more fantasy than this generation which endures the pontifications of theoretical astrophysicists! Remember, pure scientists are empirical. They are secular materialists. Take the time to look these terms up if you need to. The first pages of every modern science textbook include a commitment to the gospel of uniformitarianism - *the principle of constancy intrinsic to the creation*. Without it, there can be no science as we know it.

### ROME’S LATER ADOPTION OF UNIFORMITARIANISM.

The seeds of western philosophy/science were initially obscured as a result of the spread of the gospel. As a result of its rapid growth many came into “the church”

out of philosophical and “scientific” backgrounds. As might be expected over time, their views and the initial views of a once biblical church conflicted.

As the gap between secular and religious thought widened, an extremely brilliant and prolific theologian named Thomas Aquinas entered the scene in the thirteenth century. His school of thought (Thomisian theology) would change the Catholic church forever. **Aquinas argued that because God is unchanging, His creation must, of necessity, be unchanging.** In a word, his love for the great philosophers prompted him to reintroduce the notion of a constant in the creation.

As a result of the impact of Aquinas a series of new notions came into play. The Roman Catholic church, from this point forward, would include multiple authorities (rather than the Bible only) into their teaching. Aquinas’ conclusion necessitated this. Philosophy and science (natural revelation) were placed on an *even plane* with the Word of God.

It does not take a Bible student long to figure out that these conflicting sources of “revelation” would lead to inevitable confusion. How then, would Rome resolve these issues? It would determine its path by means of the Magisterium, the combined input of the pope, his faithful bishops, scholars, and even the holy wisdom of the full body of Catholics.

### OUR LAST DAYS WARNING

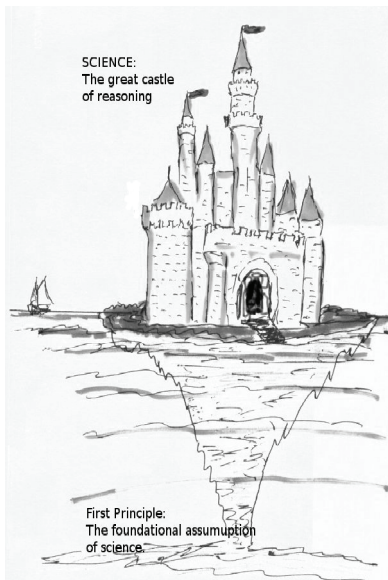
What does the Bible say? Peter warned us that coming last day false prophets would deny the biblical promise of the destruction of the creation by using this very argument - *that the universe itself is unchanging (or eternal.)* 2 Peter 3:3-4:

**Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.**



## STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

Peter, of course continues with a magnificent argument, reminding false teachers that God has already proven that He has interrupted the processes of nature and that these liars are willingly ignorant of the evidence God has left behind, specifically, the universal flood. Further, God will most certainly destroy the



entire creation in the Day of the Lord.

**The world's first principle:  
There is an eternal constant in the creation.**  
*Image: Courtesy of Godsridle.org*

How can intelligent, and well meaning people, buy such silly nonsense that natural selection can account for the so called forward movement of “evolution”? How can they swallow their constantly self-contradictory dating notions? How can they tolerate the foolish astrophysical schemes which multiply almost weekly? It all goes back to a first principle gone awry. God alone is eternal and unchanging. Their minds are in bondage or imprisoned by their first principle, so they discard anything which does not fit as error.

There simply is no constant in the universe. Your constant, your first principle, is the unchanging God revealed in the unchanging person of Jesus Christ!

Victor McAllister, at Godsridle.org has stated it succinctly:

Paul warned in Colossians 2:8 of several things that can take us prisoner (Greek sulagogeo). Watch out for philosophy, empty deceit, the teaching of men and the rudimentary principles of the orderly system (stoicheia tou kosmou). Stoicheia are elementary principles that serve as a foundation for a structured way of thinking. People can be enslaved by their passions, their religions and their way of thinking. Our minds can also be imprisoned by the elementary assumptions of philosophy.





# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

NOTES OR QUESTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN WE GET TOGETHER:



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

(S18) THINGS ADOPTION TEACHES US

If you have already taken a peek at Session 18, you will see we left some unfinished work at the end of the session. This Supplement picks up on the end of the session...

Our goal is to have the student take the remaining portion of the lesson (included below) and meditate on the associated verses. Follow down through the outline, meditate on each passage and, if at all possible, refer to a concordance, commentary or set of notes! (Consider asking your pastor for resources.) Remember, a good way to open up a passage is simply to ask it questions. You know; the old “who, what, when, where, and why” thing. Don’t forget to ask the Lord for insight.

*Please read and be prepared to discuss these remaining verses as group study time allows. If you prefer, you may write your notes on the actual lesson page (Session 18) for easier use in class.*

## **c. Adoption teaches us why the Father protects us. Romans 8: 31-34**

1.) There is no greater defender. 8:31

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

*What comes to mind?*

2.) There is no greater defense. 8: 32

**2 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?**

*What comes to mind?*

3.) There are no rightful accusers. 8:3,34

**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.**

*What comes to mind?*

d. Adoption teaches us what causes the father to preserve us. 8: 35-39

*What comes to mind?*

NOTES OR QUESTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN WE GET TOGETHER:



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

## (S19) UNDERSTANDING THE COVENANTS

### Romans 9: 4-5:

Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

Israel has despised her birthright. She was raised “with a silver spoon in her mouth.” She had been given all best advantages. Instead of responding with waves of gratitude, she saw herself as the privileged and entitled, albeit rebellious, child. As a result, she has endured the stern disciplining hand of God.

Included in the list of Israel’s wonderful advantages, are *the covenants*. Our unchanging God has spoken to us through His unchanging Word and blessed us with unchanging promises. The super promises (super because they extend to men and their seed over long periods of time) are called covenants. The individual who does not understand the covenants will never understand the works and ways of God among men. Just as one can drive a car without understanding it, one can surely be saved without understanding the covenants. However, to confess ignorance of how these covenants relate to each other is to confess ignorance and complacency about God’s plan for the world and God’s plan for us as individuals. Let’s put an end to the dire talk, and occupy ourselves with a primer on the covenants! Remember, this is a brief overview. For a full treatment of the summarizations we make below we invite you to visit [MyNewCovenantLife.com](http://MyNewCovenantLife.com). You will find hours and hours of thorough support for these general statements.

Take a good look at the chart you will find at the end of this Supplement. It records the covenants of God. When viewed in relationship to each other we see they form the basis for the plan and program of God, for both Jews and Gentiles, throughout history. We’ll walk through this chart by examining the numbers 1-8.

### 1. The Timeline

This chart is about the covenants. The numeral 1 is bottom center on the chart on a line which stretches pretty much between the left and the right. It represents the whole timeline of history, from the fall of Adam to the eternal state. All of the boxes above it build on this timeline. Many (including this teacher) believe that this timeline should be extended a bit to the left so that it includes the time when Adam was in the Garden and quite possibly governed by the Edenic Covenant. We leave that discussion for another time.

### 2. The Adamic Covenant (Inferred)

Note the next box as we move upward. It represents all of history and represents the basic, elemental terms by which God has accepted worship in any age. We believe God has never left man in the dark. From the very beginning of Genesis we see that men embraced the principles of sacrifice, the notion of priestly leadership, and the fundamental principle that God deals with men through promises to men and their seed. We *infer* that a covenant between God and Adam was in place because we see these elements already in place as though they had been there from the beginning. For that reason, we call this the Adamic Covenant even though the Bible



## STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

does not specifically speak of a covenant with Adam. Because these same elements form the basis of all of God's dealings with man for all time, we say that this covenant is *ongoing* and foundational to all future covenants.

### 3. Noahic Covenant

The number 3 is to the left of the box entitled Noahic Covenant. This covenant is specifically called a covenant in scriptures, and was clearly said to be everlasting. It is still very much in effect at this hour between God and the entire creation, Noah and his seed, and all other living things. If you inhabit planet earth you are under this covenant to this very hour. You would be wise to understand its blessings and warnings as they are recorded in Genesis 9.

### 4. The Abrahamic Covenant

The Abrahamic Covenant is the key covenant of the Old Testament which outlines all of God's dealings with both Jews and Gentiles from that time forward until the end of time as we know it.

While aspects of the Abrahamic covenant relate to both Jews and Gentiles, the Jews, in particular, traced their physical lineage to Abraham and claimed him as their "father."

Notice how large the box is which includes the Abrahamic Covenant. This is because all future covenants were based specifically upon it. One cannot overestimate the importance of this everlasting covenant upon which the doctrine of justification by faith is founded and defended for both Jew and Gentile.

### 5. 6. The Palestinian and Davidic Covenants

Numerals 5 and 6 represent the Palestinian and Davidic Covenants respectively. These represents benefits given specifically to Israel regarding their rights to the "holy land," the terms of their occupation of the land, and the promise of the perpetuity of David's throne and kingdom.

It may come as a surprise to some that we have included these covenants alongside the Abrahamic Covenant instead of alongside the Mosaic Covenant (yet to be discussed.) That is because these promises are not based upon the Mosaic Covenant even though they were given after the giving of Moses' Covenant. These promises were given in perpetuity and are unchanging.

### 7. The Mosaic Covenant

Unlike any of the previous covenants, the special covenant (Mosaic Covenant) given to Moses was only temporary. It was given for a specific period of time for a specific intended purpose. Its purpose was to show Israel her sin and to shut her up unto Christ as her only option.

Notice that the box surrounding the Mosaic Covenant is dotted rather than solid. This is to remind us that this covenant was temporary and that it has now been abolished, or done away.

### 8. The New Covenant (Keyed on Christ)

The New Covenant has to be the most fascinating of all covenants because, instead of being written on tables of stone (like the Mosaic Covenant) it is expressed in the Person of Christ. When you and I come to know Christ we are placed in Him and He in us. Because we have this indwelling Christ, we have the New Covenant written on the fleshly tables of our own heart.


As a result of this union we become heir to all of the promises made to Christ. Jesus Christ has not yet realized all of the promises made to Him. The Bible says He would first come as the suffering servant, during which time He (and we) would become a light to the Gentiles. After that, He will return and restore the kingdom to Israel.

These two phases of Christ's ministry play out in the present church age as He continues His ministry to the nations through us. In the second phase of His ministry, He will carry out the rest of the redemptive scheme as reigning King.



# STUDENT SUPPLEMENT

## GOD'S COVENANT PROMISES AS RECORDED THROUGHOUT HISTORY

P E R I O D O F I N N O C E N C E	Period or Age of Conscience	Period or Age of Human Government	Period or Age of Promise	Period or Age of Law	Period or Age of Grace	Period or Age of Kingdom
				Israel – God's Witness	(Church – God's Witness)	Israel Again
					<b>8.</b>  (The Lord Jesus Christ administers this New Covenant in two phases.)	
		<b>7.</b>		<b>Mosaic Covenant – 2 Cor. 3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administers the Abrahamic</li> <li>• Tables of Stone</li> <li>• Temporary Purpose</li> <li>• Was abolished</li> </ul>	<b>N.C. The Suffering Servant Phase – Jer. 31:31</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Light to the Gentiles – Isa. 49:6</li> <li>• Messiah ministers through His body (temple) in His physical absence. - Col. 1:24-29)</li> </ul>	<b>N.C. The Reigning King Phase - Isa 49:7-8</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Messiah's justice thru Israel's throne.</li> </ul>
		<b>4.</b> <b>5.</b> <b>6.</b>		<b>Abrahamic Covenant</b> - Principles of land ownership and blessings through Abraham and his Seed through Isaac for the blessing of many nations. This is an <i>everlasting</i> covenant. Genesis 12, 15, & 17:1-8. Its <i>land aspect</i> is amplified in the Palestinian Covenant and <i>throne aspect</i> in the Davidic Covenant.		
	<b>3.</b>	<b>Noahic Covenant</b> - Principles of landlord obligation, blood required, and promise extended through seed. Incumbent upon all, but many argue that authority for human government arises from this covenant. Gen. 9:1-17				
	<b>Adamic Covenant</b> - Principles of sacrifice, prophets and priests, and God's promise to and through seed are unveiled. Its dynamics are seen in future covenants. (Inferred from Gen. 4:5, etc.). <b>2.</b>					
	<b>1.</b>					
	<i>The Fall</i>	<i>Noah</i>	<i>Abraham</i>	<i>Moses</i>	<i>Christ</i>	<i>The Millennium</i>

Note: This Bible teacher associates each new Dispensational *time period* with the giving of a covenant. However, unlike many Dispensationalists, he sees a Dispensation as the household administration of a covenant, *not* a time period.

### A Final Consideration

It is extremely important for the New Testament (Covenant) believer to understand that the New Covenant is in place, although we have not yet fully realized all of the prophesied blessings of this Covenant. We long for the day when our Lord will return in power and glory to inherit David's earthly throne as promised to Him by the Father (Isaiah 49:6-8).

When we are ambivalent about Israel in Bible prophecy we are ambivalent toward Jesus Christ, the one to whom these promises were made.

Equally as important, when we ignore what Jesus Christ is doing at this very moment we miss our place in the body of Christ and we miss our continuing role as a light to the nations! This is not the day for bringing the kingdom in. Jesus Christ will do that single handedly! This is the day for reaching out to the nations! Is your heart vested in becoming a light to the nations? (Acts 13:46-48,15:14-18).



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NOTES OR QUESTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN WE GET TOGETHER:



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(S20) THE BIBLE AND LORDSHIP SALVATION

Our corresponding session (Session 20) treats the important issue of Lordship Salvation in Romans 10:9-10 at a basic group study level which is adequate for most folks. However, because this issue has become so divisive in the body of Christ, we offer a deeper treatment of it here.

This supplement is optional. **You are not required to study this issue at this time in your study of Romans if you do not feel the need.** Just try to remember that it is here for a future day. Be advised that, unlike most of the rest of our study, this study names individuals and includes footnotes for further examination. These names are not included to personalize the issue or to present any brother in Christ in an unfair way.

*“Lordship Salvation - If it Walks Like a Mallard, it’s Still a Duck”*

Hebrews 12:15

Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

Charles Spurgeon, a Calvinistic brother in Christ once wrote:

*“Beloved, in fighting with sin without and within, with error doctrinal or practical, with spiritual wickedness in high places or low places, with devils and the devil’s allies, you are waging Jehovah’s war, and unless he himself can be worsted, you need not fear defeat.”<sup>1</sup>*

As imperfect as Spurgeon was, few were more willing than he to take on the error of his day. I love the quote from his own autobiography: *“He who would make himself a lamb will find there are always wolves.”*

American believers have bought the pacifist, peace at any price, dogma of our culture. Sound churches are closing everywhere for want of members who have

rushed off to disobedient church models, and a desperate shortage of men to fill remaining conservative pulpits. During the past year, two once solid Baptist Bible Colleges closed up shop, after making last ditched efforts to accommodate a disobedient culture.

In each of these cases, the *first* finger must be pointed, not at those who destroyed these churches and schools, but at the feet of Bible teaching pastors and leaders who, in the name of peace, and for the sake of better attendances and enrollments, *remained silent* while these subtle changes came about.

Fifty years ago the doctrine of Lordship salvation was restricted primarily to Reformed churches. It crept in sideways (through godly men, and under the guise of being an antidote to shallow religion) and has long since gone virtually unchallenged. Once Dr. John MacArthur (the darling of the baby boomers and the millennial generation) skyrocketed into fame there was no stopping Lordship salvation. Those of us who have opposed it have been vilified, accused by MacArthur for being antinomian, and teaching a false gospel. Most importantly, we have been isolated and provincialized.

**Our proposition:** Lordship salvation is a false teaching which melds works and grace in a dangerous concoction which nullifies the work of grace by laying a thin works-based veneer over it. It is both misleading and disobedient to use Christ’s requirements for *discipleship* as requirements for the repentance that leads unto salvation. In so doing we profane the gospel of Christ.

## The Origins of Lordship Salvation

Interestingly, before we can define this term we have to talk about its origins.

**a. Lordship salvation did originate among the Reformed writers.** It can be traced back to early American preaching or as far back as Augustine, however, it is not universally accepted among Reformed teachers.





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Reformed writers take both sides on this issue because (like all the other elements in their TULIP) it is contradictory. In the purest of Reformed minds, one must be secretly regenerated by the Spirit before he can do anything. Thus, to be required to own the Lordship of Christ prior to being regenerated is impossible. This is one reason why so many Calvinistic teachers reject Dr. John MacArthur as a Calvinist.

**b. Contemporary Lordship salvation is primarily a twentieth century phenomenon.** As a result of the so-called Second Great Awakening in the 18th Century and the evangelism of Finney and his successors, a brand of evangelism arose which was geared more at marketing, rather than true conversion of the soul. Salvation was presented as a sign-on-the dotted line offer. As a result, there were many superficial decisions for Christ which were, for want of a better term, content-less, and certainly conviction-less.

**c. In the 20th Century, John MacArthur made Lordship salvation central to his teaching on salvation.** Extreme evangelistic abuse opened the door for a pendulum swing. Though MacArthur did not prefer to use the term, he taught it by returning to the Reformed tradition of eisegetically leveraging the teachings of Christ in the gospels regarding discipleship in order to formulate what he calls a hard gospel or a gospel hard to believe.

### Defining Lordship Salvation

#### a. The Problem with Ambiguity

In order to deal with Lordship salvation we must preface our remarks with a few paragraphs regarding ambiguity.

**1). MacArthurean ambiguity.** There is a great deal of confusion regarding this discussion because John MacArthur (its key spokesman) is *intentionally ambiguous* in his teaching style. Regardless of the area under consideration, anyone who has ever debated anything from John MacArthur has heard the protest “*But you are taking him out of context!*” What folks

miss, is that MacArthur intentionally *speaks out of context*, has no problem with making mutually contradictory statements because the practice is based on this theology. In his world, because God is transcendent we must *expect* contradictions in the Bible. In practice this means that we may rightfully preach what we see in a passage and feel no great compunction to reconcile it with other passages. For those who have never been exposed to this issue, we invite you to visit this URL for a starting point in the discussion: <http://examiningcalvinism.blogspot.com/2007/04/contradictions-in-bible.html> As an aside, it should be understood that Dispensationalists believe there is a divinely ordained tension between God’s sovereignty and man’s responsibility, but that this is *not* seen as contradictory.

Was Jesus ambiguous and hard to understand at times? The answer is no, and yes, in that order. What is the difference between Jesus’ teaching and MacArthur’s? The difference is that Jesus’ teaching may be hard to understand at times, but it *can be reconciled*. It is neither ambiguous nor self-contradictory. The Father’s transcendence did not make the Son’s message ambiguous.

**2). Generational ambiguity.** Another form of ambiguity represents an even greater threat to sound Bible teaching. Off the cuff remarks, sloppy definitions, and the mashing of terms which need critical definition is the order of our day. This new disrespect for truth in our culture is the immediate result of relativism and post modern thought which perceives reality as anything but absolute. No one has mastered this more than the political world and the media. Sadly, however, we saw it creep into our universities fifty years ago, and into our Christian schools and churches during the last twenty five years. We see churches now being “transitioned” through synthetic processes, supporters being told that nothing has changed when everything has, and the list goes on.<sup>2</sup>

This lack of commitment to absolute truth has led to a new rhetoric and a new hermeneutic among God’s people. Repentance and faith are seen as two



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sides of the same coin! Discipleship and “believership” are seen as one and the same thing! Doctrinal issues are not treated on the basis of right and wrong, but on a relative scale or a spectrum.

In this respect John MacArthur represents his generation as he also rejects strict definitions. Consider this example in his own words where he criticizes Dispensationalists: “...*an almost obsessive desire to categorize everything neatly has led various dispensationalist interpreters to draw hard lines not only between the church and Israel, but also between salvation and discipleship, the church and the kingdom, Christ’s preaching and the apostolic message, faith and repentance, and the age of law and the age of grace.*”

The Word of God is a book of absolutes and contains no “doctrinal spectrums”. Truths must be taught in their totality. These are hard lines. Worse, the next generation will use this same sloppy hermeneutic to blur even more doctrinal lines and move us toward an even more toxic doctrinal morass.

Truths must be taught equally (in a balanced manner) but no truth should ever be used to “balance” another truth. God balanced His truth when He gave it to us and does not allow us the option of over or under-stressing any truth, even in times when another truth is being over or under-stressed. Grace, and law, for example cannot be balanced. Grace fulfills the intent of the law, but is neither mixed with it nor balanced against it.

### **b. Lordship salvation defined.**

*Definition: Lordship salvation embraces the argument that one is not saved merely by agreeing to the facts of salvation. One must believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and must yield to Christ as Lord of his life.*

Teachers on all sides of this issue agree that agreeing to the facts of salvation does not save anyone. Most all agree that salvation does produce a change in the life. That point is rarely disputed. Most also agree that Jesus Christ should be proclaimed as Lord. Of course,

there are evangelists who have violated these truths, but they do not represent a consensus, they represent a radical, disobedient fringe.

### **Refuting Lordship Salvation.**

There are good and noble reasons why some embrace Lordship. At first blush, the above definition sounds innocent and even needed in our culture where evangelistic abuse is prevalent, especially in certain circles in the south.

#### **a.) The wrong diagnosis leads to the wrong prescription.**

Lordship salvation seems like a *rational* antidote. If making the gospel “too easy” has resulted in false conversions, then preaching and teaching a “harder” gospel, will insure more genuine conversions. We all know far too many folks who have “done it,” gone through someone’s plan, walked an aisle, and now assume they are “saved,” when there is no evidence of spiritual life in them.

The problem is that one cannot make the gospel easy or hard. We must simply present it. And in fact, because salvation is by grace through faith, and not of ourselves, it is very easy indeed to come to know Christ. I came to know Christ when I was four years old, an event which consistent Lordship people would insist is impossible. One cannot *make* the gospel easy or hard, but one can strip the gospel of its content or add contaminants to it.

Some have assumed that too many superficial decisions have been made because the gospel is easy. You will never find the term “easy believism” in your Bible because, from God’s point of view, there is no such thing. So then, why are there so many superficial decisions? Among the many answers we could provide, there are two which stand out very well.

*1.) Superficial believers exist because the Bible teaches that there always will be superficial responses to the Word of God.*



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Matthew 13 teaches us the dynamics of the ministry of sowing the Word of God and reminds us that stony ground Christians will abound (Matthew 13:1-9). Superficial believers exist because of superficial responses to the ministry of the sower. They are inevitable because men like to be accepted as being religious and, like Simon, want to enjoy the benefits which come with that acceptance. Hard ground, thorny ground, stony ground, and fertile ground will always exist.

2.) *Superficial believers exist because many “believe in vain.”*

Unlike “easy believism” the term believing in vain occurs in our Bibles. It is always in reference to those who have *failed to appropriate the grace of God*. Salvation is a matter of appropriation. Faith is a matter of appropriation. We change our minds about what God says and we appropriate what He has provided - by faith. The only labor or work associated with the gospel is laboring to enter into the rest of belief (Hebrews 4:10-11).

### **b.) A False Antidote Presents a False Dilemma**

When Lordship people present the gospel their logic goes a predictable line. David Platt (one of our contemporary Lordship advocates) tells of his interview with a Muslim woman as he confronts her with the claims of Christ.<sup>3</sup> With fear in her eyes, she asks “How do I become a Christian?” At this point Platt says:

*“You have two options in your response to Ayan. You can tell her how easy it is to become a Christian. If Ayan will simply assent to certain truths and repeat a particular prayer, she can be saved. That’s all it takes.*

*“Your second option is to tell Ayan the truth. You can tell Anan that in the gospel, God is calling her to die. Literally. To die to her life. To die to her family. To die to her friends. To die to her future. And in dying, to live. To live in Jesus. To live part of a global family that includes every tribe....”* and so on.

Now let me ask you. Which of those options are true?

The answer is, both are absolute lies. Both are perverse. Both are *false presentations of the gospel*. No one has ever been saved, by dying to self, by dying to sin, by dying to family and by dying to friends. In fact, no unbeliever CAN die to himself, because he is already dead in his sins. One cannot fully surrender a sinful will. The call to die for Christ is given to believers. It is a call to discipleship. It is NOT a call to salvation.

David Platt, at that point in his book, is presenting the gospel falsely. And consider this, as a small child, it might possibly terrify me to hear that I had to give up family, friends, and even my life to accept Jesus. That fear alone, might keep me from Christ. As an adult, that same call might even appeal to my flesh, suggesting I can earn salvation through sacrifice. When we hint that we can have eternal life if we are willing to sacrifice all and die for Christ, we sound a whole lot more like Islam than Christ.

### **c.) The Mashing of Repentance and Faith**

There are very few facts which cannot be stretched into lies and the teaching of repentance. To repent, in its strictest sense, means to change our mind. Changing the way we think, in most cases, changes the way we behave. This is because our minds, our emotions, and our actions are all related to our hearts. When a man receives Christ he repents. He agrees with what God says about his sin, about Jesus Christ, and about salvation.

The more aware we are of our sin, the more emotional or terrified we may be. The less aware we are of the significance of our sin, the less emotional we may be. In that respect, no man can be saved who has not repented and changed his mind about what God says and what God requires. Repentance, however, is qualitative, not quantitative. No one need ever ask, How sorry do I have to be for my sins? When will I know I have been sorry enough to get saved?

This is no small problem. Over the years I have heard many lost souls tell me, “I agree with what you are saying, but I still don’t feel the need to get saved.” They



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may not feel the need, but God still commands them to get saved. It's that simple. God commands all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30). This is not, however, what our Lordship salvation friends are teaching us.

Lordship people are telling us that repentance and faith are two sides of the same coin. They are not. They are mashing the definitions of repentance and faith. Repentance is agreeing with God, faith is appropriating what God has to say and resting in it. Many unbelievers, for example have walked the aisles in many evangelistic crusades weeping and mourning over their sin, and have left that auditorium without Christ. That is because repentance does not save. Faith in what God says, the kind of faith which rests in what God says, rather producing any works of our own, is what saves us. That kind of faith produces new life in Christ.

Now, based on the following statement, John MacArthur would take strong exception to what I have said. In John MacArthur's description for his book Hard to Believe he says: "*Faith in Him demands a willingness to make any sacrifice He asks. The hard truth about Christianity is that the cost is high, but the rewards are priceless: abundant and eternal life that comes only from faithfully following Christ.*" Friends, abundant eternal life does not come from faithfully following Christ.

A pastor friend of mine recently intimated to me that MacArthur's first edition of his book The Gospel According to Jesus Christ may have contained some "over the top" statements. Just to set the record straight, I'll leave this part of the discussion with a quote from his new chapter 1 of his 20th anniversary edition of the book where he tells us that James 4:7-10 is one of the most comprehensive invitations to salvation in all the epistles. He says:

*"Ten imperatives delineate the commands in James' call to sinners: submit yourself to God (salvation); resist the devil (transferring allegiance); draw near to God (intimacy of relationship); cleanse your hands (repentance); purify your hearts (confession); be miserable, mourn, weep, and let your laughter and joy be turned to gloom (sorrow); The final imperative summarizes the mentality*

*of those who are converted: 'humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord.' All this is a work of God, who gives his more abundant grace (4:6)."*

Dear friend, you cannot merit God's grace through repentance, and that is the lie of Lordship salvation.

### **d.) The Mashing of Discipleship and Believership.**

Evidence that one error breeds another is clearly seen in the discussion of discipleship. In order to teach that a pre-salvation work of the heart must include absolute surrender to the Lordship of Christ in all areas of one's life one must blend repentance and faith into two sides of one coin. But it does not stop here.

Because the Lordship person extracts his defenses from mixing the gospel of the kingdom with the gospel of the grace of God he must, inevitably see that being a disciple and being a believer are one and the same thing. This is the single, most die hard claim of the Lordship teacher. A believer is a regenerated son of God, someone who has been placed in Christ. A disciple is one who is living daily under the discipline of Christ.

For the sake of illustration, let's go back to David Platt's demands he made on Ayan, the Muslim girl. He was quoting Luke 14:26 and 27:

**If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.**

Understand, the operative word here, is *disciple*. In Platt's mind, to be a believer and a disciple is one and the same thing. He has *mashed* the definitions (and inverted the chronology). To be a believer is the result of a one time conversion, an event during which Christ came into your life. You will be a believer all of your life and as a result, you will hopefully grow into a strong disciple. Disciples can even be unsaved (John 6:61-66).



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If we believe that one must be a disciple in order to be a believer we have put the cart before the horse. This cross bearing must be done before salvation! This cross bearing must be done daily or one is not saved! (Luke 9:23)

### e.) The Mashing of Works and Grace

Romans 11:6:

**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.**

It is both misleading and disobedient to use Christ's requirements for *discipleship* as requirements for the repentance that leads unto salvation. In so doing we profane the gospel of Christ.

Consider the things you have to give up in order to embrace Lordship salvation, and for that matter, Reformed theology:

- 1.) We mash repentance and conversion into one definition and demand that our repentance must produce a change of life *prior to or parallel with* our salvation and profane the sweet doctrines of grace. The grace which saves us empowers us and teaches us to deny ungodliness (Titus 3:4). This change comes about as a result of God working in us, not as a result of our repentance.
- 2.) We mash believership and discipleship into one definition, thus requiring cross bearing and agonizing in order to be saved.
- 3.) We give up the clear gospel.
- 4.) We give up the offer of assurance. The more deeply one is caught in the web of Lordship salvation the less hope he offers to the convicted seeker. No one is ever quite sure he has repented enough to be truly saved.
- 5.) We give up offering the gospel to children with a

clear conscience. Lordship advocates suggest we teach children "obedience to Christ," until they are capable of making "adult decisions." This is a fearful offense.

6.) We give up simple literal interpretation with clear, easily understood definitions.

7.) We open the door to a plethora of doctrinal errors. Lordship salvation is generally packaged with Calvinistic soteriology. Inevitably, many teachers who hold this view are then forced to teach that the Holy Spirit regenerates us prior to salvation in order to be consistent with this doctrine. This, in turn leads to the embracing the other Reformed extremes.

**Conclusion:** When we speak of repentance *in terms of the gospel* we are commanding men and women to *change their minds* regarding what God says about our sin, His Son, and His solution through Christ. Repentance itself requires no work and no action on the part of the listener other than believing in Christ (John 6:29-30). Conversion and regeneration result in our becoming a new creation in Christ. Our salvation (the outworking of the grace of God) produces those evidences of salvation we all desire to see, *not* repentance.

So, what about that strange title "Lordship Salvation - *If it Walks Like a Mallard, it's Still a Duck*" Lordship people and hyper Calvinists want us to think that we can blend or mash two kinds of interpretation, allegorical and literal into one mix. The fact is, the moment we mix allegorical interpretation with literal interpretation, we simply have another version of allegorical interpretation.

You cannot mix works with grace and hide your mix under another label. The kind of repentance which requires us to agonize in order to be saved, or to reach some unattainable level of surrender in order to qualify for grace, is works, nonetheless. So, because we call one bird a Mallard and another a Wood Duck, it makes no difference. They are both ducks.

You are either resting completely in the finished work of Christ or you are trusting in your works at some



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level. You will never have full assurance of your salvation until you let grace do its work within you!

Rev. 22:17

**And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.**

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Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Spurgeon's Morning and Evening, Morning - June 8

<sup>2</sup> Academics should keep in mind that dialectic and synthesis require ambiguity by their very nature. One cannot synthesize absolutes.

<sup>3</sup> The excerpt is from David Platt's [Follow Me - A Call to Die](#).



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NOTES OR QUESTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN WE GET TOGETHER:



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(S21) GOD'S PLAN FOR ISRAEL

Sadly, the influences of Augustine's allegorical interpretation have infiltrated every area of Christianity. Those who take the Bible simply and literally, represent a small minority. Below, find some sound biblical fortification you will need when encountering replacement theology - the doctrine that the Church has replaced Israel and is the inheritor of her promises.

## 1. Bible Prophecy and Israel

- All prophecy resolves first around the Lord Jesus Christ. (Luke 24:44-48)
- Messiah's plan is for and through Israel first. (Acts 15)
- Israel is the conduit through which Messiah executes His program for the nations.

## 2. Israel and Covenants

The core of all Bible prophecy centers around God's covenant promises made with Israel. As noted earlier, the Abrahamic Covenant is the key to understanding all future covenants from that time forward.

Covenant	Seed Promise	Land Promise	Throne Promise	Blessing Promise	Source
Abrahamic	Seed	Land	Throne	Blessing	Genesis 12:1-3 and others.
Palestinian	Land				Deuteronomy 30:1-10 and others.
Davidic		Throne			2 Samuel 7:12-16 and others.
New (Replaces Old Covenant)				Blessing	Jeremiah 31:31-34 and others.

*Note: In reality, Jesus Christ will complete all the promises of the Abrahamic, Palestinian, and Davidic covenants as He administers the New Covenant in His role as Reigning Messiah.*

## 3. Covenants and the Land Prophecies –The Land Link:

- The Past, Present, and Future of Israel are linked to the land promises. Though occupation is based upon obedience, Israel's title deed extends ultimately to Euphrates! Genesis 15:18 The cursings and blessings outline Israel's future as she obeys or rebels. Deuteronomy 27/28

## 4. Land Prophecies of Israel's Dispersions/Returns (D= Dispersion, R=Return)

- The General Principle of Dispersion and Restoration (Deuteronomy 28:62-65; 30:13).
- The Egyptian D/R (Genesis 15:13,14).
- The Babylonian D/R (Jeremiah 25:11,12).
- The Roman D/R (Luke 21:20-24).





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- The ultimate guarantee of Israel's return may be found in Jeremiah 32:37-44; 33:14-26; Ezekiel 34:11-31; 37:15-28, and hosts of other passages.

Note: Interestingly – the Old Testament is replete with specific promises of Israel's ultimate and permanent restoration, and these are usually embedded right within God's strongest warnings and prophecies concerning His immediate judgment of Israel!

### 5. Israel is now in her third dispersion.

- Israel will remain in a dispersed state until the final restoration.
- Present "Zionists" are not presently inheriting New Covenant promises.
- We are obligated to love and pray, not approve of Israel's dealings.
- Israel remains in disobedience.
- The Bible clearly indicates, however, that many Israelites will return to Israel in unbelief prior to that great day when God universally converts her and calls her from her dispersion from among the nations. The evidence of this lies in the fact that Israel is clearly in her land during the events of the Day of the Lord (Revelation 4-16, Ezekiel 38,39, etc.)

### 6. Future Storms - Present Shadows

- a. The Times and Seasons are in the Father's Hand, not ours - Acts 1:7
- b. The Times and Seasons relate to Israel.

Regarding the Day of the Lord...

- She is to watch for the beginning of sorrows - Matthew 24:1-20 - in order to be prepared for the fast moving events of the Day of the Lord.
  - She is to avoid being deceived prematurely about the Day of the Lord 1 Thessalonians 5:1-5 (And so are we...)
  - She must wait for the end when the tender branch of the fig puts forth her leaves, summer is nigh. Matthew 24:31-33. Signs like these are given specifically to Israel and will provide pointers for her during the tribulation.
- c. The wise discern the skies .

While there are no signs given to the church and none of Israel's signs will be fulfilled until the rapture, we may still notice the tone of the times and seasons and observing the rising tide of antichrist's lie. Matthew 16:2,3.



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*Here are some things which give us pause:*

- Israel's unprecedented rebirth as a nation.
- Israel's unprecedented survival amid neighboring enemies.
- Unprecedented Antisemitism worldwide.
- Unprecedented Antisemitism in the EU (Western Confederacy???)
- The unprecedented worldwide march toward globalism. (Post Modernism).

All of these factors combined make it highly unlikely that the present wave of Antisemitism will recede. The coming storm could be casting its shadow!

## 7. What About Current Events?

- Be always looking for His Return. (Titus 2:11-13).
- Love and pray for Israel and Jerusalem (Genesis 12:3, Isaiah 62:7)
- God is calling His people out of ALL nations - Muslims, Jews, and all!
- REGARDING ISRAEL!!!!

1. Do not be surprised by her predicament!
2. Do not be fooled into thinking God is finished with Israel!
3. Do not be satisfied with her situation!

- Are you one of the Lord's "Remembrancers"? Isaiah 62:6-7

## 8. How to Give an Answer

- Comfort Israel - speak tenderly to her and woe her to the One who has pardoned her iniquity. Isaiah 40:1,ff
- God is in absolute control of the nations (Gentiles) -Daniel 4:17, Isaiah 46:9-11
- God has an exact plan for Israel -Isaiah 46:3,4
- God has a plan for each of us. - Acts 17:30

Every appearance of Israel in the news is moot testimony to the inexorable march forward toward the Day of the Lord!

**TODAY IS THE DAY OF SALVATION!**

*Note: Some of this content is distilled from MiddletownBibleChurch.org and is used with permission.  
We highly recommend this site.*



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## (S22) MINING FOR GOLD IN THE WORD “BE-

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. - Romans 12:1

You have just read one of the most wonderful commands in all of God’s Word. Paul sets the tone with the words “I beseech you.” One reason this verse is so wonderful is because it is a *gentle* admonition which combines all the spiritual ingredients needed to move someone forward for Christ. One can sense Paul loves his listeners as he passionately appeals to them on the basis of what God has already done for *them*. This is no Australian sheep dog trying to herd his recalcitrant congregation into line. This is a man who desires God’s best for his brethren. Paul tenderly provides a direct and specific request, and is not embarrassed to expect their very best response. The Greek word *parakaleo*, translated “beseech” deserves our attention.

“I beseech you.” There are times when God commands us more sternly, just as there are times when parents and pastors alike have to be more stern. In such cases, the Bible uses the word *nouthetos*, and similar words which are appropriate to what is being commanded. Such words are the stuff of another discussion. Beseech has no bark in it at all. It is a loving, but urgent plea.

Some parents and pastors only have two speeds when it comes to leading, zero or 100 miles per hour. They are either pansies or panthers. This is because they have failed to absorb the biblical skills so urgently needed to nudge folks forward in their obedience and growth. Pastors may need to set aside their books on counseling and leadership (which are often dripping with secular truisms), and re-enroll in Biblical Beseeching 101.

No servant of Christ has ever been more adept at modeling these biblical skills than Paul. One fine example may be found in the book of Philemon as our Apostle “beseeches” Philemon for “his son.” That’s just the beginning of a long list of examples the Holy Spirit has provided as models for us. Sensing the importance of *parakaleo* and learning to apply the biblical skills of beseeching and admonition with finesse is one of the most rewarding challenges a servant of Christ can attempt.

**The following exercise is designed to help you do some Bible mining with your computer or tablet.** You will need Internet access. If you not have a computer, try your best to follow along with your Strong’s Concordance. If you have no computer or concordance, just follow the next few steps with us as best as you can.

1. Turn on your computer and go to [BlueLetterBible.org](http://BlueLetterBible.org).
2. In the search box on the top right, enter: Romans 12:1 and press enter.
3. When the new page screens, hover your mouse over Romans 12:1 and it will turn red. Then click on it.
4. Your new page will contain an open box which lists every word or group of words in your verse on the left hand side.
5. If you hovered over the word “beseech” and clicked on it you would find every occasion in the Bible where this word occurs. Don’t do that now unless you want to take a peek. If you do you will need to click the back arrow to



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return to where we are in our exercise.

6. After finding the word “beseech” continue moving your mouse to the right until you are in the Strongs Column. The Strongs number g3870 should turn red. This time, click it.

7. Another new page will screen and a new box will open with some wonderful information in it. As you scroll down this rather long box, try to answer the following questions:

a. Under the heading “Root Word,” how many root words make up this word parakaleo? \_\_\_\_\_ You can actually learn more about each of these words by clicking on them at a later time. If you would like to know their basic English meanings, just hover that mouse over each of them. Pretty neat!

b. What would you do if you wanted to know Vine’s definition of this word? \_\_\_\_\_.

c. In your own words, describe how this word is used in the Bible:

d. Keep scrolling down the page until you come to the box entitled: Concordance Results using KJV. How many times does parakaleo occur in the Bible \_\_\_\_\_ in the range of how many verses? \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson:** When we took the time to look at the actual Greek word we are examining we discovered that this word is used far more than we thought it did (because it has so many other English forms) and that it was also a very common expression for Paul and the apostles.

**Most importantly:** We learn that the basic posture of the servant should reflect humble and patient efforts to admonish, console, comfort, encourage, entreat, and implore his listeners. Are there times when the servant of the Lord has to “show his teeth” so to speak? Absolutely. Was that Paul’s first approach? Absolutely not.

What have we done? We have performed a basic word study and made some inferences from it which should affect the way we minister.

### End of Exercise

Of course, there is another side to this matter of beseeching. While good leaders must learn how to beseech in the gentle and kind way the Bible models, good listeners also have an obligation.

In some cases, our leaders beseech us to sacrifice ourselves to meet someone’s need, be it physical or spiritual. In other cases, we are being admonished and entreated because of our complacency or worse because of our departure from what we know to be right. The real question remains: Am I as willing to be as loving and gentle in receiving criticism as I expect those to be who must administer it?



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(S23) PURE ECSTASY

We hardly have time or space in this material to cover spiritual gifts fully. However, because gifts are being abused at such a high level in our time, we have included several pages from a separate study on spiritual gifts by the author.

1. This supplement is optional, and provided mostly for your reference though it will benefit you immensely;
2. It only covers the issue of the *abuse* of spiritual gifts; and,
3. It is based on 1 Corinthians 12. The serious student will benefit from reading 1 Corinthians 12 before ever reading this supplement.

## PURE ECSTASY

Introduction: 1 Corinthians 11:34 and 1 Corinthians 12:1:

**And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come. Now concerning spiritual [gifts], brethren, I would not have you ignorant.**

If you will notice the first word of chapter 12 “Now,” it may help you to understand that it is the Greek word “de” and it is in the adversative position. What does that mean in English? Paul is saying, “...the rest will I set in order when I come, *but* concerning spiritual gifts (lit: spiritual manifestations), I do not want you to be ignorant.” The Corinthians could wait for Paul to come in order to settle some of the issues, but the matter before us could not wait. There was too much at stake. It needed to be dealt with right then and there.

We should feel the same way about the passage that we have in front of us. It cannot wait. More than ever before, the body needs to have clear talk and straight shooting on the matter of spiritual things and spiritual gifts. We can never ignore any portion of God’s Word without paying a price for it in our churches.

**When we ignore the Bible’s teaching on these spiritual manifestations we get into deep trouble for several reasons:**

1. We allow Satan and his demons to take advantage of us by the infiltration of false teaching that always rides in on the back of spiritual gifts when they are abused.
2. We hinder our testimony in the world when these matters are abused. The charismatic movement has made us a great laughingstock among unbelievers. Christianity recommends itself to an intelligent and orderly God. Period.
3. When we ignore what the Bible says on this subject we rob ourselves of the very resources that we desperately need to conduct true spiritual warfare in this hour.

A friend of mine suggested that his pastor did not believe in preaching on spiritual gifts because it would cause



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people to focus on their gifts instead of focusing on serving Christ. If that pastor's logic was true, Paul was in error when he said that all scripture was profitable. More importantly, *if* there are any divine enablements available we need them! How can one effectively serve Christ if he does not contemplate his gift or gifts? Look now at verse 1 in our chapter, for herein we find the overriding subject of pneumatikos {pnyoo-mat-ik-os} introduced. 1 Corinthians 12:1:

**Now concerning spiritual [gifts], brethren, I would not have you ignorant.**

Focus on the term “spiritual gifts” and learn the first important lesson of this study. The word “gifts” in your English Bible is usually in *italics*. When Paul tells us that he does not want us to be ignorant of *pneumatikos*, he is talking about far more than just the spiritual gifts that come to our minds. He is talking about the whole realm of *pneumatics* or spirit manifestations of all sorts.

Pneumatikos simply translates to “spirituals.” Pneumatikos is a very broad based word which can cover any spiritual manifestation of any kind, from heaven or hell. In fact, Paul, in this chapter begins his discussion with the false spiritual manifestations of demons. Like most other important words such as love, grace, faith, and liberty, our Bible extends the basic meaning of words and gives them a whole new value. The same is true with pneumatikos. When the Bible speaks of pneumatikos, it is usually (not always) talking of those gifts which are given by the Holy Spirit. It has not even occurred to many believers that there can be such a thing as false spiritual manifestations, yet our passage begins with this very point.

So far, we have learned that the whole arena of spirit manifestations is the first thing under discussion. Then, in a few verses, Paul will narrow the discussion to what you and I commonly called spiritual gifts.

Before we talk about the *manifestation* of pneumatikos, we must talk about their *imitation*.

### I. PNUEMATIKOS - THEIR FALSE IMITATION

Look at 1 Corinthians 12:2:

**Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.**

One may ask: What in the world does that verse have to do with spiritual gifts? The answer is everything.

These Corinthians lived in a world that was full of spiritual manifestations. These Corinthians knew full well that behind those speechless idols of wood and stone were real demons, real spiritual forces that had led them off (as a victor would lead his captives) toward their doom. They knew that there were real spiritual beings associated with idolatry. There were *many manifestations*, and none less notable than those associated with the Babylonian mystery religions and their *ecstasies*.

At the time of the tower of Babel in Babylon a great mystery religion existed, a great spiritual harlot. Because of the division of tongues and the nations, that harlot spawned many more religions, but they are all Babylonian at their core, and they will all ultimately be judged in the tribulation. The religion of Babylon has spawned more



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offspring than Genghis Khan.

**We must be willing to acknowledge and recognize demonic ecstasies.** The mystery religions *all* have their false and counterfeit religious experiences, their trances, their visions, their ecstasies.

**Mormons.** Mormons, for example, have their burning bosoms and their speaking in tongues. Please do not be offended if you have a Mormon friend. The Bible says that a man must be justified by faith. He must receive the righteousness that comes only from Jesus Christ in order to be saved. The LDS teach that one must *add* his personal righteousness to Christ's righteousness in order to be saved. But herein lies the issue: The average Mormon does not know how deeply Joseph Smith was caught up with Babylonianism. Practices from the innocent Talisman on the Mormon underwear all the way to the Mormon doctrine of godhood can be traced right to Babylon and her mystery religions. Mormons rely on false ecstasies which fool the sincere.

**Catholics.** Any Bible reading and Bible loving Catholic will soon see that the roots of Romanism are Babylonian roots. Herein lie the facts: When an unsaved Catholic, who rejects totally the doctrine of justification by faith - and yet speaks in tongues, those tongues cannot be from the Holy Spirit.

Our hearts ache for those who have been deceived. What is our point? What is Paul's point? The first point that Paul is making is this: Not all ecstasies and not all spiritual manifestations are of the Holy Spirit! Many are cheap imitations! Cubic zirconium looks like the diamond it imitates. Do not be ignorant.

**“Christians.”** We do not limit our discussion to Mormons and Catholics. Many of our dear “Christian” friends are also being led off and carried away by demon influences in the name of Christ. When any friend says, “Of course you have to receive the righteousness of Jesus Christ, but you must also add your own righteousness to His righteousness,” he is just as lost, just as much in bondage to the doctrine of demons, as is the Mormon and Catholic who say the very same thing. Many so-called charismatics (taking their name from charisma, the Bible's term for a grace gift) are also hopelessly lost and carried off by the doctrines of demons.

**A Host of Others.** All of the world's religions provide ecstatic experiences in one form or another to validate their message. All have a form of tongues and other altered states on their menus. One may ask, what about their rich, deep, glorious experiences and all those manifestations? Our Lord spoke to this when He taught in Matthew 7:22:

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

First, then, we may rightfully infer from these words that the potential for demonic abuse exists! Now, understand what Paul is saying in 1 Corinthians 12:2:

Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

These Corinthians were a lot smarter than many of us. They *knew* there could be demonic manifestations. The philosophers who lived all around them, the pagan idolaters and captives of the mystery religions, all knew





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pneumatika, but it was demonic pneumatika.

What shall we do? Shall we toss the whole doctrine of spiritual gifts out the window because we cannot be sure about their genuineness and because we cannot discern their reality? Nonsense! We must test (prove) the spirits and test the doctrines we hear to see whether they be true. 1John 4:1:

**Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.**

How shall we put these matters to the test? We have seen the false imitations of the work of the Spirit, now we see the other side of the issue.

## II. PNEUMATIKOS - THEIR TRUE MANIFESTATION

We want to see three things about the works and gifts of the Holy Spirit that will help us discern. Later we will provide some more practical helps. But, noting our passage, consider first,

### **Litmus Test A. True Spirit Manifestations are Pure**

1 Corinthians 12:3

**Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and [that] no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.**

There are actually two tests found in this verse - a negative test and a positive test.

1. The *negative* test: *no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed.* 3a

From our point of view, that is a no-brainer. It may not have been as clear to the Corinthians. There is little doubt in anyone's minds about the ever-present Gnostic presence at Corinth. These Gnostics who, themselves claimed their own "pneuma" held the doctrine that flesh is evil and spirit is good. Jesus, being in the flesh had to be accursed. The Jew may well have agreed that Christ's crucifixion (Gal. 3:13: "...cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.") disqualified Him from future glorification in His body.

We do not know for certain what prompted Paul's remark but we do get the point: If a manifestation is of the Holy Spirit it will not degrade Christ. A house divided against itself cannot stand.

2. The *positive* test is in 3b.

**...No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.**

If a man is under the control of the Holy Spirit he is going to say and teach those things that the Holy Spirit teaches. The typical charismatic prophet is pleased when he is "in tune" with the Spirit 50% of the time!

It is not uncommon for a charismatic to say "See, my gifts are real, they are the Holy Spirit kind, because I call Je-



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sus Christ Lord.” That is *not* what Paul says or means when he says that no man can say that Jesus is Lord, except by the Spirit. Even the demons were wont to proclaim His Lordship and their pneumatika are surely false!

Paul does NOT mean that a man’s ministry must be of the Spirit because he claims the Lordship of Christ. Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 7? Many will say “Lord, lord” and He will say “depart! I never knew you!”

That is not what Paul is teaching us! Paul is explaining that no man has ever come to the realization that Jesus is Lord (Jehovah) except through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Here is the point: The Holy Spirit is the only source of what is true. He is in the truth business. He does not speak lies. He only speaks truth. He is the only source of truth.

Therefore, what can we conclude? We can conclude that a man who is under the control of the Holy Spirit will not deny but affirm the Jehovahship of Christ.

If the message is pure, it is pure as to its origin. We may assume the Holy Spirit sponsors it. If the message is in error, we may assume the man to be in error, or worse, possibly even to be under demonic influence. Notice secondly:

### **Litmus Test B. True Manifestations Are Predictable.**

They originate with the *one* Holy Spirit, 1Corinthians 12:4-6:

**Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.**

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; there are differences of administrations; but the same Lord; diversities of operations, but the same God.

Christian friend, when we look at the works of the Holy Spirit we certainly see diversity and variety. His work is everywhere and it is kaleidoscopic. However, as wide and varied as it is, it is absolutely consistent and predictable because it originates from the *same* Lord. Spiritual gifts originate from the same Father, the same Son, the same Holy Spirit. We may call this the Union Label. You can be sure of the workmanship, the origin, and the quality - when it all comes from *one and the same* God. This is *not* true of the demons and their confusing and contradictory pneumatikos. If a spiritual gift is of God it will reflect God and will be consistent with His Word. If a spiritual manifestation is not consistent, it is demonic.

There is great irony in this. For if you will look at those groups that make the loudest noise about their spiritual manifestations you will find in their congregations the least correspondence to the Word of God and His character.

God is a God of *truth*. His manifestations will affirm the truth of His Word and not the lies of prosperity theology, name it and claim it teachings, and the new age “little gods” doctrines.

God is a God of *order*. His manifestations will not extol ignorance, fleshly sensual behavior, and wild interpretations of non-existent prophecies.



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And Jesus Christ's Lordship will be the center and focus of it all.

There are many gifts. There are many administrations or spheres of influence. A teacher, for instance may have great impact among one group and have no impact among another. There are many operations or levels of strength and energy. One man may be a great teacher and another only a good teacher. The variety goes on and on, but the same Father, Son, and Holy Spirit work in us all. The same product comes out in the end.

How do we test pneumatikos?

True Spirit manifestations are pure, true Spirit manifestations are predictable – they will consistently reflect the character of our God, and finally,

**Litmus Test C. True Spirit Manifestations are Profitable.** 1 Corinthians 12:7:

**But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.**

The final evidence of the genuineness of a Spirit Gift is that it will be profitable. It will edify. It will build up the edifice, the temple of Christ - the believer in Christ. It will enhance the Body of Christ, not inflate it with foolishness and fantasy. The proof of the pudding is in the eating of life.

**The Charismatic Charge.** The charismatic tends to picture the noncharismatic the same one-dimensional fashion. In his eyes the noncharismatic doesn't believe in miracles. He does not believe that miracles are for this age. According to charismatics, we do not think God has the power to do His job; we do not have the faith. This has never been the issue.

**The Noncharismatic Response.** The noncharismatic says two things and both are important:

- 1.) First, we argue that much of what is touted in the name of miracles and tongues is counterfeit and demon inspired. It is impure, unlike God, and *unprofitable*. It is a cheap imitation of the real stuff. It is absolute counterfeit, propagated by the counter-Christ. We must have the courage to stand behind this claim.
- 2.) Noncharismatics Dispensationalists are also convinced that God's Word shows us that God's emphasis is not on miracles or signs in our age. (The basis of another study.)

The noncharismatic simply takes his Bible and he tries the spirits to see if they are of God. He tests the manifestations for purity, for predictability, and for profitableness, and when he burns the dross away, he finds precious little left to debate. Be sure to get the point. If the manifestation is of the Holy Spirit it will be consistent with what the Holy Spirit has already taught. Otherwise, we may rightfully assume it is demonic.

The demons have their *impure* manifestations but the manifestations of Christ will be *pure*. The demons have their confused and contradictory manifestations because they arise from the anarchy and disorder of hell. They would have you laughing, jumping, jerking, quirking, and behaving as if you were under a seizure, while the Holy Spirit reminds you that the spirits of the prophets are under the control of the prophets and He is a God of order and decency and dignity and purity. The demons would have you high on ecstasy on Sunday and down in



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the dumps Monday morning when the ecstasy wears off. Do you know what the Holy Spirit wants us to do with our Mondays? He wants us to be meditating on the good food we received on Sunday, and on the great task that He has for each of us. He wants us experiencing the abiding presence of the living Christ, not coming down off the ceiling of a church.

Are there such a thing as spiritual gifts, divine enablements to help one minister to Christ's body? Be sure there are. Is there something for each of us? Be sure there is! Should you desire to find and recognize your gift or gifts? Be sure you should. But do not be led away. Do not settle for cheap imitations! Do not settle for fool's gold when you are sitting on the real nuggets! Fool's gold belies true gold!

We are in a spiritual warfare between the truth and the lie and God has never given us permission to set the terms of the battle. The believer who is under the control of the Holy Spirit will speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Unsaved friend, maybe it's time that you woke up to the fact that there truly is a spiritual world out there and that Satan has an agenda. You may well be one of those whom he has "carried off" through ignorance. You can find true spiritual reality and the kind of satisfaction which will release you from bondage (not dig you in deeper) in Christ!



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NOTES OR QUESTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN WE GET TOGETHER:



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(S24) MAKING ROMANS 12 PRACTICAL

This Supplement is in the form of an exercise which is best used before the student takes a peek at Session 24. Please complete this and bring it to class for your personal use in our study.

**Step 1.** Please read Romans 12:9-21.

**Step 2.** Try to count the number of specific commands found in our passage which are given to the believer who truly wants to present himself as a living sacrifice and grace minister in the body of Christ. Counts will vary a bit, but give it a try. How many commands did you find? \_\_\_\_\_.

**Step 3.** Choose any ONE command you would like to examine more closely and name it here. \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 4.** Check another translation or two, and record how that version translates the same command. \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 5.** Look up the key word or words in your command and look it up in a concordance such as Strongs. Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 6.** What would you say the broad subject is? \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 7.** Make a list of some other passages you can find which treat *the same subject* as your command and write down any additional truths these corresponding passages provide. (The cross-reference column in your Bible will help.)

Passage 1:

Passage 2:

Passage 3:

**Step 8.** (Optional) Try to find a commentary on the subject you have chosen to examine and make a note or two about it.

**Step 9.** Run with it! On the back side of this sheet, write a paragraph or two summing up what the Bible teaches. If you have several ideas, try to outline what you are saying. If you have an example or illustration which applies, be sure to include it. [Be sure to jot down any questions you would like to follow up on in class or with your leader.]



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NOTES OR QUESTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN WE GET TOGETHER:







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## (S26) "WEAKER BROTHER" CASE STUDY

This is a short challenge to “warm us up” for our study in Session 26.

**Part I.** Please try to work from your present experience and *do not* scan Romans 15 or Session 26 before completing this study.

**Case Study:** (For our purposes, you are a spiritual leader in your assembly.) Paul and Mary begin attending your church. They have received Christ somewhere along the way before attending, and have now requested to become members in your church. Your church requires baptism for membership and these folks, having already been baptized by a Mormon type cult, resist being re-baptized because they had “truly accepted Christ.”

Additionally, their Sunday School class has scheduled a Friday night bowling event at the local lanes. Paul and Mary not only refuse to attend, but feel it should not be a church sanctioned event because alcohol is served freely in such places.

Setting aside the question whether Paul and Mary are weaker brethren, how would you edify Paul and Mary? Try to use some scripture to justify your theoretical plan:

### 1. What should your attitude be toward Paul and Mary?

*(Spill over to back side if necessary.)*

### 2. How would you respond to the baptism issue?

*(Spill over to back side if necessary.)*

### 3. How would you respond to the bowling issue?

*(Spill over to back side if necessary.)*

**Part II.** After we have gone over Romans 15 and Session 26, please return and make any additional comments or suggestions you might include after our study. If you are comfortable doing so, compare your findings in class. Please don't be the weaker brother and split your fellowship over such issues!



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**1. What should your attitude be toward Paul and Mary?** *(Continued if necessary.)*

**2. How would you respond to the baptism issue?** *(Continued if necessary.)*

**3. How would you respond to the bowing issue?** *(Continued if necessary.)*