



... I must also see Rome."

Acts 19:21

A new study on Paul's Letter to the beloved in Rome

The most significant theological letter ever written. Augustine of Hippo (354-430), the most influential of the church fathers, was converted upon reading Romans 13:13-14. Martin Luther, the father of the Protestant Reformation, was studying Romans when he concluded that faith alone justifies a person before God. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, was converted on May 24, 1738, upon reading Luther's introduction to Romans.

Holman Bible Dictionary.

By Wayne E. McMorran

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INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF ROMANS

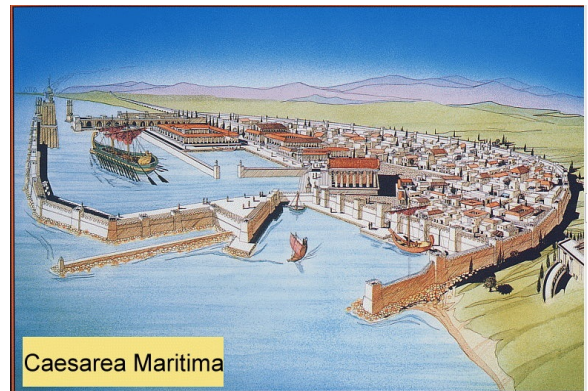
As we study this book in detail, what should we use as an outline? There are about as many outlines as there are Christian writers. I prefer to let the Bible be its own outline and go verse-by-verse and chapter-by-chapter.

I could go on at length about the author of this epistle¹. This introduction is included in the epistle (or, if you prefer, "letter.") I could describe the purpose of the epistle, but why not let Paul explain it for himself. I could write about the references used in this study - but - I shall leave that to the end where it belongs. Let's just say they are all well known and respected commentators.

I need to make it known that Paul had not written to the Romans **after** being there. The closest Paul had come to Rome on his second journey was when he went into Berea which was about 400 miles East of Rome.

I think it would be wise to note that Paul was not the only Apostle. Who evangelized on the southern shores of the Mediterranean? Who evangelized to the East? Apparently, God did not think we needed more epistles in our Bibles so He just concentrated on Paul, Peter, John, James and Jude.

Paul was in Jerusalem and he surrounding areas for a considerable length of time. He would probably be executed there but for the fact that he was a Roman citizen and, therefore, could appeal his case to Ceaser. He had been tried by the Jews and the Roman governors several times, but, finally,



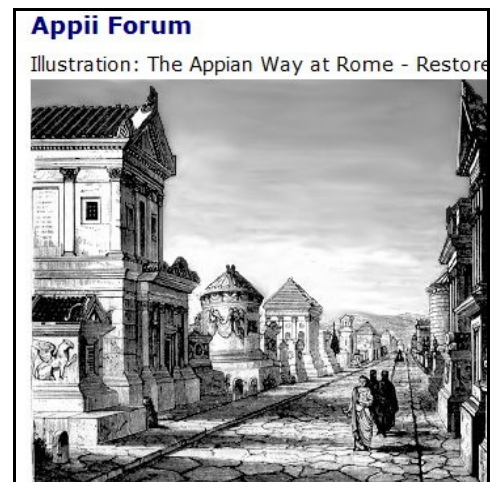
Where Paul was held before Rome

Acts 26:30-32 (NASB)

The king stood up and the governor and Bernice, and those who were sitting with them, and when they had gone aside, they began talking to one another, saying, "This man is not doing anything worthy of death or imprisonment." And Agrippa said to Festus, "This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar."

But he did appeal to Caesar and to Caesar he must go. Luke describes the voyage to Rome in great detail, the conclusion of which is below.

Acts 28:11-16 (NKJV)

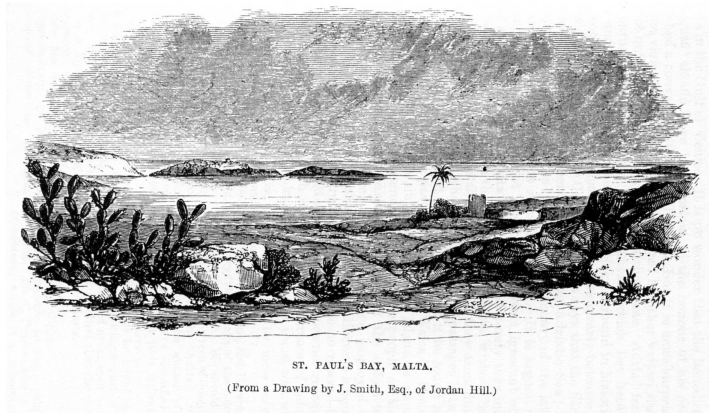


¹2 (Epistle) a book of the New Testament in the form of a letter from an Apostle. (Oxford Dictionary)

11 After three months we sailed in an Alexandrian ship whose figurehead was the Twin Brothers, which had wintered at the island. 12 And landing at Syracuse, we stayed three days. 13 From there we circled round and reached Rhegium. And after one day the south wind blew; and the next day we came to Puteoli, 14 where we found brethren, and were invited to stay with them seven days. And so we went toward Rome. 15 And from there, when the brethren heard about us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum and Three Inns. When Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage. 16 Now when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard; but Paul was permitted to dwell by himself with the soldier who guarded him.

From the island where they were shipwrecked they were able to get on a boat going to Rome. They had a stopover in Syracuse (not New York) and several other places where Paul was placed under "house arrest. There he stayed until his death² For a while he had a good ministry. He could, at least, preach Christ to the Roman soldier who guarded him. Toward the end, he wrote to his "son" Timothy,

For those who would like to read the "epic" of Paul's trip to Rome, below are two references that may be found if value



The Life and Epistles of St. Paul. Conybeare and Howson
St. Paul, the Traveler and the Roman Citizen W.M. Ramsay, D.C.L., LL.D..

2 Timothy 4:9-11 (NASB)

9 Make every effort to come to me soon; 10 for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. 11 Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service.

When and where did Paul write this epistle. I will refer to a useful source of this type of information.

Where was Paul when he wrote Romans? Paul discussed his situation at the time he wrote Romans in the book itself (15:25-29), indicating that he was about to leave for Jerusalem. He stated that his purpose was to deliver the monies given by the churches in Macedonia and Achaia (the name of the Roman province embracing most of Greece, south of Macedonia) for the "poor among the saints in Jerusalem" (15:26 NIV). This information from the Roman letter corresponds precisely with what Luke

²Some seem to think he was released and continued on to Spain but there is no evidence that this was the case.

reported in the Acts of the Apostles about Paul's deciding to leave Ephesus, travel through Macedonia and Achaia, go to Jerusalem, and then visit Rome (Acts 19:21). Paul spent three months in Achaia (Acts 20:2-3). Scholars generally agree that Paul's close relationship with the Corinthian church would have resulted in his staying there, and this is confirmed by Paul's mentioning that he was staying with Gaius (Rom. 16:23) who was a convert in Corinth (see 1 Cor. 1:14).

That Paul wrote Romans while in Greece and before leaving for Jerusalem establishes the limits for the dating of the letter. The fixed point for dating Paul's stay in Corinth is his appearance (on an earlier visit to Corinth) before Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia (Acts 18:12-17), who was in office between A.D. 50-54 and most likely in A.D. 51. Estimating the time from Paul's appearance before Gallio until his return to Corinth is difficult because of Luke's general statements of time-"Paul stayed many days longer" (Acts 18:18 RSV)-but most scholars would date Romans between A.D. 54 to 59, with a date of 55-56 being preferred. Holman Bible Dictionary.

I need to point out that Roman's is not an easy book to study. It is the longest and most technical. If you do not understand everything in it, there is no need to be ashamed,

2 Peter 3:14-16 (NASB)

*Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, **in which are some things hard to understand**, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.*

Which translation to use? Some may get very intellectual and say, "Well, we should be using the Greek text as Paul wrote it." Which Greek text? I have five versions of the Greek text in my library so, since most do not know Greek, it is far better to stick with a translation. Below is a listing of texts which might have been used, according to language. You see, even if you go back to the Greek, which Greek text to use? I have highlighted those that we use for the most part.

ENGLISH

American Standard Version
 Bible In Basic English
 Centenary Translation, New Testament
 Complete Jewish Bible
 Complete Word Study Bible
 Darby's Translation
 English Standard Version
 God's Word
 Holman Christian Standard Bible
 International Standard Version
 King James Version
 Mace New Testament
 NET Bible NT
New American Standard Bible
 New International Version
New King James Version
 New Living Translation
 Phillips NT Bible

The Living Bible
 The Message
 Weymouth New Testament
 Wuest New Testament
 Young's Literal Translation

GREEK

UBS Greek New Testament, 4th Edition
 Greek New Testament (Scrivener 1894)
 Greek New Testament (Stephanus 1550)
 Greek New Testament (Tischendorf)
 Greek New Testament (Westcott-Hort)

HEBREW

Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia
 The Hebrew Bible

SPANISH

La Biblia de las Americas
 Reina Valera (1909)
 Sagradas Escrituras

LATIN Vulgate

The choice of the translation was made on two basis: first, is it an accurate translation, and second, the practical matter of which has the most liberal copyright provisions has been considered. I would have preferred using the NKJV BUT - the copyright information reads, "Bible text from the New King James Version is not to be reproduced in copies or otherwise by any means except as permitted in writing by Thomas Nelson, Inc., 501 Nelson Place, Nashville, Tennessee, 37214-1000". The next choice was (and is) the NASB which says, *The text of the New American Standard Bible may be reprinted up to and inclusive of five hundred (500) verses without express written permission of the Lockman Foundation, providing the verses do not amount to a complete book of the Bible nor do the verses printed account for more than 25% of the total work printed.*

While this study will be "stretching" the copyright provisions a bit, I believe it is within the general provisions of the copyright. Text that is meant to be highlighted is highlighted in yellow.

Note that Paul quotes quite a lot of material from the Old Testament. These references are all indexed under a separate heading in the index - "Old Testament References."

This study is prepared through the use of: Bible Resource program, version 9, with (now) about 550 volumes in my library (over 1 GByte)

And the WordPerfect word processor and WordPerfect Office, version X5



So, let's begin at the beginning!

CHAPTER ONE

Romans 1:1-6 (NASB)

1 Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, 2 which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, 3 concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, 4 who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord, 5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake, 6 among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;

PAUL. His given name when he was born in Tarsus³ was Saul. The name Saul was a prominent name among the Jews since Saul was Israel's first (and maybe the worst) king.

It was fitting for Paul to have a Hebrew name (Saul) and a Roman name (Paul) since, being born in Tarsus, he had dual citizenship - a factor he would make use of. He usually went by the name Paul - the Greek word Paul, meaning small⁴, It is thought that he was a small man and not very good looking.

A BOND SERVANT OF CHRIST JESUS. We have his name, now his title or position - a "bond servant." In some cases, the "bond" is used quite literally as was the case of the slaves brought to the U.S. In other cases, it is a voluntary servitude. This brings us to a point that is all too often overlooked. "Have you accepted Christ as your Savior?" This is what we often ask a person. Instead, we ought to go on and ask if they have accepted Jesus Christ as **both** Savior and **Lord**. Far too many "Christians" only (verbally) accept Christ as Savior - a "life-ring thrown out to them to save them." We must also accept him as LORD of our lives. We must be willing to do as He would have us do. If Christ really is your Lord, you are not your own, the life you live will be governed by Christ. I had a lot of plans when I was young, but they were not Christ's plan and so my plans went unfulfilled and a much better plan for my life put in place.

CALLED AS AN APOSTLE. "Called" is as good a translation of the Greek as any. Christ, as Paul's Lord, called him. Called him to what? Paul was to be an "apostle." possible the greatest apostle of all. What is an "apostle?" 1. "a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders"⁵ It comes from "apo" = "out" or "away" and "stello" = to send. Hence one who has been sent by another for a specific purpose.

SET APART FOR THE GOSPEL OF GOD. This phrase hardly needs further explanation. If Christ "called" him to a particular work, then he would, of necessity be "set apart."

What is the "Gospel" of God? The word Gospel is from an interesting Greek word which I shall

³CILIC'IA (si-lish-a). The southeasterly province of Asia Minor along the Mediterranean Sea, with Tarsus, the birthplace of Paul, its capital. A Roman province, 67 b.c. The Jews of Cilicia had a synagogue at Jerusalem (Acts 6:9). Paul learned his trade of tent making here, and visited it soon after his conversion (Galatians 1:21; Acts 9:30). The New Unger's Bible Dictionary.

⁴Complete Word Study Dictionary

⁵Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament.

introduce from an Old Testament passage.

2 Samuel 18:24-27 (NASB)

24 Now David was sitting between the two gates; and the watchman went up to the roof of the gate by the wall, and raised his eyes and looked, and behold, a man running by himself. 25 The watchman called and told the king. And the king said, "If he is by himself **there is good news** in his mouth." And he came nearer and nearer. 26 Then the watchman saw another man running; and the watchman called to the gatekeeper and said, "Behold, another man running by himself." And the king said, "This one also is **bringing good news**." 27 The watchman said, "I think the running of the first one is like the running of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok." And the king said, "This is a good man and comes **with good news**."

I believe the best practical definition for the word is "Good news." So "Gospel" and "Good News" are essentially synonymous. God called Paul to spread the "Good News" of Jesus Christ. Paul did a pretty good job of it!

2 WHICH HE PROMISED BEFOREHAND THROUGH HIS PROPHETS IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES
 God did not promise Paul through the prophets, it was the message Paul was to bring that was prophesied.

The gospel, which originated with God, was not a divine afterthought, nor was it first taught in the New Testament. It does not reflect a late change in God's plan or a revision of His strategy. It was promised by God beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, that is, in what we now call the Old Testament.

Perhaps especially for the sake of his Jewish critics, Paul emphasizes in the very beginning of the epistle that the good news did not originate with him or even with Jesus' earthly ministry. He was frequently accused of preaching and teaching against Moses and of proclaiming a revolutionary message unheard of in ancient Judaism (cf. Acts 21:20 ff.). But here he makes clear that the good news he teaches is really old news of the Hebrew Scriptures now fulfilled and completed in Jesus Christ.

MacArthur New Testament Commentary

People tend to mistake the definition of a prophet. The word is "pró" =before and phemí=to speak." "Before" is to be understood as "before people" and not "before time." A "Prophet" spoke God's word "before" God's people. Often what was spoken concerned things not yet happened and hence the concept to tell about something before it happens. One of the most remarkable foretelling the future was written, not by a person we generally consider a prophet but a king.

Psalms 22:1-18 (NASB)

1 My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Far from my deliverance are the words of my groaning. 2 O my God, I cry by day, but You do not answer; And by night, but I have no rest. 3 Yet You are holy, O You who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel. 4 In You our fathers trusted; They trusted and You delivered them. 5 To You they cried out and were delivered; In You they trusted and were not disappointed. 6 But I am a worm and not a man, A reproach of men and despised by the people. 7 All who see me sneer at me; They separate with the lip, they wag the head, saying, 8 "Commit yourself to the LORD; let Him deliver him; Let Him rescue him, because He delights in him." 9 Yet You are He who brought me forth from the womb; You made me trust when upon my mother's

breasts. 10 Upon You I was cast from birth; You have been my God from my mother's womb. 11 Be not far from me, for trouble is near; For there is none to help. 12 Many bulls have surrounded me; Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me. 13 They open wide their mouth at me, As a ravening and a roaring lion. 14 I am poured out like water, And all my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It is melted within me. 15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And my tongue cleaves to my jaws; And You lay me in the dust of death. 16 For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me; They pierced my hands and my feet. 17 I can count all my bones. They look, they stare at me; 18 They divide my garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots.

This is a remarkable description of the crucifixion but was written hundreds of years before by King David.

It is not necessary to say what is meant by the term “Holy Scriptures” is the term means what we all believe it to mean,

CONCERNING HIS SON, WHO WAS BORN OF A DESCENDANT OF DAVID ACCORDING TO THE FLESH. Matthew 1:1-16 gives us the genealogy of Christ, a descendant of David.

WHO WAS DECLARED THE SON OF GOD WITH POWER BY THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD, ACCORDING TO THE SPIRIT OF HOLINESS, JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD

“Declared” comes from . . .

Horizo (declared) carries the basic idea of marking off boundaries. From that term comes our English horizon, which refers to the demarcation line between the earth and the sky. In an infinitely greater way, the divine sonship of Jesus Christ was marked off with absolute clarity in His incarnation.

MacArthur New Testament Commentary

What is the one thing that Christ did that no one else can do? The answer is to be “resurrected.” Now, to me, this needs to be more specific.

1 Corinthians 15:3-9 (NASB)

*3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins **according to the Scriptures**, 4 and that He was buried, and that **He was raised on the third day** according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; 7 then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; 8 and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.*

Let’s look at what a “disinterested party” wrote about the resurrection.

3. Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ. And when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for he appeared to them alive again the third day; as the divine

prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him. And the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day. The Works of Flavius Josephus.

Continuing this thought, 5. through whom we have received **grace and apostleship** to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake, 6 among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ;

Let us attempt to define two terms here. First "grace." Someone has defined it as "God's Riches At Christ's Expense," - not a bad definition. A more formal definition is 1. properly, that which affords joy, pleasure, delight, "sweetness, charm, loveliness"⁶: We have already described Paul's apostleship but he was not the only apostle. Dr MacArthur has rather long but interesting introduction to this.

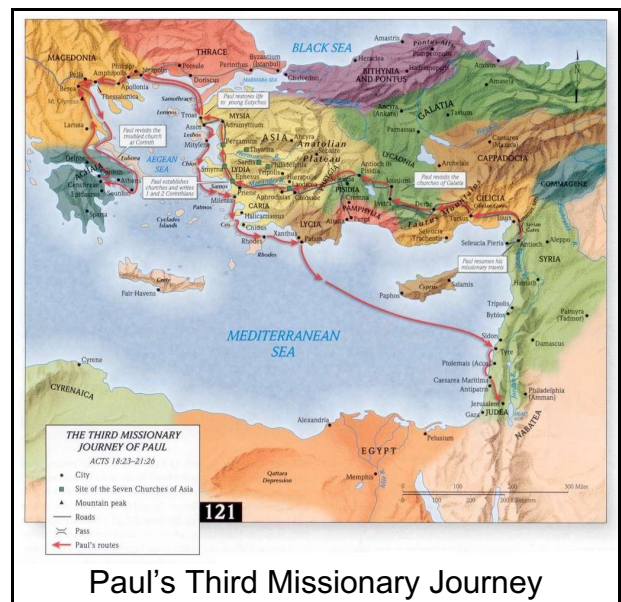
The story is told of a very wealthy man who had many valuable art treasures. His only son was quite ordinary but was dearly loved. When the son died unexpectedly as a young man, the father was so deeply grieved that he died a few months later. The father's will stipulated that, at his death, all his art works were to be publicly auctioned and that a painting of his son was to be auctioned first. On the day of the auction the specified painting was displayed and the bidding was opened. Because neither the boy nor the artist were well known, a long time passed without a bid being offered. Finally, a long-time servant of the father and friend of the boy timidly bid seventy-five cents, all the money he had. When there were no other bids, the painting was given to the servant. At that point the sale was stopped and an official read the remainder of the will, which specified that whoever cared enough for his son to buy the painting of him would receive all the rest of the estate.

MacArthur New Testament Commentary

Receiving Christ as one's Lord and Savior seems very simple. It is only when the "rest of the will is read" that you find that, by accepting Him as your Lord, you are automatically sent out to spread the Gospel. "Apostle" comes from the Greek word that means "to send forth."

Romans 1:7 (NASB)
7 to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

In verse 7 we find who Paul was writing to - the "beloved In Rome." When did he write it? Obviously, before reaching Rome. To the right is a map of Paul's third Missionary Journey. It is thought that Paul wrote it during the months it took him to get from Macedonia, through Greece, and on to Jerusalem.



Paul's Third Missionary Journey

⁶Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament.

Acts 19:21-22 (NASB)

21 *Now after these things were finished, Paul purposed in the Spirit to go to Jerusalem after he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome." 22 And having sent into Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.*

In verse 7, Paul greets those in Rome. Someone has noted that Paul did not write this letter in Latin. Apparently people in Rome were still speaking Greek. His greeting is similar in all of his epistles as shown on the next page. The only deviation in these greetings are in his two letters to "his beloved son, Timothy." Apparently Timothy had a rough go of it so Paul add "mercy" to his greeting.

1 Corinthians 1:3 (NASB)

3 *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

2 Corinthians 1:2 (NASB)

2 *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Galatians 1:3 (NASB)

3 *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,*

Ephesians 1:2 (NASB)

2 *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Philippians 1:2 (NASB)

2 *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Colossians 1:2 (NASB)

2 *To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.*

1 Thessalonians 1:1 (NASB)

1 *Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.*

2 Thessalonians 1:2 (NASB)

2 *Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

1 Timothy 1:2 (NASB)

2 *To Timothy, my true child in the faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.*

2 Timothy 1:2 (NASB)

2 *To Timothy, my beloved son: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Titus 1:4 (NASB)

4 *To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.*

Philemon 1:3 (NASB)

3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

One member of the trinity is not mentioned in these greetings - the Holy Spirit. I would assume that greetings from the Holy Spirit would be superfluous in that, as Christians, the Holy Spirit indwells as and is never apart from us where greetings would need to be sent.

Romans 1:8-15 (NASB)

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world. 9 For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you, 10 always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to you. 11 For I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established; 12 that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine. 13 I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that often I have planned to come to you (and have been prevented so far) so that I may obtain some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles. 14 I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. 15 So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

8 First, ***I thank my God through Jesus Christ*** for you all,. When you and I pray, we normally end our prayer, "In Christ's name, Amen" This is essentially what Paul says in "though Jesus Christ." (He uses it at the beginning rather than at the end). He says *because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world*. Paul had not been to Rome yet and yet there were strong believers in Rome!

Dr. McGee has an interesting note to add here.

Word had filtered out throughout the empire that many in Rome were turning to Christ -- so much so that it disturbed the emperors. Later on, persecution began. Paul mentions here that their faith was spoken of throughout the whole world.

I wonder about your group, your church. Has anybody heard about your personal testimony? What is it worth today? My, what a testimony this church in Rome had at the beginning!

Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

Says one commentator,

Not fathered or founded by any apostle, the assemblies that God had Himself gathered from all quarters into the world's capital had a faith in Christ which was "spoken of," nay, announced as a wonder, throughout the whole Roman Empire. Announced, too, without steamship, without telegraph, without newspapers, without radio!

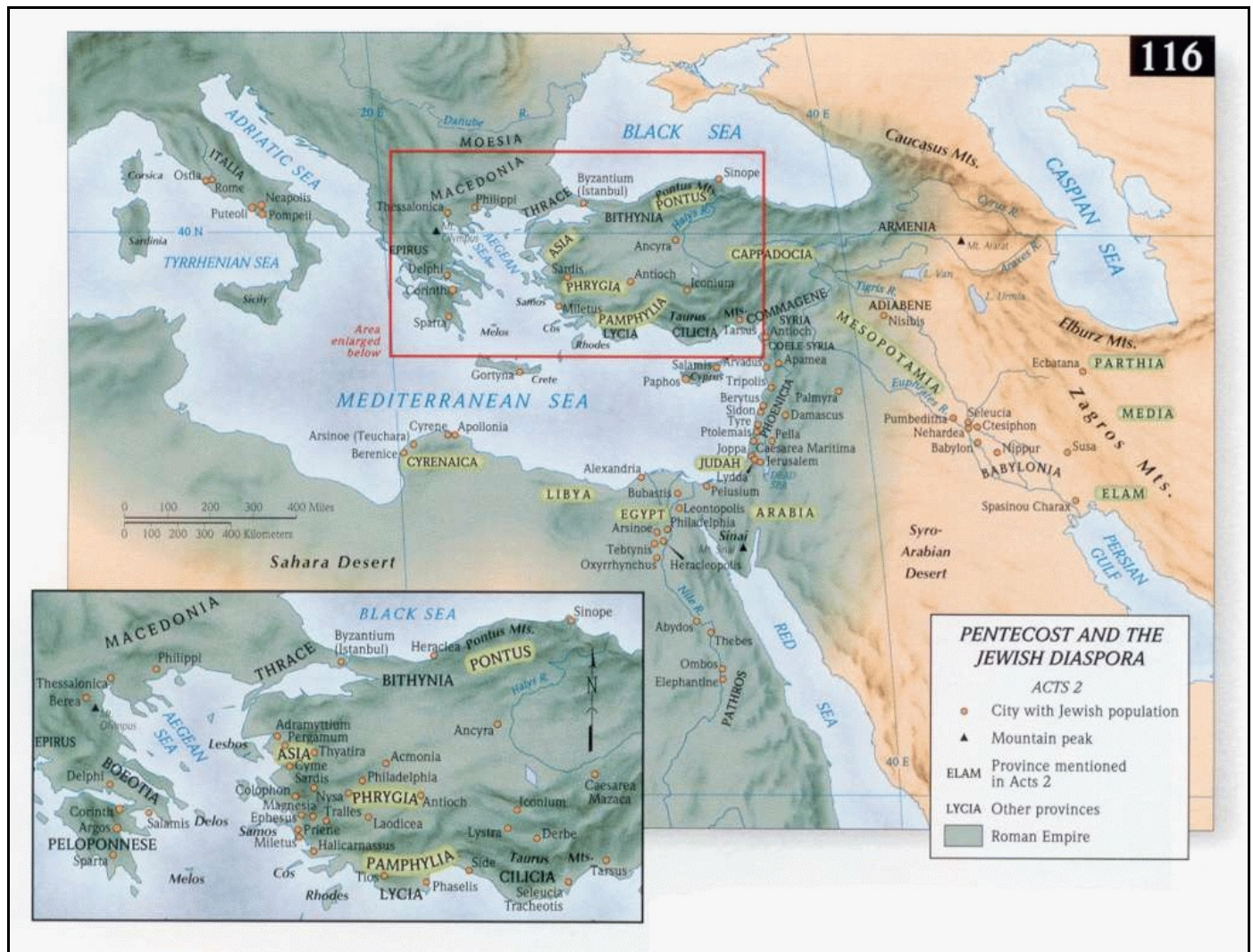
Romans Verse-by-Verse.

Today he would have added TV and the Internet. But, where did these believers in Rome come

from? Let's back up a bit.

Acts 2:1-11 (NASB)

1 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance. 5 Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. 6 And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, and were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language. 7 They were amazed and astonished, saying, "Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? 8 "And how is it that **we each hear them in our own language** to which we were born? 9 "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, **and visitors from Rome**, both Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretans and Arabs—we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God."



The Regions Where Jews Had Come from in Jerusalem

The above map shows that, indeed, there were people in Jerusalem from all over that part of the

World. Many of them may have been from Rome. Others may have gone to Rome at some time. All of these had heard the Gospel on the day of Pentecost and there must have been others who, like Paul, preached the Gospel there.

So, as Paul wrote this letter, there was a church in Rome with a real outreach. (And, no, it was not the Roman Catholic Church and Peter was not there as the first Pope!) As we study our Bibles, I think we get an implication that Paul and Barnabas, Silas and Timothy were the only ones bringing the Gospel to the world. Who evangelized the southern shore of the Mediterranean? Who evangelized in the East, in Babylon and the rest of these places? Paul was not alone. But he was an outstanding evangelist and, to the extent we know it, that only on to receive a personal call from Christ. (Acts 9:1-9).

*For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how **unceasingly I make mention of you,** 10 always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to you. Even though Paul had not been to Rome and had not part in establishing a church there, he had a heart for it and prayed. He practiced what he preached -*

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NASB)
17 **pray without ceasing;**

making request, if perhaps . . . When you pray do you ask, “perhaps if it is your will . . . “?

The Holman Bible has “always asking in my prayers that if it is somehow in God’s will, I may now at last succeed in coming to you.” We can not always discern God’s will. Is it God’s will or our desire? For most of us it is often hard to tell.

His prayer was that he would *succeed in coming to you*. God sometimes answer our prayers in strange ways.

Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you [Rom. 1:10].

Paul is praying for a "prosperous journey" to come to Rome. When we read about his journey in the Book of Acts, it doesn't look exactly prosperous -- he went as a prisoner, he got into a terrific storm at sea, the ship was lost, and he was bitten by a viper when he made it to land. Yet it was a prosperous journey. Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

11 For I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established; 12 that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine. Paul wanted to impart a “Spiritual Gift” to the Romans. When Paul wrote to Timothy he wrote,

1 Timothy 4:14 (NASB)
14 *Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery.*

1 Timothy 4:14 (HCSB)

*14 Do not neglect the gift that is in you; it was given to you through prophecy, with the laying on of hands by the **council of elders**.*

While “presbytery” is a correct term here, a “council of Elders” is more descriptive. Paul now wanted to go to Rome so that, together with other elders and apostles, one or more Spiritual Gifts by be bestowed on the Roman Christians.

What is a “spiritual gift” Is it “speaking in tongues.” Let’s consult a Bible dictionary.

Paul's letters reveal that this continued to be true in all the churches; every Christian was given the gift of the Spirit, so that Paul could write: "Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him" (Rom. 8:9 TEV). When the Spirit came into a person's life, He brought with Him a gift, or gifts, which that person could use to serve God. "Each one, as a good manager of God's different gifts, must use for the good of others the special gift he has received from God" (1 Pet. 4:10 TEV).

Like Peter, Paul believed that every Christian had a spiritual gift (1 Cor. 12:4-7). Neither Paul nor any other New Testament writer suggested that some Christians might be without gifts; all Christians are given gifts. Paul always set his discussion of gifts in the context of the church

Holman Bible Dictionary.

It is not my intent here to go into speaking on tongues. Whether or not it is a spiritual gift is not the issue here. There are many kinds of gifts.

In both of Paul’s letters to Timothy, who was the Pastor of the church in Ephesus for a time, he wrote,

1 Timothy 4:14 (NASB)

*14 Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands **by the presbytery**.*

2 Timothy 1:6 (NASB)

*6 For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through **the laying on of my hands**.*

In 1 Timothy 3 (and Titus 1) Paul lists the qualities an Elder must possess. Many of these are obtained as gifts from the spirit. Note carefully the conclusion of this statement - *each of us by the other's faith, **both yours and mine***. One can, according to this, receive a Spiritual gift while enabling another to receive one. Paul might teach some of them to be a “traveling evangelist” while they might teach Paul something he needed. The greatest gifts that God gave us (other than, of course, His Son) is the ability to share the Gospel with others. This may be next door or in upper Siberia.

I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that often I have planned to come to you (and have been prevented so far) so that I may obtain some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles. There must be fruit in the life of the Christian.

Paul's special concern was that he would be able to share with them some spiritual favor that would provide encouragement and strength. The apostle was not at this point speaking of spiritual gifts such as those listed in 1 Corinthians 12. He was concerned that believers in Rome become increasingly established in their faith. To this end he wanted to share with them some spiritual insight or gift he had received from the Spirit. His visit with them would provide the opportunity to accomplish that purpose. Here again we see the focus of Paul's ministry. A visit to Rome would not be for personal

advantage or pleasure. It would serve to strengthen the faith of those who recently had turned from idols to serve the living God (cf. 1 Thess 1:9).

New American Commentary

14 I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. 15 So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome. Paul list four types of people in pairs. "Greeks & Barbarians" We all know who Greeks are - I think. Either they live in Greece or they speak the Greek language. But Barbarians? If I were in that group I would be insulted. But that is not how this term is used.

bárbaros; gen. barbárou, masc. noun. A barbarian, i.e., a man who speaks a foreign or strange language, a foreigner (1 Cor. 14:11; Sept.: Ps. 114:1). The inhabitants of Melita (Malta) were called barbarians because they spoke a dialect of the Phoenician language (Acts 28:2, 4). In Rom. 1:14, "to the Greeks, and to the barbarians," Paul refers to those who were not Greeks as barbarians. In Col. 3:11, bárbaros seems to refer to those nations of the Roman Empire which did not speak Gr. such as the Jews, Romans, or Spaniards. The Greeks generally called the Romans and Jews barbarians. The Egyptians also referred to non-Egyptians as Berbers.

Complete Word Study Dictionary

He uses this term below.

Colossians 3:11 (NASB)

11 a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.

We come now to an important passage in this chapter/

Romans 1:16-17 (NASB)

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH." (Habakkuk 2:4)

For I am not ashamed of the gospel. How many Christians today are ashamed of the Gospel. I think most people do not talk about Christ and their church unless they are in company with those they know share a like faith. There is an old saying - "If you were being tried for being a Christian, would the prosecutor have great difficulty in proving it? *It is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.* Is Paul saying only Jews and Greeks can be saved?

There are other things one might be "ashamed of"

Luke 9:26 (NASB)

26 "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

"My words" in the above Scripture is equivalent to "gospel" here in Romans.

It is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes. The Holy Scriptures are, essentially, the only means one has of being saved today. True, people may be responsible for bring these scriptures to a person, but it is the Scriptures that provide the salvation. I have heard a number of instances where someone was “down and out” and living in some sleazy hotel. The Gideons had been there first and left a Bible. Bored, the person picked up the Bible and began to read. By the time he set it down, he had received Christ into his (or her) heart.

To the Jew first and also to the Greek. Does this mean that only Jews and Greeks can be saved? The term “Greek” has three interpretations, depending on it context.

1. A citizen of Greece
2. Someone other than a Jew
3. A Jew living in Greece.

In this context, Paul is referring to the rest of the world - everyone besides the Jews.

For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith. The righteousness of God is revealed all throughout the Scriptures. We find it (the term) first in,

Genesis 6:9 (NASB)

*9 These are the records of the generations of Noah. Noah was **a righteous man**, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God.*

The word is found all the way into the Book of the Revelation.

God acting in righteousness, as we shall find, wholly on the basis of Christ's atoning work,-to be believed in, rested upon, apart from all human works whatever. It was on the principle of faith by means of a message, and those exercising faith in the message would be reckoned righteous,-apart from all "merit" or "works" whatever. This is the meaning of "from faith unto faith"-literally, out of faith [rather than works] unto [those who have] faith.

Romans Verse-by-Verse.

"BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH." Paul here cites the Prophet Habakkuk,

Habakkuk 2:3-5 (NASB)

*3 "For the vision is yet for the appointed time; It hastens toward the goal and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it; For it will certainly come, it will not delay. 4 "Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; **But the righteous will live by his faith.** 5 "Furthermore, wine betrays the haughty man, So that he does not stay at home. He enlarges his appetite like Sheol, And he is like death, never satisfied. He also gathers to himself all nations And collects to himself all peoples.*

Habakkuk describes the man who is truly righteous. They are not the proud. They are not the haughty drunkards. The righteous man is not one who has a proud heart but one who only basis for his slvation is FAITH. Faith is the subject of the entire “Faith Chapter” in Hebrews -

Hebrews 11:1 (NASB)

1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Having dealt with those saved by faith, Paul now turns to those without faith.

Romans 1:18-23 (NASB)

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. 21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness. Today, if you are a “well educated person,” you know that all the writings in the Bible are a bunch of nonsense. There is no such thing as a God. If there is a God, it is man himself. There are great headlines when some so-called scientist reports on some finding that **appears** to prove the Bible wrong. They would have us believe in anything BUT God. “Well,” you might say, “if no one has pointed out the truths in the Bible, how are these people supposed to believe otherwise? Paul answers that question. *19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.* No, you can not see God. But you can see what God has created.

One night, being rather bored, I was watching on PBS a program in which a group of astrophysics people were explaining how the universe formed. Near the end of the program, the moderator asked the question, “What was there before the “big bang” and the universe came into being? They all looked at each other and finally said,” Well I guess you would have to ask some theologian that question.” They had been backed into a corner with no way out.

19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. Since my “tent making career” was teaching Computer Engineering, I enjoy looking into the complexities of computers and other things man has made. But, in a general sense, David was right on!

Psalms 139:13-16 (NASB)

*13 For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. 14 I will give thanks to You, for **I am fearfully and wonderfully made**; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well. 15 My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth; 16 Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written The days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was not one of them.*

When I look at the human body as a long time (65 years?) design engineer (especially in computers),

I can only think that the one who created the human body had it way over the best of engineers and designers. Think of it! What if we had a car that would run all morning on a bowl of corn flakes? What if we could devise a machine where, if a part were to break, would repair itself? My wife recently acquired a new camera that is supposed to give you an alarm if someone blinks when you take their photo. That is a pretty complex task for the computer. But I don't have much trouble telling if someone blinked.

21 For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools. Note that all of this is written in the past tense. "They **became** fools." The implication is that they are no longer around.

Genesis 6:11-13 (NASB)

11 Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth. 13 Then God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth."

I believe he is referring to man (and woman) before the great flood. However, man is no different today!

Romans 1:24-25 (NASB)

*24 Therefore God **gave them over** in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. 25 For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.*

Again an indication of a past generation of men. What eventually happened?

Romans 1:26-32 (NASB)

26 For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, 27 and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error. 28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; 32 and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.

26 For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural. Why does Paul start this section with women rather than men? Well the answer to this is that not even well known commentators agree on everything.

He is describing that state of unnatural appetites in which all normal instincts are left behind. And it

is significant, that, as originally **woman⁷ took the lead in sin**, so here!

Romans Verse-by-Verse.

But

Paul first refers to the degradation of females among the heathen, because **they are always the last** to be affected in the decay of morals, and their corruption is therefore proof that all virtue is lost.

Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans.

Or

Perhaps Paul mentions women first because their practice of homosexuality is especially shocking and dismaying.

MacArthur New Testament Commentary

27 and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.

The bottom of this descending ladder of immorality is homosexuality. It happened as early as in Abraham's time with Sodom and Gomorrah. When I was a boy, I didn't know there was such a thing - it was not talked about in good families. When I became an adult, I was aware that there were such practices but you had to go to special places to see it (in my case, I would have had to go to San Francisco). Today? Just recently the Military had to give up its policy of "Don't ask - Don't tell." Now you can go into a recruiter's office, confess you are a homosexual, and still join the military.

One can adopt the policy, "Let them do what they want and I will do what I want." It is not that simple anymore. Now homosexuals are fighting for the right to be married. This makes no sense at all to me other than a legal one. In other words, the right to file joint tax returns, to hold joint bank accounts, and other non-sexual benefits of married life.

We can not claim total innocense in all of this. To the extent we allow it to go unchecked, we are also guilty! There is a penalty besides what God may provide. There are various physical and medical "due penalties" incurred by such anti-Christian actions. In addition to physical problems and ailments, Paul lists a number of other problems.

28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. being filled with all unrighteousness, | 6. murder, | 12. haters of God, |
| 2. wickedness, | 7. strife, | 13. insolent, |
| 3. greed, | 8. deceit, | 14. arrogant, |
| 4. evil; | 9. malice; | 15. boastful, |
| 5. full of envy, | 10. they are gossips, | 16. inventors of evil, |
| | 11. slanderers, | 17. disobedient to |

⁷i.e. Eve

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| 18. parents,
without
understanding, | 19. untrustworthy,
20. unloving, | 21. unmerciful |
|---|-------------------------------------|----------------|

Paul was a great list maker and I believe this is one of his longest lists. I am aware of one long list that appears to be the precise opposite of the above. These are the requirements for Elders.

1 Timothy 3:2-7 (NASB)

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| 1. must be above
reproach, | 6. hospitable,
7. able to teach, | 12. free from the love of
money |
| 2. the husband of one
wife, | 8. not addicted to wine
9. (Not) pugnacious, | 13. one who manages his
own household well, . |
| 3. temperate, | 10. gentle, | . . |
| 4. prudent, | 11. peaceable, | 14. not a new convert |
| 5. respectable, | | |
-

This an interesting contrast as it is a contrast of what God expects in men and what he does NOT expect in men. This is as far from God's ideal as one can get. This is not quite as bad as it can get. It gets worse when Paul adds,

32 and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them. It is bad enough that we have people who do these things, but it is doubly bad when these people attempt to persuade others to do the same. This leads to an embarrassing question.

Are Christians more effective in leading others to Christ than these people are in leading others astray? It seems we have to urge people to go out and witness for Christ while these people pass on their evil ways with no coaxing at all.

With this we go on to chapter two.

CHAPTER TWO

Romans 2:1-11 (NASB)

1 Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. 2 And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things. 3 But do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment on those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God? 4 Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? 5 But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS:(Psalm 62:12) 7 to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; 8 but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. 9 There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, 10 but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 11 For there is no partiality with God.

1 Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. Whom is Paul speaking to here? What is the “therefore” there for? For . . .

WE HAVE TRACED the awful history of the human race in iniquity and idolatry, especially since the Flood, and have seen that fearful indictment of above twenty counts which ends Chapter One. We now enter upon the greatest passage in all Scripture as to the principles and processes of God in His estimate, or judgment, concerning His creatures. If God is "Judge of all," and if the whole world is to be "brought under the judgment of God" (Rom 3:19), God will surely take pains to make known the great principles of His action, so that men may know beforehand how He will decide and act. Otherwise, men would "imagine vain things" about the true God, and hug their delusions to their own damnation.

The personal character of God's relations toward men, either in the matter of salvation or of damnation, is rapidly being forgotten by this generation. Yet, if God be God, He must be the Judge of All. Back of the whole revelation of His works and ways, in His Word, is God Himself. And it is only the fool that saith in his heart, "No God." Mark that it is in his heart, his desires, that he speaks; and not in his reason or judgment!

Romans Verse-by-Verse.

And also

2:1 The critic here is Jewish, for Paul is focusing primarily on Jews. Paul had criticized the horrible evil of the Gentiles, their sins of idolatry and homosexuality and their general lifestyle. This Jewish critic nodded in agreement and assumed that he was free from such vices. Many Jews believed that their national heritage would save them; they thought their privilege of birth ensured entrance into God's Kingdom (Matthew 3:8-9). They went to great lengths to separate themselves from "unclean" Gentiles. So when Paul finished his list of characteristics of those whom God will judge (chapter 2), Paul knew that his Jewish listeners would agree that such people are terrible and deserve to be

punished. But then Paul says that the Jews have no right to pass judgment, because they are just as bad. They are not guiltless and therefore have no excuse. Their attitude freely condemned others' sins but somehow overlooked those sins in themselves (see Matthew 7:2-3).

Life Application New Testament Commentary.

Whoops! *And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things. But do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment on those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God?*

I would suppose that none of you practice immoral sexual acts and possess some of the evil traits we have covered. But - Are you free from all of the bad things we can do. It is easy to point to the evil people we have noted above, but not very easy to look at ourselves. When we get to Chapter Three, we will find,

Romans 3:10 (ASV)

10 as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one;

How many bad things can we do and get away with them? How bad do they have to be? According to Paul, we have already "blown it." None of us, apart from the work of Jesus Christ, are sin free! Well, let's try to look at it another way. *Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?* We do not really understand the first thing about being righteous.

But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS

God did not just spring these concepts on us. We read,

Jeremiah 4:4 (NASB)

4 "Circumcise yourselves to the LORD And remove the foreskins of your heart, Men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, Or else My wrath will go forth like fire And burn with none to quench it, Because of the evil of your deeds."

to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. There are a number of instances where we are told we must "persevere."

The word is *hupoméno*; from *hupó* "under", and "méno"="to remain." To remain under, i.e., to persevere, endure, sustain, bear up under, suffer, as a load of miseries, adversities, persecutions or provocations with faith⁸ James makes the following observation.

James 1:2-4 (NASB)

2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of

⁸Complete Word Study Dictionary

*your faith produces **endurance**. 4 And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*

“Perseverance” is translated “endurance” in the above passage. I tend to prefer the term “endurance.” “To those who persevere in being perfect.”? No! None of us can be perfect but we can strive to do good. Paul says that, if we accomplish this, we will gain: (1) glory, (2) honor, (3) immortality, and (4) eternal life. All four of these are things we gain when we get to glory. Can we have any of them now? We may get some glory and honor from like believers, but that is about it. Can we obtain immortality today? You probably say “No!, not until we reach heaven, The answer should be yes. If you are a born-again Christian, you - your soul and spirit - are now immortal! Your body, of course, is not, we will leave that behind.

What is death? Death is a separation. It is not the ending of the spirit or of the personality. These do not die. **The real "you" goes on to be with the Lord** if you are a child of God. It is the body that disintegrates. Death is a separation of the body from the individual, from the person. The body disintegrates, decays, decomposes. Dust to dust and ashes to ashes applies only to the body.

Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

The rest, Paul writes, are “selfishly ambitious.” There is nothing wrong with ambition. A Christian with a great ambition to serve the Lord as a real blessing - to others. We are just admonished to avoid ambition when it is to gain things for ourselves.

9 There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek. I shall not comment again that “Greek” here refers to the rest of the world that is not Jewish. To be a bit technical here. Only those unsaved who are here when the Rapture occurs will suffer the tribulation described in the book by the same name. Those who die first will go through tribulation as soon as they die. Jesus taught us this.

Luke 16:19-24 (NASB)

*19 "Now there was a rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, joyously living in splendor every day. 20 "And a poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, 21 and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man's table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores. 22 "Now the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried. 23 "In Hades he lifted up his eyes, **being in torment**, and *saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 "And he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, **for I am in agony in this flame.**'*

10 but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 11 For there is no partiality with God. In these two verses we have the opposite of what we just studied. David wrote

Psalm 14:1 (NKJV)

*1 To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David. The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, They have done abominable works, **There is none who does good.***

Psalm 14:3 (NKJV)

3 They have all turned aside, They have together become corrupt; **There is none who does good, No, not one.**

Psalm 53:1 (NKJV)

1 To the Chief Musician. Set to 'Mahalath.' A Contemplation of David. The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, and have done abominable iniquity; **There is none who does good.**

Psalm 53:3 (NKJV)

3 Every one of them has turned aside; They have together become corrupt; **There is none who does good, No, not one.**

But Paul promises glory and honor to those who "do good!" Dr. Ironside lists the ways both Jew (primarily) and Gentile have rebelled against God.

- | | | |
|-----|---|--|
| 1. | "There is none righteous, | no, not one." All have failed in something. |
| 2. | "There is none that understandeth." | All have become wilfully ignorant. |
| 3. | "There is none that seeketh after God." | All seek their own. |
| 4. | "They are all gone out of the way." | They have deliberately turned their backs on the truth. |
| 5. | "They are together become unprofitable." | They have dishonored God instead of glorifying Him. |
| 6. | "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." | Their practices are evil. They do not follow after that which is good. |
| 7. | "Their throat is an open sepulchre," | because of the corruption within. |
| 8. | "With their tongues they have used deceit." | Lying and deception are characteristic. |
| 9. | "The poison of asps is under their lips." | It is the poison inserted into the very nature of man by "that old serpent the devil and Satan" at the very beginning. |
| 10. | "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness" | for "out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh." |
| 11. | "Their feet are swift to shed blood." | Hatred produces murder, and, alas, in how many ways it is manifested! |
| 12. | "Destruction and misery are in their ways," | because they have forgotten God the source of life and blessing. |
| 13. | "The way of peace have they not known," | for they have deliberately chosen the ways of death. |
| 14. | "There is no fear of God before their eyes." | Hence there is no wisdom in them. |
- H.A. Ironside Expository Commentary

but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God. If you want an extensive definition for "partiality," here it is.

"partiality," the fault of one who when called on to requite or to give judgment has respect to the outward circumstances of men and not to their intrinsic merits, and so prefers, as the more worthy, one who is rich, high-born, or powerful, to another who is destitute of such gifts:

Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament.

For the first part of the history of the U.S., there was partiality - whites and slaves. That has, supposedly passed. With God, there has never been a division like that. In God's eyes, we are all the same. Because of this you and I can have

- 1. Glory: A person who has the respect of those around him.
- 2. Honor: To Honor, respect, reverence, esteem.
- 3. Peace: a state of peace and tranquility.

Romans 2:12-16 (NASB)

12 For all who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law, and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law; 13 for it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified. 14 For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, 15 in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them, 16 on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.

Pail here states an interesting parallel:

If you sin **without** the law..... you will perish **without** the law
 if you sin **under** the law. you will be judged **by** the law

One commentator states,

2:12 Gentiles will be judged on the basis of the knowledge available to them. They won't be condemned for failing to conform to a code of laws they knew nothing about. They will not perish because they didn't have the Jewish law; they will perish because they have sinned. The Jews will be judged by God's written law because they had been trained in it. They will be judged for sinning against the law that they knew so well. People are condemned not for what they don't know, but for what they do with what they know. Those who know God's written word and his law will be judged by them. Those who have never seen a Bible still know right from wrong; they will be judged guilty because they did not keep even the standards of their own conscience.

Life Application New Testament Commentary.

13 for it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified. 14 For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, 15 in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them. First, one technical point. Why did Paul not write, "the **readers** of the Law?" I don't know how many Jews were literate, but they always could go to the synagogue and **hear** the Law read.

Some people seem to get all tangled up in this, but I think it is quite clear. You go through a red light and are given a citation. "But officer, I did see the red light." you say. Seeing it is not enough, you have to obey the light and stop. It does you no good to know the Motor Vehicle Code forwards and backwards if you do not obey it. Neither does it do you any good to know the Scriptures from Geneses 1:1 to Revelation 22:21 if your heart is not changed by reading it. You need to become a DOER of the Law and just a hearer.

Romans 2:17-24 (NASB)

17 But if you bear the name "Jew" and rely upon the Law and boast in God, 18 and know His will and approve the things that are essential, being instructed out of the Law, 19 and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 20 a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth, 21 you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal? 22 You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23 You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God? 24 For "THE NAME OF GOD IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU," (Isaiah 52:5) just as it is written.

Paul asks a long, very interesting question.

1. *But if you bear the name "Jew"*
2. *Rely upon the Law*
3. *Boast in God,*
4. *know His will*
5. *Approve the things that are essential,*
6. *Being instructed out of the Law*
7. *Are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind,*
8. *A light to those who are in darkness,*
9. *A corrector of the foolish,*
10. *A teacher of the immature,*
11. *Having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth*

This is a rather long list of good qualities. It is the sort of qualities which we seek. But, Paul asks, “*you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself?*” It is fine to reach out to others but, you can not be effective in that if you do not “practice what you preach!”

Paul does not stop with the above, he goes on with more penetrating query.

You who preach that one shall not steal,. do you steal?
You who say that one should not commit adultery,. do you commit adultery?
You who abhor idols, do you rob temples?
You who boast in the Law,. through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God

I shall not go into what the answers to these question should be. What is important here is **YOU!**

Someone has asked if you were taken to court for being a Christian, would they be able to find enough evidence to convict you? Supposedly, the answer is to be “No.” But, what does Paul say?

"THE NAME OF GOD IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU, Most people who have met you know you are a Christian. In some cases it would be better if they did not. That is what says here. “Your testimony is causing God to be blasphemed!”

Christianity in America today is suffering. Pastors are leaving the ministry, Churches are closing their doors. Those that continue, splinter in to smaller churches. Why? Because Christianity is not popular

in this country any longer. I just wonder what the people who formed this government, wrote its Constitution and governed it would think today. I tell you, they would be saddened beyond degree.

Romans 2:25-29 (NASB)

25 For indeed circumcision is of value if you practice the Law; but if you are a transgressor of the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. 26 So if the uncircumcised man keeps the requirements of the Law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? 27 And he who is physically uncircumcised, if he keeps the Law, will he not judge you who though having the letter of the Law and circumcision are a transgressor of the Law? 28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. 29 But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

In regard to this section, Dr. MacArthur wrote,

God had instituted circumcision as a mark of His covenant with Abraham and his descendants, declaring that "every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations" (Gen. 17:10-12). Centuries later, when for some reason Moses failed to circumcise one of his sons, his wife, Zipporah, performed the rite herself, thereby protecting Moses from the Lord's wrath (Ex. 4:24-26).

No doubt this surgery was symbolic of the sinfulness of man that was passed from generation to generation. The very procreative organ needed to be cleansed of a covering. So man at the very center of his nature is sinful and needs cleansing of the heart. This graphic symbol of the need for removing sin became the sign of being a Jew

But as important as circumcision was as an act of obedience to God and as a reminder to Jews of their covenant relation to Him, the rite had no spiritual power. Circumcision is of value, Paul explains, only if you practice the Law, that is, live in obedience to God's will. To the faithful, obedient Jew circumcision was a symbol of God's covenant, His blessings, His goodness, and His protection of His chosen people. But if you are a transgressor of the Law, Paul warned, your circumcision has become uncircumcision, that is, valueless. A Jew who continually transgressed God's law proved that he had no more saving relationship to God than a pagan Gentile, whom Jews often referred to as the uncircumcised.

MacArthur New Testament Commentary

There is something that I feel needs to be noted, a very strong parallel.

25 For indeed baptism is of value if you practice the Faith in Christ; but if you are a blasphemer of Christ, your baptism has become unbaptism. The concept applies to Christians today just like it applies to Jews.

CHAPTER THREE

Romans 3:1-8 (NASB)

Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God. What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it? May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man be found a liar, as it is written, "THAT YOU MAY BE JUSTIFIED IN YOUR WORDS, AND PREVAIL WHEN YOU ARE JUDGED." (Psalm 51:4) But if our unrighteousness demonstrates the righteousness of God, what shall we say? The God who inflicts wrath is not unrighteous, is He? (I am speaking in human terms.) May it never be! For otherwise, how will God judge the world? But if through my lie the truth of God abounded to His glory, why am I also still being judged as a sinner? And why not say (as we are slanderously reported and as some claim that we say), "Let us do evil that good may come"? Their condemnation is just.

Then what advantage has the Jew? "Advantage" here is sometimes translated "superfluous" - more than is needed. Dr MacArthur begins this by saying,

Looking at the rather tragic history of the Jewish people, one is not inclined to think there has been any advantage in being a Jew. In spite of the reality that they are such a noble strain of humanity and chosen by God, their history has been a saga of slavery, hardship, warfare, persecution, slander, captivity, dispersion, and humiliation.

MacArthur New Testament Commentary

Indeed, the Jew has been persecuted more than any race the world has seen. Hitler sought to eliminate them entirely - but failed. I suspect any other nation that had suffered these persecutions would not be here today! Peter writes,

1 Peter 1:1 (NASB)

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen.

Or

1 Peter 1:1 (CJB)

From: Kefa, an emissary of Yeshua the Messiah To: God's chosen people, living as aliens in the Diaspora — in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, the province of Asia, and Bythinia —

A lady who is a missionary to Israel⁹ tells that the number of Jews seeking entrance into Israel today exceeds those leaving. One would think, given the problems of living in Israel, there would be a great exodus but the reverse is true. The Jews ARE returning to the Promised land. God has watched over His people. When they went down to Egypt in captivity,

⁹She goes by the name "Grateful" because of the danger of her work.

Genesis 45:10-11 (ASV)

and thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast: and **there will I nourish thee; for there are yet five years of famine;** lest thou come to poverty, thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast.

The Egyptians lived in famine, but not Israel. It defies human knowledge how the Jew has survived. Through the years.

Israel was destroyed in 70 AD according to Josephus. Some of us are old enough to recall the horrible things that Hitler did to the Jews. Executing them would have been bad enough but the manner in which he killed them was insane!

Or what is the benefit of circumcision? There are obvious medical benefits. But what beyond that?

(III) [circumcision] Denotes also spiritual circumcision of the heart and affections (see Deut. 10:16; Jer. 4:4) by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh (Rom. 2:28, 29; Phil. 3:3; Col. 2:11, the true circumcision or true people of God, meaning persons who were spiritually circumcised).

Complete Word Study Dictionary

I doubt if there was a Jewish boy who was not circumcised (exceptional cases excluded).

MAJOR BENEFITS OF CIRCUMCISION

Prevents urinary tract infections throughout life, most importantly in infancy
 Prevents HIV/AIDS infection and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)
 Prevent cervical cancer in female partners of uncircumcised men
 Prevents cancer of the penis
 Prevents infected/unretractable foreskin and penile skin disease
 Promotes Lifetime ease of cleanliness
 Women's sexual preference
 Overall medical summary statement. Medical proof of circumcision benefits.

http://www.medicirc.org/major_benefits.html

God chose a sign of being one of His chosen people something that would also benefit them physically. I believe you will find it to be true that, while God gave the laws to test the Jews, He gave laws which would be of material benefit to them as well.

The Jews looked with disfavor on those who had not been circumcised.

1 Samuel 17:36 (NASB)

*"Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; and this **uncircumcised** Philistine will be like one of them, since he has taunted the armies of the living God."*

With respect to themselves, they boasted of their circumcision.

Philippians 3:4-6 (NKJV)

though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Paul continues with the benefits of being a Jew. *Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God.* No other people were given any revelation other than the Jewish people. We don't have a letter written by Abel McDermott (i.e a Scotchman). All were written by the Apostles - Paul, Peter, James, John and Jude (we do not know who wrote Hebrews but from the text, he had to be a Jew).

Regardless what benefits we have as Christian, Hellenistic Jews have been given more promises than us.

What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it? His answer "may it never be!" It has always irritated me that the KJV has translated this (and similar passages) with "God forbid!" This almost taking the Lord's name in vain. But, to go on . . .

Paul really had something to boast about. In fact, he has two lists of things he did. We have the passage above and we have,

2 Corinthians 11:21-28 (NASB)

To my shame I must say that we have been weak by comparison. But in whatever respect anyone else is bold-I speak in foolishness-I am just as bold myself. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. Are they servants of Christ?-I speak as if insane-I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches.

There is the list of "good things" and this list of "bad things." As Christians we have to take the bad with the good. You should take note that the thing which was the most burdensome to Paul was caring for the churches!

But if through my lie the truth of God abounded to His glory, why am I also still being judged as a sinner? And why not say (as we are slanderously reported and as some claim that we say), "Let us do evil that good may come"? Their condemnation is just.

In this verse Paul drives his argument to its logical, yet untenable conclusion. This is called an argumentum ad absurdum. If sin magnifies the glory of God, then the more sin the more glory. Some had falsely accused Paul of teaching this absurdity. It was ridiculous, for it was Paul who insisted that God must judge sin. As surely as there is sin there must be judgment. You see, this facetious type of argument which Paul has met here makes a Robespierre a saint in the name of utilitarianism. It's

the old bromide that the end justifies the means

Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

Romans 3:9-18 (NASB)

What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; as it is written, "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE (Psalm 53:1,2,3); THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE." "THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE (Psalm 5:9), WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING," "THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS"(Psalm 140:3); "WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS" (Psalm 10:7); "THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD, DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS, AND THE PATH OF PEACE THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN." (Isaiah 59:7) "THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES." (Psalm 36:1)

To start this section, let us turn to the Psalms.

Psalm 14:1-3 (NASB)

The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; There is no one who does good. The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men To see if there are any who understand, Who seek after God. They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt; There is no one who does good, not even one.

Psalm 5:9 (NASB)

There is nothing reliable in what they say; Their inward part is destruction itself. Their throat is an open grave; They flatter with their tongue.

Psalm 140:3 (NASB)

They sharpen their tongues as a serpent; Poison of a viper is under their lips. Selah.

Psalm 10:7 (NASB)

His mouth is full of curses and deceit and oppression; Under his tongue is mischief and wickedness.

Isaiah 59:7 (NASB)

Their feet run to evil, And they hasten to shed innocent blood; Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity, Devastation and destruction are in their highways.

Psalm 36:1 (NASB)

Transgression speaks to the ungodly within his heart; There is no fear of God before his eyes.

These ten verses Paul took straight from the Psalms (one from Isaiah). Do you suppose Paul got out

his String's Concordance and looked up these Psalms. I think not. Paul knew the (Old Testament) Scriptures well. He was raised under the tutoring of Gamaliel in a most prestigious school. Why is he quoting the Psalms here? Newell, in his commentary on Romans, titles this section, "Fourteen Horrible Things about all Men." Let us consider these.

1. *THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;*

First, there has never been a righteous person (except the Lord Jesus Christ). You may say, "Well, I have lived a pretty good life." That may be so, but that does not make you righteous. Adam was righteous for a time - then came the forbidden fruit. The experience in the Garden is instructive. Adam could do anything he wanted except to eat of the forbidden fruit. I should be easy to live a righteous life and there are only one thing you can not do. But Adam didn't make and neither would you have made it.

2. *THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS,*

Newell states

There is none that understandeth [Divine things]. We have added the words "Divine things" even in the Scripture text, because this verb (sunemi) translated "understandeth" is one of those words which God reserves in Scripture unto a peculiar meaning. Romans Verse-by-Verse.

Man has investigated and learned about the tiniest of things. The computer I am using has something near 1,000,000,000 transistors in it. That means the individual transistor must be extremely small. Man has investigated big things. We have gone so far as sending space probes to Mars and beyond. But, in view of the fact that "God created the heaven and the earth" when we understand about the universe and even about ourselves, is little. We can not comprehend how

Ephesians 3:17-19 (NASB)

. . . Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

3. *THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;*

There was a good Jewish leader and teacher who came to Jesus,

John 3:1-12 (NASB)

*Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus *said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'*

"The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to Him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things? Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and testify of what we have seen, and you do not accept our testimony. If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?"

At least he sought. Yet, he still could not accept the teachings. He went away without seeing God.

4. ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE,

ALL? Adam was the first man. He was also the first sinner. He was the first to "turn aside." All you and I can do is follow Adam or, if we choose, we can follow Christ.

5. TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS;

James wrote,

James 2:20 (NASB)

But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?

Do you look back on your life and consider wasted time - that you have not really accomplished anything useful? Paul wrote,

Philippians 3:3-8 (NASB)

for we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh, although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless. But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ,

In Christ, you can not be useless, He has a use for each of us!

6. THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE."

This I shall take up when we get to verse 23.

7. "THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE,

Dr. McGee makes an interesting parallel here.

When you go to the doctor, what's the first thing that he says to you? Well, I have to go in for a regular check-up because of the fact that I apparently have cancer in my system, and I report regularly in case of an outbreak. Well, it is a ritual for me to go in, and I sit down in the little room where he does his examination. Do you know the first thing that he says to me? "Open your mouth." Then he takes a little wooden stick and pushes it around in my mouth, and he looks at my throat.

Likewise God, the Lord Jesus, the Great Physician, does that with mankind. Do you know what He says? "Their throat is an open sepulchre." Have you ever smelled decaying human flesh?

Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

8. *WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING,"*

This deception has been going on for a long time.

Genesis 3:1-5 (NASB)

Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'" The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Even God's people use it deceptively.

Genesis 48:8-14 (NASB)

When Israel saw Joseph's sons, he said, "Who are these?" Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me here." So he said, "Bring them to me, please, that I may bless them." Now the eyes of Israel were so dim from age that he could not see. Then Joseph brought them close to him, and he kissed them and embraced them. Israel said to Joseph, "I never expected to see your face, and behold, God has let me see your children as well." Then Joseph took them from his knees, and bowed with his face to the ground. Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right, and brought them close to him. But Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, crossing his hands, although Manasseh was the firstborn.

9. *"THE POISON OF ASPES IS UNDER THEIR LIPS";*

David observed this as he wrote,

Psalms 140:1-3 (NKJV)

A Psalm of David. Deliver me, O LORD, from evil men; Preserve me from violent men, Who plan evil things in their hearts; They continually gather together for war. They sharpen their tongues like a serpent; The poison of asps is under their lips.

10. *"WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS";*

James wrote at length on this.

James 3:2-6 (NASB)

For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well. Now if we put the bits into the horses' mouths so that they will obey us, we direct their entire body as well. Look at the ships also, though they are so great and are

driven by strong winds, are still directed by a very small rudder wherever the inclination of the pilot desires. So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell.

11. *"THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD,*

Note what the Lord said to Moses as they met.

Acts 7:33 (NASB)

"BUT THE LORD SAID TO HIM, 'TAKE OFF THE SANDALS FROM YOUR FEET, FOR THE PLACE ON WHICH YOU ARE STANDING IS HOLY GROUND.

God did not say, "Loosen your turban!" Nor did he ask Moses to remove his robe. It was the feet. Physically, it is the feet that come in contact with the dirt of this world - both physically and spiritually. Stay away from people seeking to send you in the wrong direction.

12. *DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS,*

Why is it that people are so bent on leading us to destruction and misery? Sometime use your computer and "Google" "Misery" There are thousands of quotations to the effect that misery loves company. If you can not rise up to their level, bring them down to yours! That is what the motto of these people is.

13. *THE PATH OF PEACE THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN."*

Satan can not live in peace and he will not let others do so either. As Christians, we have the admonition,

Psalms 122:6-9 (NASB)

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May they prosper who love you. "May peace be within your walls, And prosperity within your palaces." For the sake of my brothers and my friends, I will now say, "May peace be within you." For the sake of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek your good.

14. *"THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THEIR EYES."*

The following passage sums up this characteristic as well as those we have already considered.

Ezekiel 22:23-31 (NASB)

And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, "Son of man, say to her, 'You are a land that is not cleansed or rained on in the day of indignation.' "There is a conspiracy of her prophets in her midst like a roaring lion tearing the prey. They have devoured lives; they have taken treasure and precious things; they have made many widows in the midst of her. "Her priests have done violence to My law and have profaned My holy things; they have made no distinction between the holy and the profane, and they have not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean; and they hide their eyes from My sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. "Her princes within her are like wolves tearing

the prey, by shedding blood and destroying lives in order to get dishonest gain. "Her prophets have smeared whitewash for them, seeing false visions and divining lies for them, saying, 'Thus says the Lord GOD,' when the LORD has not spoken. "The people of the land have practiced oppression and committed robbery, and they have wronged the poor and needy and have oppressed the sojourner without justice. "I searched for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand in the gap before Me for the land, so that I would not destroy it; but I found no one. "Thus I have poured out My indignation on them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath; their way I have brought upon their heads," declares the Lord GOD.

Having covered the 14 items above, we shall go on with the narrative.

Romans 3:19-20 (NASB)

Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God; because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law. Let me begin with a rather simple example. If you do not own or drive a motor vehicle, you are not under the motor vehicle laws. They do not apply to you.

If you wish a rather humorous explanation of this, we have,

Man cannot attain righteousness by the Mosaic Law. It is as if mankind in desperation grabbed for the Law as the proverbial straw when drowning. The Law won't lift him up. Actually, it does the opposite. To hold onto the Law is like a man jumping out of an airplane, and instead of taking a parachute, he takes a sack of cement with him. Well, believe me, the Law will pull you down. It condemns man. It's a ministration of death. Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

so that every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God; because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

Here Paul declares God's verdict on fallen, unrepentant mankind.

Oida (know) refers to knowledge that is certain and complete. We know with absolute certainty, Paul was saying, that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, that every mouth may be closed, and all the world may become accountable to God. That declaration allows no exceptions. Every unredeemed human being, Jew or Gentile, is under the Law of God and accountable to God.

As Paul has already declared, the Jew is under God's written law delivered through Moses, and the Gentile is under the equally God-given law written in his heart (Rom. 2:11-15). God is the Creator, Sustainer, and Lord of the entire universe, and it is therefore impossible for anyone or anything to be outside His control or authority.

MacArthur New Testament Commentary

JUSTIFICATION

Romans 3:21-26 (NASB)

But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; Let me give a definition here. When Paul refers to the "Law and the Prophets," he is referring to the major portion of the Old Testament. "The Law" consists of the five books of Moses, the Pentateuch. The "Prophets" does not refer to what we think of - Isaiah, Jeremiah, etc. The "Prophets" is the second part of the Hebrew Bible that begins with Joshua and ends with the Minor Prophets BUT excludes Ruth, Esther, the Poetic Books, and Daniel. These later books are referred to as the Writings. So, in essence, Paul refers to all that is written in the Old Testament.

"BUT NOW"-exclaims the apostle. It marks a decided change of subject. Now that man has been fully shown up, God will be revealed. Now upon the proven unrighteousness of all mankind "the righteousness of God is manifested." Of old He had declared, "I will bring near My righteousness." This is in no sense a wrought-out, legal righteousness, such as man was unable to produce for God. It is a righteousness "without the law," that is, altogether apart from any principle of human obedience to a divinely-ordained code of morals. It is a righteousness of God for unrighteous men, and is in no wise dependent upon human merit or attainment.

H.A. Ironside Expository Commentary

. . . for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Excuse me if I get a bit technical here. The Greek translated "have sinned" is in the 2nd Aorist tense. This tense is used for something that happened at some time in the past. It is different than the "Imperfect" tense which refers to something from the past that continues to exist until now. It existed at a particular point in time.

Verse 23: for all sinned, and are falling short of the glory of God-Note the difference in the tenses: "all sinned" is in the past tense, while "falling short" of God's glory is stated in **the present tense**. When Adam had once sinned, in Eden, he continually fell short, outside of Eden, as did all his race, by him and after him. Romans Verse-by-Verse.

It is not that you sinned at some time or another - you sin continually. It reminds me of Red Skelton when he played the part (on the radio) of the "Mean Little Kid." He would say, "If I dood it I get a whipping - - - I dood it anyway"). There is not a day goes by that each of us commit some sin even though it be a very small one. We may commit that sin, but God does not see it. Let me point out a difference between this and the Old Testament.

Isaiah 1:18 (NASB)

"Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool.

In the Old Testament, a person had to go to the priest with a sacrificial animal so that the blood of the animal could be used to cover that sin. When you take a BLACK sin and cover it with blood, it becomes a CRIMSON blob which hides that sin from God. But, when Christ's blood was shed, it cleansed our sins so there is nothing to see, they have become WHITE as wool (or snow). For years, Child Evangelism Fellowship has used a book called "The Wordless Book." It is called that because there are no words in it - only colors: the BLACK of sin, the RED of blood and the WHITE of purification.



. . . being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. Here is it dressed up in more technical terms. Propitiation? My Oxford diction does not give a clue to what this term means.

PROPITIATION. The divine side of the work of Christ on the cross. Christ's atoning death for the world's sin altered the whole position of the human race in its relationship to God, for God recognizes what Christ accomplished in behalf of the world whether men enter into the blessings of it or not.

The New Unger's Bible Dictionary.

I will let MacArthur say what I wanted to say here.

Because man cannot become righteous on his own, God graciously provided for his redemption through the atoning sacrifice of His own Son, Jesus Christ.

That sacrifice was not made in the dark or even in the hidden and holy recesses of the sacred Temple, but openly on the hill of Calvary for all the world to see. God displayed His Son publicly as a propitiation.

MacArthur New Testament Commentary

This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Let us look at this passage in a "modern day" translation.

Romans 3:25-26 (MSG)

God sacrificed Jesus on the altar of the world to clear that world of sin. Having faith in him sets us in the clear. God decided on this course of action in full view of the public-to set the world in the clear with himself through the sacrifice of Jesus, finally taking care of the sins he had so patiently endured. This is not only clear, but it's now-this is current history! God sets things right. He also makes it possible for us to live in his rightness.

CHAPTER FOUR

Romans 4:1-8 (NASB)

What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? "ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS."(Genesis 15:6) Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness, just as David also speaks of the blessing on the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: "BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED.(Psalm 32:1) "BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE SIN THE LORD WILL NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT."(Psalm 32:2)

Every false religion of the world-whether a heretical branch of Christianity, a highly developed pagan religion, or primitive animism-is founded on some form of salvation by works. Without exception, they teach that, by one means or another, man can become right with deity by attaining righteousness in his own power.

The entire fourth chapter of Romans is devoted to Abraham, whom Paul uses as an illustration of the central biblical truth that man can become right with God only by faith in response to His grace, and never by works. Verses 6-8 pertain to David, but Paul is simply using David as an illustration to substantiate what he is teaching about Abraham. MacArthur New Testament Commentary.

Before we embark on this chapter, let us recall what we know about Abram - Abraham.

Genesis 12:1-3 (NASB)

Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

This is the earliest record of Abraham. In fact, he is still called Abram.

Genesis 14:13 (NASB)

Then a fugitive came and told Abram the Hebrew. Now he was living by the oaks of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol and brother of Aner, and these were allies with Abram.

Two chapters later, Abram has "made a name for himself." He is now called Abram and Hebrew. Actually, it is not a proper name but a description.

adj. et n.gent. Hebrew, either a. put into the mouth of foreigners (Egyptian and Philistine), or b. used to distinguish Israel from foreigners (= one from beyond, from the other side, i.e. probably (in Hebrew tradition) from beyond the Euphrates

Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon.

As Abram passed from his own country, UR in the east, and into the land of Canaan. He acquired this title. Look at the first thing we learn about Abraham! God, for no reason that anyone knows about, chose Abraham to be the one person through whom the entire world might be saved - *all the families of the earth will be blessed*. There was no condition laid down on this promise other than for him to go where the Lord led him. There are other things to note but I will let Paul cover them.

Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness, just as David also speaks of the blessing on the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works.

Here Paul writes two verses which every believer should commit to memory: for they state what no mind of fallen man ever imagines; for do not people naturally believe that the way to be saved is to "be good"?

To him that worketh-To a man that works for wages, the wages are due as a debt. That is a simple enough principle. But do not seek to apply it to salvation! No one ever got righteousness by work or worth! Righteousness is not by doing right, strange and impossible as that may seem.

But to him that worketh not-to him who "casts his deadly doing down"; who, seeing his guilt, and his entire inability to put it away, ceases wholly from all efforts to obtain God's favor by his own doings, or self-denyings,-even by his prayers: but believeth on the God that declareth righteous the ungodly-not the godly or the good! But, you say, God cannot do that! God cannot declare a man godly if he is really ungodly. Now God did not say "godly," but He said righteous,-"declareth righteous those ungodly who believe." God can do that! For God can reckon to an ungodly man who dares cease trying to change himself, and relies on God just as he is, a sinner,-God can and does reckon to such a one the glorious benefit of Christ's death and resurrection on behalf of sinners. And of such a believing sinner, God declares his faith is counted as righteousness.

Romans Verse-by-Verse.

So far in Genesis, Abram (Abraham) has done no works (unless you count hiking from UR to Canaan work). Yet God has made this great promise to him. Why did he select Abram (Abraham)? By that time, there were a lot of people in the world. Why choose Abram above all others?

Years later, God would appear to Jacob.

Isaiah 41:8-9 (NASB)

"But you, Israel, My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, Descendant of Abraham My friend, You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, And called from its remotest parts And said to you, 'You are My servant, I have chosen you and not rejected you.

Here we have a reason why God chose Jacob. It was not a random choice, it was based on the fact that Abraham was his grandfather. But this is still a dead end. Someday, in heaven, you may be able to ask God why He chose Abraham, but until then, it was not on the basis of anything that Abraham had done or thought.

Paul now turns to the Psalms.

Psalms 32:1-2 (NASB)

How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered! How blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit!

Were David's sins forgiven? If you do not think David committed some greivous sins, read I and II Samuel!

The Blessing of Acceptance (vv. 1-2)

Instead of starting with a catalog of his sins, David launched into the psalm with a song of praise for everybody in the assembly to hear. The first beatitude in the Psalms pronounces blessing on the obedient (1:1), but this second beatitude pronounces blessing on the disobedient who have been forgiven. (For other beatitudes, see 34:8; 40:4; 65:4; 84:5, 12; 94:12; 112:1.) Chronologically, his experience of forgiveness came long after he had committed his sins and covered them up for almost a year (vv. 3-5). But having now entered into the freedom of forgiveness, **David couldn't wait to shout about it. If we have acceptance with God, it matters not what else may happen to us**

Bible Exposition Commentary

David sinned but was forgiven. So far, we have seen no sin on the part of Abram (Abraham).

Romans 4:9-15 (NASB)

Is this blessing then on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also? For we say, "FAITH WAS CREDITED TO ABRAHAM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS." (Genesis 15:6) How then was it credited? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised; and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them, and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised. For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified; for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation.

Paul begins with Genesis 15. Abraham is still being called Abram.

Genesis 15:1-7 (NASB)

After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; Your reward shall be very great." Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will You give me, since I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" And Abram said, "Since You have given no offspring to me, one born in my house is my heir." Then behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "This man will not be your heir; but one who will come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir." And He took him outside and said, "Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness. And He said to him, "I am the LORD who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess it."

This is the first time the Lord came to Abraham and made him a specific promise. The promise was the he would have descendants as multitudinous as the stars in the universe. In passing He also told

Abraham that the land was his. This was about 2000 BC.

Thus far, neither Paul nor I have indicated why the name Abram?

abram: A proper noun referring to Abram, the biological and spiritual father of Israel. He was born to Terah in Ur of the Chaldees. The name means "exalted father"

Complete Word Study Dictionary,

Well, he would certainly be an "Exalted Father" with the number of descendants God promised him.

How then was it credited? While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Thus far in Genesis, there has been no mention of circumcision.

We find circumcision first mentioned below.

Genesis 17:9-14 (NASB)

God said further to Abraham, "Now as for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. "This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised. "And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you. "And every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations, a servant who is born in the house or who is bought with money from any foreigner, who is not of your descendants. "A servant who is born in your house or who is bought with your money shall surely be circumcised; thus shall My covenant be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. "But an uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant."

Here Abraham is introduced to the concept of circumcision. Other peoples of the earth, in Abraham's time and years later, did not practice this. An interesting example is

1 Samuel 17:36 (NASB)

"Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine¹⁰ will be like one of them, since he has taunted the armies of the living God."

To introduce the term,

mûl: A verb meaning to cut short, to cut off, to circumcise. Abraham was commanded to circumcise both himself and his offspring as a sign of the covenant made between him and God (Gen. 17:10-14). As a result, Abraham had his son Ishmael, all the male slaves in his house, and himself circumcised that same day (Gen. 17:23-27). Later, when Isaac was born, Abraham circumcised him as well

Complete Word Study Dictionary

¹⁰I.e. Goliath

The Scriptures do not leave us to wonder what the process was. Today, in most civilized countries, it is practiced on all male peoples. This brings to mind an important point to remember. Most of the commandments God gives us to obey have two purposes: (1) spiritual - are you following the Lord as required, and (2) practical benefits.

Anyway, the promise to Abraham came later, quite a bit later than the promise we have been considering.

While he was circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised; and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them, and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised

I suppose I don't have to tell you that you need not be circumcised to receive Christ and have the promise of Eternal Life. We do it for medical reasons but not for any spiritual reason.

For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified; for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation. All this seems quite simple to me - on the surface. But the deep truth is that there is not a thing we can do, including circumcision (for males) to be saved. (I wonder why there was no equivalent test for women?)

It is too bad for a quite a number of people who are trying to work their way into heaven by what they do or don't do. If you have been saved through faith and faith alone, your works will certainly earn you "brownie" points in heaven but have no effect on your salvation. I am not an expert and the false teachings of the Mormons, J.W.'s, and others but they do not include salvation through faith and faith alone.

I have had some interesting conversations with a number of J.W.s. One told me they could read Greek in connection with my debating with them regarding John 1:1. So, I quickly went into my study, grabbed my Greek New Testament and returned to the door. I turned to John 1:1 and asked them what it said there? "Where are the English words?" (I.e. in an interlinear Bible). Yeh sure! They could read Greek when the English words were printed underneath. I one time had the opportunity to meet one of the 144,000 who will go to heaven. I said to him, "Oh, that's nice, I guess I will see you there."

For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith. When you think of it, the promise to Abraham could not be through the law because, when God called him, there was no Law!

Hebrews 11:8-12 (NASB)

*By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, **not knowing where he was going**. By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised. **Therefore there was born even of one man, and him***

as good as dead at that, as many descendants AS THE STARS OF HEAVEN IN NUMBER, AND INNUMERABLE AS THE SAND WHICH IS BY THE SEASHORE.

I might have reproduced the entire 11th chapter of Hebrews, the “faith chapter,” but I have only listed the part relating to Abraham.

For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified; for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation. If you could have the promise of going to heaven by giving \$10 a year - we would not have to have any faith (other than that the \$10 was adequate).

Leviticus 11:1-12 (NASB)

The LORD spoke again to Moses and to Aaron, saying to them, "Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'These are the creatures which you may eat from all the animals that are on the earth. ~'Whatever divides a hoof, thus making split hoofs, and chews the cud, among the animals, that you may eat. ~'Nevertheless, you are not to eat of these, among those which chew the cud, or among those which divide the hoof: the camel, for though it chews cud, it does not divide the hoof, it is unclean to you. ~'Likewise, the shaphan, for though it chews cud, it does not divide the hoof, it is unclean to you; the rabbit also, for though it chews cud, it does not divide the hoof, it is unclean to you; and the pig, for though it divides the hoof, thus making a split hoof, it does not chew cud, it is unclean to you. ~'You shall not eat of their flesh nor touch their carcasses; they are unclean to you. 'These you may eat, whatever is in the water: all that have fins and scales, those in the water, in the seas or in the rivers, you may eat. ~'But whatever is in the seas and in the rivers that does not have fins and scales among all the teeming life of the water, and among all the living creatures that are in the water, they are detestable things to you, and they shall be abhorrent to you; you may not eat of their flesh, and their carcasses you shall detest. ~'Whatever in the water does not have fins and scales is abhorrent to you.

When you had dinner last night, were you sure that the meat you ate came from an animal with split hooves and chews its cud? NO? Maybe you have broken the law. I suspect you would be quite angry if you had to check all these things out - it would bring you the wrath in you. BUT! We are not under the law so all things are lawful to us. It is faith that counts.

1 Corinthians 6:12 (NASB)

All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything.

Just so you don't go too far, even though you need to keep all the ordinances of the Law, you need to use some common sense and do what faith leads you to do.

Romans 4:16-25 (NASB)

For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, (as it is written, "A FATHER OF MANY NATIONS HAVE I MADE YOU")([Genesis 17:5](#)) in the presence of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist. In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken,

"SO SHALL YOUR DESCENDANTS BE."(Genesis 15:5) Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform. Therefore IT WAS ALSO CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.(Genesis 15:6) Now not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him, but for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification.

For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. We receive the benefits of being Christians because of the faith of Abraham who believed God - he and his descendants. "Wait!" you say, "I am not Jewish!" The text here states clearly this the results of his faith were not just for those under the Law (i.e. the Jews) but to ALL nations. Paul cites Genesis 17:5 as proof of this.

Here we see anew God's great kindness. He desired that all the seed of Abraham, whether Jewish or Gentile believers, might have security,-that the promise might be sure to all the seed. Now if you introduce man's works (for man always says, "I must do my part"), you introduce an element of insecurity and uncertainty. For no man, trying to "do his part," is ever certain that he has done, or will do, his "part." Salvation is of God, not of man. It is of faith, and so, of grace; and thus, of God. For faith is unmixed with the vain promises and hopes of man to accomplish "his part"; but looks to what God has done, in sending His Son, to do a finished work on the cross; and to the fact that God has raised up Christ; and that Christ is our unfailling High Priest in heaven.

Romans Verse-by-Verse.

Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb; Abraham had absolutely no reason to believe he would be the father of anyone! He was 100 years old and Sarah not much younger. If you turn to Google and look for older women who still gave birth, they are all in the 60's and a few in their 70's. None anywhere near as old as Sarah. Sarah realized this.

Genesis 17:15-19 (NASB)

Then God said to Abraham, "As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. "I will bless her, and indeed I will give you a son by her. Then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her." Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, "Will a child be born to a man one hundred years old? And will Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?" And Abraham said to God, "Oh that Ishmael might live before You!" But God said, "No, but Sarah your wife will bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.

Genesis 18:9-15 (NASB)

Then they said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" And he said, "There, in the tent." He said, "I will surely return to you at this time next year; and behold, Sarah your wife will have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent door, which was behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; Sarah was past childbearing. Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, when I am so old?' "Is anything too difficult for the LORD? At the

appointed time I will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah will have a son." Sarah denied it however, saying, "I did not laugh"; for she was afraid. And He said, "No, but you did laugh."

This was not the end of Abraham's faith. When told to take Isaac up on the mountain and sacrifice him as an offering, what does it say?

Genesis 22:1-3 (NASB)

Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." He said, "Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you." So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son; and he split wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.

Interestingly, the Hebrew language has a word for "rising up early to accomplish a great task." That word is used here. How could Abraham be the father of many if he sacrificed Isaac on the altar? We are not told Abraham's thoughts, only his actions.

Genesis 22:8 (NASB77)

And Abraham said, "God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." So the two of them walked on together.

Some insist that, at this point, God would "provide for Himself a lamb" (i.e. God would provide some lamb, not Isaac). But the Hebrew does not of necessity mean that. Commentators usually say that this means that Abraham did not want to reveal what the offering was at that point. Perhaps both are right?

Anyway, Abraham did everything commanded of his until the moment he was to plunge the knife into Isaac. In accordance with the Scriptures, either Abraham believed God would provide another sacrifice, OR, that Isaac would not die in the process (i.e. he would come back to life).

being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform. Therefore IT WAS ALSO CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Now not for his sake only was it written that it was credited to him, but for our sake also, to whom it will be credited, as those who believe in Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, He who was delivered over because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification.

We have discussed the faith that Abraham must have had in all this. But, Paul says this was also a test of OUR faith. Do you believe what we have learned about Abraham? On what basis? You say, "I've read it in the Scriptures!" Well, someone else may have read "Playboy Magazine" and not seen this. It takes faith on your part as well. Thus said, we go to chapter five.

CHAPTER FIVE

Romans 5:1-5 (NASB)

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Therefore, having been justified by faith . . . There is an old saying that when we read “Therefore” we should ask what the “Therefore” is “there for?” In Chapter 4 Paul dealt with the subject of being justified by faith and faith alone. So, therefore . . .

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

Newell makes an important technical point here.

Therefore having been declared righteous on the principle of faith-We must note at once that the Greek form of this verb "declared righteous," or "justified," is not the present participle, "being declared righteous," but rather the aorist participle, "having been declared righteous," or "justified." You say. What is the difference? The answer is, "being declared righteous" looks to a state you are in; "having been declared righteous" looks back to a fact that happened. "Being in a justified state" of course is incorrect, confusing, as it does, justification and sanctification. "Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever." The moment you believed, God declared you righteous, never to change His mind: as David says, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin" (Rom 4:8). If therefore you are a believer, quote this verse properly, and say, "Having been declared righteous on the principle of faith I have"-these blessed fruits and results which are now to be recorded.

Romans Verse-by-Verse.

through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. We have been “introduced” by faith. The word here was commonly used for the audience or right of approach granted to someone by high officials and monarchs. Thus we may stand before the “King of Kings.” How would you feel if you had an audience with the King of England. I am quite sure you would be rather excited. Paul here uses the term “exult.” To begin with, I was not sure that was the right term - it seemed to be a synonym of “gloat.” Actually, it turns out that in common Greek writings it did often mean to boast. If you check the dictionary, the term can be used two ways: *boast >verb 1 talk about oneself with excessive pride. 2 possess (a feature that is a source of pride).* *>noun an act of boasting.*¹¹ Note that the difference is whether or not you boast in excess. We do not boast in excess when we speak of our position in Christ.

And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. Paul goes on to list a series of characteristics which are derived from this.

¹¹Oxford Dictionary

1. We also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance;
2. We exult in perseverance because it brings about proven character;
3. We exult in proven character because that gives us hope;
4. We exult in hope because it does not disappoint.

When I was a small child there was a radio show about a door-to-door vacuum cleaner salesman. As he approached a door, he would say, "Maybe they will but one - I hope, I hope, I hope!" We need not "hope" three times" since our hope is secure and that is why we can exult, be proud! Are you proud to be a Christian?

Some may say this is a wrong attitude. We had nothing to do with it that we can be proud of it. But a Marine may honestly boast about being I the Marines during a war. A congressmen may boast that he has been elected for three terms because the people believe in him. We may boast that we know the King of Kings." Jeremiah wrote,

Jeremiah 9:23-24 (NASB)

Thus says the LORD, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares the LORD.

The love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. Peter speaks of this love being poured out in his message at Pentecost.

Acts 2:32-36 (NASB)

"This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. "For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET.'" "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ-this Jesus whom you crucified."

Romans 5:6-11 (NASB)

For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

*For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. The Greek word *dúnamai*, to be able. Able, strong, powerful. Used in the NT generally of things (Acts 7:22; 2 Cor.*

10:4); with the def. art. *ho* <G3588>, *the mighty, spoken of God, the Almighty (Luke 1:49)*¹². Here, however, the word has an alpha in front of it which reverses the meaning - to be without any strength.

Man was helpless from the time of Adam to the time of Christ. Paul says Christ dies “at the right time.” Perhaps “the right time” may be better understood by the following.

Galatians 4:4 (NASB)

But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law,

Why Christ came when He did, I do not know. Don't let anyone tell you that they know. God knows, He knew from the beginning and, for whatever reason, He chose the specific time for Christ's entrance into the world.

Christ died for the “Ungodly.” While this is certainly a true statement, when Christ came, all men were ungodly in God's eyes. The only man who knew when the right time was before Jesus began His earthly ministry was John the Baptist (and Jesus' parents).

John 1:29 (NASB)

*The next day he *saw Jesus coming to him and *said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*

For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

The highest expression of human love is when someone gives his or her life so that another person can continue to live. People are able to understand sacrificial love, even though it is rarely practiced. This kind of sacrificial gesture is almost always dependent on a relationship that already exists between the one sacrificing (parent, sibling, spouse, fellow soldier) and the one benefitted. Even so, people do not readily die for others. But God's love stands in stark contrast to even the deepest expression of human love because God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners. Life Application New Testament Commentary.

From time-to-time we hear of someone who risked his own life to save another and died in the process. “Hardly” here is . “not easily,” *i.e.* “scarcely, very rarely”:¹³. “Dare” is *from b.* “to bear, endure; to bring oneself to”¹³ This has happened but it is rare. Christ died for the vilest of sinners (as well as you and me).

Even though the Gentile world (as well as the Hebrews) was, and still is, filled with people who are sinners. Some are “vilest sinners” as noted above, but in God's eyes, sin is sin. No sin is any worse than another one. We may think so, but not God

¹²AMG's Complete Word Study Dictionaries

¹³Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament

There is more to it than that. *Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.* There is a problem here to be considered. Great wrath is waiting for the world - God's wrath is powerful. The Genesis flood demonstrates this, the Fire and Brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrah demonstrates this. Some may not agree with this but we have been speaking of our being made righteous before God. But, even though righteous, God might have had us go through the Tribulation anyway - but He won't.

Paul concludes this chapter with *but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.* He summaries with the concept of "exultation" which we have covered.

SANCTIFICATION

Romans 5:12-21 (NASB)

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned- for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. The gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification. For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous. The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men. Dr. MacArthur wrote,

Many people consider Romans 5:12-21, of which the present text is the introduction, to be the most difficult passage in the epistle. At first reading it seems complex and enigmatic, and in one sense it is. As will be discussed later, as far as complete human comprehension is concerned, the truths of this passage are beyond reach. But on the other hand, the truths themselves are wonderfully simple and clear when accepted in humble faith as God's Word. Just as it is possible to accept and live in accordance with the law of gravity without fully understanding it, so it is possible for believers to accept and live according to God's truth without fully understanding it.

MacArthur New Testament Commentary

In order to simplify this a bit, I have included a diagram from Newell's book on Romans (next page)

Through each of their acts, two opposite results were obtained. As we know, Adam brought SIN into

the world when he took of the fruit from the tree. Christ paid the price for that transaction on the cross.

Before proceeding from here, most of you know that Eve was first to take of the fruit. But Eve was tricked, Adam partook wilfully.

1 Timothy 2:13-14 (NASB)

For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

Eve was tricked. She did not realize what she was doing. On the other hand, Adam knew the result of eating of the forbidden fruit but he did so willingly so as to not be cut off from Eve. Adam knew exactly what he was doing! So did Christ!. There were many people between Adam and the birth of Christ. *Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.*

You may ask why Moses becomes an important part in this discussion.

From Adam to Moses sin was in the world, but at that time sin was not a transgression; it was merely rebellion against God. I think this is the reason God did not exact the death penalty from Cain when he murdered his brother. I cannot think of a deed more dastardly than what he did, but at that time God had not yet said, "Thou shalt not kill" (Exod. 20:13).

Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

Before God wrote "You shall not kill" on the stone table, it was wrong to kill but the consequences were not spelled out until God gave the Law through Moses.

But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.

An interesting translation of this passage is below.

Romans 5:21 (MSG)

All sin can do is threaten us with death, and that's the end of it. Grace, because God is putting everything together again through the Messiah, invites us into life—a life that goes on and on and on, world without end.

Adam brought sis into the world - so much so that God had to destroy it with a great flood. (Genesis 6). That only lasted for a while and God had to do something else very drastic.

Genesis 11:7-8 (NASB)

"Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, so that they will not understand one another's speech." So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the city.

God, at the tower of Babel, made it impossible for one man to communicate with another. What more need I say? He scattered the Northern tribes all over the world. Only the Southern tribes were left when Jesus was born. Now, through Christ's death on the cross, and His resurrection and ascension, the whole world can get into God's graces through His Son.

The gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification. For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

The one-dimensional result of Adam's one act was death, whereas the result of Christ's one act is life, which is multidimensional. Christ not only offers life but abundant life, life that abounds (v. 15; cf. John 10:10). The redeemed in Christ not only receive abundant life but are given righteousness as a gift (cf. 2 Cor. 5:21). They reign in that righteous life with their Lord and Savior. They possess the very righteous, glorious, and eternal life of God Himself.

MacArthur New Testament Commentary

The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let's look at this in another translation.

Romans 5:16-17 (MSG)

There's no comparison between that death-dealing sin and this generous, life-giving gift. The verdict on that one sin was the death sentence; the verdict on the many sins that followed was this wonderful life sentence. If death got the upper hand through one man's wrongdoing, can you imagine the breathtaking recovery life makes, sovereign life, in those who grasp with both hands this wildly extravagant life-gift, this grand setting-everything-right, that the one man Jesus Christ provides?

The conclusion of all this is,

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NASB)

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

CHAPTER SIX

Romans 6:1-7 (NASB)

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin.

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? This is a rhetorical question. The answer is, obviously, no! It would be foolish to think we ought to go out and sin some more so we would receive more of Christ's grace. Of course not and so says Paul - "May it never be!"¹⁴

How shall we who died to sin still live in it? One might asking a similar question: "If you die and are buried, how can you continue to live?" There is a deeper meaning to this though.

He characterizes all Christians as those who died. The translation, "are dead" is wrong¹⁵, for the tense of the Greek verb is the aorist, which denotes not a state but a past act or fact. It never refers to an action as going on or prolonged. As Winer says, "The aorist states a fact as something having taken place." Note how strikingly and repeatedly this tense is used in this chapter as referring to the death of which the apostle speaks: Mark most particularly that the apostle in verse 2 does not call upon Christians to die to sin but asserts that they shared Christ's death, they died to sin

Romans Verse-by-Verse.

And

"To obey the cravings of sin is to be alive to sin; but not to obey the cravings of sin or succumb to its will, this is to die to sin." Sin continues in force in its attempt to dominate the life and conduct of the believer. But the believer has been baptized into Christ, and that means to have been baptized into Christ's death as well. Christ's death for sin becomes our death to sin. Sin lies on the other side of the grave for those who have in Christ died to it. Paul asked incredulously, How can we who have died to sin "breathe its air again?"

New American Commentary

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? We should not get two concepts confused here. Presumably, after you were saved, you were

¹⁴The "God forbid" of the KJV is not a proper translation in that God is not mentioned in the phrase. This translation came about because of the force of the Greek expression

¹⁵KJV

baptized in water. That is a physical act which, of itself, does nothing. But it symbolizes our baptism into Christ's death. When we are placed under the water, what happens? If you remain there very long, you die, you drown. As such, it is a symbol of our death with Christ. When we come up out of the water, we are new persons. But let us get back to Paul.

*Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too **might walk** in newness of life.*

That truth is far too wondrous for us to understand fully, but the basic and obvious reality of it is that we died with Christ in order that we might have life through Him and live like Him. Again Paul emphasizes not so much the immorality but the impossibility of our continuing to live the way we did before we were saved. By trusting in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, we were, by an unfathomable divine miracle, taken back 2,000 years, as it were, and made to participate in our Savior's death and to be buried with Him, burial being the proof of death. The purpose of that divine act of bringing us through death (which paid the penalty for our sin) and resurrection with Christ was to enable us henceforth to walk in newness of life.

MacArthur New Testament Commentary,

Here Paul gives his personal testimony.

1 Corinthians 15:31 (NASB)

I affirm, brethren, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.

Paul is saying that if Christ be not raised from the dead, then they are foolish to put their lives in danger. However, since Christ is raised from the dead, believers are identified with Him. As Paul said to the believers at Rome, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:3-4). We are joined to a resurrected, living Christ. "Now if Christ was not resurrected, then," Paul says, "I am foolish to make the sacrifices I have made down here -- my life stands in jeopardy every hour. I am constantly in danger of death."

Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin. I think the key word here is "Likeness." When we accept the fact that, when we accept the work on the cross and unite ourselves to Christ in this manner, we do much more! **We shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection.** When you were baptized (assuming you were really baptized - immersed), the Pastor did not leave you "dead" under the water, but raised you up again into newness of life. Coming up out of the water is like being resurrected. We are now dead to sin. "But," some will say, "we still commit sins!"

If you drive your car through a red light and nothing happens - no accident, and no cop to pull you over, you have broken the law but you have not be declared guilty of breaking it. It is as if you never

did it. (I don't recommend trying this analogy out!)

Knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin. It is interesting to note that Dr. MacArthur wrote,

That truth is far too wondrous for us to understand fully, but the basic and obvious reality of it is that we died with Christ in order that we might have life through Him and live like Him
 MacArthur New Testament Commentary.

If he can not understand it fully, it doesn't bother me that I can not fully comprehend it. It matters not that you may not **comprehend** it, only that you **accept** it!

Romans 6:8-14 (NASB)

Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Newell here points out a succession of items here.

Note the repeated declarations in this Sixth Chapter of our actual identification with the death of Christ:

Verse 2: "We who died to sin."

Verse 3: "We were baptized into His death."

Verse 4: "We were buried with Him through baptism into death "

Verse 5: "We became united with Him in the likeness of His death."

Verse 6: "Our old man was crucified with Him."

Verse 7: "He that hath died is justified from sin."

Verse 8: "We died with Christ."

Verse 11: "Reckon yourselves dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus."

Verse 13: "Present yourselves unto God as alive from the dead."

Romans Verse-by-Verse.

*Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, **is never to die again**. In a subheading, "The Mystery of the Resurrection, we have,*

1 Corinthians 15:50-58 (NASB)

*Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold, I tell you a mystery; **we will not all sleep**, but we will all*

be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.

Paul uses the metaphor "sleep" for the physical death you and I will experience someday (if the Lord does not come first). He uses this to avoid the word "death" Our physical bodies will lie in the ground somewhere but our soul and spirit will not see death. Paul calls it a victory.

One commentator notes,

The word dead, "nekros", is here plural, as also in v. 4, and denotes the whole of the human dead, and not simply the state of death. Hence, "raised from the dead," means brought out from among the dead, leaving them still in the grave. It does not mean simply restored to life from being dead.

Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Romans.

Death no longer is master over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Christ's body died on the cross but, at the same time sin also died for Him and all who are His followers. This does not mean that you and I never do wrong, it means it is not counted as sin.

One commentator makes an interesting observation concerning be raised from the dead.

"Christ, having been raised from the dead, will no longer die; death no longer has lordship over him." Unlike Lazarus's "resurrection" (better, "revivification"), which did not spare him from another physical death, Christ's resurrection meant a decisive and final break with death and all its power.

New International Commentary

Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts.

To reign signifies to exercise uncontrolled authority. Sin, although mortified in the believer, is not destroyed. Its power to injure remains after its dominion is overthrown. The exhortation is, that we should not yield to this dethroned adversary of Christ and the soul, but strenuously strive against its efforts to gain ascendancy over us, and to bring us again into bondage. Let not sin reign in your mortal body. This is a difficult clause.

1. Mortal body may be a periphrase for you: 'Let not sin reign within you;' as in the next verse, your members may stand for yourselves.

2. Others say that "thentos"(mortal) is to be taken in the figurative sense in which "nekros", dead, i.e., corrupt, is often used.

3. Others take "soma" in the sense of "sarx", corrupt nature, including everything in man as fallen, which is not due to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Thus Calvin says,

"Nuper admonui vocem Corporis non pro carne et cute et ossibus accipi, sed pro tota hominis massa, ut ita loquar. Id certius colligere licet ex praesenti loco: quia alterum membrum, quod

mox subjiciet de corporis partibus, ad animum quoque extenditur. Sic autem crasse Paulus terrenum hominem significat."

Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans

(I left the Latin for you to figure out!) An explanation which is a bit clearer follows.

1. Notice first, our present body is mortal, that is, subject to physical death. We are waiting for the redemption of the body, at Christ's coming.
2. Sin is present in our members, and ready to reign-as-king, if permitted. That is, our bodies have not yet been redeemed from the possibility of sin's being king, if we permit such kingship.
3. It is through the lusts or desires of the body that sin is ready to assume control. The body has many desires not in themselves evil. Paul, speaking of foods, says, "All things are lawful for me; but I will not be brought under the power of any" (1 Cor 6:12). It is when natural desires are yielded to in self-will or self-indulgence, that sin uses the desires of the body to assert sin's power and establish its reign.
4. The believer is directed to reject this reigning of sin, which would involve our obeying the desires of the body.
5. Note the important word, "therefore." This looks back at the first part of Chapter Six, in which our death with Christ unto sin has been asserted, our relationship to sin being now the same as Christ's—we have done with it in death and burial. Notice that these present verses of exhortation are built wholly upon the fact that we died with Christ: we reckon ourselves dead because we participated in Christ's death. Therefore we dare refuse sin's dominion. We owe sin nothing. We are dead to it; justified from it, and living in another sphere!

Romans Verse-by-Verse.

*. . . but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are **not under law** but under grace.*

Let me give you a rather rough example of what Paul is saying. For 36 years, I had to park my car in certain parking places and have a fair amount deducted from my pay check to pay for the parking. You might say I was under the laws of Cal Poly. But now I am retired (like being dead to sin) and I can park anywhere I want at Cal Poly¹⁶ and not have to pay any fine¹⁷ (I have an Emeritus sticker for my car). I am no longer under the parking laws. I still park, but I am not charged for it. We still commit sins (hopefully few) but we have already been forgiven for them and so there is no charge.

Romans 6:15-19 (NASB)

What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be! Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as

¹⁶Handicap Parking excepted

¹⁷Current parking permits are \$450 per Academic Year.

you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.

What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Should I go out and park my car in the choicest places every day because I am not under the parking regulations? That would be foolish! May it never be!

Sin is the most devastating, debilitating, degenerating power that ever entered the human stream. Its evil, in fact, corrupted the entire creation, which "groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now" (Rom. 8:22).

Scripture characterizes sin and its effects in many ways. It refers to it as defiling, a pollution of the soul. It is to the human soul what corrosion is to a precious metal or smog is to a beautiful sky. Sin is called "an impure thing" (Isa. 30:22), and it is compared to "the venom of serpents, and the deadly poison of cobras" (Deut. 32:33). Even things that men consider to be righteous are like "a filthy garment" (lit., "menstrual cloth") in God's sight (Isa. 64:6; cf. Zech. 3:3-4). Paul refers to sin as "defilement of flesh and spirit" (2 Cor. 7:1) and to sinners as those whose minds and consciences are defiled (Titus 1:15).

Sin is rebellious, ignoring and even trampling on God's Word. Someone has called sin God's would-be murderer, because if sin had its way it would destroy God Himself along with His righteousness.

MacArthur New Testament Commentary

I will note again (for emphasis) that "God forbid" (me gineto) in the KJV is a very bad translation as nowhere does the text indicate God. So, in that sense, it amounts to a curse! "May it never be" is a good translation.

Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? You can go on seeking worldly lusts to enjoy and be slaves to sin (and Satan) or you can seek what God has for you to do.

But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. In terms that are a bit more simply stated,

In other words, when you were in the world, when you were lost, you obeyed sin. It was natural for you to do that. A man may live such an exemplary life that the chamber of commerce presents him with a medal and a loving cup and makes him the citizen of the year. I overheard such a man talking one time after he had been presented with the cup as the outstanding citizen of a certain community. The language of this man was the foulest language I had ever heard. He may be the outstanding citizen of that community, but it's quite obvious whom he's obeying. He is obeying the Devil! The fact that you obey Christ is the thing that is important.

Now, another thing that we need to understand is that, when you have been saved, you have a new nature that can obey Christ. Paul went through the experience, as we shall see in the next chapter, of being a new Christian and discovering that there was no good in his old nature. Paul says, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:18). Although many of us have not discovered this, there is no good in us; the old nature has no good in it. You can do a lot to improve it, but you sure can't make it good

Romans 6:20-23 (NASB)

For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death. But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Paul states that, before you received Christ you were:

- Slaves to sin
- Free in regard to righteousness.

What is he saying? He is saying you can sin from sun-up to the setting of the sun and it will in no way effect your righteousness? What. Because there is no such word in the dictionary s “Unrighteousness.” Either you are righteous or you are not. If you are not, there is nothing you can do to add to that - it is an absolute state. Do not expect an unsaved person to start living righteously before he or she is saved.

Paul continues, based on what we have just considered, *Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death*

Unsaved persons, who are slaves of sin, are free in regard to righteousness. That is, they have no connection to righteousness; it can make no demands on them since they possess neither the desire nor the ability to meet its requirements. They are controlled and ruled by sin, the master whom they are bound to serve. In that sense, they have no responsibility to righteousness, because they are powerless to meet its standards and demands. That is why it is foolish to preach reformation to sinners. They cannot reform their living until God transforms their lives.

MacArthur New Testament Commentary.

But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life. Comparing this with what we have just considered, we are now,

- Slaves to Righteousness through God’s work
- Freed in regard to sin

Sin and righteousness have switch places in your life.

The ultimate, then, is expressed here by Paul. *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.* .

CHAPTER SEVEN

Romans 7:1-3 (NASB)

Or do you not know, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives? For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man.

Or do you not know, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives? Dr. McGee makes an interesting but thought provoking comment here.

The importance of this chapter cannot be overemphasized. Let me give you a quotation from Dr. Griffith Thomas: "Dr. Alexander Whyte once said that whenever a new book on Romans comes out and is sent to him by its publisher for consideration, he at once turns to the comments on chapter VII, and according to the view taken of that important section he decides on the value of the entire work." Then Dr. Frederic Godet makes this bold statement: "But it is a hundred to one when a reader does not find the Apostle Paul logical, that he is not understanding his thought." Paul is certainly logical all through this chapter.

When I was a young man, a very wonderful itinerant Bible teacher, who was a great blessing to multitudes of folk, was a great help to me. He was never a pastor, and he taught that we are to detour around the seventh chapter of Romans; we are not to live there. We are to get into the eighth chapter of Romans. For several years I taught that philosophy also. But I have now been a pastor for a long time, and I have come to the conclusion that we are not to miss the seventh chapter of Romans. I am sure that many a pastor wishes his church members would get into the seventh of Romans, because the man who gets into the seventh of Romans will get into the eighth of Romans. I am of the opinion that the way into the eighth chapter is through the seventh chapter -- at least that is the route most of us take. Well, you are not to detour around it, because if you do, you are not on the direct route. It reminds me of a jingle:

To dwell above With the saints in love -- Oh, that will be glory! But to stay below With the saints I know -- That's another story!

Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

So, let us be careful to see where this chapter leads us and prepares us for chapter 8.

Since he is speaking to those who know "the law" we should ask, "What law?" We live under laws of

- The city we live in
- The county we live in
- The state we live in . . .AND
- The country we live in.

The "law" Paul refers to is the totality of the Old Testament law. Just as you and I are subject to the laws of the land until we die, the Hebrews were (in particular) under the Mosaic Law. Many Gentiles who seek Christ also try to place themselves under this law. If this is a bit unclear, Paul cites an example.

For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. This is a good example because both the Mosaic Law and the laws of our country are alike with respect to marriage.

Except by divorce (which is rare in the Scriptures, but is common in the U.S.) a married woman is “stuck” with the man she married. She can be free from his domination by killing him, but then she would be in worse trouble than ever. The Mosaic Law was carved in stone tables and I know of no type of eraser or “white-out” that can change it. The bottom line is that the death of her husband is the only way she can be freed.

So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man. The previous sentence was not hard to figure out but this one is not. Today, we would call a woman with two (or more) husbands a “bigamist.” My first understanding of this verse was if one of the two husbands dies, she is then free from the law. This did not make much sense to me. On reading it several more times, I realize this verse is separate from the preceding. A woman who is married can not marry another without being a bigamist, except, if the first husband dies and THEN she remarries, she is within the law.

If you summarize and itemize this in terms of the law of liberty,

- When we accept Christ (in particular a Hebrew), the Laws of Moses no longer pertain to us and we can be joined to another (Christ) and still be right.
- Anyone who is under the curse of Adam and sin, if that law of sin dies with respect to him, he is free to join himself (herself) to Christ and his atoning death.

Romans 7:4-6 (NASB)

Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death. But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.. This is what Paul explains next. We are free to join with Him who was raised from the dead. One might claim that Paul threw in a commercial here - we should now bear fruit. But he is not referring to giving financially, he is speaking of bearing fruit in the sense of “fruit” like ourselves - others who are still under the Law and need to be brought to Christ.

For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death. Paul here refers to the “members” of our body. What does that mean? The Greek word “melos” is used in a number of ways such as,

Ephesians 4:25 (NASB)

*Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH EACH ONE of you WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are **members** of one another.*

Here in Ephesians it refers to the many people who make up the church. But here “member” refers to a part of the body (arm, leg, etc.). I would suspect that Paul here has in mind the “ears”, “eyes,” “nose,” etc. The parts of the body from which sinful desires attack us. I don’t believe I ever heard of someone who sinned because his leg drove him to it. It is the “passionate” parts of the body. The first such part and the example is below.

Genesis 3:6 (NASB)

*When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a **delight to the eyes**, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.*

Eve’s “members” were responsible for the original sin. It is no different today except Satan uses other objects to tempt us. John wrote,

1 John 2:15-16 (NASB)

*Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of **the flesh** and the lust of **the eyes** and the boastful **pride** of life, is not from the Father, but **is from the world**.*

But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter. Paul spoke of this in another way when he wrote,

Galatians 3:23-25 (NASB)

*But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. Therefore **the Law has become our tutor** to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.*

The Law, our “tutor” has done its duty and brought us to a point where, in Christ, we can serve “in newness of the Spirit.

Romans 7:7-13 (NASB)

*What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, "YOU SHALL NOT COVET (**Exodus 20:17**)." But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead. I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died; and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me; for sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. Therefore did that which is good become a cause of death for me? May it never be! Rather it was sin, in order that it might be shown to be sin by effecting my death through that which is good, so that through the commandment sin would become utterly sinful.*

What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to

know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, "YOU SHALL NOT COVET (Exodus 20:17)." Let us suppose you are driving down the road, being careful not to exceed 40 MPH. All of a sudden, there are red lights and a siren behind you. Why? The officer points out that you were driving 40 MPH in a 25 MPH zone. You had not seen the sign and hence you thought you were driving properly on that stretch of the road. If it were not for the Law ("John Law"¹⁸ in this case), you would never know you had done anything wrong. (Paul didn't know about speeding so he used "coveting" for an example instead.)

Paul has established that the law cannot save (Rom. 3-5), that it cannot sanctify (chap. 6), and that it can no longer condemn a believer (7:1-6). Now he establishes that the law can convict both unbelievers and believers of sin (7:7-13), and next that it cannot deliver from sin, either before or after salvation (7:14-25), and that it can be fulfilled by believers in the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit (8:1-4).

By New Testament times, Jewish rabbis had summed up scriptural law in 613 commandments, comprised of 248 mandates and 365 prohibitions. The mandates related to such things as worship, the Temple, sacrifices, vows, rituals, donations, sabbaths, animals used for food, festivals, community affairs, war, social issues, family responsibilities, judicial matters, legal rights and obligations, and slavery. The prohibitions related to such things as idolatry historical lessons, blasphemy, Temple worship, sacrifices, the priesthood, diet, vows, agriculture, loans, business, slaves, justice, and personal relationships.

To those scriptural laws the rabbis had added countless adjuncts, conditions, and practical interpretations. The attempt to fulfill all the laws and traditions became a consuming way of life for legalistic Jews such as the Pharisees. At the Jerusalem Council, Peter described that extreme legalism as "a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear" (Acts 15:10).

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But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead. I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died; and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me; for sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.

Paul asks, "Did the law, which is good, cause my doom?" Again he answers his own question, Of course not! The law was given by God; it tells us what God desires of us, and it is good. It is sin, not the law, that brings death, and it is only through the law that we can see how terrible sin really is. Sin uses God's good commandments to continue to produce death in people because people cannot keep the law in their own strength. But, by using the commandments as instruments of death, sin reveals itself in all its ugliness.

Life Application New Testament Commentary.

In a somewhat weak example, we can say, "If I run out in front of a speeding car is it the fault of the car (or driver) that I am killed? The car itself does not bring death - it is to be a convenience. But if you go contrary to it, death is the result.

Paul says that the commandments were responsible for his sinning. Does that make sense? We have a perfect example of this in the beginning of our Bibles.

¹⁸A term to describe a police officer

Genesis 3:1-6 (NASB)

Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'" The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

Eve had all sorts of good fruit in the garden. Quite likely some of it tasted better than the fruit she was not to eat. But what happens where we are forbidden something? All of a sudden, this fruit became very desirable to Eve, it supposedly promised great things - so she ate. If there were no law against eating it, she would not have taken of it. *"When the commandment came, sin became alive and I died!"*

this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me; for sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. Paul here repeats this principle. It is the forbidden thing that often is our downfall. How many climbers have fallen to their death from attempting to climb El Capitan in Yosemite? The Internet lists at least 17 who have died trying to climb it. Why risk your life doing it? Because, in the sense it is so dangerous, it is "forbidden."

Oh, the tragedy of the person who seeks to live by the Law! It does not lead him to life. While it is true that God had said, "This do and thou shalt live" (see Deut. 8:1), the doing of it was the difficulty. The fault was not in the Law, but in the one who thought the Law would bring life and power. It did neither. It merely revealed the weakness, inability, and the sin of mankind. If there had been a law which could have given life, God would have given it (see Gal. 3:21). But life and Christian living do not come by the Law.

Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. Therefore did that which is good become a cause of death for me? May it never be! Rather it was sin, in order that it might be shown to be sin by effecting my death through that which is good, so that through the commandment sin would become utterly sinful.

"Love thy neighbor as thyself!" Is there anything "unholy" about doing that? No! "The Law is holy." Each commandment is "holy and righteous and good" Then what? The commandment did not cause Paul's spiritual death nor yours. The fact is that sin in our lives makes it impossible to always "love our neighbors." Sometimes we even hate them! It is because we have been born into sin that we can not keep the law and, therefore, will lead to our deaths - were in not for Christ's substitutionary death.

Romans 7:14-20 (NASB)

For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is

good. So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.

In the foregoing part of the chapter, the Apostle had illustrated the truth that believers are dead to the law by the sacrifice of Christ. He had next shown the effects of the law on Himself before his conversion, when he was under it, and after his conversion, when delivered from it. During the former period, he was ignorant of its true nature, and consequently of himself, supposing that he was righteous. 'I was alive without the law.' But when he understood its real character, he discovered the deceitfulness and sinfulness of sin closely cleaving to him, and inherent in him. 'When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.' He had remarked that sin, taking occasion by the commandment, had wrought in him all manner of evil desires, and had deceived him. He affirms, nevertheless, that the law is holy, and just, and good; and, lastly, he now further asserts that it is spiritual. This last characteristic of the holy law, proving that it takes cognizance not only of the outward conduct, but also of the thoughts and intents of the heart, leads him, as has just been observed, to show how far sin still continued to adhere to and afflict him

Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans.

For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh sold into bondage to sin.. In writing to Galatia, Paul said,

Galatians 5:16-17 (NASB)

*But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire **against** the Spirit, and the Spirit **against** the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.*

The war between our spirit and our flesh is an important subject so let us dwell on it a bit. McGee noted,

Here we have the conflict of two natures, the old nature and the new nature. There are definitely two "I's" in this section. The first "I" is the old nature as he asserts his rights. "For what I would" is what the new nature wants to do. "That do I not" -- the old nature rebels and won't do it. "But what I hate" -- the new nature hates it -- "that do I"; the old nature goes right ahead and does it.

Do you have the experience of this struggle in your Christian life? Do you do something, then hate yourself because you have done it? And you cry out, "God, oh, how I've failed You!" I think every child of God has this experience. Paul is speaking of his own experience in this section. Apparently there were three periods in his life. First he was a proud Pharisee under the Mosaic system, kidding himself by bringing the sacrifices and doing other things which he thought would make him right with God. But the Law was condemning him all the while. Then the second period began when he met Christ on the Damascus Road. This proud young Pharisee turned to Christ as his Savior, but he still felt he could live the Christian life. His new nature said, "I am now going to live for God!" But he failed and was in the arena of struggle and failure for a time. I do not know how long it lasted -- probably it was not long. There came a day when there was victory, but Paul did not win it; Christ did. Paul learned that it was a matter of yielding, presenting himself and letting the Spirit of God live the Christian life through him.

Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

It was not Paul's conscience that was bothering him because of some unforgiven sin or selfish reluctance to follow the Lord. It was his inner man, recreated in the likeness of Christ and indwelt by His Spirit, that now could see something of the true holiness, goodness, and glory of God's law and was grieved at his least infraction or falling short of it. In glaring contrast to his preconversion self-satisfaction in thinking himself blameless before God's law (Phil. 3:6), Paul now realized how wretchedly short of God's perfect law he lived, even as a Spirit-indwelt believer and an apostle of Jesus Christ.

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Paul states the answer right off, or so it seems. *Walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.* That is all there is to it. Just "walk by the Spirit!" Do you do that? Do I do that? If Paul couldn't, you and I can not either. I think of the little girl watching the preacher repairing his home. "Are you interested in carpentry little girl? The answer - "No, I just want to see what a preacher says when he hits his finger with the hammer!" Have you ever, figuratively speaking, hit your finger with a hammer? What did you say? Chances are that it was not very nice. That is our old nature that, for a moment, get set free in our suffering.

For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. How do you feel after hitting your finger and saying something you shouldn't? I assume you feel very guilty. I remember the time my mother-in-law did a very stupid thing and, not realizing what she had done, "fixed it." Then I found out what she had really done and my repairs were a waste of time. I must confess my boys learned a few terms they need not have know that night. At least it gave me the opportunity to explain to them about the "old nature" and "new nature."

Some times I sit at my computer and play Solitaire for a time and then realize I really should be working on this study. I am sure you have similar experiences.

But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good. Paul says he rationalizes his actions by saying to himself that the Law is good - therefore what he is doing is OK. But - *So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.* It is not Paul's new nature with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit but practices he had before his salvation. If you crossed the street when the light said "wait," it is because you have been doing that since before you were saved and it now pokes its ugly head up every now and then. Paul, in his "new nature" is not responsible for the sin, it is the old sin nature that has not quite died.

*For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, **in my flesh**; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not.*

These verses contain an amplification and confirmation of the sentiment of the preceding verses. They reassert the existence, and explain the nature of the inward struggle of which the apostle had been speaking. 'I am unable to come up to the requirements of the law, not because they are unreasonable, but because I am corrupt; there is no good in me. I can approve and delight in the exhibitions of holiness made by the law, but full conformity to its demands is more than I can attain. It is not I, therefore, my real and lasting self, but this intrusive tyrant dwelling within me, that disobeys the law.'

Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans.

For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. In the next passage, Paul will explain this more fully. For now:

The GOOD I want to do
The EVIL I don't want to do

I do not do.
I practice.

Where did this problem in mankind begin?

Genesis 3:1-6 (NASB)

Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'" The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

Eve had already been instructed not to eat of its fruit - but be realistic - it looked real good. Look at what it would do. *When the woman saw that the tree*

- *was good for food,*
- *that it was a delight to the eyes*
- *the tree was desirable to make one wise*

How could she resist. You probably could not have either, Paul found he could not resist either. There is only one who could.

Matthew 4:1-11 (NASB)

*Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread [the lust of the flesh]." But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'" Then the devil *took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and *said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU'; and 'ON their HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'" Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'" Again, the devil *took Him to a very high mountain and *showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me." Then Jesus *said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'" Then the devil *left Him; and behold, *angels came and began to minister to Him.**

1 John 2:15-16 (NASB)

*Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the **lust of the flesh** and the **lust of the eyes** and the boastful*

pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

Eve was tempted in all three ways as we have just noted. So was Jesus. First Satan tempted Him when He was hungry - the lust of the flesh. Satan failed. Then Satan offered Him a chance to show Himself by jumping off the temple - playing on Jesus' pride of life. Finally, Satan showed Him all he could obtain - the lust of the eyes. But Jesus passed all three tests. He was the only one who could. Some of us fail easier than others but we all fail in some way. We know good from bad but, somehow, the bad takes precedence and we do what we should not.

Romans 7:21-25 (NASB)

I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

I shall include a rather long citation from MacArthur who explain this situation better than I can.

The Third Lament

I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wishes to do good. For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. (7:21-23)

The third lament is very much like the first two, both in substance and in order.

The Condition

I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wishes to do good. (7:21)

The continuing presence of evil in a believer's life is so universal that Paul refers to it not as an uncommon thing but as such a common reality as to be called a continually operating spiritual principle. Lingering sin does battle with every good thing a believer desires to do, every good thought, every good intention, every good motive, every good word, every good deed.

The Lord warned Cain when he became angry that Abel's sacrifice was accepted but his own was not: "Sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it" (Gen. 4:7). Sin continues to crouch at the door, even of believers, in order to lead people into disobedience.

The Proof

For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, (7:22-23a)

The first part of Paul's proof that sin is no longer his master and that he is indeed redeemed by God and made into the likeness of Christ is his being able to say, I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man. In other words, the apostle's justified inner man is on the side of the law of God and no longer on the side of sin, as is true of every unsaved person.

Psalms 119 offers many striking parallels to Romans 7. Over and over and in a multitude of ways, the psalmist praises and exalts the Lord and His Word: "I have rejoiced in the way of Thy testimonies, as much as in all riches" (v. 14), "I shall delight in Thy commandments, which I love" (v. 47), "Thy law is my delight" (v. 77), "Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path" (v. 105), and "Thy word is very pure, therefore Thy servant loves it" (v. 140). It has always been true that the godly person's "delight is in the law of the Lord" (Ps. 1:2).

Paul's inner man, the deepest recesses of his redeemed person, the bottom of his heart, hungers and thirsts for God's righteousness (see Matt. 5:6) and seeks first His kingdom and His righteousness (see Matt. 6:33). "Though our outer man is decaying," Paul told the Corinthian believers, "yet our inner man is being renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16). He prayed that Christians in Ephesus would "be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man" (Eph. 3:16).

The second part of Paul's proof that sin is no longer his master and that he is indeed redeemed by God and made into the likeness of Christ involves a corresponding but opposite principle (cf. v. 21), a different law, which does not operate in the inner person but in the members of the believer's body, that is, in his unredeemed and still sinful humanness.

That opposing principle is continually waging war against the law of the believer's mind, a term that here corresponds to the redeemed inner man about whom Paul has been talking. Paul is not setting up a dichotomy between the mind and the body but is contrasting the inner man, or the redeemed "new creature" (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17), with the "flesh" (Rom. 7:25), that remnant of the old man that will remain with each believer until we receive our glorified bodies (8:23). Paul is not saying his mind is always spiritual and his body is always sinful. In fact, he confesses that, tragically, the fleshly principle undermines the law of his mind and temporarily makes him a prisoner of the law of sin which is in his members.

As Paul will explain in the following chapter, what he has just said of himself could not apply to an unbeliever, who is entirely, in his mind as well as in his flesh, "hostile toward God" (Rom. 8:7). Unbelievers do not want to please God and could not please Him if they wanted to (v. 8).

Psalm 119 also parallels Romans 7 on the down side, in regard to the believer's constant struggle with the sin that he hates and longs to be rid of. Like believers of every age, the psalmist sometimes was plagued by evil forces and people that warred against God and his own inner person. "My soul is crushed with longing after Thine ordinances at all times" (v. 20), he lamented, "My soul cleaves to the dust" (v. 25), and, "It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learn Thy statutes" (v. 71). He repeatedly pleads with God to revive him (vv. 25, 88, 107, 149, 154). With the deep humility that characterizes every mature believer, the writer ends by confessing, "I have gone astray like a lost sheep," by imploring God to "seek Thy servant," and finally by affirming again, "I do not forget Thy commandments" (v. 176).

MacArthur New Testament Commentary

*I find then the **principle** that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. How many of you have felt that you should not do something but, because the flesh is weak, have gone and done it anyway. This sort of reminds me (and dates me!) of Red Skelton who, in his weekly routine as "the mean little kid, would say, "If I dood it, I get a whippen - I dood it anyway!"*

How many of wish to be good Christians and avoid sin of any sort, but fail! If YOU do, just remember that Paul had the problem before you!

*For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the **inner man**, but I see a different law in the members of **my body**, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. So even Paul, at times, found himself doing (or wishing to do) things which a Christian ought to do. None of us is perfect - that is why Christ had to die for us!*

Wretched man that I am!

Who will set me free from the body of this death?

Revelation 3:17 (NASB)

'Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not

*know that you are **wretched** and miserable and poor and blind and naked,*

Christ said he would “spew out of His mouth” the Laodecean (above passage) church because it thought it was so good when, in fact, it had become degenerate,

How many times have you known what God would have you do but ended up doing something else instead? I believe we all have had such times.

Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

Newell commented,

To sum up Paul's Great Discoveries in this Struggle of Chapter Seven:

1. That sin dwelt in him, though he delighted in God's Law!
2. That his will was powerless against it.
3. That the sinful self was not his real self.
4. That there was deliverance through our Lord Jesus Christ!

Romans Verse-by-Verse.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Romans 8:1-8 (NASB)

Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. What is the “therefore” there for? Lest you become discouraged and do thing which you ought not do, Paul points out that Christ has already paid the penalty for himself and for you. Hence, “no condemnation. Why?”

*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of **sin** and of death.* He has already paid the price for those things you do and shouldn't.

I would like to stop here and comment on “SIN.”

Human sin is universal-we all sin. All persons without exception are under sin's dominion (Rom. 3:9-23). How did this come about? The Bible has no philosophical argument as such concerning sin's origin. God is in no way responsible for sin. Satan introduced sin when he beguiled Eve, but the Bible does not teach that sin had its origin with him either. Sin's origin is to be found in humanity's rebellious nature. Since Adam and Eve rebelled against the clear command of God, sin has infected humanity like a dread malignancy. Holman Bible Dictionary.

I remember what one Greek scholar said would be a common occurrence. It deals with an archer who shoots his arrow at the target. It misses the target, not because of poor aiming, but because it never gets as far as the target. SIN is hamartía - to miss the mark. You may do nothing very bad in your life but the issue here is whether or not you have gone far enough with the Lord to reach the target.

The crux of the whole assertion is found in the distinctive meaning of the word translated transgressions. It is parabasis. The simple verb means "to step," the prefixed preposition, "beyond." It refers to the act of a person stepping beyond a fixed limit into forbidden territory. The word for sin is hamartia which meant in classical Greek "to miss the mark," and was used of a person who failed to hit a target. The verb was used in connection with a direct object hodos (road), in a sentence where someone missed the road. Thus, the word implies a deviation from the right course of action. But the word in the classics never had the idea of a willful transgression or overstepping of limitations with reference to conduct imposed by the deity

For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. Note the contrast here.

Law	Could not do
His Son	Fulfilled.

Paul writes that the Law was weak.

The Law could not free us because it was “weak.” This is from the Greek and means “infirm, ill, without strength” as with a person in the hospital. In that shape, the Law was powerless to condemn the sin in our flesh. If you have studied the Old Testament and, in particular, the Law, you know that there are things in it you just can not obey. You can refrain from eating pork. You have a difficult time loving your brother as yourself. When it comes down to it, “me first, others second.”

The Law can provoke sin in men and condemn them for it, but it cannot save them from its penalty. "For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse," Paul explained to the Galatians, "for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law to perform them'" (Gal 3:10). Later in that same chapter he says: "Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law" (3:21). God's holy law can only set forth the standards of His righteousness and show men how utterly incapable they are in themselves of fulfilling those standards. MacArthur New Testament Commentary

Christ became “flesh and blood” just like you and I. But He did not sin because of it. He, therefore, conquered sin. This means we have been freed from its consequence.

For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh but those who are according to the Spirit, “ ” “ ” the things of the Spirit.

Paul refers to two groups of people. The first, those “of the flesh” have various deeds.

Gal 5:19-21 — Now **the deeds of the flesh** are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

The second group,

Gal 5:22-25 — But **the fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Someone may say, "Well, I am somewhere between those two extremes!" But,

Obviously there are degrees in both categories. Some unsaved people exhibit high moral behavior; and, on the other hand, many saints do not mind the things of God as obediently as they should. But every human being is completely in one spiritual state of being or the other; he either belongs to God or he does not. Just as a person cannot be partly dead and partly alive physically neither can he be partly dead and partly alive spiritually. There is no middle ground. A person is either forgiven and in the kingdom of God or unforgiven and in the kingdom of this world. He is either a child of God or a child of Satan.

MacArthur New Testament Commentary

Paul elaborates in what follows.

For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

You can have your "mind set" on the flesh" or "the Spirit. "Mind set" here is to think, have a mind set of something. You may have you mind set on all the great accomplishments you have made in life. What does that buy you? Paul says your reward is "death." You say, "Yes, I know I shall die someday!" but death here is separation from God. An eternal life in Hell. The opposite is to have you mind set on the Spirit, the result of which, Paul writes, is "life and peace." Paul wrote much the same thing to the churches in Galatia.

Galatians 6:8 (NASB)

*For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap **corruption**, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap **eternal life**.*

Why is this? Paul writes that our flesh is "hostile toward God." Why? Let me enumerate the ways.

1. *it does not subject itself to the law of God*
2. *it is not even able to do so*
3. *those who are in the flesh cannot please God.*

So, you have a very distinct (and obvious choice?).

Romans 8:9-17 (NASB)

However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh- for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also

be glorified with Him.

Paul here makes an assumption. *However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.* He assumes those he writes to are in the Spirit but adds a note for them to make sure that they are indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

BUT! "But" is an important word. *But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.* So, here is a very strong admonition to make sure you are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The consequences of not having the Spirit are too bad to even think about!

Here is the minimum situation. *If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness.* Even though you may still live a sinful life, if the Spirit of Christ indwells you, you still have a chance.

But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. Paul now turns from writing about Christ and turns to the *Spirit of Him who raised Jesus!* Who would that be? Only God that Father could do that. What is your relation to God. When you rise in the morning, do you start out with "Our Father who is in heaven . . ." "Not that you are supposed to recite the Lord's prayer, but you need to acknowledge His Lordship over you.

Look at what God the Father did for you. He raised His Son, Christ from the grave. He did not stop there, He gives us life and He dwells within us.

Psalm 84:11 (NKJV)

For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD will give grace and glory; No good thing will He withhold From those who walk uprightly.

So then, brethren . . . Having expressed his theology, Paul now turns to instruction (A Christian must have both). *We are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh- for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.* Do as Paul writes here - put to death the deeds of your body and rely completely by the Spirit.

For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" Have you ever cried out "Abba!" Do you even know what it means?

Note in this Scripture: Jesus addressed God as "Father." This was what a small child called his father from day to day. It was the address of a child's love and dependency. The child knew that His father would hear and turn to him when he called "Father." Just like a child, Jesus Christ cried out to His Father in childlike brokenness and dependency, knowing that His Father would hear and turn to help Him.

Practical Word Studies in The New Testament.

The term is used by three times in the New Testament,

Mark 14:36 (NKJV)

And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will."

Just as our "Abba" in heaven heard Jesus' words (but said "no son"), He hears us when we pray to him. What does this all mean. I believe it is a crucial point in our understanding of our faith. How many of us, when we pray (or when we think about God), think of some far-off deity who is controlling our future. How many of us pray as if we were asking our human "Daddy" for something. There is a warm, close relationship in the latter than is missing in the former.

The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.

John, writing from Patmos, wrote,

Revelation 21:5-8 (NKJV)

Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

This, then, gives us a picture of where we will be at the end of the age. There are, ultimately, two choices presented here. This is the ultimate end to which we look forward.

Paul explains this and sums it up personally when he writes to the churches in Galatia,

Galatians 2:20 (NASB)

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Romans 8:18-25 (NASB)

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory

that is to be revealed to us. Paul compares

- *that the sufferings of this present time* (Present tense)
- *the glory that is to be revealed to us.* (Future tense)

No one could make more out of this comparison!

2 Corinthians 11:21-28 (NASB)

*To my shame I must say that we have been weak by comparison. But in whatever respect anyone else is bold-I speak in foolishness-I am just as bold myself. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. Are they servants of Christ?-I speak as if insane-I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. **Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches.***

Some wonder what Paul looked like. More than one person has said he must not have been very good looking after all the beatings he had taken. Note what the most troublesome thing for Paul was (highlighted above)!

In all that, Paul says these are nothing compared what lied ahead of him in glory!

For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility [vanity], not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God

Vanity-Here look back to the garden of Eden, and to Adam's first sin, the judgment of which fell not upon the man, but we read: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." Here we find God subjecting the whole creation to "vanity,"-that is, to unattainment. The book of Ecclesiastes dwells long, with a mournful tone upon this vanity, this unattainment; things "putting forth the tender leaves of hope" only to have the "sudden frost" of disease and death end earthly hopes. "Our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is no abiding," as David said in his great prayer (1 Chron 29:15).

Romans Verse-by-Verse.

Did God "goof up" when He created the present earth (and heaven)? By no means. Satan, through Adam, messed things up pretty bad.

Genesis 3:16-19 (NASB)

To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply Your pain in childbirth, In pain you will bring forth children; Yet your desire will be for your husband, And he will rule over you." Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you

will eat of it All the days of your life. "Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field; By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return."

The earth was from then on cursed. There is some question if God further cursed the earth with the Great Flood.

Genesis 7:11-12 (NASB)

In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened. The rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights.

It is believed by some that there was no rain on the earth prior to the flood. The vegetation grew from the waters that flowed on the surface of the earth. But, one day,

Revelation 21:1-4 (NASB)

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

For we know that the whole creation groans together, and is in pain until now. "The whole creation" denotes so much of all creation as has been cursed because of sin, with the exceptions previously specified; that is, it denotes the earth, and probably its inferior inhabitants. When man sinned, all that he was heir to and lord over was at once deteriorated. It degenerated with him, and much in the same way. Especially does this apply to the lower animals. They live by much labor as does man; they inherit like him feeble and diseased bodies; they sicken with his diseases; groan as he groans; and die prematurely. Such is man to-day, and such the animate ranks below him.

Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Romans.

We groan, animals groan, the earth itself groans (if an earthquake a form of groaning? - Perhaps).

Let us note that the Spirit does not take us out of sympathy with groaning creation, but rather supports us in such sympathy! Being ourselves, as to the body, in a groaning condition, "longing to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven" (2 Cor 5:2) we are able to sympathize with the creatures about us, which is a precious thing! No one should feel as tender as should the child of God toward suffering creation. No one should be as gentle. Not only should this be true about us as concerns unsaved people: as Paul says, "Be gentle, showing all meekness toward all men," but, I say, we should be tender and patient toward animals, for they are in a dying state-until our bodies

are redeemed.

Romans Verse-by-Verse.

For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

With respect to the help Paul writes about, he also wrote about it below.

1 Thessalonians 1:2-3 (NASB)

We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers; constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father,

To be one of Christ's own, you must have faith. We have discussed that. We have also mentioned love. But, here Paul adds that he gives thanks for their "steadfastness of hope" Even though we can not "see" hope" we can tell who really has this hope by noting how "steadfast" a person is in hoping for Christ's soon return. You may say, "I can't tell how steadfast a person is!" Well, apparently Paul could because that was in his prayer. Collectively, Christians have been persevering (being steadfast) for almost 2000 years now. Only God know how much longer we will have to persevere. In summary, this perseverance should be in us in such a way that we "wait eagerly" for it.

"Eager" - apekdéchomai to expect, look for. To wait for, used as a suitable expression for the Christian's hope which includes the two elements of hope and patience¹⁹

Romans 8:26-36 (NASB)

In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written, "FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED. (Psalm 44:22)"

In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should. Do you know how to pray? If you are a Christian, you certainly know how to pray. But do you pray correctly? The disciples didn't.

¹⁹ Complete Word Study Dictionary

Luke 11:1 (NASB)

*It happened that while Jesus was praying in a certain place, after He had finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, **teach us to pray** just as John also taught his disciples."*

Even Paul didn't know exactly how to pray.

2 Corinthians 12:7-9 (NASB)

Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me-to keep me from exalting myself! Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

No one knows what this thorn was - perhaps his mother-in-law? ☺ It is not as important what we pray, it is important **THAT** we pray. I don't know about you, but I find myself in places where I really don't know what to pray for but know I need some answer from God. I take comfort in the fact that I can simply pray, "Lord, you know my problems, please help me with them." Even more important is that fact they we are supposed to -

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NASB)

Pray without ceasing;

God has provided us with help in regards to prayer. *The Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.* Several weeks ago when I fell and injured my ribs, I made groanings that could I could not express with words. "Ouch" was not sufficient!

He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. Before going into detail, here is a short biology lesson. Where is it that we think and long for things? Is it not your mind or brain (i.e. in your head). In Bible times, different emotions were ascribed to various organs of the body.

Philippians 2:1 (KJV)

*If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any **bowels** and mercies,*

That may seem like a strange place to ascribe ones feelings to. If you think of it, sometimes, when we see something really bad, it does strike us in the "bowels." Anyway, "heart" and "mind" in the above passage are synonymous. From a more congenial standpoint, Dr. McGee wrote,

Now, if I go to God in prayer and say, "Look, Lord, I want You to do it this way," that's the way I usually do it, and I may not get the answer the way I prayed. But it's wonderful sometimes to go to the Lord and say, "Lord, I don't know what to ask for. I don't know what to say. But I'm coming to You as Your child. And I want Your will done." And the Spirit of God then will make intercession for us according to the will of God. My, again, how wonderful that is!

Thru The Bible with J. Vernon McGee.

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God for good to those who love God. This is one of the most misinterpreted scriptures in the New Testament Today, many churches have turned to “meism,” putting oneself at the top of the list. I was in a church where the words of a song using this passage came out, “All things work together for my good.” God does not do something for your good at the expense of theirs! *And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God.* Note the plurals. God is not going to do something that will help you at the expense of a hundred other Christians. He is going to do things which “work together” for you and those you know as well.

Romans 8:37-39 (NASB)

But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

CHAPTER NINE

Romans 9:1-5 (NASB)

I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

Romans 9:6-13 (NASB)

But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; nor are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: "THROUGH ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS WILL BE NAMED. (Genesis 21:12)" That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants. For this is the word of promise: "AT THIS TIME I WILL COME, AND SARAH SHALL HAVE A SON (Genesis 18:10)." And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac; for though the twins were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad, so that God's purpose according to His choice would stand, not because of works but because of Him who calls, it was said to her, "THE OLDER WILL SERVE THE YOUNGER (Genesis 25:23)." Just as it is written, "JACOB I LOVED, BUT ESAU I HATED.(Malachi 1:2)"

Romans 9:14-33 (NASB)

What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! For He says to Moses, "I WILL HAVE MERCY ON WHOM I HAVE MERCY, AND I WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON WHOM I HAVE COMPASSION.(Exodus 13:19)" So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "FOR THIS VERY PURPOSE I RAISED YOU UP, TO DEMONSTRATE MY POWER IN YOU, AND THAT MY NAME MIGHT BE PROCLAIMED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE EARTH.(Exodus 9:16)" So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires. You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?" On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why did you make me like this," will it? Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for

honorable use and another for common use? What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles. As He says also in Hosea, "I WILL CALL THOSE WHO WERE NOT MY PEOPLE, 'MY PEOPLE,' AND HER WHO WAS NOT BELOVED, 'BELOVED.'" (Hosea 2:23)" "AND IT SHALL BE THAT IN THE PLACE WHERE IT WAS SAID TO THEM, 'YOU ARE NOT MY PEOPLE,' THERE THEY SHALL BE CALLED SONS OF THE LIVING GOD.(Hosea 1:10)" Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, "THOUGH THE NUMBER OF THE SONS OF ISRAEL BE LIKE THE SAND OF THE SEA, IT IS THE REMNANT THAT WILL BE SAVED; FOR THE LORD WILL EXECUTE HIS WORD ON THE EARTH, THOROUGHLY AND QUICKLY.(Isaiah 10:23)" And just as Isaiah foretold, "UNLESS THE LORD OF SABAOth HAD LEFT TO US A POSTERITY, WE WOULD HAVE BECOME LIKE SODOM, AND WOULD HAVE RESEMBLED GOMORRAH.(Isaiah 1:9)" What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith; but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law. Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone, just as it is written, "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.(Isaiah 28:16)"

CHAPTER TEN

Romans 10:1-21 (NASB)

Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation. For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness. But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: "DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, 'WHO WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN?'"(Deuteronomy 30:12) (that is, to bring Christ down), or 'WHO WILL DESCEND INTO THE ABYSS?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead)." But what does it say? "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART"(Deuteronomy 30:14) -that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.(Isaiah 20:16)" For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.(Joel 2:32)" How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!" (Isaiah 52:7) However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? (Isaiah 53:1)" So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. But I say, surely they have never heard, have they? Indeed they have; "THEIR VOICE HAS GONE OUT INTO ALL THE EARTH, AND THEIR WORDS TO THE ENDS OF THE WORLD (Psalm 19:4)." But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they? First Moses says, "I WILL MAKE YOU JEALOUS BY THAT WHICH IS NOT A NATION, BY A NATION WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING WILL I ANGER YOU.(Isaiah 53:1)" And Isaiah is very bold and says, "I WAS FOUND BY THOSE WHO DID NOT SEEK ME, I BECAME MANIFEST TO THOSE WHO DID NOT ASK FOR ME.(Isaiah 65:1)" But as for Israel He says, "ALL THE DAY LONG I HAVE STRETCHED OUT MY HANDS TO A DISOBEDIENT AND OBSTINATE PEOPLE.(Isaiah 65:2)"

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Romans 11:1-6 (NASB)

I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? "Lord, THEY HAVE KILLED YOUR PROPHETS, THEY HAVE TORN DOWN YOUR ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE.(I Kings 19:10)" But what is the divine response to him? "I HAVE KEPT for Myself SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL.(I Kings 19:18)" In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God's gracious choice. But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace.

Romans 11:7-10 (NASB)

What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened; just as it is written, "GOD GAVE THEM A SPIRIT OF STUPOR, EYES TO SEE NOT AND EARS TO HEAR NOT, DOWN TO THIS VERY DAY.(Isaiah 29:10)" And David says, "LET THEIR TABLE BECOME A SNARE AND A TRAP, AND A STUMBLING BLOCK AND A RETRIBUTION TO THEM. "LET THEIR EYES BE DARKENED TO SEE NOT, AND BEND THEIR BACKS FOREVER.(Psalm 69:23)"

Romans 11:11-16 (NASB)

I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous. Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be! But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them. For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? If the first piece of dough is holy, the lump is also; and if the root is holy, the branches are too.

Romans 11:17-32 (NASB)

*But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you. You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear; for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either. Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree? For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery-so that you will not be wise in your own estimation-that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, **"THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB."** "THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.(Isaiah 59:20)" From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience, so these also now have been disobedient, that because of the mercy shown to you they also may now be shown mercy. For God has shut up all in disobedience so that He may show mercy to all.*

Romans 11:33-36 (NASB)

*Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! **For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR?(Isaiah 40:13) Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN?(Job 35:7)** For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.*

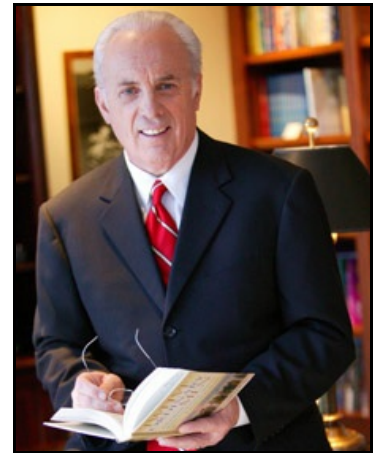
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BELOW IS A LIST OF THE PRIMARY REFERENCES IN THIS STUDY

MacArthur New Testament Commentary

This New Testament Commentary Series from noted Bible scholar John F. MacArthur, Jr., takes readers on a journey through biblical texts to discover what lies beneath the surface, focusing on meaning and context, and then reflecting on the explored passage or concept. MacArthur outlines in the preface the purpose of this commentary: "Some commentaries are primarily linguistic, others are mostly theological, and some are mainly homiletical. This one is basically explanatory, or expository. It is not linguistically technical, but deals with linguistics when that seems helpful to proper interpretation. It is not theologically expansive, but focuses on the major doctrines in each test and on how they relate to the whole of Scripture. It is not primarily homiletical, although each unit of thought is generally treated as one chapter, with a clear outline and logical flow of thought. Most truths are illustrated and applied with other Scripture. After establishing the context of a passage, I have tried to follow closely the writer's development and reasoning."

"My prayer is that each reader will fully understand what the Holy Spirit is saying through this part of His Word, so that His revelation may lodge in the minds of believers and bring greater obedience and faithfulness - to the glory of our great God." -- John MacArthur, Jr.



John MacArthur, Jr.'s Bio

John MacArthur, Jr. pastors Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, California, and serves as President of the Master's College and Seminary. A well-known Bible expositor and conference speaker, he has written numerous books. He is also the Bible teacher on "Grace to You", an international radio broadcast. He and his wife Patricia live in Southern California and have 4 grown children and eleven grandchildren.

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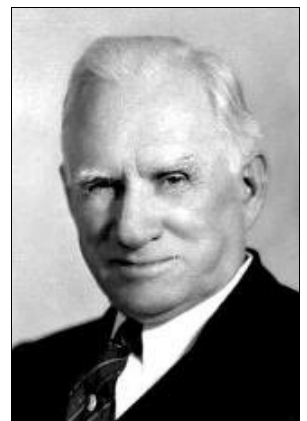
Highlights of This Volume on Romans

“Fully conversant with contemporary literature on Romans and with the thought of the apostle, Dr. Mounce has given us his mature reflection on Paul's theological masterwork. It is a commentary that will both teach and edify even when, here or there, the reader may opt for a different interpretation. I intend to use it and gladly commend it to others.”

Robert H. Mounce (Ph.D. Aberdeen) is president emeritus of Whitworth College, Spokane, Washington. He was formerly academic dean and Western Kentucky University and professor of New Testament there and at Bethel College, St. Paul, Minnesota. He has authored commentaries on Revelation and Matthew as well as numerous other books and articles in the field of New Testament studies

Romans Verse-by-Verse

Romans, Verse by Verse, is one of the best known commentaries on the Book of Romans. It was originally written in 1938, and is so clear on grace and our identification with Jesus Christ.



About the Author

William Reed Newell, (1868-1956) graduated from Wooster College in Ohio in 1891. After completing additional studies at Princeton Seminary and Oberlin Seminary, he was then called to pastor the Bethesda Congregational Church in Chicago, IL. In 1895, D.L. Moody asked him to become the Assistant Superintendent of Moody Bible Institute, which at that time was then under the direction of R.A. Torrey. Newell's gift for Bible teaching and exposition brought large crowds wherever he went and his Bible classes led to the publication of commentaries on Romans, Hebrews and Revelation. He also wrote the gospel hymn, "At Calvary."

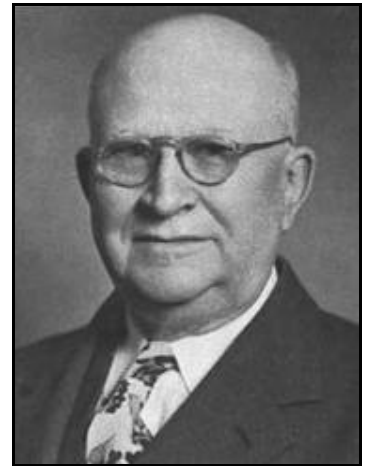
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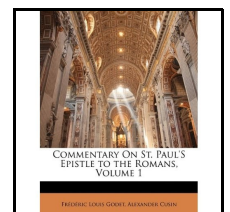
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About the Author

H. A. Ironside was an internationally acclaimed Bible teacher and preacher, as well as the author of more than 80 books and pamphlets. His writings include addresses or commentaries on the entire New Testament, all of the Old Testament prophetic books, and a great many volumes on other biblical topics. For 18 of his 50 years of ministry, Dr. Ironside was pastor of the famous Moody Memorial Church in Chicago, Illinois. Known by many as "the Archbishop of Fundamentalism."

Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans (Volumes 1 & 2)
by

F. Godet, D.D.

Translated from the French by Rev. A. Cusin, M.A.

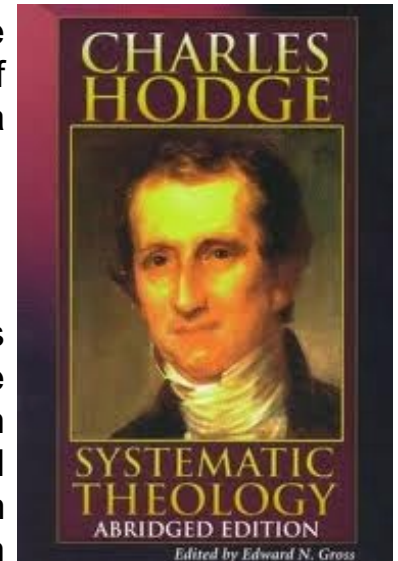


CHARLES HODGE

Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans by Charles Hodge is one of the best known commentaries on the book of Romans. It was originally written in 1835, and published as a three-volume set. It is still as relevant today as it was then.

About the Author

Charles Hodge, an American Presbyterian theologian, was ordained in 1821 and taught at Princeton for almost his whole life. In 1825 he founded the Biblical Repository and Princeton Review, and for forty years was its editor and the principal contributor to its pages. He received the degree of D.D. from Rutgers College in 1834, and that of LL.D. from Washington College, Pennsylvania, in 1864. In 1840 Dr. Hodge was transferred to the chair of didactic theology, retaining still, however, the department of New Testament exegesis, the duties of which he continued to discharge until his death. His most important works are his commentaries on Romans (1835), Ephesians (1856), 1 Corinthians (1857), 2 Corinthians (1859), as well as Constitutional History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (2 vols., 1839-40), Systematic Theology (3 vols., 1871-3), and What is Darwinism? (1874). He was an outstanding defender of Calvinism, and has a claim to be considered one of the best theologians and Bible commentators that America has produced.



COMMENTARY ON PAUL'S LETTER TO ROMANS

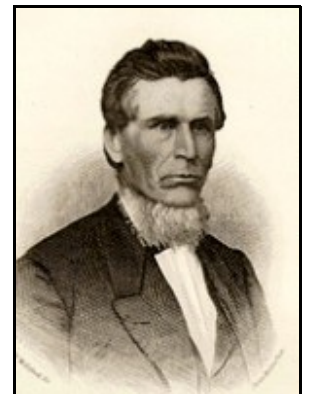
By

Moses E. Lard

1875

Comment by the author:

In studying the Letter in question, I had been constantly impressed with the conviction that no commentary on it, with which I was acquainted, was sufficiently free from the influence of particular scholastic tenets to meet the wants of those who desire to know the simple truth, as it is in Christ, without having it formulated in the schools, or modified by special theories of religion. I greatly felt the need of a work, the sole aim of which should be, to determine precisely what Paul means, regardless of what that meaning favors or disfavors. Such a work I could not command. I soon discovered that those who have written on the Letter are, for the greater part, either intensely Calvinistic, on the one hand, or intensely anti-Calvinistic, on the other. Paul wrote to favor neither of these parties; hence, neither of these parties, as such, can interpret him.



Again: The extreme doctrine of justification by faith only, has so completely engrossed the mind of commentators, since the sixteenth century, that it seems never to have occurred to them, as even a possible fact, that Paul may not have been writing in their exclusive interest. They have regarded him as certainly of their order, and, as a consequence, have written him up into a partisan, only more partisan than themselves. The result has been that in many places their works are a complete perversion of the truth, and not an exhibition of it. From these writers I could derive no benefit, except where their cherished doctrine was out of sight.

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