The Book of
ROMANS

Teacher's Edition

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Romans

(Teacher's Edition)

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Romans

Introduction:

Author: God

Writer: The Apostle Paul under divine inspiration (ll Timothy 3:16; ll Peter 3:16)

Date: Approx. 58 AD

Key words in Romans:
"Righteous" & "Righteousness" – 37 Times
"Justified" & "Justification" – 12 Times

Note: Both Righteousness and Justification come from the same root word – dikaios (noun) dikaio (verb)

Romans 1:17 is the thesis statement (theme) of the book of Romans.

Romans 1:17

For therein (In the Gospel) is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

From this proposition, Paul unfolds the righteousness of God (justification) in the rest of the Epistle.

l.	The Need of God's Righteousness *(Sin of All Men)*	(chaps. 1-3)
ll.	The Source of God's Righteousness *(Salvation by Grace)*	(chaps. 4-5)
lll.	The Results of God's Righteousness *(Sanctification of the Believer)*	(chaps. 6-8)
lV.	The Defense of God's Righteousness *(Sovereignty of God)*	(chaps. 9-11)
V.	The Application of God's Righteousness *(Service of Believers)*	(chaps. 12-16)

Section 1: ROMANS 1:1-7
"ACCURATE VIEWPOINT"

Theme and Outline of Romans 1:1-7

***Paul had an accurate viewpoint of ourselves, the Gospel, and others.**

Three viewpoints of the Apostle Paul:

I. PAUL'S VIEWPOINT OF HIMSELF (V. 1, 5)

A. He Understood God's Claim on His Life (v. 1a)

What does it mean to be a "servant of Jesus Christ?"

1. It means: Dependence upon the Master
2. It means: Dedication to the Master
3. It means: Humility before the Master
4. It means: Obedience to the Master

B. He Understood God's Call on His Life (v. 1b, 5)

1. God called a specific man (v. 1b)
2. To do a specific task (v. 1b, 5)

II. PAUL'S VIEWPOINT OF THE GOSPEL (v. 2-4)

A. The Good News Was Not New News (v. 2)

B. The Good News Centered Around the Person of Jesus Christ (v. 3-4)

III. PAUL'S VIEWPOINT OF OTHERS (V. 6-7)

A. He Respected God's Relationship to Other Believers (v. 6-7a)

1. Every believer has received the same invitation
2. Every believer is equally loved by God
3. Every believer is a saint

B. He Desired God's Best For Other Believers (v. 7b)

INTRODUCTION:

In a world of much confusion, many have a distorted view of life.

The questions: Who am I? Why am I here? and Where am I going? remain unanswered in the minds of many.

Many are groping for answers. They don't know the meaning to life. They don't know how to relate to others or how to view themselves.

All of us have struggled with these perplexities of life until God's answer came.

However, even as believers, out viewpoints can get bent out of shape. Many have an unBiblical self-image (a wrong view of themselves and their purpose in life).

Today there is much confusion as to what the Gospel is (even among Christian circles). Many believers have struggles relating to other believers.

In our study of Romans, we will find answers to these problems.

Paul's opening remarks in 1:1-7 will help us bring things into focus; his testimony will help clear the fog or remove the distorted ideas we have about 1) ourselves 2) the Gospel and 3) others

Three viewpoints of the Apostle Paul:

I. PAUL'S VIEWPOINT OF <u>HIMSELF</u> (V. 1, 5)

A. He Understood God's <u>Claim</u> on His Life (v. 1a)

ILLUS: People ask you: "What are you?" You reply, "I'm a carpenter, printer, librarian, school teacher, milk man, computer programmer, technician, mechanic, pastor, etc."

Paul would reply: "I'm a slave."

Some might think: "Couldn't Paul have been a bit more dignified in his description of himself?

Paul could have said, "I'm a preacher"; "I'm a church planter"; or "I'm a born again Christian." But rather, he said, "I'm a slave." Why?

Paul knew that before he could even be a preacher, church planter, or Christian that glorified Christ, he would have to be a slave for Christ.

Everyone in the world, if they do their job correctly, is a servant of someone else.

EX: In a church: Pastor is a minister (a servant) of the gospel; deacons and laymen serve. In the family: parents serve by providing for and protecting their children, and children serve the parents. In business: the best businessman is one who has the customer's best interest in mind.

Law enforcement officers are to be servants of the people; the armed services (army, navy, air force, and marines) serve our country. Our president's job is not to be catered to, but to serve our country. Angels are "ministering spirits" = who serve you and me (Heb. 1:14).

Even Jesus Christ: when He humbled Himself, He became a servant (Phil. 2) and said, "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." (Mk. 10:45)

In our society, the term "slave" is degrading. They think it refers to being "stepped on" or treated in a harsh manner.

*We should consider it an honor to serve Christ.

Greatness is in serving - Mark 10:43 - "But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister."

"The greatness of a man is measured not by how many serve him, but by how many he serves."

*We should consider it our duty to serve Christ.

When you trusted Jesus Christ, you trusted the Lord of the universe to save you. Anyone who truly acknowledges Christ as Lord (Rom. 10:9) will automati-cally see the need to submit to Him and serve Him.

But our service should not be drudgery. Rather, out of gratitude for His love to us, we love Him and serve Him in return.

Every believer is a servant of Jesus Christ. The question is: Are you a "good and faithful servant"? (Mt. 25:23)

We were servants of sin before salvation (Rom. 6:17), but now we are servants of righteousness (v. 18), servants of God (v. 22).

Rom. 12:7 says that we should not be "slothful in business; [but] fervent in spirit serving the Lord."

"Ye serve the Lord Christ" (Col. 3:24).

We, like the Thessalonians, turned from idols "to serve the living and true God" (I Th. 1:9).

Most everyone today wants to **be** served rather than to serve.

To find good service today is rare!

EX: Gas stations don't automatically check oil and clean your windows. Most mechanics are not interested in doing a good job repairing your car, just so long as the cash comes in.

What is a true servant? What does it mean to be a slave of Jesus Christ?

1. It means: Dependence upon the Master

In the Bibles days, a Jew who became a slave to another Jew did so totally voluntarily. If he was unable to make a living by himself he could choose to become someone's servant (Ex. 21:2).
A servant receives everything from the hand of his master. He relied upon his master to feed him, provide clothing, shelter, etc.
We, as Christ's servants, are totally dependent upon Him for everything!

2. It means: Dedication to the Master

One who became a servant surrendered all rights. he totally belonged to another.

He could no longer view his time as his own, but the time of his master. His talents were now to serve his master. His strength was now to be utilized in serving his master. His mind was now to think how he could best please his master.
He did his service without complaining, without expecting a tip or pat on the back. He just did what was his duty to do.
A slave was totally dedicated to his master. His master came first! (SEE Lk. 17:7-10)

A servant could not leave his master, nor could anyone else hire him until his time of service was ended. The Law stated that at the end of 7 years, the master had to release his servant.
If, however, the Hebrew servant because of love for the master preferred not to accept his freedom but wished to remain in his master's house, he was brought before the elders and had his ear bored against the door or post with an awl in token of lifelong servitude (Ex. 21:6; Dt. 15:17).
We as Christ's servants must be dedicated to our Master.
Our service is to be undivided - "No man can serve two masters" (Mt. 6:24).

3. It means: Humility before the Master

A servant places himself under his master. He would never usurp authority that was not his, but would submit. His master was the supreme authority in his life.

Sometimes a servant would be asked to do very humiliating tasks (EX: washing the feet of guests - cp. Jesus' example: Jn. 13:4-15 - "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet." (v. 13, 14).

If Jesus were here today, would you wash His feet? Remember, you serve Christ by serving His children.

We as Christ's servants must be humble before Him.

"The servant is not greater than his Lord" (Jn. 13:16).

Paul said to the Ephesian believers that he was with them at all seasons, "serving the Lord with all humility of mind. . ." (Acts 20:19).

4. It means: <u>Obedience</u> to the Master

Mt. 8:9 - Centurion said, "I say to my servant, `Do this' and he doeth it."

A servant was one who was totally and unreservedly obligated to obey his master. He <u>always</u> and <u>only</u> does his will. He has <u>no choice</u> but to obey.

His attitude is just as important as his action (SEE Eph. 6:5-7).

We as Christ's servants have no choice but to obey our Master.
As a servant of Christ, I must tell you only what my Master says (not be a man pleaser - Romans 16:17-18; Gal. 1:10).
And all of us must <u>do</u> what our Master says.

B. He Understood God's <u>Call</u> on His Life (v. 1b, 5)

1. God called a <u>specific</u> <u>man</u> (v. 1b)

"An Apostle" = a sent one.
General sense: a messenger sent by God with a message.

Official sense: Paul had the office of an apostle. He was, as it were, "one born out of due time" (I Cor. 15:5-8). he was commissioned by Christ Himself (Acts 9:15; Gal. 1:1; Acts 26:14-18; Jn. 6:70); was an ear and eye witness of the resurrected Christ; had special guidance of the Holy Spirit (John 14:26, 15:26); and God confirmed his authority by signs and miracles (Acts 2:43; II Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:3-4).

"Separated" - to draw a line around something; to mark off boundaries; to make distinct. God specifically separated Paul "from his mother's womb" (Gal. 1:15), from the world and sin (Acts 9:15), and from the brethren at Antioch (Acts 13:3) for a specific work.

2. To do a <u>specific</u> <u>task</u> (v. 1b, 5)

Paul had a unique calling. God said of Paul: "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my Name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."

God chooses specific individuals to do a specific job even today!
God gives gifts to men today (Eph. 4:8) and gives churches pastors and teachers (v. 11).
"But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him." (I Cor. 12:18).

God does not call us in the same way as He called Paul, but He calls us to do a specific task as we simply obey the Word of God and keep a tender heart to His leading (Prov. 3:5, 6; Acts 13:1ff).
God saved you for a purpose besides merely having Heaven as your home. He has a job for you to do that will go undone if you don't do it.
--God saved all of us to be <u>witnesses</u>.
--God saved all of us to be <u>ministers</u>.
In this local body, many needs go unmet because of some who are not doing what God has joined us together to do.

II. PAUL'S VIEWPOINT OF THE GOSPEL (v. 2-4)

A. The Good News Was Not New News (v. 2)

Paul is letting the Roman believers know right away that the Gospel he preached (and would now write about) was not his own.

Paul further explains it in this book, but it was no novelty with Paul (contrary to the beliefs of ultradispensationalists).

The Gospel was no after-thought of God but was planned "before the foundation of the world" (I Pet. 1:19, 20; Rev. 13:8).

Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22 promised Christ's substitutionary death.
Psalm 2:7 and 16:10 promised Christ's resurrection.
Christ's work for mankind is foreshadowed all throughout the O.T. (Abraham's offering up of Isaac; the various O.T. sacrifices, etc.).

NOTE: High emphasis is on the authority and distinctiveness of Scriptures - "Holy writings."

B. The Good News Centered Around the Person of Jesus Christ (v. 3-4)

His Name: His Son - points to Jesus' unique relationship to the Father ("only begotten" = "one of a kind").
Jesus = Savior; deliverer
Christ = Messiah; anointed King
Our Lord = His exalted position. He is master. He is YAHWEH!
"Our Lord" - God's Son is my Lord. He identified Himself with me by becoming incarnate.

1. Jesus became man (His humanity - v. 3).

Christ's genealogy or lineage (as far as his physical body is concerned) goes back through David (Mt. 1:1; Jn. 1:14; I Tim. 2:8; Rev. 22:16).

NOTE: "Made" - does not refer to new existence but new form of existence (Jn. 1:14; Gal. 4:4; Phil. 2:7).
Christ had to become man to die for men.
Rom. 5 - he is the "second Adam."
I Jn. 4:2 - "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God."

2. Jesus was proven to be divine (His deity) (v. 4)

Christ's death seemed to be weakness, but His resurrection revealed His power!
As the reference to Christ's flesh points to His humanity (in v. 3), the reference to His "Spirit of holiness" points to His divinity.
"In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9).
The words: "Spirit" and "holiness" describe the essence of God (Jn. 4:24; 17:11). Only God is spirit; only God is holy in and of Himself. Jesus Christ is God the Son!
The Gospel is one word - Jesus!
Mt. 1:21 - "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."
Keep Christ central in your witness (I Cor. 2:2).

III. PAUL'S VIEWPOINT OF OTHERS (V. 6-7)

A. He Respected God's Relationship to Other Believers (v. 6-7a)

1. Every believer has received the same invitation

"Called" - invited unto salvation.
God invites all! (cp. v. 5)
"The ground is level at the foot of the cross" - God's invitation is an open invitation.

2. Every believer is equally loved by God

"Beloved of God" - because we are "accepted in the beloved" (Jesus Christ - Eph. 1:6), we "all" who are in Christ are God's beloved!

Paul knew that although he was an apostle, he was not loved any more than anyone else.

When you do or say something against a fellow Christian, remember, you are striking a blow at someone God loves dearly.

3. Every believer is a saint

"Called to be saints" - Every believer is a holy one; a set-apart one unto God.
Never look down upon any fellow-believer.

--They have been invited to Jesus Christ like you were.
--They are an object of God's love, like you.
--They are set apart from sin and damnation unto God, just like you are.

B. He Desired God's Best For Other Believers (v. 7b)

1. Grace - the Source of God's blessing.

The best thing you could ever wish on someone is the grace of God. Even believers need His unmerited favor.

2. Peace - the Sum of God's blessing.

Peace is the result of grace.

Calling upon God for salvation brings peace with God.

Calling upon God for help brings the peace of God (Phil. 4:6-7).

Section 2: ROMANS 1:8-17
"PASS IT ON"

Theme and Outline of Romans 1:8-17

***We must pass on to others the Good News of God!**
Be challenged by the example of Paul.

Passing on the Good News to others was:

I. A PRAYER REQUEST OF PAUL (v. 8-10)
- A. The Cause of His Prayer (v. 8)
- B. The Continuity of His Prayer (v. 9)
- C. The Content of His Prayer (v. 10)

Passing on the Good News to others was:

II. A PASSIONATE DESIRE OF PAUL (v. 11-13)
- A. When we pass on what God has given to us, others are strengthened (v. 11)
- B. When we pass on what God has given to us, others are encouraged (v. 12)

Passing on the Good News to others was:

III. A BINDING DUTY TO PAUL (v. 14-15)
Passing on the Good News to others was:

IV. NOT AN EMBARRASSMENT TO PAUL (v. 16-17)

INTRODUCTION:
Example: The four lepers who found the abandoned Syrian treasure. While they were enjoying it and hiding it away for themselves, they said to each other, "We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace" (II Ki. 7:9).

***We must pass on to others the Good News of God!**
Be challenged by the example of Paul.

Passing on the Good News to others was:

I. A PRAYER REQUEST OF PAUL (v. 8-10)

A. The Cause of His Prayer (v. 8)

God receives the credit (the thanks) whenever our testimony goes forth (NOTE: Paul--rather than praising the Romans for their faith--praises God for their faith. Remember, even our faith is a gift of God [Eph. 2:8] and when we share it and others are convicted and converted by our witness, God still gets the glory!).

We are to ask (make request) in Jesus' name (through Jesus Christ - Jn. 14:14, 15:16, 16:23), and we should also thank the Father through (by means of) Christ.

Someone who is truly saved cannot hide it. It will be known. The evidence (fruit) will be unavoidable.

B. The Continuity of His Prayer (v. 9)

To call God to be your witness shows the sincerity of your statement.

Your spiritual service must flow from your spirit.

Our service must never be motivated or energized by the flesh but by the Holy Spirit who works in conjunction with our spirit.

Paul prayed non-stop for the Romans. This does not mean 24 hours a day, but habitually through the day and week.

C. The Content of His Prayer (v. 10)

Paul prayed that God would open the door for him to go to Rome. His request was unselfish (v. 11).

Even though Paul had right motives, even though he wanted to be a blessing to the Romans, he still was dependent upon the will of God. Whenever you pray, always ask God to do His will.

Don't force God's will. Don't be disappointed when God does not answer right away (even when it is a noble, God-honoring cause you are striving to do).

God has a reason for the delay in answering your prayer (cp. v. 13b).

Paul did not merely pray that God would give spiritual understanding and growth to the Romans, he prayed that he would be the one God would use to do it.

Paul was one who was willing to put "feet to his prayers."

It's relatively easy to ask God to do something. It's not so easy to ask God to do it through you.

It's not too demanding to pray:

1."Lord, save my parents, neighbor, friends, etc."
2."God, meet the spiritual needs of ____."
3."Father, strengthen the faith of ___."

What we fail to do is to pray:

1."Lord, use me to witness to _____."
2."God, give me the opportunity to help _____."
3."Father, open the doors for me to strengthen the faith of _____."

It is hypocritical to pray that God would meet the needs of others, when you have the ability and opportunity to do so yourself.

EX: To pray, "Lord, send forth laborers into your harvest field" (Mt. 9:38) and to not be willing to go yourself cannot be a sincere (from the heart) request.

Our prayer should be (as the hymnwriter said): "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace ..."

Passing on the Good News to Others was:

II. A <u>PASSIONATE DESIRE</u> OF PAUL (v. 11-13)

v. 11

"I long to see you" - I have a continual, strong, compelling, desire to see you.

Paul's desire to see the Romans was not for selfish reasons (ILLUS: of wanting to go on vacation or visit people for selfish reasons).

He wanted to see them for the purpose that he might share with them something that God gave him.

"Gift" = the result of grace.

Paul knew that everything he had was a result of grace. It was given him by God. So he thought "why be selfish with it. I want to pass it on! I want others to be blessed with what God has given me."

"Impart . . . <u>some</u> spiritual gift" - What was it?

Whatever it was, its purpose was to <u>strengthen</u> them ("established")

Whatever it was, it would encourage their <u>faith</u> (v. 12)

Whatever it was, it evidently involved the proclamation of the Gospel (v. 15).

Therefore, the spiritual gift that Paul wanted to share was <u>doctrinal</u> in nature. It involved preaching about various facets of the glorious Gospel (v. 15), which would strengthen their faith.

A. When we pass on what God has given to us, others are <u>strengthened</u> (v. 11)

Paul's goal in sharing the blessings that God gave him was so that the Roman Christians might be established (strengthened) by God (passive verb) in their faith.

He lived for the spiritual advancement of others.

The spiritual strength of others should be our concern. Paul was not one who merely lived for his own strength (fortitude).

Rather, he received strength by giving of his strength (NOTE: mutual encouragement is the result - v. 12).

The sowing and reaping principle applies to all areas of life. You sow hard work, you reap success. You sow into other's lives, your reap in your own. You give of your strength so that others will be strengthened, and you will find that God will give back to you.

Everything we learn about God's grace, we should desire to tell others (like a person who would find the cure for cancer, or like a person who found a buried treasure).

Paul's overwhelming desire was to <u>give</u> for the spiritual benefit of others. He wanted to give of himself. Is that your desire?

B. When we pass on what God has given to us, others are <u>encouraged</u> (v. 12)

When we are used to strengthen someone's faith, we are encouraged and they are encouraged.

No one is beyond the need of encouragement. Not even the Apostle Paul. We receive encouragement when we see living faith in others. And they are encouraged when they see it in us.

The evidenced faith of a new convert encourages those who are mature in the Lord. And the faith of those who are mature encourages the baby Christian. We need each other.

We need to see each other's faith in word and deed. Don't hide what you believe - Let it shine!

v. 13

"I purposed to come" = I had it on my agenda. It was a goal that was "<u>set in front</u>" of my vision. Paul is saying: "I had every intention to come but was hindered."

How many times did you intend to do something that you thought was God's will, but were hindered?

Paul had an eager, zealous, desire to preach the good news to the Romans (v. 15), but was stopped from going there.

Paul had been arrested (Acts 21), tried by the Sanhedrin (Acts 23), by deputy Felix (Acts 24). He was then imprisoned for 2 years and then gave his defense before Festus (Acts 25) and to Agrippa (Acts 26) before appealing to Caesar (Acts 26:32).

On his way to Rome as a prisoner, he was shipwrecked (Acts 27). And when he finally arrived at Rome, he was for two years under house arrest (Acts 28:30). But God had a purpose in his being hindered - it was so he would have fruit among other Gentiles (v. 13b).

Passing on the Good News to Others was:

III. A <u>BINDING DUTY</u> TO PAUL (v. 14-15)

Verse 14 is tied to the end of verse 13 because Paul is saying, "I wanted to come to you at Rome, but God had <u>others besides you</u> that He wanted me to share the gospel with (v. 13), because I am a debtor to all" (v. 14).

"I am debtor" = I am under a binding obligation.

ILLUS: of the trillion dollar debt of USA. ILLUS: of credit card debts, unpaid bills, etc.

Debts must be paid, no option.

Are you as conscientious about paying a debt tot hose who don't know Christ as you are in paying your phone, electric, and gas bills?

For Paul, spreading the Gospel was an obligation, not an option.

Paul saw himself as a debtor to all cultures and all classes. To: Greeks - wise (educated) Barbarians - unwise (uneducated)

The Barbarians were called this because of how their language sounded when it was spoken. to a Greek, this speaking sounded like they were saying: "Brrr-Brrr" (idle chatter).

I Cor. 9:16 - "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!"

Paul knew that if he did not pay his debt he would be guilty of crime and would stand before God with bloody hands.

Acts 20:26, 27 - "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

(cp. Ezek. 3:18)

ILLUS: If you were starving to death, living in poverty, etc., and someone gave you a million dollars that you didn't earn or deserve and said, "I want you to go tell others that I have the same thing for everyone who comes to me, wouldn't you feel a bit obligated to pass the news on??

"So" = Because of my debt . . ."I am eager to preach the Gospel . . ."

Paul was one who was eager to pay his debts.

Jeremiah said: "Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." (Jer. 20:9)

Elihu said: "For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me. Behold, my belly is as wine which hath not vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles." (Job 32:18-19)

Passing on the Good News to Others was:

IV. NOT AN EMBARRASSMENT TO PAUL (v. 16-17)

To be "ashamed" means - to have a feeling of fear or shame which prevents a person from doing something. To be embarrassed, humiliated, or blush because of something you did that others view as wrong.

The only thing we should be ashamed of if sin (immorality)! (cp. Titus 2:8)

1. No one should be ashamed of "good news" (this is what the gospel is!)

Paul said to Timothy: "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord..." (II Tim. 1:8).

Jesus said - "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels." (Luke 9:26)

2. No one should be ashamed of that which saves.

"Power" = dynamite - explosive and sustained energy that is able to crack open any hard heart!

Have you ever seen the power of the Gospel? I have seen it change homosexuals, drunkards, drug addicts. If it can do that, should I be ashamed of it?

3. No one should be ashamed of that which is for everyone.

Salvation is sufficient for all, but only efficient to those who believe.

4. No one should be ashamed of that which is right (v. 17).

God's righteousness is unveiled in the Gospel of Christ.

Never be ashamed of truth!

People may view the gospel as foolish, but it is their only hope of salvation!

When are we ashamed? When we lack confidence in the trustworthiness of God. What is the secret to sharing the gospel without shame? Total confidence in it!

Paul said in II Tim. 1:12 - "I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

Because of our oneness with Him, Jesus is not ashamed to call us "Brethren" (Heb. 2:11; cp. 11:16).

ILLUS: If you were drowning and someone rescued you, would you be ashamed of that person? NO!

How could we be ashamed of Christ, who rescued us?

CONCLUSION:
For Paul, passing on the good news to others was:
1. A prayer request of Paul
2. A passionate desire of Paul
3. A binding duty to Paul
4. Not an embarrassment to Paul

What will you do with what God has given to you? . . . Pass it on!

Section 3: ROMANS 1:17-23
"NO EXCUSE!"

Theme and Outline of Romans 1:17-23

***There is no excuse for unbelief!**

I. At the Judgment, No One Will be Able to Say:
I DID NOT HAVE THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD (v. 18)

II. At the Judgment, No One Will be Able to Say:
I COULD NOT SEE THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD (v. 19-20)

III. At the Judgment, No One Will be Able to Say:
I DID NOT KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD (v. 21-23)

INTRODUCTION: V. 17
Verse 17 is the thesis statement (theme) of the book of Romans.

From this proposition, Paul unfolds the righteousness of God (justification) in the rest of the epistle.

I. The Need of God's Righteousness (chaps. 1-3)
(Sin of All Men)
II. The Source of God's Righteousness (chaps. 4-5)
(Salvation by Grace)
III. The Results of God's Righteousness (chaps. 6-8)
(Sanctification of the Believer)
IV. The Defense of God's Righteousness (chaps. 9-11)
(Sovereignty of God)
V. The Application of God's Righteousness (chaps. 12-16)
(Service of Believers)

Today, we will examine Paul's introduction to the need of God's righteousness. Man needs to believe the Gospel to have God's righteousness.

There are 2 basic types of people in the world:

1)Those who believe
2)Those who do not believe
1)Those who have faith in God
2)Those who do not have faith in Him
1)Those who want the truth
2)Those who do not want the truth

God's righteousness is unveiled before our eyes in the Gospel.

1) His righteous demands for sin; 2) His righteous atoning sacrifice of His son; and 3) the righteousness that he imputes to the sinner upon belief . . . All are elements of the gospel (SEE Rom. 3:21-26).

The wonderful blessings of the Gospel are only visible to the spiritual eyes of those who <u>believe</u>!

"From faith to faith" = <u>Out of</u> (ἐκ-because of) initial faith, your eyes are opened to God's righteousness; <u>into</u> (εἰς) a life of faith: as it is written, "the Just (righteous) will [future tense] live by (ἐκ- because of) his faith."

The key to understanding the Gospel is faith in it!
The key to having the Gospel save your soul is faith in it!
God cannot teach you anything if you refuse to believe. God's Word cannot change your life if you refuse to believe.

Faith is <u>not</u> just something we exercised at one point in our life (at salvation) and then didn't need it anymore.

We are to live by faith. Our whole life is to be characterized as a life of faith.
"The just shall (will) <u>live</u> . . ."
What type of life is meant?
2 types - 1) Eternal life (future salvation)
2) Abundant life (present sanctification)
<u>Proof</u>: The phrase "<u>From</u> faith" (points to salvation)
The phrase "<u>To</u> faith" (Points to sanctification)

Two other times the phrase "The just shall live by faith" appears in the N.T.

In Gal. 3:11, Paul uses it to point to <u>salvation</u> by faith; and in Hebrews 10:38 to a <u>life</u> of faith -
Gal. 3:11 - "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith."
Heb. 10:38 - "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."
In other words, <u>from</u> initial faith (at salvation) <u>into</u> a growing faith (sanctification) throughout one's life, a believer becomes more and more aware of God's blessed righteousness which is brought to open view in the Gospel.

***There is no excuse for unbelief!**

I. At the Judgment, No One Will be Able to Say: I DID NOT <u>HAVE</u> THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD (v. 18)

(". . . hold the truth in unrighteousness")

Note the contrast between verses 17 & 18:

* The revealed <u>righteousness</u> of God (v. 17)
*The revealed <u>wrath</u> of God (v. 18)

*The <u>faith</u> of a righteous [just] man
*The <u>unbelief</u> of an unrighteous man

The wrath (deep-seated anger) of God <u>is</u> (present tense) revealed against the <u>sin</u> of men.

"Hold the truth" = hold down; suppress. They hold the truth down (they drown it).

Whenever there is a rejection of God's truth, there will be ungodliness and unrighteousness (Prov. 29:18). (EX: how America has gone down-hill since the teaching of evolution took over the public schools).
Unbelief and sin go hand in hand; just like belief (faith) and righteous living go hand in hand.

A. How does an unbeliever hold down truth about God?

1. They refuse to think about it (Ps. 10:4 - "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.").

2. They refuse to talk about it (remember, to ignore a fact does not alter the fact) (EX: how those in sin scatter when some godly Christian enters the room).

3. They refuse to listen to it (they have turned a deaf ear to God - "seeing [they] see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand . . ." - Mt. 13:13).

4. They refuse to obey it (Some may listen to it or talk about it out of curiosity, but do not submit themselves to it).

To them, the wrath of God is revealed.
Eph. 5:6 - "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience."
Col. 3:6 - "For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience."

B. Why does an unbeliever hold down truth about God?

**They hold it down (ignore it; cover it, etc.) so that they can live "in unrighteousness"

Truth is light, and light exposes sin (SEE John 3:19-21).

What is man afraid of, that he holds off the truth?
He is afraid of losing that which he loves most (his own self; his own independence; that which pleases him).

Why are people content with the theory of evolution? They love their sin; they don't want to acknowledge a Creator because if He existed they would have to bow their knee to Him in submission, and they don't want this.
--they don't want to be told how to live.
--they don't like authority (especially not God's)

Willful unbelief because of a love for selfish sin is man's way of saying, "Leave me alone, God, I don't want You in my life." Hell is God's way of saying, "Okay, you may have your wish."
For believers, this principle also applies.
The old saying, "This Book will keep you from sin, and sin will keep you from this Book" is true!
The real reason (whether or not you are aware of it) that you don't read your Bible is because of sin (not that you don't have time).

II. At the Judgment, No One Will be Able to Say: I COULD NOT SEE THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD (v. 19-20)

("manifest . . . shewed . . . clearly seen . . .")

V. 19

"Known of God" = knowable about God.

We can know about God through general revelation, but we cannot know Him (we need special revelation to know God).

"Is manifest" = it is clear (in their consciences).

No one can say truth about God's existence is foggy.

The problem with an agnostic is not that he cannot know there is a God, but that he will not accept it.

There are no real atheists in the world. An atheist says "There is no God."

1. That statement cannot be proven.
2. All the evidence proves just the opposite.
3. You may say, "God is not for me," but you can't say "There is no God" - because you know He is! If you have eyes, you have see evidence of God. "God hath shewed it unto" you.

A. Creation shows God's might ("eternal power")

Nature points to the eternal ability of God. (it shows God to be sufficient to do all things).

Creation shows God to be innumerable times more powerful than man.

The One who is strength can give strength! This is Isaiah's point - SEE Is. 40:12-15, 22, 26-31

A.J. Hoover said: "The choice is simple: One chooses either a self-existent God or a self-existent universe - and the universe is not behaving as if it is self-existent."

(The Law of Thermal Dynamics would support I Jn. 2:17, which states that the "world is passing away." The earth does not improve with time but deteriorates.)

B. Creation shows God's majesty ("Godhead")

Nature points to the divine nature of God (it shows God to be worthy of worship).

Cp. Paul's apologetic to the philosophers at Mars Hill (Acts 17:22-31).

V. 20

The visible creation points to an unseen Creator.

ILLUS: a watch points to a watch-maker.
I never saw the person who made this watch, but I know he exists. (I would be a fool to deny this -- "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" - Ps. 14:1).
I never met the person who made this watch, but I know something about him.
--This watch points to intelligence (it has order)
--This watch points to artistic ability (it has design)
--This watch points to a purposeful mind (it has a function)

For those who would say, "If God exists, why doesn't He shows us in some tangible way that He is there?" - I would respond: "what more tangible proof do you want than the ground you walk on; than the body you have; than the majestic mountains, or the mysterious ocean? What more tangible evidence do you need than the vastness of the universe; or the minuteness of an atom?"

"We could address the logical improbability that life began without an outside stimulus, no matter how much time scientists postulate for such an occurrence. We could speak of the intricate pattern of the movement of the bodies in the universe - including amazing, pinpoint timing of their courses in relation to one another. We could talk about the precise tilt of the earth, its exact distance from the sun, and its accurate journey through our solar system - all prerequisites for the temperate climate we enjoy." (DeHaan, Crucial Questions series, "God:His Existence" Radio Bible Class, Grand Rapids, 1987, p. 9).

III. At the Judgment, No One Will be Able to Say: I DID NOT KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD (v. 21-23)

(". . . when they knew God . . .")

A. The unbeliever rejects what he knows to be true (v. 21a)

V. 21

"When they knew God..." - The word "know" (γινωσκω) suggests a recognition or an awareness about something. It points to a progressive understanding (or a knowledge which grows), rather than a fullness of knowledge (οἰδα) or a direct knowledge (ἐπιγινωσκω)

From creation we do not know God personally, but we know what God is like.
No one is born an agnostic.
You convinced yourself at some point in your life that God's existence was not provable.
You did know about God. But because of pride or selfishness, you did not give Him glory or thanks for what He has done.

Two proper responses to creation should be:

1) Glorifying God (giving Him the honor, respect and praise due Him)
2) Thanking God (expressing appreciation for what He has done for you)

B. The unbeliever is judged for what he knew to be true (v. 21b-22)

God judges those who knew the truth but rejected it.

The verbs "became vain," "darkened," "became fools" are all passive, which means God made them vain, God darkened their hearts, God made them foolish.
Why would God do this? Because they first rejected Him (v. 21a).
Remember Pharoah - The Bible says that "Pharaoh hardened his heart" (Ex. 8:32). From that point on "The Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh" (Ex. 9:12)

When we know truth (from God) and do not believe it and act upon it, God will take it away!

Luke 8:18 - "Take heed therefore how ye hear; for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have." CP. Mt. 25:14-30).
EX: how Jesus spoke in parables because they did not accept His Word when spoken plainly. SEE Mt. 13:12-16.

"Vain in their imaginations" = worthless in their ability to reason (rationalize).

"Foolish heart was darkened" = their undiscerning (without insight) heart was darkened (blinded).

"They became fools" = they were caused to become morons.
Whenever unregenerate man rebels against light, God removes it.

The answer to reaching "atheists" and "agnostics" for Christ is not by arguing to prove the existence of God. They already know He exists. However, they have hardened their hearts, and consequently God has also hardened them.
Therefore, the only answer is prayer!

They are under the wrath of God. They are presently under His judgment.

It is a serious thing to rebel against truth!

You call for the judgment of god when you do.

Cp. v. 24 - "God also gave them up to uncleanness."
v. 26 - "God gave them up to vile affections"
v. 28 - "God gave them over to a reprobate mind."

C. The unbeliever substitutes for what he knew to be true (v. 23)

The heavens declare God's glory. SEE Ps. 19:1-4.
Creation speaks about God's glory and ability -

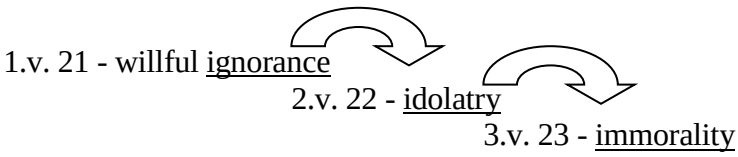
1) Creation speaks continually (v. 2)
2) Creation speaks in every language (v. 3)
3) Creation speaks at all places (v. 4)

Because God has revealed His glory in the physical universe, it has always been the tendency of depraved mankind to "worship the creature rather than the Creator."
Always remember: Nature declares (manifests) God's glory (Ps. 19:1); it is not His glory.

"Changed" = lit. exchanged. They substituted truth for a lie; reality for a copy (image).

(Those who reject God always find a substitute. It's idolatry, however it manifests itself or whatever form it takes - EX: materialism, humanism.)

NOTE: the progression of unbelief:



CONCLUSION:
What will God condemn sinners for? What is the only unforgivable sin? --Unbelief.
Your only hope is faith! Faith in a Creator-God
Heb. 11:3 - "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."
Faith in the Gospel of God (Ro. 1:16, 17)

Section 4 - "WHEN GOD LETS GO"
(The Consequences of Unbelief)
Romans 1:24-32

INTRODUCTION:

If man is as depraved as the Bible says he is, why are not conditions on earth worse than they are?

ANSWER: the common grace and mercy of God.

*God restrains sin for the sake of His people (EX: Abraham's lie to Pharaoh and God's plagues sent to keep Pharaoh from his wife - Gen. 12:17; Abraham practices the same deception before Abimalech - SEE Gen. 20:1-6 - to whom God said, "I also withheld thee from sinning against me" [v.6]).

*God restrains sin for the sake of His plan. God tells us that His Spirit is presently restraining (withholding or hindering) the flood gates of sin until the time planned by God comes (SEE II Th. 2:6-7).

God warned that His "Spirit shall not always strive with man" (Gen. 6:3).

Three times this phrase appears: "God gave them up to" (v. 24, 26, 28) (GK -)

It means to hand over into. The imagery is of God releasing His fingers (His restraining grip on them) and allowing them to sink, fall, drop, descend, or to go full force down over the cliff into the direction they wanted to go.

Why would God let anyone go? ANSWER: Unbelief

NOTE preceding context: After Paul described the necessity of faith (belief in the Gospel, v. 17), he unfolded the inexcusableness of unbelief (v. 18-23).

Men will not be able to stand before God at the Judgment and say: "I did not have the truth about God" (v. 18), "I could not see the truth about God" (v. 19-20); ~I did not know the truth about God" (v. 21-23).

After having shown the inexcusableness of unbelief, Paul now unfolds the consequences of unbelief (v. 24-32).

What happens when God lets go?

What is the result when God no longer holds back sin?

What is the outcome when He pulls off the restraints?

What would happen if God did not put as tight a reign on sin, if He did not hinder the full potential of depraved man to corrupt himself?

***Unbelief has serious consequences**!

(When God lets go, men plunge [sink or fall] into abominable wickedness.)

What happens when God lets go?

3 Consequences:

The three consequences involve the corruption of the total man - His volitional aspect (will) (v. 24);
His emotional aspect (feelings) (v. 26);
His intellectual aspect (mind) (v. 28).

I.When God lets go,
UNBELIEVERS PLUNGE INTO FILTHY BEHAVIOR (v. 24-25)
(Corrupt Actions: God "gave them up to uncleanness" -
v. 24)

V. 24

"Wherefore" - ties this verse to the preceding (v. 23).

Because those who refused to believe God substituted His glory for idolatry, God gave them up.

"Uncleanness" = refers to that which is impure, dirty, or filthy!

"Lusts" = ungodly appetites or desires

"Hearts" = the center of our will; that which makes choices; that which is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9).

Unbelievers tend to wrongly blame God for the world conditions. God can never be charged with sin or even being a culprit to sin (James 1:13-14).

It is men who, of their own choice, decide to go in a direction. At this point, God can choose to be gracious and restrain them or to let them go (He is under no obligation to restrain).

God never leads to uncleanness, though He may allow men to go there.

If they go, it is because they "gave themselves over to it."

Eph. 4:18-19 - "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness."

Uncleanness is what unbelieving man wants. Man suppresses the truth in unrighteousness (v. 18).

Like a pig that naturally loves the stinky, dirty mud (II Pet. 2:22), man who is in rebellion against God has a natural tendency toward filth, and will sink all the way down into the miry clay when God's restraining hand is removed.

"Dishonor = to disgrace, to de-value, to cheapen.

The phrase "among themselves" indicates that a physical or sexual activity is in view.

Sexual immorality dishonors your physical body. It cheapens you, makes you feel dirty. On the other hand, purity honors your body.

Since sexual purity is God's will for His children (I Th. 4:3), He says that you should know how to possess your vessel (body) in sanctification and honor (I Th. 4:4).

A man who purges himself from impurity is said to be a "vessel unto honor" (II Tim. 2:21).

Heb. 13:5 says: "Marriage is honorable in all and the bed (i.e. sex in marriage) undefiled . . ."

II.When God lets go,
UNBELIEVERS PLUNGE INTO UNNATURAL PASSIONS (v. 26-27)
(Corrupt Affections: "God gave them up unto vile affections" - v. 26)

A.Unnatural passions start with a perversion
("Change the natural use...leaving the natural use")

V. 26

"Vile affections" = disgraceful (dishonorable) passions.

1.Perversion is a "changing of the natural"

"Change" = exchange or substitute. Cp. v. 23, 25.

Whenever truth about God is substituted for lies, there is no end to the perversions (substitutes) that will follow.

What is a perversion? A twisting of something that is good; an exchanging or substitution of the lawful for the unlawful; the real for the false; the genuine for the counterfeit.

"Natural use" = the natural function; or natural sexual relations in marriage with a husband.

The natural is changed into unnatural.

Lesbianism and homosexuality is unnatural. It is against nature. Even animals instinctively know better!

V. 27

2.Perversion is a "leaving of the natural"

"Leaving" - aorist participle - After leaving (forsaking, abandoning) God's plan for sexual satisfaction.

When God created the family unit, they were named "Adam and Eve" - not "Adam and Steve!"

3.Perversion is doing the unnatural

"Burned" = became inflamed or set on fire in their lust ("reaching out; grasping at") toward one another.

Like the flames of a fire shoot out straining after oxygen to feed the fire's unsatisfied appetite, homosexuals burn with an insatiable lust toward one another.

When ever you attempt to satisfy a sexual desire other than by God's plan and will, you will become more contorted and twisted from the proper mode and satisfaction that God made you for - more and more degenerate (Bookman).

"Men with men" - lit. males in or among ( ) males

"Working" - to work with great effort; to toil

The raging madness of a homosexual drives him to go to great lengths to do that which is "unseemly" (shameful, indecent, unpresentable, disgraceful; that which should cause embarrassment).

Homosexuality is a perversion of God's law.

1.It is an abominable sin -

"Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is <u>abomination</u>" (Lev. 18:22).

2.It is a sin that calls for the judgment of God.

a.The O.T. Law required stoning - Lev. 20:13 - "If a man also lie with mankind as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them."

b.God judged Sodom and Gomorrah for this sin - Gen. 19. Gen. 13:13 - "But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the Lord exceedingly."

c.No one who is a practicing homosexual will go to heaven.

God said, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither . . . the effeminate (those who allow themselves to be abused unnaturally), nor abusers of themselves with mankind (those who are the active homosexual) . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God (I Cor. 6:9-10).

Is this sin unforgivable ? No (v. 11). It is pardonable, but only to those who are washed, sanctified, and justified.

B.Unnatural passions <u>end</u> with a <u>pay-check</u> (punishment)
("Receiving...that recompense")

"Receiving" = to <u>get back</u> one's due.

"In themselves" = a reflexive pronoun. What you do comes back to haunt you, personally.

Sin always hurts the sinner!

V. 27

"Recompense" = lit. "substitute payment" for what was done (wages, requital, or reward).

"Of their error" = delusion, for going astray.

"Which was meet" = necessary.

In a context of sexual immorality (harlotry), Solomon said: "Can a man take fire into his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?" (Prov. 6:27, 28).

Is AIDS the judgment of God? Yes & No.

Yes, because God established the <u>law</u> that "You reap what you sow"; or as the contemporary saying goes: "What goes around comes around."

No, because God did not create the AIDS virus, rather it is a natural result of breaking His Law.

(AIDS, like other sexually transmitted diseases is the natural result of immorality)

Asking the question, "Is AIDS God's judgment?" is like asking "Is someone's <u>hitting the ground</u> after leaping out of a 50-story building God's judgment?"

Yes & No - Yes, because God created gravity. No, because the person is facing the consequences for his own defiance of God's Laws.

III.When God lets go,
UNBELIEVERS PLUNGE INTO <u>REPULSIVE THOUGHTS</u> (v. 28-32)
(Corrupt <u>Attitudes</u>: "God gave them over to a reprobate mind" - v. 28)

"Did not like to retain" = - to reject after testing. To make a decision to reject the truth about God after they examined the evidence.

For these unbelievers, God did not pass their test.

"Knowledge" = a full knowledge or a direct awareness.

What type of evidence was rejected?

They had creation that pointed to a Creator. Their conscience also pointed to a creator (2:15). (Many today have heard messages, read books, went to church, etc., and after weighing the evidence they disapprove of God being something they would want a full and direct knowledge of.)

They didn't want God "getting in the way" of their thoughts.

Note the contrast: They disapproved of having God in their thoughts, so God in return allowed them to have a disapproved (same Greek word) mind.

They rejected God in their knowledge, so God handed over to them a rejected mind.

They considered God to be useless to their intellect, so God returned to them a useless thinking capacity.

They disapproved of having God in their thoughts, so God delivered in return a disapproved mind (a mind that is good for nothing - a mind that cannot think straight; a mind that causes the person to do things that are not proper, fitting, moral - KJV - "convenient").

Wrong thinking ("Mind") always leads to wrong behavior (doing "those things that are not convenient" [proper, fitting, moral]).

--Whenever man expels God from his thinking, there is a reason for it. It is because his mind is preoccupied with other thoughts. Because he has rejected a personal knowledge of God through Christ, he opened his mind to be filled with all types of perversion. An unbeliever is capable of any or all of the mentioned vices.

V. 29 -

1.Unrighteousness - the opposite of ding right or justly (God is the standard of all right).

2.Fornication - Sexual immorality (sex outside of marriage); the opposite of sexual gratification in marriage.

3.Wickedness - the opposite of moral goodness.

4.Covetousness (greed) - the opposite of selfless giving.

5.Maliciousness - the opposite of being kind.

6.Full of envy - rather than rejoicing in the success of others

7.Murder - rather than preserving life and respecting man who is made in God's image.

8.Debate - (strife) not peaceable.

9.Deceit (trickery) - not genuine.

10.Malignity - to malign or twist right; lit. evil ethics, rather than honest ethics.

11.Whisperers - secretly pouring poison into the ears of others rather than "esteeming others better than yourselves" (Phil. 2).

V. 30

12.Backbiters (evil speakers) - cut up, rather than build up; to stab rather than strengthen.

13.Haters of God - rather than loving the one who created and provided for you.

14.Despiteful - to be cruel for the mere enjoyment of seeing others suffer; seeking to hurt rather than help.

15.Proud - rather than humble under God

16.Boasters - (braggers) rather than using your tongue to uplift God.

17.Inventors of evil things - one who finds out ways to make things for evil ends (EX: abortion methods) rather than using his resources for good ends.

18.Disobedient to parents - rather than submitting to authority.

V. 31

19.Without understanding - rather than having discernment between right and wrong.

20.Covenant breakers - rather than being faithful to agreements.

21.Without natural affection - no normal tenderness or compassion.

To be missing the compassion and affection that should come natural. "Natural affection" describes a family love; feelings of loyalty because of your relationship.

It comes natural to defend your family; to have compassion on your family because of the relationship if for no other reason.

To be "without natural affection" describes a mother who has no feelings, no tender heart for her child as she aborts it (murders it); it describes a father who abandons his family or lives in sin when his little children are looking up to him; or children who forsake and neglect their aged parents after they provided for you when growing up.

22.Implacable - irreconcilable. It describes someone who holds a grudge; has a "chip on his shoulder"; as opposed to one who seeks restoration with others and forgives.

23.Unmerciful - without pity.

V. 32

Everyone who sins fully knows they are breaking God's law, and that payday is coming.

Yet, they not only practice these sins themselves, but applaud others who are joining them. "Sin likes company."

When someone is headed for hell, they don't want to go alone, so they delight in others who join them in their guilt-worthy, godless endeavors.

CONCLUSION:

Never forget the principle of "sowing and reaping" (Gal. 6:7).

*Whatever you substitute for God,
will become your ruin*

NOTE: the pattern of: 1) rejection (substitution) and
2) consequences

(cause & effect)

They exchanged the glory (honor) of God (v. 23) and received dishonored bodies.

They twisted the truth (reality) of God (v. 25) and received unreal (twisted) affections

They expelled the knowledge of God from their minds and received a worthless (empty) mind.

1.Sow unclean idolatry (v. 23), reap unclean behavior (v. 24).

2.Sow unnatural worship (v. 25), reap unnatural passions (v. 26).

3.Sow unwanted thoughts of God (v. 28a), reap an unwanted mind (v. 28b).

Nothing should be more feared than for God to say about you, "I'm finished. . . You have heard My Word; you know My righteous standards, yet you resist My Spirit. (EX: Acts 7:51)."

". . .If you want to go in that direction of unbelief -- Go!"

"My Spirit shall not always strive with man." (Gen. 6:3)

The Holy Spirit is calling you (maybe just one last time): "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. 3:7, 8).

Section 5 - "THE DELUSION OF SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS"
Romans 2:1-5

INTRODUCTION:

Paul already showed the so-called "atheist" or "agnostic" that he was without excuse (1:18-23 *v. 20) for his disbelief. Now he turns the tables on those who would say "Amen" to the people described in 1:18-32, by showing the self-made "moral" man to be without excuse (2:1).

NOTE: In verses 1-5, the words you, your, or yourself appear 11 times (5 "thous" in v. 1 alone!).

***Don't be deluded (deceived) by self-righteousness!**

The self-righteous man is:
1) foolish (v. 1-2); 2) illogical (v. 3) and 3) ignorant ("not knowing" - v. 4) in his thinking.

Avoid being deceived by remembering the 3 misconceptions (mistaken ideas) of a self-righteous person:

Misconception #1 -
I.I CAN SEE SIN IN OTHERS,
therefore, I must be right with God (v. 1-2)

(The self-righteous clearly sees, and yet is blind)

V. 1

"Inexcusable" = without legal defense

The hardest people to lead to Christ are "moral" self-righteous people. (people who are hard-working, disciplined, faithful to family and spouse, honest in business dealings, etc.).

Why are they so hard to reach with the Gospel?

1)They fail to see that they have broken God's law.

a)No one has kept the greatest command (love God and neighbor totally - Dt. 6:5; Mt. 12:30).

b)Everyone has broken at least one law, which makes everyone guilty of breaking every law (Ja. 2:10)

2)Therefore, they fail to see their need for Christ.

SEE Matthew 7:1-5.

Not all judging is wrong -

--We are to judge (in the sense of discerning right from wrong - I Cor. 2:15 - "But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.")

--We are to let God's Word do the judging (Ja. 4:11, 12), not set ourselves up as the standard.

--We are to judge righteously (Jn. 7:24).

The judging that is wrong is -

1.Unjust, fault-finding; hairsplitting legalism; cutting criticism; unloving condemnation.

2.Hypocritical judging (v. 3-5).

"Condemnest" = to make a judgment against.

Your own words and actions will one day condemn you (ILLUS: the expression "He hung himself").

Jesus said, "...By thy words thou shalt be condemned." (Mt. 12:37).

Every sin that has ever been committed, you are capable of committing!

--Anyone who would deny this does not understand how depraved he really is (cp. Rom 3:1ff).

We are just as depraved as the next guy. It's only by the restraining grace of God that we are what we are! (I Cor. 15:10).

--Anyone who would deny this is not comparing himself with a holy God! (EX: Isaiah 6; II Cor. 10:12 - "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves are not wise."

You may not exercise the magnitude of lewdness described in chap. 1, but you have broken God's law nonetheless!

You may not have broken the letter of the law, but have broken the spirit of it.

Externally, you may appear to men to be white-washed, yet internally, if you were honest and humble, you must admit that there are skeletons hanging in your closet (Mt. 23:27)

Mt. 23:28 - "Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."

There are sneaky sinners and blundering, obvious sinners who are constantly being found out. Some have the skill and ability to hid sin; others do not.

Some are more professional or "white collar" sinners, but law-breakers nonetheless. At the Judgment there will be no privileged characters (Rom. 2:2).

A wicked <u>thought</u> is just as sinful as a wicked <u>act</u>.

Mt. 5:21-22 - Anger = Murder
Mt. 5:27-28 - Lust = Adultery
(Lust - a <u>desire</u> to have that which is not yours)

If you have looked at pornography or fantasized through a "romance" novel even <u>once</u>, you are an adulterer!

A.Why is it so easy to judge others rather than self?

1.It removes the attention away from yourself. The spotlight is turned off of you.

Remember that whenever you point your finger at others you have three pointing back at yourself.

EX: David saw sin in others, but not in his own life, until Nathan very pointedly applied his sermon (II Sam. 12:1-13 *v. 7)

B.Why are we blind to our own sin?

1.<u>Our heart</u> is a deceiver -

Jer. 17:9 - "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it?"

Gal. 6:3 - "For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself."

2.<u>Sin</u> is a deceiver -

Heb. 3:12, 13 - "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

"There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness" (Prov. 30:12; CP. Is. 5:21).

Prov. 16:2 - "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the Lord weigheth the spirits."

"Every way of a man is right in his own eyes; but the Lord pondereth the hearts" (Prov. 21:2; cp. also Prov. 12:15; 14:12).

The Bible says, "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" (I Cor. 12:31).

--You judge others for going to an R-rated movie, yet you sit at home watching HBO.

--You who see the foul language in others, do you see the gossip in your own tongue?

--You who see pride in others, do you see your own selfishness?

--You who can point out unfaithfulness in someone else's life, do you see your own failures?

--You who can readily spot someone who has a "chip on his shoulder," do you ever see the abominable grudges you hold?

The Pharisees could see everyone else's sin but not their own (SEE John 9:40, 41).

v. 2

God's judgment will be according to truth. There will be no bogus defense attorneys in Heaven; no unjust judge; no buying off God.

He knows you are guilty (whether you admit it or not) and one day your works will reveal the real you (Rev. 20:12, 13).

Misconception #2 -
II.I KNOW WHAT IS RIGHT,
therefore, I must be right with God (v. 3)

(The self-righteous knows right, but does wrong)

"Thinkest" - - an accounting term meaning "to mentally calculate or reckon"; "to add up" what you view as justifiable facts that will prove your innocence at Judgment day.

"Escape" - to run out from.

A man's ability to "judge" implies a knowledge of right and wrong.

You may know the Ten Commandments, the "Golden Rule," all theology, Bibliology, Christology, Pneumatology, Anthropology, Soteriology, Harmartiology, Ecclesiology, and Eschatology.

But simply knowing truth, means nothing if it does not affect your will.

Knowing and doing are two different things.

Probably nothing is more sickening to God than someone who knows what is right, but does not obey it (Ja. 4:17).

"To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Ja. 4:17)

Jesus did not say "If you love Me, you will know my commands" - but "You will keep them" (Jn. 14:15, 21).

The saying is true: Practice what you preach

Why will the one who judges others not escape strict judgment himself?

ANSWER: He knew better! He knew the Law.

A judge in the court of law is someone who knows the law. When a judge violates the law (after he knew it well enough to be able to sentence others to prison for breaking it), he deserves a stricter trial and sentence.

Knowing what is right and not obeying it has more severe consequences than not knowing (SEE: Lk. 12:47-48).

(Degrees of punishment in Hell for sinning against Light - cp. Lk. 20:47; II Pet. 2:21, 21).

Misconception #3 -
II.I AM EXPERIENCING GOD'S GOODNESS,
therefore, I must be right with God (v. 4-5)

(The self-righteous experiences God's goodness, yet is under God's wrath)

"Despisest" = lit. to think down upon; to belittle; or treat lightly.

People belittle God's goodness by thinking "We deserve it."

The reason God's goodness is so good is because we don't deserve it.

Israel's possession of the good promised land was not because of her righteousness (Dt. 9:4-6).

ILLUS: Tom Stockwell (my former boss in Minnesota) was deceived into thinking that because his business was going well (the money was flowing in, etc.) that he must be living a life that was pleasing to God.

God is not necessarily showing His pleasure (approval) toward you because you: 1) win lotto; 2) get a promotion; or 3) win the election.

God is not necessarily saying: "I am pleased with mankind" just because the weather is beautiful, our harvest brings forth abundantly, or our economy is flourishing.

God is not necessarily smiling on you when good things happen in your life, any more than God was frowning on Job's life when he was engulfed in trials and misery.

God makes "the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Mt. 5:45).

God's goodness (kindness), forbearance (tolerance; holding back wrath), and long-suffering (patience) is not a reward to man, but should serve as a reminder that it won't last forever!

God does not want anyone to perish; He is longsuffering that all would come to repentance. (II Pet. 3:9).

"Repentance" = to have a change of mind. God's goodness to sinful man should cause undeserving man to fall on his knees and see a God of grace! A God who is able to give eternal life, to man, who cannot earn it and does not deserve it.

V. 5

However, the self-righteous one rather than softening up hardens up. Rather than having a change of heart, he has an impenitent (unrepentant) heart, and thereby he treasures up (stores up, or gradually accumulates) for himself more and more and more of the deep-seated anger of God, who one day will say, "Enough. Your change to repent is over. Now you will receive the wages of your sin!"

Many say in their heart with the wicked man described in Ps. 10:6 - "I shall not be moved, for I shall never be in adversity."

The Psalmist (Asaph) is amazed (perplexed) at the prosperity of the wicked, who are deluded by a false sense of security (Ps. 73).

They prosper (v. 3); are physically strong even at death (v. 4); "not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men" (v. 5); "...they have more than heart could wish" (v. 7); "they increase in riches" (v. 12); . . . But all this goodness does not last forever for the ungodly

(Ps. 73:15-16 - "If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children. When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me.")

CONCLUSION:

Note the paradox of self righteousness:

The self-righteous person -

a.clearly sees, yet is blind (v. 1-2)

b.knows what is right, but does what is wrong (v. 3)

c.experiences God's goodness, yet is under God's wrath (v. 4-5).

What is the cure for self-righteousness?

1.Have a humble viewpoint of yourself (an accurate self-image).

"Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (I Cor. 10:12).

A self-righteous person is one who has no mercy (compassion) on others. He is generally harsh; displaying a "holier-than-thou" attitude.

However, when you see yourself (in the true light; as you really are) you have a different attitude toward others.

It does not mean that you don't seek to correct an erring brother (indeed you must!) but you do it with a spirit of meekness (Gal. 6:1-3 - "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.").

2.Have an exalted viewpoint of God (a Biblical view of God)

"He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (II Cor. 10:17; cp. Jer. 9:23-24).

3.Submit yourself to the righteousness that God gives

(Rom. 10:3 - "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.").

The Pharisees questioned Jesus for eating in the same house with publicans and sinners (Mt. 9:10-11), to which Jesus replied, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick . . ." (v. 12) (cp. Lk. 7:36-50).

What did Jesus say to those who trusted in themselves and looked down on others? (SEE Luke 18:9-14 - Pharisee & Publican).

Jesus says to the self-righteous today as He did to the Pharisees: "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts . . ." (Lk. 16:15).

Section 6 - "THE JUST JUDGMENT OF GOD"
Romans 2:5-16

INTRODUCTION:

They convicted the wrong man -- ILLUS: I read a newspaper article involving a man who was convicted of a crime and sentenced to life imprisonment. After several years behind bars, the case was re-tried and the man was found innocent. Upon this ruling, the man sued the city for several million dollars and won. He sued because of irreparable emotional damage inflicted on himself while he spent time in prison for a crime he never committed.

Any law system governed by man is bound for failure at one point or another, because man is fallible and prone to error.

Judges and people who comprise a jury are human, mortal, and therefore often inconsistent. They are not perfect, not omniscient, nor is the law perfect, and neither is it always just.

No doubt thousands have been set free who should have been behind bars, and thousands have been imprisoned who should have been set free. No doubt thousands have passed through our judicial system who deserved a stricter penalty than they received, and thousands of others have been penalized more severely than their crime merited.

We will not always agree with the decisions made by the court of law because of man's proneness to error and injustice.

However, there is a Judgment coming that will be totally fair, just and righteous.

For you see, there is a Judge who will never make a blunder. There is a Judge who has all the facts; nothing escapes His notice; He accepts no bribes; and He shows partiality (favoritism) to no one.

God's judgment is said to be "according to truth" (2:2); it is a righteous judgment (2:5).

Why? Because God is total truth (Dt. 32:4; Is. 65:16) and total righteousness (ps. 145:17; Dt. 32:4).

***God's Judgment will be a Just Judgment!** (v. 5, cp. v. 2)

3 clear Proofs show that God's judgment will be just:

I.God's Judgment will be Just Because:
ALL EVIDENCE WILL BE UNDENIABLE (V. 6-8)
(Your own deeds will testify for or against you)

A.Your deeds (works) determine your rewards (v. 6)

No one will say to God: "It's not fair! I'm not getting what I deserve!"

"Render" = to pay back or give back; to reward (Mt. 16:17 - "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

(Your deeds will be rewarded)

NOTE: Your deeds (works) will <u>not determine</u> whether you got o heaven, but will determine the rewards (crowns) you receive in Heaven. Salvation/eternal life is not a reward; it's a <u>gift</u> (Eph. 2:8, 9; Tit. 3:5; I Jn. 5:11-13).

Your deeds (works) will <u>not determine</u> whether you go to hell, but will determine the rewards (degrees of punishment) you receive in Hell throughout eternity (SEE v. 5 - "treasurest up" = to <u>store up</u> or <u>gradually accumulate</u>).

God's wrath "accumulates like waters at a dam, being held back by divine forbearance and longsuffering."

Many Christians have the mistaken notion that the Judgment Seat of Christ (described in I Cor. 3:13-15; II Cor. 5:10-11) is nothing to be too concerned about; nothing to be feared.

Paul, however, says in a context of the judgment of believers, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." Heb. 10:30b-31, "The Lord shall judge <u>His</u> <u>people</u>. It is a <u>fearful</u> thing to fall into the hands of the living God." "Our God is a consuming fire!" (Heb. 12:29)

B.Your deeds (works) <u>reveal</u> your <u>heart</u> (v. 7-8)

1.<u>Good</u> works are proof of a <u>changed</u> (regenerate) heart (v. 7)

Verse 7 describes a heart that is seeking (zealous for) "treasure in heaven" or "things which are above" . . .

This verse is picturing someone who seeks "first the kingdom of God."

When Christ saves someone, He <u>changes their heart</u> (Acts 15:8-9 - "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.")

The reason our heart changes is because its tenant changes. The Holy Spirit moves in.

"The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Ro. 5:5).

The "earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (II Cor. 1:22)

God the Father sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts." (Gal. 4:6).

When God puts His Spirit into someone, He transforms their stony heart" into a soft, humble, submissive heart (i.e. "a heart of flesh") (Ezekiel 11:19; 36:26)

"True saving faith results in obedience and godly living, even though there may be occasional falls" (Wiersbe, p. 520).

God is showing us that outward fruits are an indication of an inward change. -- "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Because of the salvation he has inherited in Christ, he has his eyes on the eternal. He is living with Heaven and eternity in mind.

His heart is fixed on "glory" - that which is truly praiseworthy.
His heart is fixed on "honor" - that which is truly valuable.
His heart is fixed on "immortality" - that which is not corruptible.
Your actions prove your attitudes.

If your action is one of service for Christ, loyalty to fellow believers, and generosity for the work of God, this is an indication of an attitude of faith in God's promises.

At the Judgment many would no doubt claim: "But Lord, I had an attitude of love for you, etc." and the Lord will unfold before your eyes all of your actions which proved just the opposite. **Actions speak louder than words.

What is the overall focus of your life?

--If it is the world (temporal things), the love of the Father is not in you (I Jn. 2:15-16).

--If it is Heaven (eternal things), than this proves you are saved and the result will be eternal life.

2.Evil works are proof of an unchanged (hard, unrepentant) heart (v. 8)

"Contentious" = self-seeking; selfishly ambitious.

Verse 8 describes a heart that is totally 100% focused on self.

It describes someone who will do whatever it takes to please self (EX: step on others for self-advantage).

What motivates a person's heart to do evil? Selfishness

God knows what you are really living for! He knows your heart!

--Whenever someone rejects what is right, they will accept the wrong.

--When they are not persuaded that God's truth is the way to go, they reveal that they are persuaded that unrighteousness is the way to go.

Note: Contrast of "not obey" with "obey" -- By choosing not to obey the truth, you have chosen to obey unrighteousness. (no one can stay neutral)

Many think that at the Judgment, they will be able to say, "God I was not against you."

Jesus said, "He that is not for me is against me!"

"Indignation" = deep-seated anger

"Wrath" = the fuming, hot judgment of God

ILLUS: a little boy stealing a piece of cake and denying it, while the evidence is one his lips.

The evidence will be clear at the Judgment.

There will be no jury in Heaven to weigh the evidence. Your own deeds will shout out the verdict!

To the unbeliever, his lifestyle of fornication, adultery, theft, alcoholism, drug use, greed, pride, etc., will shout out the words "Guilty!" by virtue of his rejection of Christ.

To the believer, his lifestyle of honesty, purity, kindness, generosity, humility, etc., will shout out the words "innocent" by virtue of his acceptance of Christ and his righteousness.

II.God's Judgment will be Just Because:
ALL EVALUATION WILL BE IMPARTIAL (V. 9-11)
(You will not be shown favoritism or discrimination)

ILLUS: In recent days it has been said that if you are black and stand trial in NYC you are more likely to be convicted and sentenced than if you were white.

This kind of prejudice may be true. However, at the Judgment no one, regardless of race, color, ethnic background, will be treated differently.

NOTE: "every soul" (v. 9)
"every man" (v. 10)
"no respect of persons" (v. 11)
"Jew...and Gentile" (v. 9, 10)

God's judgment will be unbiased; God will not show favoritism; God is not prejudiced.

NOTE: Verse 9 is contrasted with v. 10 (evil doers contrasted with good doers).

According to God, you are either one or the other - no middle ground!
V. 9

"Tribulation and anguish" - further described the horrors of God's indignation and wrath.

"Tribulation" = affliction (pressure)

"Anguish" = distress, torturing confinement (the feeling of being crushed with no place to move).

"Doeth evil = present tense, indicating the constancy of the practice.

God is not describing someone who commits an act o sin (Even believers from time to time commit acts of sin - I Jn. 1:10); but is describing someone who has a lifestyle characterized by sin; a practice of evil.

V. 9 - Why Jew first? Because they know better; they had the written law of God.

V. 10 - Why Jew first? Because they were God's chosen people, His beloved nation.

"Worketh good" = present tense, again indicating the continual nature of the good working.

God is not describing someone who has done something good in his life. Even an unbeliever can do a "good" work now and then (though unpleasing to God - Is. 64:6). Rather, God is describing someone who has a pattern of good works; a lifestyle of doing good (only a genuine believer can maintain a consistency in living for God - an unbeliever does not have the power to do so).

Remember: No one "works good" until after they are saved by grace. Only then can they fulfill what they were "created in Christ Jesus for" = "good works" (Eph. 2:10).

"No respect of persons" - Lit. "to receive the face." God judges no one differently because of who they are. Everyone in the bible, who sinned, suffered the consequences for it (even the heroes - EX. Moses, David).
V. 11

Because of pride, many suppose that God will deal with them differently. They say, "He understands."

The saying, "It does not matter what you know, but Who you know" will not be valid in Heaven. No one will come to the aid of an unbeliever at the Judgment.

--No one has an "in" with God
--No one has special favor with God
--God can't be bribed, bought off, or buttered up.

When you were in school, you may have been able to earn brownie points with your teacher but not with God.

You may be a smooth talker and able to talk your way out of penalties on earth, but not with God!

Two places the ground is level:
1) The foot of the cross 2) the Judgment of God

You will stand before God and be judged regardless of your sex (male/female), color, nationality (race), wealth, fame, intelligence, looks, family heritage, occupation in life, etc. (the pygmies in Africa will stand next to the NYC banker at the Judgment.).

"All things are naked and open unto Him with whom we have to do" (Heb. 4:13).

III.God's Judgment will be Just Because:
ALL <u>EXCUSES</u> WILL BE <u>UNACCEPTABLE</u> (V. 12-16)
(You will not be able to say: "I didn't know the Law")

V. 12

No one will claim "insanity."

No one will be considered "irresponsible" for their actions.

The emphasis in chapters 1-3 involves the <u>sinfulness</u> of man and therefore his <u>inexcusableness</u> before God at the Judgment.

--The <u>pagan Gentile</u> in 1:20 stands before God without excuse.

--The <u>self-righteous Jew</u> in 2:1 is without excuse.

--<u>All men's mouths</u> will be stopped at the Judgment, and all the unregenerate world will stand guilty before God (3:19).

A.No excuse for those who <u>did not</u> have the Law (v. 12, 14-15)

People wonder "what will happen to those who never had God's <u>written</u> word? ANSWER: They will perish. Why won't they be excused? Because they had God's Law written in their hearts (v. 15)

Those who knew the Law will face a <u>stricter</u> Judgment (to whom "much is given, much shall be required." - Lk. 12:48).

v. 14

No matter where you travel in the world, you will always find people with an inner sense of right and wrong.

"Do by nature" - do instinctively; do without being taught by men.

V. 15

God's universal, moral laws are written upon the heart of every person!

The conscience bears witness or testifies of what God has written on your heart.

The conscience is the mediator between the heart (with its written law code) and the thoughts (which instigate one's actions).

The conscience functions like a referee.

The conscience receives the rules from the rule book and sends a message to our thoughts saying either Fair or Foul, Safe or Out, Yes or No!

Our conscience will either "accuse" (say "no, definitely not, that is contrary to God's Law"), or it will "excuse" (say "yes, that is permissible or allowable, I will do that, it is in accordance with God's standards).

Whenever we disobey our conscience, we are rebelling against God!

NOTE: A person's conscience only functions based on the information fed into it. If a person rejects the info. fed into his conscience by creation (Ro. 1:18-20), His conscience will not function properly.

B.No excuse for those who heard the Law (v. 13)

Many Jews in Paul's day would think that because they heard, were taught, and knew the Law that they were privileged characters. That they had an edge over all others (cp. v. 17).

Paul is making it clear, that it is not the possession of the Law that counted, but the practice of it (Wiersbe, p. 520).

Paul is speaking hypothetically in v. 13.

Hypothetically, if you were someone who kept every single law in the Bible, every day of your life, and never broke one - you would be justified (proven righteous). However, no one ever has (outside of Jesus Christ).

Paul is working his way up to proving that no one has "done" the Law. And that the Law cannot justify.

SEE: Rom. 3:20.

C.No excuse for those who sinned but it was never known (v. 16)

In the court of Law, there must be witnesses who accuse or defend someone (one is not convicted and sentenced without provable evidence - without someone standing up and saying, "I saw what you did").

People think, "Because no man has seen me, I am free!" Human nature deceives us into not feeling guilty until we are caught.

But remember, God sees all! and one day the "secrets of men" (the hidden things) will be judged. You can fool man, but not God.

I Cor. 4:3 - "But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self."

Jesus Christ will do the actual judging (Jn. 5:22, 27; Mt. 25:31-36; Acts 17:31)

CONCLUSION: *God's judgment will be a just judgment!

1.All evidence will be undeniable
2.All evaluation will be impartial
3.All excuses will be unacceptable

Section 7 - "FIRST THINGS FIRST!"

(Matters of Priority)
Romans 2:17-29

INTRODUCTION:

Paul in Romans 2 is knocking out the supporting legs of the chair that a "moral" Jew would confidently rest (rely) on for his salvation:

Leg #1 -In 2:1-4, the leg of <u>self-righteousness</u> is knocked away.

Leg #2 - In 2:5-16, the leg of <u>favoritism</u> (partiality at the Judgment) is knocked away.

Leg #3 - In 2:17-24, the leg of the <u>Law</u> is knocked away.

Leg #4 - In 2:25-29, the leg of <u>externalism</u> (the rite of circumcision and the name "Jew") is knocked away!

***To be truly right with God, we must be concerned about matters of priority! (We must put first things first!)**

I.FIRST YOURSELF, THEN OTHERS (v. 17-25)
(Introspection [of self] must come before inspection [of others])

It comes natural to put ourselves first when we should not, and to not put ourselves first when we should.

Matters in which we should not seek first: EX - first in line, first in fame, first to be served, in first place. This is pride. Remember: "The first will be last and the last first."

A matter in which we should seek to be first is the matter of self-examination.

It's easy to see saw dust in other's eyes and to miss the logs or planks in our own (Mt. 7:3-5).

Applying God's truth to yourself must come before applying it to others.

2 Questions to ask yourself:

A.Before you instruct others, ask yourself:
"Do I teach myself?" (v. 17-21a)

Verses 17-20 form a string of conditional clauses begun in verse 17 ("Behold" - lit. "Now if") and concluding in verse 21, which gives the apodisis. (Explain v.21a)

V. 21

"Another" = the Greek has 2 words meaning "another" -

1."Another of the same kind" ( )

*2."Another of a different kind ( )
This person views those he instructs as being different than himself. He sees them as inferior, and is deceived into thinking he towers high above them.

V. 17

1)It's not enough to have a name, if that's all you have (v. 17a)

2)It's not enough to lean on the Law, if you fail to see how it applies to you (v. 17b)

The purpose of the Law is not for someone to rest (lean or rely on), but it was to show you your sin (Rom. 3:20).

3)It's not enough to take pride in knowing about God, if you really don't know Him. (v. 17c)

4)It's not enough to know what God wants for others, if you don't know what He wants from you. (v. 18a)

5)It's not enough to have high standards for others, if you don't impose those same standards upon yourself. (v. 18b)

V. 18b

"Approvest" = to approve after testing or examining.

We are to prove "what is acceptable unto the Lord" (Eph. 5:10).

--We must examine priorities in life, but then make them your priorities.
--We are to test doctrine, but then make it part of ourselves.

--We are to perceive the superior way of living the Christian life, but then obey it!

6)It's not enough to show others the right way, if you are not going there yourself. (v. 19)

ILLUS: of a woman, who went out witnessing (soul-winning) but was never saved herself (She was convinced that the Gospel was needed, but was never convicted that she needed it).

V. 19

NOTE: the self-confidence.

This person has persuaded himself (deceived himself) into thinking he can guide (lead the way) for the spiritually blind, and be a light for those (outside of himself) who are in darkness.

Jesus rebuked the Pharisees, calling them "blind guides" (mt. 23:16, 24). He asked: "Can the blind lead the blind? Shall they not both fall into the ditch?" (Lk. 6:39)

V. 20

7.It's not enough to correct the spiritual ignorance of others, if you are ignorant yourself (v. 20)

"Instructor" = a combination of a teacher and disciplinarian (a school master).

"Foolish" = the unthinking or ignorant.

"Babes" - spiritual infants

No teacher is a good teacher unless he has first learned the lesson he is giving.

"Form" = outward form; outline.

This person has the outer shell of truth, but lacks the real substance.

The letter (legalism), but not the Spirit (love) of the Law.

The Pharisees were expert teachers but rotten examples (mt. 23:3).

God is not saying that it is wrong to instruct others, but simply to instruct yourself first!

Beware of Pharisaical Preachers:

--Paul warned Timothy: "Take heed to thyself (Yourself) and to the doctrine (teaching)..." (I Tim. 4:16)

--Paul warned the Ephesian Elders: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock..." (Acts 20:28)

Beware of Pharisaical Parenting:

Parents who say to their children:

--Don't drink, smoke, or take drugs - must have clean temples themselves.

--Don't hang around with bad company - must fellowship with God's people themselves.

--Be faithful to Christ, church, and the Bible - must be just as consistent themselves.

Beware of Pharisaical marriages:

--A husband who expects submission and willing obedience from his wife must himself be submissive and obedient to his head (I Cor. 11:3)

--A wife who rightly demands love and loyalty from her husband must be loving and loyal (not only in body) but in spirit to her husband.

We are guilty many times of:

1.vicarious (substitutionary) devotions
2.vicarious church attendance
3.vicarious listening
(we listen to God's Word and seek applications to others rather than ourselves)

B.Before you point out sin in others, ask yourself:
"Am I guilty myself?" (v. 21b-24)

It is ingrained into our sinful human nature to point out sin in others' lives while avoiding our own.

EX: Children -"Daddy, ___ is hitting me."
"Mommy, __ is talking bad to me."

Reply: "What did you do to start it?"
Usual answer: "Nothing."

1."Stealing" - (the 8th commandment - Ex. 20:15)

I know you don't rob banks, but do you steal:

--from I.R.S.
--from God (don't give Him His offering)
--from your employer (stealing time, long breaks, etc.)
--from those you borrowed from, but never paid back

2."Adultery" (the 7th commandment - Ex. 20:14)

Remember, adultery is not only committed in act, but in thought (Mt. 5:27, 28).

3."Idolatry" (the 2nd commandment - Ex. 20:4)

"Abhorrest idols" - to detest idolatry.

The idea is to become sick at the thought of idolatry.

Before the Babylonian captivity, the Jewish nation went a-whoring after idols; however, after the exile, she never returned to it.

V. 22

"Sacrilege" - 2 possibilities:

a.Traders in the temple (jn. 2:14)

The idea is "who do you think you are who is zealous against idolatry,and yet your worship money in God's temple?"

b.Robbers of heathen temples

The idea is: "Who do you think you are, who hate the idolatry that goes on in pagan temples, yet you dare to set foot into their temples without fear of pollution, for selfish gain?"

Someone who knows what is right, yet does what is wrong:

1.Dishonors God (v. 23)

Today, a major reason why people have a low regard or disrespect for the Bible is because they see those who claim to be Christians not obeying it. They don't see how it has changed your life. God is honored when His word is obeyed.

2.Gives the enemies of God cause to blaspheme (v. 24)

God's name (reputation) is profaned.

Ex: David's adultery (II Sam. 12:14 - Nathan said to David, "By this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme").

EX: God's merciful patience toward Israel time and time again was for His name's sake. (Ezek. 20:9, 14, 22, 39, 44 - cp. Ezek. 36:22, 23).

"The pagan Gentiles had daily contact with the Jews in business and other activities, and they were not fooled by the Jews devotion to the Law. The very law that the Jews claimed to obey only indicted them." (Wiersbe, p. 520).

If the Jews that Paul was addressing would have taken inventory of themselves, they would have seen what was missing, and would have asked God for His mercy and grace.

God is not calling on you to examine yourself so that you will live with a guilt complex, but so that you would see your own weakness and spiritual sickness, and come to Him for His medicine (the grace of Christ).

II.FIRST INTERNALS, THEN EXTERNALS (v. 25-29)
(Be right on the inside, before you worry about the outside)

ILLUS: I recently looked at a house for sale that had a decent exterior, but a rotten interior (it was not worth half of the $280,000 the owner was asking for it).

It is sinful human nature for people to be this way.

God never condemned externals, He condemned externals without internals.

SEE Matt. 23

A.Internal Righteousness is the true measure of spirituality (v. 25-29a)

1.True spirituality is an obedient heart (v. 25-27)

V. 25

"Circumcision" (that mark of distinction for a Jew) would profit if he practiced the Law he preached; otherwise it is worthless.

"The Jews depended on this physical mark instead of the spiritual reality it represented (Deut. 10:16; Jer. 9:26; Ezek. 44:9) (Wiersbe, p. 521).

I believe in external standards -

EX: short hair on men (I Cor. 11:14)
modest dress for women (I Tim. 2:9)

Someone can be externally right without being internally right, but you will never be internally right without eventually being externally right.

God commands external standards just as He did circumcision for the Jew (Lev. 12:3). However, don't think you are spiritual simply because you keep a few externals; God wants to give you an obedient heart.

In verses 26-27, Paul shows how it is possible for an uncircumcised Gentile to keep the Law's weightier requirements, even though he did not have the written law code!

In the same way that uncircumcision is "by nature" (v. 27, Gentiles by "nature" have the work of the Law written in their hearts (v. 14, 15)

"That which proves spirituality is obedience from the heart.

Believers today are external participants in:

--Baptism - but often are not living out what that baptism symbolized (death to old life and new life in Christ)

--The Lord's Supper - but often are not daily communing with Christ nor remembering what He did for them on the cross.

--Church membership - but often are not active, functional members of that local Body.

2.True spirituality is a clean heart (v. 28-29a)

V. 28

Paul is saying:

A true Jew is not merely a physical descendent of Abraham, nor one who keeps a religious ritual. Real circumcision is not physical.

"Outward" - that which is visible; open to sight or manifest.

In the Law, circumcision didn't merely refer to physical surgery, but god said, "Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked (rebellious) (Dt. 10:16).

"Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your heart" (jer. 4:4).

In other words, God called for Israel to separate themselves from sin and hard-heartedness, unto God.

V. 29

True spirituality is to let God cut away the filth of your heart.

Spiritual surgery, not literal (the "letter")

Col. 2:11 - "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ"

Probably the reason why the Jew chose physical "letter" circumcision over spiritual circumcision is because they didn't want God to touch their lives.

It's the same way today.

People don't mind attending mass once a week, having a few drops of water dropped on their forehead, receiving a round wafer in their mouth, etc.

But if asked: "Will you receive Christ into your heart and life?" they refuse.

"Letter" = a reference to the details of the Law.

As Christians we are to serve: "In the newness of Spirit, and not in the oldness of the Letter" (Ro. 7:6).

"The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life" (II Cor. 3:6)

You may be moral on the outside, but how is your heart?

Man sees the outside, but god sees the "thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12).

B.Internal Righteousness is what truly pleases God
(v. 29b)

Man applauds and approves of man because of externals.

Jews praised each other for their obedience to the Law, but the important thing is the "praise of God" not man (Wiersbe, p. 521).

The name "Jew" comes from "Judah" which means "praise" (cp. Gen. 29:35, 49:8)

"Men look on outward appearance, but god looks on the heart." (I Sam. 16:7).

I Cor. 4:5 - The Lord will one day "bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God."

A woman's adorning is not to be external but internal. The internal is what is valuable in God's sight (I Pet. 3:3, 4 - "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.")

CONCLUSION:

*To be truly right with God, we must be concerned about matters of priority! @3 must put first things first!

1.Introspection (of self) must come before inspection (of others)

2.Be right on the inside, before you worry about the outside.

Section 8 - "TWISTED REASONING"

(Perverted Logic)
Romans 3:1-8

INTRODUCTION: Man will think up most anything in an attempt to escape accountability before God and responsibility for his sin (v. 1-2)

V. 1

"Then" - refers back to chapter 2 where Paul systematically knocked away the supporting legs that a Jew rested on for salvation [1) self-righteousness; 2) partiality with God; 3) the Law; 4) the name Jew (circumcision)]

After boldly stating that a true Jew was not one who merely had the name or had the external mark of circumcision, and after showing that God desires a right heart relationship to Him, a Jew would then naturally ask: "If this is the case, what is the advantage of being a Jew? (i.e. what does a Jew have "over and above" anyone else - if anything?) or what is the benefit of the circumcision?

"What's the big deal about being a Jew?"

Answer: They had the great privilege of being entrusted with the oracles (words, sayings, or promises) of God.

What a privilege it was! Of all nations, God revealed Himself exclusively through this nation.

V. 2

We (like the O.T. Jews) have been entrusted with God's Word. If a Jew were responsible because he was entrusted with the O.T., how much more are we, who possess the whole Bible?

In verses 3-8, Paul, knowing the mindset of a Jew, asks 3 questions that might be in their thoughts at this point.

NOTE: The questions reveal a defective mindset. Having been proven to be sinners, thoughts might arise about the possibility of avoiding accountability for sin.

Anyone who would ask such questions is not concerns that God would be shown faithful, righteous and true, but is trying to justify unbelief and sin, and to escape accountability.

***Beware of twisted reasoning!**

2 twisted ideas to watch out for:

I.Twisted Idea #1 -
"GOD EXCUSES UNBELIEF" (V. 3-4)

A.Remember: God is believable, whether others believe Him or not (v. 3-4a)

Someone might think, "God will excuse my unbelief if enough people don't believe."

V. 3

"The faith" = the faithfulness

"Without effect" = invalid; null and void

Man's unbelief does not alter God's believableness one bit!

Even if not one person on earth believed God's word was true, it would not alter the fact that It is!

V. 4

"God forbid" = lit. "may it never be". contemporary sayings: "never happen;" "No way"; "impossible." Such a thought is unthinkable!

ILLUS: of a little girl who didn't want to look at me so she blocked her eyes and said, "You are not there."

To not see a reality does not remove the reality.

ILLUS: I could say, "I don't believe that George Washington crossed the Delaware" and I could deny that Christopher Columbus sailed the Atlantic and I could say that the Declaration of Independence was not

signed by John Hancock on July 4, 1776, and I could disbelieve that Johann Gutenberg invented the printing press in 1450, or that Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone in 1876, or Thomas Edison the light bulb in 1879.

For me to deny these facts does not detract their validity, does it?

I would be called a fool to deny those facts, because the evidence is all documented! So is the evidence of a Creator God.

--to disbelieve a promise does not nullify that promise.

--to distrust the validity of a warning from God, does not render that warning worthless.

--though every man on earth believed in evolution, this would not change the fact that "God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1)

--though every man on earth believed that man evolved from the ape and other lower forms of life, this wouldn't eradicate the fact that "God created man in His own image" (Gen. 1f:27).

--though every man on earth denied the miraculous, this would not undo the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea by Israel; the miraculous supply of manna for 40 years, the miraculous supply of water from a rock in the wilderness, the miraculous deliverance of Shadrack, Meshach, and Abednego from the fiery furnace; Christ's feeding of the 5,000 with 5 barley loaves and 2 small fish; the resurrection of lazarus, etc.

--though every man on earth, denied Christ's atoning, substitutionary death and bodily resurrection, this would not nullify the declaration that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures..." (I Cor. 15:3-4)

--though every man on earth believed that salvation was by works, this would not destroy the true doctrine of salvation by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8-9)

--though every man on earth refused to believe that Jesus was coming back, this would not alter His promise "I will come again" (Jn. 14:3); and "Behold, I come quickly" (Rev. 22:7)

--Though every man on earth refused to believe in a literal hell and lake of fire, this would not alter the darkness of hell (Jude 13), nor diminish the torment of hell (Lk. 16:23; Rev. 14:11), nor quench the flames of hell (Mk. 9:43-48); nor decrease the eternal time frame of hell (Mt. 25:41)! Millions who died, denying the existence of hell, are firm believers in it now!

God is faithful to His word whether you believe it or not!

B.Remember: <u>God is true</u>, even if everyone else is a liar (v. 4b)

Someone might think, "God will excuse my unbelief, since no one is trustworthy nowadays."

Often a wrong concept of God is derived from man when he thinks that God is like he is.

God corrects this mistaken notion in Ps. 50:21 - "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee..."

V. 4

God is true whether men see Him as truthful or not!

Paul says Let God be continually found true, though every man be found a liar. Even if every man on earth were a liar, God would still be true.

"Justified" = to be proven right, or shown to be right in What God said.

Paul is quoting Ps. 51:4 (LXX), where King David admits his sin against God and only (Ultimately) against God - then says that God is justified when He speaks (and points out man's sinfulness), and blameless when He judges. [NOTE: the Greek word can be translated middle or passive. Since the Hebrew text from which this verse is quoted would support the middle voice, the verse should read as follows: "...and mightest overcome when thou art judging."

God will overcome (conquer; be victorious) when He judges man. Man may question God, but God will always have the last word.

II.Twisted Idea #2 -
"GOD EXCUSES SIN" (V. 5-8)

A.God does not excuse sin,
Even if your unrighteousness makes His righteousness shine brighter (v. 5-6)

V. 5

"Commend" = demonstrates; shows off; or lit. makes "stand out"

ILLUS: suppose we observed the every day behavior of 2 people. One was totally wicked. The other was totally righteous. The great contrast between the two would show how different they were, and would highlight the good qualities of the righteous man.

If I hung a black piece of felt cloth over the pulpit, and then glued a pure white piece of cloth in the middle of it, the contrast would be great and the white would really stand out, wouldn't it?

Man's unrighteousness enhances God's righteousness.

The reasoning is: If man's unrighteousness gives God an opportunity to display how righteous He is, isn't man actually accomplishing something good?

If therefore, man is accomplishing a good end by his unrighteous behavior, Is God wrong to be angry with man's sin? No!

"If man's unfaithfulness and sin bright about greater glory to God, how can He justly punish man for it?" (G. Thomas, Romans, p. 96).

To say it another way, the question is: "Does God have a right to be angry because of my sinfulness, when my sin actually made God's righteousness stand out all the more?"

God will receive glory from everything man ever did.

EX: God received glory from Pharaoh by his refusal to let Israel go (Rom. 9:17).

And God receives glory when anyone speaks his words, and serves Him by His power.

I Pet. 4:11 - "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God: if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

God is glorified by every would that goes to Heaven (because they are perpetual testimonies of His love and grace), and I believe that God will even be glorified by those who got o hell (because they will be perpetual testimonies of His holiness and righteousness).

(Throughout the book of revelation, God is glorified because of His righteous judgments - Rev. 11:13; 14:7; 15:3-4; 16:5-7; 19:1-3).

"I speak as a man" = from a human perspective; from the viewpoint of a lost, unregenerate, spiritually ignorant person who things that God might be unrighteous to take vengeance (pour out His deep-seated anger).

V. 6

God could not judge the world if He was guilty of unrighteousness Himself.

A judge cannot be guilty of that which he is condemning others for.

There is no escaping judgment just because God's righteousness stands out against the back drop of your unrighteousness.

B.God does not excuse sin,
Even if your lies reveal the glory of His truth (v. 7)

V. 7

Paul follows up on what he said (in v. 5-6) by using himself as a hypothetical example.

"Abounded" = increased in abundance.

EX: "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Ro. 5:20)

--The darker a society gets, the brighter God's grace shines

--The dirtier man reveals himself to be, the more powerful the cleansing of God appears.

NOTE: It is not sin that glorifies God, it is His righteousness in contrast to it that glorifies Himself.

NOTE contrasts:

--God's faithfulness is contrasted with man's unbelief (v. 3, 4)

--God's righteousness is contrasted with man's unrighteousness (v. 5-6)

--God's truthfulness is contrasted with man's lies
(v. 7)

The reason God is glorified, is because His truth shines out against the back drop of man's falsehood.

One day God will be shown to be true.

Against the back drop of man's lies throughout history, God's truth will shine out. But sin is not justified!

C.God does not excuse sin,
Even if good was to result from doing evil (v. 8)

V. 8

Since Paul proclaimed that good works do not save, the unbelieving Jews were accusing Paul of preaching "lawlessness" (anti-nomianism). They rationalized, "If God is glorified, regardless of how we live, why not live anyway we want?"

This twisting of Paul's teachings was no doubt what Peter had in mind in II Peter 3:16.

The suggestions: "Let us do evil that good may come" is similar to Rom. 6:1 where Paul asks: "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?"

Salvation by grace is not a "green light" for sinning.

Justification of the sinner must not be confused with justification for sinning.

God can turn the evil actions of men into a good result (EX: Joseph - Gen. 50:20a - "But as for you, ye thought evil against me: but God meant it unto good." cp. Gen. 45:5-8).

But this never justifies doing evil!

Justifying evil because of good results is wrong!

ILLUS: 1) It's like criminals saying, "Because we committed crimes, this prompted man to invent guns that can be used for good purposes (EX: game hunting) Therefore didn't we do good?" NO!

2) Suppose the AIDS epidemic (causes by homosexuality) encouraged men to do such extensive research that they found an antibiotic (vaccine) that not only cured AIDS, but all blood-related viruses. Could the homosexuals say, "See what we did actually resulted in good happening. WEre we wrong for our behavior? Should we be judged by God?" YES!

Lying for a good end is never justified (EX: Rahab)

Stealing for a good end is never justified. (EX: Robin Hood).

CONCLUSION:

In the day we live in, we must beware of twisted reasoning:
There is no excuse for unbelief.

There is no excuse for sin.

Section 9: ROMANS 3:9-20
"WHAT WE REALLY ARE"

Theme and Outline of Romans 3:9-20

***It is imperative that we see ourselves as we really are - we must see the true nature of man - we must realize what man amounts to without God.**

4 proofs that reveal every man to be totally depraved:

I. **Man's Character Proves His Depravity (v. 10-12)**
(What he is is corrupt)

II. **Man's Speech Proves His Depravity (v. 13-14)**
(What he says is corrupt)

III. **Man's Action Proves His Depravity (v. 15-18)**
(What he does is corrupt)

IV. **God's Law Proves Man's Depravity (v. 19-20)**

INTRODUCTION:

A deceitful, fast-growing, and appealing religion is finding roots in America today. It is known as the New Age Movement. It advocates self-discovery, human potential, self-improvement, all based on the "essential goodness," independent power, and divine nature of man. It promotes humanism and is preparing the way for the Antichrist. Is man at all what the New Age Movement elevates him to be?

V. 9
The question is "Are we (Jews) better than they (Gentiles)?" Are the Gentiles excelled by the Jews?
Not at all!

"Pagan" gentiles were shown to be under sin in chapter 1 and the "moral" Jews in chapter 2.

"They are all under sin."
Sin is pictured as a victorious conqueror standing over its defeated victim. Unsaved man is under sin's power and penalty.
"The Scripture hath concluded all under sin" (Gal. 3:22).
Note the universality or all-inclusiveness of sin. In these verses: "all" (v. 9); "none" (v. 10); "none...none" (v. 11); "all...together...none...not one" (v. 12).

Total depravity -
Eccl. 9:3 - This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead."

Is. 1:5-6 - "Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it: but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: and they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment."

- God speaks of unsaved man as being "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1; cp. Col. 2:13).
- Man's heart is blind and he exists in spiritual darkness (Eph. 4:18; 5:8; Col. 1:13).
- The question is asked in Job 14:4 - "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" No one.
- A sinner from conception: "Behold I was shaped in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Ps. 51:5).
- A sinner at birth: "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies" (Ps. 58:3; cp. Is. 48:8).
- "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth" (Gen. 8:21; cp. Gen. 6:5).
- God cannot be blamed for man's sin. When He created man "in His own image," His creation was good (Gen. 1:27, 31).
- Solomon said: "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions" (Eccl. 7:29).

***It is imperative that we see ourselves as we really are - we must see the true nature of man - we must realize what man amounts to without God.**

"He who doubts total depravity had better study himself" --Spurgeon

4 proofs that reveal every man to be totally depraved:

I. Man's Character Proves His Depravity (v. 10-12)

(What he is is corrupt)

In verses 10-18, Paul strings together a group of O.T. proof texts (primarily from Psalms) to support his point that "all [are] under sin" (v. 9).
NOTE: His authority is the Word of God!
Paul is not saying that everyone has committed all of these sins to the highest degree possible, but that these tendencies are in all of us. Everyone has the potential to commit the most vile sin, although not everyone has. The only thing that separates us from the most abominable sinner is the restraining grace of God.

V. 10a
"None righteous" = no one is just according to God's perfect standards.
The reason why people complain about injustice, unfairness, prejudice, discrimination, etc., is because man by nature is not just. Law enforcement, taxes, etc., will often be unfair. The reason things are not right is because man is not right.
A Bumper sticker once read: "The more people I know, the more I like my dog."

V. 11a
"God hath concluded them all in unbelief" (Ro. 11:32).

V. 11
"None that understandeth" = Man lacks spiritual knowledge (cp. Ps. 14:2). He does not comprehend the true perspective of life, values, etc.

Man can understand worldly matters and concepts: You can have a conversation about cars, food, fashion, money, art, sports, etc., and man will identify with what you are saying. However, when the conversation turns to spiritual matters, "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God..." (I Cor. 2:14).
"None that seeketh after God" = lit. to "seek out." No person if left to himself would seek out God! We, in our fallen nature, love darkness rather than light.

No one seeks out God; rather, God seeks out man (EX: Adam - Gen. 3:9).

Jesus said that "no man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him" (Jn. 6:44; cp. Jn. 6:65; Jer. 31:3).
Before you sought God, He sought you! Before you wanted Him, He wanted you!
The only reason you turned to Him is because He had drawn you to Himself with cords of love (cp. Hos. 11:4).

V. 11b
We must take the Gospel to men, because men will not come to the Gospel. "How shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. 10:14; cp. Titus 1:3).

I don't have people banging down the doors of the church, seeking salvation.
They will not come unless the seed gets planted and God begins to draw men to His truth [EX: Eunich (Acts 8); Cornelius (Acts 10) - they wanted to know God's truth because seeds had been planted; yet they still needed someone to explain it].

V. 12a
"Gone out of the way" = lit. "turned away from (Him)."
Man is not heading toward God, but away from Him. Not getting closer to God, but moving further away.
"We hid as it were our faces from Him . . . All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way" (Is. 53:3, 6).
In the coming Tribulation, rather than repenting and turning to God, the world will "hide themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains" and say, "Hide us from the face of Him" (Rev. 6:15, 16).

V. 12b
"Unprofitable" - worthless, useless. The Hebrew means to go bad or sour like milk or to rot as food.
Without God, man's life is vain. It is futile.

When the sum of an unbeliever's years are added up and evaluated, the true value as God sees it is zero (Is. 64:6 - "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.").

Man's works are like a pile of stinking, rotting garbage that must be hauled off and burned.
ILLUS: of rotten grass after landlord mowed and bagged it up only to sit for two months.

V. 12c
"Doeth good" = to practice goodness or kindness (as God sees it)

Unregenerate man may from time to time do something commendable by human standards ("Even a broken clock has the right time 2 times a day). But God knows his motive.

Prov. 21:4 - "An high look, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked, is sin."
Ecc. 7:20 - "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."

II. Man's Speech Proves His Depravity (v. 13-14)

(What he says is corrupt)

V. 13
"Sepulchre" - a grave. A cave where corpses would rot and decay.

"Their mouth (words) is like the odor of a newly opened grave" (Robertson, p. 345).
Nothing stinks as bad as a rotting human body (cp. Jn. 11:39 - Lazarus).

When man opens his mouth, putrifying things come out *(Mt. 15:11, 18 - "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. . . But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.")*

"Deceit" = to speak with an intention to trick or deceive.
They speak nicely to or about a person, while at the same time they are "sticking a knife in his back."

"Asps" = cobra snakes. A reference to the Egyptian cobra. The word "aspidon" referred to that which was round (such as a bowl or shield) and was used to describe the cobra snake because of its round hood around its neck that expanded when it was excited.

> The cobra has a bag of poison under its lips that it ejects through its hollow teeth into its victim to kill it before swallowing it. Some cobras are capable of ejecting the poison for several feet into the eyes of their prey to temporary blind it before attacking.

V. 13b
The poison of the tongue - SEE James 3:5-8.
"But the tongue can no man tame (only God can); it is an unruly evil; full of deadly poison." Words not only hurt; they are deadly!

V. 14
"Cursing and bitterness" = Man's dirty, profane, vulgar mouth is proof enough of a real internal problem!

> ILLUS: Without thinking, men continually take God's name in vain.

III. Man's Action Proves His Depravity (v. 15-18)

(What he does is corrupt)

V. 15
"Feet are swift to shed (pour out) blood"

Ever since Cain killed Abel, innocent blood has been crying out for God's vengeance. EX: abortion; rape/murder

Not all men have committed murder; but all are capable of it.
Man's unrighteous anger toward man reveals the potential for murder (Mt. 5:21-22).

V. 16
Self-destruction and the destruction of others is innate.
Violent tendencies are in the heart of the unsaved.

Left to ourselves, we would make a mess out of our lives.

"Misery" = no brightness, no hope.
Wherever unregenerate man goes, he leaves behind him a trail of ruin and misery.
Vandalism and molestations are practiced for mere entertainment.

The world is heading like a herd of cattle down the "broad way" that "leadeth to destruction" (Mt. 7:13).

V. 17
The world does not know the way (road) that leads to peace.

Man tries various avenues and paths in his pursuit of peace but travels in vain, until he tries the way named "Christ." --"I am the way..." (Jn. 14:6).

Peace is found via (by means of) Jesus. SEE Rom. 5:1-2

Peace with others and peace with self is impossible for one to experience if they do not know the "Prince of peace" (Is. 9:6).
Only then can we know "the peace of God which passeth all understanding" (Phil. 4:7).

"Before" = in front of.
One who fears God is one who lives, makes decisions and plans based upon a reverential awe of God.

V. 18
One who feared God would tremble at the thought of doing evil.

Your attitude toward sin in your life reveals whether or not you fear God.
"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil" (Prov. 8:13).
"By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil" (Prov. 16:6).

The proof that men do not fear God is evident in their actions (SEE Ps. 36:1ff).

Man's eyes look out for self-gratification at all costs, regardless of the onlooking and pending wrath of God.
No one who loves sin is anticipating Judgment. Unconverted men push the slighteth thoughts of this out of their minds and in a sense laugh at God.

Remember the response to Noah's preaching? Jeremiah's preaching? Jesus' preaching?

IV. God's Law Proves Man's Depravity (v. 19-20)

V. 19
NOTE: "Every mouth . . . all the world." No one will offer excuses at the Judgment.

No one will boast of a personal righteousness at the Judgment.

ILLUS: of someone who claimed to be innocent in court until all of the evidence was opened up.

V. 20
No one will be justified in God's sight by keeping the Law because no one has ever kept the Law!
Ps. 143:2 - "And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified."

Why can't an unsaved person keep God's commandments? He doesn't have the nature to do so. No inner ability.

> ILLUS: of a lemon tree only producing sour lemons. You can pull off all the lemons and stick sweet, juicy oranges in their place; you may fool some into thinking you have an orange tree, but in reality all you have is a lemon tree with dead oranges on it. You have not changed the nature of the tree ("...a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit" - Mt. 7:17).

Our human nature is sour. Often we don't like it, but nothing we try (such as getting rid of bad habits) can change our nature. Only Christ can (II Cor. 5:17).
"Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil" (Jer. 13:23).

The Law was never intended to justify. Rather, God gave man His Law for 2 purposes:

1)To restrain sin - I Tim. 1:9-10

2)To demonstrate depravity

The O.T. Law gives man a "knowledge" (lit. "full knowledge" - direct awareness or deep consciousness) of his sin.
The Law was given to show us our transgressions (Ga. 3:19). The Law wasn't given to show you how good you are, but how bad you are.

It was an instructor or "schoolmaster" to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith" (Ga. 3:24).
The Law taught man his inability to be self-righteous. Therefore, man must throw himself upon the mercy and grace of God.

CONCLUSION:
A knowledge of the depravity of man should benefit you in several ways:

1. If you are unsaved, you should now see your need for God to give you righteousness (Ro. 3:22).
   Why would the devil deceive man (via humanistic philosophies) into thinking he is independently "good"? Because if so convinced, man would not see his need for help - God's help.

2. If you are saved, you should have a greater understanding and burden for the lost.
   They act the way they do because they are lost! They need you to lead them to the way.
   They are confused! They need you to lead them to the truth.

They are dead! They need you to lead them to the life.

Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life (Jn. 14:6).
Will you tell them?

3. If you are saved, you should have a greater appreciation for your salvation.
   Never forget what Jesus saved you from!
   Never forget how lost you were!

Section 10: ROMANS 3:21-31
"WHEN GOD CLEARS THE RECORD"

Theme and Outline of Romans 3:21-31

***You can be just as if you had never sinned in God's sight.**

6 Facts about Justification:

I. God's Means of Justification is Not New News (v. 21)
II. God's Means of Justification is Available for All (v. 22 - 23)
III. God's Means of Justification is Without Charge (v. 24a)
IV. God's Means of Justification is Only in Jesus Christ (v. 24b-26)
- A. Jesus is Our Redeemer (v. 24b)
- B. Jesus is Our Propitiation (v. 25a)
- C. Jesus is for All Ages (v. 25b-26)

V. God's Means of Justification Strips Away All Pride (v. 27)
VI. God's Means of Justification is Consistent with His Law (v. 28-31)

INTRODUCTION:

ILLUS: of the relief of having a bad record cleared.

The question is asked in Job 25:4: "How then can man be justified with God?"

In this context (vv. 21-31), the word translated "righteous" or "just" (justified) appears 9 times (the emphasis is on God's part in man's righteousness); and the word translated "faith" or "belief" appears 9 times.

***You can be just as if you had never sinned in God's sight.**

6 Facts about Justification:

I. God's Means of Justification is Not New News (v. 21)

The phrase "but now" is mentioned several times in Romans as a "transition of hope."

"But now" = In this context, the phrase shows a contrast between the impossibility of justification by works of the Law (v. 20) and the manifestation of justification by the grace of God (v. 21ff).

"The righteousness of God" = the righteousness that God gives; the righteousness that comes from God.

This message is not a new discovery on the part of Paul. This good news is not a novelty exclusive to Paul (as ultra-dispensationalists would hold).

Paul is saying that his message is not new. The Law itself spoke of a righteousness that came to man not by law-keeping but from God. The prophets foretold the same (cp. Ro. 1:2; Acts 10:43).

> "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Gen. 6:8).
> Abraham "believed in the LORD, and He (the LORD) counted it to him for righteousness" (Gen. 15:6; cp. Ro. 4:3; Gal. 3:6).
> Even Moses was not justified by the Law which he delivered to Israel, but he also found grace in God (Ex. 33:17).
> King David on numerous occasions said that he was justified by the mercy of God (Ps. 130:2, 3; Ps. 511f)
> Ps. 51:1 - "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions."
> Isaiah said, "Surely . . . in the LORD have I righteousness" (Is. 45:24).
> Is. 45:25 - "In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."
> Is. 53:11 - "He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."

Obviously, a righteousness that came apart from the Law had to exist, because the Law was not given until 1400 B.C. If righteousness only came by the Mosaic Law, everyone who died previous to the giving of that Law would be in Hell now!

The Law revealed its own inadequacy to justify. It showed that sin could not be taken away permanently by the need of continual sacrifices (Heb. 10).

II. God's Means of Justification is Available for All

(v. 22 - 23)

V. 22

"By faith of Jesus" - objective genitive. -- "in Jesus"

"Unto all and upon all" (T.R. - KJV)
"Unto" = - God's righteousness penetrates into the life of the believer, making him internally clean before God.
"Upon" - God's righteousness is like a garment that clothes a sinner, dressing him for Heaven (ILLUS: the necessity of a wedding garment - Matt. 22:11-12).

V. 22-23

NOTE: the emphasis on the all-inclusiveness of God's righteousness - "all . . . all . . . no difference (v. 22) . . . all have sinned" (v. 23).

God does not limit His atonement!

"There is no difference" = no distinction.
All need God's imputed righteousness because no one has any righteousness of their own (Isaiah 64:6); No one is any worse off or better off than the next person. God, being just, treats no one with partiality or favoritism (the reason is in verse 23).

V. 23
"Sinned" = missed the mark. Word was used of archers who would shoot an arrow and miss the "bull's eye"

"Come short" = to fail to reach; to be missing. ILLUS: Olympic runner and wheel chair patient over the Grand Canyon.
ILLUS: Someone at the bottom of a pit and someone on top of the Swiss Alps are far apart, yet neither is able to touch the stars.

No one possesses the glory that is necessary for one to have before entering into the presence of a Holy God. God has a standard that you must attain before you (or anyone) can enter into His heaven.
This standard is total, spotless perfection! Since God is perfect, anything that exists in His presence must be perfect (He is totally righteous and holy).

If you fit the description "sinner" (which you do), God's righteousness is available for you.

III. God's Means of Justification is Without Charge (v. 24a)

"Justified" - declared righteous; positional righteousness, not practical (ethical) righteousness.
One who is justified is viewed as one who has never sinned.
"Freely" - a gift without payment.
"By His grace" - the undeserved kindness of God
No man can inherit it.
No man can purchase it (I Pet. 1:18).
No man can work for it (Eph. 2:8, 9).
It's free! And it's from God! (v. 24)
Salvation is free, but it is not cheap. It costs us nothing, but cost God - His Son.

IV. God's Means of Justification is Only in Jesus Christ (v. 24b-26)

NOTE: the emphasis in this context on the necessity of faith to be specifically in Jesus.
"Faith of (in) Jesus" (v. 22)

"Redemption is in Christ Jesus" (v. 24) . . . "faith in His blood" (v. 25) . . . "believeth in Jesus" (v. 26).

Salvation is not by believing in God (even demons believe that and tremble - Ja. 2:19); but by believing in the Son of God! (I Jn. 5:11-13).

A. Jesus is Our Redeemer (v. 24b)

"Redemption" - to release by means of a ransom (lit. to buy back).

ILLUS: of a slave market where slaves were sold to the one paying a ransom (ILLUS: Gomer bought back by Hosea for 15 pieces of silver - Hos. 3:1-5).

Christ is our Redeemer (I Cor. 1:30); we have been "bought with a price" (I Cor. 6:20); "we have redemption through His blood . . ." (Eph. 1:7).

B. Jesus is Our Propitiation (v. 25a)

"Set forth" = to place before the eyes of the world. God displayed His means of salvation when He sent His son into the world.
God's righteousness has been manifested (v. 21) and Christ is the manifestation (v. 25).

"Propitiation" = the Greek word refers to the mercy seat whereon blood was sprinkled for atonement (heb. 9:5). Jesus is our only means of satisfying God (Is. 53:11)
"He is the propitiation for our sins..." (I Jn. 2:2; 4:10).
II Cor. 5:21 - "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

"Faith in His blood" = faith in the substitutionary bloody death of Christ. His shed blood accomplished what the blood of bulls and goats could not (Heb. 10:4).
Heb. 9:12 - "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

Blood indicated the outpouring of life. There is a close connection between blood and life. "The life of the flesh is in the blood." (Leviticus 17:11)

C. Jesus is for All Ages (v. 25b-26)

That which Christ accomplished on the cross met the righteous demands of God both for those who lived in the "past" (B.C. - v. 25b) and present ("this time" – literally: "the now season" - A.D. - v. 26a).

The question would naturally come to mind, if Christ died in the first century A.D. for sinners, what was the means of forgiveness for the O.T. saints? How could God declare them righteous (EX: Abraham) when Christ had not paid for their sins yet?
How could God remit (pass over) the sins committed previously? How could God forbear?
ANSWER: God saved the O.T. saint because of the payment His Son would make in the future.

They were saved "on credit"

> EX: How many people can purchase things without having actual cash on hand. The credit card company trusts you to cover the expense at a later time.

God could forgive and justify Old Testament saints because in His mind payment was as good as already made. Christ was so certain to die that He is called: "The lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8).

Peter said that we are redeemed with . . . "the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." (1 Peter 1:19-20)

God's only means of salvation for all time periods is Christ!

How could God pronounce the unrighteous "righteous" and still be just? How can God justify the ungodly? Rom. 4:5
Payment had to be made! The question is, Who would pay? Could man pay? NO!

God would be guilty of injustice if He ever allowed a lawbreaker to go free ("off the hook") without the crime being paid for. Since His Law declares: "the soul that sinneth it shall die"; "the wages of sin is death" (Ro. 6:23); sin had to be paid for before it could be forgiven.

V. God's Means of Justification Strips Away All Pride (v. 27)

Boasting is "excluded" - lit. "shut out". The picture is of someone being left outside. No boasting will enter the doors of God's Heaven.

If salvation was by the works of man, men would throughout eternity would have something to brag about (something to take pride in).

If we don't deserve to be justified, how can we possibly boast? We can't!

Boasting is excluded when someone has to have faith in order to be saved. Since faith relies upon someone else, it proves a dependence; a need to trust in another outside of self.
ILLUS: the swimmer, when he is saved from drowning, does not brag because he trusted the life guard. He had no other choice!

If salvation was by works, God would not be glorified - man would. It will not be this way in Heaven!

VI. God's Means of Justification is Consistent with His Law (v. 28-31)

V. 28
We "conclude" = to add up the facts and conclude.

V. 29
If justification was by the works of the Law, then only those who had a copy of the Law and lived in or near Israel (the Temple) could be saved.
Salvation is not only for Jews but for Gentiles as well. God is their creator and Savior as well.

V. 30
"By faith . . . through faith" - why different prepositions?

1. The prepositions are used synonymously (stylistic variation for emphasis)
2. The word "through" is used with the definite article ("the faith") to indicate that Gentiles are saved through the same faith that saves the Jew (cp. NIV - "through the same faith").

V. 31
If justification is not by the keeping of the Mosaic Law, does this mean the Law is worthless? No. Rather, justification by faith holds up the Law. It makes the Law stand up even more powerfully.

The purpose of the O.T. Law (v. 20) was to show man the need for justification apart from itself.
Salvation by grace through faith actually allows the Law to fulfill God's intention when He gave it - namely, to condemn man so he would cry out to God for His grace.

Those who believed in salvation by the works of the Law are the ones who actually tear down the Law.
They must re-define and change the true intention of God's commands in order to convince themselves that they are keeping His Law.

Section 11: ROMANS 4:1-8
"WHAT'S IN YOUR ACCOUNT?"

Theme and Outline of Romans 4:1-8

***You can know what is in your account with God!**
In verses 1-8, we find 3 evidences of someone whose account has been credited (with "righteousness") by God.

I. ***A justified person will not be:***
BRAGGING ABOUT HIS SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS (v. 2)

II. ***A justified person will not be:***
WORKING FOR HIS SALVATION (V. 3-5)

III. ***A justified person will not be:***
BURDENED DOWN BY UNFORGIVEN SIN (v. 6-8)

A. *You will know the blessing of having:*
Your sin "lifted off your shoulders" (v. 7a)

B. *You will know the blessing of having:*
Your sin "buried out of sight" (v. 7b)

C. *You will know the blessing of having:*
Your sin "not held against you" (v. 8)

INTRODUCTION: Verse 1

Paul's declaration that all men of all time who were justified, were justified by grace through faith (apart from the Law - 3:21-31) would not be enough to convince a Jew. A Jew would object and demand some proof for such an assertion.

The proof is what Paul presents in chapter 4.

To support his point that justification is by grace through faith alone, Paul now appeals to the "big heros" of the Old Testament - Abraham and David (primarily Abraham).

To a Jew, one of the most respected, honored, looked up to, and exemplary men in the O.T. was Abraham (Jn. 8:33).

V. 1
The phrase "as pertaining to the flesh" modifies the word "father."

Abraham is the Jews' physical forefather according to the flesh (with respect to physical descent - cp. the phrase "according to the flesh" - also describes relationship in Ro. 1:3; 9:3, 5).

Abraham, being the first Jew, is the "father" of the people of Israel.

Jews were natural descendants of Abraham (Jn. 8:37), but because of their unbelief, not all were spiritual descendants (Jn. 8:42). Jesus said the father of all unbelievers is the devil (Jn. 8:44; cp. Eph. 2:2-3; I Jn. 3:8-10).

The Jewish rabbis in N.T. times believed that Abraham had a surplus of goodness that he passed on to each descendent. They wrongly through (like Catholics do today of the patron saints) that they received extra credit or special merits with God simply because Abraham was their forefather -

Lk. 3:8 - "Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."

What did Abraham find to save his soul? What was his secret to acquiring righteousness with God?

ILLUS: How millions tremble with anxiety and insecurity at the thought: "Have I done enough to please God?" "Have I done enough to earn righteousness with Him?"

READ VERSE 3.

V. 3

"Counted" = Gk. logizomai. This is a key word in this context. It appears 19 times in Romans, and 11 times in this chapter alone! (4:3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 22, 23, 24)

In this chapter, it is translated "counted," "imputed," and "reckoned." It is an accounting term that refers to something being entered into the books on one's account.

It means "to set down accounts" - "It (Abraham's belief) was set down on the credit side of the Ledger" (Robertson, p. 350).

ILLUS: The accounting books that kept my financial records at college were credited (several hundred dollars) by my grandfather.

Abraham's belief was the check he deposited in God's bank, and his statement read: "Righteousness is in your account."

God's Statement of Accounts		
NAME	DEPOSIT	FINAL BALANCE
Pharisee	Works	Sin (- Dept)
Judaizer	Works	Sin (- Dept)
Abraham	Faith	Righteousness (+ Credit)
David	Faith	Righteousness (+ Credit)
Your Name	?	?

***You can know what is in your account with God!**

In verses 1-8, we find 3 evidences of someone whose account has been credited (with "righteousness") by God.

I. *A justified person will not be:* <u>BRAGGING</u> ABOUT HIS <u>SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS</u> (v. 2)

Anyone who could be justified (saved) by works would have grounds for boasting. They would have something to brag about, something to take pride in (cp. 3:27).

However, no one will ever boast "before (in front of) God."

People may boast before other people about how righteous they have made themselves, but no one will boast before the face of God.

ILLUS: How people boast:
"I go to mass every day"
"I am a member of the Elks club, boy scouts, YMCA, and Knights of Columbus"
"I gave _____ to charity last year"
"I was baptized, confirmed, etc."
"I never did anyone wrong. I have kept the Golden Rule, and the 10 Commandments."

Not even Abraham will boast about how he got into Heaven.

No one in Heaven had it over anyone else (in regard to how they were justified).

The saints of the Bible are flesh and blood like you and me (they were depraved, sin-filled beings, no better or worse than anyone else; they too needed to have the righteousness that God gives).

I Cor. 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?"

II. *A justified person will not be:* <u>WORKING</u> FOR HIS <u>SALVATION</u> (V. 3-5)

V. 3
NOTE: Paul's authority is the <u>Scripture</u>! (the Holy Spirit-inspired writings of the O.T.)

--The Bible is a self-interpreting Book (the O.T. laid the foundation for the N.T. and the N.T. explains and fulfills the O.T.).
--As it was with Paul, the Bible is with us: our only rule of faith and practice.

When we want real truth, we must ask: "What saith the Scriptures?" - Not "What saith my denomination, my rabbi, the contemporary viewpoint of the day, Dr. Spock, Ann Landers, Phil Donahue, or Oprah Winfrey."

Paul quotes <u>Gen. 15:6</u>.
In that context, God tells Abraham to try to number the stars; then God promised "so shall thy seed be" (v. 5).
[Cp. Gen. 12:1-3 - God promised Abraham a <u>land</u> (v. 1), a <u>seed</u> ("a great nation" - v. 2), and a <u>blessing</u> (v. 2b-3)]

"Abraham believed in the LORD"

The word "believed" in Gen. 15:6 is the Hebrew word (aman) from which we get our English word "Amen."

Abraham said "Amen" to God's promises. In other words, he had confidence in God's faithfulness to His Word. He acknowledged that what God said was true and trustworthy.

V. 4
If you work, your abilities, time, and effort are the basis for your wages.

"Reward" = wage, payment, salary.
"Not . . . of grace" -
ILLUS: Suppose your employer says he will pay you $10.00 per hour, and you work 8 hours. When he gives you a check for $80.00, he does not say, "Accept this as a gracious gift from me" - does he? Rather, if you call in sick and he pays you $80.00 (when he was under no obligation to do so), this would be called grace.

You can't earn grace.
"But of debt" -
ILLUS: Someone who works a job for an agreed salary gets a pay check for what was earned. That paycheck is not a gift ("grace"), is it? No. The employer gives because he is indebted to do so. He is obligated to do so.

Will God ever be indebted to man? Will man ever say to God: "Pay up for all the works I did for you"?

Mt. 7:22-23 - "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."

A man who attempts to work his way into being right with God is vainly building an insufficient foundation.

--He is trying to work to earn something that cannot be purchased with man's means.

--All of mankind's good works combined could not earn one man one speck of God's righteousness, nor one minute in God's heaven.

V. 5
"Worketh not" - this refers to working for salvation (justification).

This does not mean that a believer should not work (indeed, he will - Eph. 2:8-10; James 2:20-26).

"Believeth on Him" - NOTE: to believe is not a mere intellectual awareness of Him, but it is a dependence upon Him. It's a reliance on Him.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ..." (Acts 16:31).

"Ungodly" - the impious man. A term which describes the lowest of the low. God can justify the "chief of sinners."

The only ones God cannot justify are those who think they are independently godly, when in fact they are not (3:11).

III. *A justified person will not be:* <u>BURDENED</u> DOWN BY UNFORGIVEN <u>SIN</u> (v. 6-8)

V. 6
To give more support to justification apart from works, Paul cites David's testimony in Psalm 32:1-2.

If anyone could have been justified by works, it would have been Abraham - "the friend of God" - and David - "a man after God's own heart." (I Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22).

"Blessedness" - describes the state or condition of being happy after being showered with God's goodness.

V. 7
"Blessed" - There is <u>pleasure</u> when you are <u>free</u> from your sin.

While the world has been deceived into thinking that sin is pleasurable (and it is "for a season" - Heb. 11), the genuinely happy person is the one who knows the joy of forgiveness.

Real (genuine) pleasure is experienced when you are right with God; when clean, not dirty; when declared innocent, not guilty; when free, not burdened under the weight of sin.

A. *You will know the blessing of having:* **Your sin "<u>lifted off</u> your shoulders" (v. 7a)**

"Iniquities" - - <u>lawlessness</u> (it means rebellion; one who had refused to submit his will to God's <u>Law</u>).

We are all Law breakers! (James 2:10).

"Forgiven" = to send away; to release from. The Hebrew word "forgiven" (Ps. 32:1) literally means "to <u>lift off</u> and <u>take away</u>."

When God forgives, He lifts off our sin and guilt and takes it away.

Sin is a burden upon the soul; forgiveness is relief from the load.

Jn. 1:29 - "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

Hymn - "Burdens are Lifted at Calvary"

B. *You will know the blessing of having:*

Your sin "<u>buried</u> out of sight" (v. 7b)

"Sins" = to miss the mark (spoken of an archer or slinger); to go astray from God's standards.
Our lack of conformity to God's perfect will is covered.

"Covered" = passive voice - It is <u>God</u> who buries ours in; we are not to (Prov. 28:13 - "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

As inexplainable as it is, our offensive sin becomes hidden from God sight.

Our sin is no longer seen by the Judge; it is invisible before the one who sees all; it is out of the sight of the Holy One; and it is as though it had never taken place.

Ps. 130:3-4 - "If thou, LORD, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that thou mayest be feared."
(V. 3 "mark" = to keep a record of; to keep in mind; to retain).

The only thing God can forget is forgiven sin (Heb. 8:12 - "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

(God is able to forgive and forget.)
Ps. 103:12 - "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us."

C. *You will know the blessing of having:*
Your sin "<u>not held against you</u>" (v. 8)

"Sin" = the Hebrew word in Ps. 32:2 referred to the empty, hollow, vain, idolatrous desires of the heart.

All of the <u>nothingness</u> that we once ran after is not recorded in God's Books.

Men may hold your past sins against you, but God will not. "Not" - Gk. - a double negative.

The Lord will in no way or "by no means" enter the justified man's sins into His books.

CONCLUSION:
We are saved through <u>faith</u>, not works!

--Jesus Christ did the work for us on the cross (God is only satisfied with His work).

--We work for Christ because He gave us salvation (out of love and appreciation), not to earn it.

Works are an evidence of salvation, not the means to attain it.

Theme and Outline of Romans 4:9-25

***The blessedness Abraham had, can be yours! (v. 9)**

I. Abraham was justified through <u>FAITH ALONE</u> (v. 10-16)

A. *Through faith alone,*
God's promises are <u>obtained</u> (v. 10-12)

B. *Through faith alone,*
God's promises are <u>guaranteed</u> (v. 13-16)

II. Abraham was justified through faith IN GOD ALONE! (V. 17-25)

A. *Faith in God alone is:*
The key to facing the impossible (v. 17-18)

B. *Faith in God alone is:*
The key to gaining spiritual strength (v. 19-20)

C. *Faith in God alone is:*
The key to <u>glorifying God</u> (v. 20b-21)

D. *Faith in God alone is:*
he key to <u>attaining salvation</u> (v. 22-25)

INTRODUCTION:

ILLUS: The children's hymn - "Father Abraham had many sons; many sons had father Abraham; and I am one of them, and so are you; so let's just praise the Lord . . ."

V. 9
Paul in verses 9 & 10 follows his pattern (cp. 3:1-5, 9, 31; 4:1) of asking questions and then answering them.
In verse 9 his question is: "Is the blessedness of having righteousness credited to your account (v. 6), sins forgiven (v. 7), and the record cleared (v. 8) limited to the Jew only (because he used Abraham and David as examples)? Or does this blessedness extend also to the Gentile (the non-Jew)?"

The theme of verses 9-25 involves the fact that God can credit righteousness to anyone's account (not limited to Abraham - v. 23).

Abraham is the spiritual father of everyone who believes. The all-inclusiveness of justification through faith is stressed.
Abraham is the father of "all them that believe" (v. 11); the father of those who walk in his steps of faith (v. 12); the promise of God is to "all the seed" (v. 16); Abraham is the "father" of us all (v. 16). Abraham is the father of many nations (v. 17 & 18).

What was written down about his justification (v. 22) was not limited to him (v. 23), "but for us also" (v. 24), since Jesus is our Lord also (v. 24) and his finished work was for our need (v. 25).
***The blessedness Abraham had, can be yours! (v. 9)**

How? Through faith alone, in God alone!

I. Abraham was justified through FAITH ALONE (v. 10-16)

A. *Through faith alone,* God's promises are obtained (v. 10-12)

V. 10
The question is: "When was Abraham's record cleared with God?"

"Was it when he had the outward manifestation (circumcision) of his faith or before?"
ANSWER - Before

Abraham had his account credited with righteousness by God before he was ever circumcised.
It is stated that he "believed in the Lord" in Genesis 15:6.
He was circumcised in Genesis 17:24.
God originally gave His promise to Abraham when he was 75 years old (Gen. 12:4), and He confirmed it 10 years alter when Abraham was 85 (Gen. 15:6-18).
At age 85, Abraham's faith is recorded (15:6), but it was not until he was 99 that he was circumcised on the same day that God commanded him to be (17:23-24).

V. 11
Abraham's circumcision is called a "sign" and "seal."

1. "Sign" -

a. a mark or indication that distinguished (the Jew from the Gentile)

* b. a token to confirm a past, present, or future promise. A proof or evidence to remind someone of a promise made by God.

Gen. 17:11 - "And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you."

"Sign" = God chose a sign which would be an everyday reminder to the Jew that he was in a covenant relationship with God (every time he went to the bathroom he was reminded of the covenant relationship).

2. **"Seal"** - that which authenticates, confirms, or shows something to be genuine.

Circumcision was an external (visible) indication of the internal (Unseen) faith of Abraham.

By obeying God in being circumcised, Abraham demonstrated his faith in God. He was circumcised because he was justified; he was not circumcised in order to be justified (contrary to the Judaizer's opinion in Paul's day - Acts 15:5; Gal. 2:3, 4; 5:1-12).

Just as Abraham's seal came after his salvation, our fruits of obedience will follow our salvation.

Abraham received the title of "circumcision" (a substitute for "Jew") after he exercised faith in God's Word (NOTE: No one has the right to call themselves by the title "Christian" who has not first believed the Gospel).

Just like circumcision came after faith for Abraham, so baptism comes after faith for the Christian.

V. 11b

Abraham's faith makes him a spiritual father to all who believe (contrast with Rom. 4:1 where the physical fatherhood of Abraham is in view).

NOTE: Even though Abraham is our spiritual father, this does not make us spiritual Jews. Israel and the church are always distinct.

V. 12

"Walk" - a military term, meaning: to march in line or file. We are marching to the same music and marching orders of Abraham -- "FAITH"!

"Walk in the steps" - we are commanded to follow in Christ's steps (I Pet. 2:21) and walk in step with the Spirit (Gal. 5:25).

While we must always be careful about being followers of men (I Cor. 3), we also are commanded to follow in the steps of those who follow Christ! (I Cor. 4:16; II Cor. 12:18; Phil. 3:16; I Th. 1:16; II Th. 3:7, 9; I Pet. 5:3).

I can say with Paul, "Follow me as I follow Christ."
We all are examples to someone who is following.

"That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." (Heb. 6:12).

"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." (Heb. 13:7).

B. *Through faith alone,* God's promises are guaranteed (v. 13-16)

V. 13

"Heir of the world" = Abraham as being inheritor of the land of Canaan is specifically in view (Gen. 17:8); a promise that is still waiting ultimate fulfillment in the kingdom (Heb. 11:8-10).

The Law was not given until 430 years after God made this promise to Abraham (Gal. 3:17).

God's promise to Abraham was not conditioned by works. (EX: "I will give you a land if you …")
Our salvation today is not conditioned by works either! We are joint-heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17) by faith, not works. (Eph. 2:8, 9)

V. 14

If only Law keepers would inherit the promised kingdom:

1) Faith is "made void" - faith would be emptied of all meaning and be worthless

2) The promise would be made of "none effect" - rendered inoperative. No one would receive the promise if it were obtained by the Law, because no one has ever kept the Law! (v. 15) Gal. 3:18 - "For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise."

V. 15

"The Law worketh wrath" - the only thing the Law brings about or produces is the anger of God, not a home in the kingdom! Why? Because no one has ever kept the Law (Rom. 3).

Those who are trusting the Law for salvation would actually be better off if there was no Law, because the Law only shows how bad a transgressor they are!

--The Law only condemns man; it does not save.
--The Law only justifies the wrath of God on an individual; it does not offer salvation.

No one is ever held responsible for violating a non-existent Law (one is never guilty of breaking a law if the law did not exist).
--However, if the Law exists, and you break it, you are then held responsible to pay for it.

Jesus said: "To whomsoever much is given much shall be required."

V. 16

God's promises are based upon His grace, not men's worthiness of them.

"Sure" = firm, stable

NOTE: The pattern of those who trust in God:

1) Faith --- 2) Grace --- 3) Sure of salvation

As compared to those who trust in themselves:

1) Works --- 2) Law --- 3) Unsure of salvation

--The victory that overcomes the world is our faith (I Jn. 5:4).

--Our faith is the foundation (the bottom line) of our Christian lives. Everything else in our growth is built onto our faith (II Pet. 1:5-7).

II. Abraham was justified through faith IN GOD ALONE! (V. 17-25)

A. *Faith in God alone is:* The key to facing the impossible (v. 17-18)

V. 17
Abraham is the spiritual father of us all--maybe not in man's eyes (i.e. the Jews' eyes), but in the sight of God ("before Him" - v. 17).

V. 17b
Two attributes of God are described:

1) God is omnipotent - all powerful. He is called the one who gives life to the dead.

2) God is omniscient - all knowing. He is one who can describe things that do not yet exist as if they did exist (EX: Cyrus, Messiah, end times).

V. 18
"Who against hope" = beyond hope

"Believed in hope" = upon hope
Abraham depended upon his confidence with all of his heart (He had faith in his faith because he knew his faith was in God!).

B. *Faith in God alone is:* The key to gaining spiritual strength (v. 19-20)

V. 19
Abraham did not become weakened in his confidence in God; that is, he (literally) "did not lose strength" in his faith even though he was 100 years old and Sarah's womb was decades beyond child-bearing years.

V. 20

"He staggered not" - He did not waver. He was not divided in his thinking.
Abraham did not vacillate in two directions between faith and unbelief.

NOTE: Abraham had some misconceptions in his faith, but not mistrust.
He at first was ignorant of how God would give him a son (EX: he wondered if Eliezer his servant was whom God intended to be the promised seed -Gen. 15:24).

After he found out that the seed would come from his own body (v. 4), he thought that Ishmael through Hagar was the promised seed (Gen. 16:17:18); but when he was told that the child would come from Sarah, though amazed (17:17), he believed.

"Was strong" = lit. infused with strength, or empowered with strength by faith.

C. *Faith in God alone is:* The key to glorifying God (v. 20b-21)

V. 21
That which gives glory to God (v. 20b) is our assurance in Him.

We bring God glory by being fully persuaded (or filled with complete assurance) that what God promises, He is able to perform.

To not believe God is to question His truthfulness, to doubt His faithfulness, and to call Him a liar.

Without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6).

D. *Faith in God alone is:* The key to attaining salvation (v. 22-25)

V. 22
Faith honors God (v. 21), and God honors faith (v. 22).

V. 23, 24
The Bible is not a book that merely describes past events. It applies to everyone today!

Abraham's imputed righteousness by faith out to be an encouragement to us today, since we are justified the same way!

V. 25
Jesus was "delivered" (handed over by the Father) to be crucified because of our transgressions.

Is. 53:12 - "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

Jesus died because of the transgressions we committed (v. 25a), and He was raised to life again because of the justification we needed (v. 25b).

We could not be justified had Christ not risen from the dead, since justification means being clothed with the righteousness of the living Christ. A dead Savior could not justify.

Section 13: ROMANS 5:1-11
"PEACE WITH GOD"

***Peace with God should be something you rejoice about!**
4 Areas you can rejoice in because of your peaceful relations with God:

I. ***You can rejoice in:***
The GLORY that will be yours through Christ (v. 2)

II. ***You can rejoice in:***
The PRESSURES that you face for Christ (v. 3 - 4)

III. ***You can rejoice in:***
The SECURITY that you have in Christ (v. 5 - 10)
A. *We are secure because of:*
the Love of God (v. 5b - 8)
B. *We are secure because of:*
the Life of Christ (v. 9 - 10)

IV. ***You can rejoice in:***
GOD because of Christ (v. 11)

INTRODUCTION: Verse 1
ILLUS: of the joy that comes when you're at peace with someone you offended.

"Peace with God" = not speaking about a feeling of peace; but rather a relationship of peace. Paul is not speaking of the changed attitude of a sinner toward God, but God toward the sinner.

NOTE: It's not the "peace of God" (Phil. 4:7 - "a tranquility of the mind), but "peace with God."

God is no longer at odds with the believer. The believer is no longer an object of wrath (Rom. 9:22). God is no longer angry with the wicked one (Ps. 7:11).

SEE: "Reconciled" (v. 10)
V. 10 - "Reconciled" = the word describes a change of relationship. To change from a relationship of enemies to one of friendship; from one of enmity to one of peace!

"Reconciled" - Gk. καταλλασσω (katallasso) from which scientists derive the term "catalase" - an enzyme that decomposes hydrogen peroxide (Gingrich, Shorter Lexicon, p. 103).
In secular literature, the word was used to describe the restoration of the original understanding between people after hostility or displeasure (D.N.T.T., p. 166).
In the N.T., the word "reconciled" was used of the restored relationship of a wife to her husband (I Cor. 7:11a - "But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband").

Primary reference is made toward the restored relationship between man and God.
(NOTE: It is always man being reconciled to God, not God to man. Man is at fault for the fractured relationship, not God - SEE II Cor. 5:18-20)

V. 1
Interesting note: Paul's many references to "faith" in chapters 1 - 5:2. Now suddenly he stops until Rom. 9:30. Why? Because the emphasis now shifts from man's faith to God's faithfulness to those who have exercised faith.

Peace with God only comes after one is right with God (Justification).

Lit. "having been justified (aorist tense) by faith we have (present tense) peace with God.

No one has peace with God who has not been made just before God. Note: the word "justified" is passive, meaning God does the justifying, not man.

Peace with God is only "through (by means of) our Lord Jesus Christ"
NOTE: The emphasis on the word δια ("through" or "by")
It is by whom (Christ) that we have access by faith into this grace (v. 2).
The believer is said to be "justified by His blood . . . saved from wrath through Him" (v. 9); "reconciled to God by the death of His Son . . . saved by His life" (v. 10); "we also joy in God through our Lord . . . by whom we have now received the atonement" (v. 11).

There is no peace apart from Christ.
Jesus is the only means (Acts 4:12) and mediator (I Tim. 2:5) to attain a peaceful relationship with God.
NOTE: The theme of verses 2-11 is on our rejoicing because of our peace with God (cp. V. 2 - "rejoice"; v. 3 - "glory"; v. 11 - "joy").

***Peace with God should be something you rejoice about!**

4 Areas you can rejoice in because of your peaceful relations with God:

I. You can rejoice in: The GLORY that will be yours through Christ (v. 2)

V. 2

In addition to and because of having peace with God, we "also" have access into the rich grace of God (v. 2).

"We have access" = perfect tense - we have received access and still possess it.

When we "by faith" trusted Christ, we were given the right to have access into the spiritual treasure chest ("grace") of God.

"Wherein we stand" - picture is of someone, not merely looking afar off at the spiritual treasure chest, but of someone standing in the treasures of God's grace.

"Rejoice" = to triumphantly rejoice, or to confidently boast.

The believer who has peace with God can triumphantly rejoice in the hope (confidence) of the glory of God (the glory that God gives to those who trust Him).

Because of our peace with God, we can be confident that one day (without any doubt) we will be glorified in His presence.

Rom. 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."

SEE I Cor. 2:7-9

II. You can rejoice in: The PRESSURES that you face for Christ (v. 3 - 4)

V. 3

Because we have peace with God we can also triumphantly rejoice (KJV - "glory") in the tribulations (afflictions or various pressures) that we face.

The reason we can rejoice is because we know that God is not against us, but for us.

He is no longer in opposition to us, but rather in apposition with us. He is right by our side working all for our good. *Rom. 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."*

V. 3b

From a practical standpoint, the believer can actually rejoice ("count it all joy" - Ja. 1:2ff). in the various pressures of life because of a knowledge of what tribulations produce in us.

Tribulation (pressure) ⟹ Patience (endurance)
Patience (endurance) ⟹ Experience (proven quality)
Experience (proven quality) ⟹ Hope (confidence)

NOTE: The chain reaction of what tribulation produces in someone who undergoes such pressure.

"Tribulation worketh (is producing) patience."

Patience = υπομονη (hupomone) - "hupo" = under "mone"= to remain

Patience is the virtue of being able to remain under pressure without giving in or blowing up. It describes someone who, in the pressure cooker of trouble, endures till the end!

V.4

Such patience (or endurance) produces experience.

"Experience" = that which has been tested and approved after successfully passing the test.

The word literally means "approved" and it points to the character or the quality of the object, or in this case the individual, who passes the test.

Paul is describing someone with an approved character.

ILLUS: The pressure tests on our church fire extinguishers. They are pumped with 250 lbs. of pressure to test them and make sure that they will not burst during a fire when pressure would build in the tank because of the heat of the fire. If they pass the test, they put a sticker of approval on them.

One who has experienced the feeling of victory after passing the pressure test will have produced for himself "hope" (confidence).
It is an encouragement to us when we pass tests for Christ's sake (EX: Peter - Acts 5:41 - "And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name."

Such an experience boosts our confidence ("Hope"). It shows us that our faith is real. That we are genuine.
Those who are in the fire of suffering are always more on fire for Christ than someone who is not undergoing any pressure. Why? Because fire, in addition to purifying (Job. 23:10), reveals the indestructibleness of that which it attempts to consume! When we see the indestructibleness of our faith, we are built up in our confidence of it.
I Pet. 1:7-9 - "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."

III. You can rejoice in: The SECURITY that you have in Christ (v. 5 - 10)

V. 5
Such a hope (confidence) spoken of it verse 4 "maketh not ashamed" - our hope is not and will not put us to shame.
ILLUS: of trusting in something, only to be let down. Expecting something with full confidence only to be shamed because it didn't come to pass.
Will the believer's hope in God's salvation be disappointed? Will a Christian's confidence ever be shattered? NO!
For those who would chide with us and say, "What if you die and find that what you were hoping for does not materialize?" I say, "Will God fail the one who trusts Him?" Impossible! Why? Because of His love for the unlovely (v. 5-8).

A. *We are secure because of:* the Love of God (v. 5b - 8)

"The love of God" = in context (v. 5-8), the love described is God's love for us, not our love for Him. (compare v. 8)
"Love" = agape - God's unconditional desire to give to meet our deepest need.
Such love has been "shed abroad in our hearts" = lit. poured out into our hearts.
Our hearts were like dry, empty, barren containers - devoid of any hope, until God unloaded into our void lives His love via the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.
(NOTE: The Holy Spirit is a gift to all believers, not a reward to some (as the Charismatics and Pentecostals believe).
He was given to us the moment we believed (Rom. 8:8,9; Eph.1:13).
NOTE: The Trinity is involved in guaranteeing your salvation. God the Father gave the Holy Spirit to the believer because Christ died for the ungodly (v. 6).
(Cp. Eph. 1:4-15 - The Father planned, the Son provided, and the Spirit protects our salvation).
Paul was confident that he would not be put to shame - II Tim. 1:12.
Cp. I Pet. 4:19.

V. 6
"In due time" = at God's exact moment in history (cp. Gal. 4:4; I Tim. 2:6).

"Christ died <u>for</u> the ungodly" (cp. "for" - v. 7, 8).
"For" = υπερ "huper" - (on behalf of; instead of)
The point is Christ died to <u>take the place</u> of the ungodly (impious).
The ungodly included Paul ("we" - v. 8) and all of "us" (v. 8).

V. 7

"Scarcely" = very rarely; seldom.
"a righteous man" = someone who would be <u>pleasing to God</u>.
Sinful man would with great difficulty give his life so that a righteous man's life would be spared. Why? Because depraved man does not care a whole lot about someone's moral uprightness. Man is only touched by someone who gives something to him.
"a good man" - someone who would do or give something for his <u>fellow man</u>. For such a one (who did something for me), I might be willing to risk my life for him.
However, God's love was toward us when we were nothing before Him and did nothing for Him.

v. 8

"Commendeth" = <u>demonstrated</u>. Lit - to make <u>stand with</u>. God's love stood out in plain view, when Christ died for the unworthy.

B. *We are secure because of:* the <u>Life</u> of Christ (v. 9 - 10)

v. 9

"Much more then" - introduces a rabbinical means of proving a point by going from the <u>greater</u> to the <u>less</u> (cp. v. 10, 15, 17, 20)
The point is: If God can (in the present "now") declare a wretched sinner "righteous," He sure can (in the future) rescue the one He justified from ever falling into the fires of Hell!

If the blood that Jesus shed when He <u>died</u> can remove the <u>guilt</u> of sin now, cannot the living Jesus deliver you from the <u>penalty</u> of sin later? Yes!

"Saved from wrath" = lit. saved from <u>the</u> wrath; God is not speaking about wrath in general, but the specific coming wrath - Hell.

Our <u>future</u> salvation from the wrath, or fury, of God is based upon the <u>past</u> justification of God. <u>Justification</u> in the present guarantees <u>salvation</u> in the future!

V. 9

Paul says in Eph. 2:16 that it was by the cross that Christ slew the enmity that came between man and God and man (Gentiles) and man (Jews). And then He "came and preached <u>peace</u> to you. . . (v. 17) for through Him (Jesus) we both have <u>access</u> by one Spirit into the Father" (v. 18).

V. 10

Again, arguing from the greater to the lesser, Paul is saying, If God could save us when we were <u>enemies</u>, can't He keep us saved now that we are <u>friends</u>? Yes!

If Christ's <u>death</u> brought us into a friendship relationship, can't His <u>life</u> keep us in such a relationship? Yes!
"If the <u>death</u> of Christ was the means of our <u>reconciliation</u>, the <u>life</u> of Christ will be the means of our <u>preservation</u>" (Griffith Thomas, p. 150).
ILLUS: Hymn - "Because He lives, I can face tomorrow; because He lives, all fear is gone. Because I know He holds my future, and life is worth the living just because He lives!"

Paul uses the same argument in Rom. 8:31-32 when he says: *"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 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?"*

A little Irish convert once said, "I often trimble on the Rock, but the Rock never trimbles under me." (Thomas, p. 152).

IV. *You can rejoice in:* <u>GOD</u> because of Christ (v. 11)

The phrase "not only so" (cp. v. 3) shows that we should rejoice in what was previously stated (our <u>security</u> in Christ), but not stop there.

We should rejoice in the One who has given us such security.

Because we are at peace with God, we not only rejoice in the <u>glory</u> that will one day be ours (v. 2), we not only rejoice even in <u>pressures</u> we face because of our faith in Christ (v. 3-4), we not only rejoice in the <u>security</u> of our salvation (v. 5-10), but we simply rejoice <u>in God</u>! (v. 11)

The surrendered believer can rejoice in God because he is no longer at war with Him. God is no longer our enemy (v. 10). We are not at odds with God anymore.

Rather, He is our <u>friend</u>! We have been reconciled (v. 10), and through Christ we have received such a reconciliation (KJV - "atonement").

The believer does not dread God, but has joy when he thinks about such a God as ours is.

The believer has a feeling of joy because he has been liberated from the shackles of sin; he has been released from the prospects of hell; he has been promised the bliss of Heaven!

Because salvation is in God, the believer does not rejoice in man's religion, man's efforts, man's righteousness (contrary to cults and all works-religions).

Our boasting is not in man (like New Age Movement) but is <u>in God</u>!

Jer. 9:23, 24 - "Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD."

CONCLUSION:

"A sincere faith will bring a soul into heaven, but a strong faith will bring heaven into the soul."

Justification is a gift to be enjoyed.

Section 14: ROMANS 5:12-21
"WHO ARE YOU RELATED TO?"

INTRODUCTION: Verses 12 - 14

***The greatest security in the world is being related (united) to Christ!**

I. If union with Adam affected <u>EVERYONE</u> related to him, union with Christ will absolutely affect <u>EVERYONE</u> related to Him! (v. 15)

II. If union with Adam meant <u>CONDEMNATION</u>, union with Christ means guaranteed <u>JUSTIFICATION</u>! (v. 16)

III. If union with Adam made <u>DEATH CERTAIN</u>, union with Christ makes <u>LIFE CERTAIN</u>! (v. 17-18)

IV. If union with Adam made us <u>SINNERS</u>, union with Christ makes us <u>RIGHTEOUS</u>! (v. 19)

V. If union with Adam made <u>SIN DOMINATE</u>, union with Christ makes <u>GRACE DOMINATE</u>! (v. 20-21)

A.The flood of <u>sin</u> is surpassed by the flood of <u>grace</u> (v. 20)

B.The reign of sin is surpassed by the reign of grace (v. 21)

INTRODUCTION: Verses 12 - 14
READ Genesis 2:16-17 - God's command to Adam
READ Genesis 3:1-6 - Adam's disobedience plunged the human race into sin.

V. 12

"Wherefore" (v. 1) = lit. "Because of this" - this phrase proves that this unit of thought (v. 12-21) is tied to the previous one (v. 1-11). Paul continues his point regarding the <u>permanence</u> of a believer's justification and his consequential rejoicing over this fact.

"Sin entered into the world" - Sin is personified as an <u>alien</u> or <u>intruder</u> who made his way into the present world system.

Adam is pictured as the doorway ("by" [δια]) or the channel through which sin entered the human race.

"And death by sin" - Just as Adam opened the door for sin, sin opened the door for death.
Adam ⟶ Sin ⟶ Death

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek.18:14)
"The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23)
"Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (Ja. 1:15).

Death is always the result of sin.
Sin and death are, as it were, mother and daughter (where one is, you will always find the other).

"Death passed upon all men" = lit. "passed through" into all men.
Not only is sin passed on from parents to children and from generation to generation, but the result (consequence) of sin is also passed on.

Why is death passed on?
Answer: "For that all have sinned" (Aorist tense - "gathering up in this one tense the history of the race" Robertson, p. 358).

We cannot blame the first created man (Adam) for death.
We die because of our intrinsic sinfulness and for no other reason.

When did we sin?
Answer: We sinned when Adam sinned because of our union with him.
ILLUS: How children take on physical characteristics of the parents (resemblance)
How children acquire strengths and weaknesses of parents (EX: Doctors always check your family history to see if you may have certain tendencies toward heart ailments; cancer, etc.).
In the same way that genetic similarities exist between parents and offspring, spiritual similarities also are passed on.

"Each of us is racially united to Adam" (Wiersbe, p. 528).

Federal Headship View: Teaches that Adam is the representative (judicial head) for mankind. Being such, his sin was imputed to the account of his offspring. Adam sinned for men. [This view seems to hold God responsible for the sin nature being passed on]

Seminal Headship View: Also known as "Natural Headship." Teaches that all men genetically, actually, and personally sinned in Adam. Adam's sin nature was imparted to his offspring.

When Adam sinned, we sinned because we were in Adam.
I Cor. 15:21-22 - "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."
SEE Heb. 7:9-10 - Levi the great grandson yet unborn is said to have "paid tithes in [by means of - δια] Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him."

When Adam sinned, the race sinned, because the race was seminally in Adam (in seed form, or "in the blood").
The sin nature is passed on via the seed of the man [NOTE: Christ, being virgin born, did not come personally from the seed of Adam]

This view holds each person responsible for the sin nature he is born with.

Was Adam a mere representative for man? In other words, when Adam sinned, did God impute his (Adam's) sin to his "innocent" progeny? NO! Adam's sin was imparted not imputed.

NOTE: This differs from God's work of imputing Christ's righteousness to the account of guilty sinners.

There can be vicarious (substitutionary) suffering, not vicarious sinning (Dt. 24:16 - "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.").

(Ezek. 18:20 - "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.")

Many would question, "Is not a parallel of "headship" being made by Paul in context?

Yes, but the means by which man is related to Adam's headship is not being paralleled with the means whereby Christ becomes the head of the sinner. In fact, the means to such relationships is being contrasted in context.

The question is often asked: Is it fair that we suffer because of what Adam did?
"If God had tested each human being individually, the result would have been the same: Disobedience" (Wiersbe, p. 528).
We would have done the same thing. We are made of the "same stuff."

"Imputed" = "ellagao" - from "en" and logos" = to put down in the ledger to one's account (Robertson, p. 358).
ILLUS: The civil authorities cannot hold people responsible for breaking laws that have not been legislated. In the same sense, God did not hold men responsible for specific violations of His Law that were later given through Moses. (cp. v. 20 with Rom. 4:15).

The coming of the Law increased man's responsibility and guilt (cp. 2:9). (Robertson, p. 358).

v. 13 & 14
The point of verses 13 and 14 is that sin is more than lawbreaking. The principle of sin goes deeper than the outward violation of specific laws.
Sin exists in all mortals because of our relation to Adam. The proof that sin existed prior to the giving of the Mosaic Law is in the fact that death reigned (lit. ruled as king) from Adam to Moses.

Death even ruled as king over those who did not sin the same way that Adam did.

V. 14
Adam's specific sin was "disobedience" (v. 19).
The point being made is that death dominates mankind because sin permeates mankind, even though a man's sin may not be exactly the same as Adam's.
Not all sin ("hamartia") is disobedience, but all disobedience is sin.
Not all "harmartia" (missing the mark) is "parabasis" (transgression), but all parabasis is harmartia.

"Figure" = lit. type. Adam is comparable to Christ.
How? Certainly not in the matter of righteousness, because Adam was sinful; Christ was righteous (v. 18); Adam was disobedient, Christ was obedient (v. 19).

The similarity between Adam and Christ lies not in who they were or what they did, but to their relationship with people.
Christ is the Head of all believers as Adam is the head of the race. In this sense Adam "is a figure of him that was to come" (Robertson, p. 358).

***The greatest security in the world is being related (united) to Christ!**

In verses 15-21, Paul triumphantly unveils the superiority of being related to Christ over Adam.

I. If union with Adam affected EVERYONE related to him, union with Christ will absolutely affect EVERYONE related to Him! (v. 15)

"But" = marks a contrast. Adam is a type of Christ in terms of headship over men; but not in terms of what he did.
What Adam accomplished is called "the offense" (transgression); what Christ accomplished is called a free gift (an "act of grace").

I.e. - The free gift is not the same as the offense.

Paul again proves a point by going from the lesser to the greater (cp. 5:9, 10).
If Adam's sin ("offense") meant certain death to all those in him, then Christ's grace means certain life to all those who are in Him.

"Abounded" = to overflow, or be more than enough.
"Unto many" = lit. "unto the many."
The definite article would indicate that God's gift is abundant (more than enough to save) to those who are "in Christ."

II. If union with Adam meant CONDEMNATION, union with Christ means guaranteed JUSTIFICATION! (v. 16)

I.e. - the gift is not the same as what came by means of the one that sinned.

If "one" offense meant condemnation, then you would think that "many offenses" would mean certain condemnation.

However, the efficacy of the gift of Christ is shown to be superior to the efficacy of the sin of Adam.

III. If union with Adam made DEATH CERTAIN, union with Christ makes LIFE CERTAIN! (v. 17-18)

v. 17
Note the contrast between death ruling with life ruling.

Read the "book of the generations of Adam" in Genesis 5, and note the solemn repetition of the phrase "and he died."

Again arguing from the lesser to the greater, Paul proves his assertion stated in verse 16 as follows: If death ruled as king because of Adam, how much more will life rule as king because of Christ?

NOTE: Grace must be received; it is not automatically imputed against one's will.

v. 18
"All men" = All men related to Adam and Christ.

IV. If union with Adam made us SINNERS, union with Christ makes us RIGHTEOUS! (v. 19)

Our status is changed "in Christ."

V. If union with Adam made SIN DOMINATE, union with Christ makes GRACE DOMINATE! (v. 20-21)

A. The flood of sin is surpassed by the flood of grace (v. 20)

"The Law entered" = the Law came in alongside (of the sin that already existed) in order to point out the great number of offenses man commits that he was previously unaware of.

B. The reign of sin is surpassed by the reign of grace (v. 21)

CONCLUSION:

"You cannot help being `in Adam,' for this came by your first birth, over which you had no control.

"But you can help staying `in Adam,` for you can experience a second birth - a new birth from above - which will put you `in Christ.' This is why Jesus sad, `Ye must be born again.' (Jn. 3:7)." (Wiersbe, p. 530).

What we had "lost in Adam, we have more than gained through Christ" (W.H. Griffith Thomas, p. 155).

Hymn - "Grace Greater Than All My Sin"

Section 15: ROMANS 6:1-14
"KNOW, RECKON, YIELD"

INTRODUCTION:
***We as believers can experience victory over sin!**
Follow 3 steps:

I. REALIZE YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO CHRIST (v. 3-10)
(Know who you are "in Christ")
You need to know that:
- A. Union with Christ is union with His death
  (a look back - v. 3-4, 6-7)
- B. Union with Christ's death is union with His resurrection
  (a look ahead - v. 5, 8-10)

II. BELIEVE THAT CHRIST SET YOU FREE! (v. 11)
("Reckon" your new life "in faith")
- A. Live as if you were "dead to sin" (v. 11a)
- B. Live as if you were already resurrected (v. 11b)

III. OBEY ONLY YOUR NEW MASTER (v. 12-13)
("Yield" your life over to God "in action")
- A. Don't yield to sin (your enemy) (v. 12-13a)
- B. Do yield to God (your ally) (v. 13b)

INTRODUCTION:
NOTE: Previous context - how being "in Adam" is compared (5:14) and contrasted with being "in Christ" (5:15-21).
In chapter 6:1ff, Paul now moves from justification (chapt. 3:21 - chap. 5) to sanctification (chap. 6-8), from judicial forgiveness of sin to daily victory over sin; from righteousness imputed to righteousness imparted.

There exists a serious misunderstanding of grace today.
Many view doctrine of eternal security as a green light to commit sin.

READ V. 5:20-21. People after hearing this would rationalize: "If more sin means God will have to give more grace, then sin must be good for God and for the Gospel."

Rom. 6:1 - Paul anticipates the question. The critics' question is asked in such a way that he appears to be concerned that God's grace would increase - when really he is seeking to justify his own sin.
Peter said some of Paul's teachings were being twisted (II Pet. 3:16).
Paul knew of people who would confuse "the justification of the sinner with justification for sinning."

READ v. 2 - Paul rejects even the thought.
Not only impermissible, but impossible!
Paul responds in an interesting manner. You would think he would say, "Don't sin" in a command, or even "You are to die to sin daily." Instead he says you cannot live in sin because you are "dead to sin."

***We as believers can experience victory over sin!**
Follow 3 steps:
Summed up: 1) Know 2) Reckon 3) Yield

I. REALIZE YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO CHRIST (v. 3-10)
(Know who you are "in Christ")

v.3 – The question asked indicates an inexcusable ignorance.

Paul is going to show how they "died to sin." They "died to sin" when they were "baptized into Christ"

What is "Baptism into Christ"?

Because word "Baptizo" is transliterated rather than translated, it has caused confusion.

The word "Baptize" Simply means to immerse or unite with, and does not necessarily imply water baptism. For example, Christ referred to His own death as a "Baptism" (Mk. 10:38-39).

Proofs that Paul is speaking of Spirit baptism in Romans 6:

1) It was a well-known fact that Jesus would baptize with Holy Spirit (Mt. 3:11- "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but … he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire"); Compare with Acts 1:5).

2) I Cor. 12:13 - "By one Spirit are we all baptized. . ."

3) V. 3 - "into Jesus Christ" – The text does not say: "in the name of . . ." (which was the typical formula for water baptism- Mt. 28:19; Acts 8:16) (Gal. 3:27 - "baptized into Christ").

4) Language is stronger than analogy or symbol. Speaking of reality not ritual. Showing a specific point when one "died to sin" (v. 2), was "crucified with Christ" (v. 6), and "died with Christ" (v. 8). This didn't happen at our water baptism.

   Paul is not giving the picture behind the reality [water baptism], but the reality itself [Spirit baptism].

   However, by using the term "baptism", Paul intimates that water baptism stands behind as a symbol of the reality.

In the N.T., the word "baptism" points to a union (or a joining together).

1.When people submitted to John's baptism, they were making evident their desire to unite with the message he preached (Mk. 1:4-8). (They were identifying themselves with [showing agreement with] John's preaching of repentance).

2.John using the word "baptism" spoke of Jesus uniting believers to the Holy Spirit and unbelievers as being joined into the fires of Hell (Mt. 3:11).

(NOTE: The preposition that always follows the verb "baptized" is the Greek "en," which means "in." The idea of putting someone into something else again supports the idea of a union or joining)

3.Jesus spoke of how He would enter into a union with suffering and death (by again using the word "baptism") (Mk. 10:38, 39).

(NOTE: Peter uses the term in this same sense - I Pet. 3:21).

4.Paul spoke of how the Israelites united ("baptized") unto Moses as their leader as they crossed the Red Sea - ". . . and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink." - I Cor. 10:2-4.

5.Water baptism for believers (Acts 8:36-38) reveals the Christian's unashamedness to be identified (publically linked) with the name of Christ (Mt. 28:19; Acts 8:16; I Cor. 1:13-15), and willingness to join the ranks of Christ's disciples (I Cor. 15:29).

6.Finally, the word "baptism" describes how the believer has been united to Christ (and His "body") via the Holy Spirit [I Cor. 12:13; Col. 2:10-13; Ga. 3:27; Eph. 4:5 - "unity (v. 3) is produced by "one baptism" (v. 5)]

This is the sense in which Paul is using the term in Rom. 6:3-4.

You need to know that:

A. Union with Christ is union with His death

(a look back - v. 3-4, 6-7)

Christ's finished work is credited to your account.

Christ and the believer have been married or merged.

ILLUS: Marriage unites a man and woman together in such a way that what one has now belongs to the other.

(Her bills are my bills; my checkbook is her checkbook (and vice-versa). The same is true for talents, food, house, car, other property, etc. We wear the same last name, share the same burdens, joys, and victories, etc.)

So it is with Christ and His bride. This mysterious union described in Eph. 5:30-32 reveals the incomprehensible truth that the believer and Christ hold all things in common.

Because of our salvation (justification), we are brought into such unity that Christ's spiritual assets are credited to our formerly bankrupt account.

God views Christ and the believer as being together; one; "joint heirs" (Rom. 8:16-17).

This union is called a mystery (Eph. 5:32) that is spiritual (I Cor. 12:13) and living (Jn. 15:4).

1. We have been united together in death (v. 3)

Believers are so closely united with Christ that what He did, we did.

"We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead" (II Cor. 5:14)

> ILLUS: How someone does or wins something and their spouse is automatically included in the prize (He/she benefits by virtue of the relationship had with the winner).
>
> EX: Super Bowl winners all received $100,000 whether they played or not, by virtue of the fact that they were united to the winning team.

2. We have been united together in burial (v. 4)

--Our burial with Christ shows how fully identified we are to His death.
--Christ's burial proved the reality of Christ's death.
--Marks the end of (finality of) death, and the certainty of a resurrection.
Because our resurrection is so certain we ought to live as though we were already resurrected.

Col. 3:1 - "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above."

God views the believer as already having died and been resurrected. The Christian's resurrection is so certain, it is stated in the past tense.
SEE: Gal. 2:20; Col. 3:1-3; II Cor. 5:14-17
V. 4
"Death" = lit. "the death" - the definite article points specifically to the death of Christ.

3. We have been united together in crucifixion (v. 6-7).

Purpose of crucifixion is that the "body of sin might be destroyed."

This "knowing" of your real position in Christ will lead you to walk differently.

In God's sight, we stand as if our old nature were totally removed.

"People today talk of their act of daily crucifying the "old man." It stirs up pride to try to do something by crucifying the old man -- Christ has already gotten the victory!
Gal. 2:20 - "I am crucified with Christ . . ."

V. 6b
"Not serve sin" = Sin is personified. Paul describes sin ("him") as a ruling force that demands submission from its subjects.

**Don't take orders from that old master, old slave driver!

V. 7

Impossible for a "dead man to serve sin"

If we would recognize and meditate on our new relationship to Christ (our new Master), we would see that we no longer have an obligation to the old master.

You need to know that:

B. Union with Christ's death is union with His resurrection

(a look ahead) (v. 5, 8-10)

V. 5

"If" = a condition

1. We have been "Planted together" = a fusing, uniting (inseparable union).

Forms basis for resurrection.

2. We will live together (v. 8)

We will live with Christ because we were united in His death.

IF - condition. It is obvious that if we are considered by God as:

1)dead together
2)buried
3)planted, &
4)crucified together,

. . . then we will certainly be resurrected together.

V. 4

NOTE: Paul does not complete the verse in the most obvious and balanced way. We would think he would say: "Like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the father, even so we also will be raised up . . ."

By not completing the thought this way, Paul is indicating a transition in thought from the spiritual reality to the practical walk of the believer.

Paul sees the reality of the risen Christ as being a source of power which enables believers to sustain a different motivation, orientation, and lifestyle (cp. Rom. 7:6, I Cor. 15:45, II Cor. 3:6, Col. 3:1).

"We believe" (v. 8) = dogmatic confidence

V. 9-10 - We will live with Christ - we are united into His never-ending life.

Note: *The Christian's Belief (Faith) (v. 8) is based on "knowing" (v. 9), not on feelings.

II. BELIEVE THAT CHRIST SET YOU FREE! (v. 11)
("Reckon" your new life "in faith")

V. 11 - Paul's goal:
Turns doctrine into duty,
position into practice,
relationship into daily reality

Reckoning is the key to victory.

Definition of "reckon" - to consider, evaluate, calculate, think.

*Add up the facts in v. 1-10 and reckon yourself as if you were dead to sin and alive to God.

*Look at yourself in the true light

The reality of death with Christ and the certainty of future life with Him supplies the motive for present moral purity.

Reckon = involves a life of faith.

A. Live as if you were "dead to sin" (v. 11a)

NOTE: Paul does not command you to "die as Christ died" or to "live as Christ lived."

Continually, constantly remind yourself of the truth - "I am dead to sin in my position "in Christ."

"Death cancels obligations and breaks all ties" (Thomas, p. 168).

Most believers either:
1)Don't know their position
or 2)Don't meditate on it
or 3)Forget to continually view themselves as God sees them, and so fall into sin.

This is one reason Paul had to say: ". . . so then with the mind I myself serve the Law of God; but with the flesh the Law of sin" (Rom. 7:25).

"Dead to sin" = ILLUS: - of a Jewish father kicking out his son and saying, "This son is to me dead."

B. Live as if you were already resurrected (v. 11b)

(Day by day, hour by hour)
We should strive to live as though we were already resurrected.

This requires a life of faith.

Live the resurrected life now!

III. OBEY ONLY YOUR NEW MASTER (v. 12-13)

("Yield" your life over to God "in action")

After knowing the facts
& reckoning with faith,
we can now yield in actions

A. Don't yield to sin (your enemy) (v. 12-13a)

Paul pictures (personifies) "sin" as if he were a dictator - demanding obedience to military service, and providing soldiers with rations to satisfy their lustful appetites.

Don't give that ruler the opportunity to use your body parts for his wicked purposes.

"Instruments" = weapons of warfare (in this battle)

"Don't take your weapons and give them to the enemy!

You would be as a traitor, who is foolish, disloyal, and guilty of treason in this spiritual war

B. Do yield to God (your ally) (v. 13b)

Begin yielding and allow God to work through you (Phil. 2:13 - "For it is God which worketh in you...").

"Yield" - present tense (Rom. 12:1-2).

CONCLUSION: v. 14

II Tim. 2:4 - You must desire to "please Him who hath chosen [you] to be a soldier."

Verse 14 is a positive, encouraging statement: "Sin will (future) not have dominion over you."

The Law - commands, demands, rebukes, condemns, and restrains, but can't save or give victory over sin.

Grace - gives salvation and victory (we are dead to what Jesus died to: sin, death, and the curse of the Law).

Live with the consciousness that you belong to Christ, and let this be your motive for Godly living.

1) Know, 2) Reckon, and 3) Yield!

Section 16: ROMANS 6:15-23
"THE HIGH COST OF OCCASIONAL SIN"

***It is foolish to think you can sin once in a while!**
[Salvation by grace does not justify occasional sin in the life of a believer]

I. Don't you know that SIN IS ENSLAVING? (v. 16, v. 19b)
(The RULE of sin)
- A. Choosing to sin is choosing a master (v. 16)
- B. Choosing to sin leads to more sin (v. 19b)

II. Don't you realize that YOU WERE SET FREE? (v. 17-19)
(The RELEASE from sin)
- A. Our release from sin changed our life (v. 17)
- B. Our release from sin changed our master (v. 18)
- C. Our release from sin changed our dedication (v. 19)

III. Don't you remember that YOUR LIFE WAS MISERABLE?(v.20-23)
(The RUIN of sin)
- A. Sin resulted in shameful "fruit" (v. 21-22)
- B. Sin results in deadly "wages" (v. 23)

INTRODUCTION: V. 15
Whereas 6:2-14 revealed sin to be inconsistent with the believer's position (in union) to Christ;
6:16-23 reveals sin to be inconsistent with a believer's practice as a servant of Christ.

In verses 16-22, the word "servant" appears 8 times.
Compare 6:1 - "Shall we continue in sin?"
6:15 - "Shall we sin?"

Whereas 6:1 questioned the continued practice of sin, 6:25 questions the committing of isolated acts of sin.

Many wrongly take a deep sigh of relief, figuring now that they are under grace, an occasional fling into sin won't hurt anything. What's so bad about voluntarily committing a single act of sin every now and then? After all, we are not under a legalistic law code anymore! What could a wrong decision every now and then possibly do?

"There is a subtle poison which insinuates itself into the heart even of the best Christian; it is the temptation to say: 'Let us sin not that grace may abound (6:1), but because it *does* abound (6:14-15)" (Godet, cited by Thomas, p. 176).

***It is foolish to think you can sin once in a while!**

[Salvation by grace does not justify occasional sin in the life of a believer]

I. Don't you know that SIN IS ENSLAVING? (v. 16, v. 19b)
(The RULE of sin)

A. Choosing to sin is choosing a master (v. 16)

v. 16 - "Know ye not?" (cp. v. 3a)
Whereas Paul in 6:3-14 questioned the believer's ignorance regarding his union with Christ; in 6:16-23, Paul questions the believer's ignorance regarding the slavery of sin.

"Servants" = doulos - bondslave

"Yield" = to present or offer yourself to the disposal of. Lit. - (παριστανετε) to stand alongside of

--As one would stand in front of someone offering his service (EX: military man standing at the attention of his commanding officer awaiting orders).

When you choose to sin, you are not merely choosing an act . . . You are choosing a master.

You do not only choose a particular sin, but you choose a ruling force (or controller). When you sin, you thereby associate yourself with sin, join the ranks of sin, and volunteer to submit to the wishes of sin.

The only choice we make is whom we will serve. After this choice is made, we do not make any more choices. The choices are then made by our master (whether sin or God).

If you make one wrong decision, you will have to live with the results (and some results of sin last for a life-time)
One wrong decision . . . The Result = a perpetually mixed marriage (believer with unbeliever - resulting in "hell on earth," a never-ending nightmare.
One wrong decision . . . The Result = Addiction (Crack is addicting from the first fix).
One wrong decision . . . The Result - AIDS!
One wrong decision . . . The Result - Teen pregnancy
One wrong decision . . . The Result = a defamed character, no longer blameless.

You would not be a drunkard if it was not for that first drink!
You would not be a chain smoker if you had not taken the first puff!
You would not be a liar if it were not for the first "white lie" leading to a chain of others to cover up the first!
You would not have perverted thoughts if you had stayed clear of the porno books!

The Slavery of Sin:
"Sow a sinful thought . . .
Reap a sinful act . . .
Sow a sinful act . . .
Reap a sinful habit . . .

Sow a sinful <u>habit</u> . . .
Reap a sinful character . . .
Sow a sinful <u>character</u> . . .
Reap a sinful destiny."
"No man can serve two masters!"
Why do people stop serving Christ? They are busy attending another master!
Why do people stop coming to church? They are busy catering to another cause!
There is no middle ground.

--You are either living a life of sin or obedience.
--You are either under the domain of sin or obedience.
--You are either heading toward death, or practical righteousness.

B. Choosing to sin leads to more sin (v. 19b)

Cp. v. 19 - "Iniquity unto iniquity" Lit. "Lawlessness leads to more lawlessness."
Bondage to sin only leads one deeper into slavery so that it becomes harder and harder to do what is right. (Wiersbe, p. 533).
Sin is like a whirlpool; it sucks you down very quickly.
[Note: Sexual sin is the quickest way down (Prov. 2:18, 19).]

II. Don't you realize that <u>YOU WERE SET FREE</u>? (v. 17-19)
(The <u>RELEASE</u> from sin)

A. Our release from sin changed our <u>life</u> (v. 17)

"Ye <u>were</u> the servants of sin" - serving sin should be a thing of the <u>past</u>.
Paul reminds us of our unholy allegiance prior to salvation, in contrast with our righteous allegiance after salvation.

"Obeyed" = lit. to listen with submissiveness; it describes a responsive heart that gladly embraces the Gospel.
"Form" = "tupos" - a pattern or mold.
"Which was delivered you" = lit. "into which you were handed over, or given over into" (Passive - we did not change ourselves; we were changed by the transforming power of the Gospel).
The imagery is that of "a cast or frame into which molten material is poured so as to take its shape (Vine, p. 124). (ILLUS: putting plaster of Paris, chocolate, plastic, metal into molds).

The doctrine of the Gospel is what molded us! We took on a different shape; we were changed! Transformed!

B. Our release from sin changed our <u>master</u> (v. 18)

"Free" - <u>released</u> (unshackled; unchained).
No more "ball and chain" of sin to confine us.
Why anyone would want to go back is absurd!

Lit. "after being freed (Aor. pass. pt), away from [απο] the sin, you were made slaves of righteousness."

The phrase: "servants of righteousness" is practically synonymous with "servants to God" (v. 22).
No one serves God until they are released from serving sin.
Upon salvation, we simply changed masters. We were not released from sin into nothing (libertine-ism).
We are free from sin, but not free from slavery.

The believer is a slave of Christ! There is no middle ground! (Robertson, p. 364).

Every true Christian is a servant of God.
--A servant has no choices to make; they are made for him.
--A servant is not free to do as he likes.
--Every moment of a servant's life belongs to his master.

The believer has new obligations. We are no longer under the domination of sin (cp. 6:14), but grace joined us to righteousness.

To go back (to our old master) is to be a traitor (to our new master)!

C. Our release from sin changed our dedication (v. 19)

"I speak after the manner of men" - Paul is saying, "Pardon the expression, but I am trying to put this in human terms because of the difficulty our depraved nature ("flesh") has in comprehending spiritual things."

God, knowing that we have defective spiritual insight, uses the harsh, somewhat crude analogy of being a "slave" - even in regards to righteousness (v. 18).

Just like you freely and voluntarily offered yourselves to sin when you were unsaved, now voluntarily offer yourself to righteousness.
"The Christian ought to be as enthusiastic in yielding to the Lord as he was in yielding to sin" (Wiersbe, p. 533).

"Members" - body parts.
--Our eyes that once beheld that which is disgraceful (wrong TV, porn, etc.) now are to be steadfastly fixed on what is right.
--Our ears that were once channels through which ungodly messages entered our minds, are now to listen to that which is true and virtuous.
--Our hands that were tools for destruction or selfish gain, are now to be used for the edification of God's work.
--Our feet that once propelled us into trouble and mischief are now to move us to the needs of others (EX: Rom. 10:15).

"Unto holiness" – Holiness is a major goal of our present life.

NOTE: "practical "sanctification" (holiness) is a life process, not an instantaneous act (Robertson, p. 365).

III. Don't you remember that <u>YOUR LIFE WAS MISERABLE</u>? (v. 20-23) *(The <u>RUIN</u> of sin)*

v. 23

"Sin" and "righteousness" are mutually exclusive. They <u>can't</u> be put together. They repel each other. Before salvation, we were <u>alienated</u> from God. Separate from God. We were not connected to doing right (as God sees it).

A. Sin resulted in shameful "<u>fruit</u>" (v. 21-22)

"Fruit" = the outcome of sin; the harvest.

V. 21

When you sign up to serve sin, expect to receive the "fringe benefits" of sin.

"The <u>fruit</u> of sin":
--hangovers from drinking
--divorce, split homes (fractured relationships)
--divided friendships
--no order to life (chaos)
--no peace of mind (headaches)
--guilt
and finally, death!
A believer will be ashamed of his past, not boast about it.
Sin only leaves <u>sad memories</u>!
What good is sin? What benefit comes from sin?
What good was your life before Jesus saved you?

NOTE: Contrast between v. 21 "<u>Then</u>" and v. 22 "<u>Now</u>"
"Then" - 1) servants of <u>sin</u> . . . . 2) <u>shame</u> . . . . 3) <u>death</u>
"Now" - 1) servants of <u>God</u> . . . 2) <u>holiness</u> . . . 3) <u>eternal life</u>.

v. 22

Why would anyone choose to serve sin when the benefits of serving God are so much better!
"Holiness" - the feeling of being clean is so much better than being dirty.
"Everlasting life" - In contrast to eternal death - NOTE: Eternal life is not given because of <u>how</u> we served, but <u>Whom</u> we served
- Every believer is a servant of God. As such, we receive a <u>gift</u>, not wages (v. 23), since we could never earn eternal life.

B. Sin results in deadly "<u>wages</u>" (v. 23)

No one employed by sin, escapes the <u>paycheck</u> of sin (v. 23)
"Wages" = pay, rations, or provisions that a soldier received for his duty.
"Death" = <u>spiritual</u> death (Eph.2;1);
<u>physical</u> death (Heb.9:27); &
<u>eternal</u> death (Rev.20:14,21:8).
Even for the Christian: *"There is a sin unto death" (I Jn. 5:17) . . . "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" (I Cor. 11:30).*
Sin pays wages -- death! (illustration: How an Eskimo kills a wolf with the blood soaked blade of a knife stuck into the frozen tundra ground blade up)
Sin gives you what you deserve, but God gives you what you don't deserve - eternal life!

NOTE Contrasts:
"<u>Wages</u>" (what is deserved) . . . . . "<u>Gift</u>" (what is <u>not</u> deserved)

"Sin (the one who gives the wages) . . . . . "God" (The One who gives the gift)
"Death" . . . . . "Everlasting life"

Section 17: ROMANS 7:1-6
"FREE FROM THE LAW"

***Christ set us free from the bondage of the Law (Legalism).**
What does this mean?

Freedom from the Law means 3 new realities that every believer should experience:

Being free from the Law means we have:

I. A NEW MARRIAGE TO HONOR (v. 1-4a)
(A contrast of Husbands - Law or Christ)
A. The New Marriage Illustrated (v. 1-3)
B. The New Marriage Applied (v. 4a)

Being free from the Law means we have:

II. A NEW FRUIT TO BEAR (v. 4b-5)
(A Contrast of Fruits - To God or Death)

Being free from the Law means we have:

III. A NEW POWER TO SERVE BY (v. 6)
(A Contrast of Service – The Spirit or Letter)

INTRODUCTION:
Have you ever been frustrated as a Christian because you were not what you desired to be?
You desired to fulfill all the standards, rules, commands, etc., that God has in His Word, but found that you often lacked the motivation and ability to do so.
Maybe the reason for this is that we were missing something internally. The power just was not there!
Paul in Romans 7 is going to show us where the power for victorious Christian living is to be found. It's not by the power of the Law, but by the power of the living Christ.

What should come first, obedience or spirituality? Doing right (outside) or being right (inside)?
Answer: Spirituality and being right on the inside
Question: How is one made spiritual?
Whereas in chapters 3 - 5, God revealed that salvation does not come from the Law (works), in chapters 6 - 8 He unveils that sanctification (spirituality) does not come from the Law (works).

The word "Law" is mentioned 23 times in chapter 7 alone!
Just as we were dependent exclusively upon God for salvation (cp. 4:3); we are dependent exclusively upon God for sanctification (cp. 7:25).

Just as we tell no man "Do this work to be saved"; we tell no man "Do this work to be spiritual."
Works may reveal spirituality, but they do no produce spirituality.
Paul in chapters 6 and 7 deals with the two extremes which those who are saved by grace often succumb to:
1) license (chap. 6)
2) legalism (chap. 7)

***Christ set us free from the bondage of the Law (Legalism).**
What does this mean?

Freedom from the Law means 3 new realities that every believer should experience:

Being free from the Law means we have:

I. A NEW MARRIAGE TO HONOR (v. 1-4a)

(A contrast of Husbands - Law or Christ)

A. The New Marriage Illustrated (v. 1-3)

V. 1

"Dominion" = ruling authority or lordship

ILLUS: No law is imposed upon a dead man. No one demands that a dead man pay his taxes, fines, etc. No one legislates laws for a corpse to abide by.

V. 2

"For" = in context, the word "for" has the idea of "for example" or "for sake of illustration."

Though Paul's main point in context is not to prove the permanence of marriage [but to give an illustration of the believer's freedom from the Law], he does prove the permanence of wedlock by means of the illustration he gives.

"Hath an husband" = lit. "under a husband" (pointing to marriage and specifically the headship of the husband and the submissiveness of the wife in such a relationship)

"Is bound" = has been bound and still is (perfect, passive).

Marriage is a permanent bond. That is why it is called "wedlock." The problem today is that many are "manufacturing keys" to unlock that which is to be kept locked and secured.

"Bound by the Law" = It is God's Law (established before the Mosaic Law) that binds two (male and female) into one (Gen. 2:24).

NOTE: God says: "We are bound to our spouse by Law; He does not say "by love." "Falling out of love" is not a justifiable reason for divorce.

"If the husband be dead" = if the husband should happen to be die (by means of a natural course of events, not by the wife killing him off!!!).

"Loosed" = annulled, nullified, or discharged; away from the obligation of God's Law of matrimony.

The only way out of marriage is death! It is "till death do we part" Marriage is for keeps!

V. 3

Paul is alluding to Christ's statement found in Mark 10:11, 12 - "And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery."

"Adultery" = an unlawful union or joining together of two people wherein at least one party belongs or formerly belonged exclusively to someone else.

--The Bible speaks of spiritual adultery (James 4:4 - in which the believer becomes a companion with the world system - cp. Rev. 2:22).

--The Bible speaks of sexual adultery (I Cor. 6:9, Heb. 13:4 - where someone has a sexual relationship with the spouse of another).

--The Bible speaks of marital adultery (Mt. 5:32, 19:9; Mk. 10:11, 12; Lk. 16:18 -- where divorce and remarriage occurs.

Why is divorce wrong? It is contrary to God's original design (Mt. 19:1-9).

B. The New Marriage Applied (v. 4a)

"Become dead" - were put to death (passive). It is God who applied Christ's death to our account (Rom. 6:2-5).

"Dead to the Law" = dead in relationship to the Law.
NOTE: Paul did not say that the Law died (which would have been the most natural analogy in this passage's context), but that the believer died in relationship to the Law.

"By the body of Christ" = by means of Christ's body. Our relationship to the Old Testament Law ended when Christ's body died on the cross (the rent *(torn)* veil in the Temple is a reminder of this - Mt. 27:51).

Just as marriage involves certain obligations, and death frees you from those obligations, so the Law involved certain obligations, and death ("in Christ") freed you from those obligations.
Today we do not offer sacrifices nor fulfill the details of the Jewish ceremonial and civil Law; but Christ has freed us from the O.T. Law's authority over us.

"Married to another" - (Gk "hetero" - "Another" v. 3) - a different one; another of a different kind. Christ is contrasted with Law. He is superior in all aspects to the Law.

Believers have been married to Christ as their Husband (I Cor. 6:13; Gal. 4:26; Eph. 5:22-33).

Many Christians who are not in bondage for salvation remain in bondage for sanctification and service, struggling in a hard, legal way to please God (Rom. 8:8), instead of finding the source and spring of joyous service in union with Christ (G. Thomas, p.182).

This is not saying that we should not be concerned about God's commands (that apply to us today); indeed we must be. Rather, it is saying that we should be concerned first and foremost with our relationship to Him, and keeping His commands will take care of themselves!

Did not Jesus say that we could fulfill the whole Law if we sincerely and absolutely loved God and our neighbor?
[SEE Mt. 22:34-40; Rom. 13:8-10; Gal. 5:13, 14; Cp. Mt. 7:12; Ja. 2:8]

ILLUS: of a husband who has a list of rules and duties for his wife to do ("Do this...Do that...Don't do this...Don't do that..."). If she is a good wife, she will truly desire to fulfill that list, but may find that she cannot always do it. She may miss the wishes of her husband because her attention is drawn to the list. Eventually it may come to a point where she resents that list. What she needed was simply one rule: "Love your husband." And if she did, she would gladly do that which was in his best interest.

It's not legalistic Law, but Christ Himself who is:
- The incentive to deny self
- The power to deny sin
- The source of our fruitfulness

A Christian does not serve a Lawbook, but a Lord; not a host of rules, but a Heavenly Father; not a list of standards but a loving Savior.

Being free from the Law means we have:

II. A NEW FRUIT TO BEAR (v. 4b-5)

(A Contrast of Fruits - To God or Death)

V. 4b

Why is a believer married to Christ? What is the purpose for which you were joined to Christ?
Answer: "That we should bring forth fruit unto God!" We are joined to Christ to bring forth fruit!
(SEE Jn. 15:1-5, 8; Heb. 6:7; Eph. 2:10)

"Fruit" - not only involves our conduct but our character (EX: Fruit of the Spirit - Gal. 5:22).
Fruitfulness comes when we are more concerned about being close to Christ than on keeping ourselves in perfection by our own strength.

V. 5

As Paul showed sin's fruit and service in 5:21, 23, he now shows the Law's fruit and service in 7:4b-6.
"Flesh" is not referring to our physical skin and bones, but to the old nature that is housed within our skin and bones.

"Motions" = lit. passions; lusts and desires that moved us into action to satisfy them.
"By the Law" -

The Law stirred up (instigated) our sin nature.
The Law aggravated our rebelliousness.
The Law brought out our anti-God-ness.

ILLUS: How a child (or adult) will be tempted to do something just because it is forbidden.
If there were no prohibition, attention would not be drawn to certain things to the magnitude that it is once it is forbidden.
Man, being totally depraved and rebellious, by nature does things often for no other purpose than to defy God and His standards. There is something appealing to carnal man about those things which are outlawed.

EX: "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant" (Prov. 9:17).

Man's sin nature is drawn by the apparent attractiveness of that which is forbidden (EX: Eve, who even before acquiring a sin nature was attracted to that which God forbade, thinking perhaps that God was keeping something from her that was beneficial to her (Gen. 3:5,6).

Often called; "The forbidden fruit syndrome."

In a sense, the Law incites us to sin, then condemns us when we sin . . . The Law is a no-win situation for the sinner. (Schnaiter, Biblical Viewpoint, Romans, BJU, p. 40)
If the Law sparks man's rebelliousness, should we do away with Law? (EX: Many think about legalizing drugs or relinquishing the discipline of children).
Answer: NO! Law is good because it shows man his sinfulness, depravity, and desperate need for God - Rom. 7:7-12.

"We are no longer bound to fruitless attempts to please God in the flesh through legalistic ritual, which can only produce frustration through life and eventuate in death" (Schnaiter, p. 40).

Being free from the Law means we have:

III. A NEW POWER TO SERVE BY (v. 6)

(A Contrast of Service - Spirit or Letter)

"But now . . ."
NOTE Contrast: Dominion of the Law (v. 1)
Deliverance from the Law (v. 6)
"Being dead wherein we were held" = having died in relationship to that which held us tight and wouldn't let go (namely the Law), we are now free to serve God in a new way!

Being bound by the Law is like being married to a perfect husband who demands perfection, but never offers a hand for you to attain it (The Law offered no power over sin - 6:14).

Paul, in demonstrating the superiority of the New Covenant ("in Christ") over the Old Covenant ("through Moses"), says: "The letter [Law] killeth, but the Spirit [Holy Spirit] giveth life" (II Cor. 3:6).

He goes on to say: "Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (v. 17).

The motivation and dynamic of our lives does not come from the Law, but from the Spirit (SEE Wiersbe, p. 535).

The Holy Spirit motivates (energizes) us and enables us to serve Christ, as we draw close to our Lord.

Just as we "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4), we also SERVE "in newness of Spirit."

CONCLUSION:

Freedom from the Law means 3 new realities that every believer should experience:

1. The believer is married to Christ, not a Law-code

2. The believer bears fruit for God, not death

3. The believer serves by the power of the Spirit, not the flesh

Section 18: ROMANS 7:7-13
"THE FUNCTION OF GOD'S LAW"

***We need to realize the function of God's Law!**

What does God's Law do?

I. The Law <u>EXPOSES</u> Sin (v. 7)

(The Law reveals the <u>essence</u> of sin)

II. The Law <u>AGGRAVATES</u> Sin (v. 8-11)

(The Law reveals man's <u>proneness</u> to sin)

A. Sin sees the Law as a <u>challenge</u> to overcome (v. 8)

B. Sin is <u>awakened</u> by the Law, as an alarm clock revives one who is unconscious (v. 8b-9)

C. Sin uses the Law as a means to <u>deceive</u> the ignorant (v. 10-11)

III. The Law <u>MAGNIFIES</u> Sin (v. 12-13)

The Law magnifies sin in two ways:

A. The Law reveals the <u>opposite</u> of sin (v. 12)

B. The Law reveals the <u>sinfulness</u> of sin (v. 13)

INTRODUCTION:

V. 7

"Is the law sin?" - This question comes upon the heels of Paul's previous statements about the inadequacy of the Law to make one spiritual. After showing the law's <u>inability</u> to produce Godly <u>fruit</u> (7:4, 5) [rather, the law stirred up (instigated) our rebellious sin nature to produce the fruit of death (v. 5)], and after showing the law's <u>inability</u> to give us <u>power</u> to serve by (7:6) -- Paul now anticipates the question: "Is something morally wrong with the law?"

Even though the Law is <u>powerless</u> to make one spiritual, it is not <u>profitless</u>! it has a function.

***We need to realize the function of God's Law!**

What does God's Law do?

I. The Law <u>EXPOSES</u> Sin (v. 7)

(The Law reveals the <u>essence</u> of sin)

The word "sin" appears 9 times in verses 7-14. It is the word hamartia - which means "to miss the mark"; to fail to reach God's standard that He has set.

"Known sin" - known (ginosko) - an <u>experiential</u> knowledge.

To progressively gain an awareness <u>about</u> something.

"known lust" - known (oida) - a <u>conceptual</u> knowledge.

To have an intuitive full knowledge <u>of</u> something.

Paul is saying: "I would not know what sin was and wasn't, if it was not for the Law showing me right from wrong."

How does a student realize his academic shortcomings? He compares his SAT or ACT scores with the national average.

How does a person realize he is overweight? he compares his weight with what his weight should be for his height.

"For" = for example - I could not comprehend what lust (wrong appetites or desires) was, if I did not have the tenth commandment. *Ex. 20:17 - "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's."*

The law is like a mirror that reveals the inner man and shows us how dirty we are (James 1:22-25) (Wiersbe, p. 535).

NOTE: Paul chooses "coveting" because it is an inner attitude rather than an outward action like the other nine commands. Most people never realize their own proneness to this sin, because they do not know God's law. They are comparing themselves by another standard.

- The reason we know that adultery is wrong is because God's law says: "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Ex. 20:14).
- The basis upon which we can say that abortion is sin, is because God's law says: Thou shalt not kill (murder)" (Ex. 20:13).
- We know that teen-age rebellion is wicked is because God's law says, "Honor thy father and thy mother" (Ex. 20:12).
- The reason why we know cursing is sinful is because God's law says: "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain" (Ex. 20:7)
- The reason why we know that homosexuality is an abomination is because God's law says: "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination." (Lev. 18:22).
- The reason why we know that taking extra long breaks at work; cheating on your income tax, or neglecting to pay your debts is in, is because God's law says: "Thou shalt not steal" (Ex. 20:15).

When the "Judeo-Christian ethic) is removed out of a society, the society is bound to deteriorate!

[NOTE: However, man still has the word of the law written in his heart (Ro. 2:15), which restrains man from destroying himself and keeps society from going extinct]

1. The Law makes one conscious of His sin (SEE Rom. 3:20)
2. The Law reveals man to be a transgressor (SEE Gal. 3:19)
   It was added "because of transgressions. . ." (i.e. so that sins might be shown to be transgressions).
3. The Law teaches everyone their need for Christ (SEE Gal. 3:24).

II. The Law AGGRAVATES Sin (v. 8-11)

(The Law reveals man's proneness to sin)

A. Sin sees the Law as a challenge to overcome (v. 8)

ILLUS: How a child (or adult) will be tempted to do something just because it is forbidden.

EX: Signs saying, "Wet pain - do not touch" or "Wet cement - do not walk" actually inspire the rebellious to intentionally leave their mark.

V. 8

Man, being totally depraved and rebellious, by nature does things often for no other purpose than to defy God and His standards. There is something appealing to carnal man about those things which are outlawed.

EX: "Stolen waters are sweet, (says the harlot) and bread eaten in secret is pleasant" (Prov. 9:17).

--The Law teases man's innate appetite for wrong.

--The law stirs up (instigates) our sin nature.

--The law aggravates our rebellious hearts.

--The law brings out our anti-God-ness

"Sin" is like a punk kid saying, "Go ahead, dare me to do it." So the reply comes: "I dare you to do it!" And then after "sin" has been given its challenge (the law), it goes wild.

"Sin" is personified as someone who is looking for trouble" Someone who is "looking for a fight." (conflict). Sin is pictured as "trouble looking for a time and place to happen." Someone who is waiting for an "occasion" (opportunity, starting point) to rebel.

Man's sin nature is stirred up by prohibition, because at the center of sin is selfish pride, which has been waiting to assert itself.

"Taking occasion" (cp. v. 8)

Sin wastes no time, but seizes the opportunity that the prohibition provides.
"Wrought" = worked out; brought about
"All manner" = every (kind)
"concupiscence" = lust (same word as in v. 7)
The command not to lust makes one lust more.
Sin is pictured as a pig that dives into all kinds of mud and filth. Man's old nature has the potential of all kinds of illicit cravings (lusts).

"For without the law, sin was dead"
In what way was sin dead?
ANSWER: The sin nature is not dead, but acts of sin are. No one can miss the mark if no mark exists.
The capability of sin is living, though the opportunity to sin is missing.
The principle of sin is living, but the practice of sin is not.
The potential to miss the mark exists, though the practice of missing the mark did not occur without the mark being established.

B. Sin is awakened by the Law, as an alarm clock revives one who is unconscious (v. 8b-9)

V. 8

"Sin is not imputed, when there is no Law."
"Sin is dead" - lying dormant. Fast asleep awaiting a challenge (law) to conquer.
Paul is no doubt reflecting on his own experience as a child or a time prior to his becoming conscious of moral responsibility (Thomas, p. 186-7).

V. 9

The Law wakes up the sin already in the heart.
If there was no prohibition, attention would not be drawn to certain things to the magnitude that it is once it is forbidden.
Sin is revived (it regains vitality and strength) when it is challenged. "The strength of sin is the law." (I Cor. 15:56).
NOTE: When sin faces God's law in the boxing ring of life, God's law does not lose. Sin does! And we die. "The wages of sin is death" (Ro. 6:23).

C. Sin uses the Law as a means to deceive the ignorant (v. 10-11)

V. 10

"Ordained to life" *Lev. 18:5 - "Ye shall therefore keep my statues, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the LORD." (cp. Rom. 10:5; Gal. 3:12)*
The commands which would have brought life (if kept), ended up in death (because they were not obeyed).
No one breaks God's law and gets away with it!
NOTE: It's not the commandment that causes death (cp. v. 13), rather it's man's sin nature that breaks His commandments that causes death.

V. 11

Sin is personified as the tempter (Robertson, p. 368)
"Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed" (James 1).
"Sin is a deceiver" - When the law says "Don't", sin whispers in our ear: "God must be withholding something good, something desirable, something beneficial from you." *(EX: Satan to Eve, "Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:4b-5).*

Man's sin nature is drawn by the apparent attractiveness of that which is forbidden. But always remember, it is a trap! It is a lie!
Beware: Sin is a deceiver!
Heb. 3:13 - "But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." (cp. Eph. 4:22).

III. The Law MAGNIFIES Sin (v. 12-13)

The Law magnifies sin in two ways:

A. The Law reveals the opposite of sin (v. 12)

"The Law" in its entirety, and the "commandment(s)" in particular is holy. How do we know? Because its Author is holy!
Since God is holy, just, and good, anything that comes from Him is also holy, just, and good.
Since the commands come from God, they must be holy, because He is holy!
(cp. v. 14) "The Law is spiritual."
"The Law is just" (it's right). God never commanded anything that was not right according to His standards of rightness.
"The Law is good" (it's beneficial). SEE verse 16
I Tim. 1:8 - "But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully"
NOTE: The law is good because it shows man his sin (I Tim. 1:9-10).

If the law sparks man's rebelliousness, should we do away with the law? (Many think that society should legalize drugs, or relinquish the discipline of children).
Should society do away with law and prohibitions?
ANSWER: NO! Law is good because it shows man his true nature. It reveals to man his sinfulness, depravity, and desperate need for God's mercy and grace.

B. The Law reveals the sinfulness of sin (v. 13)

Paul is saying: The law is not a cause of death.
Sin kills - Law does not!
"Sin that it might appear sin..." - "Appear" = to be shown or manifested.
"Sin...exceeding sinful" - when someone breaks a known law, their sinfulness is magnified beyond measure.

> Sin is more sinful when you knowingly violate a clear command (it would be better not to know the law and break it, than to know it and still break it - EX: degrees of punishment in hell).

If I owned an apple orchard (or banana plantation), it is wrong for someone to go onto my property and steal my fruit. However, if I put up a sign saying "Do not steal the apples - No Trespassing, etc.", and you go ahead and steal anyway, (having fully known the prohibition), you are even more guilty! And your rebelliousness is magnified that much more.

"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Ja. 4:17).
"The law entered that the offence might abound" (Ro. 5:20) - that is, so that our awareness of our sin might abound.
Unsaved people know that there is such a thing as sin, but they do not realize the sinfulness of sin. Many Christians do not . . . so they excuse it (or rename it - "Mistakes, weaknesses") (Weirsbe, p. 536).

CONCLUSION:

1. Understand God's Law

Know its intent is not to save but to show you that you need salvation.
When understood: God's law tells the sinner something is wrong in his life.
God's law is like a stick plunged into a stream. It shows the direction of the current of our lives (cp. Thomas, p. 188).

2. Uphold God's Law

a. Teach God's commands to your children and others

Why do not more people see their need for Christ?
ANSWER: They do not see their sin.
Sin is not hammered in pulpits across this country like it once was, therefore. People do not see themselves as law breakers; and consequently they see no need for Christ!

b. Obey God's commands daily

That is, obey the commands of the Bible that apply to the N.T. believer. Such as the command to love God and your neighbor (Luke 10:27), or the command to not forsake church attendance (Hebrews 10:25)
NOTE: Remember, you do not have the strength in your flesh to obey any of God's commands with the right motivation and to the high degree that He desires!
(This is Paul's point in the following paragraph - 7:14-25)

Focus your energies on loving the one you are married to [Christ - v. 2-4] and He [via the Holy Spirit - 8:1] will give you the power to bring forth fruit (Jn. 15:1ff) and fulfill the true essence of His law (Mt. 22:39; Rom. 13:8-10; Gal. 5:14).

Happy, therefore, is that man who has come to the end of himself, his own ideas, his own efforts, his own determination to be saved (or sanctified) by his own attempts and works, and has acknowledged his utter sinfulness, his hopeless inability and has thrown himself upon Christ as "the end of the Law for righteousness" (Thomas p. 189).

Section 19: ROMANS 7:14-25
"STRUGGLING IN THE FLESH"

***We cannot do good (do right, please God) by the power of the flesh!**

I. Trying to Do Good "in the flesh" is FRUSTRATING (v. 15-20)

A. A Frustrating Paradox - Spiritual Desire but no Power (v.15-16)

The Testimony of a struggling Christian is four-fold:

1. "I don't know what I'm doing" (v. 15a)
2. "I don't do what I want to be doing" (v. 15b)

INTRODUCTION: V. 14

Verses 14-25 have been debated for centuries regarding whether Paul is describing the experience of a believer or non-believer. The reference to being "sold under sin" (v. 14), the mention of "war" and "captivity" (v. 23); the admittance of "wretchedness" (v. 24); and the seeming inability to do right (v. 15-21); coupled with the proneness to do wrong seem to support the view that the struggles of an unbeliever are in view.

However, a closer look reveals that Paul, on the contrary, is describing the life of a believer (but a believer depending on the strength of the flesh to live victoriously).

Proofs that a believer is being described:

1. Personal pronoun "I" - indicates that this struggle was Paul's own experience. (the word "I" appears 30 times in this chapter) - cp. v. 25 "I myself" - emphatically Paul's personal testimony.
2. The evidence of a hatred for sin (v. 15) is indicative of a believer (unbelievers love sin - Rom. 3; Jn. 3:19 - "Men love darkness rather than light...").
3. Godly desires are evident throughout the context. Constant references to not wanting (desiring) to sin, while wanting to do right, are made.
   In reference to sin, the reply is "I allow not" (v. 15); "I would not" (v. 16,19, 20). NOTE: The speaker's longing to be free from sin altogether - v. 24.
   In reference to doing right, the one described admits: "The Law is good" (v. 16); "to will [to do good] is present" (v. 18); "the good that I would" (v. 19); "When I would do good" (v. 21).
4. Spiritual perception ("For I know...in my flesh dwelleth no good thing" - v. 18; "I see another Law in my members..." - v. 23).
5. The existence of two natures - "inward man" (v. 22); "mind...flesh" (v. 25). (an unbeliever has one nature).

V. 14

When Paul says, "I am carnal" (fleshly), he is referring to his "old man"; his "old nature"
(SEE Eph. 4:22-24 for a description of the believer's two natures).

This passage "describes a man who is trying to be good and holy by his own efforts and is beaten back every time by the power of indwelling sin" (Thomas, p. 191).
Just as the Law offered **no power** over sin (7:1-13), Paul now shows that the flesh offers **no power** over sin (7:15-25).
EX: of people who tried to do God's word by man's strength and failed.
Paul is not teaching that a believer cannot do good; Rather, he is saying that a believer cannot do good in the power of the flesh.
***We cannot do good (do right or please God) by the power of the flesh!**

I. Trying to Do Good "in the flesh" is FRUSTRATING (v. 15-20)

A. A Frustrating Paradox - Spiritual Desire but no Power (v. 15-16)

Paul describes a dual life, that every believer can relate to.
God is not teaching that a believer has a split personality, nor suffers from schizophrenia, but that within his one personality reside two natures.
Verses 15-25 describe a man in conflict. Someone struggling. Someone who has a war going on inside of him.

The Testimony of a struggling Christian is four-fold:

1. "I don't know what I'm doing" (v. 15a)
   "I allow not" = lit. "I know not"
   Sin dulls our perceptions. It is blinding (II Cor. 4:4).
   Did you ever do something, only then to realize it was foolish and wrong, and ending up asking yourself: "Why did I do that?"
2. "I don't do what I want to be doing" (v. 15b)
3. "I don't like what I'm doing" (v. 15c)
   "Self is unable to hinder (stop) what it disapproves" (Thomas, p. 194).
4. "I don't agree with what I'm doing" (v. 16)
   Both the believer's desire to obey God's Law, and even his failure to obey God's law reveals the Law to be good (beneficial).
   ILLUS: How good we feel about ourselves until we realize what sin is. Do you ever notice that the more you know about God and His standards, the more aware you are of your own shortcomings? A new believer may view himself as doing quite well, when in actuality he still is committing sin that he is unaware of.
   ILLUS: Talking to people who are obviously living in direct disobedience to God's Law, yet they think they are right with God. What would cause such deception? Ignorance. They are totally unaware of God's Law.
   The more one sees the straightness of God's standards, the more he will see his own crookedness in comparison.
   The closer one gets to God, the more conscious he becomes of his own imperfections, limitations, and shortcomings.
   The more spiritual one is, the more heightened his awareness of sin will be.

B. A Frustrating Problem - Indwelling Sin (v. 17-20)

V. 17

"Now" - now that I am a Christian, in contrast with my former unconverted days.
"No more I that do it" - not excusing sin, but showing who the real culprit is.
Paul is explaining his problem, not justifying his problem.

Many Christians attempt to excuse their sin and exempt themselves from responsibility and accountability for it by saying, "Oh well, that's just the way I am" "I can't help it."
"No more I . . ." (same phrase appears in verse 20). Paul is saying: "The true I or the real me (in Christ) is not sinning. The internal ("inward man" - v. 22) person is the real you!

When a believer sins, what aspect of his being sins? Is it the natural aspect of man or the spiritual aspect of man? [Natural] The flesh or the spirit? [flesh]
"Sin that dwelleth in me" - lit. "the dwelling in me sin"
Sin is viewed as an unwanted tenant who lives at home inside the believer.

V. 18

"Flesh" = the physical nature of man that motivates him to gratify self with sin.

NOTE: the physical body is <u>not</u> inherently wicked. Its our <u>carnal nature</u> that is housed in the body that is sinful.

Everything the Bible says about the old nature is negative:

"No good thing" (Rom. 7:18)

"The flesh profiteth nothing" (Jn. 6:63)

"No confidence in the flesh" (Phil. 3:3)

(cited from Wiersbe, p. 538)

"The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it" (Jer. 17:9)

"This *is* an evil among all *things* that are done under the sun, that *there is* one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that *they go* to the dead." (Eccles. 9:3)

"Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head *there is* no soundness in it; *but* wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." (Isaiah 1:5-6)

The works of the flesh are outlined in Gal. 5:19-21 as being: "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness (lewdness), idolatry, witchcraft (drug usage), hatred, variance (strife), emulations (jealousy), wrath, strife (rivalries), seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings..."

"For to will" - "for" = introduces the <u>proof</u> that the "flesh" has nothing good about it.

"For the will (desire to do good) is present (within my reach; next to me), but how to perform that which is good is not to be found (in the flesh)."

V. 19

A believer relying upon himself may have <u>good intentions</u> but will inevitably produce <u>bad actions</u>.

II. Trying to do good "in the flesh" is <u>FUTILE</u> (v. 21-24)

A. The Enemy does not Leave (v. 21-22)

V. 21

"Evil is present" - evil is right next to me.

Whenever we want to do good, an evil, tag-along enemy is right there also.

V. 22

"I delight" - I am joyfully agreeing with God's law (cp. v. 16), after (according to) the inner man (in contrast with the flesh, which hates God's Law).

II Cor. 4:16 - "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."

Eph. 3:16 - "That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man."

B. The War does not End (v. 23)

"Another law" - another of a <u>different</u> kind

"Warring" = to carry on a military campaign against.

"The Law of my mind" - (synonymous with "the inward man" - v. 22) a <u>spiritual</u> mind. A mind that <u>loves</u> God. A mind that knows God's Word. A mind that desires to do right.

"Bringing me into captivity" - to subdue by force and carry away. Sin desires to fire its arrows at us and then draw us away with the lines that are attached to the arrows (ILLUS: As a whale hunter captures a whale)

SEE: Gal. 5:16-17 "Spirit vs. Flesh"

C. A Cry of Despair (v. 24)

From the depths of despair, the soul cries out, "O wretched man that I am!"
"Wretched" = miserable; distressed.
The picture is of a tired, worn out, warrior who in himself is helpless.
NOTE: The Apostle uses the word "wretched" rather than "guilty" because he is describing a struggling believer, not a condemned unbeliever.
"Deliver" - to rescue. The word is used to denote the act of a soldier who runs at his comrade's cry to rescue him from the hands of the enemy (Godet).

CONCLUSION: Just as there exists real agony for a struggling believer, there exists a real answer!
The answer to doing good is found when you yield to God (v. 25).
Victory comes when you unload your problem upon Jesus Christ (I Peter 5:7)
I Cor. 15:57 - "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."
The answer to deliverance is "through Jesus Christ our Lord." He is our means of victory - Thank God!
It is our union with Christ (via the Holy Spirit) that gave us the power over sin (Rom. 6:3-11), and now it is our yielding to Christ (and the Holy Spirit) that unleashes the power over sin (Rom. 6:13).
Remember, Jesus said: "Abide in Me . . . for without Me ye can do nothing." (Jn. 15:4, 5).

Note contrast between "I" (ch. 7) and the "Holy Spirit" (ch. 8) (cp. Thomas, p. 193).
While chapter 7 emphasizes what "I" am struggling to do, yet utterly failing in my own strength; chapter 8 emphasizes what the "Holy Spirit" (over 20 times) can and does do when yielded to.

In our hearts, we often decide:

- "I'm not going to lust any more" (Yet we forget to ask God for His grace in this matter).
- "I'm not going to think evil anymore" (jealousy, anger, etc.) (yet we fail to seek God to cleanse our minds)
- "I'm not going to miss personal prayer, Bible reading, or church attendance" (yet we forget to seek God's face for the ability and continued desire to do so)
- "I'm going to be a different husband, father, wife, or mother, son or daughter (yet we don't cry out for God's gracious power to so change)

As Christians, we must come to the point (like we did before salvation), and admit: "I can't do it" Then look to the One who can! Jesus Christ.

Yield to the Lord daily, and He will win the fight over sin for you!

Philip. 4:13
"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. "
Zech. 4:6
"…Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts."
John 15:5
"I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

Section 20: ROMANS 8:1-17
"NOT CONDEMNED"

***You can rest assured that you are under no condemnation in Christ!**

I. The REASON You are Not Condemned (v. 2-4a)
(A Changed Status - via being "in Christ")

A. Reason #1: Christ set you free (v. 2)
(Liberation)
B. Reason #2: Christ took your place (v. 3)
(Substitution)
C. Reason #3: Christ gave you His righteousness (v. 4a)

INTRODUCTION: Verse 1

Whereas chapter 7 described the futility of living victoriously in the flesh, chapter 8 unveils the victory of living by the power of the Holy Spirit, which is available to those "in Christ."

Whereas the personal pronoun "I" appeared over 30 times in chapter 7, reference is made to the "Spirit" 21 times in chapter 8.

> It has been said, "If the Holy Scripture were a ring, and the Epistle to the Romans a precious stone, chapter 8 would be the sparkling point of the jewel." (Spener, cited by Thomas, p. 200).

What a blessed chapter of God's Word this is!

Romans 8 begins with "no condemnation" and ends with "no separation" (Godet).

"Therefore" - because of Christ (7:25) who alone can deliver the "wretched man" (7:24, 25), there is now no condemnation.

"Now" - in contrast with the sinner's past; prior to coming to Christ, we were under condemnation

(Jn. 3:18 - "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.")

God is not merely saying that in the future we will not be condemned; but that at present ("now") we are not condemned.

"Condemnation" = to hold judgment against. No condemnation means the removal of all prospects of judgment. The sentence has been lifted.

"No condemnation" - an emphatic NO! There awaits no kind of condemnation whatsoever. No believer will be charged with any sin at the judgment. If only one sin were found in us, we would not be allowed in God's Heaven. With God, either one is totally free from sin (cp. v. 2) or he is not free at all. (It's all or nothing).

After death, a believer's works will be evaluated (I Cor. 3:12-15), but not his sin.

The verse does not say "no mistakes" or "no failures" or even "no sins." Christians do sin (Rom. 7:15-25; I Jn. 1:8-10) and also suffer the consequences because of their sins, but they do not suffer condemnation! (SEE Wiersbe, p. 538).

"No Condemnation" - *Jn. 5:24 - "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."*

Charles Wesley wrote:

"No condemnation now I dread,
I am my Lord's, and He is mine,
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness divine."

"To them" = NOTE: It does not say "to all" (not universalism, which teaches that all will be saved). God's promise only applies specifically to them which are in Christ Jesus.
Christ is God's only means of salvation, and our only means of safety, just as Noah's Ark was God's only means of deliverance and safety. In the ark, they were safe; in Christ, we are safe!
In Adam, we were condemned. In Christ, there is no condemnation! (Weirsbe, p. 538).

"In Christ Jesus" - this phrase depicts the believer's union with Christ; our oneness with Christ that occurs at the moment of salvation (Rom. 6:3).

Being "in Christ" means eternal life (Ro. 6:23).
Being "in Christ" means a new life (II Cor. 5:17).
Being "in Christ" means spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3).
& Being "in Christ" means no condemnation (Ro. 8:1)!

***You can rest assured that you are under no condemnation in Christ!**

I. The REASON You are Not Condemned (v. 2-4a)
(A Changed Status - via being "in Christ")

A. Reason #1: Christ set you free (v. 2) *(Liberation)*

"For" = introduces the reason why those in Christ are not condemned.
"The Spirit of life" - the Spirit that involves life; In other words, "the Spirit who imparts life."
"The law of sin and death" - the law that involves sin and death. (The Law provokes sin (Rom. 7:8) and condemns the law-breaker to death)
"Spirit & life" - always go together, and "Law, sin, and death" always go together
(I Cor. 15:56 - "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.")
Where the Spirit is, there cannot be death and where sin is, there cannot be life. Death cannot coexist with the Spirit, and sin cannot coexist with life.
Life is only "in Christ Jesus" (I Jn. 5:11, 12).
We were spiritual criminals, hand-cuffed, on death row and awaiting eternal execution.
Breaking God's Law resulted in sin, and sin always results in death (Rom. 6:23; Ja. 1:15).
The law demanded payment! But praise God, He freed us!

"Free from the law" = cp. Rom. 7:4 - The law has no claim on the believer. It cannot condemn you who are saved.

B. Reason #2: Christ took your place (v. 3) *(Substitution)*

"What the law could not do" - what the Law was powerless to do. The Law was powerless to free us from condemnation.
"It (the Law) was weak" - lit. without strength
"The Law was weak" (powerless) because it demanded what human nature could not provide.

God sent His Son…in the **"Likeness of sinful flesh"** - the word "likeness" shows that Christ in His incarnation took upon Himself flesh, but not the sinful nature of man that is housed within every man's flesh.

"Likeness" - does not mean that Christ only appeared as a man; it does not mean He came as a phantom, as the Gnostics believed (I Jn. 4:1-3). What it means is that He took on a body, a body that looked no different than any other man's body. The only exception is that man's body houses sin inside; Christ's did not. He was sinless (II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15, 7:26; I Pet. 2:22).

"God sending" - the initiative for our salvation was with God!
It has never been man's initiative to find God; it has always been God's initiative to seek and to save man!

"For sin" - for (on behalf of) our sin
"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins..." (I Pet. 3:18)
"Christ died for our sins" (I Cor. 15:3).

"Condemned sin in the flesh" = the reason we are not condemned for our sin (v. 1) is because our sin was condemned in Christ.
God judged your sin in the flesh of His Son.
The Father "laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Is. 53:6); Christ bore "our sins in His own Body on the tree" (I Pet. 2:24); Christ was made a "curse for us" (Gal. 3:13).
God being a just God must condemn sin. He must judge it. It must be paid for. He cannot violate His Law, and "sweep sin under the carpet" and hide it as if it never took place.
In God's wondrous plan, however, He judged sin by putting it on His Son, and judging His Son!
The "Law of double jeopardy" states that a man cannot be tried twice for the same crime. Since Jesus Christ paid the penalty for your sins, and since you are "in Christ," God will not condemn you. (Wiersbe, p. 539).

ILLUS: Hymn "It is Well With My Soul" - third stanza:
"My sin, O the bliss of this glorious thought,
My sin, not in part, but the whole
Is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more,
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!"

C. Reason #3: Christ gave you His righteousness (v. 4a) *(Justification)*

Because of Christ, it is as if those "in Him" have never broken God's law. Christ took the full load of man's sin and paid for it so "that" (for the purpose that) the righteous demand of the law would be fulfilled in us.
The law said, "here is the standard"; and in Christ, we meet the standard. We measure up because He measures up, and we are in Him!
2 Cor. 5:21 - "For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made ***the righteousness of God in him***." You the righteousness of God because of your "marriage" union to Christ!

II. The EVIDENCE That You are Not Condemned (v. 4b-17)
(A Changed Life - via being "in the Spirit")

Paul in verses 4b - 17 gives evidences of sonship, objective proofs revealing who are children of God and who are not. Evidences to show who has eternal life and who does not.
NOTE: He is not describing the means to life (which is "in Christ" v. 1) but merely the evidence of it.

V. 4b
"In verses 1 - 4, the apostle has shown that until and unless a man is justified, he cannot possibly be holy. So now, in verses 5 - 11, he will show that if a man is not holy, he cannot possibly have been justified" (Thomas, p. 208).

Those under "no condemnation" will have the following evidences in their lives:

A. You will have the Spirit's <u>mindset</u> (v. 5-8)

v. 5

God is describing the overall bent, trend or tendency of one's life. It is <u>not</u> that a believer will not ever think about or even from time to time desire the things of the flesh. The point is that this way of thinking will not be the overshadowing trend of the true believer's life.

There are only <u>two</u> groups of people in the world: Saved and Lost. Those "after the flesh" and those "after the Spirit."

"This does not mean that the unsaved person never does anything good, or that the unbeliever never does anything bad. It means that the bent of their lives is different. One lives for the flesh, the other lives for the Spirit." (Wiersbe, p. 539).

What characterizes your walk/your life?

As you examine your life, are you predominantly controlled by the Spirit of God or by your own natural, selfish, fleshly cravings?

"Mind" = to mind with a purpose; to have a mind set on something.

An unbeliever's mindset is merely physical; of this world; geared toward self-gratification.

"The things of the flesh" obviously include the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19ff).

The believer's mindset is focused on the <u>things of God</u>.

"The things of the Spirit" obviously include the fruit of the Spirit

(Gal. 5:22, 23 - "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance").

The Christian who has the Spirit of God in him has new goals, new ambitions, new desires. He lives in a totally different sphere.

Many view Christians as "out of place," "from another world", etc. and rightly so, because our "citizenship is in Heaven."

When Evangelist D. L. Moody described his conversion, he said: "I was in a new world. The next morning the sun shone brighter and the birds sang sweeter . . . the old elms waved their branches for joy, and all nature was at peace" (cited from Wiersbe, p. 540).

V. 6

Paul is <u>not</u> describing two kinds of Christians, one carnal and one spiritual. He is contrasting the <u>saved</u> and the <u>unsaved</u> (Wiersbe, p. 539).

The fleshly-minded man proves by his mindset that he is abiding in death; but the spiritually-minded man evidences by His Godly desires that he is in the realm of life and peace with God (5:1).

V. 7

"Enmity against God" - <u>hatred</u> (hostility) toward God.

> The mindset of the unbeliever reveals its hostility in that it refuses to submit itself (place itself under) to God's law. Such a mindset is rebellious and insubordinate.
>
> A spiritual mind (a believer) is willing and able to submit to God's law (cp. Ro. 7:25).

"Neither indeed can be" - the fleshly mind has <u>no power</u> or <u>ability</u> to submit itself to God's law. Such ability comes only through the power of the Spirit.

This does not necessarily mean that a person with a fleshly mind will live a gross, vicious life, for the flesh as unrenewed may be educated, refined, cultured, and even externally religious (Thomas, p 209).

What it does mean is that the inner man is <u>dead</u> toward God and does not respond to the things of the Spirit.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh..." (Jn. 3:6)

V. 8

After describing the fleshly mind's relationship to God as being "enmity," God in verse 8 describes God's relationship to the fleshly mind. Such a one has absolutely no ability to please God.
That which pleases God is faith (spiritual trust and dependence - Heb. 11:6 - "Without faith it is impossible to please Him"). An unbeliever has not this faith.
The flesh prompts men to walk by sight; the Spirit prompts us to walk by faith - II Cor. 5:7.
The unsaved person lives to please self, not God.

B. You will have the Spirit's presence (v. 9-11)

V. 9

The word **"dwell"** occurs 3 times in verses 9 - 11, and refers to the Spirit as the tenant or resident in the believer's life.
The believer has the flesh (old nature) in him, but he is not "in the flesh."

V. 9b

"Spirit of God". . . "Spirit of Christ" - NOTE: How Christ's relation to the Spirit is synonymous with God's, identifying Christ as God! Another proof of His deity!
"He is none of His" = i.e. he does not belong to Christ.
It is the Holy Spirit that links the believer to Christ (Rom. 6:3ff). No one gets the Spirit without getting Christ, and no one gets Christ without getting the Spirit.

V. 10

"Because of sin" = because of indwelling sin.
"Because of righteousness" = because of imputed righteousness.

The body is dead because its resident is indwelling sin.
Our true life is not related to our physical body, but to the Spirit who resides in our physical body.

V. 11

If the **"Spirit is life"** (v. 10), and the Spirit is in you (v. 9), then the logical conclusion is that you will be guaranteed life!
"Mortal" = subject to death
Having Christ's spirit guarantees your resurrection.
Just as the Holy Spirit "quickened" Christ (I Pet. 3:18), He will quicken those "in Christ."

C. You will have the Spirit's victory over sin (v. 12-13)

V. 12

The reason we are not indebted to the flesh is because the flesh did nothing for us. The flesh did not provide our salvation; the flesh does nothing but lead to death (v. 10), and the flesh does not mortify sin (v. 13).
In contrast we are indebted to the Holy Spirit.
The Holy Spirit has given us life (v. 10) and guarantees us future life (v. 11). Therefore, the implication is this: Every Christian is obligated (indebted) to live a life that does not grieve the Spirit, and obligated to allow the Spirit to dictate our desires, ambitions, goals in life, etc.
The flesh does not dictate our lives. It has no right to! It did nothing good for us, so why should we live to serve it?

V. 13

The contrast between "dying" and "living" must refer to eternal death and eternal life.

All Christians have died physically but will never die eternally.
"Ye shall die" = lit. You are about to die. Eternal death is right around the corner for those whose lives are characterized by the dominant control of the flesh.
"Mortify" - to put to death. The only way we put to death the deeds (practices) of the body is "through" (or by) the Spirit.
The Spirit stops us from indulging in sinful practices. The Spirit convicts, protects, and gives us the "will power" to deny the selfish impulses that are aroused by the flesh (the old nature).
"Mortify the deeds of the body" = NOTE: God never calls on us to mortify or inflict personal injury to the physical body itself (EX: asceticism), but to the sinful practices that stem from the fleshly old nature *(Col. 3:5 - "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil conucupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.").*

How do you mortify (kill) the deeds of the flesh?
ANSWER: You don't give them a chance to live.
Don't even give sin a chance to be born (Ja. 1:15); Abort it, by asking for God's cleansing & forgiveness. Abort a sinful thought, before it conceives and becomes a sinful act.
"Do mortify" - refers to a continual lifestyle. Paul does not suggest that the war with sin was something that was fought and won in the past, but a continual campaign that lasts throughout our life.
The question is not: "have you reached perfection?" nor "have you gained total victory over all acts of sin?" (I Jn. 1:10).
The question is: "Are you in the battle against sin?" "Is your life presently characterized by victory over sin's domination?" (SEE I Jn. 3:7-10).
Sin may on occasion knock us down, but it does not knock us out.
Sin may trip us up, but it won't chain us up.

D. You will have the Spirit's leading (v. 14)

God only leads His children (He does not lead "the Devil's kids").
HYMN - "God leads His dear children along."
The Spirit of God, as it were, takes us by the hand and like a good shepherd leads us in the path of righteousness for His names' sake (Ps. 23:3).
Who leads your life? What is the guide of your life?

E. You will have the Spirit's witness (v. 15-17)

V. 15
NOTE: "The spirit of bondage" is contrasted with "the Spirit of adoption."
Someone in bondage to sin and its fearful results is led by another spirit (small "s"), not by the Spirit of God.
"Bondage" = servitude; slavery. Sin and Satan don't lead (in contrast to the Spirit - v. 14). They chain their victims up and drag them along, pulling their prey toward the fearful prospects of death and hell.
"Adoption" is the legal process by which someone who is not blood related, becomes related to someone and thereby gains all of the rights, privileges and responsibilities of a literal son.
Our adoption came through Christ *(Eph. 1:5 - "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will").*
God who formerly was not our Father (but we were "children of wrath" - Eph. 2:3; and **"children of disobedience"** - Col. 3:6-7); but now God is our dear Heavenly Father.
The idea of "adoption" would have been fully understood by the Romans, since Roman law observed certain facts concerning adoption:

1. An adopted son lost all rights in the old family and gained all rights of a legitimate son in the new family.
2. He became an heir to the new father's estate.

3. His old life was forgotten.
4. He was considered the son of the new father.

(Stitzinger, Romans notes, p. 51)

"Abba" = Aramaic term used in addressing one's father. "O Father" "O Daddy" or "Papa". An intimate expression; cp. Mk. 14:36. A term of endearment.
God is not an alien to His children.
The term "Father" is primarily a N.T. term, frequently used by Christ to emphasize the closeness we have with God (EX: Lord's prayer - "Our Father...")
NOTE: Paul speaks in similar words and along the same line of thought in Gal. 4:6-11)*v. 6).

"The Spirit itself" [itself = Himself - He is a person not a force; a force does not speak (bear witness)]
"Beareth witness" - to testify in support of someone. To confirm.
The Holy Spirit speaks to us in conjunction with our human spirit and confirms to us that we are saved and belong to God.
The evidence is not speaking in tongues; but is that "still small voice," that says to us: "You belong to God."
"Children of God" - Greek - tekna - a different word than "son" in v. 14, used to emphasize the relationship we have with God.
V. 16
"with our spirit" - NOTE: Not to our spirit
A double testimony is given to assure us of sonship:
Both God's Spirit and our human spirit confirm to us that we belong to God. NOTE: The Holy Spirit only speaks in conjunction with the spiritual aspect of man (Not the flesh).
Housed in the believer's body (I Cor. 6:19-20) is the Holy Spirit, whose echo can be heard saying: "You are a child of God."
ILLUS: How someone doubted my salvation because I never spoke in tongues.
I do not need any man to tell me whether or not I am a Christian; I have the Spirit of God to do so.
V. 17
"If children, then heirs" = no one becomes a child of God who does not inherit what is God's (ILLUS: No good parent would keep any child out of his/her will; rather the children inherit what was the parents).
"Joint heirs" – Joint inheritors; co-heirs; fellow-heirs.

Section 21: ROMANS 8:18-25
"FUTURE ANTICIPATION"

***Believer, keep your eyes on the future, if you want to make it through the present!**

I. The CREATION anxiously awaits our future glorification (v. 19-22)
- A. An Expectant Wait (v. 19)
- B. A Long Wait (v. 20)
- C. A Worth-while Wait (v. 21)
- D. A Painful Wait (v. 22)

II. The CHRISTIAN anxiously awaits his own future glorification (v. 23-25)
- A. We wait for our complete redemption (v. 23)
- B. We wait with hope (v. 24-25)
  1. Such a hope requires eyes of faith (v. 24)
  2. Such a hope inspires patience (v. 25)

INTRODUCTION: V. 17b - 18
ILLUS: of the times we have all said: "I can't wait" -- "I can't wait till school's done"; "I can't wait till I grow up"; "I can't wait till this job's finished"; "till I get married and have children [then many say, "I can't wait till they're grown, married, and out of my house."]
We live in a world of "can't waits."
In Romans 8:18-25, we find an attitude of "I can't wait for the glory to come."

V. 17b

The certainty of being a child of God (v. 16) and joint heirs with Christ (v. 17) brings with it other certainties, namely: the certainties of present suffering and future glorification.

The phrase **"we suffer with Him"** - does not refer to Christ's redemptive sufferings which He underwent for us on the cross, but to our present sufferings for His sake.
Phil. 1:29 - "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Cp. John 15:18-21. SEE Ro. 8:35.

Always remember that His accompanying presence is with us as we suffer for Him (Heb. 13:5; cp. II Cor. 1:5; Phil. 3:10; Col. 1:24).
It is in this sense that we suffer with Christ.
Sufferings include: Opposition for righteousness sake; pain and sickness ("thorns in the flesh"); disappointment; unemployment; poverty; various frustrations, etc.

"Glorified together" - along with Christ and by virtue of our union "in Him," we will in the future be perfected.
We will one day share in Christ's inheritance, be separated from all suffering and exist in a state of bliss for eternity (Rev. 21:4)

V. 18

"This present time" – Literally: "the now season"
"Time" = a brief moment of time compared to future eternity.

The present sufferings are temporal,
The future glory is eternal
The present sufferings are periodic
The future glory is non-stop
The present suffering is light (II Cor. 4:17)
The future glory is heavy (II Cor. 4:17)

"Not worthy" = not comparable. The word "worthy" means to balance the scales.

The present suffering the believer faces will not even tip the scales when compared with the "eternal weight of glory" (II Cor. 4:17) yet ahead. Paul did some spiritual arithmetic by putting the present sufferings in one column and future glory in the other. He then added them up and found the totals to be so disproportionate that a comparison could not be made (SEE Thomas, p. 219).

"Revealed" = unveiled, uncovered.
Our wildest imaginations cannot fathom what glory is yet ahead for us to see and experience; but one day it will be revealed! *(I Cor. 2:9 - "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.")*

"Our present sufferings, be they ever so many and severe, fade into insignificance when compared with our future glory (cf. II Cor. 4:17-18). (Stitzinger Syllabus, p. 52).
HYMN - "It Will be Worth It All When We See Jesus"
We need a right prospective of this life compared with eternity.

***Believer, keep your eyes on the future, if you want to make it through the present!**

I. The CREATION anxiously awaits our future glorification (v. 19-22)

A. An Expectant Wait (v. 19)

"Creature" = that which has been created; creation (same word as in v. 22)
"Earnest expectation" = lit. to intently watch with an outstretched head (EX: People sticking their heads out of the window anticipating the parade to begin).
Creation is pictured as being anxious for what is about to take place.
"Waiteth" = to wait it out with expectancy.
Creation is wiser than most men. Natural man does not expect God to reconstruct the present world system. Creation, however, knows it is absolutely certain; it is inevitable!
"Manifestation" = revealing (unveiling) as in v. 18.
Creation, as it were, sympathizes with us. Physical nature itself longs for the transformation of its inhabitants (Compare - the idea of the land of Canaan vomiting out its wicked inhabitants - Lev. 18:25 - "the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants"; cp. the idea of the stones crying out in praise - Lk. 19:40).
"The sons of God" - glorified saints of all ages. When the saints are all in glorified bodies, the resurrection will have taken place and the Messianic Kingdom will be established. At that time Satan will be bound (Rev. 20:1-3) and the curse removed from the earth. (Isaiah 11:6-9; 35:1-8; 40:3-4; Ezek. 47:1-12)
"The revealing of the sons of God" -
I Jn. 3:1-2 - "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."
Col. 3:4 - "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory."

B. A Long Wait (v. 20)

"Vanity" = futility; an inability to reach a desired goal.
Creation had an original ability to reproduce perfectly.

--The apple trees never produced a bad apple
--The orange groves never bore dried-out oranges
--The fields of grain, corn, strawberries, etc., never needed insecticide.
--The animal realm never reproduced deformed offspring.
--Mosquitoes were not flying vampires
--Snakes, rats, and cockroaches were among man's best friends.
--Thorns did not invest the ground
--Viruses and diseases did not exist.

Earth was a utopia; a perfect paradise until sin came. Since then, the earth has been longing for liberation from the curse.

"Not willingly" = Creation (outside of man) did nothing to deserve the corruption that it was subjected to.
The earth received a curse from God as the direct result of man's sin (SEE Gen. 3:17-19).
Everything we see, hear, smell, taste, and touch has been tainted by human sin.

The present conditions on earth (like the destruction of the ozone layer, oil spills, earthquakes, etc.) all point to the fact that things are not what they once were, nor are they what they shall be.

C. A Worth-while Wait (v. 21)

"Delivered" = freed from the slavery of deterioration into the same freedom that the children of God will experience.

When such a deliverance occurs, creation will rejoice (SEE Ps. 96:11-13; 98:7-9; cp. Rev. 5:13).

The Bible speaks of the coming "times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21).

One such prophet was Isaiah, who described the hard-to-imagine utopian conditions of the coming kingdom (Is. 11:6-9; 35:1, 5-7).

D. A Painful Wait (v. 22)

"Whole creation . . . together" = all aspects of creation and all things that have been created like an harmonious choir of lamenters let out, as it were, continual groans and agonizing sounds of suffering even up to the present day.

In Romans 8, God describes 3 groans: 1) Creation groans (v. 22); 2) Believers groan (v. 23); 3) The Spirit groans (v. 26).

"Travaileth" = the suffering of birth pains.

Like a pregnant woman in agony as she delivers her child, "Mother Nature" has longed for deliverance from the various forms of undesirable corruption that she bears.

Creation feels the burden (weight) of man's sin. (Pollution, natural disasters, the curse - weeds, thorns, poison ivy, dry deserts, disease, etc.).

What the earth needs is not merely the ecological improvements of man's efforts to clean up the air, waters, and natural habitats for wildlife, etc.

Nature needs the core of the problem to be solved. The problem is Man, and the answer is God's salvation and glorification before such utopian kingdom conditions can exist.

II. The CHRISTIAN anxiously awaits his own future glorification (v. 23-25)

A. We wait for our complete redemption (v. 23)

"We ourselves" = "we" would include Paul. The word "ourselves" is repeated twice for emphasis.

"The reason we groan is because we have experienced "the first fruits of the Spirit," a foretaste of the glory to come." (Wiersbe, p. 540).

> The firstfruits involved the year's first harvest of corn, wheat, wine, oil, cattle, etc., that was given to God (Dt. 18:4; Ex. 23:16, 19; 34:22, 26; Lev. 23:10, 17, 20; Prov. 3:9).
>
> The first fruits also involved the promise of a greater harvest that would belong to the people *(Prov. 3:9-10 - "Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thing increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.").*
>
> Christ is called "the firstfruits of them that slept" (I Cor. 15:20, 23) - implying a great harvest of "the dead in Christ" to follow His resurrection.

"The firstfruits of the Spirit" = genitive of apposition (Robertson); meaning "the firstfruits which is in the Spirit."
The Holy Spirit has been given to us as the first portion, first installment, or pledge of the total future harvest which we anticipate (SEE II Cor. 1:20-22; Eph. 1:13-14).
The Holy Spirit is our "guarantee of glory."

"Groan within ourselves" - a yearning in our inmost nature for freedom from the pressures, discouragements, tensions, etc., that we face during this present life.
We groan because we desire more than salvation from sin's penalty and power, but from its presence!
A true believer is sick of the world system, he is sick of sin, sick of injustice, sick of corruption - in his own life (Rom. 7:15-20) and in others.

"Waiting" - to wait with expectancy; to wait with readiness and preparedness.

"The adoption" = the full adoption; the culmination of our adoption.
The believer has already been adopted spiritually (Rom. 8:15), but awaits the completion of the adoption - physically.
"Then we shall have complete redemption of both soul and body" (Robertson, p. 376).

"To wit" = That is; or namely

"The redemption of our body" --

"Redemption" = release, deliverance

"Body" = the flesh with its limitations and frustrations.
Phil. 3:20, 21 - "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

B. We wait with hope (v. 24-25)

1. Such a hope requires eyes of faith (v. 24)

"Saved" = delivered. The reference is to the same deliverance described in v. 18-23 - namely, the deliverance from mortality to immortality; from corruption to incorruption (I Cor. 15:51-54).

"The hope" described is something that is yet future (v. 25 - "we with patience wait for it").

This hope is the full realization of what our salvation promises us.

The difference between faith and hope:
Faith looks upward; hope looks onward
Faith accepts; hope expects
Faith believes Him who promises; Hope anticipates the things promised (SEE Thomas, p. 222)

Faith says, "I trust Him"; Hope says, "I wait for Him."
By faith, we are "looking for that blessed hope." (Titus 2:13).
Hope fulfilled is no longer hope; it is reality.
Today, "faith, hope, and love" abide (I Cor. 13:13), but one day faith and hope will be replaced by sight and reality.

2. Such a hope inspires patience (v. 25)

We can endure patiently because of our hope of deliverance from the present distressful sufferings of life.

CONCLUSION:
The prospect of our future glory is absolutely certain, for we have God's Word on it (Thomas, P. 222).
For the Christian, such a hope should bring encouragement; it should cheer us up; it should inspire us not to give up. However, such a hope only applies to those who are "sons and children of God" (v. 19, 21). Do you belong to Him? Have you been born again? (John 3) What a future awaits he child of God! As the Hymn-writer said…*"O That Will be Glory For Me."*

Section 22: ROMANS 8:26-30
"COMFORTING CERTAINTIES"

***In a "world of uncertainties," we can take comfort in the certainties of God!**
3 certainties every believer can trust:
I. The HOLY SPIRIT is PRAYING for you (v. 26-27)
II. The HEAVENLY FATHER has a PLAN for you (v. 28-34)
III. The SON OF GOD LOVES you (v. 35-39)
...and nothing can separate you from His love:

INTRODUCTION:
In verses 26-39, the entire Trinity is involved in the life of the believer. Such care should bring real comfort.
The Holy Spirit prays for us (v. 26-27); the Father plans for us (v. 28-30); and the Son of God loves us (v. 31-39).

***In a "world of uncertainties," we can take comfort in the certainties of God!**

3 certainties every believer can trust:

I. The HOLY SPIRIT is PRAYING for you (v. 26-27)

V. 26

NOTE: The various ministries that the Holy Spirit fulfills for the believer in chapter 8:
1)The Holy Spirit changes our thinking (v. 5-8)
2)The Holy Spirit permanently dwells in us (v. 9)
3)The Holy Spirit gives us life (v. 10-11)
4)The Holy Spirit conquers sin in our life (v. 12-13)
5)The Holy Spirit leads us (v. 14)
6)The Holy Spirit confirms to us that we belong to God (v. 16)
7)The Holy Spirit causes us to anticipate our future change from mortality to immortality (v. 23)
8)And now, the Holy Spirit prays for us (v. 26-27)

"Maketh intercession" = to plead or intercede on behalf of someone, to pray for them.
The word is picturesque of rescue by one who "happens on" one who is in trouble and intercedes for him (Reinecker, p. 367).
Sometimes when we pray, our thoughts and words flow so easily and clearly that we know God is hearing and will answer.
However, other times, our words do not come so smoothly. Our thoughts are somewhat jumbled and confused. Are such prayers in vain? NO! At these times, the Spirit comes to our rescue!

A. The Spirit prays when we need Him most (v. 26a)

"Likewise" = Not only does the Spirit within the believer cause the Christian to groan for his anticipated resurrection and home in glory (v. 23-25), but He also groans for us in prayer (v. 26).
"Helpeth" = to come to someone's aid and share the burden; to lend a helping hand.
The Holy Spirit is our comforter ("paraclete" - Jn. 14:16-18). who is by our side every step of the way, ready and willing to intercede on our behalf.

"Infirmities" - an "infirmary" is a medical center for sick people. The word "infirmity" literally means to be "without strength," or "weak."
"Infirmities" = singular - "infirmity" = our entire body which we desire to have replaced (v. 23) is permeated with weakness because of sin.
Sometimes what we think is best is not always best; what we think we need is not what we need; what we think the answer is, is not the answer.
Sometimes we are so discouraged and distracted that we do not know how to pray as we should.
In suffering (because of a preoccupation of our minds on suffering), the Holy Spirit intercedes for us.

B. The Spirit prays with compassionate feelings (v. 26b)

"Groanings" = shows the compassionate feelings the Holy Spirit has for us.
To think that the Holy Spirit loves us enough that He would "groan" (sigh) over us.
Not only does the Spirit intercede on our behalf, but Christ does as well (v. 34)!
"Cannot be uttered" - unable to be spoken; words that are beyond one's limited vocabulary.
The Spirit's groanings are too deep for words. Words cannot express what the Spirit says on our behalf.
Often times our real needs run deeper than words can express. It is for this reason that the Holy Spirit prays for us.
The Holy Spirit who lives within us edits our thoughts and presents them to God.

When we can't express the words, the Spirit who knows our thoughts translates them into groaning words to God.
The phrase "cannot be uttered" shows a heavenly communication, a language only known among the Trinity.
NOTE: These non-utterable groanings are **not** a reference to "speaking in **tongues**."
Two proofs:

1.The gift of tongues was not a remedy for helping one's "infirmities" (as is the subject in context). [As a matter of fact, tongues was not for the benefit of the one speaking at all, but was a sign to unbelieving Jews (I Cor. 14:21, 22) in Paul's day]

2.The groanings which come from the Spirit "cannot be uttered" (meaning cannot be spoken in a language). Tongues were in fact known languages (Acts 2:6-11).
(There exists no earthly language that can communicate the thoughts that the Spirit makes to the Father on the believer's behalf)

C. The Spirit prays with the mind (will) of God (v. 27)

Many of our requests are merely that -- our requests.
Often our prayers are not what Christ would want, but are selfish (Ja. 4:3) and out of the will of God (I Jn. 5:14).
"He that searcheth (examines) the hearts" - is God the Father, and He knows what requests are coming from our mind and what requests are coming from the mind of the Spirit.
The reason God can quickly distinguish between our wrong requests, and the Spirit's requests is because the Spirit prays only for those things that are in accordance with God's will.
Obviously the Spirit being God, will only ask for the things of God.
Whatever the Spirit wants, the Father wants, and whatever the Father wants, the Spirit wants.
We are to be "praying in the Holy Ghost" (In the power and promptings of the Holy Spirit) (Jude 20). *Ephesians 6:18 says: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit . . ."*

The Trinity is involved in our praying:
God's Method for prayer -
We are to pray to the Father (Mt. 6:8, 9) . . .
through the Son (Jn. 15:16; 16:23)
in the Spirit (Jude 20)

II. The HEAVENLY FATHER has a PLAN for you (v. 28-34)

A. His plan works everything out for good (v. 28)

1. Our confidence in God's plan ("We know")

"We know" - an intuitive knowledge; a full and complete confidence.

2. The completeness of God's plan ("all things")

"All things" - would include all types of suffering (remember suffering is in view in context - v. 17, 18).
[Tragedies, natural disasters, physical impairments, etc.]
We may not be able to see how it will turn out for good because we are only looking at one piece of the puzzle. But God has an overall "purpose" (v.28b).

3. The harmony of God's plan ("work together")

"Work together" - Each event, circumstance, or person that God puts into our life will blend together and produce a good outcome.

4. The faithfulness of God's plan ("for good")

"For good" = not merely good in the present life (v. 29), but ultimately in the life to come (v. 30).
Our life many times may seem like it is going in circles, but like a winding staircase, "each step is higher than the preceding one, and it is still upward!" (Thomas, p. 225).

If you are walking with God and in His will, everything (even "suffering" - cp. Ro. 8:17, 18) will turn out for good in the end.

EX: Joseph: "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meat it unto good" (Gen. 50:20).

God said: People like Daniel and Nehemiah were carried away captive *"into the land of the Chaldeans for their good. For I will set Mine eyes upon them for good. . ."* (Jer. 24:5, 6).

5. The restriction of God's plan ("to them...")

This promise can only be claimed by a certain group of people. It only applies to a specific people. This promise is not for everyone!

Who is this promise for?

1) "To them that love God"

2) "To them who are the called..."

These two phases describe a genuine believer from two angles:

--From man's vantage point - We will love God.

The phrase: **"To them that love God"** is emphatic in Greek, being first in the sentence. "Loving God" is an evidence of real salvation.

"...For love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (I Jn. 4:7).

"...God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him" (I Jn. 4:16).

"we love Him, because He first loved us" (I Jn. 4:19).

I Cor. 16:22 - "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha"

1Peter 1:8 "Whom having not seen, ye love"

--From God's vantage point - He called (invited) us.

"The called" are: Those whom God invited to salvation (Ro. 1:6, 7) by means of the Gospel (II Th. 2:14) and those who accepted His invitation (Mt. 22:14).

"Purpose" - basically refers to God's plan. The word literally means: "To place before" or to "set a course in advance."

Life is not haphazard chance, nor fate for the child of God. Rather, our lives follow the course that has been established by God.

B. His plan leads us to Christ-likeness (v. 29)

"For" - the word "for" expands upon the fact that God works all things out for good in fulfilling His purpose (plan).

To **"foreknow"** means to know in advance or beforehand (cp. I Pet. 1:2)

What did God foreknow?

1) He knew He would call (invite) you to salvation

2) He knew you would accept His invitation.

Though God knows all men, He knows those who are related to Him in a special sense (I Cor. 8:3).

He has an intimate relational knowledge for His own (Gal. 4:9; Jn. 10:20; II Tim. 2:19) in contrast to unbelievers (Mt. 7:23).

"Predestined" = to determine in advance. To mark out with a boundary beforehand.

Predestination in this verse refers not to salvation but sanctification.

Our being "conformed to the image of His Son" has ultimate reference to our future bodily resurrection.

I Cor. 15:49 - "And as we have borne the image of the earth, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

"We know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope (Rom. 8:24) in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." (I Jn. 3:2, 3).

Our lives are to be formed into Christ-likeness.

This is God's plan for our lives here and now, not merely in the future.

When we were saved, we became God's "workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).

Being a "Christian" means a "Christ-like-one" or a "follower of Christ" (Acts 11:26, 26:28; I Pet. 4:16).

**You will be like whom you follow.

God does not want His children to be conformed (put into the mold of) to this world (Rom. 12:1, 2), but to His Son. You were not saved to be conformed to the image of some movie star, rock musician, sports figure, millionaire, or other celebrity! Rather, you were saved to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ!

"First born" - a title of honor, authority, and pre-eminence, not a reference to origin (Col. 1:15; cp. Ps. 89:27).

For example, Jesus is called the "first born of the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence." (Col. 1:18).

Ultimate perfection is found in Jesus Christ! (Hutz, BJU - Romans, p. 52).

To stoop to conform your life to anyone else is to choose far less than the best!

C. His plan guarantees us future glory (v. 30 - 34)

Note the sequence of God's plan:

1)	Foreknowledge	The mind of God	(His will)
2)	Predestination	" " "	" "
3)	Calling (inviting)	The mouth of God	(His word)
4)	Justification	The forgiveness of God	(His way to righteousness)
5)	Glorification	The resurrection of God	(His wardrobe)

God predetermined that we would be like Christ even before He "called" (invited) us to come to Christ.

No one is justified unless they are first called (invited); and no one is glorified unless they are first justified.

V. 30

NOTE: Paul has been building up to this word - "glorified." The concept of "glory" has been a theme in the preceding context (cp. v. 17, 18, 21, 30).

NOTE: **"Glorified"** - past (aorist) tense. God, who sees the end from the beginning, can view the believer as already glorified. It is so certain that God states it in the past tense.

God says: "New things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them" (Is. 42:9).

God is able to declare "the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done" (Is. 46:10) (cp. Is. 41:4, 48:5).

Such a truth should bring comfort!

V. 31

"What shall we then say" = what should be our response? ANSWER: Security.

"These things" - the comforting facts concerning the Spirit's prayers (v. 26-27), and the Father's plan (v. 28-30) for His children.

Paul answers a question with a question (actually 6 questions - v. 31b-35).

"If God be for us" = on our behalf.

In the conflicts of life (v. 17-18), God is on our side. God is working everything out in our favor.

"Who can be against us?" [cp. suffering in previous context (v. 17, 18, 26, 28)]. The obvious answer is No one! "God and I make a majority!"

If God loves me enough to intercede for me (v. 26-27), work all things out for my ultimate good (v. 28); if God predestined me, invited (called me), justified me, and considers me already glorified (v. 30), then who could oppose me and win? No one!

v. 32

Paul argues from the greater to the lesser (cp. 5:10). In other words, if God did not hold back ("spare") His Son (the greatest gift -- II Cor. 9:15 -- His most infinite treasure), how could He hold back the mere gifts that come "with" the Son?

In other words, what is a greater sacrifice: God's "delivering" (handing over) His Son to be crucified, or God delivering the benefits that Christ's crucifixion provided?

Obviously, the greatest sacrifice is God delivering His Son.

The point is: If God would go to such great lengths as to give His Son, don't you think that He can much more easily give the things that His Son died to provide? Definitely yes! What security! What a guarantee! What a comfort!

NOTE: The free gifts (including future glory - v. 30) only come to us together "with Him" (Christ). Apart from Christ, God has nothing of eternal value to offer!

V. 33

"Who shall lay anything to the charge…?" = lit. Who will "call in and make a legal accusation against" God's elect?

Who can accuse us of being unworthy of "glory" (v. 30) when God has justified us?

Satan would like to accuse us (Zech. 3:1-7; Rev. 12:10) (Wiersbe, p. 541).

"Elect" = chosen; picked out based on the foreknowledge of God" (I Pet. 1:2).

"It is God that justifieth" = lit. "God is the One justifying" He alone has the authority to declare one to be righteous!

V. 34

"Who is he that condemneth?" = who is the one bringing judgment against you?

Whoever would has no right to! Why? Because Christ took our judgment (condemnation) upon Himself when He died!

Christ (1)Died
(2)Arose
(3)Ascended
(4)And now intercedes.

Christ's death paid for my pardon (Rom. 4:25a).

Christ's resurrection applied my pardon (Rom. 4:25b).

Christ's ascension guaranteed my pardon. ("right hand" = place of power and authority)

Christ's intercession pleads my pardon.

(SEE: I Jn. 1:1-2 - Christ is our advocate (our defense attorney) who pleads our case before the Father. It is a comfort to know that God the Son [v. 34] as well as God the Holy Spirit, intercedes for us [v. 26])

V. 35

"Separate" - to part or remove us away from. Nothing can remove us away from God's love toward us. Often other things or other people come in between one person's love for another.

A common phrase in marriages today: "I don't love him/her anymore." Praise God, Christ's love never ends! (real love never does!).

III. The SON OF GOD LOVES you (v. 35-39)

. . . and nothing can separate you from His love:

v. 35

Things can come in between us and our love for God (such as "worldliness" - I Jn. 2:15), but nothing can come in between us and His love for us.

"Us" is emphatic in the Greek. Lit. "Who us will separate from the love of Christ?" (cp. v. 39).

"Love" (agapa) - a supernatural love that is exclusive to God.

Such love is unconditional (Rom. 5:8).

The following list of difficulties is given because although God loves us, it is important to note that His love does not necessarily shelter us from the difficulties of life.

On the contrary, we need them for spiritual growth (Rom. 5:3-5). In fact, they are working for us , not against us (cp. Wiersbe, p. 542).

. . . Nothing can separate us from His love:

A. Trials cannot! (v. 35a) ***("tribulation...distress...persecution)***

"Tribulation" = pressures of life; afflictions

"Distress" = torturing confinement (cp. Ro. 2:9); a feeling of being trapped in a tight seemingly inescapable situation.

"Persecution" = to hunt. Persecution is proof that someone does not love us -- that someone is Satan, not God!

There is a tendency to doubt God's wondrous love when trials come our way.

Yet God's love has not diminished at all (EX: the trials of Job, Joseph, David, Daniel, Paul).

B. <u>Tragedy</u> cannot! (v. 35b) ***(famine...nakedness)***

"Famine" (Hunger) = a lack of <u>food</u>

"Nakedness" = a lack of <u>clothing</u>

C. <u>Opposition</u> cannot (v. 35b - 37) ***(peril...sword)***

"Peril" = danger

"Sword" = a slaughter weapon, implying martyrdoms (cp. v. 36).

V. 36

No doubt every day, someone around the world dies for his faith (for the sake of Jesus Christ).

In the Tribulation, for example, the world will consider Christians as being nothing more than "lit. sheep of slaughter."

V. 37

"More than conquerors" = super victorious ones; over-conquering ones. We are over and above a mere conqueror. We are "conquerors to the max!"

"Through Him (Christ) that loves us" = We are <u>not</u> conquerors independently. We only can be considered conquerors by means of Jesus. He made me a conqueror; I did not make myself one.

D. <u>Death</u> cannot (v. 36 - 38) ***("Sword...death")***

In verses 38 and 39, Paul gives a list of <u>contrasts</u> (EX: "Death nor life" . . . "Height nor depth") to reveal how Christ's love spans the widest of extremes.

v. 38

"I am persuaded" - perfect tense; implying: "I have been persuaded in the past and nothing has changed my mine up to the present."

Christ's changeless love was a <u>certainty</u> to Paul!

"Death" = when people die, it is human nature to forget them eventually. However, God never forgets His own!

E. <u>Spirit</u> <u>powers</u> cannot! (v. 38b) ***("Angels...principalities...powers)***

"Angels" = can be good or evil (fallen spirit beings).

Evidently evil angels are being described.

Neither the most powerful demon of hell, nor Satan Himself, can block or sever Christ's love from His own!!

"Principalities" = rulers

"Powers" = potentates - no power can out-power God's love from reaching His own.

F. <u>Time</u> cannot! (v. 38c) ***("things present...things to come")***

"Things present" = the way things stand at present, here and now.

"Things to come" = the future Tribulation; life hereafter.

God's love doe snot fade or change with time.

G. <u>Distance</u> cannot (v. 39a) ***("Height nor depth")***

Psalm 139:7-10

H. <u>The whole universe</u> cannot! (v. 39b) ***("any other creature" [thing in creation])***

Nothing in creation is able (lit. powerful enough) to separate us from the agape love of God!

CONCLUSION:

During times of trouble, Satan will tempt you to question God's love for you. He might say: "How could a God of love allow this to happen to you?" Or, "God loves others, but not you; look at what He thinks of you!"
v. 39
No circumstance whatsoever can divide His love from us!
Why is it that nothing can separate us from God's love? Answer: Nothing will ever separate God's love from His Son, and we are "in Christ."
We are beloved because we are "in the beloved." (Eph. 1:6).

Important note: God's love is only found in one place - **"In Christ Jesus."**
The sole source and wellspring of God's love is Christ! To be outside of Christ is to be outside of the love of God. Just as God offers no grace outside of Christ (Eph. 2:7) and no blessings outside of Christ (Eph. 1:3), God offers no love for you to be a recipient of ("partakers of") outside of Christ!
God's demonstration of love is the giving of His Son (Jn. 3:16). To reject God's Son is to reject God's love!

This great chapter in God's Word began with "no condemnation" and now ends with no separation!
Not only is Christ the entrance into God's love, but He is the endlessness of God's love.

The Christ who granted salvation guarantees it! The one who provided our relationship to God also protects our relationship to God!
Our salvation is certain because the love that brought such salvation to us never ceases. He loves us and will love us forever! What a comforting certainty!

"What shall we then say?" (v. 31)
Herein lies the personal application. Ask yourself: "Is this my experience? Is this the Christianity of my life?" (Thomas, p. 223). Is this the blessed assurance that I have? If not, why not?

Section 23: ROMANS 9:1-5
"A BURDENED HEART"

We need a burdened heart for the souls of men!** ***(like Paul had!)

- **I. Paul had a SINCERE burden for his people (v. 1).**
- **II. Paul had a GREAT burden for his people (v. 2a).**
- **III. Paul had an UNCEASING burden for his people (v. 2b).**
- **IV. Paul had a COMPASSIONATE burden for his people (v. 3-5).**

INTRODUCTION:
The contrast between the end of chapter 8 and the beginning of chapter 9 is astounding.
After triumphantly exclaiming the blessing of being partakers of the inseparable love of Christ, Paul now abruptly laments over those who are not partakers of such love.
He goes from rejoicing to lamenting. From being exhilarated to being full of sorrow.
Why? Because he knew that what he had others did not have. He felt sorry for them.
ILLUS: Although dwelling on our wonderful, amazing, indescribable salvation causes our hearts to rejoice, it also causes us to think about those we love who don't have it. This is a natural response.

"It is moments when our joy in Christ is brightest. . . that this sadness comes to us with greatest bitterness." (Beet, cited by Thomas, p. 248).

When Paul turned to Christ, many viewed him as a traitor to his people Israel (Acts 21:33, 22:22, 25:24).

Even though Paul previously (chapters 3-8) disproved the notion that salvation came through the Jewish Law, that does not mean that Paul did not love the Jewish people. Indeed, he had a great love for them.

When we realize what we have in Christ (Romans 8:28-39) and consider the lot of those who don't have Christ (9:1-5), we should have burdened hearts.

***We need a burdened heart for the souls of men! (like Paul had!)**

I. Paul had a <u>SINCERE</u> burden for his people (v. 1).

"I lie not" - Paul is saying, "I am not being false when I tell you about my burden."

Paul did not fake tears. He did not tell others he had a burden, if indeed he did not.

Paul's conscience and will both agreed together. They were literally "witnessing together" - convincing Paul that his burden was no mere fleeting, superficial, fake burden, but that it was real!

Note: the phrases "in Christ . . . in the Holy Ghost."

Two persons of the Godhead are appealed to in order to substantiate (prove) Paul's testimony of his burden.

Paul was one with stern convictions, yet he had a tender heart (II Cor. 2:4).

He served Christ with "all humility of mind, and with many tears" (Acts 20:19); and he said to the Ephesian elders: "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." (Acts 20:31).

How do you know when someone's burden is real? ANSWER: They do something about it! Their burden moves them to <u>action</u>!

Someone who says, "I have a burden for souls," but never witnesses, never hands out tracts, etc., is a liar!

II. Paul had a <u>GREAT</u> burden for his people (v. 2a).

"Great heaviness" = a great grief, or sorrow that weighs upon Paul (hence, we use the term "burden").

Like Paul, Jeremiah (Jer. 9:1), and Jesus Christ (Mt. 23:27; cp. Jn. 11:35, Lk. 19:41) wept over the souls of men.

> *--Jeremiah, knowing the judgment to soon fall upon his people, cried out: "Oh that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" (Jer. 9:1)*
>
> *--The Lord Jesus, knowing that Israel had rejected Him as being her Messiah, cried out: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Mt. 23:37).*

SEE Luke 19:41-44.

Having a "<u>great</u>" burden will motivate one to go to "great" lengths to see someone saved!

A great burden will propel one to:

a. continual fervent prayer
b. traveling many miles to give the Gospel
c. be willing to witness anytime, anywhere, and to anyone.

III. Paul had an <u>UNCEASING</u> burden for his people (v. 2b).

"Continual sorrow" = <u>unceasing</u> pain.

Paul never became cold to the need of his own people.

Apathy for souls did not get a foothold in Paul's life.

As Paul writes to Rome, he has already faced much opposition and persecutions from his people (the Jews) on his first and second missionary journeys, yet that did not quench his concern for Israel.

I fear the Adversary is making God's people insensitive to the need of men.
I fear that we are being distracted from what really matters!
I fear that we have lost sight of the eternal torment that awaits all who die without Christ!
I fear that our love is about to "wax cold!"
Paul's sorrow is said to be "in [his] heart" (the word Heart refers to both the rational and emotional make-up of man.
Both thinking (Mt. 9:4, 13:15; Heb. 4:12) and feeling (Lk. 24:32; Acts 21;13) flow from the heart.
When Paul woke up, he thought about the lost condition of his people. When Paul traveled, he could not stop thinking about souls. When he went to sleep at night, he was burdened with the need of the lost.
The only time our tears for souls should cease flowing is when we get to heaven. Only then will we have no more "sorrow...crying...or pain" (Rev. 21:4).

IV. Paul had a COMPASSIONATE burden for his people (v. 3-5).

A. Paul's compassion made him willing to make any sacrifice (v. 3).

"For I could wish. . ." = imperfect tense, meaning: "In the past and up to the present, I have reached the point of wishing that [if it were possible, which it is not], I myself might be accursed away from Christ on behalf of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh."
"Accursed" = lit. "Anathema" - devoted to destruction; damned to eternal ruin; cut off from eternal life, and placed under divine wrath.
Paul is saying: "If I could die and go into the eternal Lake of Fire (Rev.20:14-15; 21:8) so that my people (Israel) might take my placed and go to heaven with Christ - I would be willing to do it."
What love! "What a man this Paul was! He was willing to stay out of heaven for the sake of the saved (Phil.1:22-24), and willing to go to Hell for the sake of the unsaved" (Wiersbe, p. 543).
Moses had the same sacrificial compassion for Israel (Ex. 32:31-33).
"My brethren, my kinsmen" (relatives)
Other than the fact that God wanted Israel to get the first chance at hearing the message of salvation in Christ (Acts 3:26; Ro. 2:10), one reason Paul often described God's salvation as being "to the Jew first" (Ro. 1:16) and the reason why he brought the Gospel to the Jews first (Acts 13:5, 46; 18:6) was because he was one of them! They were his people!
"According to the flesh" - Paul realized that his relationship with his people (Israel) was only physical (not spiritual). Christ, like Paul, viewed His relatives (those in a vital relationship with Him) as being not his flesh and blood family, but His spiritual family (Mt. 12:46-50).

B. Paul's compassion was stirred up when he saw what others had and yet did not have (v. 4-5).

Verses 4 & 5 are ironic. It is hard to imagine how a nation which had so many privileges could miss out on the salvation of God.
Notice 8 privileges Israel had:

1. **Israel had the privilege of "adoption"** - out of all nations on earth, God adopted this nation as his "son."
   Moses said to Pharaoh, "Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn" ("firstborn" - a position of pre-eminence - cp. Col. 1:18) (Ex. 4:22).
   God said through the prophet Hosea, "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." (Hos. 11:1; cp. Mt. 2:15).
2. **Israel had the privilege of seeing God's glory** - the Shekinah glory (a manifestation of God's presence) appeared to the Israelites on numerous occasions (Ex. 16:7, 10, 24:17, 40:34; Num. 16:19, 20:6) and filled their Temple (II Chron. 7:1-3).
3. **Israel had the privilege of the "Covenants"** (God's binding agreements were with the Jews - Eph. 2:12).
   a. They were recipients of the Abrahamic Covenant (which promised them a land, a seed, and a blessing - Gen. 12:1-2; 15:1ff)
   b. They were recipients of the Mosaic Covenant (which promised them blessings

and life if they obeyed God's commands - Deut. 28-30 *30:19).

c. They were recipients of the Davidic Covenant (which promised a King to sit on David's throne forever - II Sam. 7:12, 22:51).

d. And they were promised the New Covenant (which would provide them with God's Spirit and a new heart. A covenant that we partake of today, and one that will in the future have literal fulfillment to Israel as spoken of in Jer. 31.)

4. Israel had the privilege of having the "Law."
[A guideline for morality, worship and service (Deut. 4:13), and a standard that showed man his crooked, law-breaking nature, which would reveal to man his need for the grace of God (Rom. 3:20, 4:15)]
No other nation had as righteous a law as Israel did.

5. Israel had the privilege of being a part of God-honoring religious "service" (or Temple worship).
A worship and service which was a foreshadowing of What Christ would accomplish. What an honor it was to know how to serve God, when the surrounding nations did not have such guidance.

6. Israel had the privilege of having God's "promises" (thousands of promises of blessings).

7. Israel had the privilege of having such great ancestors ("fathers" - patriarchs) like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekial, Elijah, Daniel, etc.

8. Most importantly, Israel had the privilege of being the vehicle through which Christ came! Christ the Messiah was a Jew in regard to His human nature. Note the phrase: **"as concerning the flesh"** is significant. It proves that Christ received only a human nature from Israel. His divine nature is eternal. He did not receive His deity from Israel, only His humanity. [SEE Romans 1:3]
The only thing Jesus received from the Virgin Mary was His "flesh." A body that would house His deity (Col. 2:9).
What an honor! What a privilege to be the nation through which God would enter the world!

This is Paul's point in tying in Christ's deity by the phrase: **"Who is over all, God, blessed forever"** Or more literally: Christ. . . "the one being God over all [to be] praised unto the ages, Amen (truly)."
Christ is God very God, as the Scriptures clearly indicate: Mt. 1:23; Jn. 1:1, I Jn. 5:20; Rev. 21:7; Jn. 20:27-29, 5:18, 10:30; 14:9; Heb. 1:3, 8; Acts 20:28; Phil. 2:6; Col. 1:15, 2:9; I Tim. 3:16; Titus 2:13).

The Jews had a privilege that no other nation had!
Yet, the divine Christ came to His own (the Jewish nation) and His own did not receive Him (Jn. 1:11).
This is why Paul weeps with tears of sorrow!

To understand the irony of verses 4 & 5, picture this:
Picture someone who owns a Bible; more than that, one who is so wealthy that he gives away Bibles by the millions to those who are hungry for the Word. This man not only has the Scripture, but he knows much of the Scripture, and he tells others about the true God. Many have come to receive God's salvation because of this man. Not only that, but he faithfully serves in his church and meticulously can be counted on for his attendance at worship services. Largely due to this man's influence, he had five sons who all turned out to be outstanding Christians who lived exemplary lives. One of these sons turned out to be a renowned preacher of the Word who had the greatest impact upon the world that any man ever had. This man, (the father) however, though he knew the Word, shared it with others, served faithfully, and fathered exceptional

sons, finally dies and goes to hell! Why? Because though he had the form of religion, he did not have the substance. He had not Christ.

Paul, no doubt recalling his lost condition as a Pharisee, puts himself in the sandals of his people and with tears rolling down his cheeks, he sorrows over the fact that his people had so much; they were blessed so highly, yet they missed the whole point of it all. They never realized the purpose of it all, they never saw the fulfillment of it all, as Paul had seen.

CONCLUSION: Do you care for the souls of men?

"We don't reap because we don't weep."

Ps. 126:6 - "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bring his sheaves with him." Out of the multitudes who call upon God for the salvation of their loved ones, friends, relatives, and neighbors, God knows a burdened heart!

The fervent prayer avails much (James. 5:16).

One time a life guard was asked this question: "How can you tell when anyone is in need of help if thousands of swimmers on the beach or in the water are all combining their voices in a veritable hubbub of noise?" He replied, "No matter how great the sound of confusion may be, there has never been a time when I couldn't distinguish a cry of distress above them all."

God responds to a burdened heart.

What causes one to become cold? What is it that robs our compassion?

1. Lovelessness (no love) - no concern for anyone other than self - "lovers of self" - No love to bear one another's burdens.
2. Faithlessness (no faith) - no belief in God's Word (Ex: regarding Judgment Day)

SEE Jude 20-23. Faith and love are needed for one to have compassion that will make a difference in the life of one who is not sure what to believe.

Pastor Doug Lowery in a hymn entitled "Burning Hearts" said: *"Many hearts today are very hard and cold, And millions of Jesus have never been told. Oh, how could our hearts be so unbroken and cold! Dear Lord, give us burning hearts. Burning hearts are what we need today; burning hearts for those who've gone astray. Compassion, tears, for these we need to pray. Dear Lord, give us burning hearts!"*

Section 24: ROMANS 9:6-33
"GOD'S SOVEREIGN SALVATION"

***God chooses whom He will save!**

I. If God does not choose everyone (all in Israel) to be saved:
Has God FAILED? (v. 6-13) Answer: NO

A. God's choosing was never based on physical descent (v. 6-9)
B. God's choosing was never based on personal merit (v. 10-13)

II. If God does not choose everyone (all in Israel) to be saved:
Is God FAIR? (V. 14-33) Answer: YES

A. God is fair in showing mercy to whomever He chooses (v. 15-18)
B. God is fair in molding vessels for His own glory (v. 19-23)
C. God is fair in redeeming a remnant as He promised by His prophets (v. 24-29)
D. God is fair in rejecting a people who attempt to be saved by their works (v. 30-33)

INTRODUCTION:

Romans 9 is often called "the most overlooked chapter in the Bible."

Because of its complexities and controversial content, many ignore it.

Peter said that some of Paul's writings were "hard to be understood" (II Pet. 3:16). This chapter is certainly among the more difficult.

The heresy of "universalism" teaches that all men will be saved.
The Bible, on the other hand, teaches that a minority will be saved, and that the majority will walk the wide road which leads to destruction (Mt. 7).

After describing the eternal blessings of our salvation in Christ (8:28-39), and lamenting over the fact that His own people (as a nation) are missing out on God's salvation (9:1-5), Paul now answers the question: Why?
Why cannot God save His own people Israel as a nation?
If this (Paul's) message is true, why did the Jews reject it?

The main thrust of Romans 9 (as a whole) does not describe personal election, but national election (God's choosing of Israel).
NOTE: However, the illustrations and applications given by Paul in this chapter do support the doctrine of personal election.

***God chooses whom He will save!**
A statement like this one prompts two immediate questions which we will seek to answer:

If God does not save everyone (particularly of Israel) -
1) Has He failed? & 2) Is He fair?

I. If God does not choose everyone (all in Israel) to be saved: Has God FAILED? (v. 6-13)

(Answer: No! Because God never promised He would save all who are physically related to Abraham.)
[The Illustration of God's Sovereignty]

A. God's choosing was never based on physical descent (v. 6-9)

(Salvation has nothing to do with whom you are related to)

V. 6

Did not God make promises to the nation (v. 4)? Did not He adopt them (v. 4)?
Has God's Word failed? (become of **"none effect"**)
Literally: "Has God's Word fallen down from its exalted place and become of no enduring effect" (perfect tense)
Has God's Word, like a ship blown by the winds of circumstance, gone off its course?
God's answer is "No." For the simple reason that God never promised to save the entire nation from their sin.
Just because the nation of Israel in the Old Testament are called the *"people of God"* did not mean that they all knew God or that they were "saved" in the spiritual sense of the term.
As a whole, the nation belonged to God, but not all of the people of the nation did.
Just because someone can trace his genealogy back to Israel does not make him a true Israelite.
To be a true Israelite, you had to be one both physically & spiritually; Both in relationship to Abraham via Isaac, and in relationship to God via Christ. (Not merely a "circumcision of the flesh" but a "circumcision of the heart" made one a true "Jew" (Rom. 2:28-29).

V. 7

God never said that all those who physically proceeded from Abraham would be redeemed.
Abraham had two prominent sons - Ishmael and Isaac.

God in His sovereignty chose **Isaac** (Gen. 21:12).
Isaac was to be the "*only begotten*" (unique) son of Abraham (Heb. 11:18).
The blessings would flow through Isaac.
The Pharisees one day boasted to Jesus: *"Abraham is our father"*; to which Jesus replied: *"If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham"* (Jn. 8:39; cp. v. 44).
(Cp. Romans 2:25-29)

V. 8

One does not become a child of God simply because he is born into a particular family or race (Compare John 1:13).

V. 9

"At this time will I come" - It was Christ preincarnate as "the Messenger of YAHWEH" who made this statement (cp. Gen. 18:1, 10; with Jn. 8:56).

V. 7-9

"It is not what we get from our fathers and mothers that ensures our place in the family of God" (Denney cited by Thomas, p. 253).
The main point of vv. 6-9 is: Even when God was forming the nation, He was selective, so why would God be viewed as inconsistent for being selective at present (in Paul's day)?
In other words: Israel's unbelief does not contradict God's character or Word.
God is in no way inconsistent with His promises and prophecies. He has always been selective.

B. God's choosing was never based on personal merit (v. 10-13)

(Salvation has nothing to do with what you do)

V. 10-13

God's choosing of Jacob over Esau is even stronger proof of divine election than that of Isaac over Ishmael because Jacob and Esau were both legitimate children (Ishmael was not); they were twin brothers of the same mother; Isaac and Ishmael were from different mothers (SEE Thomas, p. 251).

V. 13

"Esau have I hated" - Hatred does not mean "antagonism against" as it does today. Nor does it mean to have animosity towards someone. It simply refers to someone who is not preferred above someone else. It means to show a degree of neglect (Proverbs 13:24) It is also a comparative term which means to "love less" (to love someone less than someone else).
(Cp. Lk. 14:26; Mt. 6:24 - where Jesus taught that to be His disciple, one had to "hate" even family. "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" - Lk. 14:26)
The words: "love" and "hate" in this context are not a matter of "personal feeling, but a deliberate decision in favor of one rather than the other" (Thomas, p. 252).
God chose to give the blessing (birthright) to Jacob (this is agape love); He chose not to give it to Esau (this is all that is meant by the word "hate").

II. If God does not choose everyone (all in Israel) to be saved: Is God FAIR? (V. 14-33)

(Answer: Yes! Because of four reasons.)
[The Vindication of God's Sovereignty]

V. 14

Is God unrighteous for showing favoritism on Jacob (who did nothing good) over Esau (who did nothing evil – v.11)?
Is God unfair? unjust? wrong?
"God forbid" = May it never be!

A. God is fair in showing mercy to whomever He chooses (v. 15-18)

(God's will shows His righteous sovereignty)

V. 15

It is God's character to be merciful and compassionate, but God is not obligated to be such to everyone. Especially since no one deserves it.

"Mercy" = the withholding of deserved punishment (to not give someone what he deserves).

No one deserves mercy. If it could be deserved, it would not be mercy.

God would be unrighteous if we deserved mercy and He did not give it to us. But the facts are that no one deserves mercy.

The very word "mercy" shows that the object of such mercy stands guilty and has not earned it.

ILLUS: Napoleon and the mother who begged mercy for her guilty son - Green #873.

ILLUS: If I have a dollar bill and choose to give it to one person instead of another person, is there unrighteousness in me? No. I am free to give it to whomever I choose.

ILLUSTRATION: "THE COAT FACTORY"… Picture in your mind:

--Someone who owns a leather coat manufacturing company in NYC.

--Outside his company are 100 homeless vandals who each had a part in breaking his windows, "graffiti-ing" his building, and cursing him as he left the factory each day.

--Despite what they did to him and his company property, the owner ironically displays up in front of his building a large sign which says: "FREE COAT - Just ring the bell and ask for it."

Everyone who walks by sees the sign but -

--Some couldn't read it, so they never came.

--Others were too proud to ask for a coat, so they never came.

--Others heard many lies and bad things about the coat company which turned them off.

--Some frankly didn't feel they needed a coat.

Since no one came, the compassionate owner went one step further. He went out into the streets and selected 10 unworthy and uninterested homeless vandals and took them by the hand one by one and led them to the coat company. He then gave them each a brand new coat.

--Is the owner unfair (unjust) because he didn't also give a coat to the 90 other homeless vandals? NO! Why? Because he was under no obligation to give them all one! Actually, no one deserved one! But because of his grace and mercy, he of his own will chose out 10.

V. 16

"Willeth" = Man's desire . . . "runneth" = man's efforts.

Our reception of God's mercy and compassion had nothing to do with our desiring it or working for it; but it simply comes to us because of God's arbitrary choice to give it to us.

"Willeth...runneth" - Both words point to human efforts and "human striving and may reflect the symbol of an athletic contest" (Reinecker, citing Mitchel, p. 369).

God did not merely choose you because He knew you would choose Him, but in fact He had to choose you because He knew you wouldn't choose Him!

"There is none that seeketh after God" (Ro. 3:11) This means: There is no one who independently seeks after God (God must draw a sinner to Himself or that sinner will never come to God – John 6:44)

Ps. 14:3 - "They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

V. 17

"I raised thee up" - God, as it were, calls up the actors onto the stage of history (Reinecker, p. 369).

Pharaoh was not hardened for the mere sake of hardening, but that God would be glorified through it.

Pharaoh's hard heart allowed God to unleash all ten plagues on Egypt, and thus bring Israel out "with a high hand."

The plagues which should have had a softening effect on Pharaoh's heart actually hardened it.

"The same sunlight that melts the ice also hardens the clay."

V. 18

God showed mercy on Moses and Israel, but hardened Pharaoh.

Question: When God hardened Pharaoh, did He harden a heart that was previous soft? No!

[Actually, no man's heart is soft toward God (Rom. 3) unless God chooses to make it soft.]

When God hardened Pharaoh's heart, He was actually keeping hard that which was already hard. He hardened his heart after Pharaoh himself hardened it [Pharaoh hardened his own heart (Ex. 8:15, 32; 9:34, 35); then God hardened it (Ex. 9:12, 10:1, 11:10). The hardening was only temporary (Ex. 9:16).]

If God can harden a hard-hearted Pharaoh (to which all Jews would have said "Amen"), cannot He also harden a hard-hearted nation? (SEE: Mt. 13:13-15; cp. Is. 6:10).

B. God is fair in molding vessels for His own glory (v. 19-23)

(God's workmanship shows His righteous sovereignty)

V. 19

The question is: Why does God blame me? (How can He condemn me?) . . . For who has ever stood against (and stopped) what He determined to be done (who ever thwarted God's purpose or intention?).

In other words, if we are nothing but puppets, if we are nothing but victims of divine choice, how could God condemn us?

V. 20

If v. 19 were a false assumption, Paul would have corrected it in v. 20, but he does not. Rather, he appeals to silence (MacArthur, tape).

"Repliest" = to "answer back"; to "talk back" in a reciprocal manner.

Paul is saying: "Who are you (you mere mortal) to talk back to God and question what He chooses to do?"

It is absurd to think that man could question God's integrity. Paul is saying: "How could you, O man with your small, puny, microscopic, pea brain; with your thimble-full of information; with your limited ability to know and your great ability to forget. . . How could you make God answerable to you? You don't have all the facts, and yet you would question God? (MacArthur, tape)

God is the potter. Is. 64:8 - *"But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand."*

"Shall the thing molded say to the molder, 'Why did you make me this way?'"

This question is especially inappropriate when you consider the poor condition of the lump of clay before the potter even began to work on it.

V. 21

"The same lump" - depicting the same lump of depraved, sinful humanity.

"A potter can make of the same clay either a beautiful dish or a trash barrel" (John MacArthur, tape from Grace to You, CA)

God is not claiming the right to create damnable creatures in order to damn them, but He is claiming His right to deal with creatures who are sinful already as He wills.

He does not make men sinners (James 1), but He chooses the disposition of men who are sinners already (MacArthur tape)

The Bible does not teach that God creates occupants for Hell. Hell was not made for man, nor man for Hell.

Rather, the Bible teaches that "everlasting fire was prepared for the Devil and his Angels" (Mt. 25:41).

V. 22

God does not choose to make a person a candidate for hellfire, but He does have the prerogative to keep them that way.

By using the word **"formed"** (v. 20) rather than **"created,"** Paul shows that he is not referring to original creation, but to spiritual destination. God is regarded as taking men as He finds them

(in their present condition), just as the potter does not create the clay, but uses it (Thomas, p. 260).

"Fitted to destruction" = either a middle or passive participle. If it is passive, Paul is teaching that God is the one fitting (preparing) the vessels for destruction. If it is middle, the clay itself fits itself for destruction by hardening itself against the potter.

(SEE Jer. 18:1-8, which in verse 8 indicates that the condition of the clay will determine the outcome of the vessel)

The phrase "fitted to destruction" is best understood in the middle voice: meaning the vessels made themselves fitted unto destruction.

Proof:

1) God is seen as **"enduring"** (bearing with) such vessels with patience [in hopes of repentance, but knowing there will be none. Hence, "vessels of wrath"].

2) NOTE: The intended contrast of phrases grammatically: "Fitted for destruction" (middle voice) - "Prepared unto glory" (v. 23 - active voice)

[If God intended the fitting" to be done by Him, why did He not use the active voice, which would have been the most grammatically balanced way to demonstrate such a point?]

Question: Why did God allow sin in the world?

1. **So that He could show His wrath.**
   God's holy wrath is as much a part of His nature as is His love, mercy, and grace.
   The entrance of sin in the world was necessary so that God could manifest His wrath, judgment, holy anger, and justice.
   God's wrath is one aspect of His nature that would go forever unseen if he had never allowed sin to enter the world.
2. **So that He could show His power.**
   a. God's power is seen in His ability to judge sin (cp. Revelation judgments)
   b. God's power is seen in His ability to redeem sinners
      "Men fit themselves for Hell; but it is God that fits men for Heaven (v. 23)" (Thomas, p. 261)
3. **So that He could show His Grace & Mercy**
   Grace and Mercy are two attributes of God that would never have been exercised if there were not sinners to extend such to.

V. 23

The purpose of God saving us is so that He might display the riches of His glory.

C. God is fair in redeeming a remnant as He promised by His prophets (v. 24-29)

(God's Word shows His righteous sovereignty)

V. 25

"O'see" = Hosea 1:9-10

V. 25/26

SEE Christ's illustration of the king and the marriage of His Son (Mt. 22:1-10)

V. 27

"Remnant" = that which is left; that which remains. In every age, God has always had a remnant of God-fearing people (EX: Noah, Abraham, Daniel and his 3 friends in Babylon; Elijah and the 7,000 who did not bow to Baal - I Ki. 19:18)

V. 28

"The work" - lit. "the Word" ("logos"). God will fulfill His Word in saving a remnant.

According to Isaiah 10:22-27, which Paul is quoting, the ultimate reference to the "remnant" is to the Jews who will be redeemed at the end of the Tribulation (compare Rom.11:26).
Verse 28 speaks of God's end-time salvation of His remnant which will occur with completeness (finality) and speed (quickness).

V. 29

cp. Isaiah 1:9

"A seed" = a godly remnant, genuine sons of God (cp. Ezra 9:2; Mal. 2:15).

Why was Sodom and Gomorrah so wicked? There were not even 10 righteous people in those cities (Gen. 18:22-33). Where there is no godly seed, a people (nation) will deteriorate to the likeness of Sodom and Gomorrah (SEE Is. 1:9).

When you think of Sodom and Gomorrah, two things come to mind:
1) gross wickedness
2) awesome judgment

Where there is no remnant:

1. Man's wickedness prevails

Christians are the moral conscience of a society. Believers are a preserving influence (Matthew 5:13-16 - "Salt and light")

The presence of God's children has a sanctifying effect on others who are around them (EX: Joseph to Potephar; Daniel to Babylon; I Cor. 7:14 - saved spouse to an unsave mate).

2. God's judgment falls

SEE Is. 13:19

Where there is no Godly remnant, there will be unrestrained wickedness; and where there is such sin that its stench reeks to the high heavens, judgment is soon to follow!

Paul is quoting Isaiah is making this point: If it were not for God sovereignly choosing out a people for Himself (cp. I Pet. 2:9); if He did not select a remnant, mankind would have been destroyed by fire and brimstone long ago!

D. God is fair in rejecting a people who attempt to be saved by their works (v. 30-33)

(God's way [of salvation] shows His righteous sovereignty)

"What shall we say then?" = Is God fair for only choosing a remnant of Jews and Gentiles to be saved? Is He fair for not saving all of Israel? Yes!

Why? Because the nation as a whole (for the most part) sought their salvation by some other means than by God's sovereign plan.

They sought to be saved by works.

God in His sovereignty chose a plan of saving lost mankind, and no one will be saved outside of His plan (way of salvation).

V. 31

"Followed" - lit. to "hunt after," to seek something by pursuing it.

"The Law of righteousness" - a righteousness that Israel thought came by means of the Law [a "law-righteousness"]

"Israel...hath not attained" = did not arrive at meeting the Law's perfect demands. Since God is perfect, His Law demanded perfection, yet no one has kept it all. The Law demanded complete obedience (SEE: Rom. 10:5; cp. Gal. 5:3).

To break one law is to be guilty of breaking all of them (James 2:10)

Therefore, all of us stand guilty before God of breaking all of His Laws. None of us has reached His perfect standard. *"For all have sinned (missed the mark) and come short of the glory of God." (Ro. 3:23).*

V. 32

"Wherefore" = Why? Why didn't Israel gain righteousness with God? Because they didn't seek salvation God's way.

Like many today, Israel wanted the right thing ("righteousness") but she went about getting it the wrong way ("works"). They were looking for the right thing, in the wrong place!

No one will boast in Heaven: "I achieved righteousness according to my plan, my genius, my ingenuity! No one will say before God: "I did it my way."

God says: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD, For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Is. 55:8, 9)

"Faith" - Has its eyes fixed on God (specifically, the Messiah - Christ, the Rock).

"Works" - Has its eyes fixed on self - human efforts and achievements.

Hence, those who see God's salvation through eyes of faith see their need of Christ. They don't trip over the rock, rather they stand upon it!

But those whose gaze is on themselves (on what they can do to achieve salvation by works), they--looking at their own righteous efforts and self-achieved spiritual muscle--trip over the Stone in front of them.

If you seek salvation by works, you will never attain it; and God will not be unrighteous because He rejects you from entering His kingdom.

The Bible is clear on this issue: Tit. 3:5, Eph. 2:8, 9; Gal. 5:4

"Stumbling stone" - Christ is the stumbling stone (cp. Is. 8:14, 28:16; I Pet. 2:8).

Christ is called the "Rock" (I Cor. 10:4).

To the believer, He is our "foundation" Rock (I Cor. 3:11), and "Living stone" (I Pet. 2:4).

To the church, He is the "chief cornerstone" (Ps. 118:22; Eph. 2:20).

To God the Father, He is the chosen ("elect") and "precious" chief corner stone (I Pet. 2:6).

To the Jews who crucified Him, He is "the stone which the builders disallowed" (I Pet. 2:7).

And to all who are disobedient to the Gospel, He is "a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense" (I Pet. 2:8).

All who stumble over Christ fall into the fires of Hell.

V. 33

The Father placed the Rock (Christ) in Sion (Mt. Zion in Jerusalem).

No one remains neutral about Christ. You are either for Him or against Him.

--You either stumble over him (stumbling stone),

--Or are offended at Him (rock of offense)

--Or you believe on Him.

"Whosoever" = includes anyone (all who believe are the elect of God).

"Believeth" - Not a head knowledge, but a continual, life-long trust (NOTE: present tense).

"on Him" = Not merely "in Him" (intellectual assent), but "on Him" = complete reliance.

"Shall not be ashamed" - will not be put to shame (passive verb).

No one who sincerely comes to Christ will be let down or left "hanging"

God does not let His believing elect down.

Those who will be ashamed will be those who sincerely thought that works were God's means to attain eternal life. They will be surprised to find out that works had no part in attaining God's sovereign salvation.

CONCLUSION:

The believer's response to Romans 9 should be one of humility and thankfulness (gratitude).

Our salvation (like God's election of Israel) had nothing to do with any goodness or initiative of our own, but a sovereign God chose us out of the multitudes to be His own.
--We should be humble because we could do nothing to save ourselves - we needed God.
--We should be thankful because even though we deserved hellfire, God showered us with His grace.

Section 25: ROMANS 10:1-13
"ISRAEL'S UNBELIEF IS INEXCUSABLE"

***There is no reason to reject God's salvation!**

I. ***There is no reason to be***
IGNORANT of God's salvation (v. 2-8)
(The Why of Salvation - God is Righteous)

II. ***There is no reason to be***
INSINCERE about God's salvation (v. 9-10)
(The How of Salvation - "Believe in heart . . . confess with mouth")

III. ***There is no reason to not be***
INCLUDED in God's salvation (v. 11-13)
(The Who of Salvation - "Whosoever . . . all")

INTRODUCTION: (v. 1)
Though Romans 9 speaks of God's sovereignty in salvation, Romans 10 speaks of man's responsibility to be saved. God's Word teaches both God's sovereignty & election (Chapter 9) and man's opportunity & responsibility to believe (See: 2 Thessalonians 2:13; cp. John 6:37)
Though only a "remnant" of Jews are saved, they, like all men are without excuse for rejecting God's salvation.
V. 1 In the previous context, Paul declared that only a "remnant" of Jews would be saved (9:27); and described God's rejection of national Israel because of her seeking righteousness by works (9:30-32) while stumbling over Christ (v. 33). In response to such statements, someone might accuse Paul of being anti-semitic; of being unloving toward his own people; of not caring about Israel. It is to such a thought that Paul speaks in 10:1.

1) Paul desired for his people to be saved -

"My heart's <u>desire</u>" - lit. "the good pleasure of my heart" or "the wish of my heart."
If one were to ask Paul, "What is the desire of your heart?" He would say, "That my people come to Christ." (cp. Paul's burden revealed in Rom. 9:1-5).

2) Paul <u>prayed</u> for his people to be saved.
A true spiritual desire will always be joined together with prayer. A person's desire is measured by the <u>frequency</u> and <u>fervency</u> of their prayers.

***There is no reason to reject God's salvation!**

I. There is no reason to be <u>IGNORANT</u> of God's salvation (v. 2-8)

(The <u>Why</u> of Salvation - God is Righteous)

A. Beware of: Zeal Without Knowledge (v. 2)

"I bear them record" = I testify (stand witness) on their behalf. If someone were to ask Paul to give his vote concerning the Jew's zeal for God, he would have to vote "<u>yes</u>, they definitely have a zeal for God." [NOTE: "zeal of God" = objective genitive - "zeal for God."]
The Jews in Paul's day had incredible zeal for God. They were known as "the God-intoxicated people." Their entire lives were centered around their religion (Kreloff, <u>Israel My Glory</u>, Dec. 88, p. 20).

Note: The Jews' zeal for God (Mt. 23):
--zeal for <u>converts</u> (Mt. 23:15)
(EX: Paul's misguided zeal before conversion)
--zeal for <u>details of the Law</u> (Mt. 23:23)
(meticulousness)
--zeal for <u>external spotlessness</u> (Mt. 23:25-28)
(EX: Hasidic Jews of today)
For one to be zealous for God does not necessarily mean that he truly knows God or is right with God.
"Not according to <u>knowledge</u>" - (epiginosko) <u>direct</u> knowledge, <u>accurate</u> knowledge.
"Zeal...but not according to knowledge" - ILLUS: "City-dwellers who bought a bird dog" (Green, #1508).
ILLUS: One can have great zeal to perform surgery, but if he does not have the proper diagnosis and the proper cure, I would not want him to work on my body!
Having the <u>facts</u> is essential to all technical procedures in life (EX: computer repair, auto repair).
If having accurate knowledge is important to temporal and physical matters, how much more essential is it to have the facts in relation to <u>eternal</u> and <u>spiritual</u> matters.
No doubt some of the last words uttered by those who will be condemned at Judgment Day (Mt. 7:21-23) will be: "But Lord, I <u>thought</u>. . . I <u>thought</u>"
Multitudes in world religions and cults today have zeal, but don't have knowledge. They seek to win converts, but do not know the true contents of God's plan of salvation.

B. Beware of: Man-Made Righteousness (v. 3-5)

V. 3

Two things keep people from submitting themselves to God's righteousness:

1) Man's <u>ignorance</u> of God's perfect standard of righteousness
Men view God as having standards which fall far below that which He actually has.
God's righteousness demands…
a) a perfect substitutionary <u>sacrifice</u> (II Cor. 5:21 - "the righteousness of God in Him")

b) the shedding of blood . . . Not man's works
NOTE: Ignorance is a willful ignorance.

2) Man's substitution for God's perfect standard of righteousness.

Ignorance of the truth leads of necessity to the need for people to find a substitute for it.
The question is often asked: "Why so many different religions in the world?"
* Answer: There are so many different attempts by man to substitute their own ideas for God's righteousness.
"Their own" - emphatic in Greek.
"Going about to establish" = to make something stand. "It means to cause to stand erect as a monument raised, not to the glory of God, but to their own" (Godet, cited by Reinecker, p. 370).
ILLUS: The foolishness of owning a General Motors repair manual and insisting on repairing it "my way."

V. 4

"Christ is the end of the Law" = the goal or completion of the Law.
Christ fully satisfied the just demands of God's Law. He can therefore give His righteousness to all who believe.
Christ spells the end of all of man's vain efforts to save himself, by himself.

V. 5

The emphasis is on the word **"doeth"** (aorist participle).
The man who has (past tense) fully practiced the righteous requirements of God's Law will live by them.
God's promise was: If you obey ALL, you will (in the future) LIVE by the Law.
The problem is: No one has ever kept all of the Mosaic Law (Rom. 3:23); as a matter of fact, no one has kept any of it, in its truest sense (Mt. 5:27-32) - for to break one is to break all (James. 2:10).
The Law said, "Do and live." No one did; therefore, no one lived. Their graves are lasting testimonies to this fact.

C. Beware of:
Missing the Simplicity of the Gospel (v. 6-8)

V. 6

"Just as the apostle quoted Moses to prove the impossibility of salvation by works (v. 5), he again quoted him to prove the possibility of salvation by faith (v. 6-8)" (Kreloff, p. 21).

V. 6-7

Paul is using Deuteronomy 30:11-14 to support his point. **READ Deut. 29:29, 30:11-14.
"Say not in thine heart" – The heart is the place where skepticism and doubt reside (it is also the place where true belief resides - v. 9).
Unbelief always demands evidence (Lk. 16:30).

There is no need for Christ to come down from Heaven (the Lord has already come - v. 9).
Every Jew (event the Samaritans) knew that when the Messiah would come, He would tell them all things regarding salvation (Jn. 4:25-26).
There is no need for someone to visibly see and audibly hear the resurrected Christ (the Messiah has been resurrected - v. 9).

The point is this: No one needs to bring the Messiah back to tell us that salvation is not by the Law but by grace through faith. He has already come and told us that. We must respond to what he has already said! We have no excuse! The message of salvation is not an enigma.
"The knowledge of God's will is accessible to you. You are not required to do the impossible, such as ascend into Heaven or go beyond the sea. God's will is not unreachable. You do not have to go searching for something you cannot possibly attain!" (Kreloff, p. 22).

V. 8
Many have come in close contact with the truth, yet have not believed it. (**"Nigh thee"** = near you. Those most to be pitied are those who had Bibles on their mantles or their bookshelves, yet never diligently searched them to find the way to salvation).
Particularly to the Jew, God's truth has been more at hand, more available, closer to one's grasp than they realized (cp. v. 18).

Many have uttered the truth and even knew it, yet have not believed it ("in thy mouth, and in thy heart").
"Mouth...heart" - note the connection with mouth and heart in v. 9 & 10.

II. There is no reason to be <u>INSINCERE</u> about God's salvation (v. 9-10)

(The <u>How</u> of Salvation - "Believe in heart . . . confess with mouth")
V. 9
"Confess" - "As a judicial term, the word indicates the binding and public declaration which settles a relationship with legal force" (Kasmann, TDNT, cited by Reinecker, p. 371).
"Confess" - to say the <u>same word</u>. Confession is simply saying the same thing with your lips that you believe in your heart.
"confess" -
Mt. 10:32 - "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven."
Lk. 12:8 - "Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God."
"...the Lord Jesus" = Jesus is Lord.
Calling Jesus "Lord" implies two things:

1) He is Divine (He is <u>God</u> - Yahweh)
(cp. "Lord" v. 13 is Yahweh in Joel 2:32)

2) He is Master (He rules in my life)
If Jesus is not God nor Ruler of your life, you have "another Jesus."
For belief to be genuine, it must come from the heart (the center of man's will) (cp. Acts 8:37 - *"If thou believest with all thine heart..."*).
The mouth without the heart is <u>insincerity</u> (<u>hypocrisy</u>).
The heart without the mouth is <u>no conviction</u> (<u>cowardice</u>).
"Confess. . . believe" - both aorist tense, pointing to a <u>specific point</u> and <u>time</u> conversion.

"Thou shalt be saved" - passive: <u>God</u> saves us, we don't save ourselves.
ILLUS: Col. Sanders found the Secret (Tan #859).
V. 10

NOTE: In the Greek, the act of "believing and confessing" are in the passive voice, indicating that they are a work of God, who leads one to believe and confess.

"Confession unto salvation" - is a confession to God that Christ is your Lord and resurrected Savior.

Question: Which comes first - heart belief or mouth confession? Answer: Heart belief. But mouth confession will always follow.

The only reason why Paul mentions confession before faith (in v. 9) is because that is the order Moses gave in Deut. 30.

The mouth is an expression of the heart. The mouth and heart work in harmony (Kreloff, p. 22).

"For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Mt. 12:34).

"Unto righteousness . . . unto salvation" - unto = "eis" - with a view to.

Just as belief guarantees our righteousness, confession guarantees our salvation.

III. There is no reason to not be INCLUDED in God's salvation (v. 11-13)

(The Who of Salvation - "Whosoever . . . all")

V. 11

The emphasis in verses 11-13 is on the all-inclusive, universal, impartial nature of God's offer of salvation.

NOTE: "whosoever (v. 11). . . no difference. . . all. . . all (v. 12) . . . whosoever (v. 13). . ."

God's imputed "righteousness" and imparted "salvation" (v. 10) are guaranteed to all who believe (v. 11).

"Believeth on Him" - Belief is a dependence upon, or reliance on someone; not a mere awareness of Someone.

"Shall not be ashamed" - passive = "shall not be put to shame. God will not let down one single person who believes on Christ.

"No difference" = no distinction; God is not partial.

Proofs:

1) He is Lord over all
2) He is rich to all who call.

V. 12

"Rich unto all" - SEE Psalm 145:13-21 (NOTE: the many references to "all").

God, being rich (wealthy), has enough salvation to go around. His priceless salvation will go to all who call upon Him for it.

The quoted reference specifically promises salvation to those who call upon the Lord in the Day of the Lord (Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21). Paul's usage of it shows it has a wider, universal application.

V. 13

"For whosoever shall call…shall be saved"

Paul quotes Joel 2:32 and applies that eschatological verse to today.

Note: If God's atonement was limited (in its provision), He could not legitimately offer salvation to all

I Jn. 2:2 - "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

I Tim. 2:4, 6 - "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. . . Who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time."
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."
God's offer of Salvation is an open invitation!

CONCLUSION: Three excuses will be unacceptable at the Judgment:

1) "I didn't know" (v. 2-8)
2) "It was too hard" (v. 9-10)
3) "It wasn't for me" (v. 11-13)

Section 26: ROMANS 10:14-21
"BE READY ALWAYS"

***As God's servant, you need to be ready always to witness for Christ!**
(Be a mouthpiece for God!)
To share the Gospel is to proclaim:

I. An ESSENTIAL message (v. 14-15a)
- *A. The essential of believing the Gospel*
- *B. The essential of hearing the Gospel*
- *C. The essential of proclaiming the Gospel*
- *D. The essential of God's commission*

To share the Gospel is to proclaim:

II. A POSITIVE message (v. 15b)

To share the Gospel is to proclaim:

III. An often UNWANTED message (v. 16-21)

INTRODUCTION:
Note: The teaching in chapter 10, like chapters 9 and 11, involves the nation of Israel, her rejection of the Gospel, and her full responsibility for such rejection.
Previously, Paul described the availability of the Gospel (v. 6-8), the simplicity of the Gospel (v. 9), and the universality of the Gospel (v. 10-13).
Now, he unveils the importance of sharing the Gospel.
I Peter 3:15 - "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."

After stating that anyone who calls upon the Lord will be saved (v. 13), Paul in verses 14 and 15 outlines the steps that must be taken before this call can be made (Kreloff, "The Charge Against Israel," Israel My Glory, Feb. 89, p. 24).

***As God's servant, you need to be ready always to witness for Christ!**
(Be a mouthpiece for God!)

To share the Gospel is to proclaim:

I. An ESSENTIAL message (v. 14-15a)

"The Apostle works backward by stages, dwelling on the
1) calling, 2) believing, 3) hearing, 4) preaching, 5) sending." (Thomas., p. 283).
In verses 14 & 15 Paul moves down the ladder from effect to cause.

A. The essential of believing the Gospel

God's salvation is applied to the sinner the instant he calls upon the Lord and receives Christ.

V. 14

Believing on Him (v. 11) and calling on Him (v. 12-13) are closely related. One precedes the other and leads to the other.

Belief comes immediately before one calls upon the Lord for salvation. EX: Paul came to believe that Jesus was "Lord" in Acts 9:5ff, but he did not call upon Christ until he met Ananias (cp. Acts 9:17-18 with Acts 22:16).

Salvation is not a mere calling on the Lord *("asking Jesus to come into your heart").*

The calling must be founded upon belief. Belief implies an accurate understanding of the Gospel. Many so-called "professions of faith" today are lacking the essential bedrock, foundational teaching of the substitutionary death of Christ (When witnessing, make sure they clearly understand the Gospel - I Cor. 15:1-4).

For someone to call upon Christ without knowing who He is or what He has done for them is fruitless. Many have "another Jesus" and not the Jesus of the Bible, due to many who preach an inadequate Gospel.

B. The essential of hearing the Gospel

Just as believing is a prerequisite to calling, hearing is a prerequisite to believing.

No one can believe God's Word until they hear God's Word (cp. v. 17). [NOTE: Hearing God's Word was especially vital to the early church because not everyone had the availability of a complete Bible like we have today. The Gospel was passed on by word of mouth.]

One can hear without believing (Heb. 4:2), but one cannot believe without hearing (or coming in contact with the Gospel).

The world listens to many voices, many messages, many bits of information daily, yet the most vital, necessary, important truth to be heard is that of the Gospel.

Ephes. 1:13 - "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise."

Handing out a tract is great, but don't stop there. Give the Gospel. Inviting someone to church is commendable, but don't limit your words to an invitation to come to church. Invite them to Christ!

V. 14

People must not only see the Gospel (in your life - EX: "lifestyle evangelism"), they must hear the Gospel (from your lips). Many Christians have "bloody hands" because they fail to warn the wicked of the Judgement to come and of the forgiveness of sin available now to all who repent and believe God's Word. (Ezekiel 3:18; cp. Acts 20:26)

C. The essential of proclaiming the Gospel

V. 14

"Preacher" = lit. "one preaching" - a herald. Someone who proclaims or publishes a message. This activity is not limited to a pastor or evangelist.

- The word describes a delivered demon-possessed man -Mk. 5:20 - "And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel."
- The word is used to describe a cleansed leper who "published it much" and began to "blaze abroad the matter" (Mk. 1:45).
- The word is given in a command that applies to all believers - "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mk. 16:15).

God has chosen the "foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1:21). God has "manifested his Word through preaching" (Titus 1:3).

V. 17

"Hearing (comes) by the Word of God"

"Word" = "rhema" - oral communication, the spoken word, the Gospel articulated.

God is referring to our speaking what He has written.

A different word: "Logos" - refers primarily to the written word. Our oral testimony is always based on God's written Testimony (the Bible). Faith comes when we verbally share God's Word with the lost.

Many own a Bible, but will never understand it's theme without a Christian filled with the Author of the Bible (the Spirit of God - II Pet. 1:21) coming to them and explaining its message.

EX: Philip and the Eunich - "How can I (understand) except some man should guide me?" (Acts 8:31).

D. The essential of God's commission

God is the initiator of our salvation! He is the bottom line.

V. 15 Who does the sending? God does - through the local church (Acts 13:3).

If God had not sent us forth with a message, our words would be useless.

To share the Gospel is to proclaim:

II. A POSITIVE message (v. 15b)

V. 15 What are the feet described as beautiful? Why not the mouth that utters the message? Why not the eyes or gestures which express the Gospel's wonder?

Why the feet? Answer: God wants us to GO. God wants us to physically bring the message to those in need of it.

NOTE: In God's list of the believer's armor, He commands us to have our "feet shod (fitted) with the preparation of the Gospel of peace" (Eph. 6:15). I may wear a size 12, have blisters, athlete's feet, corns, and untrimmed toenails, but God says if I share the Gospel I have beautiful feet!

NOTE: The "gospel" (good news) and "glad tidings" is described as a message of:

1) "peace"
2) "good things"

SEE: Is. 52:7 - In the context of Isaiah's prophecy this verse describes the proclamation of victory in the future kingdom and restoration of Israel.

The way we proclaim the Gospel should match the contents of the Gospel. We should be joyful and enthusiastic when sharing the Gospel. Does your demeanor turn people off?

NOTE: The word order: "peace," then "good things." No one receives the good things of God unless they have peace with God (Rom. 8:1).

To share the Gospel is to proclaim:

III. An often UNWANTED message (v. 16-21)

V. 16 "Obeyed" = to listen with a submissive heart.

V. 16-17 The word "believed" (v. 16) corresponds to "faith" (v. 17); and the word "report" (v. 16) to "hearing" (v. 17).

V. 18 "Have they (Israel) not heard?" ILLUS: children who constantly use the excuse "I didn't hear you."

Will they be able to say at the Judgment, "Nobody told me"?

Paul quotes Ps. 19:4, which in context describes the testimony of creation to the glory of God (cp. Rom. 1:20).

V.19 "Did not Israel know?" (v. 19-21).

They knew the truth about God, yet rebelled against such knowledge. God therefore said He would lift up other people not related to Him, as Israel was, and favor them instead (cp. Deut. 32:21).

V.20 Paul's point is this: If the Gentiles who did not seek after God found Him, then the Jews who had God's written Revelation had no excuse for not finding Him.

V. 21 "...I have stretched forth My hands."

God's gracious offer of life was and is extended even to those who are under His wrath.

Note the phrase in Isaiah, "But His hand is stretched out still" (SEE: Is. 5:25; 9:12, 17, 21; 10:4).

As long as God's hand of mercy is stretched out we must invite men to the spiritual wealth in His hands (Rom. 10:12).

"Gainsaying" = obstinate or contradicting

Israel had witnesses from A - Z (prophets from righteous Abel unto Zacharias - Mt. 23:35).

ILLUS: The parable of the King's wedding for His Son (the rejection of Israel) - Matt. 22:1-14.

God gives patience and "thick skin" for his witnesses to handle rejection. We must be willing to share the Gospel even to those we think will not want to hear - EX:Jews; Catholics; Muslims; Agnostics and "atheists"

CONCLUSION: The essential element to people being saved is YOU!

God wants to use your mouth to utter his message, your tongue to articulate His truth, your vocal cords to herald His Gospel.

Today will you say, "Here am I Lord, send me"? "Take my life and let it be consecrated Lord to Thee"

Section 27: ROMANS 11:1-10
"THE GOD OF ISRAEL"

***We need to see how God dealt with Israel in order to learn about the character of God.**

Three attributes (characteristics) of God:

I. God's dealings with Israel teach us that:
HE IS FAITHFUL (v. 1-5a)

God has not cast away His people (Israel). Two illustrative proofs:

A. The salvation of Paul (v. 1-2a)
B. The remnant of 7,000 in Elijah's day (v. 2b-5a)

II. God's dealings with Israel teach us that:
HE IS GRACIOUS (v. 5-6)

A. Grace is God's only means of salvation (v. 5)
B. Grace and works don't mix for salvation (v. 6)

III. God's dealings with Israel teach us that:
HE IS JUST (v. 7-10)

A. God is just (right) to:
Reject those who don't come to Him on His terms (v. 7)
B. God is just (right) to:
Harden those who harden themselves against Him (v.7b-8)
C. God is just (right) to:
Turn the tables from blessings into cursings on those who reject Him (v. 9-10)

INTRODUCTION:

After describing God's turning to the Gentiles (Rom. 10:19-20) and Israel's rejection of God (v. 21), the question comes: **"Hath God cast away His people?"**
It would seem that if what Paul has been saying in chapters 9 & 10 is true, then God is finished with Israel.
Paul addresses this question in chapter 11 by proving that:

1) the rejection of Israel is <u>not total</u>, but <u>partial</u>

and 2) even this partial rejection of Israel is <u>not final</u>, but only <u>temporary</u> (v. 25-26)
(MacClain, p. 195)

***We need to see how God dealt with Israel in order to learn about the character of God.**

Three attributes (characteristics) of God:

I. God's dealings with Israel teach us that: HE IS <u>FAITHFUL</u> (v. 1-5a)

V. 1

"Hath God cast away His people?" - Lit. "God has not cast away His people, has He?" Expecting the answer "No."
"Cast away" = to reject something by pushing it away; to repel from one's self.
"God forbid" - lit. May it never be! Such a thought is unthinkable.

God has not cast away His people (Israel). Two illustrative proofs:

A. The salvation of Paul (v. 1-2a)

Paul gives himself as an example to prove that God has not pushed aside everyone in Israel from salvation.
If God had rejected all Jews, He would have rejected Paul also, since he was Jewish.
NOTE: Paul for the third time introduces a chapter with a reference to <u>himself</u> and thus shows his own profound sympathy and identification with his people (9:1, 10:1, 11:1) (cp. Thomas, p. 289).
Paul stands as a monument of divine mercy (Thomas, p. 292).
God is able to save the hardest rebel and the most religious of Jews (SEE: Paul's testimony - I Tim. 1:12-16).
Don't be intimidated to share the Gospel with Jewish people!

V. 2

"God hath not cast away His people" - Samuel testified: *"For the Lord will not forsake His people for His great name's sake: because it hath pleased the Lord to make you His people" (I Sam. 12:22).*
Two obvious reasons why God does not forsake His people:

1) His <u>reputation</u> is at stake (Because of "His great name's sake") (Moses appeals to God's reputation - Ex. 32:12-13)
2) He receives <u>pleasure</u> in having a people who belong to Him *("The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people <u>unto Himself</u>, above all people that are upon the earth" - Dt. 7:6)*
   God said to Solomon: "I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will <u>not forsake</u> my people Israel" (I Ki. 6:13).
   The psalmist proclaimed: "For the Lord will not cast off His people, neither will He forsake His inheritance" (Ps. 94:14).
   "For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not His saints; they are preserved forever: but the seek of the wicked shall be cut off." (Ps. 37:28)
   Among Moses' last words were these: "Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." (Dt. 31:6)

This promise applies to believers today since it is reiterated to us in Hebrews 13:5.
God is true to His Word. He is faithful to His promises. He keeps His covenants.
"Whom He foreknew" -
--God foreknew that He would <u>choose Israel</u> to be a nation to bear His name.
--God foreknew that He would <u>preserve Israel</u> to be a nation to occupy a future kingdom.

SEE Jeremiah 31:31-37
"The permanence of the cycle of nature (vv. 35-36) and the immeasurable heaven and earth (v. 37) guarantee the survival of the Hebrew people" (Ryrie note)
*God foreknew those whom He would redeem among Israel to have everlasting life (this point is the emphasis in context).

Another proof that God has not cast away His people is the illustration of...

B. The remnant of 7,000 in Elijah's day (v. 2b-5a)

V. 2b-4

During a time when sin and apostasy among Israel was at a high point, Elijah thought he was the only true, faithful believer left in Palestine (I Kings 19:10-18).
--Many times we feel alone, we feel like we are the only ones still taking a stand for God. God, however, always has His remnant.
"Remnant" - that which remains, that small portion which is left over.
Salvation has always been obtained by a small remnant ("small" relatively speaking). --Cp. Mt. 7:13-14 (*"few there be that find it"*) --Cp. Rom. 9:27-29

V. 4

"I have reserved (Kept) to myself" -
This phrase points to:
1) God's sovereignty in choosing whom He will save - **"reserved"** (it is God who makes the reservations for those who will belong to Him)
2) God's authority (property rights) over those He saves - **"to myself"** (God does not save us so that we can run our own lives, live the way we want, do our own thing. . . but that we would be devoted to His and His will (I Cor. 6:19-20).

V. 5

Being in the majority (in the mainstream, flow of society) does not mean you are in the right (in fact, it is an indication that you may be in the wrong).
We as God's children may not be on the majority side, but praise God we are on the right side and the winning side. No matter how bad things get, there will always be a "kernel of loyalty." There will always be a few faithful; there will always be a select remnant, who like the quiet pious group that welcomed the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem, patiently waited for "the salvation of Israel" (Thomas, p. 290).

II. God's dealings with Israel teach us that: HE IS GRACIOUS (v. 5-6)

A. Grace is God's only means of salvation (v. 5)

"Election" = selection, to choose
"Election of grace" = God's election (selection) is based on His grace, not man's works.
GRACE: **G**od's
Riches
At
Christ's
Expense
Why is salvation by grace:

1. Because man could never earn salvation
We could not do enough even if we wanted to.
What price tag could be placed on eternal life?
Rom. 3:23 - "All come short of the glory of God"

2. Because God wants the credit (glory) for salvation
"Not of works lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:9)

God does not have one way of salvation for the Jews and another for the Hindus, another for the Moslems, and another for the Buddhists. He has only one way - grace.

B. Grace and works don't mix for salvation (v. 6)

"Grace" and **"works"** are antonyms or opposites; they are antithetical or mutually exclusive. They cannot be mixed to produce salvation.

We are not saved by- grace plus baptism; grace plus communion; grace plus keeping Golden Rule; grace plus church affiliation

Note the following equations:

Trusting grace + works = Hell fire!

Trusting grace + nothing = Eternal life!

This does not mean that we do not work. The point is that works are a result (fruit) of salvation, not the means to it (Eph. 2:8-10)

--Grace is free

--Works carry a price tag

--Grace cannot be bought

--Works demands a reward

No one will demand salvation from God, because of what they did to earn it.

No one will ever say to God, "OK God, pay up!" (Rom. 4:4)

"Grace is no more grace" - Grace is not grace if you must earn it. Grace is unearned, undeserved, and often unwanted.

If I offer you a gift and say, "That will be $50.00" -- is that a gift? No.

"Work is no more work" - if you work for me to cut my lawn and I offer you $10 per hour and it takes you five hours, you have worked for $50.00. If I then say, "here is a gift of $50.00", am I right in calling it a gift? No.

III. God's dealings with Israel teach us that: HE IS JUST (v. 7-10)

A. God is just (right) to:

Reject those who don't come to Him on His terms (v. 7)

The reason Israel (as a whole) did not receive ("obtain") salvation is because they were not looking to receive it God's way but their own way (Rom. 9:31-32).

Like most of the world today, Israel was all tied up in ceremonialism, trusting their own ability to please God by external religious rituals.

If God prepared a wedding feast and said, "All guests who come must be dressed in a white garment that I will provide," and you showed up in your own rags, would God be unrighteous to send you away? Not at all! Why? Because you did not come on His terms. You did not meet His conditions.

". . . the election hath obtained it" - a chosen minority of Jews and Gentiles who are being saved today.

B. God is just (right) to:

Harden those who harden themselves against Him (v.7b-8)

V. 7b "Blinded" = lit. hardened. To cover with a thick skin, to harden by covering with a callous (Rienecker, p. 372).

NOTE: God does not cause spiritual blindness to those who see. Rather, He keeps blind those who are already deliberately blind to the truth.

God does not harden people who by nature have soft hearts, because, indeed, no one has a soft heart. Rather He often keeps hard a heart that hardened itself against God. God is totally righteous to act in such a manner.

V. 8 Proof that God blinds eyes and hardens hearts that are already blind and hard against Him - SEE Isaiah 29:10, which Paul quotes. And note the context which describes Israel's deliberate blindness and hardness (hard-heartedness - Is. 29:13; deliberate blindness - Is. 30:10).

Unbelieving Israel's fate should be a warning to us. To neglect God's Word and way is a serious sin. Many today are "Gospel-hardened" because they heard the truth over and over yet did not yield to it.

C. God is just (right) to:

Turn the tables from blessings into cursings on those who reject Him (v. 9-10)

V. 9 - David's imprecatory request is that the Jews table piled with food and money would become their downfall.

When God turns the tables on a people that reject Him, He often does so by providentially turning blessings into actual curses.

"Recompense" - to pay back; what is sown will be reaped (Gal. 6:7).

V. 9-10

SEE: Psalm 69:22-23

Interestingly enough, in the context of Ps. 69:22-23, which Paul quotes, Israel's judgment is ultimately linked to their rejection of Jesus Christ.

NOTE: Verses 19-25 (esp. v. 21; cp. Mt. 27:34).

Section 28: ROMANS 11:11-24
"THE GENTILES' ATTITUDE TOWARD ISRAEL'S FALL"

***As Gentiles, <u>we need to check our attitude</u> (specifically, toward God's rejection of Israel).**

What should our attitude be toward fallen Israel?

I. <u>GRATITUDE</u> for the <u>WISDOM</u> of God (v. 11-16)

We should be grateful for two reasons:

A. God in His wisdom turned Israel's rejection into <u>riches</u> for the Gentile world (v. 11-14)

B. God in His wisdom turned Israel's rejection into <u>reconciliation</u> for the Gentile world (v. 15-16)

II. <u>HUMILITY</u> because of the <u>WORK</u> of God (v. 17-20)

(Don't think you were really something superior for God to save ("graft") you)

III. <u>FEAR</u> because of the <u>WARNING</u> of God (v. 20b-22)

IV. <u>FAITH</u> in the <u>WONDER-WORKING POWER</u> of God (v. 23-24)

INTRODUCTION:

Obadiah prophesied about the doom and destruction of Edom because she laughed at Israel's calamity (SEE book of Obadiah).

As in past history, there is a danger today of Gentiles despising Jews, and forgetting the source and channel of their own spiritual blessings (Thomas, p. 298).

***As Gentiles, <u>we need to check our attitude</u> (specifically, toward God's rejection of Israel).**

What should our attitude be toward fallen Israel?

I. GRATITUDE for the WISDOM of God (v. 11-16)

God's ways are so amazing, so wise, that Paul triumphantly praises the wisdom of God as he closes this chapter (v. 33).
God's wisdom is seen in verses 11-16 by His ability to turn a bad situation into a good end!

We should be grateful for two reasons:

A. God in His wisdom turned Israel's rejection into riches for the Gentile world (v. 11-14)

V. 11

The question is: Has Israel (the Jewish race) stumbled for the purpose that they would fall beyond recovery? Was Israel's fall God's intention?
The negative adverb ("not") in this question expects a No answer.
Lit. "They did not stumble in order that they would fall, did they?" ("No!")
"God forbid" = May it never be!
"Through their fall" = By means of their transgression ("to overstep a known boundary; to sin against light) salvation was offered to the Gentiles (who did not have the light that Israel had)
God's purpose in allowing Israel to stumble (cp. 9:32-33) was not for her downfall, but so that salvation would extend to the Gentiles. (Note: God allowed their fall; He did not cause it to happen)
Paul went to the Gentiles after the Jews rejected his message (Acts 13:46-47, 18:5-6; 22:21; 28:25-**28**).
If Israel had not stumbled, would not the Gospel have been brought to the Gentiles? Yes, it would have been!
Question: Is God teaching us that Israel stumbled in order that the Gospel might go to the Gentiles? Or with the result that the Gospel might go to the Gentiles?
Answer: Result (cp. same idea in verses 19-20).
"For to provoke them to jealousy" = to provoke someone to jealousy means to causes someone to want (desire) what you have.
Jealousy refers to someone having a zeal to get something. Usually, the word is used in a negative sense, but here it is positive (cp. v. 13, 14).
Paul's statement in verse 11 is almost paradoxical. God actually used Israel's stumbling so that God's Word might go to the Gentiles and in turn provoke some Israelites to desire what others had but they themselves did not have
Today people need to see what we have in Christ. They may be jealous over the peace that exists in your home, or by your calm, spirit-controlled ability to handle problems, tragedies and even death. But this actually shows that they know they need what you have.

V. 12

"Fall" = transgression
"Riches" = we are wealthy in Christ! (Eph. 1:3ff)
The church today is richly benefiting in the New Covenant promised to Israel in Jer. 31:31-34 (cp. Heb. 8:6).
"Diminishing" = failure, crushing defeat
The phrase **"How much more"** (used frequently in Romans - EX: 5:9, 10, 15, 17; 11:24) shows that Paul is arguing from the lesser to the greater.
The point is this: If the fall and failure of Israel meant riches for the rest of the world, how much more riches will be had by the world when the time of their "fullness" comes?!
The word **"fullness"** refers to a "full number" of people.

SEE Paul's use of "fullness" in verse 25. When the full number of Gentiles finally come to Christ (a number only known to God), God is going to lift the partial blindness of Israel and save a great host of Jews (v. 26).

V. 13

"For I speak to you <u>Gentiles"</u> - an indication that Paul is writing to <u>Gentile</u> (not Jewish) Christians at Rome (cp. 1:13, 15:15-16).

"The Apostle of the Gentiles" = objective genitive case - Paul was the Apostle <u>to</u> the Gentiles (the other apostles brought the same message Paul preached, but they brought their message <u>to</u> the Jews; cp. Gal. 2:7-9; Rom. 15:16).

Paul magnified (lit. glorified) the fact that he, though a Jew, was a minister <u>to</u> the Gentiles ("nations").

Why did he "rub in" such a point to the Jews? Answer: Because he wanted to provoke the Jews to get jealous ("emulation") and desire the same Lord he had and end up getting saved (v. 14).

V. 14

"Emulation" = jealousy. Same Greek word as in verse 11.

"Them which are my flesh" = those related to me in the flesh (Paul's physical relatives).

B. God in His wisdom turned Israel's rejection into <u>reconciliation</u> for the Gentile world (v. 15-16)

V. 15

"Casting away" = Israel's rejection by God.

"Reconciling" = to form a relationship. To go from enmity to friendship (Ro. 5:11).

The picture is of God sternly (cp. v. 22) throwing aside a nation that has rejected Him, and then forming a friendship relationship with those through the world who would come to Him.

"Receiving" = the opposite of "casting away." It refers to God opening up His arms and receiving unto Himself repentant Israel.

God's reception of Israel again - Zech. 2:1-13

[NOTE: Zech. 13:8-9 - Two-thirds of Israel will be killed (v. 8); one-third will be refined through the fire and saved (v. 9)]

"Life from the dead" - SEE: Ezek. 37:1-14 - "Valley of dry bones."

Resurrection of Israelites will occur before the kingdom.

Israel's reception back again is to be of infinitely greater value to the world than their fall (Thomas, p. 294).

Again arguing from the lesser to the greater, (cp. v. 12), Paul pronounces that if God's rejection of Israel meant reconciliation for the world, how much more will God's reception of Israel, means resurrection for the world (including Jews & Gentiles).

If Christ formed a relationship with the world because of Israel's rejection of Him, how much more will Christ be married (via resurrection and rapture) to those redeemed of the world when Israel is received by Him in the Last Day.

God's reception of Israel and the Resurrection are linked because they evidently will happen at the same time.

V. 16

If that which came first was holy, so is that which comes later.

Evidently the "first fruit" and "root" refer to the saved O.T. saints (ex. the Patriarchs).

NOTE: The root refers to O.T. Israel in verse 17b.

Firstfruits given to God were always an indication of a harvest to follow.

The point is this: If the first lump of dough was set apart by God, so will the lump be in the end. If the root had holiness with God, so will the off-shooting, regrafted branches.

II. <u>HUMILITY</u> because of the <u>WORK</u> of God (v. 17-20)

(Don't think you were really something superior for God to save ("graft") you)

V. 17

"Olive tree branches " = Israel (Jews)

"Wild olive tree branches" = Gentiles

NOTE: God did not cut off all Israelites, but "some" of them.

Israel is called an olive tree planted by God (Jer. 11:16-17).

David describes the blessing of being "like a green olive tree in the house of God" (Ps. 52:8); children are a blessing to a man who fears God and depicted "like olive plants round about thy table" (Ps. 128:3).

To be likened to an olive tree was considered a tremendous blessing. Israel as a whole forfeited such a blessing.

"Partakest" = to be a co-sharer; participant together with someone else - Paul is describing Jew and Gentile partaking together in the root of God's covenant promises.

"Fatness" = nourishing richness.

V. 18 **"Boast not"** = don't be arrogant toward the branches (Jews). Don't look down upon them as if you were superior.

If you are being arrogant, remember this, you are not supporting the root, but the root is supporting you! A branch does not provide water and foot for the tree, rather the root does!

What we have comes from God (vine and branches - John 15:1ff).

V. 19 The statement reflects some Gentile pride

V. 20 God does not arbitrarily sever ties with a people.

If He rejects you, it is because you have rejected Him. God rejected Israel because of her unbelief.

"Thou standest by faith" - perfect tense = you have stood and remain standing by faith (faith is a gift from God - so we can't boast about having it).

"Be not high-minded" - Don't set your mind (thoughts) on how high you think you are.

"Pride cometh before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall"

III. FEAR because of the WARNING of God (v. 20b-22)

V. 21 NOTE: God is not bringing into question the believers' eternal security - He is speaking of Gentiles as a whole (Gentiledom) being possibly cut off from the life-giving tree.

If God could cast away Jews (the natural branch), Gentiles (the wild uncultivated branch) had better especially look out.

"It is worth noting that, according to Bible prophecy, the professing Gentile church will be "cut off" because of apostasy. I Tim. 4 and II Tim. 3, along with II Th. 2 all indicate that (multitudes in) the professing church in the Last Days will depart from the faith" (Wiersbe p. 552).

V. 22 Two contrasting characteristics of God are mentioned:

1) Goodness (kindness)
2) Severity (sternness)

We need a balanced understanding of God's love and justice. Must believe in both God's graciousness and His righteousness.

"Severity" = the word comes from a verb meaning "to cut right off, to cut short" and emphasizes a rigor which does not bend (Godet, cited by Reinecker, p. 373).

A mark of a true believer is that he will continue in God's goodness (a true believer will endure to the end [Mt. 24:13], and will continue in Christ's Word [John], because God is faithful [Phil. 1:6])

To be **"cut off"** is serious! (Jn. 15:2)

IV. FAITH in the WONDER-WORKING POWER of God (v. 23-24)

V. 23 **"They"** = unbelieving Israel

Belief is the key to grafting.
"For God is <u>able</u> (Powerful enough) **to graft them in again."**
Never forget that "God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20)
V. 24 The Bible teaches in numerous places that in the last days God will turn back to Israel and regenerate multitudes of Jews from the inside-out (Ezek. 36:22-27, 29-38).
The point is: If God is powerful enough to graft a <u>wild</u> olive branch into a cultivated olive tree, how much easier will it be for Him to re-graft a formerly cultivated branch into its <u>own</u> olive tree? The latter is easy compound to the former.

> For God to save a Gentile, He must cut a wild branch out of <u>heathenism</u> (in many cases, polytheism), while to save a Jew, at least there exists the common ground of monotheism.
>
> For God to save a Gentile, He generally must save someone who is <u>ignorant</u> of God's Word, while to save a Jew is to bring to Himself someone who at least has a foundational knowledge of creation, the fall of man, the Law, the sacrificial system, etc.

This is why Paul's custom was to go to preach at the synagogues in Acts (he had common ground).
<u>Don't question the power and wisdom of God</u> (Rom. 11:33-34). Just believe it!

Section 29: ROMANS 11:25-36
"ISRAEL'S FUTURE RESTORATION"

You (like Israel) can be reconciled to God (II Cor. 5:17-20).

I. Israel's Restoration Begins with God's <u>SALVATION</u> (v. 25b-27)
II. Israel's Restoration is Based on God's <u>FAITHFULNESS</u> (v. 28-29)
A. Israel - God's enemy, yet <u>God's beloved</u> (v. 28)
B. Israel - She failed, but <u>God's promises cannot</u> (v. 29)
III. Israel's Restoration is Possible Because of God's <u>MERCY</u> (v. 30-32)
IV. Israel's Restoration is Incomprehensible, But it is God's <u>WISDOM</u> (v. 33-36)

INTRODUCTION: Verse 25a
Illus. - God can take someone who is a rebel and turn them around (EX: Prodigal Son).
Israel (as a nation) is much like the "Prodigal Son." She once had a covenant relationship with her Father, but has gone astray.
READ v. 25a.
Whereas the overall theme of Romans 9-11 involves <u>Israel's rejection</u> of God, God closes the context--with light at the end of the tunnel--by describing <u>Israel's future restoration</u> with God.
Israel's future restoration is a major theme in 11:11-36.
EX: Paul describes Israel's future: "fullness" (v. 12b)
"receiving of them" (v. 15)
"re-engrafting" (v. 23-24)
&future "salvation" (v. 26-27)

V. 25
"Wise in your own conceits" = The Gentiles, no doubt, felt superior to the fallen Jews, who had been cut off, while they had been grafted in (cp. v. 18-24)
"Mystery" = the plan and purpose of God which was hidden in the past and impossible for human beings to discover, but which is now made known by God (Reinecker, p. 374).

***You (like Israel) can be reconciled to God (II Cor. 5:17-20).**

I. Israel's Restoration Begins with God's SALVATION (v.25b-27)

V. 25

"Blindness" - the covering with a callous; dulled perception; hardness (cp. v. 7).

Not every Jew has been blinded (calloused) to the truth of Christ. It is a blindness "in part" - i.e. a large part have rejected the Gospel.

"Until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in" -

"Fullness" = full number (cp. v. 12b)

When the full number of Gentiles (a number only known to God) have come to salvation, God is going to cause a national revival among the Jewish people.

V. 26

"And so all Israel shall be saved" -

"So" = in this way - in the same manner as God saved a full number ("fullness") of Gentiles (v. 25), "so" He will save a full number of Jews.

"All Israel" - the nation as a whole. Jews from every tribe (Dan excluded- Compare Revelation 7:1-8). Rather than a partial remnant of Jews getting saved (as is the case now - Rom. 9:27; 11:5), a great multitude will cry out for Jesus to save them. The phrase "all Israel" does not necessarily mean every individual Israelite, but the whole nation, a future national conversion of individuals, in contrast to the present "partial" conversion of Jews (cp. Thomas, p. 304).

Revelation 7 details that 144,000 Israelites will be saved and sealed by God.

How do the 144,000 come to Christ?

a. When Christ returns at the Rapture His coming will be visible to the eyes of all the world. (Matthew 24:30; cp. Rev.6:16; I Peter 4:13)
b. Multitudes of Jews will "look" on Him whom they have pierced as He returns (Zech. 12:10)
c. They will at that time repent in genuine sorrow for their sin and former rejecting of Christ (Zech. 12:10-14).
d. They will call upon the Lord at that time and be saved (Joel 2:31-32)
e. These 144,000 sealed Israelites are called *"firstfruits unto God"* (Rev. 14:4-f). Being "firstfruits" they are the first of the people who will be redeemed after the Rapture occurs. These people will be among the first people in mortal bodies to enter the Millennial kingdom.

When does this sealing occur?

a. After the 6th seal is loosed (Rev. 6:12-17), but before the 1st. Trumpet Judgement (Rev.7:3 cp. 8:7)
b. Immediately after the rapture has occurred.
"When the church is raptured, the 144,000 will not be taken with the saints because they will not as yet have been brought into a saving relationship with their Messiah, Jesus Christ" (Van Kampen The Sign p.302)

"The Deliverer" = the one who rescues. A reference to the Messiahship of Jesus Christ.

The Deliver (Jesus Christ) will come to deliver Israel from her real enemy - Sin ("ungodliness").

Israel's real enemy was not Caesar, Titus, Hitler, Stalin, etc. but was--and is--ungodliness.

This is our arch enemy also.

Paul is quoting Isaiah 59:20-21. NOTE: In a context describing Christ's second coming, Isaiah describes how Christ will judge His enemies (v. 17-19) and bring salvation to Israel (v. 20-21).

The word for "Redeemer (Is. 59:20) means kinsman-redeemer; i.e., one who is related by blood to those he redeems, indicating the necessity for the incarnation (Heb. 2:14-16)." (Ryrie Study Bible).

Zechariah 12:8-14 -

Verses 10-11 - Shows the sincerity of Israel's repentance

Verses 12-14 - shows the individuality of Israel's repentance (each family "apart" will mourn).

Verses 12-14 - also show the totality of Israel's repentance.

Everyone from the top of the line (David) to the bottom of the line (Shimei) will be saved. From the king to the peasant.

All classes in Israel will be saved. King = David Prince = Nathan Priest = Levi Peasant = Shimei

God promised to redeem a remnant of the people of Israel in the last days *"when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in"* (Romans 11:25-ff) (See the O.T. prophets - Zech. 12:8-14, 13:9; Ezek. 20:33-44, 34:13-17, 36:25-29; Jer. 31:1-2; Is. 59:9-15, 43:1-7, 11:11-12:6)

V. 27

"Covenant" = a binding oath

God is faithful to His covenants. And a particular covenant that God will keep is the one to remove sin from Israel.

II. Israel's Restoration is Based on God's <u>FAITHFULNESS</u> (loving loyalty) (v. 28-29)

A. Israel - God's enemy, yet <u>God's beloved</u> (v. 28)

"They are enemies for your sakes" -

The Gentiles have benefitted in Israel's rejection of the Gospel. Because the Jews by and large rejected the Gospel message, God sent it to the Gentiles (cp. v. 11).

"They are beloved for the fathers' sakes" -

"Fathers" is plural - a reference to the O.T. patriarchs. God loves the Jewish race today because He loved her forefathers (EX: God would often deal with Israel because of His irrevocable covenant promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob).

On the one hand, the nation of Israel are "<u>enemies</u>" of God, yet on the other hand Israel is "<u>beloved</u>."

What a contrast in terms!

Application: God <u>loves</u> the unsaved world (Jn. 3:16) even though the unsaved world is at enmity with God (Eph. 2:3).

SEE Romans 5:8 - God's love was demonstrated, when we were enemies of God (v. 10).

Perhaps this pattern is the basis upon which we are to love our enemies (Mt. 5:44).

B. Israel - She failed, but <u>God's promises cannot</u> (v. 29)

"Gifts" - that which is the result of grace.

None of God's promised gracious blessings to Israel can be taken back.

"Calling" = God's invitation. God's specific calling of Israel can <u>not</u> be taken back.

"Without repentance" = cannot be taken back; God cannot be sorry or regretful about choosing Israel and then revoking or taking back his promises.

God's blessings and promises, like His nature, are changeless (Mal. 3:6; Num. 23:19).

Just as God must be faithful to the promises He made to Israel, God must be faithful to keep the promises He made to everyone who has trusted His grace. God cannot go back on anything He has promised to give to the believer. For example: God cannot take your salvation back (we have eternal security).

III. Israel's Restoration is Possible Because of God's <u>MERCY</u> (v. 30-32)

V. 30 Same thought as verse 11.

God amazingly turned Israel's unbelief into blessing for the Gentiles.

V. 31 "Through your mercy" = i.e. by means of the mercy shown to you.

God does not want to limit His mercy to the Gentile, but wants to extend it to the Jew.
It is through the mercy shown to you that others will come to know about and experience God's mercy for them.
Others must know about God's mercy to you. We must share the Gospel. By witnessing, we become the link to others experiencing the mercy of God.
V. 32 God's mercy is enough for ALL. Mercy, however, is only extended to those who ask for it (EX: Pharisee & Publican)
"God hath concluded them all in unbelief" (cp. Rom. 3:9-11).
Gal. 3:22 - "But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe."
"God hath concluded . . ." - When God wrote the book on humanity, His conclusion is this: "No one believes." That is, no one will be persuaded of the truth of the Gospel unless God extends mercy.

IV. Israel's Restoration is Incomprehensible, But it is God's WISDOM (v. 33-36)

V. 33
In verses 33-36, after contemplating God's great plan of salvation for Jews and Gentiles, all Paul could do was sing a hymn of praise.
Here, "theology becomes doxology" (Wiersbe, p. 553).
It may seem absurd to some for God to remain faithful to the nation of Israel - But His ways are not our ways.
Three facets of God are extolled:
1) God's **"wisdom and knowledge"** = deep
2) God's **"judgments"** = unsearchable
3) God's **"ways"** = past finding out

"O the depth. . ." - Depth refers to inexhaustible fullness; our wisdom has limits, God's does not.
Man's wisdom is nothing but "foolishness" compared to God's wisdom (I Cor. 1:20, 25).
"How unsearchable" - lit. unsearched out; to be beyond the scrutiny of man; to evade the examination of man.
His ways (are) **"past finding out"** - lit. untraced out. From "ichnos" - meaning a footprint or a track (Vine, p. 174).
This word tied to the word "ways" (lit. roads), gives the picture of someone trying in vain to follow the footprints or tracks of God.
God's ways mysteriously evade the efforts of man to follow. God's ways lead down a road that no one has ever been.
It may seem amazing that God would extend salvation to His enemies at no cost, but He does.
SEE Isaiah 55:1-9. NOTE: verses 8-9 - "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, siath the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.
V. 34
No one can "read" God's mind. The world thinks they know the way God thinks *("Thou thoughtest I was altogether like thyself").*
However, no one begins to comprehend the mind of God who does not first have God's Spirit and God's Word. (I Cor. 2:16).
"Counselor" = advisor; a fellow advisor on equal par with God.
God takes advice from no one! WE can't tell God what to do.
V. 35
Will God ever be indebted to man? Impossible!
God needs no loans.
In fact, He is the sole source of all riches (everything), as verse 36 declares.
V. 36

1) **"of Him"** - God planned all things (He is the originator or source of all).
2) **"Though Him"** - God created all things - Jesus is the Creator - Col. 1:16 - "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him."
3) **"To Him"** - God's glory is the goal of all things (we were made for God).

CONCLUSION: What does it take for a sinner to be reconciled or restored to God?
Answer: God's salvation, faithfulness, mercy, and wisdom.

Section 30: ROMANS 12:1-2
"FULL SURRENDER"

***Because of God's mercy, you (as a believer) should fully surrender your life to God.**

I. Full Surrender is:
Letting God HAVE your life
(A sacrificed life - v. 1)
A. What kind of sacrifice does God want?
1. A living sacrifice
2. A holy sacrifice
3. An acceptable sacrifice
B. Why should you give such a sacrifice?
--It is "your reasonable service"
(sacrifice is the logical, intelligent choice)

II. Full Surrender is:
Letting God CHANGE your life
(A transformed life - v. 2)
A. The Enemy of a transformed life: The world's mold
B. The Entrance into a transformed life: A renewed mind
C. The End Result of a transformed life: The will of God

INTRODUCTION: V. 1a
The book of Romans (like Ephesians, etc.) naturally breaks down into two divisions.

Chapters 1 - 11	Chapters 12 - 16
Doctrine	Duty
The way of salvation	The walk of salvation
The pardon of the believer	The practice of the believer
Salvation acquired	Salvation lived out (EX: Phil. 2:12-13)

Romans 12:1 now begins the practical section of the Book of Romans. We now move from a study of theology to Biblical ethics and morals.

V. 1
"I beseech you" = I am encouraging, exhorting, urging you

"The word was used in classical Greek of exhorting troops who were about to go into battle" (Reinecker, p. 375).

"Brethren" - brothers (not physically or ethnically related to Paul -- since the Church at Rome was predominantly Gentile (Rom. 1:13, 11:13, 15:15-16) -- but brothers in Christ, fellow Christians.

The appeal to surrendering one's body, not being conformed to the world, and to know God's will is for those who are saved, not for those who are unsaved.

It is futile to teach a lost person how to live the Christian life, since he is not a Christian.

The exhortation to believers implies that not all have done it.

"By the mercies *(compassionate pity)* of God" - the basis for such an exhortation to full surrender is "the mercies of God."

In other words, since God has been merciful to you (11:30-32), since God has saved you, since you are a child of God, you should accept this admonition.

"The great compassion of God should move us to dedication" (Custer, BJU, "Viewpoint" Romans, p. 55).

We <u>received</u> mercy (Titus 3:5; I Tim. 1:13, 16)
We <u>are receiving</u> mercy (now) (I Tim. 1:2; II Tim. 1:2; II Jn. 3; Jude 2)
We <u>will receive</u> mercy (Jude 21; II Tim. 1:18)
God is rich in mercy (Eph. 2:4.
God's mercy endureth forever (Ps. 136)
God's mercy is for those who ask for it (Lk. 18:13).

Because of God's mercy, you (as a believer) should fully surrender your life to God.

What is full surrender?

Various ideas and opinions -

Some would say full surrender is:

--cutting back on drinking or smoking
--not doing anything against God
--attending a church once a week
--throwing a $20 bill in the offering plate
--denying self of certain foods or pleasures

What does full surrender mean?

I. Full Surrender is: Letting God <u>HAVE</u> your life

(A <u>sacrificed</u> life - v. 1)

"To present" - Aorist tense - a once and for all dedication (but one that must be remembered and renewed). . . to yield, offer, give, or hand over.

God does not force it. It brings more glory to Him when we willingly offer it to Him (EX: Rom. 6:13, 19 - "yield members")

"To present" = lit. to place beside; a technical term for offering a sacrifice.

"Your bodies" = the whole person; your body and everything in it; which includes your heart (affections) and mind (will, volition, decision-making).

NOTE: The Greeks depreciated the body, viewed it as a prison house, as evil. They worshipped the mind and thinking.

However, the Bible says: Your "body is the <u>temple</u> of the Spirit of God (I Cor. 6:19-20).

God wants <u>you</u> more than what you have.

Giving yourself to God recognizes rightful ownership.

"Sacrifice" -
EX. of O.T. sacrifices. Sin offerings, guilt offerings, free-will gift offerings, peace offerings and whole burnt offerings.
O.T. sacrifices are now obsolete.
Our service of worship is a giving of ourselves.
NOTE: In O.T. it wasn't merely the animal that pleased God; it was the attitude (and amount of sacrifice) of the giving that pleased Him.

A. What kind of sacrifice does God want?

What type of sacrifice does God want? A living, holy, and well-pleasing ("acceptable") sacrifice.

1. A <u>living</u> sacrifice

--As opposed to dead (like O.T.)
Implies a sacrifice of your life <u>now</u>.
Many are supposedly willing to die for God, but never totally live for Him.
The evidences of a living sacrificed life are the fruits of sacrifice, which include:
1)Praise
2)Thanks
3)Doing right
4)Sharing (giving) - *Heb. 13:15-16 - "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."*

2. A <u>holy</u> sacrifice

"Holy" = set-apart, pure.
Just as the O.T. sacrifices were to be holy (unblemished and undefiled), so are we.
Positionally, we are totally holy (I COR. 6:11; Acts 26:18).
Our <u>name</u> denotes our holiness - "saints"
God's <u>nature</u> demands our holiness - "Be ye holy, for I am holy."

a. How are we made holy?

"Sanctify (make holy) them <u>through Thy truth</u>; Thy Word is truth" (Jn. 17:17).

b. Why should we be holy?

So that we might be "sanctified and meet (suitable) for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (II Tim. 2:21).
We are not "holy" sacrifices, if we are not "set apart" (transformed from the world (v. 2).

3. An <u>acceptable</u> sacrifice

"Acceptable" = well-pleasing; satisfying to God.
Just as righteous O.T. sacrifices were a "sweet savor" to the nostrils of God, so you must be.
What scent does your life bring up to God?
The O.T. sacrifices had to meet specifications - Why? They were a type of Christ. We must give God <u>what</u> He wants and the <u>way</u> He wants it, or it is unacceptable.
"Acceptable" - God does not want you on your terms, but on His. You cannot give God garbage [EX: Israel's repulsive O.T. sacrifices - Mal. 1:6-13 - "Neither will I accept (v. 10) . . . Should I accept this (v. 13?"]

What is an <u>acceptable</u> sacrifice?

a. A clean sacrifice

Salvation is a prerequisite.

"The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord."

Only a saved individual is called: "a royal priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

Undefilement is a prerequisite.

Unacceptable sacrifices are those which are defiled (unclean) sacrifices (SEE: Mark 7:20-23).
Jesus Christ specifically names some defiled people:

1) Those with a bad tongue (v. 20) (sinful speech - cp. James 3:6). "That which cometh out of the man" – specifically from his mouth - cp. parallel passage Mt.15:18)
2) Those with evil thoughts (lust, etc.) -v. 21
3) Those involved in extra-marital affairs (adulteries)
4) Those involved in pre-marital sex (fornications - also includes other types of sexual immorality)
5) Those who take the life of innocent people (EX: abortion. NOTE; Hatred is on equal par with murder – Mt. 5:21-22)
6) Those guilty of taking what did not belong to them ("thefts")
7) Those who idolize things that belong to others ("covetousness")
8) Those who think, plan, & do evil ("wickedness")
9) Those who lie (deceive by not telling the truth)
10) Those who dress immodestly or act indecently (lasciviousness = sensuality, lewdness)
11) Those who envy others (jealousy) (an "evil eye")
12) Those who speak against God or His Word ("blasphemy")
13) Those who think too much of themselves ("pride")
14) Those who live for vanity ("foolishness" = lit. those who live their lives without thinking seriously)

An unclean sacrifice is no sacrifice!
A true sacrifice is one that costs you something.
To live in sin and offer yourself to God is to give God garbage.

2. A complete sacrifice

When a sacrifice was made in ancient Israel on the brazen altar, the sheep, goat, or calf was given completely over to God to be burned with fire. The offerer could lay no further claim on it.

In Leviticus chapter 1, the first offering required after the great Passover sacrifice was the burnt offering. Just as the offering of Christ on Calvary symbolized the passover lamb and our salvation, the whole burnt offering symbolizes our total dedication.

--You either are completely given over to God, or you are not.
*It's all or nothing!
To be acceptable, it must be all (no man can serve two masters).

B. Why should you give such a sacrifice?

--It is "your reasonable service"
(sacrifice is the logical, intelligent choice)
"Reasonable" - we derive our English word "logic" from the Greek.
The believer's devotion to God as a living sacrifice is not an unreasonable demand. It is very logical, a very intelligent choice.
Our complete sacrifice is very logical for two reasons:

1. Sacrifice is the logical response to God's ownership of my life.

In light of the mercies of God, the most reasonable response of the believer would be total devotion.

Poem: "After all He's done for me..."

If you are saved, God is not asking you to give Him anything that is not His already (our spirit and our body is God's already - I Cor. 6:19, 20).

ILLUS: It would be foolish for you to buy a car and not use it. God bought you and now desires to use you. It would be wrong for the one from whom you bought it to demand it back after the price was paid. Christ paid the price to buy you. If He has bought you, what right do you have to selfishly reserve the rights to your life?

2. Sacrifice is the logical key to the abundant life

The Lord Jesus did not give you eternal life so that life would be a drag (dull and boring). Rather, He came that we might have life, and that we might have it more abundantly (Jn. 10:10).

The most <u>intelligent</u> decision in the world is to dedicate your life to Christ, when you realize the rewards of such dedication.

The most irrational, <u>foolish</u> decision would be to not surrender all.

Our amount of joy is determined by the degree to which we surrender to God.

Someone who surrenders all (has nothing held back) lives the most abundant life.

II. Full Surrender is: Letting God <u>CHANGE</u> your life

(A <u>transformed</u> life - v. 2)

A. The <u>Enemy</u> of a transformed life: The world's mold

"Be not conformed" - stop allowing yourselves to be put into a mold or form (present, passive imperative).

Evidently, some of the Roman Christians were being influenced by the pagan Roman society, hence the present imperative calls for a stopping of a lifestyle already in progress.

"Conformed" - cookie cutter or mold

"This world" - lit. this "age" (aion) in contrast to the coming one.

This age is called an "evil age." (I Cor. 2:6, 8; Gal. 1:4)

Beware of the New Age Movement.

Is your thinking like this age?

If all of our calculations, plans, ambitions, decisions, etc., are determined by what falls within life here, then we are thinking like children of this age.

God is calling on us to not allow ourselves to be cloned into the spiritual and moral characteristics of the <u>times</u> in which we live.

Whether you realize it or not, the world (instigated by spiritual wickedness & demonic forces) is specifically trying to mold (structure) your mind (your way of thinking) - via the media (TV, radio, movies, magazines, books, etc.)

Don't be deceived into thinking that you have to match the world's fashions, thinking, planning, speaking, etc.

We are not to be like the world - READ Eph. 4:17-19

Love not the world (Cosmos) - I John 2:15-17

Being salt and light (Mt. 5:13-16), we are to be distinct from the world.
Don't be like a chameleon, which takes its color from its surroundings.
Believers must learn to swim against the tide (drift) of this age.

We must be willing to cut across the grain of this contemporary world-view. Even if it means standing alone.

B. The Entrance into a transformed life: A renewed mind

"Be ye transformed" = lit. "allow yourself to be changed in form" (pres. pass. imper.)
"Metamorphoo" - from which we get our English word metamorphosis, which means to undergo a change in physical form, structure, or substance, usually resulting in a striking alternation in appearance and character. EX: catapillar into a butterfly; tadpole into frog

The secret to being transformed is **"by the renewing of your mind."**
"Renewing" = to be new again; to have a restructured thought life; a new way of thinking or philosophy of life in contrast to the world.
Like spring cleaning is to a house, so Bible reading and instruction is to the mind.
"Mind" - the seat of understanding, where we think, perceive, and determine our actions and attitudes.
"You are what you think" (what you think is what you are).
To have a renewed mind is to have our minds brought back to the conditions of Adam's mind before sin entered the world (God-centered, pure, productive thought life).
Eph. 4:23 - "renewed in the spirit of your mind"
Being "brainwashed" is good, if it is God's Word that is doing the washing! (Eph. 5:26).
You will be brainwashed one way or the other - either by the world or by God. You must choose to whom you will listen.
When you read the Bible, you will not remember everything, but it will change you. ILLUS: of bucket with holes in it (some water leaks out, but it cleans the bucket in the process). ILLUS: I don't know what I ate last Monday, but I know I was nourished by it.

C. The End Result of a transformed life: The will of God

The reason why we should refuse to be conformed to the world, and the reason why we should have a transformed mind is so that we might know God's will for our lives.
"That you may prove" - in order that you may accept after testing.
The word "prove" describes the transformed mind's ability to examine the crossroads of our lives and to determine which direction would be God's choice.

We need to know God's will in regards to:
1) Morals of right and wrong
2) Issues which face society
3) Specific direction in our lives
   a)Whom to marry
   b)what to do (vocationally)
   c)where to live, etc.

God's will is described in three ways:

1) God's will is **"good"** -
   It is good - morally (our lives will be clean)
   It is good - socially (our relationships will be blessed)
   It is good - pragmatically (we will be successful - Prov. 3:5-6)
   To not be in God's will is to live a wasted life.
2) God's will is **"acceptable"** (well-pleasing)
   Knowing and doing what God wants is life's greatest privilege.
   To please God by knowing and doing His will is life's greatest opportunity.

3) God's will is **"perfect"**

It is complete - it's all you need for happiness and success.

God's will is "good, acceptable, and perfect" - the contrast is the world's mold, which is no good, unacceptable (to God), and infinitely opposite of perfect.

Section 31: ROMANS 12:3-8
"YOU - A Gift to the Body of Christ"

***God wants to use you and the gift He gave you in the body of Christ!**

In order for God to use you and the gift(s) He gave you, remember these two exhortations:

I. Don't think too much of your gifts (v. 3-5)

(Have a humble mind in the Body of Christ)

Pride is foolish when you realize:

A. God intends us all to have differing abilities (v. 4)

B. We are all in this Body together (v. 5a)

C. How much we need each other (v. 5b)

II. Don't fail to use your gifts (v. 6-8)

(Have a servant's heart in the Body of Christ)

A. Use your gift! (v. 6b-8a)

B. Use your gift to the fullest! (v. 8b)

INTRODUCTION:

After exhorting the Roman Christians to let God have their lives (v. 1), and to let God change their lives (v. 2), now Paul makes an appeal to let God use their lives (v. 3ff).

"After a right relation to God (v. 1-2) comes a right relation to our fellow believers" (Thomas, p. 331).

After surrender (v. 1-2) comes service (v. 3ff).

We are saved to serve (Eph. 2:10 - *"unto good works...before ordained"*) and we are gifted to serve in a particular way.

V. 3 Many Christians tend to go to two sinful extremes -

Some say, "I'm worthless" (I have nothing to offer the Body of Christ).

Others say, "I'm indispensable" (I'm everything in the Body of Christ).

Both of these extremes are corrected in verses 3-8.

***God wants to use you and the gift He gave you in the body of Christ!**

In order for God to use you and the gift(s) He gave you, remember these two exhortations:

I. Don't think too much of your gifts (v. 3-5)

(Have a humble mind in the Body of Christ)

Some think within themselves: "I'm the greatest thing that ever happened to Christianity." "What would this church be without me?"

To such attitudes Paul responds:

V. 3 - "For I say, through the grace given unto me" - a reference to Paul's position as Apostle to the Gentiles (Rom. 15:15-16; SEE Eph. 3:1-8).

Paul, who is about to exhort us toward humility (v. 3b), himself reveals humility as he gives credit to the grace of God for making him what he was.
Humility because of the grace of God was a characteristic feature of Paul's life as evidenced by the words: "By the grace of God, I am what I am" (I Cor. 15:10).
"To every man" - the appeal to humility is for all Christians (No one has the right to claim superiority in the body of Christ).
"Every man who is among you" = Everyone who is in your midst (a reference to the local church at Rome).
The exhortation that Paul will give comes to Christians in the setting of a church.
"Think more highly" - to think too much of yourself; lit. to think above and beyond what you should
To suppose you are something you really are not - is pride or arrogance.
[NOTE Paul's previous warning to the saved Gentiles about viewing themselves as something special and superior to the Jews who were lost and alienated from God's salvation (Rom. 11:18-20, 25)]
"Think soberly" - to think sensibly. Someone who is proud is like someone who is drunk - they both think they can do anything; they both think they are the greatest; they both think too highly of themselves.
The phrase "to think soberly" is actually one word in the Greek - lit. to have a "saved mind" (Gk. "sozo" = to save; "phren" = the mind).
To have an accurate viewpoint of ourselves is a result of salvation. The more you know about your depravity and the greatness of God's saving grace, the more sensible your own estimation of yourself will be.
NOTE: This is why Paul adds the phrase - **"according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."**
Our duty is--through eyes of faith--to see our gifts and only our gifts; and to by faith exercise them.
It is not wrong to recognize gifts in your life (recognition of gifts is what is meant by the reference to **"faith"**).

It is wrong:
1) To suppose that you by yourself gained that gift (sinful independence)
2) To suppose that you are better than others because of the gift you have (sinful feeling of superiority)
3) To suppose that you have gifts that you really don't have (sinful self-deception).

We need to use what we have and recognize what we don't have; see our strengths and know our limitations, and work accordingly.
V. 3b
". . . God hath dealt . . . the measure of faith."
"Dealt" = to divide up; allot; to measure out.
Lit. "God has measured to each (of you) a measure of faith" - God determines the degree (extent) of your faith. The "faith" described is a faith for living the Christian life (Rom. 1;17). It is the faith which motivates and energizes you to use your gift(s) with eternity in mind.

God cannot and will not use a proud individual.
Why not? Because God wants the glory for what He does through your life. Pride robs the credit from God. *Phil. 2:3 - Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves."* "Vainglory" - the idea of a "look at me" selfish attitude.

Three humbling thoughts:

A. *Pride is foolish when you realize:*
God intends us all to have differing abilities (v. 4)
(Our Diversity in the Body)

"We have many members . . . not the same office."
"Office" = function, practice, action

Just as we have many parts (**"members"**) in our physical, human body, and each part has a different function
(KJV = **"office"**), so is the Body of Christ.
The various parts of our physical body can do some things, but cannot do others.
EX: The eye can see, but cannot hear;
the ear can hear, but cannot taste;
the lungs can take in air, but not water (or else you have pneumonia)

ILLUS: of the foolishness to put all attention to one part of the body. EX: Someone who exercises his biceps but has "chicken" legs and a bony chest.
Every body part is essential and should be developed in the Body of Christ. There should be no "show off" parts.
Don't have an overestimation of your worth to the Body of Christ.
Don't be deceived into thinking that the other "body parts" are inferior to you or other members have a lesser function than you.

Diversity in the church Body is part of the marvelous plan and wisdom of God.
The key to any sport team is diversity - each player performing his own role (job) to accomplish the goals of the team.

B. *Pride is foolish when you realize:*
We are all in this Body together (v. 5a)
(Our Unity in the Body)

"So we being many are one body in Christ"
The goal of ministry is "unity" and maturity (SEE Eph. 4:11-13).
If the key to our effectiveness for Christ is our unity (SEE John 17:21-23), then we had better be on guard because our unity will be that which Satan will attack. His most effective weapon against unity is pride!

We must stop viewing And see ourselves as a

ourselves as an:		vital part of the whole:
stranded soldier	--	army
independent player	--	team
isolated soloist	--	grand choir
sole laborer	--	great work force
unneeded church member	--	Body of Christ

C. *Pride is foolish when you realize:*
How much we need each other (v. 5b)
(Our Dependency in the Body)

"Everyone (of us are) members one of another"
We need each other!
"Members" - this word shows the need for commitment to church membership.
No believer is an island unto himself. We need each other!

The dependence of the human body is exemplified by:
Eating -
You depend on your hands to bring the food to your mouth;
you depend on your tongue to tell you if it is too hot, etc.;
you depend on your teeth to chew it up;
your tongue pushes the food back, and you depend on your throat to force it down to your stomach;
you rely on your stomach to digest it with the help of certain acids which come in at just the right time;
your food then passes into the small intestine, where the nutrients are transported to the hungry blood cells which carry the nutrients to various parts of the body to build up muscle tissue, etc.;
then you depend on your large intestine to carry away the waste.
All of the above mentioned functions are essential for a healthy body, and al of the bodily operations work because of the brain.

Just as no part of your human body exists for itself, but for the assistance of some other bodily function, so no part of the Body of Christ is to exist selfishly for itself.

"Spiritual gifts are tools to build with, not toys to play with or weapons to fight with" (Wiersbe, p. 555).

II. Don't fail to use your gifts (v. 6-8)
(Have a servant's heart in the Body of Christ)

Our question is not "How can I shine?" (v. 3-5) But "How can I serve?" (v. 6-8) (Thomas, citing Gore, p. 333)

V. 6-8 All of the gifts mentioned are gifts that help (edify) others. (none are for self-edification)

Every gift we have is to be used to help someone else or else we are misusing or neglecting what God gave us.

A. Use your gift! (v. 6b-8a)

V. 6

Prophecy = to forthtell God's Word (I Cor. 14).

Our speaking about the Lord is a result of our faith in the Lord (II Cor. 4:13 - *"We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak."*).

"Faith" is a gift from God.

Some believers have it to a greater degree than others (since God has opened their eyes to more truth in the Scripture).

In a context similar to Romans 12:3-8, note what Paul says in I Cor. 12:4-7, 11 -- Cp. v. 9 - "To another faith by the same Spirit"

Faith is a gift (cp. Eph. 2:8).

"Proportion" - a different word, but similar idea as verse 3 ("measure of faith"). As in verse 3, God is "warning against going beyond what God has given" (Vine, p. 225).

In other words, don't prophecy (preach) about that which God has not revealed.

If God did not say it, don't proclaim it.

If your gift is forthtelling the word of God, don't go beyond that which your beliefs (convictions) dictate. Preach only what you know to be true; don't utter speculations.

Neither emotion nor human reason should dictate our message, but faith.

Using computer language, if God gave you 10 megabytes of Bible truth, don't give out 11 megabytes! But on the other hand, don't proclaim only 9 either!

Give to others all that God gave you, but only give what God gave you. This is what is meant by "proportion of faith."

V. 7

"Ministry" = humble service; to be one who helps those in need.

EX:Deacons (Acts 6) Phoebe (Rom. 16:1)

"Teacheth" - to impart Bible knowledge on all levels.

We have so much to teach in the Scriptures, and so many to teach it to in the world, but sad to say the laborers are few.

If teaching is your gift, use it for Christ!

V. 8a

"Exhorteth" = to encourage; it describes someone with the gift of comforting others (to lift up others).

Examples of the neglected talent in the Body of Christ:

Approximately 5% of believers do 95% of the ministering in the average local church.

B. Use your gift to the fullest! (v. 8b)

In verses 7 - 8a God is concerned that we use our gift, whereas in v. 8b, God is emphasizing how we use our gift.

Note the change in grammatical structure:

V. 7-8a = prophecy . . . prophecy
ministry . . . ministering
teacheth . . . teaching
exhorteth . . . exhortation

V. 8b =
giveth . . . simplicity
ruleth . . . diligence
mercy . . . cheerfulness

V. 8

"Simplicity" denotes:

1) Sincere giving (from "haplous" which means single, in contrast to "diplous" - double). Our motives are to be single - to please God; no duplicity.
2) Generous giving - giving liberally (same word translated liberally - Ii Cor. 8:2, 9:13). In other words, our giving is to be both open-hearted (sincere) and open-handed (generous) (Rienecker, p. 376).

Someone who gives with "simplicity" does not keep a complex journal of every gift they give. Rather, they give and think nothing of it.

"Ruleth" = lit. to stand in front; i.e. to lead. The gift of leadership is in view.

"Diligence" = earnestness, zeal.

This word has the idea of doing something in a businesslike manner ("business" - v. 11), as opposed to a lazy, "lazaifaire," "let life go on," looser fashion.

"Cheerfulness" = hilariousness.

Be a light-hearted, joyful forgiver.

If showing mercy is a problem for you, maybe it is because you have never been on the receiving end of the mercy of God.

If you are conscious of His mercy, showing it yourself will be "no problem!"

CONCLUSION:

We are to be "good stewards of the manifold grace of God"
(I Pet. 4:10).

Section 32: ROMANS 12:9-21
"Higher Dimensions of Christian Living"

***Your lifestyle as a Christian should be distinctly different than the world's!**
In verses 9-21, God lists for us nine higher levels of living the Christian life:

I. A Higher Dimension of LOVE (v. 9a)
II. A Higher Dimension of MORAL STANDARDS (v. 9b)
III. A Higher Dimension of FRIENDSHIP (v. 10)
IV. A Higher Dimension of SERVICE (v. 11)
V. A Higher Dimension of SPIRITUALITY (v. 12)
VI. A Higher Dimension of GIVING (sacrifice) (v. 13)
VII. A Higher Dimension of DISPLAYING EMOTIONS (v. 14-15)
VIII. A Higher Dimension of THINKING (v. 16)

INTRODUCTION:
As a Christian you are different. The result of being different is living different.
After exhorting us to non-conformity to the world (v. 2), God describes in verses 9-20 a pattern of living that is totally different from the way the world lives and reacts.
Our lifestyle is unusual, unique, "out-of-this-world." We should not be ashamed to live on a new dimension, or on a "higher plane," for unto this we were saved.
ILLUS: Bob Jones University's Film Production is called "Unusual Films" Why? Because they are distinctly different than the productions of Hollywood.
Verses 9-21, basically describe our distinctiveness in regards to relationships [EX: our relationships to our Christian brothers (v. 9-13), to those in need (v. 13), to those who oppose us (v. 14), to those who are poor and humble (v. 16), and to those who do us wrong (v. 17-21)]
Much is known about the spirituality of an individual by the way he relates to others.
ILLUS: Song "Higher Ground"
***Your lifestyle as a Christian should be distinctly different than the world's!**
In verses 9-21, God lists for us nine higher levels of living the Christian life:

I. A Higher Dimension of LOVE (v. 9a)

"Let love be without dissimulation" -
If something is "simulated" it means it is a fake or phoney; it is something made to look genuine but really isn't. The word "dissimulation" literally means without hypocrisy. The word hypocrite was used to describe a stage-actor or someone who wore a mask to cover up his real identity, to pretend to be someone else.
The world may portray a pretentious love (EX: salesmen, etc.), but we cannot.
We are to love in an unfeigned manner (II Cor. 6:6).
I Pet. 1:22 - *"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently;"*
How can you "play act" love?
1)By acting concerned about someone, when really you are not (a pretentious caring)
2)By giving with the motive of selfishly getting (a pretentious generosity)
3)By serving with the intention of receiving recognition (honor from men) (a pretentious service)

Love does not wear a mask.
Love is not an actor, or showman.
Love is not to be mere externals.
Love is not to be motivated by selfish ambitions.
Don't be a pretender in the matter of love.
Hypocrisy is so devilish because it is a contradiction of truth. "Our Lord exposed its diabolical character when he said to Judas, "Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" (Luke 22:48) (Murray, p. 128).

II. A Higher Dimension of MORAL STANDARDS (v. 9b)

The world tends to be neutral concerning absolutes, right & wrong, standards of morality, the "Judeo-Christian ethic."
Today, there is a big push among liberals to bring into the public school system something called "Valueless Education"
That is, an education where right and wrong are "relative"; therefore, they are not essentials to "real training."
An education without values is exactly what it is called - "Valueless" -- it's worthless!
Contrary to the world, we are not to be neutral concerning good and evil.

"Abhor" = to hate something to the point of separating yourself from it.
The Greek word is "apostugeo" "Apo" = away from (the idea is separation from) "Stugeo" = to hate, to be disgusted at, to be horrified at, to be shocked or appalled (Mk. 10:22).
The things we would never dream of allowing to enter into our eye gate or ear gate 10-20 years ago, now don't seem so bad.
Satan has two methods to soften God's people concerning evil.

1) The Shock Treatment - in which he exposes us (usually via the media) to an extremely gross form of sin, so that other sin seems mild in comparison.

OR 2) The Desensitizing Treatment - in which we gradually get introduced to "mild" forms of ungodliness in small doses, sot hat after a period of time we have been conformed to the world without even realizing it.

Through a conditioning process, the world has systematically been inoculating God's people and numbing our feelings toward evil (EX: frog boiling in water).
There is a gradual movement toward neutrality, toward compromise.
We cannot be neutral regarding sin.
As Jude said, We must hate "even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 23).

"Cleave" - to glue, cement, bond, or join together.
NOTE: After calling upon the believer to be detached (totally removed) from evil, God now commands us to be attached (totally glued) to good.
God's exhortation is toward a continual, permanent attachment to that which is good.
The decision is yours to join yourself (middle voice) together with moral goodness. No one can make that decision for you.
The same word is used by Jesus to illustrate the permanent inseparable bond of marriage (Mt. 19:5).

God is calling for commitment.
We need to be believers who are
committed to truth,
committed to high moral standards,
committed to family
committed to evangelism & discipleship

We should be as fastly joined to good **practically** as we are to the Lord positionally ("he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit" [I Cor. 6:17]).
If it is good, we need to be 100% for it; if it is evil, we need to be 100% against it.

III. A Higher Dimension of FRIENDSHIP (v. 10)

"Kindly affectioned" = Greek "philostorga" "Phileo" - affection; "Storga" - loyal, family devotion.
"To have a family affection; a loyal devotion like you have with your natural family members"
"Brotherly love" = we are to love each other as you do your physical brother. We are brothers and sisters in Christ. We are in God's family.
We should love each other because we are brethren.
"We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren" (I Jn. 3:14; cp. Gal. 6:10).
In the early church, during a time of severe opposition to Christian, God's people stayed close to each other and cared for each other. The heathen were so deeply impressed by such a unique display of generosity, grace, and selflessness, that they said, "Behold, how these Christians love one another!"
"In honor" = treat others like a dignitary, someone special.
"Preferring" = lit. to let others go ahead of you. The word corresponds to the word "honor." Someone who is honorable goes first.
We need to put others first, to esteem others as better than ourselves (Phil. 2:3).
As Christians we should not strive to outdo one another to gain honor, but we should try to outdo one another in showing honor.
In other words, whether or not you honor me, I should turn around and give you double honor in return.

IV. A Higher Dimension of SERVICE (v. 11)

"Not slothful in business"
"Slothful" = lazy, idle, to be slow and "poky" (Robertson, p. 404).
[SEE: Prov. 6:6-11, 26:13-16]
"In business" = lit. in zeal [same word is translated "diligence" in v. 8]
Laziness may be a characteristic of the world (as they seek to earn the most money with the least amount of effort), but should not be for the Christian.
Sad to say, sometimes the world is more industrious and hard working at their cause than Christians are in theirs.
As Jesus described, it is often the case that: *"The children of this world are in their generation wiser than children of light"* (Lk. 16:8)
"Fervent in spirit" = burning, boiling, red hot on fire for God in our human spirit, as we serve Christ in spiritual matters.
As is typically the case for new converts, the Bible describes a man named Apollos, who was "fervent in the spirit (as) he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord. . ." (Acts 18:25).
Our fervency is what should distinguish us from the main line denominations. Our spiritual heat should be many degrees higher than the most zealous of cults.

Solomon said, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" (Eccl. 9:10).

Time is so short,
the need is so great
and our "business" is so urgent
that we can't afford to be asleep on our Lord!
It's time to awake! (SEE Rom. 13:11-12)

"Awake thou that sleepest" (Eph. 5:14).
It's time to get "fired up"

It's time to break out of our ice closets; it's time to scrape off the frost; it's time to escalate our spiritual temperatures out of lukewarmness (Rev. 3:16) and serve the Lord with fervency.
Some things can't wait until tomorrow!

"Serving the Lord" = the "service" (douleuo) described is that of a slave (doulos).
We need the attitude of a humble slave who views all that he does for his master as "the least he is responsible to do." It's our duty! (SEE: Luke 17:7-10).

You can never serve Christ too much!
Everything we do in life (secular or "sacred") is to be service as unto the Lord
(I Cor. 10:31 - "...all to the glory of God").
(Eph. 6:5-7 - "...doing service as to the Lord, and not unto men")
If we view everything we do as "serving the Lord," perhaps such motivation will inspire us to do it with a new fervency.

V. A Higher Dimension of SPIRITUALITY (v. 12)

A. "Rejoicing in Hope" (v. 12)

Our spirituality is not to be:
"Blah" - but joyful ("rejoicing")
Weak - but enduring ("patient")
"Turned on" when circumstances are right, and "Turned off" when times are rough, but it is to exhibit faithfulness ("continuing instant")

"Rejoicing" - Jesus came that we might have life and that you might have it more abundantly! (Jn. 10:10).
Living on the "higher plane" is living with real joy. Joy is not mere happiness which depends on "good happenings," but joy finds its well of refreshing waters from a living relationship with the water of life - Jesus Christ.

"Hope" = confidence; certainty.
Our "hope" is a confident expectation, not an unsure speculation (as the word is often used today).
What is our "hope"? It is a fact of the certainty of our salvation and the certainty of our future resurrection (glorified bodies).
Rom. 5:1-2 - "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

Does your salvation cause you to rejoice? If not, perhaps you have gone to the world to find joy.

Paul does not say "rejoicing" in your job" but in your hope.
Paul does not say "rejoicing in your money" but in your hope.
Paul does not say "rejoicing in your girlfriend" but in your hope.
Paul does not say "rejoicing in your easy lifestyle" but in your hope.

If your salvation does not give you reason to rejoice, maybe you don't have it?? Or perhaps you have forgotten that you do?

B. "Patient in Tribulation" (v. 12)

"Patient" - the ability to "remain under" pressure without giving up, quitting, or giving in to the enemy. It means to endure.
"Tribulation" = lit. pressure; those circumstances of life which attempt to squeeze you to the point where you do anything to get out, to run, to quit, to deny your faith.
For the Christian, struggles in life are nothing more than a series of God-assigned tests designed to reveal your faith and make you mature (James 1).
From God's vantage point tribulations are for your growth and maturity - to develop patience (James 1), but from Satan's they comprise a solicitation to evil.

The temptation of:
--financial pressure is to provoke you to be dishonest
--sexual pressure is to provoke you to be immoral
--persecution pressure is to provoke you to be unfaithful

True Christian character is revealed when things get tough, hot, tight, irritable, seeming "not worth it."

Being "patient in tribulation" is:
--Relying on God's grace and faithfulness, when your children are wayward;
--Giving 10% of your income to the Lord, when you don't know how you will pay the rent this month.
--Being faithful to Christ although your spouse, relatives, fellow employees are antagonistic to your faith.
--Keeping yourself morally pure, in the midst of a society that is applying pressure to encourage sex before marriage.

"If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small" (Prov. 24:10).
When pressure strikes the average unsaved person, he, having no convictions, will take the easy way out. This is why it will be so easy for the world to receive "the mark of the Beast." (Rev. 13).

C. "Continuing instant in prayer"

"Continuing instant" = lit. to be "strong towards"; to be faithful; to persevere or endure all attacks from the enemy to try to divert you from praying.
The implication is that prayer is hard work, easy to neglect, difficult to practice.
Satan hates witnessing, but He hates prayer more, because prayer gives power to your witness.
Satan hates pure living, but He is infuriated by prayer, since it is the key to holy living.
Satan hates when you serve the Lord, but he can't stand prayer, because it influences how effectively and consistently you serve.
Satan hates the family, but he really despises prayer, since "the family that prays together, stays together."

The early church "continued steadfastly in...prayers" (Acts 2:42).
Have you slipped in the consistency of your prayer life since you got saved?
One's hope is not that which the average person rejoices in; one's tribulations are not the easiest times of life through which to remain patient; praying is not the most natural thing to be faithful at.

VI. A Higher Dimension of GIVING (sacrifice) (v. 13)

Human sinful nature tends toward stinginess; to hoard, to be greedy. But when you come to grips with the gracious, bountiful riches given to you in Christ - your tight fist becomes an open hand.
No longer is your motto "What's mine is mine and what's yours is mine" . . . but rather, "What's mine is yours" if you have a need.

Unto this level of selflessness we are called. Are you living on higher ground in terms of your giving?
"Distributing" = sharing; giving.
"Necessity" = needs.

Before we supply our "wants" we should make sure we don't know a fellow-Christian who has an unmet need.

"Saints" = fellow-believers.

Rather than giving to the "United Way" "World Relief" or other secular social programs, (where you really don't know how your money is being spent), find a brother in need and personally and tangibly meet that need.

NOTE: The giving of the early church to meet needs - SEE: Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-37.

II Cor. 8:1-5

"Given" = to be devoted to; lit. to "hunt" after or "pursue" after.

"Hospitality" = lit. a lover of strangers. To have affection for those you don't know.

Bible hospitality is not opening your home to relatives nor is it having over well-known friends for coffee and donuts or tea and cookies.

It is opening your home to some newcomer to our church; it is allowing your home to become a "hotel room" for a visiting Christian who passes through NY (Note: discretion is important).

Hospitality is basically saying, "What's mine is yours" for Jesus' sake.

Hospitality is the opposite of clique-ishness; the opposite of only loving those who love you. The opposite of saying, "I'll scratch your back if you first scratch mine."

Only God can give us an ability and desire to love those we barely know, to give to those who have never given to us... but this is living on a higher dimension!

VII. A Higher Dimension of <u>DISPLAYING EMOTIONS</u> (v. 14-15)

V. 14

"Bless" = lit. to say a <u>good word</u>

In the ears of the world, such a statement sounds absurd. They would respond, "You mean God expects me to say something good about those who treat me like dirt?"

Only a Christian has such a capacity.

This whole context (v. 9-21), especially v. 14-21, is basically a restatement of the Beatitudes and Sermon on the Mount of Jesus.

The Beatitudes are often explained away; or interpreted as "Kingdom teaching" (i.e. teaching that only applies to the future kingdom).

To the contrary, those principles are for you and me. Jesus said: *"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (Mt. 5:44).*

"Curse not" - Certainly God never wants his children to use vulgarity or "smut" language toward anyone.

The prohibition against cursing, however, means more than our contemporary usage. It means not to <u>invoke</u> <u>ill fortune</u> upon someone; not to wish that they get <u>paid back</u> for what they did to you; but to rather wish a blessing upon them.

(Example: Melinda Raffensberger's parents pray that the men who murdered their son Witt will get saved!)

(Example: Christ's words while being crucified and reviled - "Father forgive them. . ." [Luke 23:34])

(Example: Stephen's words while being struck by boulders - "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" - Acts 7:60)

Such an attitude is totally contrary to the world, but God is calling His children to a higher level of living.

V. 15

"Rejoicing with them that do rejoice"

Beware: Our sin nature often prompts us to be <u>jealous</u> or <u>envious</u> when others rejoice, when we may not get the same exact blessing (EX: When someone else gets a promotion and you don't; when

another preacher's church is growing and yours isn't; when another person gets engaged and you have not even found a date; when a friend finally got a baby boy and you have all girls, etc.)

Such an attitude of rejoicing shows your:
1. Love *(you don't envy those you love)*
2. Selflessness *(You can honestly be happy because of someone else's happiness)*
3. Faith *(that God knows your needs and desires; and that He is in control and will bless you as He sees fit).*

"Weep with them that weep" -
God now moves to an opposite emotion from that of rejoicing.
Sympathy - is feeling sorry for someone else.
Empathy - is feeling sorry with someone else.
(to be able to feel what they are feeling - to "put yourself in their shoes")
It's often easy to say to someone who is discouraged, down-hearted, saddened by tragedy - "Oh, come on, it's not that bad. Be strong! What are you crying for?"
When we respond this way, we are not living Romans 12:15.
The best therapeutic aid you can be toward those with wounded spirits is to let them know that you really care.
Job could honestly say: (Job 30:25) *"Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? Was not my soul grieved for the poor?"*
Such an attitude is cultivated when we really view ourselves as "family" (brothers).
SEE Heb. 13:1-3

VIII. A Higher Dimension of THINKING (v. 16)

"Be of the same mind" = have the same thoughts toward one another. I.e. think about each other equally with no prejudice or partiality.
The carnal Corinthians needed such a lesson.
They, following the "big shots" of Christianity (I Cor. 1:12) needed the admonition of I Cor. 1:26=31 (READ).
"Mind not high things" - don't have thoughts toward that which is "high" or "exalted" in the eyes of the world. Carnal nature has a tendency to look up to (idolize) people based on worldly things:
1. Wealth
2. Popularity (fame)
3. Talent
4. Position

The true worth of an individual is not measured by how much they have, how many know them, what they can do, or how high they sit, but by who they are - a soul made in the image of God, a blood-bought child of God!
"Condescend" = lit. go along with; be led along with.
God is saying, "Fellowship, associate, make friends with those who are humble or lowly. Those who don't have much in the world's eyes.
"Be not wise in your own conceits" = Don't think too much of yourselves (Rom. 1:25; Prov. 3:7 - give the same imperative). Pride is a killer!

IX. A Higher Dimension of REPAYING ENEMIES (v. 17-21)
(Overcoming evil with good)

Satan is influencing (especially via music) our society toward "war" and "rebellion"
The believer who lives for God will eventually have enemies. Friction will inevitably come as you go

across the grain of the world.
--Jesus had enemies
--Paul had enemies
--Stephen had enemies (Acts 7)
"Jesus warned His disciples that their worst enemies might be those of their own household" (Matt. 10:36) (Wiersbe, p. 556)
Make sure, however, that if you have enemies it is because of the "offense of the cross" (Gal. 5:11; 6:12-15) and not because you are an offensive Christian.

***Paying back evil with evil is wrong on three counts:**

A. Someone who "pays back" evil with evil is Saying that <u>SIN JUSTIFIES SIN</u> (v. 17-18)

V. 17
The world's way of dealing with people is returning "evil for evil" and "good for good". . . "you stab me, I stab you" . . . "You tip me, I tip you."
In NYC, however, it goes: "You tip me, I still stab you."
"Recompense" = to pay back, give back, return.
"To no man" - regardless of who they are, or what they have done.
"Evil <u>for</u> evil" - the word **"for"** ("anti") means "in the place of."
We are not to return evil to <u>replace</u> the evil that someone else gave to us.
Those who fight evil with evil are saying: "You sin gives me a right to sin" (one wrong deserves another).
Of all sinful tendencies, this one is the easiest to <u>give in to</u>, and <u>justify</u>.
We think: "He stabbed me, I'll stab him. He gossiped about me . . . robbed . . . cheated . . . slandered . . . spoke against my child . . . I will do the same to him. He didn't give to me, I won't give to him."
EX: <u>Divorce</u> - "You committed adultery . . . I'm going for a divorce."
EX: <u>Lawsuits</u> - "You ruined my reputation (injured my character),etc., so I am going to sue you!"
EX: <u>Cheating an employer</u> - "He doesn't pay me or treat me like he should, so I'm not going to do my best on the job."
However, no doctor would fight poison with poison! Or disease with disease. That is not a cure.
[NOTE: a vaccine when you are well is given so that you will build up antibodies; no one gives a vaccine to someone who has the virus already. You give an <u>anti-biotic</u> - the opposite of the virus.]

Rather than seeking to justify evil for evil:

1. Seek to show <u>SINCERE GOODNESS</u> toward your enemies (v. 17b)

I Thes. 5:15 - *"See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men."*

"Provide things honest" -

"Provide" = to plan in advance; to think previously as to what you will do for those who did you wrong.

"Honest" = ethical goodness; intrinsic <u>genuine</u> goodness with no cover up.
Even though they may have treated us with unfairness, deceitfulness, maliciousness, we are to return their evil with honest-goodness.
EX: If someone does you "dirty" or "stabs you in the back," you don't invite them over for dinner and then slip some arsenic in the food.

We are not to have any pretentiousness or false motives (of revenge) behind our good treatment of others.

"In the sight of all men" - what they see is what they get. We are not to get revenge by covering up our hidden feelings and acting like all is OK, when really we are seeking occasion to "move in for the kill."

2. Seek to live <u>PEACEABLY</u> with your enemies (v. 18)

"If it be possible" - if you are <u>able</u>, do what is in <u>your power</u> to maintain peaceful relations with others.
"As much as lieth in you" = from your standpoint, seek to be peaceful.
We cannot control whether or not someone else will be peaceful but we <u>can control the peace</u> from <u>our end</u>, <u>from our side</u> of the problem.
Too often you worry about the <u>other</u> side of the problem; you are concerned about their attitude and action toward you, and fail to remember you will not answer to God for them, but for you. Pay attention to how well you are doing to promote a peaceful relationship.
"Live peaceably with <u>all men</u>" -
Do your best to <u>be what you should be</u> to promote harmony and tranquility with:
1)your spouse 2)your employer 3)your neighbors 4)your in-laws and relatives 5)those who "hate your guts"

Some might say: "I can be nice to <u>some</u> enemies, <u>some</u> of the time; but certainly God does not expect me to be nice to <u>all</u> enemies, <u>all</u> of the time, does he?"
ANSWER: There are no exceptions.
Note - **"no man"** (v. 17a); **"all men"** (v. 17b); **"all men"** (v. 18). This includes saved <u>and</u> lost (cp. I Th. 5:15)
V. 18
You cannot influence anyone for righteousness unless they can feel at rest (at ease) in your presence.
James 3:18 - "And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."
Mark 9:50 - "Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? have salt in yourselves and have peace one with another."

B. Someone who "pays back" evil with evil is <u>Taking God's PREROGATIVES</u> in their own hands (v. 19)

"Dearly beloved" - It is God who loves us; therefore, He will see that we are vindicated. Because God loves me, He will fight my battles. He will right all wrongs done to His beloved.
"Avenge" - lit. to "take out justice"; to seek to make a matter <u>right</u> by taking out revenge toward someone. To take <u>justice</u> into your own hands.
Some wrong thing that doing evil toward others is <u>justified</u> because of what they did to you.
"Give place unto wrath" - it is not "our place" to vent anger; it is God's place; it is His prerogative.
When we seek to make right a wrong done to us by retaliating, we have entered into God's place as judge and executioner.
[NOTE: Government does have the right as "the minister of God" to judge and pay back evil doers - See following context, especially v. 4b. But we are not to take the law into our own hands.]
Why should we "give place to wrath"?
Answer: Because the Bible says so!
"For [because] <u>it has been written</u>: Vengeance belongs to Me, I will pay back," says the LORD.
Paul is citing Deut. 32:35.

Don't be quick to defend yourself. If you do, then the Lord can't defend you. God does a better job at being a prosecuting attorney anyway.
Just as we would be fools to go to the court of law to defend ourselves without a lawyer, so is the Christian who attempts to defend himself.
David said, "Plead my cause, O LORD, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me." Ps. 35:1
(Cp. the LORD's future defense of Israel - Isa. 49:25-26)
Remember, if God commands us not to "get even," then just the thought or desire to "get even" is wrong (sinful).

C. Someone who "pays back" evil with evil is Not practicing the LAW OF LOVE (v. 20-21)

Note the balance in the context between the negative prohibition and the positive injunction.
God says, **"Recompense to no man for evil"** (v. 17), **"avenge not yourselves"** (v. 19); **"be not overcome"** (v. 21).
Then in each case, He balances it out by commanding something we are to do. We are not merely to stop the negative (not give evil for evil) but we are to go a giant step further and replace it by doing the positive ("provide" [v. 17], "live peaceably" [v. 18], "feed him" [v. 20], "overcome evil with good" [v. 21]).
According to verse 19, to leave the retribution up to God requires faith. Faith in the fact that God will make right all wrongs.
According to verse 20, to return blessing to those who gave you misery, requires love. A love for their soul and their relationship to God.
Jesus taught against retaliation (SEE Mt. 5:38-48)
EX: How Elisha treated his enemies (a whole host of Syrian soldiers who had come to take Elisha captive (II Ki. 6:22, 23).
EX: Joseph's response to his brothers.
"Heap coals" = to pile up fiery coals of conviction.
Each good deed is another coal, a re-confirmation of the inexcusability of your enemy's behavior and attitude toward you.
When you do good in return for the bad that someone else did to you, you cause the other person to be ashamed or embarrassed because of their wickedness. Such shame, brings conviction, and conviction, if responded to correctly, will bring about repentance!
Observe how God treated us when we were enemies (Rom. 5:6-10; Eph. 2:3-4).
The goodness of God has as its goal to bring man to repentance (Rom. 2:4).

Paul is quoting a Proverb (a portion of true wisdom) - Prov. 25:21-22 - "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee."

Doing good to an enemy will not only have an effect on your enemy, but will have a benefit for you.
Prov. 25:22 adds this phrase: "...and the LORD shall reward thee."
I Peter 3:9 - "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise, blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing."
God sees how you treat those who are your enemies. Though your enemies may never repay you, God will!
Jesus promised in Matt. 6:4 that our Father who sees our alms (righteous deeds) [though they are done in secret, with no one else knowing] "shall reward thee openly."

"Will they take advantage of us? Will they hate us more?"
Only the Lord knows. Our task is not to protect ourselves but to obey the Lord and leave the results to Him." (Wiersbe, p. 556).
What if they don't change at all? What if our efforts of love don't convert them? In such cases, "we have still experienced the love of God in our own hearts and have grown in grace" (Wiersbe, p. 556).
V. 21
How do you "win a fight" as a Christian?
"Be not overcome of evil" = do not be conquered by evil.
The implication is that evil--if returned for evil--makes you the loser, the victim, the casualty.
Sin conquers you every time you choose to lower yourself and yield to it. (Rom. 6:16).

"Overcome evil with good" - the secret to conquering evil (on a personal level) is with good.
Showers of goodness quench the flames of evil. This is lifestyle of one living on a higher plane.

"Overcome evil with good" - the way to fight fire is not with more fire.
You don't quench fire with fire. But with the opposite of fire.
The best way to fight fire is not to add fuel to the fire, but to pour on that which robs the fire of its fuel.

CONCLUSION:
Doing good to those who do evil to you does not come natural.
But whoever said, we as Christians were to do what comes natural?
We are to live above the world, according to supernatural (Holy Spirit) promptings and impulses, not according to the flesh.
This is life on the higher plane!
Who is it that has done you wrong. Call that individual (or individuals) to mind.
Determine in your heart, right now, what good thing you are going to do for them. Maybe write a card, letter, mail a gift, invite them over for dinner, etc. Pray for them also.

Section 33: ROMANS 13:1-7
"OBEY THE LAW!"

(The Believer and Governmental Authority)
***You must submit to the law! (v. 1a)**
Four Reasons why you should obey governmental authority:
I. ***Reason # 1 - We should submit to the law:***

INTRODUCTION: What would society be like without laws?
Have you ever imagined what life would be like in NYC if there were no laws?
The existence of law is a clear testimony to one fact: "Man is depraved."
The humanistic teachers of today can call man "good" all they want; however, all the evidence shows just the opposite! (Rom. 3:10, 23).
Law would not be needed if there were no such thing as sin.
If man were flawlessly perfect (as originally created) there would exist no need for law.
However, because man is rebellious (due to his fallen nature), we need laws.

Because man is selfish (often at the expense of others), we need laws.
Because man is greedy, we need laws against stealing.
Because man is perverted, we need laws against rape and incest.
Because man lies, we need laws against fraud.
Because man is vengeful and cruel, we need laws against murder, attempted murder, and physical abuse.

"Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions" (Gal. 3:19)
I Tim. 1:9-10 - "Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine."
"For by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:20) (in a lawful society, man is made aware of his sinfulness and need for salvation).
"The law entered that the offense might abound" (Rom. 5:20, cp. 7:7).
V. 1
"Every soul" = every living being. The obligation to obey government applies to all people. No one excluded. [unless you are dead; hense, the word "soul" refers to living.]
"Be subject" = to place yourself under; to take your place in rank; to submit to the authority over you.
"Higher powers" = governing authorities.
After commanding all men to submit to the law, God gives four reasons why we should [NOTE: The word "for" (meaning "because") - v. 1, 3, 5, 6]

Each of the four reasons can simply be stated in one word: We ought to submit to the law because of:

1) "God" (v. 1-2)
2) "Wrath" (v. 3-4)
3) "Conscience" (v. 5)

and 4) "Obligation" (debt or dues - v. 6-7)

***You must submit to the law! (v. 1a)**

Four Reasons why you should obey governmental authority:

I. *Reason # 1 - We should submit to the law:* TO HONOR GOD (v. 1-2)

V. 1

"For there is no power but of God" - The word "for" gives us a very good reason to obey the "higher powers" (governing authorities).

The reason is, God is the originator or establisher of all true, bonified authorities.

Examples:

1) The home - the husband (I Cor. 11:3)
2) The church - the pastor(s) (Heb. 13:7, 17)
3) The society - government officials

"The powers that be" = the authorities that presently exist.

"Are ordained of God" = lit. have been placed by God (perfect tense)

It is God who established the principle of government ("authority") in the past.

Contrary to the humanists of today, our law system did not originate over a "millions of years" evolutionary process. But God established law.

> A detailed system of law existed even before the Mosaic Law, as evidenced by the archaeological finding of "Hammurabi's Code of Laws." Hammurabi, who reigned from 1728 - 1686 B.C. (at least 3 centuries [300 years] before the Law was given to Moses) wrote down many laws strikingly similar to the Law of Moses.

It is important to note that:

1) God ordained (appointed) the fact of government, not necessarily the forms of government that exist today.
   EX: of inferior forms of government:
   --Communism - A forced redistribution of wealth (taking it from those who earned it and giving it to those who did not). No one owns private property under Communism.
   --Totalitarianism - Dictatorship (EX: Hitler); the state has total control over everything in a society.
2) God instituted the principle of law and justice, not necessarily the specific laws that a given government might legislate.
   EX: of inferior laws:
   --Legalized abortion (freedom to murder)
   --No Bible reading in public schools (viewed as unconstitutional)
   --Murderers gaining freedom (EX: Charles Manson getting weekend passes)
   --Compulsory education (the education of children is the responsibility of the parents, not the state)
   --Social Security (government becoming a provider of goods and services [seeds of Socialism])
   --Certain "Anti-discrimination" laws - forcing an employer to hire homosexuals, etc.

Despite the growing inadequacies in our crumbling government, praise God some element of justice remains.
Bad government is better than no government.
If there were no government authority, there would be anarchy and lawless, wild, uncontrollable, barbaric behavior.
Society would be like a roller coaster off its tracks, like a river over its banks, or like nuclear waste outside of its container.
There must be law and order, restraints, enforced boundaries.

V. 2

"Resisteth" = to place oneself against; to oppose; or rebel.

"The ordinance of God" - the institution of God.

Certain forms of civil disobedience--taking the law into one's own hands, or refusal to obey the law of the land--is sin against God!

Why? Because God established government.

"Damnation" = judgment

> The judgment in view is no doubt temporal (in this life, by rulers - v. 3); but also it will be answered for at the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:1-15).
>
> You will not get away with breaking the law! *"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). "Be sure your sin will find you out." (Numbers 32:23)*

There are times when it is right to break the law.
When is it okay?
*When man's law conflicts with God's law. [It is legitimate to disobey the government when it imposes a law that, if obeyed, would force the Christian to violate a Biblical conviction]
Three Biblical examples of when Christians can disobey government:
1. When it interferes with your prayer life (Dan. 6)
2. When it interferes with your worship (Dan. 3)
3. When it interferes with your witnessing (Acts 4:19-20)

"We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29)
Examples of situations when it is right to disobey the law:
When the law forbids evangelism
church attendance
Bible reading and prayer
Child discipline
The reason for separation of church and state is:
1. To keep the church from becoming political, and the state (government) from becoming a religion (EX: the corruption of a "state-church" as Roman Catholicism in the Dark Ages and the Anglican Church etc.)
2. To safeguard the state from telling the church who or how to worship. The state is never to impose (force) a belief or practice on the church.

II. *Reason # 2 - We should submit to the law:* TO AVOID PUNISHMENT (v. 3-4)

V. 3
A law-abiding citizen will not be afraid of the law-enforcing authorities.
Someone who lives a life of good works (or good behavior) will not feel guilty whenever he sees a policeman nor will he hide what he is doing when a "blue car" passes by. Someone who obeys the traffic laws (EX speed limit) will not be looking in his rear view mirror constantly. Someone who is honest and respectful of others and their property will not live in constant fear of "getting caught!"
"Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power?" - Do you want to not live in terror of the law? Do you wish to be free from fear?
Wouldn't it be great to not wake up every morning with paranoia?
The secret to living a life free from "law-enforcement paranoia" is to simply practice what is good. Not only will you be free from having "the shakes" but you might even get recognition from the authorities for honoring the law (v. 3b).
V. 4
"He *(government)* is the minister of God to thee for good"
"Minister" = servant. The same word as translated "deacon" (diakonos).
"to thee" = government to be a servant to the people (not a dictator)
"For good" = government is to help make this world a better place to live; it is for our benefit, that we might have freedom and peace. God not only teaches us to obey government leaders but to pray for them - so that we might enjoy such peace (I Tim. 2:1-4).
"He beareth (carries) not the sword in vain" -
"Sword" - the symbol of law enforcement
"In vain" - for nothing; for no purpose; a police officer does not carry a gun for nothing. It is not a decorative piece of metal, designed to make his hip attractive!
He carries it to use it, when the need arises.
Government has the authority (under God) to practice corporal punishment upon criminals.
Capitol punishment is Biblical. It is not murder because murder is an indivdual taking the life of an innocent person. Capitol punishment is the law taking the life of a guilty criminal.
Gen. 9:6 - "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man."

Num. 35:33 - "So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed by the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it."

Acts 25:11 - "For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Caesar."

"A revenger" - Someone who carries out justice by executing God's wrath upon the one who practices evil. [NOTE: previous context - Individuals are not to avenge themselves (12:19); but are to leave the "getting even" up to God. Government, however, is God's only legitimate means to do His work of vengeance by human beings.]

A just government's best friend is a law-abiding citizen (of all people, Christians should be the most law-abiding citizens).

What a shame it is for a Christian to go to jail for evil doing *(I Pet. 4:15 - "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other matters.")*

III. *Reason # 3 - We should submit to the law:* TO KEEP A CLEAN CONSCIENCE (v. 5)

An observation: Lawbreakers with any conscience at all will generally be nervous people, jumpy, shaky. Why? Because they have a guilty conscience.

"Ye must needs" = It is a binding obligation or an absolute necessity that you place yourself under the law.

If the fear of punishment is not a good enough reason for you to obey the law, obey the law for your own conscience's sake.

Your **"conscience"** is "that internal voice" put into you by God (Rom. 2:15) that tells you whether something is right or something is wrong. "I can do this; I can't do that."

The Bible says that even unsaved "Gentiles" have: *"The work of the law written in their hearts"* (Rom. 2:15).

Even unsaved people who don't know the Bible have an intuitive sense of right and wrong.

The Christian, however, has a heightened sense of right and wrong. He who knows God's Word has a greater sensitivity to morals

Don't violate your conscience: if you do, it will become calloused (I Tim. 4:2).

We as believers must keep a clean conscience.

Paul could say: "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day" (Acts 23:1).

(To disobey government is to be guilty before God)

Acts 24:16 - ""And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men."

At salvation we have had "our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience" (Heb. 10:22).

Don't defile it! Keep it clean and you will keep it tender and sensitive.

--We are commanded to have a "good" conscience (I Tim. 1:5, 19)

--The servant of God is to have a "pure" conscience (I Tim. 3:9)

The Bible says: "The spirit of a man is the lamp of the LORD, searching all the inner depths of his heart (Prov. 20:27 - NKJV).

Don't dim your lamp by dulling your conscience!

LAWS THAT ARE OFTEN VIOLATED, EVEN BY SOME CHRISTIANS:

- **Immigration**
- **Marriage Laws**
- **Traffic Laws (Speeding/stop signs/red lights/no seat belts)**
- **Not paying Fines**
- **Tax evasion**
- **Cheating on income tax**
- **Arms (illegal possession of guns)**
- **Drugs**
- **Alcohol sales to minors**
- **Draft dodging**
- **Renting out illegal apartments**

- **Welfare Laws abused**
- **Ecological abuse (littering; graffiti defacing public property)**

- **Vehicle Laws (No Registration; inspection; insurance etc.)**
- **Copyright infringement**

Christians should never have to lie, cheat, or steal.
Have a clean conscience toward God & men

IV. *Reason # 4 - We should submit to the law:* TO FULFILL AN OBLIGATION (v. 6-7)

V. 6

"Pay ye tribute" - the phrase could be translated as present tense, indicative or imperative.
In context, it seems best to understand it as an imperative. You must pay tribute (taxes).
"Ministers" - a different word than in verse 4 (Greek "leitourgoi" - Eng. "loiter" - someone who constantly remains in a certain location.)
This word "minister" refers to a "devoted and dependent servant" (a "hired servant"). Someone who, because of their devotion to a certain task must be renumerated financially for their service so that they can make a living (EX: the O.T. priests and Levites and N.T. pastor offer such full-time, dependent service - Luke 10:7; I Cor. 9:14; I Tim. 5:18 - "a laborer is worthy of his hire").
"Attending continually (working full-time) upon this very thing (namely, law enforcement).

V. 7

"Render *(pay back)* therefore to all their dues *(that which is owed)*".
"Tribute" = tax (EX: IRS, local, state and federal taxes; sales tax)
"Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's . . ." (Mt. 22:21; Lk. 20:22-25)
"Custom" = tolls (EX: NYC bridges)
"Fear" = reference (a healthy fear of the law is good)
"My son, fear thou the LORD and the king" (Prov. 24:21)
"Honor" = respect (to treat with value)
Don't ever call police "pigs"
Don't ever belittle your mayor, governor or president (if you don't respect them for their character, at least respect their position).

CONCLUSION: The only time a Christian is justified to disobey the law is when the law would require him to violate a Biblical command of God. Otherwise we must obey!
"They that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law contend with them" (Prov. 28:4)
The best way to fight crime and criminals is to be a law-abiding citizen.

Section 34: ROMANS 13:8-10
"YOUR ONLY DEBT"

1. Don't be indebted - to bills.
2. Do be indebted - to love.

***We must love one another (it is not an option, but an obligation).**
Two reasons why we should practice agape love:

I. Love is the SUM of God's Law (v. 9)
(Love's Extent)

II. Love is the secret to obeying God's Law (v. 8b, 10)
(Love's Effect)
A. If you love, you won't commit adultery.
B. If you love, you won't kill.

INTRODUCTION:

1. Don't be indebted - to bills.

No one likes bills (we all love receiving letters in the mail, but not when they are in the form of invoices).

V. 8

"Owe no man anything" = don't be indebted in any way to anyone.

It is no sin to borrow; it is a sin to borrow and not pay back.

It is no sin to borrow - EX. of borrowed items -

1. The widow who was told by Elisha to borrow vessels (II Kings 4:1-7)
2. Elisha recovered the borrowed axe head (II Ki. 6:5)
3. Christ borrowed a donkey and a colt (Mt. 21:2-7).

Jesus said, "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away" (Mt. 5:42).

Borrowing is no sin, and lending is no sin

[NOTE: We should not lend to gain exuberant interest!

- Ex. 22:25 - "If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury."

Dt. 23:19 - "Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury." (cp. Neh. 5:1-13)]

It is a sin to not pay back what you borrowed. *"The wicked borroweth and payeth not again." Ps. 37:21*

*Never take on a debt you cannot pay back (Don't put God to the test either by acting foolishly - going into deep debt, and expecting God to pick up the tab).

*If you are in debt, get out of it! That debt will be a noose around your neck and it will control you. *"The borrower is servant to the lender" (Prov. 22:7).*

You will be a slave working for the one you are indebted to, not free to serve Christ as you should be.

One way Satan can control a Christian, is by "tying him up" financially.

If the devil can't get you one way (ex: morally), he will try to get you another way (ex: financially).

Satan will allure you to purchase enough of the glittering goods of this greedy world to strap you up. So that you must work for this world and not Christ (EX: buying a home, car, luxury item that you really can't afford).

"No man" (not bankers, friends, family, neighbors, government, etc.)

Don't be indebted to:

1. credit cards
2. bank loans
3. personal loans
4. outstanding bills
5. taxes (cp. v. 7)

Pay them up! And then form a habit of never spending unless you have the cash readily available (use credit cards only for emergencies).

"Men judge Christians by their promptness in fulfilling obligations and in paying their bills, and it is a fine, natural, and legitimate test" (Thomas, p. 358).

A Christian or a church has no testimony if their bills are not paid.

Verses 8ff build upon what was previously said:

--Paul, having talked about the Law (v. 1-7) now shows the secret to obeying the Law (v. 8-10). The secret is "love".

--After speaking about rendering "dues" (opheilas, v. 7), Paul now speaks about not owing (opheilete - v. 8) anyone anything except the debt of love.

2. Do be indebted - to love.

"Love" = agapao. This is the highest form of love (it's not mere sentiment, emotion, nor infatuation). This is God's love (the word does not appear in secular literature prior to the writing of the N.T.)
Agape love is:

1. Volitional - It's a decision (an un-coerced choice of the will).
2. Rational - It's a thought-out decision [not a mere fleeting, unfounded emotion that prompts a good feeling about someone) Love is based on God and His love toward us.
3. Sacrificial - It's a thought out decision to give for the well-being of someone else (Jn. 3:16)
4. Unconditional It's a thought-out decision to give for the well-being of someone else whether they deserve it or not (no "strings attached"; no "ifs")

* Rom. 5:8
Love is a fruit of salvation. According to I John it is a prime evidence (proof) that you are saved. (SEE: I John 2:5, 9-10; 3:10, 14*; 4:7)

Why is the believer indebted to love? Why do we owe it to others to love them?

1. Because of God's love toward you (I John 4:10-11; cp. Jn. 13:34)
   God loved me when I didn't deserve it, and He still does; therefore, what basis do I have not to love even my enemy?
2. Because of God's love toward them (I Jn. 5:1)
   If God loves them, so should I, since I am to love what God loves.
3. The reason given in context (Rom. 13:8b) is because of the fact that loves fulfills the moral law of God and we are obligated to fulfill the moral law of God as Christians.

ILLUS: Receiving invoices and statements which read "Balance due" or "Pay this amount." When God gives us His statement, it reads: "Balance due - Love."

Only one debt should carry an unpaid balance due, that is our "debt " to love. This is a debt about which we can never say: "I have paid it in full; I don't owe any more."

***We must love one another (it is not an option, but an obligation).**

Two reasons why we should practice agape love:

I. Love is the SUM of God's Law (v. 9)

(Love's Extent)

"Thou shalt not" = lit. You will not [future tense; cp. the Hebrew Text in Exodus 20:13-17].
The future tense is a stronger imperative because it expects (assumes) fulfillment rather than just demanding it [EX: Saying to your children: "Pick up your clothes" or "You will pick up your clothes" (implied "Won't you?") - the latter is stronger]

"If there be any other commandment" = no matter what other command God gives to guide and guard our relationship to fellow man, they all can be briefly summarized by one "saying" (lit. word).
"Briefly comprehended" = lit. It is being summarized (or summed up) (implied, "by Christ").
Christ summed up the whole Law in one word - "Love" (SEE: Matthew 22:37-40).
"Briefly comprehended" = Paul echoes Christ's summation of the Law in Gal. 5:14 - *"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."*

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor <u>as thyself</u>" (a direct quote of Leviticus 19:18).
--Man naturally loves himself ("no man ever yet hated his own flesh..." - Eph. 5:29).
God never commands you to love yourself. Rather, He assumes that you do, because He knows that you do.
Loving others as you do yourself will cause you to fulfill the well-known "Golden Rule" (Mt. 7:12 - *"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets").*
The law of love is also called the "<u>Royal Law</u>" in James 2:8.
When we practice Biblical love, there is no need for any other Law, because love covers it all (Wiersbe, p. 557).
When one practices love, he automatically obeys laws that he is not even aware of (EX: of a new Christian)..

II. Love is the <u>SECRET</u> to obeying God's Law (v. 8b, 10)

(Love's Effect)

V. 8b

"Fulfilled (v. 8b) . . . fulfilling (v. 10)" - To fulfill something is to <u>complete</u> it. EX: To fulfill a task is to get it done, finished, completed.
"The end (fulfillment) of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart" (I Tim. 1:5).
It's <u>difficult</u> to <u>remember</u> each and every command of Scripture, so God gives us the key to fulfilling them all.

V. 10

"Love worketh no ill" = Love does <u>not accomplish evil</u>.

A. If you love, you won't commit adultery.

If you love your neighbor as yourself. . . you won't be making passes at his wife.
If your boy friend tells you he loves you while he robs you of your virginity - that is lust not love.
If someone would seek to steal you away from your spouse and says, "I love you" -- it's a lie!

B. If you love, you won't kill.

If you love your neighbor as yourself . . . you won't be plotting his assassination. (nor will you have thoughts of hatred)
"Kill" - abortionists are missing a key ingredient to life: love. They loves <u>themselves</u> (they are thinking only about what is best for themselves). They are "without natural affection" (II Tim. 3:3).
Adultery . . . murder . . . lying . . . stealing . . . and coveting all stem from hatred. Not love. They have their roots in selfishness.

C. If you love, you won't steal.

If you love your neighbor as yourself . . . you won't rob what he owns.

D. If you love, you won't lie.

If you love your neighbor as yourself . . . you won't lie to smear his character; or lie to deceive him.

E. If you love, you won't lust.

If you love your neighbor as yourself . . . you won't lust after what he has. You won't be jealous or envious.

Love will not only keep you from breaking the negative prohibitions (the "Thou shalt nots") but it is the key to fulfilling the positive commands.
EX: Gal. 6:2 - "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

If you love someone . . .
--you won't murder him but rather protect him.
--you won't rob from him but you will give to him.
--you won't covet what he has but rather be thankful that he has it.

God is not teaching us that love replaces holiness, honest, purity, etc., as some would suggest. Rather love is the secret to being holy, honest, pure, etc.

Love never discards virtue, but rather strives to fulfill it.
Love is not a replacement for truth, but rather a motivating power to uphold it and guard it.

Love "rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth"

When Paul said, "I am debtor" (Rom. 1:14), he revealed his obligation to love the lost (regardless of race, color, or status).

Section 35: ROMANS 13:11-14
"GOD'S WAKE-UP CALL"

***God's people must wake up!**
Are you spiritually awake?

I. WHEN Should You Wake Up? (v. 11a)
(The Timing of God's Wake-Up Call - "Now!")

II. WHY Should You Wake Up? (v. 11b-12a)
(The Reason for God's Wake-Up Call - The Coming of Christ)

II. HOW Should You Wake Up? (v. 12b - 14)
(The Result of God's Wake-Up Call - A Change of Clothing)

A. Don't dress in the old rags
B. Rather, put on the new garment
   1. "Put on the armour of light"
   2. "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ"

INTRODUCTION:
On average, people generally spend one-third of their life doing nothing but sleeping (generally, any more sleep than eight hours is laziness).
Physical laziness is sin (Prov. 6).

When we are asleep, we are insensitive (we don't consciously hear, see, feel, or know what is going on in the world around us). Our reflexes are inhibited.

When we are asleep --

We can't see straight
We can't grip tight
We can't walk right

Those are the effects of physical sleep; but what happens when God's people are spiritually asleep?

Why no revival today? (Why the coldness in the matters of brotherly love, evangelism, prayer?)

Is it because of liberalism? NO!
Is it because of the New Age Movement? NO!
Is it because we are "outnumbered"? NO!
It is because many of God's people are fast asleep.
The church in America is as a "sleeping giant."

The devil has taken a needle filled with the "anesthesia of worldliness" and has effectively stuck it into the believer's arm.
And there we lie, helpless, harmless, and hopeless. We may dream much, but we do little.

***God's people must wake up!**

Are you spiritually awake?

I. WHEN Should You Wake Up? (v. 11a)
(The Timing of God's Wake-Up Call - "Now!")

"And that" = the word "that" points to the command to love (vv 8 - 10).
God is saying, "And this do, knowing the time." We should be more conscious of our debt to love knowing that our time to pay this debt is short.
(Cp. Heb. 10:24-25 - "Provoke unto love . . . and so much the more as ye see the day approaching")
"The time" = the word time points to a "season" or specific "point of time."

Three "time" words in the Bible:

1. "Aion" = an age of time
2. "Kronos" = a chronological period of time
*3. "Kairos" = a point of time (Paul uses this word meaning a short season of time)

"High time" - the hour
Just as there was not a moment to lose to come to Christ for salvation (II Cor. 6:1-2), there is no time to wait to awake to righteousness.
"To awake" = lit. to be raised (passive)
It is God who is trying to wake you up. He is willing and able to lift you out of your spiritual slumber if you will let Him!

II. WHY Should You Wake Up? (v. 11b-12a)

(The Reason for God's Wake-Up Call - The Coming of Christ)

V. 11

"Now is our salvation nearer (closer) . . ." -

Salvation = deliverance

The Bible teaches three tenses of salvation for the believer (SEE I Pet. 1:1-5):

1. Past (v. 2a) (a life delivered from sin's penalty)
   a. Election (cp. Eph. 1;3-6)
   b. Conversion - "setting apart of the Holy Spirit" (cp. Eph. 2:8-9; *Titus 3:5)
2. Present (v. 2b) (a life delivered from sin's power)
   a. Obedience
   b. "Sprinkling of the blood" - daily cleansing (I Jn. 1:9) (cp. Phil. 2:12-13)

* 3. Future (v. 3-5) (a life delivered from sin's presence)

This future tense of our salvation is known as "glorification" cp. Rom. 8:30

This future sense of salvation is what Paul is referring to in Romans 13:11.

Our salvation is our deliverance prior to the outpouring of God's wrath -

I Thes. 1:10 - "And to wait for His Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come."

I Thes. 5:9 - "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Our salvation" - Paul is including himself

The believer is closer to death, now than when first saved. There is a deliverance that occurs at death (Phil. 1:19-22).

The "salvation" spoken of in verse 11, refers to "the day" which is "at hand" in verse 12.

The phrase "the day" points to the "Rapture" - specifically called "the day of Christ" - II Thes. 2:2; I Cor. 1:8 - *"Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." [SEE Heb. 10:25 - Assemble in church! . . . "And so much the more as ye see the day approaching" (cp. Heb. 10:37)]*

--Seeing Jesus "face to face" (I Cor. 13:12) is closer now than when we first believed.

--Receiving a glorified body is closer now than when we first believed (I Cor. 15:50ff)

--Stepping onto Heaven's shore is closer now than when we first believed.

V. 12

"The night is far spent" = the night (of this present evil age) is nearly over; it's almost gone!

"Night" =- typifies the moral and spiritual darkness of the times in which we live *(EX: "Rulers of darkness" Eph. 6:12).*

Praise God, it's almost gone forever!

As Peter echoes, "The end of all things is at hand" (I Pet. 4:7).

"But this I say, brethren, the time is short" (I Cor. 7:29)

Paul said to the "carnal Corinthians": And they that use this world, as not abusing it, for the fashion of this world passeth away" (I Cor. 7:31).

John said, "Love not the world. . . and the world passeth away (present tense)" (I Jn. 2:17).

The Bible teaches that there will be a greater tendency to "sleep" as the end of this age and the return of Christ draws near.

1. NOTE: The constant warning to stay awake prior to Christ's coming (Mt. 24:36-44)
   "If therefore thou shalt not watch (stay awake), I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee" (Rev. 3:3).
2. SEE: Parable of the 10 Virgins - Mt. 25:1-13
   Mark 13:35-37 - "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly He find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

We must wake up because the coming of Christ is at hand!

III. HOW Should You Wake Up? (v. 12b - 14)
(The Result of God's Wake-Up Call - A Change of Clothing)

When someone is spiritually awake, how will they look? (What will their clothing look like?)

A. Don't dress in the old rags

V. 12

"Cast off" = Discard; throw away; like filthy clothes, we should remove and discard the filth of this present darkness, which at one time enveloped our lives. Throw away anything that you could classify as a "work of darkness."

Examples:
--Pornography (and any ungodly reading material)
--X & R rated videos
--Rock and rap music (tapes, records, videos)
--drugs, alcohol
--any form of crime or corruption
--certain TV programs

Ask yourself, "Is what I am involved in 'a work of darkness'?"
EX: of discarding the filth of the past life - SEE: Acts 19:17-20
"Walk honestly" - conduct your life decently; live appropriately as "in the day." Our spiritual attire should be suited for living in the "light" , in the "day"

V. 13

Paul lists: Three sets of sins that come in pairs -
1) rioting and drunkenness (alcohol)
2) chambering and wantonness (sex)
3) strife and envying (jealousy)

NOTE: The word order foes from effect to the cause. EX: rioting is the effect of drunkenness; chambering the result of wantonness; and strife is the end product of envying.

"Rioting" = rowdy partying; late night carousing.
The word was used of a "nocturnal, riotous procession of half-drunken and frolicsome fellows who paraded through the streets with torches and music in honor of Bacchus or some other deity. Then it was used generally of feasts and drinking parties that were protracted till late at night and indulged in revelry (Reinecker, citing Thayer's Greek Lexicon).
"Chambering" - a "chamber" is an old English expression for a "bedroom."
Lit. Greek = beds ("koitais" - plural for bed or sex - EX: Heb. 13:4)
God is forbidding illicit sexual relationships, unlawful acts of intercourse. God is addressing the age-old enslaving sin of pagan society which involves the unfulfilled, unrestrained, and unsatisfied sexual lust (I.E. having sex with one partner one night and someone else the next, etc.)
"Wantonness" = someone who lives to gratify sensual "wants."
The word refers to unrestrained, animal-like greedy passions; someone who selfishly indulges in sexual promiscuity and feels no shame about it; someone who knows no limit or restraint to his perverted thoughts and actions.
God's people, however, are to know how to restrain themselves from such behavior.
READ I Thes. 4:3-8. A believer *"should know how to possess (control) his vessel (body)"*
"Awake to righteousness and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame." (I Cor. 15:34)

B. Rather, put on the new garment

V. 12

"Cast <u>off</u> . . . put <u>on</u>" - the Christian life involves both positives and negatives. It's not merely casting off the <u>old</u>, it is putting on the <u>new</u> (Eph. 4:22-24).

It's not merely a refusal to yield yourself to sin, but is a decision to yield yourself to God (Rom. 6:11-13).

1. **"Put on the armour of light"**

   "Put on" - middle voice; you must do it - no one can do it for you.

   "Armour of light" - not speaking about electric clothing that lights you up when you turn on a switch; but rather a spiritual armour that is characterized by "light."

   Armour describes the clothing of a warrior who is fighting darkness, ready for conflict and battle (SEE Eph. 6:11-17)

2. **"Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ"**

   V. 14

   Christ must not only be <u>in</u> our lives (Col. 1:27); but He should also be <u>on</u> our lives.

   That is, we should radiate Christ; we should reflect Christ by the way we live. When people observe the way we live, they should get a glimpse of Christ. We are called "Christians" - little Christs or Christ-like-ones.

   We should "follow in His steps" (I Pet. 2:21).

   When confronted with a choice in life, we should ask ourselves "What would Jesus do?"

   When we come to a fork in life's road, we should ask ourselves, "Where would Jesus go?"

   "Make not provision for the flesh" = do not <u>make preparations</u> so as to gratify the lustful appetites of the flesh *(I Pet. 2:11 - "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.")*

   We should not only avoid participating in sin, but we should go a step further and avoid providing the <u>occasion</u> for sin.

   In other words, don't put yourself in (or allow yourself to be put into) a situation where temptation might exist.

EX:

--If your problem (weakness) was drinking, don't go into bars or keep alcohol at home.
--If your problem was pornography, don't go near certain newsstands (and cancel cable TV or Internet)
--If your problem is overeating, avoid the bakery
--If your problem was drugs, avoid those situations that provoked the urge.

"Hear me now therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth. Remove thy way <u>far</u> from her, and come <u>not nigh</u> the door of her house" (Prov. 5:7-8).

The "sleepy" simpleton does not avoid the trap, but falls right into it (Prov. 7:7-9).

EX: Joseph *(Gen. 39:10 - "And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her.")*

CONCLUSION:

SEE Eph. 5:8-16 (*v. 14, 16)

It's time to <u>wake up</u>!

--To wipe the slumber out of our eyes, and to really see what is going on these days.
--To get the blood flowing to our spiritual muscles so that we can accomplish the great task that God has for us.

Is God shaking your bed today?

Did the divine alarm clock go off in your ears today?

Is God shouting, "Get up! Get up!"
"So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Ps. 90:12).

Section 36: ROMANS 14:1-12
"DIFFERENCES OF OPINION"

*** What should you do when you don't agree with a fellow-Christian over a disputable matter?**

I. **DON'T BE HIS <u>ENEMY</u> (vv.1-3)**
(He has been received by God)

II. **DON'T BE HIS <u>MASTER</u> (v.4)**
(He has his own Master - God)

III. **DON'T BE HIS <u>CONSCIENCE</u> (v.5)**
(He is to be "fully persuaded in his own mind")

IV. **DON'T BE HIS <u>MOTIVE</u> (vv.6-9)**
(He is to please the Lord, not you)

V. **DON'T BE HIS <u>JUDGE</u> (vv.10-12)**
(He will be judged by God, so will you!)

Introduction: All believers should agree it comes to the essential doctrines of Scripture which relate specifically to salvation. As believers, we have a wonderful Holy Spirit-produced unity over the Fundamentals of the Faith. We have a common bond in Christ because we share a common faith, common fight (against world, flesh, and devil) and a common future (heaven).
However, you don't have to live the Christian life very long before you come to realize that along with our unity comes diversity (cp. I Cor. 12).
Each believer is different. Different in age, color, background, culture, experience, abilities & talents, and understanding of the Scriptures.

While each believer (in order to be a believer) must agree on what the Bible says about Christ and salvation, there do exist some differences over certain interpretations of difficult passages and standards for Christian living.
Some things are undeniably and immediately clear, and some things require more intense study and thought.
No one agrees with everyone on everything. Praise God for our individuality!
Issues that some Christians divide over:

1. Bible interpretive differences on minor issues: ("sons of God" - Gen. 6:2; "born of water" - Jn. 3:5; "except it be for fornication" - Mt. 19:9)
2. Where to draw the line on certain standards: Women wearing slacks, wigs, make-up
3. Birth control
4. The use of certain musical instruments in church
5. Observance of Christmas
6. Eating certain foods (EX: pork)
7. Doing laundry on Sunday
8. The Translation issue
9. Men who wear a mustache, beard, or have hair over their ears
10. Music (EX: Bach, Beethoven)
11. Interracial dating

There was a time in America when well-meaning Christians opposed Christian radio "because Satan was the prince of the power of the air!" (Wiersbe, p. 559).

Many times people are prone to hold to a certain standard which cannot be proven Biblically. Some standards that people hold to are not Biblical but cultural or traditional.

"This is what us southerners believe!"
"Our church has done it this way for 100 years!"

But the question is: What do you do when you don't agree with someone else over a disputable matter?
Some people fume (they get hot and angry; hold grudges)
Some people fight (physically or verbally - "mud slinging")

EX: the divisiveness at Corinth (I Cor. 1:10-13, 6:1-8)
the two women at Philippi (Phil. 4:1-3)

Some people freeze (become cold toward someone, and cut off all communication)
Some people simply give in (with no conviction of their own)

--There is no virtue in being "wishy-washy"

*** What should you do when you don't agree with a fellow- Christian over a disputable matter?**
It is to this question that Paul responds in Romans 14 - 15:13.

I. DON'T BE HIS ENEMY (vv.1-3)

(He has been received by God)

V. 1

"Weak in the faith" - possibly a new convert; someone who has not matured to a complete understanding of what God clearly says is wrong and what is not.
NOTE: In context, God is talking about a "weak" brother, not a "wicked" brother.

"Receive ye" - take to yourselves, embrace, to welcome, or fellowship with.
"But not to doubtful disputations" - not with the intention (or goal - "eis") of passing judgment about questionable things.
"Doubtful disputations" = to dispute over matters of opinion; we derive our word "dialogue" from the Greek "dialogismon." To dialogue is to verbally "go back and forth with opinions."
God's people waste much time and cause so many divisions because of arguing over opinions, speculations, non-essentials, gray areas, areas of Christian liberty, non-moral issues.

As a preacher, I must preach what is "black and white," not speculations.
I must proclaim God's Word, not opinions.
I must herald "Thus saith the Lord" not "This is what I think" or "This is what I believe."

There are some matters that we will disagree on.
But in our disagreements, let us not be disagreeable. Let us agree to disagree and still love our fellow-brothers in Christ. Let's not go looking for fights.

We will differ on some views, but we must never be obnoxious or sin in our attitudes toward those with whom we differ.
Gal. 5:15 - *"But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another."*
God is not teaching us that we are not to practice Biblical separation.
To honor God, we must separate over unrepented moral transgression (I Cor. 5:5-11) and over cardinal doctrinal deviations (Rom. 16:17). Biblical separation is a doctrine based upon the holiness of God (I Pet. 1:15-16).

Separation is a clear command of the N.T. (II Cor. 6:14-16; II Thes. 3:6-15).

NOTE: In the church of Rome were both saved Jews and Gentiles. "The Jew had a background with centuries of following a strict code dealing with sacred days and specific diets. This developed in him a strong devotion to scruples. Contrastingly, the Gentile was saved out of a pagan influence of life and often had eaten meat sacrificed to idols, participating in debauchery. Gentiles, once saved, had no problem with scruples." (Stitzinger, Romans notes, p. 74).

V. 2

"He may eat all things" = This belief is held by the more mature believer who knows God's N.T. regulations regarding eating such things as meat:

1) Mark 7:18-23 - It's not what goes into a man's mouth that defiles a man, but what comes out of his heart.
2) Acts 10:15 - Peter learned "what God hath cleansed, that call not thou common."
3) I Timothy 4:4 - In a context describing an "end time" heresy of asceticism, God says, "For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving."
4) In a passage very similar to Rom. 14, Paul states to the Corinthians, "But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse." (I Cor. 8:8)
5) Paul is clear in Rom. 14:14, "No meat is unclean of itself"

"Herbs" = vegetables

V. 3

"Despise him" = to regard someone as "nothing," as a "nobody." To treat with contempt or to look down upon.
There is a tendency for those who are fully aware of their "liberty" in Christ to look down upon those who live under a few more regulations than they do. They, with a feeling a superiority, look down their noses at those they view as ignorant "legalists."
Often those with such lofty attitudes are themselves "proud" (I Cor. 8:1-2), and tend to go to the opposite extreme of being almost "antinomian libertines."
Remember the words of Paul to such people - "Use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh" (Gal. 5:13) . . . and "take heed lest ye fall" (I Cor. 10:12).

"Judge him" - to criticize or condemn
There is a tendency among those who maintain an abundance of regimented extra-Biblical external standards to condemn those who don't hold to their "rules."
If you don't fit into their exact mold of practice and methodologies, you are a carnal, backslidden, "new evangelical" modernist!
"Externals" do in some cases reflect someone's spirituality, but they don't make you spiritual. True spirituality is internal first and foremost.
If God has "received him" (same word as in verse 1), we must not condemn him.
The strong must not despise the weak and call them immature. The weak must not condemn the strong and call them unspiritual. (Wiersbe, p. 559).

"Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God" (Rom. 15:7).
Even in cases where a fellow Christian is living in undeniable disobedience to the Word, God says, "Count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother" (II Thes. 3:15).
Yet our old nature is so quick to make someone an enemy over the silliest, most trivial matters.

II. DON'T BE HIS MASTER (v.4)

(He has his own Master - God)

Paul is saying, Who do you think you are criticizing someone else's servant??

"Servant" = a household servant who belonged to someone else.
"Master" = Lord ("kurios") - this word occurs 10 times in this chapter (esp. v. 6 & 8)
Example of a sport player (ex. football) criticizing a player on another team. To his own coach, manager, or team owner, he must give an account.
Each believer belongs to God. Therefore, He is the one to say whether or not you are doing or believing what is right.
He determines whether you are rightly standing on your belief or whether you have fallen off the "deep end."
Not only does God determine how His servants are doing, but He also causes them to do what's right (v. 4b).
I have noticed that God actually blesses people who I don't agree with on every jot and tittle!!
I cannot tell another preacher who to fellowship with and who not to fellowship with (I can give him advice, warn him, etc., but I am not a "Baptist Pope").

III. DON'T BE HIS CONSCIENCE (v.5)

(He is to be "fully persuaded in his own mind")

"Esteemeth" = lit. to judge or consider

A particular day above another:
1) Holidays (ex. Jewish festival "Holy Days")
2) Sabbath (commanded in O.T. Law specifically for the Jewish Israelite- Ex. 31:17. The Sabbath is not commanded in the N.T. Epistles; Rather the teaching of the N.T. is that the Gentile does not have to keep the Sabbath - Gal. 4:10; Col. 2:16).
3) Lord's Day (the "first day of the week" - Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:2. "The Lord's Day" - Rev. 1:10)

"Every day alike" - This believer would contend that every day is a "holy day"; that every day is to be a day devoted to the Lord and His work.
He would say, "We should not merely remember Him on Christmas or Easter; nor should we merely donate one day a week to God; nor should we limit our assembling to one day a week.

"Fully persuaded" - totally convinced, with full assurance that what I am doing is right.
Whenever you violate your conscience, you have sinned! (v. 23)
"If it is doubtful, it is dirty" (for you).

IV. DON'T BE HIS MOTIVE (vv.6-9)

(He is to please the Lord, not you)

V. 6
"He that regardeth the day" - the person who thinks highly of a certain day.
"Unto the Lord" = for the Lord; for the Lord's sake; for His glory, to please Him.
V. 6-8
"Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31)
"Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3:17).
Believers (especially new converts) are often questioning certain practices (and rightfully so): "May I do this?" "Should I go there?" "Can I read this or watch or listen to that?"
The answer is simple, "Does participating bring glory to God? Can I do this as 'unto the Lord'? Can I thank God for this?"
Both men, though having differing views and practices, have the right motives - they believe and practice the way they do to please their Lord.
In Heaven, which of the two will receive a greater reward? Answer: If they both were acting out of conviction "fully persuaded" - they both will be rewarded equally.
God rewards based on the heart motive as you live according to what God has taught you and as your conscience dictates.

V. 7
"Liveth to himself . . . dieth to himself" = No man is an island unto himself. We are to do whatever we do for God since "we are the Lord's" (v. 8) (we belong to Him - I Cor. 6:20).
We do not live to please other men, or even ourselves, but to please God.
Jesus is Lord (Rom. 10:9; Phil. 2:11; Mt. 28:18), and He is my Lord. It is for Him that we are to do whatever we do. Don't be intimidated by what man thinks of you, but what your Savior thinks of you!

V. DON'T BE HIS JUDGE (vv.10-12)

(He will be judged by God, so will you!)

"No Christian has the right to 'play God' in another Christian's life." (Wiersbe, p. 559).

V. 10
"Set at nought" = to regard as nothing (same word as v. 3 - "despise")
"The judgment seat" = lit. the "Bema" seat; a judgment for determining rewards of the righteous - I Cor. 3:13-15 and II Cor. 5:10.
[Not a reference to the "Great White Throne Judgment" (Rev. 20:11-15), which involves unbelievers who are not part of the first resurrection (Rev. 20:6)]

V. 11
"Confess" = to speak out the same thing."
At the judgment, no one will deny the Lordship of Christ (cp. Is. 45:23; Phil. 2:10).

V. 12

"Every one" -	the universality of the Judgment (no one excluded)
"Shall" -	the certainty of the Judgment (future tense)
"Give account" -	the content of the Judgment (God's ledgers will be opened)
"Of himself" -	the personal evaluation of the Judgment

I will be held accountable for me.
You will be held accountable for you.
I will not be judged for your failings.
You will not be judged for mine.
Therefore, we ought to judge ourselves, not others (I Cor. 11:31).

We ought to fear the scrutiny of God not the scrutiny of others.

"It is encouraging to know that our success in the Christian life does not depend on the opinions or attitudes of other Christians. God is the Judge . . . " (Weirsbe, p. 559)

ILLUS: The division between Joseph Parker (who attended the theater) and Charles Spurgeon (who smoked cigars). God will one day set the record straight (SEE: Wiersbe, p. 560).

Conclusion:

What is God calling for in our lives?

--A mutual forbearance (patience)
(sometimes we simply need to bite our tongue and not contest someone's view)

--A degree of tolerance (understand)
(NOTE: Not on a cardinal doctrine or clearly defined moral practice, but on questionable areas of Christian liberty)
(Beware of becoming preoccupied with the trivial and missing the vital (Mt. 23:23).

--A dosage of love (I Pet. 4:8)
(Where we won't let our insignificant differences of opinion divide us)

--A time of introspection (self-examination)
(We need to worry more about ourselves; concentrate on casting the beam out of our own eyes)

People who are busy serving God have no time or desire to be investigating the lives of other Christians.

Example: Peter's question about John, "Lord, what shall this man do?" Jesus replied, "What is that to thee? Follow thou Me!" (SEE: John 21:5-25).

There must be harmony in the family of God. In a home, you don't sever your ties to your brothers or sisters because of personal quirks and differences of opinion. Why? Because your love for each other binds you. So it must be in our spiritual family.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Ps. 133:1).

UNITY . . . even with a few "differences of opinion."

In ESSENTIALS we must have UNITY
In NON-ESSENTIALS we must allow LIBERTY
But in ALL THINGS we must show CHARITY
(Attributed to Augustine)

Section 37: ROMANS 14:13-23
"AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?"

***While enjoying your Christian liberty, remember to: keep your brother's best interest in mind!**

(keep him from falling) How?

I. Don't be a Source of Temptation (v. 13-16)
- A. Are you a stepping stone or a stumbling block? (v. 13)
- B. Are you stubborn or loving? (v. 14-15)
- C. Are you careful or careless? (v. 16)

II. Don't Lose Your Spiritual Priorities (v. 17-20a)
- A. What matters in life is: Being spiritual (internally) (v. 17-18)
- B. What matters in life is: Building others (spiritually) (v. 19-20a)

III. Don't Violate Anyone's Convictions (v. 20b-23)
- A. Don't violate your brother's convictions (v. 20b-22a)
- B. Don't violate your own convictions

INTRODUCTION:
Whereas 14:1-12 described the conducts of both the weak and strong Christian, 14:3-15:6 describe particularly the conduct of the strong (more mature) Christian toward the weaker.

Example: Christ's concern not to offend the tax collectors (Mt. 17:27).

Are we really responsible for others? If I believe that what I am doing is okay with God, yet it offends some other believer, should I do it anyway?

***While enjoying your Christian liberty, remember to:**
keep your brother's best interest in mind!
(keep him from falling)

How?

I. Don't be a Source of Temptation (v. 13-16)

A. Are you a stepping stone or a stumbling block? (v. 13)

V. 13

Rather than putting thought, time, and energy into scrutinizing someone's life in order to pass judgment on them, we should instead pour our energies into making sure we are stepping stones for others, rather than stumbling blocks.

"Judge this rather" = decide on this

As believers we affect each other whether we realize it or not. We (by our lives) either hold up or trip up (v. 13); we either cause joy and peace or we cause grief (v. 15); we either build up or we might even destroy (v. 20).

"Stumbling block" - a stone that causes someone to trip and fall

"An occasion to fall" = that which trips us up. Greek = "skandalon' - the stick which caused the trap to fall.

We must not only ask ourselves, "Is this practice, place, or product okay for me?" But the spiritual Christian who has his weaker brother's best interest in mind must ask himself: "Would this practice, place, or product cause him to stumble?"

EX: One man may be able to read certain books and not be bothered by them, while a weaker Christian reading the same books might be tempted to sin.

> But the issue is not, "How does it affect me?" So much as, "If I do this, how will it affect my brother? Will it make him stumble? Will it grieve him or even destroy him by encouraging him to sin? Is it really worth it to harm a brother just so I can enjoy some food? NO!" (Wiersbe, p. 561)

Beware of what you do around "baby Christians" (or immature Christians).

> ILLUS: When you brought your baby home from the hospital, some things (practices) had to change in the home. You no longer left the scissors on the chair or the steak knife on the kitchen table. Anything that was potentially dangerous, you kept out of reach (EX: pills, medicine, chemicals, tools, etc.). Even though none of those things were wrong, you did not want your baby near them because of the possible harm that could occur. As the child grew and matured, you adjusted your house rules to deal with him in a more adult fashion.

So it is with baby Christians. (SEE Wiersbe, p. 561)

B. Are you stubborn or loving? (v. 14-15)

Paul's confidence toward God's lifting former restrictions dealing with food (Lev. 11) is revealed in his words: "I know . . . and am persuaded."

Just as Jesus persuaded Peter (Acts 10:15), He also persuaded Paul.

V. 14

"Unclean" = lit. common - "It is a technical term to express those customs and habits which, although "common" to the world, were forbidden to the pious Jew" (Reinecker, p. 380).

"Nothing is unclean of itself."

"Nothing" = things have no morality, people do.

"Of itself" = There is no intrinsic evil in things. It is how they are used that determines whether or not defilement has occurred.

EX: A TV set is not sinful, however, what appears on it often is. A drum set/guitar etc. are not sinful, what man plays on them may be wrong. No food is sinful, but gluttony is. Drugs are not sinful (when they are prescribed by a doctor), but they are when you use them to gain a selfish high off of them.

V. 15

"Meat" - can be substituted with any potential vice (cp. v. 23- "whatsoever"). EX: TV, social life, associations, reading material, dress and music standards, etc.

If there is a stone that will trip up Christians, it is "Christian rock."

"Now walkest thou not charitably" - You are no longer conducting your life according to love (agape)

"Charity" - In a similar context, Paul said in I Cor. 8:1 that "knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth."

If your brother is hurt, sorrowful or caused to become bitter because of something you deliberately did (in spite of his weak conscience), you did not act out of love.

When you love someone, you will have their best interest in mind, not your own selfish interest. "Love seeketh not her own" (I Cor. 13).

Two good reasons why we should be concerned about not grieving (offending) other Christians by our lives:

1. **Many times the things we do are so insignificant compared to the price we pay for doing them.**
   "Eating meat" may be a little thing, but if it could destroy someone's walk with Christ, we should not do it.
2. **An offended brother is a soul for whom Christ died. If Christ was willing to die for them, is it too great a thing for God to ask us to abstain from certain practices so as not to hurt their faith?**

Though our ultimate goal in life is to please God by the way we live, we must be concerned about what others think of us.

We need what Paul had: "A conscience void of offense toward God and toward men."

If someone was to be offended because I owned a corvette, I would not buy one.

If someone was to stumble because on occasion I watch a football game, I would never turn one on in their presence.

If I knew someone had a conviction against caffeine, I would not offer them a cup of coffee, tea, or coke, nor would I drink it in front of them.

If I knew that someone thought it was worldly for a man to wear a beard and jewelry, etc., then I would save it off and wear none.

There are many things that a pastor (especially) shouldn't do (though they are not wrong) that others could do.

EX: The Rockefellers may drive in a Rolls Royce and live in a castle. I cannot. (since some people might brand me another "materialistic minister").

Some people would not think twice about going into a movie theater to see a G-rated film. The conscientious Christian should not. Why? Because he has the best interest of others in mind (a totally unselfish motive).

cp. Jesus warning about offending a "little one" who believes in him (Mt. 18:6).

C. Are you careful or careless? (v. 16)

When we sin (Ex. David & Bathsheba), it gives others cause to speak against (blaspheme) our God, our Bible, our salvation. We must be on guard against sin (note pastors - I Tim. 4:16).

However, as Christians we need to go a step further and be on guard against having the appearance of sinful behavior.

We should avoid appearing to do wrong even though we actually are not.

*Beware of doing what might look like evil.
Ex. drinking soda out of a can wrapped up in a paper bag gives the impression that you are drinking beer.
Ex. carrying a box-shaped New Testament in your shirt pocket often gives the impression of having a pack of cigarettes.
*Avoid being seen in certain situations (EX: alone with a woman in the wrong place at the wrong time).

Many Christians are destroyed (ruined) because of another Christian who is not living right. Someone is watching your life. For their sake, live above reproach!

II. Don't Lose Your Spiritual Priorities (v. 17-20a)

A. *What matters in life is:* Being spiritual (internally) (v. 17-18)

V. 17
"The kingdom of God" - the soteriological (present salvation) aspect of the Kingdom. I.E. the saved life; the Christian life; the spiritual life.

The truly spiritual life is not a matter of satisfying carnal appetites at the expense of others. There is more to our saved life than the physical. There are more essential things to do with our lives than utilizing and enjoying our "Christian liberty" to the maximum.

"Not the externals, but the eternals must be first in our lives" (Wiersbe, p. 561).

"Serveth" - to serve as a slave; a devoted bond slave.

If you serve Christ with a life characterized by:
1) righteousness
2) peace
3) joy
. . . you are well pleasing to God.

Those virtues are produced by the Holy Spirit (v. 17), not the flesh, which is more concerned with "meat and drink."

V. 18
"Approved" - to find something to be genuine after examining it.

The world is looking for something real in us! As they scrutinize our lives, they do not find true spirituality in the insignificant petty things we do or don't do, but they find genuine Christianity in our righteousness, peace, and joy. All of which come from supernatural power of the Holy Spirit.

B. *What matters in life is:*
Building others (spiritually) (v. 19-20a)

V. 19

"Follow after" = hunt after, to zealously pursue.

Our objective in life is not to do things that would tear apart relationships with other Christians, rather our goal is to do everything in our power to:

1. maintain peaceful relationships (Jms. 3:18)
2. build strong relationships (**"edify"** = to build up)

V. 20

"Destroy not" - Don't tear down or undo the work of God.

God is contrasting the "edifying" commanded in verse 19, with someone who would tear down God's edifice.

Prov. 18:19 - "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle."

III. Don't Violate Anyone's Convictions (v. 20b-23)

A. Don't violate your brother's convictions (v. 20b-22a)

V. 20

All things (meats) indeed are pure (clean), but they are bad (wrong) for someone whose eating becomes a stumbling block to someone else.

V. 21

If whatever I do as a Christian will either stumble, trip, or weaken a fellow believer, I should out of love refrain from it.

"Stumbleth" - lit. "to strike against." The word is used of those whose feet strike against a stone or other obstacle in the path (Reinecker, p. 380).

A good reason for abstaining from alcoholic beverages (other than God's commands - Prov. 20:1, 23:31; Eph. 5:18) is so that you won't be a source of temptation to a brother who might justify drinking because of your example.

Anything that would induce someone to sin is wrong!

Anything that would be a source of temptation is wrong for me to participate in.

My attitude should not be:

--"Well, this is my Christian liberty! If you don't like it, go live in a monastery!"
--"If you disapprove of my practice, tough luck!"
--"I don't care what you think!"

Many New Evangelicals are guilty of violating the conscience of many! They are quick to call you a "legalist" because you hold to certain standards that they don't have. By doing this, they actually are not practicing Christian love.

V. 22

"Hast thou faith" = Do you have full confidence that you can in the eyes of God Almighty, participate in a certain practice which others question! If so, keep it to yourself! Keep it between you and God.

One way to violate someone else's conviction is to force your convictions on them.

They must be taught in an atmosphere of love so that they can have their own convictions.

Even though you may think that someone else's personal convictions are immature, you must never violate that person's conscience.

This would do great damage to his spiritual life. For example, the mature Christian knows that an idol is nothing. But a young Christian, just converted out of pagan idolatry, would still have fears about idols. If the strong believer forced the new Christian to eat meat sacrificed to an idol, the younger Christian would experience problems in his conscience that would only further weaken it (SEE I Cor. 8 - 9) (Wiersbe, p. 561).

B. Don't violate your own convictions (v. 22b-23)

V. 22

"Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing (whatever it may be) that he alloweth" = Blessed is the Christian who does not feel guilty about the practices he views as okay to do.

If you can do it with a clean conscience, then do it! If it bothers you and you do it anyway, you have sinned and have condemned (judged) yourself as "guilty."

V. 23

"Doubteth" = lit. to "judge between," to hesitate, waiver, to be unsure about what you are thinking about doing.

"Is damned" = is judged as guilty.

"Because he eateth not of faith" - everything we do should spring from a confidence that it is okay to do it.

"Whatsoever" = all you do; everything you do (the application Paul now makes broadens the principle to every area of life, not merely eating meat).

"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" = If it is doubtful, it is wrong for you. It is sin when you don't have the confidence ("full persuasion" - cp. v. 5, 14) that what you are doing is right.

"If it's doubtful, it's dirty."

If you question it, don't do it. Run from it!

CONCLUSION:

Your life is being observed.

You are making a profound impact on someone else.

Do you have their best interest in mind?

Are you living for their growth?

We are our "brother's keeper." We must be concerned about the spiritual lives of others. Their heart, mind, and soul should be that which we want to strengthen, never weaken.

--Will any lost person stumble into Hell because of your life?

--Does your life, give cause for someone to justify sin in their life?

--Could a new believer's life be shipwrecked if he sees something that to him seems inconsistent in your life?

Section 38: ROMANS 15:1-14
"CARING FOR ONE-ANOTHER IN GOD'S FAMILY"

INTRODUCTION:
***We need to genuinely take care of each other in the family of God!**
How should we take care of each other?

I. **<u>BEAR</u> with one another (v. 1)**
(A plea for <u>patience</u> toward each other)

II. **<u>PLEASE</u> one another (v. 2-4)**
(A plea for <u>unselfishness</u> toward each other)

III. **<u>UNITE</u> with one another (v. 5-6)**
(A plea for <u>oneness</u> with each other)

IV. **<u>ACCEPT</u> one another (v. 7-12)**
(A plea for <u>impartiality</u> toward each other)

V. **<u>ADMONISH</u> one another (v. 14)**
(A plea for <u>loving confrontation</u> with each other)

INTRODUCTION:
ILLUS: of a family where all of the family members (brothers and sisters) took care of each other.
Contrary to that ideal, families today have become less close, less loving, and less patient.
Contemporary society reflects such self-centeredness quite graphically.
Most people seem to be out for themselves; with their own best interests in mind, living for # 1.

Our church is a family (Eph. 2:18-19), and like a family we need to care for one another.

In Romans 15:1-4, several statements are made to show us our duties toward other Christians. The emphasis in context focuses our attention away from self and on to others, away from living for ourselves and pleasing ourselves to living for others and pleasing others.
NOTE: Our responsibilities are toward . . . "the weak (v. 1) . . .(our) neighbor (v. 2) . . . one toward another (v. 5) . . .one another (v. 7) . . . one another (v. 14)."
***We need to genuinely take care of each other in the family of God!**
How should we take care of each other?

I. BEAR with one another (v. 1)

(A plea for patience toward each other)

"We" - Paul includes himself among the strong
"Strong" - those who are spiritually mature enough to know their liberty in Christ (14:1, 14), and mature enough to exercise it in loving concern for their weaker brethren (14:3, 15).
"Ought" - are indebted (cp. Ro. 1:14); are obligated; we owe it!
We have no other option than to fulfill our responsibilities (duties) toward our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.
"To bear" = to bear with; to put up with someone patiently.
In previous context, the patience would be toward those who would be offended or caused to stumble, if you did something that was against their conviction.
"Infirmities" - the weaknesses. Not speaking about physical infirmities, but spiritual infirmities.
Infirmities that stem from spiritual immaturity.
Those who are "weak in the faith" (14:1); those who stumble often due to immaturity (14:13, 21) *(Gal. 6:1-2 - "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ.")*
With the diversity of people in the body of Christ, differences in gifts (I Cor. 12), backgrounds, cultures, and various levels of understanding the Scriptures, we need a great deal of patience with each other. Everyone has their own unique quirks, problems, and personalities; and strong Christians need to bear with such people.
I Thes. 5:14 - "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men."
"Charity suffereth long" (I Cor. 13:4)
It's easier to be patient when you view each other as family.
"A little girl was once carrying a baby, and someone asked, "Is he not heavy?" "No," was the reply, "he is my brother." (Thomas, p. 380).
"Not to please ourselves" - not to live to enjoy our Christian liberty at the expense of others; not to live to gratify our selfish desires (14:15, 17) at the expense of someone else's conscience.
"Not to please ourselves" - Paul himself, lived such an unselfish life - I Cor. 10:33-11:1 - *"Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."*

II. PLEASE one another (v. 2-4)

(A plea for unselfishness toward each other)

A. The purpose for pleasing others is edification (v. 2)

The **"pleasing"** intended by God is:
1)Not doctrinal compromise (EX: being an "ear tickler" - II Tim. 4:3-4)

2)Not to gain popular favor (EX: being a "men pleaser" - *Gal. 1:10 - "For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.")*

3)Not to do eye service (being a hypocrite - Eph. 6:6).

Rather, the "pleasing" God is talking about is doing that which is for the spiritual well being of the other individual. Sometimes, that which our fellow-brother needs most is loving confrontation (v. 14), not someone who will deceitfully tell him how wonderful he is *(Prov. 27:6 - "Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.")*

"His neighbor" - a neighbor is anyone who is "next to you" within your sphere of influence (not merely the one who lives next door). A neighbor is anyone with a need (EX: Good Samaritan - Lk. 10:25-37)

"For his good" - toward his good; with a goal toward his benefit.

I Cor. 10:23-24 - "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth."

"Edification" - Eng. word "edifice" which refers to a building or that which is built up).

Our goal as Christians is to find someone we can build up. We are to be on the look out for those who need help (Rom. 14:19). We are to be on the look-out for cracked lives that need spiritual plastering, crumbling people that need cement work, structurally damaged saints who have the right foundation yet have not been building on that foundation with the right materials, who need architectural advice.

It takes unselfishness to be concerned about someone else's spiritual house.

I have found that the best way to build my life spiritually is to be busy laboring to build others. (this is contrary to the world's philosophy, as Jesus confirmed through His teachings [See Mt. 20:25-28] and by his unselfish life [John 13:14-17]).

B. The pattern for pleasing others is Christ (v. 3)

We are to imitate Christ, in our dealings with other Christians.

"Pleased not himself" - the Kings of kings had every right to be waited on hand and foot, to live in the world's best luxury, and to have the notoriety of the universe.

Yet He served as the waiter (Jn. 13), He gave up luxury (Mt. 8:20), and humbled Himself (Phil. 2:5-10)

"Christ pleased not himself" - Mt. 20:28 - "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Paul is quoting Psalm 69:9, which has immediate reference to King David, but is applied to Christ who took the insults hurled at him, like David did.

"Reproaches" = insults

Christ unselfishly allowed the insults aimed at the Father to fall upon Him.

To insult Christ was to insult the Father, just as to honor Christ was the same as honoring the Father (Jn. 5:23).

Christ was insulted for reaching lowly sinners with His Gospel (Mt. 9:11, 11:19).

Christ was insulted for hanging on the cross to pay for the world's sin (Mk. 15:29-32; cp. Mt. 27:39-44).

I Pet. 2:23 - "Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." (SEE Matthew 5:11-12).

If there was ever anyone who had no right to be mistreated, maligned, wrongly accused, etc., it is the spotless, irreproachable Son of God (I Pet. 2:22).

Yet for our sakes He endured such, that we might be saved (I Pet. 2:24).

"St. John's first epistle lays great stress on Christ as our pattern. No less than six times he uses the phrase, "even as He." We are to "walk in the light, as He is in the light" (1:7). We are to "walk, even as He walked" (2:6). We are to "purify ourselves, even as He is pure" (3:3). And we are to "Love as He gave us commandment" (3:23). ". . . [Peter also speaks] of Christ "leaving us an example, that ye should follow in His steps" (I Pet. 2:21)" (Thomas, p. 382).

"Does a strong Christian think he is making a great sacrifice by giving up some food or drink (14:21)? Then let him measure his sacrifice by the sacrifice of Christ" (Wiersbe, p. 562).

C. The power for pleasing others is the Scriptures (v. 4)

It is God's Word that tells us who to please, how to please, and why to please our fellow brother. It is our only guide to faith and practice. Therefore, we must be diligent to apply its principles!

1) How much of God's Word applies to me? - Whatsoever things"
"All Scripture . . . is profitable for doctrine . . ." (I Tim. 3:15-16)
"Aforetime" = previously written; written beforehand (EX: the O.T. Scriptures still applied to Paul in the New Covenant).
In other words, all Scripture is for us. We can draw eternal principles, and see examples from all of the Bible and apply them to our lives today.
Though the Bible was written thousands of years ago, and though the various books were addressed to specific people (Ex. Deut. to Israel - Dt. 1:1; Luke to Theophilus - Lk. 1:3) and churches (Ex. Romans to the church at Rome - Ro. 1:7) -- It is for our learning!

2) Why does God's Word apply to me? (what is the goal of Scripture?) -- **"For our learning" -** For our instruction (doctrine).
The greatest source of knowledge, unsurpassed by any other book, is the Bible! This is why I give myself to studying the details of Scripture. It has all the answers to life's questions.

3) How does God's Word apply to me?
   a) It gives patience (the Bible helps us to "remain under" the pressures of serving)
   b) It gives comfort (the Bible helps encourage us when we are tempted to doubt whether or not its "worth it" to serve Christ)**.**

4) What is the end result of applying God's Word to my life? -- "Hope"
I will gain confidence that my labor (in edifying others) is not in vain in the Lord - I Cor. 15:58.

III. UNITE with one another (v. 5-6)

(A plea for oneness with each other)

V. 5

NOTE: Verse 4 teaches that the Scriptures give "patience and comfort."
Verse 5 teaches that God gives "patience and comfort."
Why? The Scriptures are God's Words. (when Scripture speaks, God speaks; and God only speaks today via His written Word).

"God . . . grant you to be like minded" - Only God can produce unity, and He does so by giving us patience and consolation (peace and encouragement), which are fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22).
Patience and peacefulness are vital ingredients to provide unity.
Eph. 4:2-3 - "With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

"Likeminded" - to set your minds toward the same things.
God is not calling for Christian "clones" in personality, but in sharing common goals - namely, each other's total well-being.

"According to Christ Jesus" = Two ideas:
God wants us to be united by:
1) Following Christ's example (Rom. 15:3, 7) (To do as Jesus did)
2) Fulfilling Christ's desire (Jn. 17:21-23) (To do as Jesus wants)

Rom. 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."

"Oneness with God will lead to oneness among the brethren. When God is first, the result will be unity" (Thomas, p.381)

V. 6

Why should we be united?
In order that we may with one mind (purpose or intention) and one mouth glorify God! To glorify God is to make Him shine before the watching eyes of the world which is looking at us.

1) God is glorified when His people are heading in the same direction (**"one mind"** = to have the same goals and desires in life*) (Mt. 5:16 - "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.")*

"With one mind" = with one purpose, the same intention, the same desire. The same word appears in Acts showing the unity of believers - Acts 1:14, 2:46, 4:24, 5:12.

"Abraham's words to Lot are applicable today - *"Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee. . . for we are brethren" (Gen. 13:8)* (Wiersbe, p. 562).

2) God is glorified when His people are saying the same message (**"one mouth"** = like a grand choir, God's people blend their voices to shout to the world - "Jesus saved! Jesus is true! Jesus changes lives! Jesus cares for you! etc.)

It is a shame for God's people to "talk like the devil" (lies, vulgarity, gossip, etc.).

Believers being "one in mind" is not visible to the world unless it is outwardly expressed by the "mouth"!

SINS that disrupt unity:
--Non-commitment (to church membership and attendance)
--Gossip, slander (judging - Rom. 14)
--Pride and other forms of selfishness
--Divisiveness, discord

VIRTUES that promote unity:
--Humility (Phil. 2:2ff)
--Peace (Ph. 4:3)
--Compassion & Love - *I Pet. 3:8 - "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous"*
--Unselfishness- *Acts 4:32 - "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common."*

"A chain is only as strong as its weakest link" (We must all be faithful to each other and to the work of God)
"The single most common factor in creating strong family (type) bonding is shared struggle" (Gary Smalley)
"A team that sweats together, gets together"
--For any relationship to work, there must be uniting
(EX: work, sports, church, family).
--Satan fights unity! Don't let Him have a foothold in our church family.

IV. ACCEPT one another (v. 7-12)

(A plea for impartiality toward each other)

V. 7

"Receive ye" = to accept or welcome; to take ot yourself (same command as 14:1)

"One another" - Regardless of nationality or maturity - Jew & Gentile, weak & strong believers alike.

In previous context, God taught us to accept those Christians with whom we differ about disputable matters (14:1ff).

"As Christ also received us" - our Savior is the perfect example of impartiality.

In order for Jesus to receive us, we did not have to be of a particular race or have a particular ability, or prestige or live at a high economic status.

Rather, He received us:
--Regardless of race (Rom. 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.")
--Regardless of intellect (I Cor. 1:26 - "Not many wise")
--Regardless of ability (talent) ("Not many mighty")
--Regardless of worldly prestige (fame and notoriety; upper crust of society . . . "Not many noble")
--Regardless of economic status (SEE James 2:1-9)

If Jesus has accepted someone, who are we not to?

A question to ask yourself when trying to figure out who you can and cannot fellowship with: **"Does God fellowship with Him?"**

V. 8

In our Savior's early ministry, He continuously made statements like: "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Mt. 15:24); "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Mt. 10:5-6).

Why was His priority mission to Israel? To fulfill Scripture which promised that He would bring salvation to Israel.
Jesus by going to the Jew first with the Gospel message confirmed (fulfilled) the promises made to the O.T. Patriarchs.
God had made promises to Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, etc., that He would redeem His people, that the Messiah would come to save Israel.
But God all the while knew that He would not limit the Messiah's atoning sacrifice to Israel, but would offer its efficacy to all! (I Jn. 2:2; I Tim. 2:4, 6; 4:10).
* The point of verses 7 & 8 is: Christ accepted us (Gentiles) (v. 7), even though He was originally sent as a servant of the circumcision (Jews) (v. 8).

V. 9-12

In verses 9 - 12, Paul quotes four O.T. verses (from the LXX), which show the Gentile sharing in the Jews' blessing of salvation. [Each quotation includes the word "Gentile" in it. The inspiration of the Holy Spirit was Paul's concordance in retrieving such references.]
Because of God's mercy, all believers (including Jew and Gentile) can:

1) Worship together (v. 9, quoting Ps. 18:49) We share a common testimony and sing a common song. **"Confess"** = to speak out the same words of praise.
2) Rejoice together (v. 10, quoting Dt. 32:43) We share a common joy.
3) Praise together (v. 11, quoting Ps. 117:1) We praise a common Lord.
4) Believe together (v. 12, quoting Is. 11:10) We share a common faith.

V. ADMONISH one another (v. 13-14)

(A plea for loving confrontation with each other)

V. 14

"Admonish" - noutheteo - lit. to put into the mind; to confront one's thinking.
A pastor's job is to admonish the flock so that they think Biblically (I Th. 5:12).
As a man thinks, so is he.
"You are what you think."
The way you think and what you think affects every area of your life.
Your thoughts affect your emotions and your actions. Hence, Bible teaching is essential to emotional stability and Godly conduct.

The word "admonish" is used in the sense of:
1)To rebuke and 2) To instruct

1)To rebuke - to correct sinful thinking (II Th. 3:14-15 - "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, not that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." (Cp. Titus 3:10)

2)To instruct - to strengthen defective (weak) thinking

a. To remind about what may be forgotten *(Acts 20:31 - Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.")*
b. To warn about potential danger
(cp. Acts 20:31; I Cor. 4:14 - "I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you")
c. To encourage about God's will *(Col. 3:16 - "Let the word of Christ dwell in your richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.")*

"Admonish one another" - The admonishing is not only the pastor's responsibility and privilege but is expected of the laymen to be involved in reciprocal admonition. In the family of God we need to verbally encourage each other.
"Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of a friend" - Prov. 27:17

Prov. 27:6 - "Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."

Three prerequisites to admonishing others (three needed "fillings" that will give you a competence to Biblically instruct someone else).
In verses 13 & 14 the word **"fill"** occurs three times.

V. 13

You cannot give what you do not have. Before we can impart words of encouragement to others, our lives must be "full" of something to give. Before you are competent to admonish others, you need to be:

A. Filled with joy and peace (stable emotions) (v. 13)

1. God is the source of joy and peace (only He can fill you with such)
2. Faith is the means of joy and peace
   "In believing" = Joy and peace come to us by means of our believing or faith in God's Word.
3. Hope is the result of joy and peace
   "Abound" = to overflow; God wants us to be absolutely confident of our salvation. Holy Spirit empowered "hope" comes to our hearts when we have subjective faith and objective joy and peace.
   God's equation - Belief produces joy and peace which results in hope.

B. Filled with goodness (steadfast morals) (v. 14a)

The reason Barnabas was such an encourager (as his name implies - "Son of Consolation") was because "He was a good man" (Acts 11:24).

Being full of goodness is the result of being full of spiritual knowledge.
Lit. "You yourselves are full of goodness having been filled with all knowledge."
Do you want to be good? Then know God's Word! Give yourself to reading it, meditating on it, and memorizing it.

C. Filled with Bible knowledge (spiritual intellect) (v. 14b)

"All knowledge" - know the "whole counsel of God." Have a well-rounded knowledge of Scripture.
To be able to admonish others you need a balanced understanding of Scripture, knowing more than one "pet" doctrine.
We are to be encouragers!

Every Christian is ot lift up those who fall, strengthen the weak, etc.

--We are to comfort those who are distressed
(II Cor. 1:3-4 - "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.")

--We are to repair (mend) those who are broken by sin *(Gal. 6:1-2 - "Brethren if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.")*

--We are to convert those who stray from the truth - *(James 5:19-20 - "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.")*

Section 39: ROMANS 15:15-21
"PAUL'S METHOD OF MINISTRY"

***Follow Paul's example of service for Christ!**
How did Paul serve Christ?

I. Paul served with <u>CONSCIENTIOUSNESS</u> (v. 15-16)
[A Great <u>Concern</u> for God's Work]

II. Paul served with <u>HUMILITY</u> (v. 17-18)
[A Great <u>Attitude</u> in God's Work]

III. Paul served with <u>DIVINE ABILITY</u> (v. 19)
[A Great <u>Power</u> for God's Work]

IV. Paul served with a <u>PIONEER SPIRIT</u> (v. 20-21)
[A Great <u>Vision</u> for God's Work]

INTRODUCTION:
<u>How</u> we do something is as important as <u>what</u> we do.
In Romans 15:15-21, the Apostle Paul describes for us <u>how</u> he ministered (served) for Christ.

***Follow Paul's example of service for Christ!**
How did Paul serve Christ?

I. Paul served with <u>CONSCIENTIOUSNESS</u> (v. 15-16)
[A Great <u>Concern</u> for God's Work]

A. The <u>words</u> which revealed Paul to be conscientious (v. 15a)

("Boldly...putting you in mind" - A bold reminder)

"Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly" -- After commending the Roman Christians for their "goodness" and spiritual "knowledge" and after showing his confidence that they had the ability to "admonish" one another (v. 14), Paul is quick to say that he still was careful to be boldly strong in this Epistle to remind them about their faith (chap. 1-11) and their responsibilities as Christians (chap. 12-16).

--Paul is bold in condemning sin (chap. 1-3)
--Paul is bold in proving salvation by grace not works (ch. 4-5)
--Paul is bold in calling for sanctification (ch. 6-8)
--Paul is bold in proclaiming God's sovereignty (ch. 9-11)
--Paul is bold in exhorting to full surrender and service (ch. 12)
--Paul is bold in commanding obedience to government (ch. 13)
--Paul is bold in teaching Christians how to care for one another (ch. 14-15)

"In some sort" - lit. in some parts (of my Epistle).

In certain passages in Romans, Paul is very bold in his exhortation. The reason: He is conscientious!

"Putting you in mind" - lit. to put upon your minds again; i.e. to remind.

Someone who is conscientious about others, is constantly reminding them (EX: "Don't forget to. . . Remember to . . . Did you remember to?...etc.)

Like Paul, Peter conscientiously reminded God's people about God's Word: *"Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance." (II Pet. 1:12-13)*

Jude also said: "I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this . . ." (Jude 5)

NOTE: Paul's conscientiousness in reminding the Ephesian pastors of their duties (Acts 20:17-38)

A conscientious pastor will:

1. Keep his life pure (Acts 20:28a)
   Cp. I Tim. 4:16 - "Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."
2. Watch his flock (v. 28b)
3. Feed his flock (v. 28c)
4. Guard his flock from wolves (v. 29-31)

B. The motive which inspired Paul to be conscientious (v. 15b)

("The grace that is given to me of God")

What makes a person conscientious?

What motivates someone to really care about what they do for God and His people?

Answer: The Grace of God.

Paul testifies of such grace which saved him and placed him in the ministry (SEE I Tim. 1:12-14)

I Cor. 15:10 - "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

C. The goal which drove Paul to be conscientious (v. 16)

("That...the Gentiles might be acceptable [to God])

"Minister" = a servant who performs a public spiritual ministry

"Of Jesus Christ" = He is Master, and Lord!

"To the Gentiles" - while the twelve apostles primarily brought the Gospel to the Jew, Paul's mission was to the Gentile (Acts 9:15; Gal. 2:7-9; Ro. 1:5).

The words: "ministering...offering up...acceptable...sanctified" form a picture of the O.T. priestly sacrifice. Paul, like an O.T. Jewish priest ministered the Gospel to the Gentiles, thus making those he won to Christ an offering that was acceptable to God.

SEE I Peter 2:5

"Acceptable" = well-pleasing

Paul's goal was that Christians would not just be an offering to God, but a well-pleasing offering! An offering that was sanctified (totally set apart for divine purposes).

Paul, being conscientious, stopped at nothing short of expecting those he ministered to to be holy! He was not merely concerned about the number of converts, but the quality of converts

(II Cor. 11:2 - "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one Husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.")

NOTE: All three persons of the Godhead are involved in the Gentiles' salvation ["Jesus Christ...God (the Father)...the Holy Ghost]

Are you conscientious about your service for Christ? Do you do your ministry (whatever it may be) with utmost care?

(Whether your ministry is teaching, S.S. or Jr. Church, bus driving, bookstore, cleaning, paying bills, ushering, helping in activities, etc.)

II. Paul served with HUMILITY (v. 17-18)

[A Great Attitude in God's Work]

V. 17

"Glory" - to boast in

Paul is saying, "I have something I can take pride in."

What is it? "Those things which pertain to God" (namely - "acceptable" and "sanctified" saints - v. 16). Paul speaks in a strikingly similar manner in II Cor. 10:12-18.

NOTE: Paul's glorying was not in self -- but in what was accomplished "through Jesus Christ."

If you want to glory in anything, don't glory in yourself (because we are at best frail, dependent, depraved mortals who would have nothing and could do nothing outside of the grace of God).

Glory in God! - Jer. 9:23-24 - "Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD."

V. 18

"For I will not dare to speak..." -

Paul would not dare be so arrogant as to boast about anything which Christ did not produce ("wrought" - lit. work out, accomplish) through him.

Many times Christian workers can be like King Nebuchadnezzar: "Is not this great Babylon that **I** have built...?" (Dan. 4:30)

Is not this the great church that I have built? . . . Are not these the souls that I have won? . . . Is not this the teaching skill that I alone possess? . . . Is not this the spiritual knowledge that I alone have attained?

We tend to forget that Jesus said: "Without me ye can do nothing" (Jn. 15:5).

Any work we do (if it is not done through Him and for Him) will go up in smoke on Judgment day (I Cor. 3; II Cor. 5).

Don't minister "in the flesh."

Christ is the real worker; we are simply His tools, His instruments, His channels, His servants.

Christ should receive all the glory. "That in all things He might have the preeminence" (Col. 1:18).

"By word and deed" - Paul led people to Christ because of his words (verbal testimony) and deed (lit. works - the consistent testimony of his life).

In our witness we need both lip (words) and life (deed).

*It is our words that make the Gospel understandable, and it is our deeds (works) that make the Gospel credible (believable).

III. Paul served with DIVINE ABILITY (v. 19)

[A Great Power for God's Work]

"Mighty" = powerful; undeniable because of their supernatural nature.

"Signs" = miracles that pointed men to God and drew men's attention to what God was doing.

"Wonders" = miracles that caused men to wonder or stand in awe or amazement.

Proof of apostleship was ability to perform signs and wonders.

SEE II Cor. 12:11-12

Heb. 2:3-4 - "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"

Though we are not apostles and don't perform signs, we do have divine power to utilize as we serve Christ!

Acts 1:8 - "But ye shall receive power..." - The same Holy Spirit who lived in Paul lives in every believer.

"The power of the Holy Spirit" - With the Spirit's power we are effective though we may be feeble and fearful when we serve. Without the Spirit's power, we are ineffective though we may be eloquent and self-confident.

SEE I Cor. 2:3-5

As the hymn writer put it in the song "Brethren We Have Met to Worship" - "All is vain unless the Spirit of the Holy One comes down!"

The power of God enabled Paul to encircle all of the Mediterranean world with the Gospel and to plant an estimated 80-100 churches.

"Round about" - "The idea in the word is that of a complete circle, and Paul describes the territory already evangelized in Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, and Greece as lying within a circle; that is, within the circle of the nations around the Mediterranean Sea." (Reinecker, citing Knox, p. 382).

IV. Paul served with a PIONEER SPIRIT (v. 20-21)

[A Great Vision for God's Work]

V. 20

"I strived" = I aspired, I was ambitious, I made it my honorable goal.

Paul endeavored to go where the need was the greatest! Where people did not hear about Christ.

"Lest I should build upon another man's foundation" - Paul was a church planter; hence was itinerant.

There is nothing wrong with building on another man's foundation (Jn. 4:38). (Actually, Paul commends those who do it rightly - I Cor. 3:10ff).

Paul had broad horizons, great expectations, a big vision of what God can do!

"From Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum" (v. 19) covers about 1,400 miles! (Wiersbe, p. 564) This would be the equivalent of one man spreading the Gospel and planting churches from NY halfway across America.

In NYC, a church planter does not have to worry much about building on a foundation which belongs to someone else.

There are many unreached communities and ethnic groups. NYC is the greatest mission field in the world!

V. 21

Paul, citing Isaiah 52:15, shows Scriptural support for his pioneer spirit.

He desired those whose ears never heard the "sweetest story ever told" to hear such a message so that their spiritual eyes might be opened (Eph. 1:18) and so that their blinded mind (II Cor. 4:4) might be illuminated (Heb. 10:32).

Song: "Untold millions are still untold. Untold millions are outside the fold. Who will tell them of Jesus' love? . . . And the heavenly mansions awaiting above?"

Section 40: ROMANS 15:22-33
"PAUL'S RELATIONSHIP TO FELLOW-BELIEVERS"

***Christian living is a matter of <u>giving</u> and <u>receiving</u>.**
(God intended us to be <u>dedicated</u> to each other and <u>dependent</u> on each other.)

I. Paul <u>LOVED</u> Fellow-Believers (v. 22-29)
(He was <u>dedicated</u> to other Christians - He <u>gave</u>)
A. His love is proven by his "<u>Great Desire</u>" to be with them (v. 22-24)
B. His love is proven by his <u>Humble Service</u> for them (v. 25-28)

II. Paul <u>NEEDED</u> Fellow-Believers (v. 30-32)
(He was <u>dependent</u> upon other Christians - He <u>took</u>)
A. He needed their <u>prayers</u> (v. 30-31)
B. He needed their <u>refreshment</u> (v. 32)

INTRODUCTION:
Paul begins and concludes this Epistle by describing his great desire to meet and minister to the Roman Christians (SEE 1:9-13)
Though Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35), both giving and receiving (taking) are realities of life.
***Christian living is a matter of <u>giving</u> and <u>receiving</u>.**
(God intended us to be <u>dedicated</u> to each other and <u>dependent</u> on each other.)

I. Paul <u>LOVED</u> Fellow-Believers (v. 22-29)
(He was <u>dedicated</u> to other Christians - He <u>gave</u>)

A. His love is proven by his "<u>Great Desire</u>" to be with them (v. 22-24)
V. 22
"For which cause" - Because of the fact that God wanted Paul to reach those who never heard about Christ (v. 20-21), the Lord sovereignly allowed Paul to be "much hindered" from going to Rome.

V. 23

"Now having no more place in these parts" = No more locations in these regions.

In other words, Paul is saying, "There are no more areas of opportunity to preach Christ to those who never yet heard."

In the regions where Paul went, he could honestly say that everyone had had a chance to at least hear about Christ. Hence, he testified: "I am free from the blood of all men." (Acts 20:26)

God intends for everyone to hear the Gospel (Mk. 16:15 - "Every creature"; Mt. 28:19 - "all nations"; Rev. 22:17 - "whosoever will").

Sad to say, the greatest commission ever given to Christians has become the greatest omission by Christians.

"A great desire" = Paul loved fellow-believers. He earnestly longed to meet them and fellowship with them. The Roman Christians were led to Christ by someone other than Paul. The Apostle never met them before, yet still longed to be with them.

V. 24

"Somewhat filled with your company" = After enjoying your company.

"Christians ought to rejoice in meeting one another. . . The more Christian fellowship we can realize and cultivate, the greater the power and blessing that will accrue to the Church as a whole" (and to our local churches in particular). (Thomas, p. 409)

B. His love is proven by his Humble Service for them (v. 25-28)

V. 25

"Minister" = diakonon - to serve in mundane manners

Paul's service was to be a carrier to bring their financial gift to Jerusalem.

V. 26

"It hath pleased them" = they thought it was a good idea to help the poor saints in Jerusalem.

"The poor saints" - God's people must take care of their own spiritual family.

Someone who loves others will generally be a ring leader in taking up special, anonymous love offerings to meet the needs of others.

For example, Paul not merely delivered what the Corinthians gave, but he encouraged them to give (II Cor. 8:6-9:5).

V. 27

Gentile Christians owe a debt to Israel (the Jew). Why? Because we are sharing in the spiritual blessings that came via Israel.

--Jesus said: "Salvation is of the Jews" (Jn. 4:22)

--Paul said that the oracles (Words) of God came through the Jew (Rom. 3:2)

**--SEE: Rom. 9:4-5

"Anti-Semitism has no place in the life of a dedicated Christian" (Wiersbe, p. 564).

The principle of repaying spiritual blessings with material blessings is a truth taught throughout Scripture.

EX: O.T. Levites

N.T. Pastor

(Gal. 6:6 - "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things."

--I Cor. 9:11 - "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?")

1Ti 5:18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.

"Carnal things" = tangible; material possessions

V. 28

"Have sealed to them" = have made sure that they received the offering.

"This fruit" = this financial offering

V. 29

Paul was confident that Christ's full power and blessing would still be upon him when he arrived at Rome.

Although he was in chains when he finally arrived (Acts 28:20), he did have God's full blessing to minister (Acts 28:30-31).

II. Paul NEEDED Fellow-Believers (v. 30-32)

(He was dependent upon other Christians - He took)

A. He needed their prayers (v. 30-31)

1. The urgency of prayer - "I beseech you" = I urge you; I earnestly encourage you to pray for me.

2. The motivation for prayer - "For" = because of (the why of prayer)

"For the Lord Jesus Christ's sake" - if for no other reason you pray for someone, pray for the sake of Jesus and His great cause.

"For the love of the Spirit" - The love that the Holy Spirit puts in your hearts for others should prompt you to pray for them!

3. The difficulty of prayer (the how of prayer)

Prayer is a conflict, a battle we must win, or we lose!

"Strive together" -

"Strive" = a word used of ancient athletic contests, describes the fervor, intensity and struggle of prayer (SEE: Col. 2:1, 4:12). To fight or contend. To wrestle in prayer.

Prayer is the hardest work anyone can do!

Why? We are wrestling against a spirit world that hates prayer (Eph. 6:12, 18-19).

The novel This Present Darkness illustrates the importance of prayer in the spiritual warfare that is occurring in our world. In the book, a young pastor begins praying (almost continuously) for his church and the town. He doesn't realize it at first, but there is a fierce battle going on between the forces of Satan (demons) and the forces of Christ (angels) for control of the town and destruction of the one fundamental church there. As more of the pastor's church people wake up spiritually and begin to pray, more and more power is made available to the angels as they fight the demons' control over lost souls and the demons' efforts to keep evil reigning in the town. When Christians don't pray, demons have more freedom and power. But they are weakened and limited by the prayers of the saints, just as the angels are strengthened.

"Together" - Prayer is to be a joint effort. Paul did not merely say, "Pray for me" (Ex. Acts 8:24), but "Pray with me."

On the other hand, some pray for themselves, but don't expect other fellow Christians to hold them up in prayer. We need each other. The Christian life is a "give and take" matter.

Many want others to pray for them, but they do not even pray for themselves.

4. The Content of prayer (v. 31) (The what of prayer)

--He needed their prayers for a protected ministry (v. 31a)

--He needed their prayers for an effective ministry (v. 31b)

B. He needed their refreshment (v. 32)

The result of their prayers would be effective ministry and subsequent joy!

"By the will of God" - when it comes to travel plans, we are subject to the will of God (James 4:15 - "Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain.")

". . . with you be refreshed" - Paul, like you and me, needed to be refreshed physically and spiritually by the company of other believers.

1. Physical Refreshment -

Cp. v. 24 - "I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you"

"Brought on" - to send forth; to help on one's journey with food, money, by arranging for companions, means of travel, etc. (Reinecker, p. 383).

Paul anticipated the Roman Christians to help (assist) him on his way to Spain (cp. v. 28 - "...I will come by (by means of) you into Spain").

Although Paul on many occasions refused financial aid and worked a secular job for his income to avoid anyone questioning his motives (EX: Ephesus - Acts 20:33-35; and Corinth - Acts 18:3; I Cor. 11:7-11), he did on occasion accept financial help from those who were mature enough to not hold him suspect of pedalling the Gospel for monetary gain (II Cor. 2:9; Phil. 4:14-18).

2. <u>Spiritual</u> refreshment

SEE: Rom. 1:11-12

When you are with believers who love the Lord, they have a rejuvenating, revitalizing, inspiring, stimulating effect on your life. God intended it to be this way (Acts 2:46; Heb. 10:24-25).

Many of God's children are like a "breath of fresh air."

They have a way of reviving your spirit; rekindling your fire; fortifying your strength; reinforcing your faith; and renewing your zeal.

Section 41: ROMANS 16:1-16
"GOD USES ORDINARY PEOPLE"

***Regardless of your talents, God wants to use your life for His glory!**

Whom does God use? God uses ordinary people like:

I. PHEBE . . .
A Helpful <u>Servant</u> in God's Work (v. 1-2)

II. PRISCILLA & AQUILA . . .
A Couple who <u>Sacrificed</u> for God's Work (v. 3-5a)

III. EPAENETUS & APELLES . . .
Men who were <u>Faithful</u> to God's Work (v. 5, 10)

IV. MARY, TRYPHENA, TRYPHOSA, & PERSIS . . .
Women who <u>Toiled</u> in God's Work (v. 6, 12)

V. ANDRONICUS & JUNIA . . .
Men of Notable <u>Reputation</u> (v. 7)

VI. URBANE . . .
A Man with a <u>Team Spirit</u> in God's Work (v. 9)

VII. RUFUS' MOTHER . . .
A <u>Mother to Many</u> in God's Work (v. 13)

INTRODUCTION:

When we think of prominent Christians or saints of years gone by, we think of Biblical heroes like Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David, Elijah, Daniel, Isaiah, Peter, Paul, and John.

Or heroic figures recorded in the annals of Christian history like Chrisostum, Martin Luther the Reformer, John Wesley, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, George Whitfield, D. L. Moody, Jonathan Edwards, Billy Sunday, etc.

While all of these men had a unique ministry in the plan of God through the ages, we dare not forget that men like these are only a small representation of the over-all picture.

God has used multitudes more of faithful people whose names have not been inscribed on the pages of our Christian history books, yet who are prominent heroes who occupy special places in Heaven, and will have special rewards for eternity because of their loving, dedicated service for Christ.

When we get to Heaven, I'm sure we will be amazed by the great number of "ordinary" people who, because of their labor for God, will stand out as prominent "giants of the faith."

"Greet" = in verses 4-16, the word "aspazomai" (translated "greet", also "salute" [for variety]) occurs a total of 17 times.
Romans contains the longest list of greetings of any Epistle. Again proving Paul's great desire to meet with the Romans and his great love for them (1:11; 15:23).
To "greet" ("salute") means to: pay one's respects to; to welcome. In modern terms - to say "hello to."
In Paul's long list of greetings, we find references to some unsung heroes of the faith -- men and women whose names are not so popular, yet whose lives made an indelible mark for Christ in the local churches in which they served and the societies in which they lived.

***Regardless of your talents, God wants to use your life for His glory!**

Whom does God use?
God uses ordinary people like:

I. PHEBE . . .

A Helpful Servant in God's Work (v. 1-2)

V. 1
"I commend" - lit. I stand with; I recommend.
Letters of commendation were a common practice (Acts 18:27; II Cor. 8:18-24; III Jn. 9, 10)
"A servant" - a "diakonon" (Greek)

> NOTE: The word diakonon does not necessarily refer to the office of "deacon," but is used to refer to a servant in the general sense.
> EX: Martha was cumbered about with much serving (diakonia) (Luke 10:40).
> --All Christians are to do the work of a diakonia (Eph. 4:12; Heb. 6:10).
> Jesus Christ was a diakonos (servant) (Rom.15:8)
> Angels did the work of serving (diakoneo) (Mt.4:11)
> The Servants at the Wedding of Cana were called servants (diakonos) (John 2:5,9)

The word diakonos is used in the technical sense of "deacon" (Acts 6:1-2; I Tim. 3:8) only a few times in Scripture. It is primarily used of a servant in the unofficial sense (Mt. 20:26, 23:11; Jn. 2:5, 9; 12:26; I Cor. 3:5; Eph. 6:21).
This sense of the word is meant by Paul in Rom. 16:1. Therefore it is inappropriate to think of the reference to Phebe as being support for the office of "female deacon."

Cenchrea = the eastern port of Corinth.
V. 2
"Receive her" - Paul appeals to the Romans to welcome Phoebe into their fellowship, just as they would welcome any saint of God. In other words, although she is changing location from Corinth to Rome, she is to be accepted and treated on an equal level (Gk. = axios) as their fellow church members are.
The practice of sending "letters of recommendation" on behalf of people who move from one church to another, finds support from Paul's commendation of Phebe.
"Assist her" - lit. stand by her; i.e. support her, help her.
"Business" = matter
Paul is saying: "Help her in any matter where she may need help."
The reason given as to why the Romans should help Phebe is because she helped other believers, including Paul.
"Succourer" = helper, protector
"The masculine form of the word was used by the Romans for the legal representative of a foreigner.

A "patron" was one in the Greek states who took care of a stranger and was responsible for him to civil authorities" (Thomas, p. 418). (Like someone today who would work with immigration as a "sponsor" for a foreigner).
In Jewish communities it meant the legal representative or wealthy patron. (Reinecker, p. 383).
Phebe, evidently supported Paul, and did whatever she could to advance the work of God with whatever resources she had.
No doubt she was a hospitable woman.

II. PRISCILLA & AQUILA . . .

A Couple who <u>Sacrificed</u> for God's Work (v. 3-5a)

V. 3

Phebe being from Cenchrea (Acts 18:18) and Priscilla and Aquila being from Corinth (Acts 18:2, 26; I Cor. 16:19), apparently all travelled from Corinth to Italy to help the saints of God at the Church of Rome. [NOTE: Aquila was originally from Italy (Acts 18:2)]

"Priscilla and Aquila" - a saved Jewish couple who served Christ as a <u>team</u>. Every time they are mentioned in Scripture, they are together as a husband and wife team (Acts 18:2, 26; I Cor. 16:19; II Tim. 4:19; Ro. 16:3).

"My helpers" = lit. my joint workers, my fellow laborers who work with me.

How did they work with Paul?

1. They <u>assisted God's man</u> in the ministry (Acts 18:2).
   This Godly couple together helped Paul by giving him a <u>job</u> (tentmaking) and <u>housing</u> when he went to plant churches in Corinth.
2. The <u>helped disciples</u> immature believers (Acts 18:26)
3. The <u>opened up their home</u> for the Lord's work (I Cor. 16:19; Rom. 16:5).

V. 4

4. They <u>laid down their necks</u> for Paul's sake.

They were willing to die; they went so far as to risk their lives in order to protect God's man.

"Laid down their own necks" = to place one's head under the axe of the executioner (Reinecker, p. 384).

Exactly how they risked their lives for Paul's sake is not known. One thing is sure - Paul was thankful and so were the Gentile converts who came to Christ because of Paul's ministry.

I'm sure Paul on many occasions testified to Gentile converts of their great debt to this couple who heroically delivered Paul's life in some way.

Paul could say to the saved Gentiles: "You would not be saved if it were not for Aquila and Priscilla!"

V. 5

"The church that is in their house" - the early Church did not congregate in Cathedrals with stained glass windows and arched roofs, but in people's homes.

Remember a church is not a building, but is an assembled body of saints gathered together in an orderly fashion for the purpose of worship, fellowship, and edification (with pastors and deacons - Phil. 1:1).

Beware of formalism!

III. EPAENETUS & APELLES . . .

Men who were <u>Faithful</u> to God's Work (v. 5, 10)

V. 5

A. <u>Epaenetus</u>, who is the firstfruits of Achaia"

"Firstfruits of Achaia" - Epaenetus was the first convert to Christ in Achaia (in the province of Asia).

"My well beloved" - There is something special about that first soul you ever lead to Christ; or the first charter members of a church.
It's a thrill to see converts "stick." That is, to not see them fall by the wayside but to remain faithful.
For evangelism to multiply, it only starts with one convert (ILLUS: the many souls that have been won to Christ because of one person. The Gospel spreads, disciples multiply, and the fires of revival spread when there is but a "spark").
No doubt God used Epaenetus to reach many in Asia Minor.

B. "Apelles approved in Christ" -

"Approved" - to approve after testing, to find genuine after examination, to find acceptable after trial.
EX: James 1:3 - "Trying" is same word as "approved."
The word means to prove or show something to be real or genuine after testing it (EX: How gold is tested).
V. 10
We don't know what tests Appelles went through to gain the status of being named "approved," but the point is - He passed the tests!
He was proven to be a genuine, unhypocritical, sincere believer in Christ.
May God find us to be genuine!

IV. MARY, TRYPHENA, TRYPHOSA, & PERSIS . . .
Women who Toiled in God's Work (v. 6, 12)

A. Mary (v. 6)
"Bestowed much labor on us" -
"Labor" = from "kopiao"; to work to the point of exhaustion; to toil till you grow weary; points to the intensity of the work. The word describes hard labor, to the point of sweating.
"Much" - points to the quantity of the work. This Christian woman did not sweat for God once or twice, but many times.
"On us" - points to the objects of the work. She labored for God's people. Whatever you do for Christians, you actually do for Christ (SEE: Mt. 25:34-40)
Servicing God's children is an evidence of salvation (Heb. 6:10) and will not go unrewarded (Mk. 9:41; I Cor. 3:14).

B. Tryphena, Tryphosa, and Persis (v. 12)
"In the Lord" - points to the motive of the work.
The phrase: "in the Lord" - shows that even though these women bestowed labor on God's people, they did it for the Lord's sake.
The work of the Lord must always be done for the Lord.
We are to serve "in the name of Christ" *(Col. 3:17, 23 -"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. . . . And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.")*
When was the last time you sweat for the Lord's work?

V. ANDRONICUS & JUNIA . . .
Men of Notable Reputation [Outstanding Testimony] (v. 7)

"Who are of note among the Apostles" -
"Of note" - they were noteworthy, outstanding; they had a splendid reputation, an admirable testimony.
"Among the apostles" - lit. in the apostles' (opinion)

Paul is not teaching that these two men were apostles, but that they had a notable testimony in the eyes of the Apostles.
Why were they notable?

1. They were related to Paul (**"My kinsmen"** = "my relatives" [cp. v. 11] - either a reference to immediate relationship or to the fact that they were fellow Jews)

* 2. They suffered for Christ like Paul (**"My fellow prisoners"**)
Phil. 1:29 - "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, no only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."
Mt. 5:11-12 - "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."
Suffering for Christ is part of the Christian life.
SEE I Peter 4:12-19

* 3. They were mature believers
"Who also were in Christ before me" - Adronicus and Junia were saved before Paul was. They became believers and thus were baptized "in Christ" (Rom. 6:1ff) prior to Paul's conversion.

The implication is that they were mature believers. Their spiritual age matched their spiritual maturity.
"A good name" is important! (SEE: Rom. 16:19).
Prov. 22:1 - A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold."
"A good name is better than precious ointment" (Eccl. 7:1).

To lose or ruin your testimony is to hurt the cause of Christ
--Eccl. 10:1 - "Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour."
EX: David (II Sam. 12:14 - "Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast giving great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die."
EX: Israel (Ezek. 36:20, 23) (Rom. 2:24 - "For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.")

VI. URBANE . . .
A Man with a Team Spirit in God's Work (v. 9)

"Urbane our helper" - lit. our fellow-worker ("sunergon"); the one who worked together with us.
Urbane was a man with a "team spirit." (like that of Priscilla and Aquila who are also called "helpers" (lit. fellow-workers, v. 3)
Men like Urbane don't live for vain glory or self-recognition. They don't have to be the sole servants. They don't mind sharing the credit for labor done.
They don't live for the limelight to be upon them. The Urbane's tend to work behind the scenes. They don't clamor for attention. They are "people oriented," who can function in conjunction with others.
Today, we need fewer "chiefs" and more "indians." Fewer foremen and more common laborers. Fewer captains and more soldiers.

VII. RUFUS' MOTHER . . .

A Mother to Many in God's Work (v. 13)

"Chosen" = elected. Rufus was chosen in Christ like the above-mentioned people.

The word "chosen" points to the fact that he was a believer.

Everyone who believes, has been chosen *(II Thes. 2:13 - "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.")*

"His mother and mine" - Although she was not Paul's physical mother, Rufus' mother was like a mother to Paul (cp. Mark. 10:30).

She is the mother of Rufus by birth, and the mother of the Apostle Paul by Christian love (Thomas, p. 425).

Being as a mother to Paul, she probably prayed for him, cooked special meals for him, did special tasks for him; and encouraged him.

> Every good church has the "motherly" types of women. We need more Godly women with this affectionate quality.
>
> There are some ladies in this church that I know care for me like a son. They also take under their wing and care for others in our church. These ladies are teachers to the younger women (Titus 2:3-5) and are burden bearers.

[NOTE: This woman's husband could be the father of the same Rufus who helped bear the cross of Christ - Mk. 15:21.]

CONCLUSION:

V. 16

"An holy kiss" -

"Holy" - set apart from impurity and sin

"Kiss" - lit. an expression of affection.

God wants us to express our affection for each other in a manner that is not offensive or sinful.

Different cultures express friendship in different ways: Italians hug; Americans shake hands; Eskimos rub noses; and Jews kiss on the cheek. How ever you express your heart-felt affection for other believers, make sure they know you genuinely care for them. Beware of being cold, formal, stand-off-ish, and distant.

(Note: In Paul's culture, the women kissed the women and the men kissed the men; Men did not kiss other women in the ancient Jewish culture)

Who does God use for His work? Ordinary people. . . various people . . . and diverse people (cp. I Cor. 12:4-5, 12-27).

God uses ordinary laymen!

God uses men and women!

God uses various abilities (talents, skills, etc.)

What God is looking for today is willing servants.

"For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath and not according to that he hath not" (II Cor. 8:12).

He will accept whatever you have to offer Him.

Section 42: ROMANS 16:17-20
"BEWARE OF FALSE TEACHERS"

***Beware of false teachers!**
Four questions for you to answer:

I. <u>WHO</u> is a False Teacher? (v. 17)
He is one who causes:
- A. <u>Division</u> contrary to sound doctrine
- B. <u>Offenses</u> contrary to sound doctrine

II. <u>WHY</u> must I Separate from False Teachers? (v. 18)
- A. He has a deceitful <u>motive</u> (v. 18a)
- B. He uses a deceitful <u>method</u> (v. 18b)
- C. He will deceive the <u>immature</u> (v. 18c)

III. <u>HOW</u> can I Discern False Teachers? (v. 19)
- A. Be wise concerning good
- B. Be simple concerning evil

IV. <u>WHAT</u> is the result of Having Spiritual Discernment? (v. 20)
[Satan is crushed and conquered.]

INTRODUCTION:
Paul concludes this great Epistle with an important warning.
Last words are important words.
V. 17
"I beseech" = I urge, I encourage.
Paul's appeal shows the extreme <u>importance</u> or <u>seriousness</u> of the forthcoming admonition.
"Brethren" - Primarily aimed at the leadership, but also including the laity of the church at Rome.
Cp. Paul's warning to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:28-31).
"Mark them" = "Skopeo" - to watch out for; to keep your eye on; to scrutinize.
The appeal is to vigilance, watchfulness, to be on guard against.
Jesus sternly warned about the fate of those who cause His children to stumble (SEE: Mt. 18:6-7).

***Beware of false teachers!**
Four questions for you to answer:

I. <u>WHO</u> is a False Teacher? (v. 17)

He is one who causes:

A. <u>Division</u> contrary to sound doctrine

"Cause divisions" - the people warned against are instigators of divisiveness.
The word **"divisions"** (dichostasia) literally refers to a "standing apart."
"Diche" = division, apart, asunder
"Stasis" = to stand
This word occurs two other times in Scripture:

1)The word is used of those who divide themselves from others and form clique-ish, sectarian groups (Ex: The Carnal Corinthians - SEE: I Cor. 3:3-4)
The Corinthians, being characterized by "envying, strife and divisions" (envy and strife being related to divisiveness), were separating from each other wrongly, and rallying around personalities--such as Paul, Apollos, and Peter--rather than around Christ (cp. I Cor. 1:10-13).

The Romans evidently had legalists slip in (hence the appeal in Roman 14 - 15:13) who were disrupting the unity so encouraged by Paul (Rom. 12:3ff).

2) The word "divisions" (translated "seditions") occurs in Gal. 5:20 in a context describing the works of the flesh.

Unbiblical divisiveness is opposite the fruits of the Spirit, and is a work of the old sinful nature. The word in Gal. 5:20 is surrounded by its "kissing cousins" -- "hatred, variance, emulations, jealousy, wrath, strife/rivalries, heresies and envyings."

B. Offenses contrary to sound doctrine

"Offenses" = (skandala) - obstacles, hindrances, stumbling blocks.
The word occurs in Rom. 14:21 (as a verb), and 9:33, 11:9, 14:13, and 16:17 (in its noun form). In all cases, it refers to that which would cause someone to fall.
In Rom. 14, a context describing why Christians should avoid doing anything (EX: eating meat) that would be a temptation for a weaker brother, God exhorts that "no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" (14:13).
Whereas the word "divisions" often characterizes the behavior of a legalist, the word "offenses" often depicts the unloving actions of a libertine.

Two Extremes:
Divisions - the legalistic Judaizers
(Legalists - those who add to Scriptures)

Offenses - the antinomian libertines
(Liberals - those who delete from Scriptures)

"Contrary to the doctrine" = opposite the teaching
What is contrary to the doctrine?
1) Their message (false teaching - cp. v. 18 - "fair speeches deceive")
2) Their behavior (ungodly lifestyle - v. 17 - characterized by divisiveness and offensiveness)

Such behavior of divisiveness and throwing stumbling blocks in the way of Christians is contrary to the doctrine (teaching) of this Epistle (Rom. 12:3ff; 14-15:7) and the Word of God from cover to cover.

God calls the divisive person an abomination - *"He that soweth discord among the brethren" (Prov. 6:19).*
And God commands to separate from those who--like Balaam--cast stumbling blocks in front of His people (Rev. 2:14, 20) and solicit them to evil.

"Avoid them" - turn away from them; keep away from them; separate yourself from them.
"Avoid" - As Chrysostum noted, the Apostle does not advise any debate with these men, but separation (cited in Thomas, p. 430).
Nor does Paul encourage dialogue. We can debate and dialogue with God's people, but not with apostates.
*Separation from false teachers is a constant command of the New Testament.

--Do not receive them *(II Jn 10, 11 - "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.")*

--Withdraw from them *(I Tim. 6:5 - "Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.")*

--Have nothing to do with them *(II Pet. 2:1 - "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction.")*

--Reject them *(Titus 3:10 - "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition, reject")*

--Be separate from them *(II Cor. 6:14-18)*

Any doctrine that causes [teaches] divisiveness (factions) and offenses (stumbling blocks) cannot be from God!
SEE: A parallel warning in Phil. 3:17-19 - NOTE: Whereas, Paul warned to "mark" those who were to be avoided in Rom. 16:17, in Phil. 3:17, he says to "mark" those whose examples are to be followed.
Who are these false teachers? They knock at your door with magazines and books; they come into your living room via TV with great appeals for money; they enter your car via radio with persuasive charisma; they are found in your mail box with appealing advertisements and colorful illustrative material.

II. WHY must I Separate from False Teachers? (v. 18)

A. He has a deceitful motive (v. 18a)

"Serve" (douleo) = to serve as a slave; it describes devotion.
The point: These false teachers are not devoted to Christ, but to their stomachs (cp. Phil. 3:19; Tit. 1:10-11).
Such a statement clearly identifies these false teachers as unbelievers.
They **"minister"** for **"gain"** (selfish advantage) (I Tim. 6:3-5).

B. He uses a deceitful method (v. 18b)

"Good words" (Gk. chrestor & logia) = kind words, "smooth words"
"Fair speeches" (Gk. eu & logia) = praise words; to say something good about someone so as to "butter them up," to flatter
The two phrases point to someone with persuasiveness; a false teacher who knows the right words [the most deceitful of cults are those who know how to talk and deceive those who don't have a firm grasp on Scripture]
Col. 2:3-4 - "In Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words."
SEE: II Peter 2:1-3
"Good words and fair speeches" - They appear "good" but they are tools of Satan, who through eloquence, charm, charisma, and personality etc., deceives the hearts of the unsuspecting.
--They are "wolves in sheep's clothing" *(Mt. 7:15 - "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."*
--They appear as "ministers of righteousness" *(II Cor. 11:13-15)*

C. He will deceive the <u>immature</u> (v. 18c)

"Deceive" = to trick or lead astray

"The simple" = those who are unaware of evil; those who are without a knowledge of evil tactics; they are naive, innocent and immature. They don't suspect such religious tricksters.

(EX: Someone who is not "street-wise" in NYC is easily tricked by the liars, connivers, and deceivers that lurk in the city streets)

III. <u>HOW</u> can I Discern False Teachers? (v. 19)

In contrast to the "simple" (v. 18) who succomb to false teachers, the Romans had a testimony of faithful obedience.

The report of their obedience had reached out to all men (cp. Ro. 1:8). *News travels fast!

May our lives echo out obedience to God.

"I am glad" - Paul says, "Because of your obedience, I am rejoicing over you!"

Your obedience causes others to rejoice. Your disobedience causes God's people to be ashamed.

A. Be wise concerning good

"I would have you" = I desire, I want, I wish you to be wise. . ."

"Wise toward good" - Wisdom is the ability to have a practical "hands on" knowledge of truth that relates to real life situations.

The best way to be wise unto that which is good is to know the standard of goodness -- The Word of God.

By knowing true goodness, you can easily detect error. By being an expert at the genuine, you will have the insight to detect the counterfeit.

I Cor. 14:20 = "Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men."

Matthew 10:16 - "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

B. Be simple concerning evil

"Simple concerning evil" =

"Simple" = <u>not</u> the same word as in V. 18. This word means "<u>unmixed</u>"; God wants His children to be <u>unmixed</u> with evil, pure (again an appeal for separation).

The word is translated "harmless" in Mt. 10:16 and Phil. 2:15 (Phil. 2:15 - "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world."

"They were not to be wise with regard to evil and simple with regard to good. This is the maxim of the world, but there is no need to practice evil in order to become wise in it" (Thomas, p. 332).

The positive relationship toward doctrinal "good," and the negative relationship toward doctrinal "evil" is repeated in I Thes. 5:21 & 22 - "Prove all things; hold fast that which is <u>good</u>. Abstain (lit. hold yourself away) from all appearance of <u>evil</u>."

Again God says: *"Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Rom. 12:9).*

IV. <u>WHAT</u> is the result of Having Spiritual Discernment? (v. 20)

[Satan is crushed and conquered.]

"The God of peace" = the God who gives peace.

False teachers disrupt peace. God restores it! How? By crushing Satan.

"Will bruise Satan" = will crush, trample on; lit. will "<u>rub</u> (the serpent's head) <u>together</u>" with the dust of the ground.

What is the secret to victory over Satan and his lies? ANSWER: To be wise concerning good and unmixed with evil."

In other words, to know the <u>Scripture</u> and to remain <u>separate</u> from false teaching.

EX: Christ's conquering of Satan

(Mt. 4:4, 7, 10 = The Word of God)

"Shortly" = swiftly; in a brief amount of time; quickly.
"When the believer fights with the armor of God, the conflict is never long" (Godet, cited by Thomas, p. 433).
Christ is the only source of grace. Without His grace our ability to conquer Satan's attacks is null and void.

Section 43: ROMANS 16:21-27
"TO GOD BE THE GLORY"

***God is worthy to receive glory! (v. 25a, 27)**

I. The <u>REASONS</u> for Him to be Glorified (v. 25-26)
("To Him that is of power to <u>establish you</u>")
- A. Glorify God for the strength He gives Through the <u>saving Gospel</u> (v. 25a)
- B. Glorify God for the strength He gives Through <u>spiritual understanding</u> (v. 25b-26)

II. The <u>MEANS</u> for Him to be Glorified (v. 27a)
(". . . Through <u>Jesus Christ</u>)

III. The <u>Duration</u> for Him to be Glorified (v. 27b)
(". . . <u>For ever</u>, Amen")

INTRODUCTION: Verses 21-24 Greetings to Rome from Corinth:

V. 21

"Workfellow" = fellow-worker; one who works together with someone; it describes someone who is a partner in ministry; someone with a team spirit.

"Kinsmen" = relatives; evidently relatives in Christ. In Christ we are family; we are brothers and sisters wearing the same "last name" - "Christians"

V. 22

"I Tertius, who <u>wrote</u> this epistle" -Tertius was Paul's amaneunsis, his secretary, his scribe, his penman. Paul evidently had eye trouble and relied upon Godly men to pen his letters.

Paul under the superintending ministry of the Holy Spirit dictated this letter to Tertius (II Pet. 1:15-<u>21</u>).

God used men to write His Word.

[What a privilege it was for Tertius to have part in the production of Holy Scripture, each stroke of the pen being divinely inspired!]

While men "wrote" the Bible, God "<u>authored</u>" the Bible. The source of Scripture was <u>God</u>, not men!

Man's part was absolutely controlled by the Holy Spirit so that what was written was absolutely authoritative and completely free from error or omission (II Tim. 3:16).

Peter equates Paul's writings with the other Scriptures and recognizes their authority (II Pet. 3:15-16).

V. 23

"Gaius mine host" -

"Host" = someone who shows <u>hospitality</u>. Gaius opened his home for Paul and for all of God's saints.

The Apostle John commends Gaius for his faithful service for Christ and his love for God's people (III Jn. 1-6)

III Jn. 5-6a - "Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers: Which have born witness of thy charity before the church."

"Erastus the chamberlain of the city" - the city treasurer, steward, manager.

God throughout history has saved many who had influence in the towns and cities in which they lived (EX: Ethiopian eunich - Acts 8:27ff).

He has saved bankers, presidents of corporations, governors, mayors, etc. Regardless of whom they are - "The ground is level at the foot of the cross."

Verse 24 was probably written by Paul's own hand, since this was his "official seal" in every letter (SEE: II Thes. 3:17-18) (Wiersbe, p. 566).

V. 25 "Now to Him" - a phrase of praise.
NOTE: This benediction of praise is a thought not completed until v. 27.
"Now to Him (v. 25) . . . To God . . . be glory (v. 27)."
Jude 24-25 has a similar benediction - "Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."
Paul concludes this Epistle with a "look upwards" (Godet).
It is fitting that a message such as in Romans which came from God, should consequently inspire men to give glory to God.
Man was created to give glory to God!
Sinners are redeemed to give glory to God!

***God is worthy to receive glory! (v. 25a, 27)**

I. The REASONS for Him to be Glorified (v. 25-26)

("To Him that is of power to establish you")
(the strength He gives)
V. 25
"Stablish" = to make stable, firm, solid
God does not intend for His children to be weak; to vacillate; to be blown around by every wind of doctrine (Eph. 4:14) or circumstance of life, but He wants them to be fixed, stable, mature.
"Power" = ability; the power to establish is found in no place other than God.
God intends for you to be "strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man" (Eph. 3:16)
Every Christian needs the strength that only God provides - even Pastors *(Acts 20:32 - "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.")*

A. Glorify God for the strength He gives through the saving Gospel (v. 25a)

"According to my Gospel" - does not mean that the Gospel was exclusive to Paul, or that he was the only one who shared it. The phrase "my Gospel" simply refers to the Gospel which Paul preached, a Gospel which also the other Apostles preached (I Cor. 3:21-4:1).
"My Gospel" - Rom. 2:16; II Tim. 2:8; "Our Gospel" - II Cor. 4:3; I Th. 1:5
"Gospel" = good news
Many times, as believers go through life, they often forget all that Jesus did for them through the simple Gospel. That simple message is our source of strength.
The core or our fortitude is our faith in the finished, substitutionary work of Christ. Don't lose sight of it!
The simple key to victory over the world's philosophies, temptations, etc., is our faith (I Jn. 5:4)
The Gospel Paul preached was:

1) A righteous Gospel (totally consistent with the holiness of God - Rom. 1-3)
2) A free Gospel (no charge) - Rom. 4-5 (cp. Rom. 6:23 - "gift")
3) A complete Gospel (enough to transform the "whole man" - Rom. 6-8)
4) A universal Gospel (enough for everyone who believes - Rom. 9-11)

"The preaching of Jesus Christ" = the proclamation about Jesus Christ (objective genitive)
Paul's only message was "Christ"!

Jesus Christ was the "constant theme and predominant subject of his message" (Thomas, p. 438). When Christ is uplifted, God's people are strengthened! When He is exalted, we are edified.

-B. Glorify God for the strength He gives through spiritual understanding (v. 25b-26)

v. 25

"Revelation" = unveiling; revealing

"Mystery" = that which was previously unknown, but now is revealed

"Kept secret" - passive; it was God who kept such a message hidden.

Paul's description of the "mystery" - SEE: Eph. 3:1-10 * v. 6

The mystery of which Paul speaks "was not that the Gospel was to be extended to the Gentiles, for this was no mystery at all, since it is clearly found in a number of passages in the O.T. The 'mystery' was something that arose out of this extension to the Gentiles, namely, the union of Jew and Gentile on the same level, as one Body in Christ" (Thomas, p. 439)

V. 26

"Now is made manifest" - made clear, made visible

1. **How does God give spiritual understanding?**
   --"By the Scriptures"
   "By the Scriptures of the prophets" = the New Testament apostles and prophets (Eph. 3:5; 4:11-12) (Paul is not referring to the O.T. prophets, since they never heard of the mystery of the "Church").
   "According to the Commandment" - God gave the word; the "OK" and His mystery was revealed. Unless God reveals something, it will never be known.
2. **To whom does God give spiritual understanding?**
   --"All nations"
   "Made known" - passive. God wants to use His children to make His truth known to the world. The world will never know, unless we make it known!
3. **Why does God give spiritual understanding?**
   --"For obedience"
   "Obedience of faith" =
   The "root" of obedience is faith.
   The "fruit" of faith is obedience (James; I John)
   Obedience is the result of saving faith; a faith which does not produce obedience is no faith at all (James 2:14-20).

II. The MEANS for Him to be Glorified (v. 27a)

(". . . Through Jesus Christ)

"To God only wise" = God displayed wisdom in His marvelous plan of salvation, being both just and the Justifier of him who believes (Rom. 3:26; 11:33-36).

God is the only source for true wisdom! All wisdom comes from Him. You must go to Him to get it (Prov. 3:5-7; James 1:5). God the Father is glorified through (by means of) Jesus Christ the Son -

Example:

1) **By His life on earth** *(Jn. 17:4-5 - "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.")*

2) **By His <u>exaltation</u> in Heaven** (Compare: Phil. 2:9-<u>11</u>)
Christ's finished work of redemption and all who are saved because of Jesus will glorify God the Father.

III. The <u>Duration</u> for Him to be Glorified (v. 27b)

(". . . <u>For ever</u>, Amen")

"Forever" = lit. unto the ages of the ages. God will be glorified eternally because His work of salvation will last eternally.

God is worthy of glory!
SEE: Rev. 4:8-11
Rev. 5:11-14

CONCLUSION:

This study of the book of Romans should encourage us in regard to:
God's <u>salvation</u> (ch. 1-5)
God's <u>sanctification</u> (ch. 6-8)
God's <u>sovereignty</u> (ch. 9-11)
and God's complete right for us to present ourselves to Him as living <u>sacrifices</u> (ch. 12-16)
. . . All so that God would be glorified!

We are to give glory to God *(Jer. 9:23-24 - "Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD."*

We are to do all to the glory of God (I Cor. 10:31 - "Whether therefore ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do al to the glory of God.")

King Herod "gave not God the glory" (Acts 12:23) and it cost him his life!

Do you bring glory to God?!

"Day by day, hour by hour, and even moment by moment, may we never forget the supreme purpose of everything in life" (Thomas, p. 442).

Namely, to glorify God!