

A Note to the Reader. This Annotated Outline of Romans is a work in progress. The text of NASB has been incorporated only in chapter 1 and also from chapters 9-16. Search for \*\* to go directly to chapter 9.

A few notes exist throughout the document. Extensive annotation presently covers Chapter 12-16. Search for \*\*\* to move directly to Romans chapter 12.

James T. Bartsch, August 9, 2011

# ROMANS

*An Expanded Analysis based on the New American Standard Version*

## "GOD'S GOOD NEWS ABOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS"

“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.’”  
Romans 1:16-17

EXPANDED ANALYSIS OF ROMANS  
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# ROMANS

## "GOD'S GOOD NEWS ABOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS"

### A1 INTRODUCTION 1:1-17

#### B 1 Paul's Salutation 1:1-7

##### C 1 The writer -- Paul 1:1-5

D1 Slave of Messiah Jesus: {1} Paul, a bond-servant <sup>1</sup> of Christ Jesus, 1:1a

D2 Apostle: called *as* an apostle, <sup>2</sup> 1:1b

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<sup>1</sup> 1:1 - bond-servant: I am uncertain as to why the NASB uses "bond-servant" to translate the word *doulos* (1401). It simply means "slave." Paul asserted he was a slave of the Messiah, Jesus.

A note to the reader: I typically use Strong's numbers when discussing a Greek word. I invite the reader to go to StudyLight.org and plug in Strong's numbers to the Lexicons provided online. (Obviously, use the Greek lexicon for NT words.) This enables the reader to detect every occurrence of every (major) word in either the NASB text or the KJV text. The following URL links to the choice of lexicons: <http://www.studylight.org/lex/>

<sup>2</sup> 1:1 - called as an apostle: Paul identified himself as one who was called (*kletos*, 2822) (by Jesus Christ to serve Him as) apostle (*apostolos*, 652). The noun apostle means a "sent one," and it comes from the verb *apostello* (649) – "I send."

One of the qualifications of an apostle was that he must have personally seen Jesus (1 Cor. 9:1). Paul did see Jesus personally en route to Damascus to apprehend Christians there, and in the process he had been blinded by the brilliance of Jesus' glory (Acts 9:1-9).

Another qualification was that an apostle must have been personally selected by Jesus and "sent forth" to communicate the good news about the Messiah to others. Jesus personally stopped Paul on the road to Damascus and instructed him to go into the city and await instructions. Jesus then gave Paul a vision that a man named Ananias would come and lay hands on him to restore his sight. Jesus told Ananias that Paul was "a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel" (Acts 9:10-16).

A third qualification is that an apostle must have been given by the Holy Spirit power to work miracles to authenticate himself and his message as having been authorized by the Christ Himself. Paul stated that he had manifested "the signs of a true apostle" (2 Cor. 12:12). Indeed, he did (Acts 13:9-12; 14:8-10; 16:16-18; 19:11-12; 20:7-12; 28:1-9).

- D3 Separated to the gospel: set apart<sup>3</sup> for the gospel of God,<sup>4</sup> (1:1c) 1:1c-6
- E1 Promised by God: {2} which He promised beforehand 1:2
- G1 through His prophets<sup>5</sup>
- G2 in the holy Scriptures,<sup>6</sup> 1:2
- E2 About God's Son: {3} concerning His Son,<sup>7</sup> (1:3a) 1:3-5
- G1 Descendant of David: who was born of a descendant

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<sup>3</sup> 1:1 - set apart: translates *aphoridzo* (873), which means, generally, to mark off by boundaries. It is used (1) in a neutral context in Matt. 23:52 (Jesus will **separate** the nations as a shepherd **separates** the sheep from the goats);

(2) in a negative sense in Matt. 13:49 (at the end of the age the angels will **sort out** [JTB] the wicked from the righteous); Luke 6:22 (men will “hate you, **ostracize** you, and insult you, and scorn your name as evil”); and in Gal. 2:12 (Paul chided Peter, who had first eaten with the Gentiles, but when men from James came, he hypocritically reversed his acceptable behavior and “began to withdraw and **hold himself aloof**, fearing the party of the circumcision.”);

(3) in a good sense in Acts 13:2 (“the Holy Spirit said, ‘**Set apart** for Me Barnabas and Saul”); in Acts 19:9 (when some in the synagogue were becoming hardened, Paul “withdrew from them and **took away** the disciples”); in Rom. 1:1 Paul was “**set apart** for the gospel of God”); in 2 Cor. 6:17 (“‘Come out from their midst and **be separate**,’ says the Lord.”); and in Gal. 1:15 (Paul states that God had “**set me apart** even from my mother’s womb”).

<sup>4</sup> 1:1 - the gospel of God: “Gospel” translates *euaggelion* (2098), strictly, “good news.” But “the Good News of God” is that fallen men, under condemnation because of sin, can be justified (declared righteous) – not by works – but by faith in Jesus the Messiah, who died and rose again to pay the death penalty for the sins of all. Not only can man be declared righteous by faith in Jesus, but he can anticipate a resurrection and a future life in a glorious, redeemed creation freed from the curse of death and decay, and an existence in which there is perfect harmony between Gentile peoples and Jewish people, the latter finally fulfilling their promised destiny. That is the gospel of God, summarizing Romans 1-11. Paul uses *euaggelion* (good news, 2098) nine times in Romans: 1:1 (the *euaggelion* of God); 1:9 (the *euaggelion* of His Son); 1:16 (Paul is not ashamed of the *euaggelion*, for it is God’s power for [the purpose of] salvation to everyone believing); 2:16 (a day will come when God judges the secrets of men according to the *euaggelion* of Paul through Christ Jesus); 10:16 (But not all obeyed the *euaggelion*. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who believed our report?”); 11:28 (As regards the *euaggelion*, they [the Jewish people] are enemies for your sake, but as regards the election, they are beloved on account of the fathers); 15:16 (that I [Paul] should be a public servant of Christ Jesus for [the benefit of] the nations, serving as a priest the *euaggelion* of God...); 15:19 (the *euaggelion* of the Christ); and 16:25 (Now to the one who is able to establish you according to the *euaggelion* of me [Paul] and the proclamation concerning Jesus Christ, according to the unveiling of a mystery kept hidden from times eternal). [All these are the author’s translations.]

<sup>5</sup> 1:2 - prophets: Individuals who receive messages directly from God and pass them on to other people. Paul was thinking here of the OT prophets, many of whom wrote down their messages. Some of these writings became part of the OT Scriptures. For more information on prophets, see <http://www.wordexplain.com/glossaryp.html#Prophet>.

<sup>6</sup> 1:2 - holy Scriptures: Paul will document, in the course of this letter, OT Scriptures that authenticate Jesus as the Messiah.

<sup>7</sup> 1:3 - concerning His Son: Jesus is the Son of God on three accounts. (1) He is the Son of God by virtue of His Divine essence. He and His Father are one – they share the same essence (John 10:30; 14:7; 17:11, 21-22; 1 John 2:23). (2) On a human level Jesus is the Son of God by virtue of his being the Messiah, ultimate descendant of David (see the ensuing note in 1:3 on “born of a descendant of David”). (3) Jesus was declared to be the Son of God with power by virtue of God’s having raised Him from the dead (Rom. 1:4).

of David <sup>8</sup> according to the flesh, 1:3b

G2 Declared God's Son by resurrection 1:4

H 1 The declaration: {4} who was declared the Son of God with power by the <sup>9</sup> resurrection from the dead,

H 2 The source of power to accomplish the resurrection: according to the Spirit of holiness,

H 3 The authority of Jesus: Jesus Christ <sup>10</sup> our Lord, 1:4

G3 Dispenser of Apostleship to Paul 1:5

H 1 The fact of his apostleship: {5} through whom we have received grace and apostleship <sup>11</sup>

H 2 The purpose of his apostleship: to bring about

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<sup>8</sup> 1:3 - born of a descendant of David: The royal ancestry of Jesus provides him with the genealogical requirement to be the Jewish Messiah (Christ), or Anointed One. His Messiahship is based on the promise Yahweh made with David (2 Sam. 7:1-16). Yahweh would enter into a "Father / Son" relationship with David's descendants (2 Sam. 7:14). David's **house** (dynasty) and **kingdom** would endure before Yahweh forever, and David's **throne** would be established forever (2 Sam. 7:16, emphasis mine). In Psalm 89, Ethan the Ezrahite termed this agreement (Ps. 89:3-4, 19-29, 34-37) Yahweh made with David a covenant (Ps. 89:3, 28, 34, 39) and an oath (Ps. 89:35). The angel Gabriel later announced to Mary, herself a descendant of David (Rom. 1:3) that she was to bear a son whose name she was to call Jesus ("Yahweh is Salvation") (Luke 1:26-31). Her son would be great, and would be called the Son of the Most High (cf. 2 Sam. 7:14; Matt. 27:43; Mark 1:1; Rom. 12:3-4); "and the Lord God will give Him the **throne** of His father David; and He will reign over the **house** of Jacob forever, and His **kingdom** will have no end" (Luke 1:32-33, emphasis mine). The point is that because Jesus, on His human side, is the ultimate descendant of David, God entered into a Father/Son relationship with Him just as He had promised David.

<sup>9</sup> 1:4 - by the: NASB note: *Or as a result of*

<sup>10</sup> 1:4 - Jesus Christ: Jesus, whose name means "Yahweh is Salvation," is designated Christ ("Anointed One" - Hebrew, Messiah) five times in the first eight verses (1:1, 4, 6, 7, 8). *Christos* (5547) is, of course the Greek translation of the Hebrew *mashiach* (4899). First-century Jewish people would have understood *christos* to refer to the ultimate Anointed One, the Messiah. They would understand the term to refer primarily to the Ultimate Anointed King. As it turns out, Jesus was anointed by God at His baptism to be Prophet, Priest, and ultimately, King. So Jesus, as the Jewish Messiah, is first and foremost King of Israel. Paul, however, is writing to a largely Gentile Christian audience in Rome, and he uses the term, "our Lord" (*kurios*, 2962), meaning "master." So Paul is claiming that the Jewish Messiah, Jesus, is King not only of Israel, but King of the nations of the earth, the Gentiles. This is confirmed in the next verse, where Paul spoke of his objective of bringing about "the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles" (1:5, see the similar phrase in 16:26).

<sup>11</sup> 1:5 - apostleship: The office of being an apostle, one sent by Jesus Christ on a preaching / healing mission. *apostole* (651) is used only four times in the NT: Acts 1:25; Rom. 1:5; 1 Cor. 9:2; Gal. 2:8. 1 Cor. 9:2 links the two words, apostle (*apostolos*, 649) and apostleship (*apostole*, 651). See the discussion of "called as an apostle" in 1:1.

the obedience of faith<sup>12</sup> among all the  
Gentiles<sup>13</sup> for His name's sake, 1:5

## C 2 The addressees 1:6-7

- D1 Those among the nations called of Jesus, Messiah: {6} among whom you also are the called<sup>14</sup> of Jesus Christ; 1:6
- D2 Beloved of God: {7} to all who are beloved of God<sup>15</sup> 1:7a

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<sup>12</sup> 1:5 - obedience of faith: Sometimes we treat the Gospel invitation as an option which we can choose to accept or reject with impunity. Such is not the case. To reject Jesus Christ, who is the only possible means of salvation (see Rom. 1:16; Acts 4:12) is a virtual slap in the face of God. It is an act of arrogance and defiance that can only earn one the ongoing wrath of God (John 3:36; Rom. 1:18). To place one's faith in Jesus is to obey God. Not to trust in Jesus is to spurn Him and to disobey God. One cannot reject Jesus without deliberately disobeying God. As John put it, "He who believes in Him [Jesus] is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18). The phrase "obedience of faith" (*hupokoēn pisteos* (5218, 4102) is used only twice in the NT – in Rom. 1:5 and 16:26.

<sup>13</sup> 1:5 - Gentiles: Almost the entire Bible was written from a Jewish point of view. From a Jewish point of view there is one chosen nation, Israel. Non-Jewish peoples are spoken of as "the nations" (*ethnos*, 1484), frequently, as here, translated "Gentiles." The English reader will notice that our English word "ethnic," as in "ethnic foods," stems from the Greek word *ethnos*. Even though Israel is God's chosen nation, God has always determined to bless the nations of the world through the seed of Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3). In Psalm 87, the sons of Korah praise Yahweh for granting "Born in Zion, His Favorite City" status to multitudes of Gentiles!

<sup>14</sup> 1:6 - called of Jesus Christ: Just as Paul was a called one (*kletos*, 2822) to be an apostle (1:1), so these Roman believers were also called ones (*kletos*, 2822) of Jesus Christ (the genitive case of Jesus Christ suggests they belong to Him). Paul was called by Jesus to be an apostle (1:1), but this text (1:6) does not explicitly state that Christ was the one who issued the invitation to certain Romans so that they are "called ones (*kletos*, 2822) [to be] saints" (1:7), resulting in their salvation. Rather, as John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, pp. 14-15 suggests, it is God the Father who calls to salvation (Rom. 8:30 (*kaleo*, 2564); 9:24 (*kaleo*, 2564); 11:29 (calling, *klesis*, 2821); 1 Cor. 1:9 (*kaleo*, 2564); Gal. 1:6, 15 (both *kaleo*, 2564); 2 Thess. 2:14 (*kaleo*, 2564); 2 Tim. 1:9 (*kaleo*, 2564)).

<sup>15</sup> 1:7 - beloved of God: Beloved (*agapetos*, 27) is the adjective derived from the verb *agapao* (25). Both refer to the noblest form of love, which is an others-oriented, self-sacrificial type of love, well-illustrated in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that He gave," etc. The adjective beloved (*agapetos*, 27) occurs 61 times in the NT. With only one exception [see (6) below], *agapetos* refers either to Jesus as God's beloved or to believers in Christ as being beloved. When *agapetos* refers to Christians, they are either beloved of God (as in Rom. 1:7) or, more frequently, they are beloved by other Christians. There follows a categorization of *agapetos*:

- (1) The majority of uses in Acts and the epistles refer directly to Christians, either singly, or corporately.
- (2) Two instances refer indirectly to Christians in a metaphorical sense – 1 Cor. 4:14, where Paul speaks of the Corinthians as his beloved children; and Eph. 5:1, where Paul exhorts his readers to "be imitators of God, as beloved children."
- (3) Elsewhere, in the Gospels, God refers to Jesus as His beloved Son: Matt. 3:17; 17:5; Mark 1:11; 9:7; Luke 3:22. In one reference in 2 Pet. 1:17, God does the same.
- (4) God refers to Jesus as His beloved, chosen servant: Matt. 12:18.
- (5) Twice in parables, God metaphorically speaks of Jesus as His beloved son. In both cases, a man plants a vineyard, rents it out to vine-growers, then sends his beloved son to collect rent. In both instances the son is killed by the vine-growers: Mark 12:6; Luke 20:13. The vineyard owner represents God and the beloved son represents Jesus.
- (6) In only one instance, Romans 11:28, does *agapetos* refer to a group of people who are substantially unbelievers. The Jewish people are enemies for the Roman believers' sake from the standpoint of the gospel, but from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers.

In conclusion, Christians can rest assured that they are special objects of God's sacrificial love and that they are special objects of other believers' sacrificial love. God loves (*agapao*, 25) every person in the world in a sacrificial sense (John 3:16), but, with only one exception (Rom. 11:28), only the righteous are God's beloved ones (*agapetos*, 27).

D3 In Rome: in Rome,

D4 Called holy: called *as* saints: <sup>16</sup>

**C 3 Gracious Greeting:** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **1:7b**

## **B 2 Paul's Desired Association with the Roman Christians 1:8-15**

### **C 1 Paul's prayers regarding them 1:8-10**

D1 His thanks to God for their world-renowned faith 1:8

E1 Paul's thanks: {8} First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all,

E2 The Romans' faith: because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.

D2 His ceaseless prayers for them 1:9

E1 God's witness; {9} For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the *preaching of the* gospel of His Son, is my witness *as to*

E2 Paul's prayers: how unceasingly I make mention of you,

D3 His constant request to visit them 1:10

E1 Paul's continual requests: {10} always in my prayers making request, if perhaps now at last

E2 The contingency of God's will: by the will of God

E3 Paul's contemplated visit: I may succeed in coming to you.<sup>17</sup>

### **C 2 Paul's motivation to visit them 1:11-15**

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<sup>16</sup> 1:7 - called as saints: In general terms, all who are "beloved of God" (1:6) are also "called of Jesus Christ" (1:6) and "called *as* saints" (1:7). The word *called* is the adjective *kletos* (2822), previously used by Paul in reference to his having been called (*kletos*, 2822) as an apostle (see the discussion in the note at 1:1) and those who are called of Jesus Christ (1:6) (see the discussion in 1:6). Here (1:7), believers in Rome, who are by definition "beloved of God," (1:6) and are, by definition also "called of Jesus Christ" (1:6), are also, by definition, "called (*kletos*, 2822) as saints." There is a general call of God to salvation – "many are called" (Matt. 22:14), and there is a specific call to salvation – "few are chosen" (Matt. 22:14). Here (Rom. 1:7) the reference is to a specific call to sainthood. Those who are specifically called are "called (*kletos*, 2822) according to [His] purpose" (Rom. 8:28). The Roman Catholic understanding of sainthood is that only special people can be "canonized" as saints. But in the NT, every believer in Jesus is a saint. The word saints (*hagios*, 40) identifies those who are "set apart" from sin to God. Paul often wrote to the saints (believers) of a particular city or region (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; Php. 1:1; Col. 1:2).

<sup>17</sup> 1:10 - I may succeed in coming to you: Paul had long wanted to visit the church in Rome. But because of his priority – that of proclaiming Christ where His name had not before been proclaimed, he had been unable to visit them. He discussed this whole matter in some detail in Romans 1:10-15 and 15:22-29.

- D1 For impartation of spiritual gift [i.e. exercise of his gifts for their benefit]
- E1 Paul's longing: {11} For I long to see you
- E2 Paul's purpose: so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you,<sup>18</sup>
- E3 The contemplated result: that you may be established; 1:11
- D2 For mutual encouragement of one another's faith 1:12
- E1 Anticipation of encouragement: {12} that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you,
- E2 Ground of encouragement: each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.
- D3 His desire to have fruit among Romans as well as other Gentiles 1:13
- E1 His many plans: {13} I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that often I have planned to come to you
- E2 His thwarted accomplishment: (and have been prevented so far)
- E3 His desire for a fruitful ministry among them
- G1 so that I may obtain some fruit among you also,
- G2 even as among the rest of the Gentiles.
- D4 His sense of debt to all peoples: {14} I am under obligation<sup>19</sup> 1:14
- E1 Of any language:<sup>20</sup> both to Greeks and to barbarians,<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> 1:11 - that I may impart some spiritual gift to you: Paul does not contemplate bestowing upon them some special ability to serve God. It is the Holy Spirit who does that (1 Cor. 12:4-11). Rather, Paul intended, by his presence, to be able to give of himself in the spiritual realm to bless and build them up in the Lord so that they might be even more firmly established in their faith (see Rom. 1:12). At the same time he expects to be encouraged by their faith (1:12).

<sup>19</sup> 1:14 - under obligation: NASB note: A literal translation: *debtor*

<sup>20</sup> 1:14 subtitles - language, culture: Credit to James A. Stifler, *The Epistle to the Romans*, p. 27.

<sup>21</sup> 1:14 - to Greeks and to barbarians: The term "Greeks" (*Hellen*, 1672) refers, in this context, to people of Greek language and culture (*Friberg Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*). These people would not necessarily have been of a Greek ethnic background. In this context, "Greeks" refers to people who are civilized and educated, as opposed to those who are barbarians (*Louw-Nida Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*). "Barbarians" translates *barbaros* (915), an onomatopoeic term referring to gibberish, or unintelligible speech. Here it means non-Greek speaking people, and hence, in this context, people who were uneducated and, to a degree,

E2 Of any culture: both to the wise and to the foolish.<sup>22</sup>

D5 His eagerness to proclaim the Gospel to the Romans: {15} So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome. 1:15

### **B 3 Paul's Unashamedness of the Gospel 1:16-17**

#### **C 1 Because the Gospel constitutes God's power unto salvation to everyone believing 1:16**

D1 His unashamedness in respect to the good news: {16} For I am not ashamed of the gospel,

D2 The power of the good news: for it is the power of God

D3 The purpose of the good news: for salvation to everyone

D4 The requirement for accessing the good news: who believes,

D5 The priority of the good news: to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

#### **C 2 Because in the gospel is constantly unveiled a righteousness from God based wholly on faith 1:17**

D1 That which is unveiled in the good news: {17} For in it *the* righteousness of God is revealed

D2 The fundamental importance of faith in appropriating the good news: from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS *man* SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

### **A2 CONDEMNATION: The Unveiling of God's Wrath against Man's Unrighteousness 1:18 - 3:20**

#### **B 1 The Condemnation of Gentiles 1:18-32**

##### **C 1 The constant unveiling of God's wrath 1:18**

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uncivilized, because they did not partake of Greek culture. According to Louw-Nida, it would be appropriate to term this contrast "the civilized and the uncivilized."

<sup>22</sup> 1:14 - to the wise and to the foolish: Paul was not referring here in a literal sense to people who were filled with wisdom and made wise choices as opposed to people who were fools and made foolish choices. Rather, "the wise" (*sophos*, 4680) corresponds to "Greeks," people who participated in the Greek culture and could speak Greek. Thus, they were sophisticated, comparable to those who, in American culture, are esteemed because they have a degree from an "Ivy League" university, such as Harvard or Yale. The foolish (*anoetos*, 453), here refers to the unsophisticated – people without the proper culture and understanding. In America, people of a liberal/progressive/socialist persuasion on the east and west coasts of our country view the conservatives of the midwest as living in "fly-over" country. To them, we are uneducated and unsophisticated, incapable of thinking for ourselves. John MacArthur, in his commentary on Romans aptly summarized Romans 1:14, "Paul was therefore expressing his responsibility to the educated and the uneducated, the sophisticated and the simple, the privileged and the underprivileged."

- D1 The fact of the constant unveiling of God's wrath: {18} For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven
- D2 The target of God's wrath – against men's ungodliness and unrighteousness: against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men 1:18a
- D3 The grim description of man's acts – his ongoing suppression of the truth by unrighteousness: who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 1:18b

## C 2 The process of men's suppression of the truth about God 1:19-23

- D1 Evidence of God is clearly revealed among men 1:19-20
  - E1 God showed it to men 1:19
    - G1 The fact – knowledge about God is self-evident among men: {19} because that which is known about God is evident within them;
    - G2 The reason – God has deliberately revealed to men evidence about Himself: for God made it evident to them.
  - E2 The evidence lies in the physical universe: {20} For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, 1:20
    - G1 Eternal power: His eternal power
    - G2 Eternal "Godness" (Divine nature): and divine nature,
    - G3 The transparency of the evidence
      - H 1 have been clearly seen,
      - H 2 being understood through what has been made,<sup>23</sup>
    - G4 The universal culpability: so that they are without excuse.

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<sup>23</sup> 1:20 - being understood through what has been made: We call this information about God, which is clearly seen in nature, "natural revelation." God has left decisive, incontrovertible clues about Himself in nature. The massive size of the universe, the overwhelming power of the forces of nature, the privileged position of the earth in its own galaxy and in relation to its own sun, the ideal habitat for man and animals and vegetation upon earth, the intricacies of cells – all of these facts and many more trumpet the power and wisdom of God. God has left visible footprints in the sky and on the earth. David, in Psalm 19:1-4, affirmed,

<sup>1</sup>The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. <sup>2</sup>Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. <sup>3</sup>There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard. <sup>4</sup>Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their utterances to the end of the world. In them He has placed a tent for the sun ....

- D2 Evidence of God is distorted by men 1:21-23
  - E1 Men's original knowledge of God: {21} For even though they knew God, 1:21a
  - E2 Men's refusal to give God proper credit 1:21b
    - G1 Failure to glorify: they did not honor <sup>24</sup> Him as God
    - G2 Ingratitude: or give thanks, 1:21b
  - E3 Men's perception of God became worthless and darkened 1:21c
    - G1 Men's worthless interpretations: but they became futile in their speculations,
    - G2 Men's darkened, misunderstanding heart: and their foolish heart was darkened. 1:21c
  - E4 Men became oblivious of their foolishness 1:22
    - G1 {22} Professing to be wise,
    - G2 they became fools,
  - E5 Men converted the glory of eternal God into a model of decadent matter 1:23
    - G1 {23} and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God
    - G2 for an image <sup>25</sup> in the form of
      - H 1 corruptible man
      - H 2 and of birds
      - H 3 and four-footed animals
      - H 4 and crawling creatures.<sup>26</sup>

### C 3 God's judgmental giving over of men to evil 1:24-32

- D1 Judgment #1: God gave them over to uncleanness dishonoring their

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<sup>24</sup> 1:21 - honor: NASB note: A literal translation: *glorify*

<sup>25</sup> 1:23 - image: With regard to interpretation, Paul is referring to idols; by way of application, in the modern era, this also refers to evolution, the invention of secular humanism.

<sup>26</sup> 1:23 - crawling creatures: NASB note: Or *reptiles*

bodies 1:24-25

- E1 The description of sexual impurity 1:24 (cf. 1 Cor. 6:18)
  - G1 The judgmental consignment of God: {24} Therefore God gave them over
  - G2 The area of judgment
    - H 1 in the lusts of their hearts
    - H 2 to impurity,
  - G3 The result of judgment: so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.
- E2 The reason for the giving over to sexual impurity 1:25
  - G1 They changed the truth of God into a lie: {25} For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie,
  - G2 They worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator:
    - H 1 and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator,
    - H 2 who is blessed forever. Amen.
- D2 Judgment #2: God gave them over to dishonorable passions: {26} For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; (1:26a) 1:26-27
  - E1 Lesbianism among females 1:26b
    - G1 Female abandonment of the natural: for their women exchanged the natural function
    - G2 Female adoption of the unnatural: for that which is unnatural,
  - E2 Homosexuality among males: {27} and in the same way also the men 1:27a
    - G1 Their abandonment: abandoned the natural function of the woman
    - G2 Their mutual inflammation: and burned in their desire toward one another,
    - G3 Their indecent acts: men with men committing indecent acts

- E3 The tragic result: and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.<sup>27</sup> 1:27b
- D3 God gave them over to a disqualified mind 1:28-32
  - E1 The reason for the giving over: They didn't see fit to have God in their knowledge: 1:28a
    - G1 The reason – failure to approve of God: {28} And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer,
    - G2 The judgment – a disapproved mind: God gave them over to a depraved mind,
  - E2 The result of the giving over 1:28b-32
    - G1 The fact of impropriety – the constant doing of that which is improper: to do those things which are not proper, 1:28b
    - G2 The description of impropriety 1:29-31
      - H 1 {29} being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; *they are* gossips,
      - H 2 {30} slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents,
      - H 3 {31} without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful;
    - G3 The deliberateness of impropriety 1:32
      - H 1 Their participation despite the knowledge of the death penalty
        - J 1 Their full knowledge of God's ordinance: {32} and although they know<sup>28</sup> the ordinance of God,

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<sup>27</sup> 1:27 - the due penalty of their error: The due penalty of their error is the destruction of one's own identity. One completely distorts who he is – first of all, a human being created in the image and likeness of God; second, the distortion of one's own sexuality; third the destruction of the most basic unit of society (the family); and fourth, the destruction of the very fiber of society itself.

<sup>28</sup> 1:32 - know: The normal verb "to know" is *ginosko* (1097). The verb here is *epiginosko* (1921), which means, strictly, "to know fully," although it is rarely translated that way. (See 1 Cor. 13:12 for an exception.) In 1:32 *epiginosko* (1921) appears as an aorist participle, normally translated, "having fully known." Murray, however, argues cogently that these degenerate people presently possessed awareness of God's ordinance (pp. 51-52). Be that as it may, the ultimate culpability is damning. People know God's standard and the Divine consequence for breaking

J 2 The damning content of God's ordinance: that those who practice such things are worthy of death,

H 2 Their encouraging of others

J 1 Their ongoing practice of evil: they not only do the same,

J 2 Their ongoing approval of others who practice evil: but also give hearty approval<sup>29</sup> to those who practice them.

## **B 2 The Condemnation of Moralists 2:1-16**

### **C 1 The inexcusability of hypocritical moralists 2:1**

### **C 2 The inevitability of God' judgment on hypocritical moralists 2:2-5**

D1 God judges all offenders according to truth 2:2

D2 The hypocritical moralist cannot escape God's judgment 2:3-5

E1 He brazenly thinks he can judge others for that which he himself does and yet escape God's judgment 2:3

E2 He ignorantly despises God's goodness 2:4

E3 He stores up for himself wrath in the coming day 2:5

G1 Of wrath

G2 Of the unveiling of the righteous judgment of God

### **C 3 The basis of God's judgment on all peoples--their works 2:6-10**

D1 To each person God will pay back 2:6a

D2 According to his works 2:6b-10

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it, but they violate his standard anyway, while at the same time congratulating others for doing the same!

<sup>29</sup> 1:32 - hearty approval: John Murray (pp. 52-53) delivers a damning indictment against humanity:

However severe has been the apostle's delineation of the depravity of men, he has reserved for the end the characterization which is the most damning of all. It is that of the consensus of men in the pursuit of iniquity. The most damning condition is not the practice of iniquity, however much that may evidence our abandonment of God and abandonment to sin; it is that together with the practice there is also the support and encouragement of others in the practice of the same. To put it bluntly, we are not only bent on damning ourselves but we congratulate others in doing of those things that we know have their issue in damnation. We hate others as we hate ourselves and render therefore to them the approval of what we know merits damnation. Iniquity is most aggravated when it meets with no inhibition from the disapproval of others and when there is collective, undissenting approbation.

- E1 To those seeking glory--honor and non-decay 2:7
  - G1 By persistence in good work 2:7a
  - G2 God will pay back eternal life 2:7b
- E2 To those characterized by strife and disobedience God will pay back 2:8
  - G1 Wrath
  - G2 Anger
- E3 To each one working evil (Jew and Greek) 2:9
  - G1 Trouble
  - G2 Distress
- E4 To each one working good (Jew and Greek) 2:10
  - G1 Glory
  - G2 Honor
  - G3 Peace

**C 4 The impartiality of God's judgment on all peoples 2:11-16**

- D1 God's impartiality stated 2:11
- D2 God's impartiality elaborated 2:12-13
  - E1 Sin, not possession or non-possession of law, brings God's judgment 2:12
  - E2 Keepers of law, not possessors of law, are justified (declared righteous) before God 2:13
- D3 God's impartiality illustrated 2:14-15
  - E1 Gentiles, who do not have the Law, are a law to themselves 2:14
  - E2 They stand accused or excused by their own consciences 2:15
- D4 God's impartiality standardized: The judgment of all will be 2:16
  - E1 According to Paul's gospel
  - E2 Through Jesus Christ

**B 3 The Condemnation of Jews 2:17 - 3:8**

**C 1 The high position of the Jew 2:17-20**

D1 His five privileges 2:17-18

E1 Relying upon the law 2:17

E2 Boasting in God 2:17

E3 Knowing God's will 2:18

E4 Approving things excelling [or essential - NAS]

E5 Instructed in the law

D2 His five areas of priesthood 2:19-20

E1 A guide of the blind 2:19

E2 A light in the darkness 2:19

E3 An instructor of the foolish 2:20

E4 A teacher of infants 2:20

E5 Having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth  
2:20

**C 2 The hypocrisy of the Jew 2:21-24**

D1 The five hypocrisies of the Jew 2:21-23

E1 Teaching others, do you not teach yourself? 2:21

E2 Banning stealing, do you steal yourself? 2:21

E3 Forbidding adultery, do you commit it yourself? 2:22

E4 Detesting idols, do you rob temples? 2:22

E5 Boasting in the law, do you break the law and dishonor God?  
2:23

D2 The blasphemous reaction of the Gentiles 2:24

**C 3 The warning to the Jew 2:25-29**

D1 Circumcision is of value only when accompanied by obedience to  
the Law 2:25-27

E1 Circumcision without obedience is worthless 2:25

- E2 Obedience without circumcision 2:26-27
  - G1 Is accounted as circumcision 2:26
  - G2 Qualifies one to judge the hypocritical circumcised 2:27
- D2 Real Judaism is internal, not external 2:28-29
  - E1 Not essentially external 2:28
    - G1 A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly
    - G2 Nor is circumcision merely outward and physical
  - E2 But essentially internal 2:29
    - G1 A man is a Jew if he is one inwardly
    - G2 Circumcision is circumcision of the heart
      - H 1 By the Spirit
      - H 2 Not by the written code
- E3 Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God 2:29

#### **C 4 The questioned worth of Jewishness 3:1-8**

- D1 The questioned worth of national identity 3:1-2
  - E1 The question: "Is there value in being a Jew?" 3:1
  - E2 The answer: Jewish worth consists in a trusteeship of the Scriptures. 3:2
- D2 The questioned worth of national promises<sup>30</sup> 3:3-4
  - E1 The question: "Does Jewish unbelief cancel God's obligation to be faithful?" 3:3
  - E2 The answer: God keeps His promises, though men lie. (Cf. Psalm 51:4) 3:4
- D3 The questioned justice of God's wrath against Israel 3:5-8
  - E1 The implication Godward 3:5-6

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<sup>30</sup> 3:3-4 title - The questioned worth of national promises: This is a question of premillennial vs. amillennial eschatology! Stated another way, do we take God's promises to the OT saints literally, or do we spiritualize (metaphorize) them? Amillennialism spiritualizes the national promises to Israel and makes them apply to the Church.

- G1 The question: "If Israel's unrighteousness highlights God's righteousness, is not God disqualified from judging Israel?" 3:5
  - G2 The refutation: If God cannot judge Israel, how will He judge the world (as He says He will)? 3:6
  - E2 The implication manward 3:7-8
  - G1 The question: If my lie enhances God's glorious truthfulness, why am I judged a sinner?<sup>31</sup> 3:7
  - G2 The accusation of Pauline antinomianism<sup>32</sup> 3:8
  - G3 The refutation by way of their judgment<sup>33</sup> 3:8
- B 4 The Condemnation of All Men 3:9-20**
- C 1 The charge of universal condemnation 3:9**
  - C 2 The Scriptural documentation of universal condemnation 3:10-18**
  - D1 The universality of sin 3:10-12<sup>34</sup>
    - E1 None are righteous 3:10
    - E2 None seek God 3:11
    - E3 All have turned away from God 3:12
      - G1 All have become unprofitable
      - G2 Not one does acts of kindness
  - D2 The totality of depravity 3:13-18
    - E1 Reflected in men's destructive speech 3:13-14
      - G1 Their **throat** an open grave 3:13

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<sup>31</sup> 3:7 title - why am I judged a sinner? The denial that sin requires judgment is valid evidence that the *asker* of the question needs judgment!

<sup>32</sup> 3:8 title - the accusation of Pauline antinomianism: This represents a classic perversion of grace! The deliberate pursuit of evil inevitably brings judgment

<sup>33</sup> 3:8 title - The refutation by way of their judgment: God tells us not to sin, not because it angers Him, but because sin is so destructive. If we pursue sin, it is because we really don't understand its awesome destructiveness as God does.

<sup>34</sup> 3:10-12 quotes from Psalm 14:1-3

- G2 Their deceiving **tongues** 3:13
- G3 Their **venomous** lips <sup>35</sup> 3:13
- G4 Their **mouth** full of cursing and bitterness 3:14
- E2 Reflected in men's destructive actions 3:15-17
  - G1 Their feet swift to murder 3:15
  - G2 Their paths full of destruction and misery 3:16
  - G3 The path of peace they have not known 3:17
- E3 Reflected in men's flippant disregard of God: "There is no fear of God before their eyes." 3:18

**C 3 The function of the Law in universal condemnation 3:19-20**

- D1 The universal implication of Jewish condemnation under the Law - The thought: "If those under the Law cannot keep it, surely no one can!" 3:19
- D2 The function of the Law -- universal condemnation, not justification 3:20

**A3 JUSTIFICATION: The Declaration of Righteousness through Faith 3:21 - 5:21 <sup>36</sup>**

**B 1 God's Righteous Provision of a Righteousness for Humans Apart From the Law 3:21-31**

**C 1 The description of the righteousness God has provided apart from the Law 3:21-24**

- D1 Its methodology - apart from the Law 3:21
- D2 Its origin - from God 3:21
- D3 Its authenticity - predicted in Scripture 3:21
- D4 Its terms - faith in Christ 3:22
- D5 Its universal availability - to all continually believing 3:22
- D6 Its universal necessity - all have sinned 3:23
- D7 Its Divine motivation - grace 3:24

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<sup>35</sup> 3:13 - poison of asps is under their lips: Probably taken from Ps 140:3.

<sup>36</sup> 3:21-5:21 title - Justification: This section deals with "sin as guilt." The next – 6:1 - 8:39 deals with "sin as power."

D8 Its basis - Christ's redemption 3:24

**C 2 The vindication of God's own righteousness in providing righteousness apart from the Law 3:25-26**

D1 The fact of God's provision of Jesus as a propitiation 3:25a

D2 The necessity of God's provision of Jesus as a propitiation 3:25b-26

E1 To demonstrate God's justice in forgiving past sins 3:25b-26a

E2 To demonstrate God's justice in His present policy of declaring righteous those who believe in Jesus 3:26b

**C 3 The implications of God's provision of righteousness apart from the Law 3:27-31**

D1 Human boasting is excluded 3:27-28

D2 Justification (declared righteousness) extends to believing Gentiles as well as to believing Jews 3:29-30

D3 Faith does not circumvent the Law, but upholds it 3:31

**B 2 Abraham, the Illustration of Declared Righteousness 4:1-25**

**C 1 Abraham's justification was apart from works 4:1-8**

D1 Demonstrated by Abraham's "non-boasting" 4:1-3

D2 The suggestion of Abraham as an appropriate example 4:1

E1 Justification by works implies grounds for boasting 4:2

E2 But the record states justification by faith 4:3

D3 Confirmed by Scripture's adherence to the grace principle 4:4-8

E1 The opposing principles stated 4:4-5

G1 Working implies obligation 4:4

G2 Believing implies grace 4:5

E2 The grace principle documented 4:6-8

G1 The gracious imputation of righteousness 4:6

G2 The gracious non-imputation of sin 4:7-8

**C 2 Abraham's justification preceded his circumcision 4:9-12**

- D1 The question of the availability of justification to the uncircumcised 4:9
- D2 The timing of Abraham's circumcision in relation to his justification (He was justified while he was uncircumcised!) 4:10
- D3 The significance of Abraham's circumcision: a sign, not a means of justification (cf. Gen. 17:11) 4:11a
- D4 The results of Abraham's circumcision 4:11b-12
  - E1 He is father of all who believe, though uncircumcised <sup>37</sup> 4:11b
  - E2 He is father of all who, being circumcised, also **believe** 4:12
- C 3 Abraham's justification was by faith in God's promise apart from the Law 4:13-25**
  - D1 God's promise to bequeath the world to Abraham and his descendants was independent of Law 4:13-15
    - E1 The statement of independence 4:13
    - E2 The negative affect of hypothesized dependence 4:14
      - G1 Israel's faith would be emptied 4:14a
      - G2 God's promise would be destroyed 4:14b
    - E3 The reason for the negative effect - Law has to do with wrath against Law-breakers 4:15
  - D2 God's promise to bequeath the world to Abraham and his descendants necessarily operated on faith based on God's free goodness 4:16-17a
    - E1 So the promise could be guaranteed 4:16a
    - E2 So the promise could extend to all Abraham's seed who believe 4:16b-17a
      - G1 Both to Israelite 4:16b
      - G2 And to Gentile as God promised 4:17a
  - D3 God's promise to Abraham had to be believed 4:17-25
    - E1 The terms of the promise 4:17a

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<sup>37</sup> 4:11 subtitle - father of all who believe, though uncircumcised: One purpose of the Abrahamic Covenant was **universal** blessings! – Gen. 12:1-3; 17:4-5

- E2 The power of God who made the promise 4:17-b
- E3 The obstacles to Abraham's faith 4:18-19
  - G1 The hopelessness of the situation 4:18
  - G2 The deadness of Abraham's body 4:19a
  - G3 The deadness of Sarah's womb 4:19b
- E4 The reality of Abraham's faith 4:20-21
  - G1 He did not discriminate in unbelief against God's promise 4:20a
  - G2 He believed in the person of God 4:20b
  - G3 He believed in the promise of God 4:21
- E5 The results of Abraham's faith 4:22-25
  - G1 Abraham was justified 4:22
  - G2 Abraham serves as a precedent for all to be justified by faith 4:23-25
    - H 1 The precedent stated 4:23-24a
    - H 2 The focus of faith - God 4:24b-25
      - J 1 The resurrection of Jesus 4:24c
      - J 2 The substitutionary atonement of Jesus 4:25a
      - J 3 The reality of justification 4:25b

**B 3 The Incredible Benefits of Declared Righteousness 5:1-11**

- C 1 Peaceful relationship with God 5:1**
- C 2 In the place of the blessing of God 5:2**
- C 3 Proud hope for the future glory of God 5:2**
- C 4 Pride in present hardship, which creates... 5:4-5**
  - D1 Perseverance 5:3
  - D2 Proven character 5:4
  - D3 Hope 5:4-5

**C 5 Recipients of God's love 5:5-8**

- D1 The measure - poured out 5:5
- D2 The method - through the Holy Spirit - Himself a gift 5:5
- D3 The circumstance - when we were... 5:6-7
  - E1 Weak: While we were still helpless, 5:6
  - E2 Ungodly: At the right time Christ died for the ungodly 5:6
  - E3 Unjust: For one will hardly die for a righteous man; 5:7
  - E4 Not good: Though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die 5:7
  - E5 Sinners: But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, 5:8a
- D4 The cost - the substitutionary death of the Messiah: Christ died for us! 5:8b

**C 6 More assured protection from the future wrath of God 5:9-10**

- D1 The statement of future protection: Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. 5:9
- D2 The logic of future protection 5:10
  - E1 The present reality: Past reconciliation, as enemies, through the death of God's Son: For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, 5:10a
  - E2 The future guarantee: Future salvation, as reconciled ones, through the life of God's Son: Much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. 5:10b

**C 7 Pride in God because of reconciliation 5:11** And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

**B 4 The Supreme Success of Declared Righteousness in Contrast to the Defeat of Condemnation<sup>38</sup> 5:12-21****C 1 The universality of condemnation (death from sin) despite no Law**


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<sup>38</sup> 5:12-21 title - The Supreme Success of Declared Righteousness in Contrast to the Defeat of Condemnation: Two ideas are present in this section: (1) The gracious, declared righteousness universally available through the one man Jesus Christ **far surpasses** the universal condemnation and death through the one man Adam. (2) The grace in justification **surpasses** the death and condemnation in sin.

**5:12-14**

- D1 Just as Adam's sin directly affected every man, so did death 5:12
- D2 Sin before the Law was not imputed 5:13
- D3 Yet death reigned as king over people anyway 5:14

**C 2 The superiority of grace over condemnation 5:15-17**

- D1 The superiority of the amount of grace compared to the amount of condemnation 5:15
- D2 The superiority of the capacity of grace to cope with a quantity of sin 5:16
- D3 The superiority of the result of grace compared to the result of condemnation 5:17

**C 3 The similarity of grace and condemnation 5:18-19**

- D1 In regard to one act and its universal application 5:18
- D2 In regard to one man and its cosmic effects 5:19

**C 4 God's super-gracious response to the deadly condemnation from Adam's sin 5:20-21**

- D1 He brought in Law to heighten man's guilt in condemnation 5:20a
- D2 In response to increased sin, He super-increased grace 5:20b
- D3 The net effect of grace's super-superiority 5:21
  - E1 Whereas Adam's one sin reigned as king over man in death 5:21a
  - E2 So, through Jesus Christ's one redemptive act, grace reigned as king through righteousness unto eternal life 5:21b

**A4 SANCTIFICATION: The Out-working of Righteousness in the Believer's Experience<sup>39</sup> 6 - 8****B 1 The Necessity of Sanctification in Relation to Sin 6:1-23****C 1 The question of believers continuing in sin to attract God's grace 6:1-14**

- D1 The question asked: "Are we to continue in sin that grace might

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<sup>39</sup> Chapter 6-8 Title - Sanctification: The previous section, Justification, 3:21 - 5:21, dealt with "sin as guilt." The present section, Sanctification, 6:1 - 8:39, deals with "sin as power."

increase?" 6:1

- D2 The answer stated: "May it never be!" 6:2a
- D3 The reason stated: "How can believers, who have died to sin, continue to live in it?" 6:2b
- D4 The reason explained: The Baptism Principle 6:3-10
  - E1 Believers must know the implications of baptism into Christ (Note: See E4 and E5 below!!) 6:3-5
    - G1 Baptism into Christ includes baptism into Christ's death 6:3
    - G2 Baptism into Christ includes baptism into Christ's resurrection 6:4-5
      - H 1 Implying, in the present, a new, living lifestyle 6:4
      - H 2 Implying, in the future, a conformity to Christ's resurrection 6:5
  - E2 Believers must know the implications of baptism into Christ's death 6:6-8
    - G1 The co-crucifixion of the old nature 6:6a
    - G2 The overthrow<sup>40</sup> of the body<sup>41</sup> of sin 6:6b
    - G3 The cessation of serving sin 6:6c
    - G4 Justification from sin: {7} for he who has died<sup>42</sup> is freed<sup>43</sup> from sin. 6:7
    - G5 Life with Christ: {8} Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live<sup>44</sup> with Him,

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<sup>40</sup> 6:6 subtitle - overthrow: "Overthrow" in the sense of paralysis.

<sup>41</sup> 6:6 subtitle - body: "Body" = the instrument through which sin works.

<sup>42</sup> 6:7 - he who has died: Believers in Jesus are identified with Him. Thus, when Jesus died, believers positionally died with Him when he died. As legally dead men, they can no longer be prosecuted, because they have already paid (in Jesus) the just penalty for their sins!

<sup>43</sup> 6:7 - freed: The word is the perfect passive indicative of *dikaioo* (1344) = "has been justified" or, "has been declared righteous (in regard to sin)." Or, we might say he has been acquitted of guilt.

<sup>44</sup> 6:8 - live with Him: : v. 7 may refer to release from the **guilt** of sin, while v. 8 refers to the (potential) release from the **power** of sin (though that comes ultimately at the resurrection).

6:8

- E3 Believers must know the implications of Christ's resurrection from death 6:9-10
- G1 He need never die again 6:9a
  - G2 Death no longer holds power over Him 6:9b
  - G3 He died in respect to sin permanently 6:10a
  - G4 He lives in respect to God 6:10b
- E4 Note: Reasons why the baptism under discussion here is "Spirit baptism", not "water baptism" (borrowed from J. Dwight Pentecost except as indicated):
- G1 No water is mentioned.
  - G2 βαπτισω does not necessarily require water as the agent (1 Cor. 10:2; 12:13; 15:29).
  - G3 This is real death here, not a picture of death.
  - G4 Romans 6:1-6 is the Divine perspective, not personal experience.
  - G5 Water baptism is prominent in Acts (the external is emphasized), whereas Spirit baptism is emphasized in the epistles (the internal is emphasized).
  - G6 The only baptism that is said to place us in Christ is the Spirit's baptism (1 Cor. 12:13).
  - G7 Colossians 2:12 is a parallel passage and it clearly speaks of Spirit baptism. ??
  - G8 A mere outward ordinance has never been a deterrent to sin.
  - G9 Outward rituals can only **mirror**, but can never **achieve** inward spiritual realities (JTB).
- E5 Note: I have always maintained that baptism here (Romans 6) is Spirit Baptism a la 1 Cor. 12:13 March 16, 1993
- G1 Arguments **for Water Baptism** and against Spirit Baptism:
    - H 1 The biggest argument against that is that "Spirit" is never once used in this (Romans 6) passage.

- H 2 The biggest argument for water baptism is that that is how one would normally take it.
- J 1 Stifler, p. 107, takes baptism as water baptism. He sees it as a symbol for real faith, not a substitute for faith. Interesting!
- G2 Arguments **for Spirit Baptism** and against Water Baptism
- H 1 The argument against water baptism is "How can a rite accomplish a spiritual reality?"
- J 1 Even John the Baptist understood (Matt. 3:7-10) that his water could not produce repentance, but only symbolized it. He told the hypocritical Pharisees and Sadducees to bring forth fruits fitting for repentance--not just go through the motions of being wet!
- J 2 There are many different kinds of baptism in Scripture. The chief meaning is one of identification:
- J 3 Jesus' baptism (Matt. 20:3) evidently spoke of His coming crucifixion. No water here!
- K 1 Israelites were baptized into Moses (1 Cor. 10:2) at Dead Sea. Only ones who got wet were the dead Egyptians!
- H 2 Water baptism in Matthew 28:18-20 and 1 Cor. is distinguished from Spirit baptism as being baptized into the **name** of Christ. That is a symbolical baptism. (Acts 10:48; 19:5; 22:16; 1 Cor. 1:13-17)
- H 3 Water baptism in the New T. follows Spirit Baptism (Acts 10:47, 48)
- H 4 Real Baptism actually places one into Christ, not merely into the name of Christ! (Cf. Acts 11:16; Romans 6:3; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:7)
- G3 Here are a list of passages, added 5/3/02, that all convey Spirit Baptism. (I think the texts below are KJV.)

- H 1 Matthew 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall **baptize you with the Holy Ghost**, and [with] fire:
- H 2 John 1:33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which **baptizeth with the Holy Ghost**.
- H 3 Acts 1:5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be **baptized with the Holy Ghost** not many days hence.
- H 4 Acts 11:16 Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but **ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost**.
- H 5 Romans 6:3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were **baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?** 4 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.
- H 6 1 Corinthians 12:13 For **by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body**, whether [we be] Jews or Gentiles, whether [we be] bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.
- H 7 Galatians 3:27 For as many of you as have been **baptized into Christ** have put on Christ.
- D5 The application of the Baptism Principle commanded 6:11-13
- E1 Believers must continually count themselves dead to sin, but living to God 6:11
- G1 Dead to sin: {11} Even so consider <sup>45</sup> yourselves to be dead to sin,
- G2 Alive to God: but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

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<sup>45</sup> 6:11 - consider: to reckon, or count as true. Consider is a present tense imperative. We are commanded continually to consider ourselves as being dead to sin and alive to God.

- E2 Believers must not let sin continually reign as king in their bodies 6:12
- E3 Believers must not continually present their members as weapons of unrighteousness 6:13a
- E4 Believers must decisively present their members to God as living weapons of righteousness 6:13b
- D6 The answer summarized 6:14
  - E1 The summary stated: "Sin shall not master believers" 6:14a
  - E2 The summary explained: "Because believers are not under law, but grace" 6:14b
- C 2 The question of believers “committing an act of sin”<sup>46</sup> in view of their freedom from Law 6:15-23**
  - D1 The question asked: "Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace?" 6:15a
  - D2 The answer stated: "May it never be!" 6:15b
  - D3 The reason explained: **The Slavery Principle** 6:16-18
    - E1 The principle stated: Continual presentation as obedient slaves is enslaving 6:16
      - G1 Whether to sin leading to death 6:16a
      - G2 Or to obedience leading to righteousness 6:16b
    - E2 The principle elaborated from experience 6:16-18
      - G1 Their past enslavement to sin 6:16
      - G2 Their subsequent enslavement to righteousness 6:18
  - D4 The application of the Slavery Principle commanded 6:19
    - E1 As the past presentation of your members as slaves to uncleanness and lawlessness resulted in lawlessness 6:19a
      - G1 Concession: {19} I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh.
      - G2 Past presentation: For just as you presented<sup>47</sup> your

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<sup>46</sup> 6:15-23 title - “committing an act of sin”: The verb tense is aorist, meaning an act at a point in time.

<sup>47</sup> 6:19 - presented: This was a decisive act.

members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness,  
resulting in further lawlessness,

E2 So now make a presentation of your members as slaves of  
righteousness resulting in sanctification 6:19b

G1 Obligatory current presentation: so now present <sup>48</sup>  
your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in  
sanctification.

D5 The results of the Slavery Principle elaborated 6:20-23

E1 Past results of slavery to sin 6:20-21

G1 Freedom from righteousness 6:20

G2 Fruit -- present shame 6:21a

G3 End -- death 6:21b

E2 Present results of slavery to God 6:22

G1 Freedom from sin 6:22a

G2 Fruit -- sanctification 6:22b

G3 End -- eternal life 6:22c

E3 Results summarized 6:23

G1 The wages of sin is death 6:23a

G2 The free gift of God is eternal life 6:23b

## **B 2 The Futility of the Believer's Sanctification By Means of the Law 7**

### **C 1 The reality of the believer's freedom from the Law 7:1-6**

D1 The principle of jurisdiction stated: "The jurisdiction of the Law  
ceases at death" 7:1

D2 The principle of jurisdiction illustrated in marriage 7:2-3

E1 Marriage is binding until death 7:2

E2 Remarriage before death is adultery 7:3a

E3 Remarriage after death is lawful 7:3b

D3 The principle of jurisdiction applied 7:4-6

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<sup>48</sup> 6:19 - present: This also is to be a decisive act.

- E1 The **fact** of co-death: "Believers have died to the Law through the body of Christ." 7:4a
- E2 The **purpose** of co-death 7:4b
  - G1 To permit remarriage to the risen Christ
  - G2 To produce fruit for God.
- E3 The **fruit** of the old marriage 7:5
- E4 The **condition** after co-death 7:6
  - G1 Release from the Law 7:6a
  - G2 Spiritual service 7:6b

## C 2 The vindication of the Law 7:7-13

- D1 The Law is holy and does not cause sinfulness -- sin does 7:7-12
  - E1 The question about the Law: "Is the Law sin?" 7:7a
  - E2 The answer: "May it never be!" 7:7b
  - E3 The explanation 7:7c-11
    - G1 The function of the Law -- definition of sin 7:7c
    - G2 The action of sin under the Law -- production of lust 7:8a
    - G3 The state of sin under the absence of Law 7:8b-9a
      - H 1 Sin was dead 7:8b
      - H 2 I was living 7:9a
    - G4 The effect of the arrival of the Law 7:9b-11
      - H 1 Sin arrived 7:9b
      - H 2 I died 7:10
      - H 3 The Law turned into an instrument of death through sin 7:10-11
        - J 1 Sin deceived me 7:11a
        - J 2 Sin slew me 7:11b
- E4 The verdict about the Law 7:12

- G1 The Law is holy 7:12a
- G2 The Commandment is holy, just, good 7:12b
- D2 The Law does not cause death -- sin does 7:13
  - E1 The Question: "Did that which is good to me become death?" 7:13a
  - E2 The Answer: "May it never be!" 7:13b
  - E3 The Explanation 7:13c
    - G1 Sinful sin worked death through the good Law
    - G2 So the commandment shows the surpassing sinfulness of sin.
- C 3 The impossibility of attaining sanctification by keeping the Law (because of the sin principle residing in the human body) 7:14-25**
  - D1 The basic reason for the impossibility 7:14
    - E1 The spirituality of the Law 7:14a
    - E2 The slavery to sin in the area of the flesh of the one under the Law 7:14b
  - D2 The elaboration of the impossibility 7:15-20
    - E1 The one under the Law does what he hates 7:15-17
      - G1 The activity stated 7:15-16a
      - G2 The implication about the Law -- it is good 7:16b
      - G3 The implication about the act -- it is not self, but indwelling sin at work 7:17
    - E2 The one under the Law is unable to do the good he wishes 7:18-20
      - G1 The inability stated 7:18-19
        - H 1 The absence of good in the flesh 7:18a
        - H 2 The inability to perform desired good 7:18b-19
      - G2 The restated implication about the act -- it is not self, but indwelling sin at work 7:20
  - D3 The result of the impossibility -- the principle of continual conflict

for the one under the Law 7:21-25

- E1 The statement of the principle of conflict -- "Good desired is thwarted by evil" 7:21
- E2 The elaboration of the principle of conflict 7:22-23
  - G1 The inner man's delight in the Law 7:22
  - G2 The principle of sin at work in the members of the body 7:23
- E3 The reaction to the principle of conflict 7:24
  - G1 The cry of despair 7:24a
  - G2 The plea for deliverance from the human body dominated by death 7:24b
  - G3 The gratitude for deliverance that can come only through Christ (not the Law) 7:25a
- E4 The summary of the principle of conflict of the one operating under the Law 7:25b
  - G1 He serves the Law of God with his mind
  - G2 He serves the Law of sin with his flesh

### **B 3 The Empowerment for the Believer's Sanctification By Means of the Holy Spirit 8:1-17**

#### **C 1 Through the elimination of condemnation for those in Christ 8:1-11**

- D1 Because of God's condemnation through Jesus of sin in the believer's body 8:1-3
  - E1 The fact of the absence of condemnation for those in Christ 8:1
  - E2 The reason for the absence of condemnation: "The law of the Spirit producing life in Christ has freed from the Law of sin and death" 8:2
  - E3 The explanation of the absence of condemnation 8:3
    - G1 The inability of the Law to condemn sin in the flesh 8:3a
    - G2 The ability of God's Son to condemn sin in the flesh 8:3b
- D2 Because of the believer's ability to fulfill the requirements of the Law by walking according to the Holy Spirit 8:4-10
  - E1 The accomplishment of the Spirit in those who walk according to the Spirit, not the flesh: the fulfilling of the requirements of the Law 8:4
  - E2 The comparison of the flesh and the Spirit 8:5-10
    - G1 In relation to orientation 8:5
      - H 1 Flesh concentrates on flesh 8:5a
      - H 2 Spirit concentrates on Spirit 8:5b
    - G2 In relation to outcome 8:6
      - H 1 The mind-set of the flesh: death 8:6a
      - H 2 The mind-set of the Spirit: life and peace 8:6b
    - G3 In relation to God 8:7-10
      - H 1 Those in the flesh 8:7-8
        - J 1 Hostile against God 8:7
        - J 2 Unable to please God 8:8

H 2 Those in the Spirit 8:9-10

J 1 Identified by the indwelling Spirit  
8:9

J 2 Defined as to state 8:10

K 1 Their body is dead because of  
sin 8:10a

K 2 Their spirit is alive because  
of righteousness 8:10b

D3 Because God will resurrect the believer's body by means of the  
Holy Spirit 8:11

## C 2 Through a new obligation 8:12-17

D1 Not to live according to the flesh 8:12-13b

E1 The denial of obligation to the flesh 8:12-13a

E2 The outcome of living according to the flesh: death 8:13b

D2 But to kill the body's actions by means of the Holy Spirit 8:13c-17

E1 As those who are alive 8:13c

E2 As sons of God 8:14-16

G1 Proven by the Spirit's leading 8:14

G2 Accomplished by positional adoption 8:15

G3 Confirmed by the Spirit's witness 8:16

E3 As heirs with Christ of God 8:17a

E4 As sufferers with Christ anticipating glory 8:17b

## B 4 The Importance of Hope in the Believer's Sanctification 8:18-39

### C 1 The believer's hope of future glory surpassing present sufferings 8:18-25

D1 The believer's hope as stated 8:18

D2 The believer's hope as affecting the creation 8:19-22

E1 The present expectation of the creation: "Eager anticipation  
of the unveiling of the sons of God" 8:19

- E2 The past curse upon the creation: the deprivation of purpose 8:20
- E3 The future prospect of the creation: freed from decay to the glory of God's children 8:21
- E4 The present agony of the creation 8:22
  - G1 Groaning in the agony of slavery 8:22a
  - G2 Travailing in the birth pains of the new creation 8:22b
- D3 The believer's hope as affecting himself 8:23-25
  - E1 The basis of the believer's hope 8:23
    - G1 Based on the deposit of the indwelling Spirit 8:23a
    - G2 Based on the groaning expectation of completed adoption: the redemption of the body by resurrection 8:23b
  - E2 The necessity of the believer's hope 8:24-25
    - G1 Hope is an essential element in salvation 8:24
    - G2 Hope builds patience 8:25
- C 2 The believer's hope of present goodness because of God's sovereignty 8:26-30**
  - D1 The believer's hope as dependent on the intercession of the Holy Spirit 8:26-27
    - E1 Sympathetic intercession 8:26
      - G1 Sharing in human weakness 8:26a
      - G2 Mindful of human ignorance 8:26b
      - G3 Participating by groaning in human agony 8:26c
    - E2 Effective intercession 8:27
      - G1 Because of Divine communication 8:27a
      - G2 Because of Divine cooperation 8:27b
  - D2 The believer's hope as dependent on the predestination of God 8:28-30

- E1 The nature of the hope 8:28
  - G1 The beneficiaries of the hope – those loving God: 8:28a
  - G2 The content of the hope – God works together all things for good 8:28b
  - G3 The perspective of the hope – for the benefit of those called according to God's purpose 8:28c
- E2 The achievement of the hope 8:29-30 - made possible by God's
  - G1 Foreknowledge <sup>49</sup> 8:29a
  - G2 Predestination 8:29b
    - H 1 The area of predestination -- "conformity to the image of God's Son"
    - H 2 The purpose of predestination -- "The provision of many suitable brothers for God's Son"
  - G3 Calling 8:30
  - G4 Justification 8:30
  - G5 Glorification 8:30

### **C 3 The believer's hope of eternal victory because of God's love 8:31-39**

- D1 The question of appropriate response to God's sovereign care for us

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<sup>49</sup> 8:29 subtitle - foreknowledge: Many try to dilute this word by saying it means only that God knew in advance which would respond to Him, and thus He chose them. This makes God's choices subject to man's actions, and it is not what the text is saying. The text does not say that God foreknew facts about people – who would and who would not accept Him; it declares that He knew certain people as His own from eternity past without any merit on their part. This Scripture teaches that God foreknows people, not facts about people. Now it is true that God knows ahead of time which individuals will accept His Son and which will not, but that is not what this text is saying. The only reason we respond to God in faith is precisely because He foreknew us and "predestined us to become conformed to the image of His Son."

If it be argued that this violates man's free will, I will argue that man's free will is a myth in certain respects. Romans 3:10-18 proclaims from the Old Testament man's universal depravity. Because he is depraved, and, in the words of Ephesians 2:1, dead in his trespasses and sins, man is unable to choose God. It is only because of God's election (Rom. 8:33) of us in Christ "before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4) that any of us would ever choose God.

If it be argued that God is unfair in choosing certain ones (but not others) as His own. I would agree. It is not fair – it is more than fair! It is utter grace and mercy that God chooses any of us at all! If it is mere fairness you want, then all of us will be consigned to the lake of fire (Rev. 20:11-15). If it is mercy you want, then humble yourself and accept God's grace (not His justice) and trust in Jesus – we beg you to be reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:20)! God's just wrath was poured out on His sinless Son on the cross, who willingly absorbed God's intense antipathy toward sin in our place.

8:31-32

- E1 The question asked 8:31a
- E2 The question answered by a question about the believer's safety 8:31b
  - G1 The premise: "If God is on our behalf",
  - G2 The question: "Who can possibly be against us?"
  - G3 The Implication: THE BELIEVER IS ETERNALLY SAFE IN GOD
- E3 The question answered by a question 8:31c-32
  - G1 The explanatory statement: "God has already given us the ultimate gift - His Son" 8:31c-32
  - G2 The logical question: "Would God logically refuse to give us lesser gifts?" 8:32b
  - G3 The Implication: THE BELIEVER IS ETERNALLY THE RECIPIENT OF ALL GOD'S GOOD GIFTS
- D2 The question of bringing legal charges against God's chosen ones 8:33
  - E1 The question
  - E2 The answer: God is the One acquitting
  - E3 The logic: To accuse the acquitted ones is to accuse the Judge who acquitted
  - E4 The implication: THE BELIEVER STANDS ETERNALLY UNACCUSABLE BEFORE GOD
- D3 The question of rendering a verdict of condemnation<sup>50</sup> 8:34
  - E1 The question
  - E2 The answer - Christ wont...
    - G1 "Are there offenses? Christ died for them.
    - G2 "Is there need of life? Christ was raised for our

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<sup>50</sup> See James Stifler, *The Epistle to the Romans: A Commentary Logical and Historical*, Moody Press, Chicago, 1969, 256 pp.

benefit. (cf. Rom. 5:10)

G3 "Do we need representation and influence in court? Christ is at God's own right hand.

G4 "Do we in hours of transgression and weakness need a Lawyer? Christ constantly intercedes for us. (cf. I John 2:1, John 17)

E3 The logic: Christ won't condemn -- who is left?

E4 The implication: THE BELIEVER IS ETERNALLY FREE FROM CONDEMNATION IN CHRIST.

D4 The question of our separation from the love of Christ 8:35-39

E1 The question asked 8:35a

E2 The possibilities explored 8:35b

E3 The likelihood of participation confirmed 8:36

E4 Super-victory assured because of Christ's act of love on our behalf 8:37

E5 Conclusion reached 8:38-39

G1 The options closed 8:38-39a

G2 The conclusion: THE BELIEVER IS ETERNALLY SECURE IN GOD'S LOVE IN CHRIST 8:39b

**A5 VINDICATION: The Defending of God's Righteousness in Setting Aside National Israel to Save the Nations 9 - 11 \*\***

**B 1 The Defense of God's Righteousness in the National Exercise of His Sovereignty 9:1-29**

**C 1 Paul's agony for national Israel's present condition 9:1-5**

D1 The depth of his agony 9:1-2

E1 The depth of Paul's sincerity: I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, 9:1

E2 The depth of his sorrow: that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. 9:2

D2 His prayer for his vicarious condemnation on Israel's behalf 9:3

- E1 His wish for damnation: For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ
- E2 The object of his concern: for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh
- D3 The reason for his agony: Israel's accursed condition exists despite her blessed position, enumerated below 9:4-5
  - E1 Positioned as Israelites: who are Israelites, 9:4
  - E2 Possessors of the adoption as sons: to whom belongs the adoption as sons 9:4
  - E3 Possessors of the glory: and the glory 9:4
  - E4 Possessors of the covenants: and the covenants 9:4
  - E5 Recipients of the giving of the Law: and the giving of the Law 9:4
  - E6 Possessors of the service of God: and the [giving of the] temple service 9:4
  - E7 Possessors of the promises: and the [giving of the] promises 9:4
  - E8 Descendants of the patriarchs: whose are the fathers, 9:5
  - E9 Progenitors of the Messiah: and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. 9:5

## C 2 God's faithfulness to His Word cannot be questioned 9:6-13

- D1 The reliability of God's Word: But it is not as though the word of God has failed. 9:6a
- D2 Physical descent does not guarantee spiritual heritage 9:6b-7
  - E1 Within Israel: For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; 9:6b
  - E2 Within Abraham's descendants: neither are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, 9:7a
  - E3 The Scriptural proof: but: "Through Isaac your descendants will be named." 9:7b
- D3 Spiritual heritage restricted to the heirs of promise within physical descent 9:8-13
  - E1 The principle stated 9:8

- G1 Not physical descent: That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God,
- G2 But heirs of promise: but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants.
- E2 The principle illustrated 9:9-13
  - G1 With reference to Isaac: For this is a word of promise: "At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son." 9:9
  - G2 With reference to Jacob 9:10-13
    - H 1 The unity of conception: And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac; 9:10
    - H 2 The choice of God 9:11-13
      - J 1 Before birth: for though the twins were not yet born, 9:11a
      - J 2 Before any moral activity: and had not done anything good or bad, 9:11b
      - J 3 According to God's purpose: in order that God's purpose according to His choice might stand, 9:11c
      - J 4 Without reference to works: not because of works, 9:11d
      - J 5 According to God's calling: but because of Him who calls, 9:11e
      - J 6 According to God's promise: it was said to her, "The older will serve the younger." 9:12
      - J 7 Confirmed in Scripture: Just as it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." (Cf. Mal. 1:2ff) 9:13
- C 3 God's righteousness cannot be questioned 9:14-29**
  - D1 In His selective mercy 9:14-18
    - E1 The question of God's possible unrighteousness asked: What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? 9:14a

- E2 The question answered: "May it never be!" 9:14b
- E3 The answer elaborated 9:15-18
  - G1 The Scriptural statement to Moses 9:15
    - H 1 Fact: God chooses those to whom He will show mercy -- For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."
    - H 2 Implication: A righteous God has no obligation to show mercy to **anyone**; therefore He is not unjust if He shows mercy to some.
  - G2 The explanation: So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy.<sup>51</sup> 9:16
  - G3 The Scriptural illustration in Pharaoh: For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, 9:17. Why God raised up Pharaoh –
    - H 1 To display God's own power: "For this very purpose I raised you up, to demonstrate my power in you, 9:17a
    - H 2 To advertize God's own name: "and that My name might be proclaimed throughout the whole earth." 9:17b
- E4 The principle broadened 9:18
  - G1 Whom God wishes, He shows mercy: So then He has mercy on whom He desires, 9:18a
  - G2 Whom God wishes, He hardens: and He hardens whom He desires. 9:18b
- D2 In His policy of holding man accountable despite Divine election 9:19-29
  - E1 God's righteousness questioned 9:19
    - G1 For blaming humanity: You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? 9:19a
    - G2 When no one can resist God's decree anyway: For

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<sup>51</sup> 9:16 God's mercy is His alone to give, independent of human desire or effort.

who resists His will? 9:19b

E2 God's righteousness defended 9:20-29

G1 **His demonstrable authority:** Created things have no right to question the prerogatives of their Sovereign Creator 9:20-21

H 1 The absurdity of the question stated: On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? 9:20a

H 2 The absurdity defined 9:20b-c

J 1 By man's finite creatureliness: who are you, O man, who answers back to God? 9:20b

J 2 By God's Infinite Creator-ness: The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why did you make me like this," will it? 9:20c

H 3 The absurdity illustrated - The potter has the right to fashion clay as he chooses 9:21

J 1 Some of it to honor: Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use,

J 2 Some of it to dishonor: and another for common use?

H 4 The unstated implication: A Sovereign by definition is not answerable to any of His creatures -- else He ceases to be sovereign.

G2 **His demonstrable mercy:** The Sovereign Creator has actually exercised mercy -- therefore He is a merciful God 9:22-23

H 1 God's righteous desire to execute wrath: What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, 9:22a

H 2 God's longsuffering policy toward creatures of wrath fitted for destruction: endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? 9:22b

H 3 God's exercise of mercy toward creatures He

had previously prepared for glory: And He did so in order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, 9:23

H 4 The unstated implication: God rightly desired to punish the evil of all His creatures. Yet He was longsuffering to all and merciful to many. He must therefore be a merciful God.

G3 **His demonstrable impartiality:** The Sovereign Creator's election applies to both the Gentiles (nations) and the Jews 9:24-29

H 1 The statement of election to glory from among the Jews and from among the nations (Gentiles): even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles. 9:24

H 2 The Scriptural documentation of the election of the nations (Gentiles) 9:25-26

J 1 The calling and loving of a people not previously God's: As He says also in Hosea, "I will call those who were not My people, 'My people,' and her who was not beloved, 'beloved.'" (Hos. 2:23) 9:25

J 2 The calling "Sons of the Living God" of those who were previously "Not My People": "And it shall be that in the place where it was said to them, 'you are not My people,' there they shall be called the sons of the living God." (Hos. 1:10) 9:26

H 3 The Scriptural documentation of the election of a remnant from within the nation of Israel 9:27-29

J 1 The prediction of the salvation of a remnant within national Israel: And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, "Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved; (Isa. 10:22) 9:27

J 2 The prediction of the destruction of all the rest of the earth including the

non-remnant of Israel): "for the Lord will execute His word upon the earth, thoroughly and quickly." (Isa. 10:23) 9:28

J 3 The prediction of the necessity of a remnant in Israel: And just as Isaiah foretold, "Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left to us a posterity, we would have become as Sodom, and would have resembled Gomorrah." <sup>52</sup> (Isa. 1:9) 9:29

## **B 2 The Responsibility of National Israel in Failing to Attain the Righteousness of God 9:30 - 10:21**

### **C 1 Israel's failure: The transitional summary 9:30-33**

D1 The non-seeking nations have attained the "by faith" righteousness: What shall we say then?

E1 The ethical indifference of the nations: That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness,

E2 The surprising attaining of righteousness by the nations: attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith; 9:30

D2 Israel has not 9:31-33

E1 Israel's unsuccessful pursuit of legal righteousness: but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law. 9:31

E2 Israel's lack of faith: Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, 9:32a

E3 Israel's pursuit of works: but as though it were by works. 9:32a

E4 Israel's stumbling over the Stumbling Stone 9:32b-33

G1 The reality of their having stumbled: They stumbled over the stumbling stone, 9:32b

G2 The prediction of their stumbling: just as it is written, 9:33

H 1 God's establishment of an unpalatable object of faith: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of

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<sup>52</sup> 9:29 - Sodom ... Gomorrah: - without the election of a remnant, all Israel would be destroyed.

stumbling and a rock of offense,

H 2 God's promise of reward to those who believe anyway! and he who believes in Him will not be disappointed." (cf. Is. 8:14; 28:16; 1 Pet. 2:6-9) 9:32b-33

**C 2 Israel's failure by trying to establish her own method of righteousness 10:1-5**

D1 Paul's longing for Israel's salvation 10:1

E1 His desire: Brethren, my heart's desire

E2 His prayer: and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation.

D2 Israel's zeal for God: For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, 10:2a

D3 Israel's ignorance of righteousness from God 10:2b-3a

E1 The non-productiveness of their zeal: but not in accordance with knowledge. 10:2b

E2 Their ignorance of God's righteousness: For not knowing about God's righteousness,

D4 Israel's pursuit of her own self-righteousness: and seeking to establish their own, 10:3b

D5 Israel's failure to submit to the righteousness of God, namely, Christ (Gal. 3:19,24) 10:3c-4

E1 Israel's insubordination: they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. 10:3c

E2 Christ's termination of the Law as a means of righteousness: For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. 10:4

D6 Israel's failure even to keep the righteousness of the Law: For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness. 10:5

**C 3 Israel's failure to understand the "by faith" nature of righteousness as stated in her own Scripture 10:6-15**

D1 The nearness of righteousness by faith 10:6-10

E1 Not obtained by human effort: But the righteousness based on faith speaks thus, (cf. Deut. 30:12-14) 10:6-7

- G1 Not working to retrieve Christ from heaven: "DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, 'WHO WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN?' (that is, to bring Christ down), 10:6
- G2 Not working to retrieve Christ from the dead: "or 'WHO WILL DESCEND INTO THE ABYSS?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead." 10:7
- E2 But internal and accessible 10:8-10
  - G1 The statement of internality 10:8
    - H 1 The proximity of the message: But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" --
    - H 2 The identification of the message: that is, the word of faith which we are preaching,
  - G2 The explanation of internality 10:9-10
    - H 1 Confession with the mouth: that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, 10:9a
    - H 2 Faith within the heart: and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, 10:9b
    - H 3 Resultant salvation: you shall be saved; 10:9c
    - H 4 The significance of the heart: for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, 10:10a
    - H 5 The significance of the mouth: and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. 10:10b
- D2 The universal availability of righteousness by faith 10:11-13
  - E1 The O.T. statement of universal availability to all who believe (cf. Isa. 28:16) 10:11
    - G1 The authority of the availability: For the Scripture says,
    - G2 The universality of the availability: "Whoever
    - G3 The qualification for availability: "believes in Him
    - G4 The cashing in on the availability: "will not be

disappointed."

- E2 The implication of availability--to both Jew and Greek  
10:12
  - G1 The disclaimer of distinction: For there is no  
distinction between Jew and Greek;
  - G2 The ubiquity of Christ: for the same Lord is Lord of  
all,
  - G3 The reward of Christ: abounding in riches for all  
who call upon Him;
- E3 The O.T. confirmation of availability: "for whoever will call  
upon the name of the Lord will be saved" (cf. Joel 2:32)  
10:13
- D3 The "universal communication" implications of righteousness by  
faith 10:14-15<sup>53</sup>
  - E1 Calling impossible without faith: How then shall they call  
upon Him in whom they have not believed? 10:14
  - E2 Faith impossible without hearing: And how shall they  
believe in Him whom they have not heard?
  - E3 Hearing impossible without announcing: And how shall  
they hear without preacher?
  - E4 Announcing impossible without sending (cf. Isa. 52:7)  
10:15
    - G1 The statement of the impossibility: And how shall  
they preach unless they are sent?
    - G2 The example from Scripture: Just as it is written,  
"How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad  
tidings of good things!"
  - E5 **Implication:** Had Israel really understood the "by faith"  
nature of righteousness, she would have sent missionaries all  
over the earth!

#### C 4 Israel's failure as a nation to obey the good news about righteousness

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<sup>53</sup> This whole section carries with it several implications: Churches need to encourage young people and young adults to full-time Christian service. Thus, churches also need to encourage these same groups to prepare for full-time Christian service (e.g., in a Bible College or conservative seminary). Furthermore, churches need to encourage people presently to take short-term missions trips. Churches need to encourage their members to encourage one another in the pursuit of short-term and full-time Christian service. This includes verbal encouragement and financial encouragement.

**by faith 10:16-21**

- D1 The analysis of incomplete obedience 10:16-17
  - E1 The fact of Israel's disobedience: However, they did not all heed the glad tidings; 10:16a
  - E2 The prediction of Isaiah (cf. Isa. 53:1): <sup>54</sup> for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?" 10:16b
  - E3 The dependence of faith upon hearing 10:17
    - G1 The priority of hearing: So then faith comes from hearing,
    - G2 The source of hearing: and hearing by the word of Christ.
- D2 Israel's failure was not a lack of hearing (cf. Psa. 19:4) 10:18
  - E1 The objection -- people have never heard: But I say, surely they have never heard, have they?
  - E2 The rebuttal: Indeed they have;
    - G1 The universal message: "THEIR VOICE HAS GONE OUT INTO ALL THE EARTH,
    - G2 The articulate message: "AND THEIR WORDS <sup>55</sup> TO THE ENDS OF THE WORLD." <sup>56</sup>
- D3 Israel's failure was not a lack of knowledge 10:19-21
  - E1 The present gracious opportunity for the nations was predicted in Scripture 10:19-20
    - G1 God's plan to provoke Israel to jealousy 10:19
      - H 1 The objection -- Israel did not understand: But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they?

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<sup>54</sup> Cf. John 5:42-43, where Jesus said, "...but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another shall come in his own name, you will receive him."

<sup>55</sup> 10:18 - words: The sound is intelligible -- the term is ῥῆμα (*hrema*, 4487) the word for *words* or *terms* or *verbal utterances*.

<sup>56</sup> One church I pastored made a point to distribute copies of the Jesus video as an evangelistic outreach. It was interesting to watch peoples' responses to the opportunity. Some took the opportunity to watch the video almost immediately. Others, who may have been eager to receive it in the first place, still, weeks later, had not watched it. The opportunity was there. If people did not take advantage of it, it was certainly not God's fault!

- H 2 The first rebuttal (cf. Deut. 32:21) -- At the first Moses says, (God's goading Israel into): 19:20
    - J 1 Jealousy: "I WILL MAKE YOU JEALOUS BY THAT WHICH IS NOT A NATION;
    - J 2 Anger: "BY A NATION WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING WILL I ANGER YOU."
  - G2 God's planned self-disclosure to non-seeking nations -- The second rebuttal: And Isaiah is very bold and says (cf. Isa. 65:1), 10:20
    - H 1 "I was found by those who sought Me not,
    - H 2 I became manifest to those who did not ask for Me."<sup>57</sup>
  - E2 Israel's disobedience and contradiction documented in Scripture (cf. Isa. 65:2): But as for Israel He says, "ALL THE DAY LONG I HAVE STRETCHED OUT MY HANDS TO A DISOBEDIENT AND OBSTINATE PEOPLE." 10:21
- B 3 The Praise of God's Merciful Wisdom in Temporarily Casting Away National Israel to Save the Nations 11**
- C 1 **The incompleteness of National Israel's being cast away: "The present rejection of Israel is not total."<sup>58</sup> The remnant 11:1-10**
    - D1 Paul's case as proof of a present remnant 11:1
      - E1 The question asked - "Did God cast aside His people?": I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? 11:1a
      - E2 The answer given: May it never be! 11:1b
      - E3 The answer explained: For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 11:1c
    - D2 Elijah's case as proof of a historical remnant (cf. 1 Kings 19:10-18) 11:2-4
      - E1 The fact declared - "God did not cast aside His people": God has not rejected His people 11:2a
      - E2 The reason given -- God's foreknowledge: whom He

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<sup>57</sup> The point: "How can Israel be excused for ignorance of a world-wide Gospel, when even the heathen discovered it?" (James Stifler, *The Epistle to the Romans*, p. 182.)

<sup>58</sup> Stifler, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

foreknew. 11:2b

E3 The fact historically illustrated 11:2c-4

G1 Elijah's incorrect conclusion - The remnant would die out with he himself 11:2c-3

H 1 The reference to Elijah: Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? 11:2

H 2 The desperation of Elijah: "LORD, THEY HAVE KILLED YOUR PROPHETS, THEY HAVE TORN DOWN YOUR ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE." 11:3

G2 God's assessment – Remnant = 7,000: But what is the divine response to him? "I HAVE KEPT FOR MYSELF SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL." 11:4

D3 The conclusion – There is a present remnant among the hardened nation of Israel 11:5-10

E1 The remnant's existence: In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant 11:5-7a

G1 Chosen by grace: according to God's gracious choice. 11:5

G2 Works not a factor 11:6

H 1 The exclusion of works by grace: But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works,

H 2 The protection of the voluntary nature of grace: Otherwise grace is no longer grace.

G3 The elect remnant found what the seeking Nation did not 11:7a

H 1 What then? That which Israel is seeking for, it has not obtained,

H 2 but those who were chosen obtained it,

E2 The Divine hardening of the non-elect Nation 11:7b-10

G1 The hardening stated: and the rest were hardened; 11:7b

- G2 The Divine hardening documented in Scripture: just as it is written, 11:8-10
- H 1 Dulled spiritual sense
- J 1 Quoting Moses (Deut. 29:4): "GOD GAVE THEM A SPIRIT OF STUPOR, EYES TO SEE NOT AND EARS TO HEAR NOT, DOWN TO THIS VERY DAY."
- J 2 Quoting Isaiah: "EYES TO SEE NOT AND EARS TO HEAR NOT, DOWN TO THIS VERY DAY." (Isaiah 29:10) 11:8
- H 2 Irresistibly trapped and blinded – Quoting David (Psalm 69:22,23): And David says, 11:9-10
- J 1 "Oblivious of danger": "LET THEIR TABLE BECOME A SNARE AND A TRAP, AND A STUMBLING BLOCK AND A RETRIBUTION TO THEM. 11:9
- J 2 "Insensibly weighed down": "LET THEIR EYES BE DARKENED TO SEE NOT, AND BEND THEIR BACKS FOREVER." 11:10
- H 3 Notes on Imprecatory Prayer by David:
- J 1 Statement: See RSB, "Introduction to Psalms"; See also Baxter.
- J 2 These are prayers for God's righteousness to be vindicated.
- J 3 The prayers in these psalms are those of a prophet.
- J 4 Today, we do not judge unbelievers-- God does (1 Cor. 5:12-13).
- J 5 Today, we can pray that God's will may be done: that means the ultimate exclusion of unrighteousness from God's universe (Rev. 21:27; 22:14-15; 2 Pet. 3:13).
- J 6 Today, we must be part of the purifying process in the lives of believers, but this always has the idea of judgment of sin in the body so the spirit can be saved (1 Cor. 5:1-13).

**C 2 The dual purpose of National Israel's being cast away: Gentile salvation and Jewish jealousy 11:11-16**

- D1 What God's purpose is not 11:11a
- E1 The purpose asked: I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? "Is the casting aside to shatter forever Israel's hopes of existing as a saved nation?"
- E2 The answer given: "May it never be!"
- D2 What God's purpose is 11:11b-c
- E1 Salvation for the nations: But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, 11:11b
- E2 Jealousy incentive for national Israel: to make them jealous. 11:11c
- D3 The implications of God's dual purpose 11:12-16
- E1 Regarding the nations - Future blessings much greater than present 11:12
- G1 The nations' present rich benefit from Israel's transgression
- H 1 Now if their transgression be riches for the world
- H 2 and their failure be riches for the Gentiles,
- G2 The nations' projected far greater benefit from Israel's blessed obedience: how much more will their fulfillment be!
- E2 Regarding Paul's ministry - Paul employs the jealousy principle in his ministry 11:13-16
- G1 Paul's audience: But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. 11:13
- G2 Paul's strategy -- Working super-hard among the nations: Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry. 11:13
- G3 Paul's motive -- "To provoke (national) Israel to jealousy and thereby save some Jews" 11:14
- H 1 Jealous Jews: if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen
- H 2 Saved Jews: and save some of them. 11:14

- G4 The nations' benefit (if Paul employs the jealousy principle) 11:15-16
  - H 1 The benefit stated 11:15
    - J 1 "If God's casting aside (national) Israel provided the world reconciliation" -- For if their rejection be the reconciliation <sup>59</sup> of the world,
    - J 2 "God's reception of (national) Israel will provide the world resurrection from the dead." -- what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?
  - H 2 The benefit assured: The salvation of the remnant of Israel ultimately assures the salvation of the whole nation at a future time! 11:16
    - J 1 The holy harvest: And if the first piece of dough be holy, the lump is also;
    - J 2 The holy tree: and if the root be holy, the branches are too.
- C 3 **The warning to the nations in light of national Israel's being cast away 11:17-22**
  - D1 Don't boast against the cast-aside branches of national Israel 11:17-18
    - E1 The reality of the situation 11:17
      - G1 The breaking off of some branches (non-elect Israel's being temporarily cast aside): But if some of the branches were broken off, 11:17a
      - G2 The grafting in of wild olive branches (elect among the nations): and you, being a wild olive, were

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<sup>59</sup> 11:15 - reconciliation: "Because Israel rejected Christ, the gospel was taken to these Gentiles. In Scripture reconciliation is a work of God in the death of Christ which does not actually restore an individual to fellowship with God but provides the basis for him to be restored to fellowship (cf. 2 Cor. 5:18-20). (TBKC, II, 483,484.)

<sup>60</sup> 11:15 - acceptance = life from the dead: "Israel's 'acceptance' of Christ is related to 'the first resurrection' (Rev. 20:4-6), the resurrection of life (John 5:29, KJV). The first resurrection includes dead saints at the Rapture (1 Thess. 4:13-18), martyred Great Tribulation saints raised at Christ's return to rule upon earth (Rev. 20:4, 5b), and believing Old Testament saints at the same time (Dan. 12:1-2). The second resurrection will include all the wicked dead to be judged at the great white throne judgment (Rev. 20:5a, 12-13). The teaching that there will be one general resurrection of all humanity at one time fails to take these distinctions into account." (TBKC, II, 484.)

- grafted in among them 11:17b
- G3 The partaking by wild branches of the root (the salvation experienced by the patriarchs and the elect remnant): and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, 11:17c
- E2 The warning from the situation 11:18
- G1 Don't boast against the cut-off branches of national Israel: do not be arrogant toward the branches; 11:18a
- G2 Reason given - The root (the patriarchs and the elect remnant of Israel) is not dependent on elect among the nations, but you (elect among the nations) are dependent on it. 11:18b
- H 1 but if you are arrogant,
- H 2 remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you.
- D2 Don't be proud of your present position 11:19-20c
- E1 The acknowledgment of the grafting process (elect from among the nations in place of non-elect Jews) 11:19-20a
- G1 Gentile recognition: You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." 11:19
- G2 Apostolic agreement: Quite right, 11:20a
- E2 The identification of the reason for the breaking-grafting process: the presence or absence of faith 11:20b
- G1 Israeli unbelief: they were broken off for their unbelief,
- G2 Gentile faith: but you stand by your faith.
- E3 The warning application -- Don't be proud!: Do not be conceited,<sup>61</sup> 11:20c
- D3 Rather fear 11:20d-21
- E1 Attention to fear commanded: but fear; 11:20c
- E2 Reason for fear described: for if God did not spare the

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<sup>61</sup> 11:20 - conceited: The implication – Faith means that grace, not works is in operation. There can then be no pride in human merit.

natural branches, neither will He spare you.<sup>62</sup> 11:21

D4 Be aware of God's kindness and sternness: Behold then the kindness and severity of God; 11:22

E1 Severity to the unbelieving Jews: To those who fell, severity,

E2 Kindness to believing Gentiles: but to you, God's kindness,

G1 The qualification of continuity in believing: if you continue in His kindness;

G2 The danger of failing to continue believing: otherwise you also will be cut off.<sup>63</sup>

**C 4 The reversal of national Israel's being cast away: Total national salvation! 11:23-32**

D1 The prediction of national Israel's total salvation 11:23-27

E1 The plausibility of restoration 11:23-24

G1 In view of God's ability to graft the nation back in faith 11:23

H 1 Israel's responsibility: And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in;

H 2 God's ability: for God is able to graft them in again.

G2 In view of God's already having grafted in unnatural branches 11:24

H 1 The Gentiles' wild past apart from God's blessing: For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree,

H 2 The Gentiles' grafting into the place of God's blessing: and were grafted contrary to nature

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<sup>62</sup> 11:21 - neither will He spare you: If God didn't spare national Israel in unbelief, He won't spare the nations in unbelief, either.

<sup>63</sup> 11:22 - cut off: The question of continuing in God's kindness is not raised to suggest that an individual Christian can lose his salvation. The question is whether national groupings, in this case Gentiles, can continue to participate in God's kindness through belief. National groups such as Israel and the Gentiles can certainly lose God's blessings if they do not continue to believe, at least in a representative way. In fact, there will come a time when the church has been raptured, and the Gentiles will be largely unbelieving. God will in fact introduce severity into His dealings with the Gentiles as He begins, once again, to show kindness to Israel. This time of terrible severity against the Gentiles, along with unbelieving Israel, is called the Tribulation.

- into a cultivated olive tree,
- H 3 The likelihood of Israeli restoration to the place of God's blessing: how much more shall these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?
- E2 The apostolic revelation of total salvation 11:25-27
- G1 The apostolic caution 11:25a
- H 1 Against ignorance of God's new revelation: For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery,
- H 2 Against Gentile pride in present blessing: lest you be wise in your own estimation,
- G2 The apostolic revelation 11:25b-26a
- H 1 Partial hardness has happened to Israel: that a partial hardening has happened to Israel 11:25b
- H 2 Temporary hardness has happened to Israel: until the fulness of the Gentiles<sup>64</sup> has come in: 11:25c
- H 3 Total salvation will happen to Israel: and thus all Israel will be saved; 11:26a
- G3 The Scriptural documentation: just as it is written, 11:26b-27
- H 1 God's promise of a Deliverer to remove ungodliness from Jacob 11:26b (cf. Isa. 59:20,21; Ezek. 20:33-44)
- J 1 The promise of the Jewish Deliverer: "THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION,
- J 2 The purpose of the Jewish Deliverer: "HE WILL REMOVE (ALL) UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB."

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<sup>64</sup> 11:25 - fulness of the Gentiles: a reference to the full number of Gentiles who make up the Church. When the full number of Gentiles in the Church have been saved, the Church will be raptured. Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week will begin, and God will begin working strategically and explicitly with Israel. By the time Christ returns to set up His Kingdom millions of Jews will have become believers, for God will have rectified their hardening and their spiritual blindness (see Jer. 31:31-17; Zech. 12:10-13:1)!

- H 2 God's covenant to remove from Israel (all) sins: "AND THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS." 11:27 (cf. Isa. 27:9)
- D2 The reasons for national Israel's total salvation 11:28-32
  - E1 God's election of the nation 11:28
    - G1 National Israel's position from the nations' viewpoint -- Enemies of the gospel for the nations' benefit: From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, 11:28a
    - G2 National Israel's position from God's viewpoint -- God's beloved choice because of promises made to the patriarchs: but from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; 11:28b
  - E2 God's unswerving character 11:29
    - G1 God does not alter His gifts: for the gifts 11:29a
    - G2 God does not alter His calling: and the calling of God are irrevocable. 11:29b
  - E3 God's determination to show mercy to Israel and all other nations 11:30-32
    - G1 The fact of God's present mercy to the nations: 11:30
      - H 1 The Gentiles' past disobedience: For just as you once were disobedient to God,
      - H 2 The Gentiles' present possession of mercy because of Israel's disobedience: but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience,
    - G2 The fact of God's future mercy to Israel 11:31
      - H 1 The fact of Israel's present disobedience: so these also now have been disobedient,
      - H 2 The prospect of present jealousy over the Gentiles providing future mercy for Israel: in order that because of the mercy shown to you they also may now be shown mercy.
    - G3 remarkable redemptive program with regard to all nations 11:32

H 1 Having shut up all nations in disobedience:  
For God has shut up all in disobedience  
11:32a

H 2 To show mercy to all nations: that He might  
show mercy to all. 11:32b

**C 5 The reaction of praise for God's merciful wisdom in relation to all the earth's nations 11:33-36**

D1 Praise of the depth of the wealth of God's character as seen in His  
11:33a

E1 Wisdom: Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom

E2 Knowledge: and knowledge of God!

D2 Praise of God's wisdom and knowledge as seen in His 11:33b-34

E1 Unsearchable judgments: How unsearchable are His  
judgments 11:33b

E2 Unchartable methods: and unfathomable His ways! 11:33c

E3 Unknowable mind: FOR WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE  
LORD, 11:34a (cf. Isa. 40:13-14; Jer. 23:18)

E4 Uncounselability: or WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR?  
11:34b

D3 Praise of God's initiative 11:35-36a

E1 Because His gifts are given out of indebtedness to no one:  
OR WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID  
BACK TO HIM AGAIN? 11:35 (cf. Job 35:7; 41:11) <sup>65</sup>

E2 Because He is the Be-All and the End-All of all things  
11:36a

G1 The Source of all: For from Him

G2 The Administrator of all: and through Him

G3 The Purpose of all: and to Him are all things.

D4 To God be the Glory into the ages: To Him be the glory forever.

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<sup>65</sup> 11:35 - that it might be paid back to him again?: There are some people whose every motive one has to question. Why is he doing this? What hidden agenda does he have? To whom is he beholden that he makes such an offer? God carries none of this baggage. He gives gifts sincerely, with no strings and no hidden agenda, simply because He wishes to. God, though the most complex Being in all the universe, is very simple and transparent in His dealings with man. His motives are always pure and ethical – unquestionable.

Amen. 11:36b

**A6**    **TRANSFORMATION: The Application of Righteousness in Specific Areas 12:1 - 15:13** \*\*\*

**B 1**    **In the Believer's Daily Conduct 12**

**C 1**    **The logical foundation for daily conduct 12:1-2**

D1    The offering of the body to God 12:1

E1    The urgency: {1} Therefore <sup>66</sup> I urge <sup>67</sup> you,

E2    The addressees: brethren,<sup>68</sup>

E3    The motivation: by the mercies <sup>69</sup> of God,

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<sup>66</sup> 12:1 - therefore: The conjunction *oun* (3767). In this context, *oun* is used “inferentially, to introduce a logical result or inference from what precedes ....” Thus, it is translated “therefore, so, consequently” (*Friberg Greek Analytical Lexicon of the New Testament*). NASB translation frequencies include therefore (178), so (153), then (141), so then (9), now (5), contrary (1), however (1), so ... then (1). The inference Paul here makes is connected with “the mercies of God”, on which, see the footnote. In view of God mercies, Paul urges the Roman believers to present their bodies a living sacrifice (12:1); continually refuse to be conformed to this world (12:2); but rather to be transformed by the renewing of the mind (12:2).

<sup>67</sup> 12:1 - urge: *parakaleo* (3870): Keep urging (pres. act. imptv.). The appeal to Christians to dedicate themselves to God is an open-ended, ongoing appeal. Literally, Paul *begs* the Christian brothers in Rome to present their bodies a living sacrifice to God, refuse to conform to this age, and rather to be transformed by renewing their minds.

<sup>68</sup> 12:1 - brethren (*adelphos*, 80): A general reference to the Christians at Rome whom Paul here addressed as “brothers.” Yet, Paul realized that in a church, men are the key. If the men dedicate themselves to the Lord, the chances are excellent that the women, most of whom are their wives, will follow suit.

Paul made his appeal to people who were already Christians. There are some who espouse what I term “Lordship salvation.” In this regard, some state, “If He is not Lord *of all*, He is not Lord *at all*.” This is manifestly untrue. There is progress in the Christian life, which is entered by simple faith in Jesus. To those who are already Christians, Paul urges a dedication of one’s body, a refusal to conform to this age, and the renewal of the mind.

There may be some individuals who enter the Christian life with a dedication and commitment intact from their first day. But most of us, I suspect, are not like that. As we grow in the Christian life, we become more and more aware of what Jesus’ lordship entails in practical terms. Consequently we are forced to make decisions – will I dedicate this aspect of my life to God or not? Sometimes circumstances in life crop up that leave us scratching our heads and saying, “I wasn’t aware of that! – I guess I had better yield that aspect of my life over to Jesus!” Living the Christian life is a lifelong process with many twists and turns in the road that were unexpected and unanticipated – and we have new decisions to make about yieldedness and dedication.

<sup>69</sup> 12:1 - mercies of God: *oiktirmos* (3628) is not a common word in the NT, occurring only five times – here in Romans 12:1, “the mercies of God”; in 2 Cor. 1:3 God is described as “the Father of mercies”; in Philippians 2:1, “compassion” is seen as a desirable human attribute; believers are commanded to clothe themselves with “a heart of compassion” (Col. 3:12); “Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses” (Heb. 10:28). So *oiktirmos* refers to sympathy, mercy, or pity (Friberg); its corresponding verb, *oiktiro*, means “to show mercy and concern, with the implication of sensitivity and compassion” (*Louw-Nida Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*).

The preceding chapters of Romans have demonstrated God’s mercy: (1) God’s wrath is revealed from heaven against the ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness” (Rom. 1:18). Indeed, all men stand condemned before God (Rom. 1:18 - 3:20); (2) God mercifully declares righteous those who place their faith in His Son, who paid the death penalty (Rom. 3:21 - 5:21); (3) God has provided for the sanctification in time and eternity for all believers (Rom. 6 - 8); (4) God’s fairness and justice is vindicated in

- E4 The objective: to present <sup>70</sup> your bodies <sup>71</sup>
- G1 a living <sup>72</sup>
- G2 and holy sacrifice,
- E5 The assessment
- G1 acceptable <sup>73</sup> to God,
- G2 which is your spiritual <sup>74</sup> service of worship.<sup>75</sup>

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dealings with the entire human race in that He has temporarily set aside national Israel to save the earth's nations (Rom. 9-11). What a merciful, compassionate God! It is in view of these mercies (*oiktirmos*) that Paul begs Christians to dedicate themselves as a living sacrifice to God; refuse to conform to this present evil age; but instead to be transformed by renewing their mind!

It is most remarkable that Paul does not attempt to shame or "guilt-trip" Christians into dedicating themselves to God! Rather he begs them to respond to God's loving, compassionate mercies!

<sup>70</sup> 12:1 - present: *paristemi* (3936): to present at a point in time (aor. act. inf.). This amounts, I believe, to a crisis in one's Christian life. I think that there is a parallel to be made between maturing physically and socially as a human being from infancy to mature adulthood on the one hand, and maturing spiritually and experientially as a Christian from infancy to mature adulthood on the other. I think that what Paul is saying is that at some point, all Christians need to be confronted with the urgent appeal to dedicate their bodies to Jesus, to stop being conformed to this present evil era, and to be transformed by renewing their mind! Many baby and adolescent Christians live the Christian life perhaps for their own benefit. But mature, adult Christians have made this basic and crisis commitment to stop living their lives for themselves, and instead to live their lives for Jesus. This is not an easy decision to make, and it should not be made casually. It should be revolutionary! And the entire way one lives from that point forward should be perceptibly different!

<sup>71</sup> 12:2 - bodies: *soma* (4983). "The word 'bodies,' mindful of the Old Testament sacrifices, represents the totality of one's life and activities, of which his body is the vehicle of expression" (John A. Witmer, Romans, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary [TBKC]*). If God has your body, He has all of you!

<sup>72</sup> 12:1 - living: *dzao* (aor. act. fem. sing. ptc.). In contrast to the dead bodies in the OT sacrificial system, Christians are to present their bodies as living sacrifices so they can thereby serve God with their bodies.

<sup>73</sup> 12:1 - acceptable: *euarestos* (2101) literally, "to God, well-pleasing." See more comments on the same word in 12:2.

<sup>74</sup> 12:1 - spiritual: the reasonable (*logikos* - 3050), rational, logical

<sup>75</sup> 12:1 - service of worship: *latreia* (2999). "Religious service based in worship" (Friberg)

- D2 The continual refusal to be outwardly conformed to this age: {2}  
And do not be conformed <sup>76</sup> to this world,<sup>77</sup> 12:2a
- D3 The commitment to continual inner transformation 12:2b
- E1 The process: but be transformed <sup>78</sup>
- E2 The method: by the renewing <sup>79</sup> of your mind,
- E3 The goal: so that you may prove <sup>80</sup> what the will <sup>81</sup> of God is,

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<sup>76</sup> 12:2 - conformed: do not be being conformed (*suschematidzo*, 4964) (present middle or passive masculine plural imperative) Middle = “to conform or assimilate oneself to” (Bagster). Christians are commanded (the word is an imperative) to avoid being conformed or assimilated to this present evil era! The difficulty lies in that we are constantly being bombarded by every aspect of society to conform to the standards of this era: Our non-Christian friends and associates pressure us to conform; our schools pressure us to conform; our government pressures us to conform; our entertainers pressure us to conform; our workplace pressures us to conform; our news media pressure us to conform; the marketplace, along with all its advertizing, pressures us to conform. It takes a deliberate, persistent, watchful effort to resist being conformed to this present evil era! The biggest motivator ought to be a warm response to God’s vast sympathy and compassion!

<sup>77</sup> 12:2 - world: to this world (lit. age) (*aion*, 165) “a period of time of significant character; life; an era; an age; hence, a state of things marking an age or era; the present order of nature; the natural condition of man, the world; ...” (Bagster). We get our word eon from *aion*, but *aion* has not so much to do with the length, as with the character of the era. NASB translation frequencies forever, 27; forever and ever, 20; age, 20; world, 7; ages, 6; ever, 2; forevermore, 2; eternal, 2; ancient time, 1; beginning of time, 1; course, 1; eternity, 1; long ago, 1; never, 1; old, 1; time, 1; worlds, 1. Here in Rom. 12:2, I prefer to use the translation *age* or *era*, as time is the most fundamental aspect of *aion*. Again, the emphasis is not so much the length of the era, but the character of it. This present age is characterized as evil! Jesus gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue us from this present evil age (Gal. 1:4). According to 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, Satan is designated as the god of this era (*aion*). In context, the people of this age are said (1) to be perishing; (2) the Good News is veiled to them; (3) they are unbelieving; (4) the god of this era has blinded their minds; (5) he has done so in order that they might not see the light of the Good News. So this age is very much in a state of blinded rebellion against God and Jesus. Satan has profoundly blinded minds of the people of this era to the Good News of the glory of the Messiah, Jesus, who is the image of God. It is no wonder that Christians are urged not to be conformed to this age or era! This era is completely inimical to God and Christ and the values they represent!

<sup>78</sup> 12:2 - transformed: *metamorphoo* (3339) (2 pers. pl. pres. imptv. pass.) “to change the external form, transfigure; mid. to change one’s form, be transfigured; to undergo a spiritual transformation (Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18)”

<sup>79</sup> 12:2 - renewing: *anakainosis* (342) noun, dat. sing. “renovation, renewal” (Bagster). “figuratively in the NT, as the action by which a person becomes spiritually new and different” (Friberg).

<sup>80</sup> 12:2 - prove: *dokimadzo* (1381) “to prove by trial; to test, assay metals, (1 Pet. 1:7); to prove, try, examine, scrutinize, (Luke 14:19; Romans 12:2) ....” (Bagster). To me this means that as we live our lives out in actual practice according to the dictates of Romans 12:1-2, we increasingly demonstrate that God’s will is good, acceptable, and perfect. It may not initially seem so to us. But I have seen Christians go through some exceedingly difficult experiences, yet say, “I wouldn’t have missed it for the world.”

<sup>81</sup> 12:2 - will of God: *thelema* (2307). There is an inherent tension in the will of God. This is reflected in its first usage in the NT, Matt. 6:10, where Jesus illustrates prayer by praying, “Your kingdom come. Your **will** be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” There is the **moral will of God**, which ought to be done, but most often on this earth, is not done. It is always done in heaven, and Jesus prayed that it might so be done on earth. Obviously, from Jesus’ point of view, God’s will was not yet being done on earth as in heaven. Otherwise, why pray the prayer?

There is another will of God – His **sovereign will**. That will encompasses everything that happens. God’s sovereign will is seen in Ephesians 1:11, where Paul said that in Jesus “also we have obtained an inheritance, having

- G1 that which is good <sup>82</sup>
- G2 and acceptable <sup>83</sup>
- G3 and perfect.<sup>84</sup>

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been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His **will**,” the objective of which is “the praise of His glory” (Eph. 1:12). In that God “works all things after the counsel of His will,” which includes the predestining of the elect, God’s sovereign will necessarily encompasses *everything* that happens. It makes little sense at this point to distinguish between God’s decree and His permission. If it happened, either God was in control or He wasn’t. It is an abomination to hold that God is *ever* out of control. Therefore whatever happens is under His control and part of His sovereign will, if not His moral will. It was not God’s moral will for Adam to sin. But in God’s sovereign will, He permitted Adam to sin.

Paul’s point here in Romans 12:2 is that if we offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, refuse to conform to this era, but rather allow ourselves to be transformed by renewing our minds, we will demonstrate in our lives that God’s will (both moral and sovereign, however that may unfold) is good, acceptable, and complete, meaning that there is nothing lacking. The good, acceptable, and complete may not be so according to our standards, but certainly so according to God’s. In practice, it may take a lifetime of living on the basis of Romans 12:1-2 to demonstrate the perfect nature of God’s will in every area of our lives. In fact, I suspect we may not see the complete perfectability of God’s will for us until we can examine the data on the other side of eternity. Life is hard, and we must take God’s perfect will by faith, not by sight.

<sup>82</sup> 12:2 - good: *agathos* (18). Here, *agathos* is a neuter adjective used to describe the will of God. If we wish to know and understand the moral will of God and His sovereign will as it relates to our particular lives, we will have to take the three steps Paul commands us to take: (1) offer our bodies as a living sacrifice to God; (2) avoid being conformed to this age; and (3) renew our minds. I believe God’s will here refers both to His moral will, which is inevitably the same for each person; but also His sovereign will, which is inevitably different for each believer. Each of us believers, in the sovereign will of God, goes through trials, tribulations, and heartaches; triumphs, successes, and joys. God uses each circumstance to mold us and transform us into a complete and useful subject. God’s sovereign will is able to take the good and the bad we experience and mold each Christian into a unique individual, admirably conformed to the image of His dear Son (Rom. 8:28-29).

<sup>83</sup> 12:2 - acceptable: *euarestos* (2101). A neuter adjective describing God’s will. NASB translates it as acceptable (3), pleasing (3), and well-pleasing (3). If we offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, that is acceptable *euarestos* or pleasing to God. Then in actual practice we prove out the fact that God’s will is acceptable *euarestos* or pleasing to us!

We should make it our ambition, whether we are dead or alive, to be acceptable *euarestos* or pleasing to God (2 Cor. 5:9). We should try to learn what is pleasing *euarestos* to the Lord (Eph. 5:10). It really pleases *euarestos* the Lord when children obey their parents in all things (Col. 3:20). Slaves are exhorted to be well-pleasing *euarestos* to their masters rather than argumentative (Tit. 2:9). We pray that God will work into our lives that which is well-pleasing *euarestos* in His sight (Heb. 13:21).

<sup>84</sup> 12:2 - perfect: *teleios* (5046) – “complete, perfect; (1) with its chief component as totality, as opposed to partial or limited ... (Rom. 12:2; 1 Cor. 13:10; Heb. 9:11; Matt. 5:48; 19:21); (2) with its chief component being full development as opposed to immaturity ... (1 Cor. 14:20; 1 Cor. 2:6; James 1:4; 1 John 4:18); (3) with its chief component being full preparation or readiness ... (1 Cor. 1:28; James 3:2); in all its meanings *teleios* carries the component of a purpose that has been achieved” (*Friberg Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*). Our lives are in a state of process, and as we obey the three imperatives in these two verses, we will demonstrate that both God’s moral will and His sovereign will for us are complete, finally developing us into believers who will reflect the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27) and of Christ (Rom. 8:28-29). We ought to carry signs with us that read, “Under Construction. Please be patient. God is not finished with me yet.” Those signs ought to help fellow believers be patient with us, and they ought to help us be patient with God and patient with ourselves.

## C 2 In relation to gifted ministry to the Church 12:3-8

- D1 The foundation for proper self-esteem in ministry 12:3
- E1 The basis of Paul's apostolic communication: For through the grace <sup>85</sup> given to me
  - E2 The scope of his communication: I say to everyone <sup>86</sup> among you
  - E3 The prohibition against inflated self-esteem: not to think more highly of himself <sup>87</sup> than he ought to think;
  - E4 The recommendation of proper self-esteem: but to think so as to have sound judgment, <sup>88</sup>
  - E5 The source of proper self-esteem: as God has allotted to each a measure of faith. <sup>89</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> 12:3 - through the grace given to me: Paul did not plant the church at Rome, nor had he ever visited them, though he had hoped to do so (Rom. 15:22-29). Yet, his intentions were, in the latter part of this letter, to write "very boldly" to them, on account of the grace that God had given him to be "a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles" (15:15-16). By grace (*charis*, 5485) – a gift – given to him (in 12:3 and 15:15), Paul meant that Jesus Christ had graciously given him the privilege and responsibility of serving the Gentiles on His behalf. It was for that reason that Paul had, in this portion of his letter, begun making some very personal commands that demanded their obedience. He was not acting on his own authority – he was serving the Messiah!

<sup>86</sup> 12:3 - to everyone: Paul was, indeed, becoming personal. The word *pas* (3956) appears in the singular. We could translate, "to each one among (all singular words) you" (plural).

<sup>87</sup> 12:3 - not to think more highly of himself: These seven words translate two in Greek - the negative (*me*) and the present infinitive, *hyperphroneo* (5252). They were not to be haughty or conceited. The trouble with all the emphasis, even in Christian thinking today, on self-esteem is that almost invariably, when a Christian looks at himself unaided by a biblical perspective, he tends to over-rate his importance, and destructive pride ensues! To be honest, when I was in school, I had a fairly high opinion of myself. But the school of hard knocks has taught me that I am, in many respects, pretty average. I think that I, at my present age, have a much more realistic opinion of myself than I did 45 or 50 years ago! I am a small duck in a small pond, and whatever gifts I have are exactly that – gifts, not earnings! Even so, I regularly battle pride.

<sup>88</sup> 12:3 - sound judgment: *sophroneo* (4993), lit., to be sound-minded or saved-minded. More bluntly, to think sanely or sane-mindedly. The root word *phroneo* (5426) occurs repeatedly. "For I say ... not to **super-think** (*hyperphroneo*, 5252) beyond what is necessary **to think** (*phroneo*), but **to think** (*phroneo*) toward the [goal of] **to be sound-thinking**" (*sophroneo*). It is always a challenge for us Christians, battling the world, the flesh, and the devil, to think sanely. This means we must always seek to use God's perspective so that we live in a world of reality, not insanity and self-delusion.

<sup>89</sup> 12:3 - as God has allotted to each a measure of faith: A proper self-esteem comes from an assessment of myself from God's perspective, using God's gift of faith. Paul is about to embark upon the subject of spiritual gifts, and it will require faith for each believer to live in light of the fact that God has given him a particular spiritual gift which he is to use in serving.

- D2 The instruction about the Church as constituting in Christ a single spiritual body whose members are diverse, yet united in mutual interdependence 12:4-5
- E1 Implying the diversity of the many individuals: the analogy of the human body 12:4
- G1 The multiplicity of various organs in a single human body: For just as we have many members in one body<sup>90</sup>
- G2 The variety of the functions of the human body's organs: and all the members do not have the same function,<sup>91</sup>
- E2 Implying the interdependence of each individual: the application of the human body to the body of Christ 12:5
- G1 The unity of the diverse, multiple believers

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<sup>90</sup> 12:4, 5 - one body; one body in Christ: The word for body in each case is *soma* (4983). In the first instance (12:4) Paul used it of the literal, flesh-and-blood human body; in the second (12:5), he used it for the mystical, spiritual body of Christ, meaning all the believers in Jesus of the present Church Age, who thus constitute his presence in the world today. Of course, a great portion of the members of the body of Christ are deceased and now with Him in heaven. Nevertheless, all believers in Christ in the Church Age constitute the Body of Christ.

The Body of Christ, the Church, remains a distinct entity in both time and eternity, perpetually distinguished from believers among the Nations (or Gentiles) both before and after the Church Age, and from the redeemed from among the nation of Israel, both before and after the Church Age. Redeemed Jewish people in the Church Age have a dual status – they are eternally identifiable as members of the Church and also as Israelis. The primary residence of the Church and of the Nation of Israel in eternity will be New Jerusalem. The primary residence of the redeemed from among the Nations in eternity will be New Earth. A corollary presumption is that there will exist in New Earth an identifiable portion of real estate identifiable as the nation of Israel. As Isaiah indicates, foreigners, redeemed from among the Nations, will perform the bulk of the tasks of agriculture, manufacturing, and commerce in the physical State of Israel on New Earth (Isa. 61:5-6). Many of these concepts are unacceptable to advocates of Covenant Theology and, to a lesser extent, Progressive Dispensationalists, but I believe the Scriptures support this view.

<sup>91</sup> 12:4 - all the members do not have the same function: Paul is obviously using the human body to teach truths about the spiritual body of Christ. The implied concept “body of Christ” used in this passage (see also 1 Cor. 12:12-31; Eph. 4:12) clearly does not here refer to Jesus’ physical body, but to His spiritual or mystical body, which is composed of all of the believers in Jesus during the Church Age. Paul’s point is that we do not expect the different members/organs of the human physical body to perform the same task. The arms, legs, kidneys, and lungs all perform distinct tasks for the greater good of the human body and the person whom they represent. By the same token, we should not expect all the different members of the Body of Christ to perform the same task. There is great diversity among the members of the Body of Christ, and yet there is a mutual unity and interdependence. And this all fits together for the greater good of the Body and the Person whom we represent, Jesus.

By way of practical application, I as a pastor am occasionally confronted with unrealistic expectations, sometimes voiced, more often not. I have sometimes jokingly said that a church looks at its past pastors, selects all the gifted traits from each of them and throws out all their less-gifted traits, then expects its new pastor to exhibit all the gifted traits and none of the ungifted traits! It is not only unrealistic, but is also unbiblical to place those expectations on one person. God has gifted each of us in a different way with a unique ministry, and we need to accept and support one another with the gifts and ministries that each of us has. A church who recognizes these truths and practices them will be more effective and more harmonious than a church who does not.

- constituting Christ's Body: so we, who are many,<sup>92</sup>  
are one body in Christ,<sup>93</sup>
- G2 The interdependence of the many members of Christ's Body: and individually members one of another.<sup>94</sup>
- D3 The necessity of each individual serving in his God-given area of giftedness 12:6-8
- E1 The importance of knowing the nature of gifts 12:6a
- G1 The fact – the variety of spiritual gifts of different believers: Since we have gifts<sup>95</sup> that differ
- G2 The reason – God's differing distribution of grace:

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<sup>92</sup> 12:5 - we, who are many: As Christians, we need to acknowledge the staggering diversity in the Body of Christ. As Paul revealed in 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, there are various gifts, but the same Spirit who gives them; there are various ministries using those gifts, but the same Lord who authorizes; there are various effects in employing those gifts in those ministries, but the same God who empowers. We need to recognize and celebrate and make good use of all the diversely-gifted people the Lord brings into our local churches. Let us not expect "cookie cutter" Christians coming off the assembly line. Let us expect and capitalize on the diversity!

<sup>93</sup> 12:5 - one body in Christ: Despite the fact that there are millions of us believers in Jesus, and despite the fact that we are so incredibly diverse, we are actually one body – the Body of Christ. The almost infinite diversity in the Body of Christ ought not to obscure the fact of our unity in Christ. Theoretically, it seems, there ought to be a way for us all to unite together for the common good. That was, after all, a fervent intent of Jesus' High Priestly prayer in John 17:11, 20-22. Unfortunately, that has not been the case. I found recently on the internet a Baptist pastor of a flock of fifty who asserted that his was the only true church in the entire world, and he railed against other Christians with whom he would not associate. I do not think that is quite what Jesus had in mind.... But sadly, I fear I am also guilty....

<sup>94</sup> 12:5 - individually members one of another: Not only are we united in one body, we Christians are mutually dependent on one another. It is easier to see that on a small scale – in a local church. It is not so easy to see that on a larger scale – the Church Universal. But surely it is true. Perhaps we should look at it this way – there are Roman Catholics who can reach people for Jesus that Baptists cannot. There are Presbyterians who can reach people for Jesus that Methodists and Lutherans and Mennonites cannot. And there are amillennialists who can reach people for Jesus that dispensational premillennialists cannot. And there are Kenyans who can reach people for Jesus that Venezuelans and British cannot. I could go on, but you get my point. The interesting thing is that no one has a lock on truth, and no one entirely represents truth. There are people who attend Roman Catholic churches that are truly believers in Christ, and other Roman Catholic attenders who are not. Similarly, there are people who attend Baptist churches that are truly believers in Christ, and Baptist attenders who are not. It is a good thing that Jesus does not ask us to consign people to hell. Otherwise we would send some fellow-believers there (Matt. 13:24-30).

<sup>95</sup> 12:6 - gifts: The word is *charisma* (5486), a verbal noun from *charidzomai* (5483) (*give, give freely, even forgive*). A related noun is *charis* (5485), grace. Theologians call these gifts (*charismata*, plural accusative case), of which Paul here speaks *spiritual gifts*. A spiritual gift is a special, God-given ability to serve Him. Some of the gifts (such as healing – 1 Cor. 12:28) have a miraculous element in them, while others (such as teaching – Rom. 12:7) seem to consist of a heightened natural ability. Nevertheless, all spiritual gifts are supernatural in that the ability comes from God. There are some groups of Christians who emphasize especially the gifts of miracle working, healing, speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, and prophecy. Sometimes this movement is called Pentecostal, at other times, Charismatic. There is a technical distinction between the two, but that is beyond our present discussion. With the possible exception of the gift of prophecy, the gifts Paul here discusses in Romans 12 do not have miraculous overtones. 1 Corinthians 12-14 gives a much fuller discussion of spiritual gifts.

according to the grace given to us,<sup>96</sup>

E2 The importance of exercising the gifts: each of us is to exercise them accordingly:<sup>97</sup> 12:6b-8

G1 Of prophecy according to faith: if prophecy,<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> 12:6 - gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: All Christians have been given a gift or gifts. Put another way, all Christians have been gifted to serve God. It is an act of grace (charis, 5485) on God's part that permits us to serve Him. The more we learn about the Christian life, the more we discover that it is God's grace, meaning unmerited favor, that is behind the whole of the Christian life. Whatever is of grace, of course, can not be claimed for one's own credit. If God gifts me to serve Him, then I have no rational reason for being proud of my gifts, on the one hand, or of being discouraged and jealous because I do not have certain gifts I might have preferred! Paul is clear that the Holy Spirit distributes gifts as He wishes (1 Cor. 12:11), not as we might wish! We should expect that we are gifted differently than other Christians, and that other Christians are gifted differently than we are. Cooperation and mutual upbuilding for the benefit of Christ's Body and the expansion of His work are in order.

<sup>97</sup> 12:6 - *each of us is to exercise them accordingly*: The NASB editors have placed this clause in italics because it has no counterpart in the Greek text. The Greek text here is elliptical, but the English translation is warranted. What Paul is saying is this: God has given each Christian a gift. Whatever that gift is, major on that gift! Use it for God's glory! Do well what God has gifted you to do. Don't fret over gifts you don't have. Don't try to serve where you are not gifted. Do major on serving where you are gifted! All of us have certain tasks that we are obligated to perform that may not necessarily be in an area where we are gifted. Perform them, but don't major on them. Major instead – focus instead on serving in areas in which God has gifted you. You will be more effective, and the Body of Christ and the purposes of God will be better served!

<sup>98</sup> 12:6 - prophecy: "Prophecy" translates *propheteia* (4394). This word conveys a dual meaning, depending upon the context.

(1) In some contexts *propheteia* (4394) refers to a message received *directly* from God and which was to be passed on to people. We might further identify this meaning as referring to "the *product* of prophecy," meaning the end result – that which the prophet either spoke or wrote or, in some cases, both. Examples include Matt. 13:14; 1 Thess. 5:20 (notice the plural); 1 Tim. 1:18 (note the plural); 2 Pet. 1:20; probably also 1:21; Rev. 1:3; 19:10; 22:7, 10, 18.

(2) In other contexts *propheteia* (4394) refers to the actual process of communicating to others a message received directly from God. We might specify this meaning as "the process of prophecy." Examples of this second meaning include our present passage, Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:10; 13:2, 8; 14:6, 22; possibly 1 Thess. 5:20; 1 Tim. 4:14; possibly 2 Pet. 1:21; Rev. 11:6; possibly 19:10. Charles Ryrie, in his *Ryrie Study Bible (RSB)* note on 1 Cor. 12:8-10, defines prophecy (*propheteia*, 4394) in v. 10 as "The ability to proclaim new revelation from God." His definition focuses on the second of the two meanings outlined above.

John MacArthur, in his commentary on Rom. 12:6, acknowledges Ryrie's definition, but disagrees with it. He states that while prophecy "certainly had a revelatory aspect during Old Testament and apostolic times, it was not limited to revelation. It was exercised when there was public proclamation of divine truth, old or new." He states, further, that prophecy "has the literal meaning of speaking forth, with no connotation of prediction or other supernatural or mystical significance. The gift of prophecy is simply the gift of preaching, of proclaiming the Word of God."

At this stage of my study, I reject MacArthur's definition. I believe he is confusing the gift of prophecy with the gift of teaching. I believe that Biblical prophets did not prophesy every time they opened their mouths in a public assembly. Sometimes, perhaps most of the time, they merely taught that which they had learned from their own study of Scripture or that which had previously been revealed to them by the Spirit of God. But when they were merely teaching, they were not acting as prophets, but as teachers. What made them prophets was the fact that they received messages directly from God and communicated those messages without error to the people. Just as Old Testament prophets at certain times predicted the future, so did New Testament prophets. The prophet Agabus accurately predicted a famine (Acts 11:28) and Paul's incarceration under Gentile authority (Acts 21:10-11 cf. Acts 21:27 - 28:31). When the prophets spoke *ex cathedra*, as prophets not teachers, they could not err, because their message came directly from God.

It is my personal belief that, with the completion of the New Testament canon of Scripture, God was no longer giving the gift of prophecy. Paul does, after all, reveal that prophecy is a temporary gift (1 Cor. 13:8-10). If bona fide prophets have existed since the writing of the Book of Revelation, why have none of their utterances been incorporated in Scripture? It is unprecedented that utterances of prophets, if indeed they exist, have gone unrecorded

- according to the proportion of his faith;<sup>99</sup> 12:6b
- G2 Of ministry (service): if service, in his serving;<sup>100</sup>  
12:7a
- G3 Of teaching: or he who teaches, in his teaching;<sup>101</sup>

in Scripture for almost two millennia!

Will the world ever see prophets again? Undoubtedly! God has revealed that, during the Tribulation period, “And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth” (Rev. 11:3). Furthermore, that which Yahweh predicted through the prophet Joel (2:28), though it was partially fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:16-18), has yet to be fulfilled for Israel in all its fullness: “It will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.” Additionally, Jesus is a prophet. When He reigns in Jerusalem for a thousand years, nations will stream from all over the world to learn of His ways (Isa. 2:3). I cannot imagine that none of His words will be added to the Bible!

<sup>99</sup> 12:6 - according to the proportion of his faith: There are two ways this phrase can be translated. Faith (*pisteos*, 4102) appears with the article (*tes*). “The faith” probably refers back to the occurrence of “faith” in 12:3, where Paul exhorted his readers to think with “sound judgment, according as God allotted to each a measure of faith.” Since it takes faith to exercise spiritual gifts, Paul here urged a prophet [to prophesy] in accordance with the amount (proportion – *analogia*, 356) of faith he possessed. But “the faith” can also refer to the body of revealed truth which one is to believe. In that case, Paul was urging a prophet [to prophesy] in correspondence (*analogia*) with or analogous to the body of revealed truth – “the faith” (*pistis*, 4102).

There are about 37 passages in the Greek NT which combine the article “the” (*tes*) with the noun “faith” (*pisteos*, 4102). In most of these, the NASB justifiably does not translate as “the faith” depending on other words in the context. But in nine passages, NASB *does* translate the phrase “the faith,” because from the context, it is clear that the writer was referring to “the body of revealed truth which is to be believed.” Those passages are Acts 13:8; Gal. 6:10; Eph. 4:13; Phil. 1:25, 27; 1 Tim. 3:9; 1 Tim. 4:1, 6; 1 Tim. 6:10.

Personally, I believe that in Rom. 12:6, Paul had both ideas in mind. I think that he meant that a prophet must prophesy according to the amount or proportion of faith which he possesses; and also that a prophet should prophesy analogous to or in correspondence with the body of revealed truth which is to be believed. In this latter instance, a Biblical prophet never utters a prophecy which contradicts the previously revealed truth of the Bible.

<sup>100</sup> 12:7 - if service, in his serving: “Service” (*diakonian*, 1248) is the *accusative* singular form of the noun; “serving” (*diakonia*, 1248) is the *dative* singular feminine of the same noun. Friberg’s lexical entry: (1) generally *service* (Heb. 1:14); (2) as charitable giving *aid*, *support*, *arrangement for provision* (Acts 6:1); (3) as preparing meals *servicing*, *preparation* (Luke 10:40); (4) as the role or position of one serving God in a special way *task*, *office*, *ministry* (Rom. 12:7; 1 Tim. 1:12).” Let us look at some examples: (1) Martha busied herself with food *preparation* (*diakonia*, 1248) and complained to Jesus that her sister Mary had left her to do all the *servicing* (*diakoneo*, 1247) alone (Luke 10:40). Jesus said that Mary had chosen the better option of having fellowship with Him (Luke 10:41-42)! (2) The NT church provided a daily *servicing* (*diakonia*, 1248) of food for widows (Acts 6:1). (3) The Gentile Christians in Antioch sent money to provide *relief* (*diakonia*, 1248) for the Christian Jews in Judea (Acts 11:29). (4) God had given to Paul and his associates a *ministry* (*diakonia*, 1248) of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18). (5) Angels are sent to render *service* (*diakonia*, 1248) to those who inherit salvation (Heb. 1:14). Here in Rom. 12:7, *service* (*diakonia*, 1248) is seen as a spiritual gift – a special God given ability to serve Him by serving other Christians. A brief working definition of this gift is as follows: A special ability to meet the needs – often the physical needs – of others. Paul’s point was this: If God has given a Christian the gift of service, that Christian ought to specialize in using that gift to serve others!

<sup>101</sup> 12:7 - or he who teaches, in his teaching: “He who teaches” translates the verb *didasko* (1321); “teaching” translates the noun *didaskalia* (1319), the content of that which one teaches.

Examples of the verb, to teach (*didasko*, 1321): (1) As one studies the NT, he realizes that Jesus strongly emphasized teaching. He went around *teaching* (*didasko*, 1321) in synagogues (Matt. 4:23). (2) The Pharisees acknowledged (whether or not they actually believed it) that Jesus *taught* (*didasko*, 1321) the way of God in truth and impartiality (Matt. 22:16). (3) It was no accident that Jesus’ apostles, who had seen him teach for three years, themselves emphasized teaching. The priests and Sadducees were upset that the apostles were *teaching* (*didasko*, 1321) in Jesus the resurrection of the dead (Acts 4:1-2).

Examples of the noun, teaching (*didaskalia*, 1319): (1) Paul wrote, “Whatever was written [in the OT] in

12:7b

- G4 Of urging: or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; 12:8a
- G5 Of sharing intently (single-mindedly): he who gives, with liberality; 12:8b
- G6 Of leading diligently: he who leads, with diligence;<sup>102</sup> 12:8c
- G7 Of showing mercy cheerfully: he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. 12:8d

### C 3 In relation to general deportment toward the Church 12:9-16

D1 Flavored over-all by love 12:9-10

E1 Genuine, discerning love 12:9

G1 The command of genuine love: Let love<sup>103</sup> be

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earlier times was written for our *instruction* (*didaskalia*, 1319) (Rom. 15:4). (2) [In this second, extended passage (in Ephesians), I have identified certain words that also appear in Romans 12.] Paul also wrote, “<sup>11</sup>And He [Jesus] gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers (*didaskolos*, 1320), <sup>12</sup>for the equipping of the saints for the work of service (*diakonia*, 1248), to the building up of the body of Christ; <sup>13</sup>until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. <sup>14</sup>As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of *doctrine* (*didaskalia*, 1319), by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming” (Eph. 4:11-14). (3) To the Colossians, Paul wrote about “the commandments and teachings (*didaskalia*, 1319) of men” (Col. 2:22). There are many Christians who somehow think that what Paul wrote about justification and election and sanctification is doctrine, but what Jesus said about the Good Samaritan is not. They are mistaken. Both are merely the content of what Paul and Jesus, respectively, taught.

How does someone who has the gift of teaching (*didasko*, 1321) differ from someone who has the gift of prophecy (*propheteia*, 4394)? Teaching is the communication of a message received *indirectly* from God, while prophecy is the communication of a message received *directly* from God. Teachers expound upon the messages communicated by prophets. Presumably, all prophets also have been given the gift of teaching, but not all teachers are prophets.

Paul’s point in Romans 12:7 is that if God has given a Christian the gift of teaching, he ought to focus on and major on the content (and perhaps presentation) of that which he teaches.

<sup>102</sup> 12:8 - he who leads, with diligence: *Diligence* is the word *spoude* (4710), from which we derive our English word, speed. In the NASB, it is translated twice in Mark-Luke as going somewhere “in a hurry.” It is translated as “diligence” in Rom. 12:8, 11; as “earnestness” six times in 2 Cor. and Hebrews; and as “making every effort” in Jude 1:3. The point is that church leaders are to lead with diligence, effort, energy, and enthusiasm. No half-hearted ambivalence or laziness is warranted here!

<sup>103</sup> 12:9 - love: The word is *agape* (26), the highest form of love. *Agape* love is the greatest of the three cardinal Christian virtues (1 Cor. 13:13). *Agape* love is self-sacrificial (“For God so loved that He gave”... (John 3:16), looking out for others’ interests, not its own (1 Cor. 13:5). Love is long-suffering, humble, and sides with truth (1 Cor. 13:4-7). God is essentially *agape* love (1 John 4:8, 16), and therefore we are to love as He does (1 John 4:7-8, 16). Loving one another is a sign that we are Christ’s disciples (John 13:35). Whoever loves the Father must also love the Father’s child (1 John 5:1).

- without hypocrisy.<sup>104</sup>
- G2 The command of discerning love<sup>105</sup>
- H 1 Fleeing moral evil: Abhor what is evil;<sup>106</sup>
- H 2 Adhering to moral good: cling to what is good.<sup>107</sup>
- E2 Family-brotherly love: Be devoted to one another in brotherly love;<sup>108</sup> 12:10a
- E3 Reciprocal honoring: give preference to one another in

<sup>104</sup> 12:9 - without hypocrisy: These two English words translate *anupokritos* (505), which incorporates the negative prefix *an* and the verb *hupokrinomai* (5271), “to pretend.” Biblical love cannot masquerade as loving another Christian on the one hand, while actually hating him on the other (1 John 4:20). I am sometimes asked, “Can I love a Christian brother but not like him?” That is a difficult question to answer. The standard for love is high:

<sup>4</sup>Love is patient, love is kind *and* is not jealous; love does not brag *and* is not arrogant, <sup>5</sup>does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong *suffered*, <sup>6</sup>does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; <sup>7</sup>bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things (1 Cor. 13:4-7).

At the same time, we must acknowledge that Jesus had three favorites – Peter, James, and John. Also, loving others does not mean that one does not confront them with their evil and hypocrisy. Jesus spoke the truth to His diabolical opponents – the scribes, Pharisees, priests, and Sadducees of His day (Matt. 23). Yet He loved them so much He died to pay for their sins! The standard of speech for Christians is to speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15).

*Anupokritos*, meaning not hypocritical, genuine, or sincere, is linked with love in Rom. 12:9, 2 Cor. 6:6 and 1 Pet. 1:22; with faith in 1 Tim. 1:5 and 2 Tim. 1:5; and with wisdom in James 3:17.

<sup>105</sup> 12:9 subtitle - The command of discerning love: The point of the caveat is that love cannot embrace moral evil, but must condone and support only that which is upright. For example, I am obligated to love another Christian, but I am not thereby obligated to embrace and support an evil agenda he may have. In context, a hypocritical love would include embracing someone’s evil.

<sup>106</sup> 12:9 - abhor what is evil: Abhor, *apostugeo* (655), is a strong word, used only here in the NT. It means to abhor or hate utterly, to shrink away from (Friberg). Louw-Nida Lexicon incorporates the ideas of “to have a strong dislike...implying repulsion and desire for avoidance...to despise.” It must be noted that Paul clearly intended that we are to abhor evil *things*, not evil *people*! “*to poneron*,” lit. “the evil,” appears in the accusative case, neuter gender, not the masculine gender! God loved evil people enough to send His Son to die for their sins!

<sup>107</sup> 12:9 - good: We are to cling to “the good” (*agathos*, 18). Used substantively here, “the good” refers to that which is morally good. Here, Paul deliberately switched cases from the accusative case to the dative case (*to poneron* was accusative; *tw agathw* is dative). Why did he switch? Because in the dative case, the spelling can be either neuter gender or masculine gender! While we are called to abhor only evil *things*, we are called to cling to good *things* and to good *people*!

<sup>108</sup> 12:10 - *be* devoted to one another in brotherly love: Back to our discussion of whether Christians can love one another with an *agape* love but not like one another... Paul here closes the wiggle room! *Be devoted* translates *philostorgos* (5387), used only here. *Philostorgos* is a compound composed of *philos* (5384) and *storge* (not used in the NT). *Philos* is a friendship kind of love. *Philos* is translated in the NASB as either *friend* (12 X) or *friends* (17 X). *Storge* means “cherishing one’s kindred, especially parents or children” (<http://www.studylight.org/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=5387>). So Christians are to have the same affection toward one another as friends and family members do!

Paul didn’t stop there. He added “brotherly love” (*philadelphia*, 5360), again from *philos* (5384) – friendship love, and *adelphos* (80), brother. We Christians are commanded to exhibit every kind of warm affection to other members of the Body of Christ! “To one another” means the warm affection is to be reciprocal, not one-sided. I don’t know about you, but I have some attitude adjustments to make!

honor;<sup>109</sup> 12:10b

D2 Serving intensely 12:11

E1 Unslothful zeal: not lagging behind in diligence,<sup>110</sup>

E2 Burning inner drive: fervent in spirit,<sup>111</sup>

E3 Serving the Master: serving the Lord;<sup>112</sup>

D3 With a positive, prayerful attitude 12:12

E1 Rejoicing in hope for the present and future: rejoicing in hope,<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> 12:10 - give preference to one another in honor: “Give preference” translates *proegeomai* (4285), used only here in the NT. It means (1) *lead the way, be the leader*; figuratively in the NT *outdo others* (possibly Rom. 12:10); (2) prefer, consider better, esteem more highly (possibly Rom. 12:10)” (Friberg). Though the NASB opts for the second definition, I believe the first is truer to the etymology of the word. I think Paul was asking all the Christians to lead the way in honoring one another, to outdo one another in honoring each other. “in honor” translates *time* (5092). John MacArthur, in his commentary on Romans, states this:

To honor is to show genuine appreciation and admiration for one another in the family of God. We are to be quick to show respect, quick to acknowledge the accomplishments of others, quick to demonstrate genuine love by *not* being jealous or envious, which have no part in love, whether *agape* or *philadelphia*.

<sup>110</sup> 12:11 - not lagging behind in diligence: “Not lagging behind” translates *me skneros* (3636), which conveys the idea of being “shrinking, timid, hence idle, lazy, troublesome.” Friberg states that it pertains to shrinking from or hesitating to engage in something worthwhile, possibly implying lack of ambition - “lazy, lacking in ambition.” The master in Matt. 25:26, using this word, called his slave “lazy.” The words “in diligence” translate the primary word, *te spoude* (4710), which Paul has previously used in 12:8 (see the discussion there). Just as leaders in the church were challenged to lead with diligence, effort, energy, and enthusiasm, so each Christian is charged with serving Jesus with diligence, effort, energy, and enthusiasm! Lazy, half-hearted Christians are not Biblical Christians! Christians are not to be slothful, but zealous in their service.

<sup>111</sup> 12:11 - fervent in spirit: Fervent translates *dzeo* (2204), literally, to “*well up, bubble, boil*; figuratively, of spiritual fervor *be very eager, show enthusiasm*” (Friberg). Acts 18:25 describes Apollos as being fervent in spirit. These are the only two uses of *dzeo* in the NT. The NASB translates the word spirit (*pneuma*, 4151) in both passages as referring to the human spirit or motivation of the individual Christian and of Apollos. But both instances incorporate the dative case of the article “the” (*tw*), as in “the spirit”. In my view, one cannot rule out a reference to the Holy Spirit. We must be fervent in our own spirit, but zealous also in the power of the Holy Spirit.

<sup>112</sup> 12:11 - serving the Lord: Serving translates *douleuo* (1398), the verb for performing the duties of a slave. “Lord” is *kurios* (2962), often (but not always) used in reference to a slave-owner, one who had power and authority over his slave(s). The referent is obviously Jesus the Messiah. We Christians have no authority over our own lives. We are slaves serving our Master, Jesus Christ. We ought to live our lives that way, serving Him zealously and with diligence, never lazily or haphazardly!

<sup>113</sup> 12:12 - rejoicing in hope: Literally, “in the hope rejoicing.” Christians should be optimistic and constantly rejoicing because of the hope (settled assurance) we have of eternal life with God and Jesus; of Jesus’ coming rule over this entire world; of a resurrection body; of a pristine heaven and earth unblemished by sin; of a utopian world governed by the co-regency of Jesus and God from their throne in New Jerusalem, the ultimate, eternal capital of New Earth. Many of these sureties are described in Rom. 8:16-39; Rev. 21:1-22:5.

- E2 Persevering in present trouble: persevering in tribulation,<sup>114</sup>
- E3 Constantly praying: devoted to prayer,<sup>115</sup>
- D4 Helping others 12:13
- E1 Materially, financially: contributing to the needs of the saints,<sup>116</sup>
- E2 Opening up one's home: practicing hospitality.<sup>117</sup>
- D5 Upbuilding others with one's speech 12:14-15
- E1 Blessing one's persecutors 12:14

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<sup>114</sup> 12:12 - persevering in tribulation: Literally, “in the tribulation persevering.” Tribulation (*thlipsis*, 2347), translated in NASB as affliction (14X); afflictions (6X); tribulation (16X); tribulation (4X); distress (2X); persecution (1X); trouble (1X). Jesus told His followers, “In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). Jesus has promised to keep His church out of the Great Tribulation (Rev. 3:10; cf. Matt. 14:21; Rev. 7:14).

But in the ordinary course of life, Christians must learn to endure trouble and pressure from living and from the world. But instead of succumbing or giving up or becoming despondent or depressed, Christians are to “remain under” (*hupomeno*, 5278) – *hupo* means under, *meno* means to remain. *Hupomeno* is translated in the NASB with the “endure” family of terms thirteen times (13X) as follows: endured (5X); endure (3X); endures (3X); endure...with patience (1X); patiently endure (1X); and otherwise, perseveres (1X); persevering (1X); remained (1X); and stayed behind (1X). Christians must expect trouble and must persevere through it. Evidently God seeks to mature us through trouble in this life, and does not necessarily preserve us from it. Our task is to develop perseverance – spiritual toughness.

<sup>115</sup> 12:12 - devoted to prayer: Devoted (*proskartereo*, 4342) has a basic meaning of persist at, stay by; ... with the dative of the thing [as here] ... it means to “occupy oneself diligently with, pay persistent attention to, be devoted to ...” (Friberg). Devoted is, as are the other verbal forms in this passage, a plural present participle with imperatival force. The expected action is seen as being commanded and ongoing, reinforced by the meaning of the word itself. Prayer is to be a continual way of life for us Christians.

<sup>116</sup> 12:13 - contributing to the needs of the saints: Contributing translates *koinoneo* (2841), here “denoting common participation *share, have in common, take part with someone*” (Friberg). The nature of the sharing is defined by the context. The believers in Rome are urged continually (*koinoneo* is a present participle with imperatival force) to contribute to the needs of the saints, meaning other believers. Presumably these are physical, material needs. Government welfare programs do not absolve us Christians from our God-given responsibilities to share with other Christians. Meeting the needs of the Christian family carries a higher priority than meeting the needs of people outside the faith.

<sup>117</sup> 12:13 - practicing hospitality: *Practicing* is the second person, present participle with imperatival force of *dioko* (1377), meaning to run, here used in a figurative sense “as being zealous; ... as an earnest striving after something *pursue, follow after, seek after.*” Paul was commanding the Roman Christians constantly to be pursuing *philoxenia* (5381). This is a compound word form *philos* (5384), to be a friend of or fond of, and *xenos* (3581), a stranger or foreigner. Christians are constantly to be pursuing hospitality, opening up their homes even to foreigners. *Philoxenia* is used elsewhere in the NT only in Heb. 13:2 – “Do not neglect to show *hospitality to strangers* [*philoxenia*, emphasis mine], for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.” In context, Paul, in Rom. 12:13, meant that Christians were intentionally to pursue hospitality with other Christians, no matter what their ethnic or national background was. Faith in Jesus forms a bond that ignores ethnicity and nationality. Christianity is the supreme melting pot!

- G1 Bless those who persecute you;<sup>118</sup>
- G2 bless and do not curse.<sup>119</sup>
- E2 Rejoicing with the overjoyed: Rejoice with those who rejoice,<sup>120</sup> 12:15a
- E3 Sharing the sorrow of those in tears: and weep with those who weep.<sup>121</sup> 12:15b
- D6 Upbuilding others with one's realistic humility 12:16

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<sup>118</sup> 12:14 - you: NASB note: Two early mss do not contain *you*.

bless those who persecute you: This verse is a quotation from Luke 6:28. *Bless* is the plural present imperative of *eulogeo* (2127), from which we derive our English word *eulogize*. In its most basic sense, *eulogeo* means to speak well of someone. We humans bless God, or speak well of Him, when we praise Him. We bless men when we call upon God to prosper them. In this sense we are “calling down God’s gracious power on persons” (Friberg). Examples of humans blessing other humans include the following: Elizabeth blessed Mary and Jesus, her unborn child (Luke 1:42); Simeon bless Joseph and Mary (Luke 2:34) after having first blessed God (Luke 2:28); Jesus blessed His gathered disciples at His ascension (Luke 24:50-51); Melchizedek blessed Abraham (Heb. 7:1, 6-7); Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau (Heb. 11:20); and Jacob blessed Joseph’s sons (Heb. 11:21).

those who persecute you: *Persecute* is *dioko* (1377), which Paul already used in a good sense in 12:13 of *practicing* or *pursuing* hospitality. Here Paul uses it in a negative sense – when people *pursue* Christians in order to *persecute* them. He will use it again in a positive sense in Rom. 14:19 – we are to “pursue the things which make for peace ....” Jesus repeatedly used *dioko* in its negative sense of persecution: Matt. 5:10-12, 44; 10:23; 23:34; Luke 11:49; 21:12; John 15:20. Paul’s point here is that, even though others *persecute* us, we are to *bless* them!

<sup>119</sup> 12:14 - bless and do not curse: When others revile us or persecute us, we are tempted to curse them. Curse is the second person plural present tense imperative of *kataoaomai* (2672). (1) In the middle voice, as here, *kataoaomai* is used “as stating that a supernatural power will cause harm to someone or something *curse* (Luke 6:28); (2) passive *be doomed, be accursed* (Matt. 25:41)” (Friberg). In Rom. 12:14 we are forbidden to curse continually, and we are twice commanded to bless continually instead! Counting this passage, this word is used five times in the NT. Jesus used *kataoaomai* in Matt. 25:41, saying to the “goats” – the people of the nations on His left, “Depart from me, *accursed* ones, into the eternal fire ....” Peter noted that the fig tree Jesus had *curse*d had withered (Mark 11:21). Jesus said, “bless those who *curse* you, pray for those who mistreat you” (Luke 6:28). James shamed his readers, “With it [our tongue] we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we *curse* men, who have been made in the likeness of God” (James 3:9). So here in Rom. 12:14, Paul not only commands us twice to keep blessing those who persecute us, but he forbids us to keep cursing them. Dedicating one’s body to God (Rom. 12:1-2) and serving Jesus with our gifts (Rom. 12:3-8) requires us to act exactly opposite of what the normal, fallen human reaction would dictate!

<sup>120</sup> 12:15 - rejoice with those who rejoice: Rejoice is the present infinitive of *chairō* (5463). We are “to rejoice continually”. “Those who rejoice” translates the present plural participle of *chairō*. Literally, we are “to rejoice continually with the ones continually rejoicing.” To rejoice is to be glad, to be delighted in something or someone (see Friberg). The Christian is commanded to empathize with others, no matter what their situation. If someone is overjoyed that he inherited a fortune, we are to rejoice with him rather than become jealous and envious and disdainful. If they had a good day and we didn’t, we are to rejoice with them! If others received an honor we were hoping for, we are to rejoice with them!

<sup>121</sup> 12:15 - weep with those who weep: We are “to keep weeping” (present active infinitive of *klaio*, 2799) with “weeping ones” (present active participle of *klaio*, 2799). To weep is to express “strong inner emotion *weep, cry, shed tears*” (Friberg). Again, Paul is urging Christians to empathize with one another. If someone is sad and we are happy, we are not to chide them, “Well, you don’t need to rain on my parade!” That is selfish. The dedicated Christian always seeks the good of the *other* person, not himself. We are to place ourselves in one another’s shoes and join them in their perspective. We are often tempted to quote Scripture verses to others. Sometimes the greatest comfort is to join silently with someone else in his or her misery. Usually “I’m so sorry!” is better than “Cheer up, things could be worse!”

- E1 The command of unity: Be of the same mind toward one another;<sup>122</sup>
- E2 The forbidding of arrogance: do not be haughty in mind,<sup>123</sup>
- E3 The command of humble association: but associate with the lowly.<sup>124</sup>
- E4 The command of humble self-esteem: Do not be wise in your own estimation.<sup>125</sup>

<sup>122</sup> 12:16 - Be of the same mind toward one another: Literally, the phrase translates something like this – “The same thing toward one another thinking.” In this literal translation, “thinking” is not a noun (as in most translations), but a present tense participle with imperatival force. It translates the word *phroneo* (5426), meaning to “think, have an opinion, have understanding” (Friberg). Paul has already used this word twice in this chapter, in Rom. 12:3, when he was discussing the attitude that Christians should maintain in assessing themselves and their own spiritual gifts. There he said, “For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to **think**; but to **think** so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith (emphasis added).” The caution there was not to become conceited about the gifts God has given to us with which we serve Him, but to exercise sound judgment. Here in 12:16, the same general idea persists, but now the focus is not so much on what we think of *ourselves*, but how we perceive *others*: We are all one in Christ, so let us each maintain the same attitude toward one another – let us not have a degrading view of other Christians, thinking they are inferior to us in any way. In other words, let us not devalue other Christians. The latter part of 12:16 provides context – “do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.”

<sup>123</sup> 12:16 - do not be haughty in mind: Haughty translates *hupselos* (5308). Literally *hupselos* means that which is “high, lofty, tall (Matt. 4:8),” while its opposite is *tapeinos* (5011), that which is lowly (Friberg). In a figurative sense, and coupled here with, again, the present participle of *phroneo* (5426), Paul means, “Don’t be having an exalted opinion of yourself in comparison to other Christians, whom you deem to be beneath your dignity and status.” It is a warning against high-mindedness regarding oneself mixed with corresponding condescension toward others.

By way of more personal application, I believe that those who believe the King James Version is the only valid Bible need to obey Paul’s injunction here. And I believe that those who disagree with the KJV-only adherents need also to obey Paul’s injunction. Likewise I believe that non-dispensational covenantalists need to follow Paul’s injunction here, as also do premillennial dispensationalists.

<sup>124</sup> 12:16 - associate with the lowly: Lowly translates *tapeinos* (5011), the opposite of *hupselos* (5308), exalted. Back in school I associated with a friend whom many considered to be among the lowly. There were those who appeared to be somewhat conceited and who held a high opinion of themselves who would not associate with him. I chose to associate with someone who was not “cool”, and have felt that God honored that. When we choose not to associate with someone whom we think is beneath our dignity or status in life, we are exhibiting arrogance. We are being high-minded (*hupselos*, 5308). Do we really think God is more impressed with sinner A than with sinner B? What arrogance! God will destroy pride!

<sup>125</sup> 12:16 - do not be wise in your own estimation: *Wise* translates *phronimos* (5429). Jesus uses *phronimos* in contexts in which it is a valued trait, and that is its normal meaning. But Paul often uses it in a negative way, but he qualifies it so his readers can understand. In Rom. 11:25, Paul did not want these same Roman, non-Jewish Christians to be *wise* in their own estimation, thinking that Jewish people are forever of no further account as Jews. That status is only temporary, Paul explained. And here in Rom. 12:16, Paul does not want us to have an exalted opinion of ourselves and consider ourselves to be full of wisdom while other Christians, in our opinion, are destitute of wisdom and completely wrong-headed. John Murray’s well-spoken comments are as follows:

“Apparently the conceit in view is that self-sufficiency by which our own judgment is so highly esteemed that we will not have regard to wisdom that comes from any other source. It strikes at the opinionated person who has no regard for any one else’s judgment. ‘The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated’ (James 3:17). The opinionated person is intractable and impervious to any advice but his own. Just as there is to be no social aristocracy in the church, so there is to be no intellectual autocrat.” (John Murray, *Romans*, Vol. II, p. 137.)

**C 4 In relation to deportment toward those outside the Church 12:17-21**

- D1 Reaction – Never react to evil in kind: Never pay back evil for evil to anyone.<sup>126</sup> 12:17a
- D2 Foresight – Plan to be good: Respect <sup>127</sup> what is right <sup>128</sup> in the sight of all men. 12:17b
- D3 Lifestyle – Seek peace 12:18
- E1 The contingency: If possible,<sup>129</sup> so far as it depends on you,
- E2 The goal: be at peace with all men.<sup>130</sup>
- D4 Revenge 12:19-20
- E1 Let God take revenge 12:19
- G1 The prohibition against taking one’s own revenge:

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<sup>126</sup> 12:17 - evil for evil: Both words translate *kakos* (2556), used 48 times, 32 of those translated “evil.” There is that within fallen man which passionately desires a reverse sort of justice. If someone has done me wrong, then I demand that he get paid back exactly what he did to me. That would be justice, we think. The difficulty is that we are hopelessly biased. If we have ill-treated someone else, we do not wish for justice – that we should be ill-treated also. In a word, we are selfish. God, through Paul, forbids us to pay back evil with evil. We are to represent the nature of God, who is longsuffering, “not wishing for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance” (2 Pet. 3:9). At the proper time, God will bring justice, if His mercy is first rejected. But in the meantime He offers mercy. And so should we.

<sup>127</sup> 12:17 - respect: *pronoao* (4306) is difficult to translate. Literally it means “to know ahead of time” or “to foreknow.” It is used only here in Rom. 12:17, in 2 Cor. 8:21 (“for we have *regard* for what is honorable”), and in 1 Tim. 5:8 (“But if anyone does not *provide* for his own ... he has denied the faith”). The NASB in 1 Tim. 5:8 is the easiest of the three to understand the root idea. The head of a household must exercise foresight, organization, and effort to provide for the financial well-being of his dependents. The idea in Rom. 12:17 is this: Instead of retaliating with evil for evil done, we are to exercise planning and foresight to bring about good for others, not evil. The ESV has a better translation here, “give thought to do ....”

<sup>128</sup> 12:17 - what is right: This phrase translates the single word *kalos* (2570). *kalos* is a vanilla word for “good,” which is far and away its most common translation. In my view there is no reason why it should not be translated “good” here. *kalos* is used 100 times, and 79 of those times it is translated “good.” Why not here? It is directly contrasted with *kakos* (2556), a common word for evil. Instead of retaliating with *evil* against an evil-doer, we should “give thought to do” *good* to him. If “right” were the preferable translation here, we should have expected the word *dikaios* (1342). Nevertheless, “right” is sufficiently close that the thought is not obscured.

<sup>129</sup> 12:18 - if possible: *ei dunatos* (1415). The “if” (*ei*) assumes it is possible, that one has the ability; but the rest of the phrase, “so far as it depends on you,” admits that peace is a two-way street. Not all wish to be peaceful. The Christian is not to be the one preventing an amicable relationship.

<sup>130</sup> 12:18 - be at peace with all men: literally, “with all men be keeping peace” (*eireneuo*, 1514). The emphasis is on all men, not just Christians, or not just nice pagans. *eireneuo* is used only three other times in the NT: Mark 9:50 – “Be at peace with one another.” 2 Cor. 13:11 – “Live in peace.” 1 Thess. 5:13 – “Live in peace with one another.”

- Never take your own revenge,<sup>131</sup> beloved,
- G2 The command to yield to God's wrath: but leave room for the wrath of God,<sup>132</sup>
- G3 The documented assurance: for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> 12:19 - revenge: literally, "not yourselves taking revenge." Taking revenge is *ekdikeo* (1556), a present participle with imperatival force. In Luke 13:3, 5, *ekdikeo* is translated as "give legal protection." In 2 Cor. 10:6 Paul says, "we are ready to *punish* all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete." In Rev. 6:10, the martyrs cry out, "How long, O Lord ... will you refrain from judging and *avenging* our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" The instinct for revenge is a cry for justice. But we are not to exact justice ourselves. It is never *our* task to do so. That prerogative is God's alone. Those who are so addressed are beloved of God. If God loves us, surely He will provide justice on our behalf at the right time!

<sup>132</sup> 12:19 - but leave room for the wrath of God: leave room, lit. "but give place to the wrath". "Give" (*didomi*, 1325), 2 person plural imperative. "the wrath" (*te orge*, 3709): It is understood that "the wrath" refers to the wrath of God. (*of God* does not appear in the Greek text, thus the italics. But the added words are a correct interpretative supply.) Here in 12:19 it refers to "the divine reaction against evil, bringing judgment and punishment both historically and in the future," meaning "*wrath, indignation*" (Friberg). Jesus experienced, in His then present time the emotions of *wrath* (translated *anger*), along with grief at the hard-heartedness of those opposed to His healing a man in the synagogue on the Sabbath day (Mark 3:5), but no judgment ensued immediately. God's awful wrath was unleashed upon His people, Israel, in A.D. 70 for their rejection of His Anointed King, Jesus. But there is an eternally devastating wrath in the distant future that awaits every person who fails to submit to King Jesus: "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the *wrath* of God abides on him" (John 3:36). This is the future, eternal wrath of God against unbelieving man, and it will be expressed in the lake of fire and sulfur, which burns forever (Rev. 20:10, 14-15).

<sup>133</sup> 12:19 - "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay": These six words translate but three Hebrew words from Deut. 32:35. The text there reads, literally, "To Me [one word] vengeance and recompense [one word]." NASB accurately translates, "Vengeance is Mine, and retribution." The concept of "Vengeance is Mine" is repeated in Ps. 94:1. The phrase, "I will repay" translates the Heb. *shillem* (8005) in Deut. 32:35. The Heb. word has three radicals (consonants) *sh* (*shin*), *l* (*lamedh*), *m* (*mem*). In certain contexts, the word carries the idea of agreement, or peace. We are familiar with another word that possesses the same three radicals, but with different vowel pointings – *shalom*. The idea in Deut. 32:35 is that any human (or angelic) sin (violation of God's standards) brings about disruption in God's peaceful, ordered universe. Thus, God's world is in a state of disagreement, imbalance, non-peace. That disruptive state arouses God's wrath. The resolution of that disruptive state through vengeance restores tranquility or peace to God. Because God is not only a God of wrath, but of mercy and love, He provided for the full appeasement of His wrath against sin by sending Jesus as a willing substitute for each of us. On the cross He bore all of God's wrath against all sin for all time. It is no wonder that Isaiah terms Jesus, the child to be born and the son to be given, the "prince of peace" (Isa. 9:6[5, Hb.]), and that the "good news" (gospel) about Jesus is the gospel of peace (Eph. 6:15).

When I was a parent, I would punish, including, if necessary, spank my children for disobeying. I was wrathful at their disobedience, but the punishment restored some level of equanimity in the household. I was able to control my children because I was able to discipline them effectively. When I taught Jr. High and High School students for five years, I was unable to discipline them the same way I disciplined my own children. I battled internally with a rising level of wrath that went unresolved because I could not discipline them the way they needed to be disciplined. (Some of the students, frankly, needed a stout board wielded across their backsides!) Because of the rising tension within me, undissipated wrath at their evil and misbehavior, I finally resolved the problem by exiting the teaching profession and returning to pastoring. (My "students" in the pews, for the most part, exhibit respectful decorum.) God resolves His inner tension (wrath) against mankind (a) by permitting them to undergo the consequences of their rebellion (death or self-destruction), (b) by sending calamities and invading nations, © by sending His own Son to pay the death penalty for their rebellion, and (d) by permitting all who do not trust in His wrath-bearing Son to pay for their own misdeeds by spending eternity separated from Him in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:10-15). There will come a time when all evil will have been removed from God's universe, and when He will create a new Heavens and a new Earth in which only righteousness will be present (2 Pet. 3:13). There will be no

- E2     Repay evil with good 12:20
- G1     The provision of food: “BUT IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM,<sup>134</sup>
- G2     The provision of drink: “AND IF HE IS THIRSTY, GIVE HIM A DRINK;
- G3     The causing of shame and penitence: “FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS UPON HIS HEAD.”<sup>135</sup>
- D5     General policy: Defeat evil with good 12:21
- E1     The prohibition against allowing oneself to be controlled by evil: Do not be overcome by evil,<sup>136</sup>

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further disruption of either God’s equanimity or of ours who have submitted to His Son.

<sup>134</sup> 12:20 - if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink: This is a direct quote from Proverbs 25:21. The next line, referring to burning coals is a direct quote from Prov. 25:22a (on which, see the next note). “Clearly the point of this proverb is to return good for evil (cf. Matt. 5:40-46; Rom. 12:20)” (Thomas Constable, *Notes on Proverbs*, 2010 Edition, p. 56). <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/proverbs.pdf>.)

In Matthew 5:38-48 Jesus lectured fairly extensively on returning good for evil: (1) The Biblical standard of justice in a court of law was “an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth” (Matt. 5:38, quoting Ex. 21:24; Lev. 24:20; Deut. 19:21). That is a just and fair standard in a court of law. (2) But on a personal level, people in Jesus’ kingdom are not to resist an evil person (Matt. 5:39a). (3) If someone slaps you on the right cheek, you are to turn the other (5:39). (4) If anyone sues you for your shirt, let him have your cloak also (5:40). (5) If a Roman soldier forces you to help carry his baggage for one mile, carry it for him another (5:41). (6) Give to the one who wishes to borrow from you (5:42). (7) Love your enemies and pray for them (5:43-44). (8) Why? – and this is key – so that you may accurately represent the love of your Father in heaven, who causes His sun to shine on both evil people and good, and who sends rain upon both righteous and unrighteous people (5:45). (9) Why else? – because even unrighteous people love those who love them! Despised tax collectors love those who love them, and despised (to the Jewish mind) Gentiles even greet their brothers! Surely you ought to have a higher standard of love than they, shouldn’t you? (5:46-47). (10) The final standard is this: We who are believers in Christ are children of the Heavenly Father. We ought to be complete (the word *teleios* [5046] always carries the idea of completeness) in our love just as He is (5:48)!

<sup>135</sup> 12:20 - heap burning coals upon his head: This phrase quotes exactly Prov. 25:22a. The coals on the head may refer to a ritual in Egypt in which a person showed his repentance by carrying a pan of burning charcoal on his head. Helping rather than cursing an enemy may cause him to be ashamed and penitent.” (John A. Witmer, *TBKC*, II, 490.) Commenting on the parent Scripture in Proverbs 25:21, Constable stated,

Evidently this clause alludes to an ancient custom. When a person’s fire went out at home, he or she would go to a neighbor and get some live coals to rekindle the fire. Carrying the coals in a pan on the head involved some danger and discomfort for the person carrying them, but they were an evidence of the neighbor’s love. Likewise the person who receives good in return for evil feels somewhat uncomfortable even though he receives a good gift. His discomfort arises over his guilt for having wronged his neighbor in the first place. So returning good for evil not only secures the blessing of God (v. 22b), it also convicts the wrongdoer of his ways (v. 22a) in a gentle way.

Paul, in his quotation of Proverbs 25:21-22, left out the last phrase of v. 22: He who feeds his enemy and give him water will heap burning coals on his head, “*and the LORD will reward you*” (emphasis mine). Paul’s decision not to quote that part of the verse does not obviate the principle. God always rewards those who honor Him.

<sup>136</sup> 12:21 - Do not be overcome by evil: Literally, “Do not be being conquered by that which is evil.” “Overcome” translates the present tense, passive voice, imperative mood of *nikao* (3528). *Nikao* means to win a victory over, to be a victor, to conquer ...” (Louw-Nida). Its corresponding noun, *nike* (3529), means *victory*. (Now perhaps you know what Nike footwear stands for!) *Nike* appears only once in Scripture, in 1 John 5:4, along with

E2 The command to control evil with good: but overcome evil with good.<sup>137</sup>

## B 2 In the Believer's Relation to the State 13

### C 1 The necessity of subjection to the state 13:1-7

D1 The **command** to be in subjection: Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities.<sup>138</sup> 13:1a

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*nikao* (twice). Here is my translation: “For whatever is born of God conquers (*nikao*) the world; and this is the conquest (*nike*) – the one having conquered (*nikao*) the world – our faith!” Notice how *nikao* is properly translated twice in Revelation 6:2. Rom. 12:21a contains a command imposing an ongoing policy – we are commanded, as a matter of course, not to be being conquered by *that which is evil* (*kakos*, 2556, is neuter in gender). The Christian life is not a passive, easy life. It is a life of constant wariness, constant alertness, constant watchfulness, and constant effort in the power of the Spirit. Satan wants, above all, to conquer Christians. We are surrounded by the world, which wants to conquer us and squeeze us into its mold. Our own flesh is against us, because it desires to give in to the world and its allure. Satan desires to bring as much pressure against us as he can mount, and is quite happy to have people who are willfully or unwittingly in his kingdom carry water for him. But when they do us evil, we are forbidden either to retaliate or to become defeated, despondent, or discouraged.

That brings me to another point. The evil may perhaps be evil that does not even come to us at the hand of other humans. It may be sickness, calamity, misfortune, tragedy. It may be completely impersonal. It makes no difference. We are not to permit ourselves to be conquered by evil. We are not to become depressed, discouraged, defeated, or to feel that God has given up on us.

<sup>137</sup> 12:21 - but overcome evil with good: Rather than allowing ourselves to be conquered by impersonal evil, we are to take the offensive – rather we are commanded continually to be conquering, with that which is good – that which is evil!” “Overcome” (conquer), in the second half of the verse, is the second person singular imperative of *nikao* (3528). We are commanded to conquer and that, continually! We are not conquer – with that which is evil – the evil. Rather we are to conquer – with that which is good – the evil! Good is an all-purpose, general word that translates the adjective *agathos* (18), used 102 times in the NT. Clearly *agathos* (18) and *kakos* (2556) are polar opposites. *Agathos* describes (1) good moral character (John 7:12); (2) the good performance of a faithful slave (Luke 19:17); (3) things that are good and beneficial, as good soil, of useful words; (4) or as a substantive for that which is morally good and right (Friberg). In summary, we are commanded not to let ourselves be conquered by that which is evil. Instead, with that which is good, we are commanded to be conquering that which is evil!

<sup>138</sup> 13:1 - Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities: One way not to be overcome by evil, but to overcome evil with good, is to submit to the government under which one resides. In many countries there are multiple layers of government to which one must be in subjection. In the United States, frequently, one must submit to his city government, county government, state government, and the federal government.

(1) *Every person* is to be in subjection. Being a Christian in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ is no excuse for not submitting oneself to the earthly kingdom in which one resides. As Paul will tell us, submitting to the earthly kingdom is a way to submit to the heavenly King. “Every person” translates *pas* (3956) *psuche* (5590); *psuche* is most often translated “soul” (33X) or “souls” (14X); next “life” (36X) or “lives” (7X), etc. This is the only occasion in which NASB translates *psuche* as “person,” thrice as “persons.” We of course derive our English word *psyche* from this noun. In this context, “person” is a perfectly good translation.

(2) *be in subjection*: The third person singular present passive imperative of *hupotasso* (5293). Every person is constantly to be placed in subjection to the governing authorities. *Hupotasso* literally means “to place or arrange under.” In the passive, it means to be obedient. (Liddell-Scott Greek-English Lexicon). According to Louw-Nida, it means “to bring something under the firm control of someone.” NASB most often translates with some form of the word “subject,” as here, less often as a form of the word “submit.” To pick out a sample of Paul’s varied employment of this word, he uses *hupotasso* to speak of (a) submission to the government (Rom. 13:1); (b) all things in subjection under Christ (Eph. 1:22); (c) mutual subjection of Christians to one another (Eph. 5:21); (d) the church in subjection to Christ (Eph. 5:24); and (e) the implied subjection of wives to their husbands in everything after the pattern of the church under Christ (Eph. 5:22, 24) (see the explicit statements in Col. 3:18 and Tit. 2:5). In other contexts, Jesus was subject to His parents (Luke 2:51); demons were subject to Jesus’ name (Luke 10:17); the creation was subjected to futility (Rom. 8:20); slaves are to be subject to their masters in everything (Tit. 2:9; 1 Pet. 2:18); Christians are to submit to God while resisting the devil (James 4:7); and younger men are to submit to their elders (1 Pet. 5:5).

- D2 The **reasons** for subjection 13:1b, c
- E1 All governmental authorities are from God: For there is no authority except from God,<sup>139</sup> 13:1b
- E2 Existing governmental authorities have been pre-ordained by God: and those which exist are established by God.<sup>140</sup> 13:1c
- D3 The **implications** of non-subjection 13:2
- E1 Resisting the government authority is resisting God's ordinance: Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God;<sup>141</sup> 13:2a

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(3) *governing authorities*: *Governing* translates *huperecho* (5242), strictly speaking, “*hold above*; hence (1) of value *surpass, be better than, excel* (Php. 4:7); (2) of power *be in authority (over), be in control* (1 Pet. 2:13)” (Friberg). It could well be translated “higher.” Indeed, the KJV translates the two words “higher powers” in Rom. 13:1, while NASB, ESV, NIV, and NKJV all translate “governing authorities.” *Authorities* translates the plural of *exousia* (1849), which means the right, authority, or power to act. Without the word “governing” (*huperecho*), it would be difficult to know what Paul meant by “authorities” (*exousia*). But placing the two words together with the subsequent context makes it clear that Paul meant the authoritative governments. The implication is that governments have both the right and the power to control their citizenry. The stated goal of the government is to praise good (13:3-4) and to create a fear of reprisal for participating in evil (13:3-5).

<sup>139</sup> 13:1 - For there is no authority except from God: *For* translates *gar*, which indicates a causal connection. The reason that every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities is that there is no government that exists that does not come from God. God not only establishes governments generally; he installs individual rulers specifically! Remember that it is God who removes kings and raises up kings (Dan. 2:21). Even the most morally permissive democracy or the most brutal dictatorship is better than anarchy. There is no inherent conflict in obeying both God and human government. Jesus said, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s” (Matt. 22:21; Mark 12:17; Luke 20:25).

<sup>140</sup> 13:1 - those which exist are established by God: Several principles may be derived: (1) God is in charge of founding new nations. (2) God is in charge of the overthrow of old nations and heads of state. (3) There is no government nor head of state, no matter how corrupt, that exists apart from the providential hand of God. (4) Even though nations or heads of state are corrupt, they still have a profound role to play in God’s overall purpose. (5) Even the most corrupt government is better than no government, which is anarchy.

<sup>141</sup> 13:2 - whoever resists authority: *Resists* translates *antitasso* (498), used only in the middle voice in the NT; strictly set in array against; as setting oneself against oppose, resist, be hostile toward (Acts 18:6)” Friberg. It is used 5X in the NT: Acts 18:6 (“they *resisted* and blasphemed”; Rom. 13:2; James 4:6 (“God *is opposed* to the proud”); (5:6 (“the righteous man ... does not *resist* you”); 1 Pet. 5:5 (“God *is opposed* to the proud”).

*has opposed*: *anthistemi* (436) is a synonym of *antitasso* (498). If you *resist* (*antitasso*) the human authority (government), you have *opposed* (*anthistemi*) God. It is our Christian duty to cooperate with and submit to the secular government. Being a good Christian does not justify civil disobedience. The only circumstances under which we can justify civil disobedience are (a) if the government asks us to do something that God forbids us to do or (b) if the government forbids us from doing something that God commands us to do. But in all cases, we are to offer no physical resistance to the government. If we violate, on Biblical grounds, the decrees of the government, we cannot overthrow the government or resist it, but we must take the punishment the government offers us. Two cases illustrate this point:

(1) The government of Babylon, King Nebuchadnezzar, decreed that all citizens should worship and bow down to the statue that Nebuchadnezzar had erected under pain of death. Daniel’s three friends, Azariah, Mishael, and Hananiah, refused to obey the government’s edict. Their lot, then, as those who participated in civil disobedience, was to be thrown into the fiery furnace. Their answer was remarkable. The three prisoners replied to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the

E2 Those who resist receive judgment: and they who have opposed will receive condemnation <sup>142</sup> upon themselves.

golden image that you have set up” (Dan. 3:1-18). And of course, they were thrown into the fire. And God, in His sovereign mercy, elected to rescue them.

(2) In another instance, Peter and John healed a congenitally lame man at the temple. They took the occasion to teach the people in the temple about Jesus (Acts 3). While they were speaking, the priests, the captain of the temple guard, and the Sadducees were greatly disturbed that the apostles were teaching in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. They arrested them, and held a hearing the next day. They ordered Peter and John “not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.” Peter and John replied, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than God, you be the judge; for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:1-20). As the narrative reveals, they were released and continued to teach. Within a short amount of time all the apostles were apprehended and imprisoned because the priests and the Sadducees were jealous of the apostles’ increasing success and popularity. The Jewish Supreme Court, the Council, interrogated the apostles and reminded them of their previous prohibition against teaching in Jesus name, which restriction the apostles had flouted. Again, Peter and the apostles replied, “We must obey God rather than men” (Eph. 5:17-29). The Council eventually flogged them before releasing them. (Acts 5:33-40). Ultimately the Apostle James paid with his life, and Peter almost did also (Acts 12). My point is that in each case believers felt obliged to partake of civil disobedience in obedience to God, they were prepared to pay the consequences the government imposed for that disobedience.

John MacArthur, in his commentary on Rom. 13, mentions other instances of justifiable civil disobedience: the Hebrew midwives’ refusal to murder Hebrew baby boys (Ex. 1:15-21); the refusal of Daniel and his three fellow exiles to defile themselves with the King’s diet (Dan. 1:8-20); and Daniel’s refusal to quit praying to God in response to the King’s ill-advised decree (Dan. 6). MacArthur, in the same volume, wrote of the following incident:

Some years ago, the tax department of the state of California issued a broadly-worded form that required all tax-exempt organizations, including churches, to attest that they did not and would not engage in political activities. A number of local congregations arched their backs, as it were, and refused to sign the affidavit, which resulted in their buildings being boarded up by state officials. Although he had no association with those churches and was not asked by them to intervene, a prominent Christian attorney talked with state officials on the churches’ behalf. He explained that a Christian’s conscience sometimes requires him to take certain positions on moral issues that relate to civil laws, but that those positions come from religious convictions that are based on Scripture, not on political ideology. Appreciating that explanation, the state officials reworded the form in a way that better protected religious rights. Conflicts do not, of course, always work out that favorably, but churches and individual believers should make every effort to explain carefully and respectfully their reasons for wanting a civil law or mandate to be changed that they believe would force them to disobey God.

As our American government increases its opposition to God and Christ, more and more Christians and churches will be forced to make tough decisions in the decades that lie ahead. A Christian Canadian pastor, Stephen Boissoin, for example, was found guilty of committing a “hate crime” by Alberta’s Human Rights and Citizenship Commission in 2002 because of his views on homosexuality. Boissoin was ordered to pay \$7,000, to apologize publicly to Darren Lund, the homosexual activist who made the claim, and was banned from publicly expressing his views on homosexuality for the remainder of his life. Providentially, in December of 2009, Justice Earl Wilson overturned the Commission’s decision. That decision, however, did not retrieve Boissoin’s legal fees or his seven years of emotional duress. Moreover, the law remains on the books. (See <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/canadian-pastor-cleared-of-hate-crime-after-7-years/> ). This case represents only a small indicator of the persecution that awaits Christians in North America in the future.

*the ordinance of God:* *Ordinance* translates the noun *diatage* (1296), derived from the verb *diatasso* (1299). It means “that which has been specifically ordered or commanded” (Louw-Nida), in this case, ordered or commanded by God.

From a pragmatic point of view, I have often wondered what I would have done had I lived in the colonies of North America in the 1770’s. I believe that, in obedience to God’s Word, I may have had difficulty in shouldering a gun to fight against the British in the Revolutionary War. On the other hand, just as there are layered levels of authority in our present country, so there were then. There was the British crown, and then there were the colonial governments. What would I do today if my state, which includes my county and my city, were to secede from what was perceived to be a tyrannical U. S. Government? There are no easy answers!

<sup>142</sup> 13:2 - condemnation: The Grk. word is *krima* (2917), which can mean (1) “an administrative decree [as] the result of *krino*” (2919),” to judge or pass judgment: “*judgment, verdict, sentence* (Luke 24:20); often in an unfavorable sense *condemnation, punishment* (2 Pet. 2:3); (2) as the function of a judge *authority to judge, judgment, judging* (Rev. 20:4); (3) as a legal action or process *lawsuit* (1 Cor. 6:7) (Friberg). Here the judgment or condemnation reaped is the judgment of the secular government as the agent of God.

13:2b

D4 The **motivation** for subjection 13:3-7

E1 The fear of wrathful judgment 13:3-5a

G1 Planned avoidance of fear 13:3-4a

H 1 Know the basis of the government's fear-principle 13:3a

J 1 For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior,

J 2 but for evil.<sup>143</sup>H 2 Co-operate with the government's fear-principle 13:3bJ 1 Do you want to have no fear of authority?<sup>144</sup>

J 2 Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;

H 3 Know the significance of the state's fear-principle: for it is a minister of God to you for good.<sup>145</sup> 13:4a

G2 Defiant invitation of fear 13:4b-d

H 1 The creation of fear - practicing evil: But if you do what is evil, be afraid; 13:4bH 2 The instrument of fear - capital punishment: for it does not bear the sword<sup>146</sup> for nothing;

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<sup>143</sup> 13:3 - good behavior, but for evil: Literally, "Rulers are not a fear to the good work but to the evil."

<sup>144</sup> 13:3 - no fear of authority: He who consistently drives the speed limit has no fear of a Highway Patrol vehicle he encounters. He who deliberately exceeds the speed limit is always looking, apprehensively, for patrol cars.

<sup>145</sup> 13:4 - good: The government authority is a servant of God to you to encourage good.

<sup>146</sup> 13:4 - the sword: The purpose of a sword is to kill people. God has given human governments the authority to protect its citizenry by prosecuting criminals with lethal force. Police have the right to kill offenders if the situation warrants such action. Governments have not only the right, but the responsibility of exercising capital punishment for capital crimes. Long ago, God decreed, "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man" (Gen. 9:6). Government's use of the sword also authorizes it to wage war, if necessary, to protect its citizenry. Greg Boyd's thesis, that there is no such thing as a defensible war, is, in my judgment, indefensible from a Biblical point of view (see Greg Boyd, *The Myth of a Christian Nation: How the Quest for Political Power is Destroying the Church*). Boyd makes the mistake that pacifists make – he confuses God's directive for personal action ("turning the other cheek" – Matt. 5:39) with His prescription for a government's

13:4c

- H 3 The function of the government authority in fear -- wrath: for it is a minister of God, an avenger <sup>147</sup> who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. 13:4d
- G3 Obligatory conclusion -- "Out of fear, be subject to avoid wrath.": Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, 13:5a
- E2 The maintenance of a clear conscience 13:6b-7
  - G1 The statement of a clear conscience as a valid motivation for submitting to the government authority: but also for conscience' sake. 13:5b
  - G2 The implications of maintaining a clear conscience 13:6-7
    - H 1 The payment of taxes 13:6
      - J 1 Payment commanded: For because of this you also pay taxes, 13:6a
      - J 2 Payment explained 13:6b
        - K 1 The government authority is a priestly servant of God: for rulers are servants of God, <sup>148</sup>
        - K 2 The government authority constantly attempts as God's agent to encourage good for God and avenge evil for God: devoting themselves to this very thing.
    - H 2 Rendering to all their dues: Render to all what is due them: 13:7

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maintaining law and order via the sword (Rom. 13:1-5). If God authorizes the government to use the sword, then Christians can serve on the police force or in the military without fear they are violating God's moral standards.

<sup>147</sup> 13:4 - avenger: The government authority is God's servant to avenge God's wrath against the one practicing evil.

<sup>148</sup> 13:6 - For rulers are servants of God: There is reassurance for a Christian who is paying his taxes that it's more like paying a tithe to God which God in turn uses to support the government to keep law and order in our society. Christians cannot guarantee that any government to which they pay taxes will use the money responsibly in every case. What we can guarantee is that God is using our money to help this government keep law and order. We don't want an intrusive, inefficient, immoral government, which is increasingly what we have in America. But consider the alternative. Would we rather have anarchy?

- J 1 Personal/property tax: tax to whom tax is due;
- J 2 Business/sales tax: custom to whom custom;
- J 3 Fear: fear to whom fear;
- J 4 Honor/Respect: honor to whom honor.

## C 2 The Place of Love in Subjection to the State 13:8-10

- D1 The **command** – to be indebted to no one in any area: Owe nothing to anyone 13:8a
- D2 The **exception** – One always owes love: except to love one another; 13:8b
- D3 The **reason** – Love for others fulfills legal requirements 13:8c-10
  - E1 The statement of fulfillment: for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. 13:8c
  - E2 The demonstration of fulfillment 13:9
    - G1 Any commandment 13:9a, cf. Ex. 20:13-15,17
      - H 1 For this, “YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY,
      - H 2 “YOU SHALL NOT MURDER,
      - H 3 “YOU SHALL NOT STEAL,
      - H 4 “YOU SHALL NOT COVET,”
    - G2 Is summarized under loving one's neighbor 13:9b, cf. Lev. 19:18
      - H 1 and if there is any other commandment,
      - H 2 it is summed up in this saying, “YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.”
  - E3 The explanation of fulfillment 13:10
    - G1 Love never works evil to one's neighbor: Love does no wrong to a neighbor; 13:10a
    - G2 So love is fulfillment of law: therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. 13:10b

**C 3 The Urgency of Subjection to the State 13:11-14**

- D1 Wakeful awareness of the near day of final salvation urged 13:11
  - E1 The alarm from sleep: Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep;
  - E2 The need for alertness: for now salvation <sup>149</sup> is nearer to us than when we believed.
- D2 Appropriate action commanded in light of the coming dawn 13:12
  - E1 The assessment of time 13:12a
    - G1 The night is almost gone,
    - G2 and the day is near.
  - E2 The call to action 13:12b
    - G1 **Cast off** works of darkness: Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness 13:12
    - G2 **Put on** weapons of light: and put on the armor of light. 13:12
- D3 Appropriate day-time action specified: Let us behave properly as in the day, 13:13-14
  - E1 **Negatively:** not drunken, orgiastic strife: 13:13
    - G1 not in carousing and drunkenness,
    - G2 not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality,
    - G3 not in strife and jealousy.
  - E2 **Positively:** put on Jesus, making no loophole for fleshly lusts 13:14
    - G1 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ,
    - G2 and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

**B 3 In Relation to Debatable Matters 14:1 - 15:13**


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<sup>149</sup> 13:11 - salvation: NASB note: *Or our salvation is nearer than when*

**C 1 The Principle of Non-Judgmental Acceptance 14:1-13a**<sup>150</sup>

- D1 The command of mutual acceptance 14:1-3a
  - E1 The command of acceptance of the weaker brother 14:1
    - G1 The command: Now accept the one who is weak in faith,<sup>151</sup>
    - G2 The prohibition: but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions.
  - E2 The area of debate 14:2
    - G1 The tolerant conscience: One man has faith that he may eat all things,
    - G2 The restrictive conscience: but he who is weak eats vegetables only.<sup>152</sup>
  - E3 The command to refrain from mutual judgment 14:3a
    - G1 The command to the tolerant: Let not him who eats regard with contempt<sup>153</sup> him who does not eat,
    - G2 The command to the restrictive: and let not him who

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<sup>150</sup> There is a great temptation for us to think that the views at which we personally have arrived regarding clothing, diet, religious observances, music, possessions, leisure time, and a host of other areas, are the only correct ones. Those who disagree with us are either too liberal (i.e. not spiritual enough) or too conservative (i.e., unnecessarily legalistic). This passage teaches us that in certain debatable areas, there is room for differences of opinion and Christian service. People can be on both sides of an issue and still be serving Christ. Our job is to be fully convinced in our own minds and not to judge someone we think too liberal, nor to regard contemptuously someone we think too legalistic. Our job is to accept one another, because God has accepted us. We will each, one day, have to give an account to Him. Therefore, we ought not judge one another!

<sup>151</sup> 14:1 - accept the one who is weak in faith: better, weak in the faith (the article *ton* is present in the text). The point is that he is weak in the area of revealed truth, known as “the faith”. In this case, he has scruples against eating meat that had presumably been offered to idols previously. The doctrinally correct view is given by Paul in 1 Corinthians 8:4-6. It is this: There is no valid idol in the world, and there is only one true God, the Father, Maker of heaven and earth, “from whom are all things and we exist for Him.” And there is only one Master – Jesus Christ, by whom all things came into existence, and through whom we exist. Therefore any meat is created by the one true God and can be received with thanksgiving (1 Tim. 4:3-5). The difficulty is, that some in the church in Corinth (and presumably in Rome) did not have this knowledge (1 Cor. 8:7). So the weaker brother was a vegetarian because the meat, in his view, had been defiled by having been offered to idols. Paul’s opening command here is to accept this brother who is weak in the faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his (doctrinally unenlightened) views.

<sup>152</sup> 14:2 - eats vegetables only: The brother who was weak in the faith eschewed meat not for dietary reasons nor for animal-rights reasons, but because it had come to the meat market via the idol temple. His scruples would not, for that reason, ever allow him to eat meat. Consequently, he ate only vegetables.

<sup>153</sup> 14:3 - regard with contempt him who does not eat: The tendency on the part of the enlightened believer (the one who believes he can eat all things) is to regard with contempt the believer who is weighed down by an over-active conscience.

does not eat judge him who eats,<sup>154</sup>

- D2 The reasons for mutual acceptance 14:3b-12
  - E1 Because God has accepted the (tolerant) brother: for God has accepted him.<sup>155</sup> 14:3b
  - E2 Because we are not responsible to judge another's servant 14:4-5
    - G1 The analogy of the servant 14:4a
      - H 1 Who are you to judge the servant of another?<sup>156</sup>
      - H 2 To his own master he stands or falls;
    - G2 The acceptability of each servant 14:4b
      - H 1 and stand he will,<sup>157</sup>
      - H 2 for the Lord is able to make him stand.
  - G3 The necessity of individual decision 14:5
    - H 1 The restrictive view of one: One man regards<sup>158</sup> one day above another,

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<sup>154</sup> 14:3 - judge him who eats: The tendency on the part of the brother who is weaker in the faith is to stand in judgment on the brother who eats. Ironically, the brother who is weaker in the faith actually thinks he is more spiritual because he does not indulge in what he considers to be a sinful practice. But the message from God through Paul is that he is not to judge the brother who believes he can eat anything. The truth is that we need to leave room for the more liberated Christian brother and the more scrupulous Christian brother.

<sup>155</sup> 14:3 - for God has accepted him: The closest antecedent is the stronger brother, "him who eats." However, by application, God has accepted both the stronger and the weaker brother. But as the statement reads, the specific referent of Paul is the stronger brother, whom God has accepted. If God has accepted the stronger brother, it would have been scandalous for the weaker brother *not* to accept him!

<sup>156</sup> 14:4 - who are you to judge the servant of another? It is sheer audacity for someone to judge the household servant of another. In modern terms, if I owned a business and employed workers, and you owned a business and employed workers, what right would I have to go to one of your employees and start lecturing him on how poorly he was serving you? Or worse yet, what right would I have to fire him? You are his employer, and you only have the right to correct him. By the same token, the brother who scrupulously avoids meat and eats only vegetables, has no right to stand in judgment on the liberated brother who eats meat. Why? Because the meat-eating brother is a servant of Jesus, not the servant of the vegetarian. We have no right to judge Jesus' servant!

<sup>157</sup> 14:4 - stand he will: The brother stronger in the faith will indeed stand successfully before Jesus, for the Lord, Jesus, is able to make him stand. In the context, it seems that the one more likely to stand in judgment is the Christian with the more scrupulous conscience.

<sup>158</sup> 14:5 - one man regards: Literally, the word is judges (*krino*, 2919) just as in 14:3, 4. Whereas the one who does *not* eat is *not* to judge (*krino*) the one who does eat (14:3), and whereas he has not right "to judge (*krino*) the servant of another", a Christian does have not only the right, but the responsibility judge whether he will regard one

- H 2 The tolerant view of another: Another regards every day alike.
- H 3 The necessity: Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind.
- E3 Because each Christian lives his life for the Lord's benefit 14:6-9
  - G1 Activities and non-activities are done for the Lord 14:6
    - H 1 Those who participate for Christ's sake
      - J 1 The restrictive observer of a "holy" day: He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord,
      - J 2 The tolerant eater of food
        - K 1 His tolerant participation: and he who eats,
        - K 2 His spiritual motive: does so for the Lord,
        - K 3 The sign of his service: for he gives thanks to God;<sup>159</sup>
    - H 2 Those who abstain for Christ's sake
      - J 1 The conservative abstainer from food: and he who eats not,
      - J 2 His spiritual motive: for the Lord he does not eat,
      - J 3 The sign of his service: and gives thanks to God.
  - G2 Life and death are for the Lord 14:7-9
    - H 1 The denial of life or death as being for one's private self 14:7

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day above another or to regard every day alike (14:5). We have no right to judge *people*, but we have an obligation to judge our personal *policy*. "Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind" (Rom. 14:5).

<sup>159</sup> Rom. 14:6 - he gives thanks to God: Elsewhere Paul wrote to Timothy that there are "foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude; for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer" (1 Tim. 4:3-5). Those who advocate abstaining from these foods are thus in error.

- J 1 For not one of us lives for himself,
- J 2 and not one dies for himself;
- H 2 The affirmation of life and death for the Lord 14:8
  - J 1 for if we live, we live for the Lord,
  - J 2 or if we die, we die for the Lord;
  - J 3 The conclusion: therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.
- H 3 The reason for Christ's death and resurrection: to reign as Lord over the dead and the living 14:9
  - J 1 For to this end Christ died and lived again,
  - J 2 that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.<sup>160</sup>
- E4 Because each brother will be judged of God 14:10-12
  - G1 The unreasonableness of judging one another 14:10a
    - H 1 The warning to the Christian with a restrictive conscience: But you, why do you judge your brother?
    - H 2 The warning to the Christian with a tolerant conscience: Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt?
  - G2 The reality of universal judgment by God: For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God. 14:10b
  - G3 The Scriptural documentation of universal judgment: For it is written, 14:11 (cf. Isa. 45:23; 49:18)
    - H 1 "As I live, says the Lord; every knee shall bow to Me,
    - H 2 "and every tongue shall give praise to God."

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<sup>160</sup> 14:9 - Lord both of the dead and the living: Jesus is Lord (Master) over all who are live. And He will judge all who die. Therefore, through His death and resurrection, He is Master over every person, regardless of whether he happens to be alive or dead.

G4 The conclusion – universal accountability: So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God. 14:12

D3 The concluding command: "Stop judging one another." Therefore let us not judge <sup>161</sup> one another anymore, 14:13a

## C 2 The principle of not being a stumbling block 14:13b-23

D1 The command to avoid being a stumbling block or an offence 14:13b-14

E1 The command stated: but rather determine <sup>162</sup> this – not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way. 14:13b

E2 The inherent amorality of things in themselves: I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself,<sup>163</sup> 14:14a

E3 The reality of the uncleanness of things in the mind of the beholder: but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.<sup>164</sup> 14:14b

D2 The command expanded 14:15-23

E1 Don't destroy a brother by your food 14:15

G1 Because that is not loving him 14:15a

H 1 The unfeeling use of liberty: For if because

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<sup>161</sup> 14:13 - let us not judge one another anymore: With the exception of the two uses in 14:5 translated *regards*, Paul has been using the word judge (*krino*, 2919) with reference to the weaker brother not judging the stronger brother (14:3, 4, 10). But here he uses the word reciprocally – “let us not judge one another anymore.” So in general terms, the principle of not judging can be applied both to the weaker brother not judging the stronger and to the stronger brother not judging the weaker.

<sup>162</sup> 14:13 - rather determine this: Christians, whether strong or weak in the faith, are not to judge (*krino*, 2919) one another, but they are to judge (*krino*, 2919) this – not to put an obstacle or stumbling block in a brother's way.

<sup>163</sup> 14:14 - nothing is unclean in itself: Paul is convinced, apparently through revelation received directly from Jesus, that there is no such thing as food that is morally inappropriate to eat in an of itself. That is the correct, and therefore preferred doctrinal position (see 1 Timothy 4:3-5).

<sup>164</sup> 14:14 - but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean: Notwithstanding the correct doctrinal position, if another (can we say, incorrectly instructed?) believer thinks that meat offered to idols is unclean and morally inappropriate to eat, to him, that perception becomes his reality, and he must abide by his perception, however imprecise it might be.

- of food your brother is hurt,<sup>165</sup>
- H 2 The absence of love in one's lifestyle: you are no longer walking according to love.<sup>166</sup>
- G2 Because Christ died for him 14:15b
- H 1 The prohibition: Do not destroy with your food
- H 2 The reason: him for whom Christ died.<sup>167</sup>
- E2 Don't let your good be ill-spoken of 14:16-18
- G1 The command stated: Therefore do not let what is for you a good thing be spoken of as evil,<sup>168</sup> 14:16
- G2 The reasons given 14:17-18
- H 1 Because the kingdom of God does not consist in materialism, but in spiritual character 14:17
- J 1 What the kingdom of God is not: for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking,<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> 14:15 - if because of food your brother is hurt: *lupeo* (3076) 3<sup>rd</sup> person, singular passive - he is distressed or grieved or caused sorrow because of my persistence (in this case) of eating meat offered to idols when I know it is extremely problematic for him.

<sup>166</sup> 14:15 - you are not walking according to love: The Christian life is not about personal fulfillment, but about exhibiting love to one another. Flaunting my right to eat meat offered to idols to the weaker brother's detriment is acting selfishly, not out of love.

<sup>167</sup> 14:15 - do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died: This weaker brother is one for whom Christ died. Jesus sacrificed His life to deliver Him from death and judgment. If Jesus made that extreme sacrifice for my weaker brother, what right do I have to destroy his spiritual equilibrium by eating meat that I know is morally clean but that he thinks is morally repugnant?

<sup>168</sup> 14:16 - do not let what is for you a good thing be spoken of as evil: It is possible for a Christian to be completely in the right as far as God is concerned, and yet be handling his position poorly, to the detriment of a weaker brother. In this case, it is possible for a knowledgeable Christian to be able to eat meat that has been offered to idols without violating his conscience and without offending God. However, if what is right for him is viewed by a weaker brother as something sinful, it becomes wrong because it causes distress to the weaker brother. We are not to permit what is good to us be spoken of as evil.

<sup>169</sup> 14:17 - the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking: What is the essence of the kingdom of God? It is not material qualities, but spiritual qualities. Paul is not saying that eating and drinking never take place in the kingdom of God. Of course they do. If not, why is there a river of life-giving water and a tree of life that bears a different fruit each month in New Jerusalem (Rev. 22:1-2)? What he is saying is that spiritual qualities take precedence over material qualities in the kingdom of God. His point is that, for the sake of promoting righteousness and peace and joy, I must be willing to give up eating meat that causes my brother to stumble.

- J 2 What the kingdom of God is: but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.<sup>170</sup>
- H 2 Because this is serving Christ: For he who in this way serves Christ 14:18
  - J 1 This pleases God: is acceptable to God 14:18a
  - J 2 This gains approval from men: and approved by men 14:18b
- E3 Pursue things which create peace and build one another up: So then let us pursue the things 14:19
  - G1 which make for peace
  - G2 and the building up of one another.<sup>171</sup>
- E4 Don't undo God's work for the sake of food 14:20-21
  - G1 The command stated: Do not tear down the work of God for the sake of food.<sup>172</sup> 14:20a
  - G2 The command explained – Things clean of themselves become evil to the one causing another to stumble 14:20b
    - H 1 All things indeed are clean,<sup>173</sup>
    - H 2 but they are evil <sup>174</sup> for the man who eats and

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<sup>170</sup> 14:17 - righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit: The eternal intangibles of moral and spiritual rectitude, of peace, and of Spirit-filled joy are what make the kingdom of God unique, good, beneficial, and eternally good. One is reminded of the nine-fold fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23) and Paul's comment that there are three eternal verities – faith, hope and love, the greatest being love (1 Cor. 13:13).

<sup>171</sup> 14:19 - let us pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another: Christians should make it our goal to promote peace in the body of Christ. And we should make it our goal to do things that will build other Christians up, not tear them down. That means at times we will have to give up our rights as liberated Christians to do things that do not offend us, but that do offend a Christian with a more restrictive conscience.

<sup>172</sup> 14:20 - do not tear down the work of God for the sake of food. This is a specific application of the principle that the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but rather righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 14:17).

<sup>173</sup> 14:20 - all things indeed are clean: Paul here reaffirms the truth that Christians have the moral and spiritual right before God to eat any kind of food, even meat offered to idols.

<sup>174</sup> 14:20 - but they are evil for the man who eats and gives offense: Even though all foods (including meat offered to idols) are permissible, a man who eats with a guilty conscience the meat that has been offered to idols, that meat is an evil thing. He is offending God in eating because he is violating his conscience.

gives offense.

- G3 The command applied: "Don't do anything that causes a brother to stumble." 14:21
- H 1 It is good not to eat meat or to drink wine,
- H 2 or to do anything by which your brother stumbles.<sup>175</sup>
- E5 Don't flaunt your faith in debatable matters – keep it between yourself and God 14:22-23
- G1 The command: The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God.<sup>176</sup> 14:22a
- G2 The results 14:22b-23
- H 1 The one not judging himself in what he allows is happy: Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.<sup>177</sup> 14:22b

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<sup>175</sup> 14:21 - it is good not ... to do anything by which your brother stumbles: Even though I have the right before God to eat or drink anything, it is a good thing if I voluntarily give up that right in order to avoid causing a Christian brother to stumble in his walk with God.

<sup>176</sup> 14:22 - the faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God: In other words, if I believe (and rightly so) that I can eat meat offered to idols, I can do so privately in my own home. But I should not become a “meat evangelist,” flaunting my right before Christians with a more restrictive conscience, or trying to convert them to my point of view.

<sup>177</sup> 14:22 - Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves: Whatever we do, we must have a clear conscience before God. If I am participating in some activity, but I have this nagging doubt that it is not really right, I am in the wrong. My conscience, even if improperly programmed, condemns me. But I can be filled with joy if I participate in something with a clear conscience. Perhaps a personal illustration is in order here.

I grew up in a very conservative Christian home. I was taught that it was wrong to smoke cigarettes, use chewing tobacco, drink any alcohol, gamble, dance, go to the movie theater, or participate in card games with traditional playing cards. When we argued with Mom (she seemed to be the enforcer) that there were some good movies, she responded, “But someone might see you go into a theater and then justify his going to a theater to watch a bad movie.” So I cooperated and didn’t go.

I went to a Bible college that forbade attending movies in a theater. That rule was problematic for some of the students, but not for me – I was used to it. But one time, there was an exception. There was a Billy Graham movie that showed in local movie theaters. And the faculty encouraged us to attend! I thought that was a betrayal of policy and refused to go. But I learned my lesson: If there is one good movie to attend, there is probably another.

After I graduated from Bible College, I attended Dallas Theological Seminary in Dallas, Texas. I was exposed to guys from all over the nation studying to be ministers and Bible teachers. I observed they loved Jesus, but that they didn’t have the same conservative scruples that I did. By that time I was married and out from under the jurisdiction of both my parents and the Bible College I had attended. So one time, I decided to go see a movie. The first movie I ever watched in a movie theater was 2001: A Space Odyssey. My wife doesn’t like science fiction movies, so I went all by myself. And I went with a clear conscience. And enjoyed every minute of it! It was an exhilarating experience!

My point here is that having a clear conscience is critical. I didn’t have a clear conscience to go to the Billy Graham movie in Bible College days. But later, I did have a clear conscience to go to 2001: A Space Odyssey. God’s standards didn’t change. My conscience had been properly educated.

- H 2 The one who doubts has been condemned:  
But he who doubts is condemned if he eats,<sup>178</sup>  
14:23
- J 1 Because he is unable to believe:  
because his eating is not from faith;<sup>179</sup>  
14:23a
- J 2 The absence of faith is sin: and  
whatever is not from faith is sin.<sup>180</sup>  
14:23b

### C 3 The principle of living for others 15:1-6

- D1 The principle stated 15:1-2
- E1 The strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those not strong:  
Now we who are strong<sup>181</sup> ought to bear the weaknesses<sup>182</sup>  
of those without strength<sup>183</sup> 15:1a
- E2 The strong ought not to live to please themselves: and not

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<sup>178</sup> 14:23 - he who doubts is condemned if he eats: Paul's point here is not that it is wrong to eat meat offered to idols. Rather his point is that if I *think* it is wrong to eat meat offered to idols, and I eat anyway, I have a guilty conscience and my conscience condemns me. Violating one's conscience is sin.

<sup>179</sup> 14:23 - because his eating is not from faith: Why is it wrong to violate my conscience? Because I do not have faith before God that what I am doing is right. If I do something out of the energy of my flesh, but I am not acting in faith that it is right, I am sinning. Sometimes we may be believing something that is not quite right theologically. But God has constructed our conscience in such a way that we are never excused for violating our conscience for any reason at all.

<sup>180</sup> 14:23 - whatever is not from faith is sin: Faith is an indispensable coin in the Christian life. We cannot please God without faith (Heb. 11:6); we are saved by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8-10); and we walk (live) by faith, not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7). If we are not trusting God at any moment, even trusting Him that what we are doing is right, we are sinning.

<sup>181</sup> 15:1 - we who are strong: For the first time, Paul identifies the believer who has the freedom to eat meat offered to idols and who observes all days as holy days, and thus feels no compulsion to treat one day as more holy than another – he calls him “strong” (from *dunatos*, 1415, one who possesses strength, power, or might). Paul includes himself as being one of the strong.

<sup>182</sup> 15:1 - weaknesses: plural adjective of *asthenema*, 771, meaning weaknesses or infirmities. This is the only time this word is used in the NT. But twice, in Rom. 14:1 and 2, Paul used the verb weak (*asthuneo*, 770), obviously related to *asthenema* (771). In 14:1 Paul wrote that the church was to “accept the one who is weak (*asthuneo*, 770) in the faith” (lit. translation); and in 14:2 he wrote “he who is weak eats vegetables only”. So the weaknesses (*asthenema*, 771) that “we, the strong” are to bear would include, among other things, eating meat offered to idols and special holy days. By that, we the strong are urged, where necessary for the sake of “those without strength”, to forego eating meat (that has been offered to idols) and to observe a particular day as being holy even though we believe all days are equally holy.

<sup>183</sup> 15:1 - those without strength: Instead of referring to “the weak” (*asthenes*, 772) in contrast to “the strong” (*dunatos*, 1415), Paul referred to those “without strength” (*adunatos*, 102), the opposite of “the strong” (*dunatos*, 1415).

- just please ourselves.<sup>184</sup> 15:1b
- E3 Each ought to please his neighbor for building up: Let each of us please his neighbor 15:2
- G1 for his good,
- G2 to his edification.
- D2 The principle modeled 15:3-6
- E1 Christ the example 15:3 (cf. Psalm 69:9)<sup>185</sup>
- G1 For even Christ did not please Himself;
- G2 but as it is written, “THE REPROACHES OF THOSE WHO REPROACHED YOU FELL UPON ME.”
- E2 The use of the O.T. Scriptures justified 15:4-6
- G1 As providing hope through patience and comfort 15:4
- H 1 For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction,
- H 2 that . . . (3) we might have hope.
- J 1 (1) through perseverance
- J 2 (2) and the encouragement of the Scriptures
- G2 As a basis for Paul's prayer for the Romans 15:5-6
- H 1 For unity in Christ 15:5

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<sup>184</sup> 15:1 - and not just please ourselves: Most people, and too many Christians, are merely intent on pleasing themselves. That was not the motivation of Jesus when He came into this world, and it cannot be our own. Jesus expressed His standard for us and His own drive in these terms, “...whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for all” (Mark 10:43-45). Commenting on this last phrase of 15:1, John Witmer (Romans, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary [TBKC]*) wrote, “This last clause is the key; a Christian should not be self-centered, but should be concerned about the spiritual welfare of others.”

<sup>185</sup> 15:3 - Psalm 69:9: In Romans 15:3 Paul quoted from a Messianic psalm which, though written by David about himself, also looked ahead to the future Messiah. In Psalm 69:8 David said he was “estranged from my brothers and an alien to my mother’s sons.” This was prophetic also of the Messiah. In Psalm 69:9 The source of their embarrassment about him and their reproach of him was his total absorption with God’s House and God’s Cause. This was true both of David and of Jesus. Zeal for God’s House: “For zeal for Your house has consumed me;” Zeal for God’s Cause: “And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.” In the case of David, one is reminded of His own wife Michal’s reproach of David when he brought up the ark of the covenant to its residence in Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:16-23). In the case of Jesus, His own brothers mocked him (John 7:3-5), and on the cross the leaders and the people of Israel mocked Him (Matt. 27:41; Mark 15:31).

- J 1 The gifts of God: Now may the God
  - K 1 who gives perseverance
  - K 2 and encouragement
- J 2 The request of God: grant you to be of the same mind with one another<sup>186</sup> according to Christ Jesus;
- H 2 For united glorification of God the Father 15:6
  - J 1 The accompaniments: that
    - K 1 with one accord you may
    - K 2 with one voice
  - J 2 The goal: glorify the God and Father<sup>187</sup> of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- C 4 The principle of Jew and Gentile accepting one another for the glory of God 15:7-13**

D1 The command of mutual acceptance: Therefore, accept one another,<sup>188</sup> 15:7a

D2 The example of Christ in accepting both Jews and Gentiles 15:7b-12

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<sup>186</sup> 15:5 - same mind with one another: Paul's over-riding concern in the "Culture Wars" of the early church was unity. The believers needed to be of the same mind. One of Jesus' ongoing concerns for His followers in His "High-Priestly Prayer" (John 17) was "that they may be one even as *We are*" (John 17:11, 21).

<sup>187</sup> 15:6 - glorify the God and Father: The ultimate aim of Church unity is the united glorification of God the Father. None of us lives for himself. Our destiny is to exist for the praise of His Glory (Eph. 1:6, 12, 14). Let us help fulfill that destiny with our unity.

<sup>188</sup> 15:7 - accept one another: "Accept" (plural imperative of *proslambano*, 4355) is another in a series of imperatives. Paul used *proslambano* also in 14:1 ("accept the one who is weak in the faith") and 14:3 ("God has accepted him"). Imperatives (**bold font**) in Romans 14:1-15:6 include the following: (1) "**Accept** the one who is weak in the faith" (14:1). (2) "The one who eats **is not to regard with contempt** the one who does not eat" (14:3). (3) "...the one who does not eat **is not to judge** the one who eats" (14:3). (4) "Each person **must be fully convinced** in his own mind" (14:5). (5) "**...let us not judge** one another anymore" (14:13). Technically this is not an imperative, but it is a hortatory (exhortational) subjunctive, which functions as an imperative. (6) "...but rather **determine** this – not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way" (14:13). (7) "**Do not destroy** with your food him for whom Christ died" (14:15). (8) "Therefore **do not let** what is for you a good thing **be spoken of as evil**" (14:16). (9?) "So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another" (14:19). There is a textual problem here. The earliest manuscripts (MSS) read as does the NASB here. But because of the repeated use of imperatives and one hortatory subjunctive prior to this, some textual critics believe the use of the hortatory subjunctive here, which occurs in many MSS, is to be preferred. If it is, it reads, "So then **let us pursue** the things," etc. (so KJV, NKJV, ESV, NIV, etc.). (10) "**Do not tear down** the work of God for the sake of food" (14:20). (11) "The faith which you have, **have** as your own conviction before God" (14:22). (12) "Each of us **is to please** his neighbor ..." (15:2). (13) Therefore, **accept** one another" (15:7).

- E1 The statement of Christ's acceptance: just as Christ also accepted us 15:7b
- E2 The motive of Christ's acceptance – to the glory of God 15:7c
- E3 The method of Christ's acceptance – to become a servant: For I say that Christ has become a servant 15:8-9b
- G1 To Israel: to the circumcision<sup>189</sup> 15:8
  - H 1 on behalf of the truth of God 15:8a
  - H 2 To confirm the promises of the patriarchs: to confirm the promises given to the fathers,<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> 15:8 - Christ has become a servant to the circumcision: The term “circumcision” here refers to the nation of Israel as defined by those who observe the identifying sign of circumcision (Gen. 17:9-14). As Paul has phrased it, The Messiah did not become a servant only to those Jewish people who would trust in Him, but to all Jewish people everywhere who observe circumcision. His objective, of course, was that the Jewish people might believe “the truth of God” (15:8). In what way has the Messiah become a servant to the circumcision? John Witmer (*TBKC*) succinctly stated, “Jesus was born a Jew as God’s Messiah for Israel ....”

To think that Jesus, the Messiah has become (the verb is a perfect, meaning that in the past Jesus became a servant and He remains such) a servant to the circumcision when the vast majority of Christians across Christendom take a rather different position toward the circumcision. They see Jewish people as an enemy of peace in the Middle East, as occupiers of “Palestinian” territory and as having forfeited any future as a nation. This is the sad outcome of Amillennialism, which refuses to take literally the promises of God to the patriarchs. Barry E. Horner, in his book, *Future Israel: Why Christian Anti-Judaism Must be Challenged*, details the tragic history of Christianity’s failure to be a servant to the circumcision. For a review, see [http://www.wordexplain.com/Review\\_Future\\_Israel.html](http://www.wordexplain.com/Review_Future_Israel.html). In his “Personal Introduction” to his book (pp. xvii-xviii), Horner related “In conversation, quite a few [but not all Calvinists] by their derogatory manner have inferred that they would be delighted if the Arabs would push Israel into the Mediterranean Sea, repossess Palestine, and thus vindicate their eschatology”.

<sup>190</sup> 15:8 - to confirm the promises *given* to the fathers: The promises are those given first to Abraham, then confirmed to Abraham and Sarah’s promised seed Isaac (not Ishmael), and then to Jacob and his descendants (not Esau and his).

There are three essential features of the patriarchal promises (Gen. 12:1-3). God subsequently formalized these promises in terms of a unilateral covenant with Abraham (see Gen. 15). We call this the Abrahamic Covenant. These three essential features were first outlined in Genesis 12:1-3. They include: (1) **Blessing**: God would bless Abraham. He was to be a blessing. God would bless those who blessed him and curse those who cursed him. God’s plan was to bless “all the families of the earth” through Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3). (2) **Descendants**: It was not only Abraham whom God would bless, but his numerous (as the stars – Gen. 15:2-6) descendants through the promised line of Isaac and Jacob. (3) **Land**: In God’s plan, one cannot have a nation without a place to live. In a unilateral covenant, God guaranteed to Abraham and his descendants a specific piece of real estate. This land, God revealed, stretched “from the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates” (Gen. 15:17-19). This land was given to Abraham and his promised descendants *in perpetuity* (Gen. 15:14-17).

Most people in Christendom today believe that the Church is the fulfillment of the promises God gave to the Israeli fathers – Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – and that Israel, because of her rejection of her Messiah, forfeited those promises. This majority view comes from a failure to take many of the promises, the covenants, and the eschatological prophecies of the Old Testament literally. The NT does not abrogate these promises, but fulfills them and expands certain (but not all) of their benefits to believing Gentiles. Jesus did not take the stance of modern-day Christendom. He came to *serve* the circumcision to *confirm* the promises made to the fathers, not *abort* them! One day, Israel will mourn over her Messiah as the One crucified by the nation (Zech. 12:10-13:1). Jesus will return to Israel, to the very place from which He left, the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:4). He will deliver Israel from the savage attacks of the United Nations of the world (Zech. 12:1-9; 14:1-3, 12-15). Jesus will reign from Jerusalem as King of Israel and of the entire earth (Zech. 14:9), replacing the evil, anti-God, anti-Christ, anti-Israel focus of the United Nations. All of the world will come to Jerusalem at least annually to worship the King, the LORD of Hosts, Jesus of Nazareth, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths (Zech. 14:16-21) and to learn of His ways (Isa. 2:1-4; Micah 4:1-3).

15:8b

- G2 For the nations: and for the Gentiles <sup>191</sup> 15:9
- H 1 to glorify God 15:9a
- H 2 for His mercy 15:9b
- E4 The documentation of Christ's acceptance from O.T. Scripture: as it is written, 15:9c-12
- G1 The prediction of Messiah's praise of God among the nations 15:9c (cf. Psalm 18:49 and 2 Sam. 22:50)
- H 1 "THEREFORE I WILL GIVE PRAISE TO YOU AMONG THE GENTILES,"<sup>192</sup>
- H 2 AND I WILL SING TO YOUR NAME."
- G2 The prediction of the nations' uniting in joy with God's people, Israel: And again he says, "REJOICE, O GENTILES, WITH HIS PEOPLE."<sup>193</sup> 15:10 (cf. Deut.

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There will be universal peace and prosperity! And there will be no separation of Church and State. For further studies, see The Second Coming of Christ (<http://www.wordexplain.com/2ndcomingb.html>) and Characteristics of the Millennium (<http://www.wordexplain.com/millenniumcharacteristics.html>). Read a brief summary of the Abrahamic Covenant: [http://wordexplain.com/glossarya.html#Abrahamic\\_Covenant](http://wordexplain.com/glossarya.html#Abrahamic_Covenant). This URL also links to a more extensive discussion.

<sup>191</sup> 15:9 - and for the Gentiles: As John Witmer (Romans, *TBKC*) pointed out, Jesus had two objectives in becoming a servant to observant (circumcised) Israel:

The first was to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs (Rom. 9:4-5)... God's second objective in Christ's ministry was so that (lit., "and that," because the following clause is coordinate with the preceding one) the Gentiles may glorify God (cf. 15:6) for His mercy. God had made covenants only with Israel (9:4), not with the Gentiles (cf. Eph. 2:12), so God had no covenantal promises to confirm with the Gentiles. Any spiritual blessings that come to the Gentiles spring solely from the mercy of God. Nevertheless God eternally purposed to bless the Gentiles spiritually through the Lord Jesus as their Messiah and through His covenants with Israel (e.g., Gen. 12:3; cf. John 4:22).

God's two purposes in the ministry of Christ are being achieved now while Israel nationally has been set aside (cf. Rom. 11:1-31) and the church is being formed of both Jews and Gentiles (Eph. 2:14-22). And it will be achieved in the future when Israel is restored to her place as head of the nations and becomes a means of blessing to everyone (cf. Deut. 30:1-10).

<sup>192</sup> 15:9 - Therefore I will give praise to You among the Gentiles: A quotation from Psalm 18:49 and 2 Sam. 22:50. Though David wrote Psalm 18 and 2 Sam. 22:50, he himself realized that, because of the Davidic Covenant God had made with him (2 Sam. 7:12-16), promises made to him applied to his messianic (anointed) heirs. In this case Paul states that Psalm 18:49 is fulfilled ultimately in David's greatest descendant, Jesus, The Messiah. Jesus will praise God among the Gentiles. And indeed He has and He will!

<sup>193</sup> Romans 15:10 - Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people: Paul here quoted Deuteronomy 32:43. Deuteronomy 32:34-43 proclaimed Yahweh's ultimate vindication of His servants and His vengeance upon His adversaries. Yet even in this diatribe against the nations (Gentiles) who oppose Israel, there is a jewel of redemption. There will be those nations who rejoice with God's people instead of attempting to destroy them (Deut. 32:43). It was always God's purpose to bless all the peoples of the earth through Abraham's ultimate descendant, Jesus of Nazareth (Gen. 12:3; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14; Acts 3:25; Galatians 3:8). As the Sons of Korah so beautifully proclaimed in Psalm 87, it

32:43)

- G3 The prediction of praise toward God by all the nations 15:11 (cf. Psalm 117:1)
- H 1 And again, “PRAISE THE LORD ALL YOU GENTILES,
- H 2 AND LET ALL THE PEOPLES <sup>194</sup> PRAISE HIM.”
- G4 The prediction by Isaiah of Jesse's offspring to rule the nations 15:12 (cf. Isaiah 11:10) <sup>195</sup>
- H 1 The prediction of Messiah to rule the nations 15:12a
- J 1 And again Isaiah says, “THERE SHALL COME THE ROOT OF JESSE, <sup>196</sup>
- J 2 AND HE WHO ARISES TO RULE OVER THE GENTILES, <sup>197</sup>

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was always God’s plan to grant “born in Zion” status to multitudes of Gentiles! (See <http://www.wordexplain.com/PDFdocs/Psalm087ea.pdf>.)

<sup>194</sup> 15:11 - and let all the peoples praise Him: Paul here used the word “peoples” (*laos*, 2992) as a synonym for “Gentiles” (*ethnos*, 1484), meaning “the nations of the world.” Repeatedly in the NT, “people” is used for the “people of God,” often meaning the people of Israel, and sometimes the people of God through Christ. Here, in context, it means the nations. There follows a list of references where *laos* refers to Gentiles specifically: Luke 2:31; Acts 4:25; 15:14; Rom. 9:25-26; 15:11; Rev. 5:9; 7:9; 10:11; 11:9; 13:7; 14:6; 17:15.

<sup>195</sup> Romans 15:12 cf. Isaiah 11:10: In Romans 15:12, Paul quoted from Isaiah 11:10. Anyone comparing the two must surely scratch his head and wonder how Paul arrived at his text. The problem is resolved, upon closer examination, when one understands that, with certain omissions, Paul was quoting the Septuagint text almost verbatim, not translating from the Hebrew (Masoretic) text (MT). There is surprising latitude between the LXX and the MT. The LXX is a defensible, but hardly a literal translation. Paul chose to quote from the LXX. For a further discussion of this issue, see “A Comparison of Romans 15:12 with Isaiah 11:10” – (See [http://www.wordexplain.com/PDFdocs/Romans\\_15.12\\_cf\\_Isaiah\\_11.10.pdf](http://www.wordexplain.com/PDFdocs/Romans_15.12_cf_Isaiah_11.10.pdf) )

<sup>196</sup> 15:12 - Root of Jesse: A reference to the Messiah, the descendant of Jesse (David’s father) who will serve as the Ultimate King not only of Israel, but of the Earth. This refers, of course, to Jesus, the Messiah.

<sup>197</sup> 15:12 - There shall come the root of Jesse ... who arises to rule over the Gentiles: Paul here quoted from Isaiah 11, a Messianic chapter. Specifically, he quoted Isaiah 11:10 to prove that God has always had a plan to bring Gentiles to a place of subservience to His will and consequent blessing through faith in the Jewish Messiah. This will not happen to the extent that Isaiah prophesied until Jesus returns to set up His kingdom here upon earth. Then Jesus will reign as the Great Jewish King who is also King Over All Nations. The OT prophets repeatedly predict this time of future blessing for the world. The Messiah will have achieved His dual goal of benevolently ruling over both faithful Israel and faithful nations (Gentiles) of the world.

Amillennialists, because they do not interpret prophetic Scripture literally, deny that Jesus will one day rule over the Gentiles (nations) in a literal political/spiritual kingdom on this present earth. They say that He is ruling over the Gentiles now. If that is true, why do the Gentiles perpetually blaspheme Jesus’ name? The very next line in Romans 15:12 states, “In Him shall the Gentiles hope.” While a fraction of the Gentiles presently trust in Jesus, the vast majority do not and continue rebelling. In the verse immediately preceding Isaiah 11:10, Isaiah predicted, “For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea” (Isa. 11:9). The very next verse (Isa. 11:10) continues, “In that day the nations will resort to the root of Jesse, who will stand as a signal for the peoples;

- H 2    Messiah as being the hope of the nations: “IN HIM SHALL THE GENTILES HOPE.”<sup>198</sup> 15:12b
- D3    Paul's prayer for abundance of hope for the Gentile Christians of Rome 15:13
- E1    Now may the God of hope<sup>199</sup> fill you with all
- G1    joy
- G2    and peace in believing,
- E2    that you may abound in hope<sup>200</sup> by the power of the Holy

and His resting place will be glorious.” It is eminently clear that today, the earth is not full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea, and it is eminently clear that the nations are not today resorting to the root of Jesse the way Isaiah meant, but rather stand in blatant rebellion against Jesus and against God, just as David stated in Psalm 2:1-3. So the fractional Gentile trust in the Messiah today in the Church Age can only be a partial fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy in Isaiah 11:10, not a complete one. The world awaits a yet future fulfillment, first in Christ’s future Millennial Kingdom, and ultimately, in the eternal state in connection with New Earth, whose capital city will be New Jerusalem, governed by the Co-Regency of God the Father and Christ the Son (Rev. 21:1-22:5).

<sup>198</sup> 15:12 - in Him shall the Gentiles hope: The Hebrew text (MT) of Isaiah 11:10 reads, “For him nations will seek” (author’s translation). Paul quoted from the Septuagint (LXX): “in Him shall the Gentiles hope.” He will amplify the theme of hope in the following lines.

<sup>199</sup> 15:13 - Now may the God of hope fill you: Paul is beginning to conclude his didactic (teaching) portion of his letter to the Romans. (He will conclude by informing them of the nature of his ministry and by explaining why he has not yet visited them (Rom. 15:14-23). Then he will write a fairly extensive list of greetings (Rom. 16).) Here he expands on the theme of hope (*elpis*, 1680), derived from the LXX translation of Isa. 11:10, by extolling God, from whom the hope derives. Paul previously spoke of hope in this chapter in 15:4-5.

<sup>200</sup> 15:13 - that you may abound in hope: Paul continued to expand on the theme of hope begun in his quotation of Isa. 11:10. He prayed that the God of hope may fill them with all joy and peace in believing so that they may abound in the hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. In the NT hope for the believer is not wishful thinking, but a Spirit-empowered, settled assurance of good, both in the present and in the future, based upon the character and promises of God. According to Paul’s prayer, it is God’s task to fill the believers with all joy and peace; it is the believers’ task to believe; and it is the believers’ task to abound in the hope, but they can only do so by the power of the Holy Spirit. In Romans 15:13, Paul spoke of the God of the hope, and he stated that believers are to abound in the hope by the Spirit’s power. What is *the* hope?

In Rom. 5:1-2, Paul stated that, “having been justified by faith, we [Christians] 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.” So the hope we have as Christians consists in part of **partaking of the glory of God** by virtue of our having been declared righteous through faith (not works). In the same context (Rom. 5:4-5), proven character works hope; moreover, the “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.” So hope is linked to **experiencing the love of God**.

In Romans 8:20-21, hope is defined as the assurance that the whole created order will be set free from its slavery to destruction and decay to the glory that the children of God are destined to enjoy. So the believers’ hope includes **deliverance from bondage to decay to enjoy the glory which God’s children are predestined to experience**.

As God has constructed redeemed living this side of Adam’s fall and this side of the cross and the empty tomb, **hope is a fundamental experience of the Christian life** (Rom. 8:24-25). Hope presupposes that we cannot see that for which we hope, but that with perseverance we eagerly await it. So a fundamental characteristic of Christian living is that we must constantly be rejoicing in hope (Rom. 12:12). To that end God has given us the Scriptures to encourage us, and He gives us perseverance so that we might have hope (Rom. 15:4,5). So it is no surprise that Paul concludes His mini-essays on hope by praying that the God of the hope would fill his readers with

Spirit.

**A7 INFORMATION: Paul, the Model of Righteousness 15:14 - 16:27**

**B 1 In His Reasons for Writing to the Romans Instead of Visiting Them Personally 15:14-22**

**C 1 To tell them he is convinced of their ability to warn one another without his being there personally:** And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are 15:14

D1 full of goodness,

D2 filled with all knowledge,

D3 and able also to admonish <sup>201</sup> one another.

**C 2 To remind them he is Christ's priest to the nations 15:15-19**

D1 His acknowledged boldness in writing: But I have written very boldly to you on some points, so as to remind you again,<sup>202</sup> 15:15a

D2 His reminder of the grace given to him by God 15:15b-16

E1 His acknowledgment of God's grace to him: because of the grace that was given me from God, 15:15b

E2 His awareness of his God-given, priestly role 15:16

G1 His priestly role for Christ to the nations: to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, 15:16a

G2 His personal sacrifice – a ceaseless commitment to telling the gospel: ministering as a priest the gospel

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all joy and peace in believing so that they will abound in the hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 15:13).

<sup>201</sup> 15:14 - able also to admonish one another: Admonish translates *noutheteo* (3560), to caution or warn or instruct others in regard to their belief or behavior (see Friberg Analytical Lexicon). It is used in the NT in Acts 20:31; Rom. 15:14; 1 Cor. 14:14; Col. 1:28; 3:16; 1 Thess. 5:12, 14. Paul offers two characteristics requisite for admonishing others: One must be filled with goodness and all knowledge. Paul was convinced the Romans met those requirements.

<sup>202</sup> 15:15 - so as to remind you again: “remind you again” translates *epanamimnesko* (1878), used only here in the NT. The translation “remind you again”, is, unfortunately, redundant. “Remind” is all Paul meant to say. His point is that, even though the brothers at Rome are “full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able also to admonish one another” (Rom. 15:14), it was perfectly fitting that he had written to them this to remind them of certain points. It was fitting because God had given him special grace to serve as a priest on behalf of Jesus the Messiah to the nations (Gentiles), wooing them to be reconciled to God through Jesus (Rom. 15:15-16).

- of God,<sup>203</sup> 15:16b
- G3 His acceptable offering to God – the nations: that my offering of the Gentiles<sup>204</sup> might become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 15:16c
- D3 His restrictions in boasting 15:17-19
- E1 The **area** in which he boasts – in Christ: Therefore in Christ Jesus I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God. 15:17
- E2 The **activities** of which he speaks 15:18-19
- G1 Their identification – only those in whom Christ worked through him: For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, 15:18a
- G2 Their result – obedience among the nations: resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles 15:18b
- H 1 In word: by word
- H 2 In work: and deed,
- G3 Their authentication – by means of power displayed: in the power of 15:19a
- H 1 In signs (authenticating miracles): signs<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> 15:16 - the gospel of God: “Gospel” translates *euaggelion* (2098), strictly, “good news.” But “the Good News of God” is that fallen men, under condemnation because of sin, can be justified (declared righteous) – not by works – but by faith in Jesus the Messiah, who died and rose again to pay the death penalty for the sins of all. Not only can man be declared righteous by faith in Jesus, but he can anticipate a resurrection and a future life in a glorious, redeemed creation freed from the curse of death and decay, and an existence in which there is perfect harmony between Gentile peoples and Jewish people, the latter finally fulfilling their promised destiny. That is the gospel of God, summarizing Romans 1-11. See the footnote on “the gospel of God” in 1:1 for a listing of all the occurrences of *euaggelion* in the book of Romans.

<sup>204</sup> 15:16 - my offering of the Gentiles: Paul sees his ministry among the Gentiles as an offering which he, as a believer-priest, is presenting and will present to God. That perspective gives rise to a sobering question for each of us. What offering will we have to present to God when we stand in His presence? Are the things we are doing in this life of sufficient value and merit that we can present them as an offering to God?

<sup>205</sup> 15:19 - signs: *semeion* (4592) refers to authenticating miracles Paul performed by means of the power of the Holy Spirit. Here Paul used “signs” – *semeion* (4592, authenticating miracles) in tandem with *teras*, “wonders” (5059, awe-producing miracles). The signs and wonders were designed to authenticate Paul as a legitimate apostle of Jesus Christ, with all the authority and responsibility that office entailed. He was as fully a hand-picked apostle of Jesus Christ (Acts 9:1-18) as were any of the original twelve. In Acts 2:43 and 5:12 Luke noted that many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. In 2 Corinthians 12:12 Paul defended his apostleship by stating that his apostolic ministry had been authenticated by the signs (*semeia*) of a true apostle. He further denoted this as authentication in terms of signs (*semeion*, 4592), wonders (*teras*, 5059), and miracles (lit. powers - *dunamis*, 1411). These miracles were designed to prove that both he and his message were from God. That was particularly necessary since Paul, as an apostle of Christ, was also a prophet, and was repeatedly dispensing revelation given to him directly

- H 2 In wonders (awe-producing miracles): and wonders
- G4 Their source of power – the Holy Spirit: in the power of the Spirit; 15:19b
- G5 Their extent – from Jerusalem to Illyricum: so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum<sup>206</sup> 15:19c
- G6 Their function – the fulfillment of the gospel of Christ: I have fully preached<sup>207</sup> the gospel of Christ.<sup>208</sup> 15:19d
- C 3 To inform them of his reasons for never having visited them personally 15:20-22**
- D1 His *policy* – to evangelize only where Christ was unnamed: And thus I aspired to preach the gospel,<sup>209</sup> not where Christ was already named,<sup>210</sup> 15:20a

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by God.

In the Gospel that bears his name, the Apostle John selected certain signs (*semeion*, 4592) Jesus had performed in order to prove that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, so that if his readers continued believing, they might have life through His name (John 20:30-31). It is worth noting that when the “lawless one”, the Antichrist is revealed, his coming (*parousia*, 3952) will be according to the energy of Satan with all power (*dunamis*, 1411), and signs (*semeion*, 4592), and wonders (*teras*, 5059) – of falsehood (!) “and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved” (2 Thess. 2:8-10).

<sup>206</sup> 15:19 - Illyricum: A Roman Province on the Grecian peninsula adjacent to the NW corner of Macedonia, bounded on its west by the Adriatic Sea. As of his writing to the Romans, Illyricum was the westernmost extent of Paul’s evangelism (proclaiming of the gospel of Christ), Jerusalem being the easternmost extent. Rome, of course, was further west, across the Adriatic from Illyricum.

<sup>207</sup> 15:19 - I have fully preached: This partial clause translates but one word in Greek, the perfect tense of *pleroo* (4137), to fulfill. What Paul stated literally was, “I have fulfilled the good news of Christ.” Of course, he did so by proclaiming, but that is not what he stated here. Of the 87 translations of this word in the NASB, this is the only instance in which it is so translated. The most frequent translations include “fulfill” (20X); “fulfilled” (20X); “filled” (16X); “made full” (5X); “fill” (3X); and “completed” (3X).

<sup>208</sup> 15:19 - the gospel of Christ: “Gospel” translates *euaggelion* (2098), “good news.” Paul in this letter has referred to “the gospel of God”, “the gospel of Christ”, and even “the gospel of me” (Paul). See the notes on “the gospel of God” in 1:1 and 15:16 for further definition.

<sup>209</sup> 15:20 - to preach the gospel: This phrase translates the present tense infinitive of *euaggelidzo* (2097), to announce good news, or, literally, “to good-news-icize.” (We would say today, “to evangelize.”) *Euaggelidzo* (2097) is the verb of which *euaggelion* (2098) is its noun. *Euaggelidzo* (2097) is used only three times in Romans – in 1:15; 10:15; and here in 15:20. It means in Romans to announce the good news about Jesus and the salvation He brings to all who believe in Him.

<sup>210</sup> 15:20 - not where Christ was already named: Jesus assigns different ministries to different ones of His servants (1 Cor. 12:5). One parameter of Paul’s evangelistic, church-planting ministry was to present the good news about Jesus in regions in which the residents had never before heard of Him. In the twentieth century, we would have said that Paul was engaged in “pioneer missions.” In this century, we would say that he was targeting “unreached people groups.” Obviously, the good news about Jesus had already reached Rome, and so, because of his priorities,

- D2 His *purpose* – to avoid building on another's foundation: that I might not build upon another man's foundation;<sup>211</sup> 15:20b
- D3 His *motive* – to fulfill Scripture – Those untold about Him will see and understand: but as it is written,<sup>212</sup> 15:21 (cf. Isa. 52:15)
- E1 “THEY WHO HAD NO NEWS OF HIM SHALL SEE,
- E2 AND THEY WHO HAVE NOT HEARD SHALL UNDERSTAND.”
- D4 The *effects* – he was often hindered from visiting them: For this reason I have often been prevented from coming to you;<sup>213</sup> 15:22

## **B 2 In His Plans for the Future 15:23-33**

### **C 1 His plans to visit the Romans 15:23-29**

- D1 His completion of the work in Greece: but now, with no further place for me in these regions, 15:23a
- D2 His long desire to visit the Romans: and since I have had for many years a longing to come to you 15:23b
- D3 His plan to visit them on the way to Spain: whenever I go to

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Paul had never visited them. He is explaining his absence.

<sup>211</sup> 15:20 - not build on another's foundation: Another way of stating Paul's priority in evangelism and church planting was that he did not wish to build on a foundation laid by someone else. I can personally identify somewhat with that priority as it relates to my publication in this venue (WordExplain) of my understanding of theology and different books of the Bible. I was recently asked why I do not possess and read a great many commentaries. Why, in WordExplain, do I seek to reinvent the wheel? I must confess that, though I have had years of formal theological and biblical training, and though I feel free to consult commentaries as needed, my desire in this venue is to present the truth of God as I see it, now as how others see it. If readers wish to know how others see the truth of God, they may read others' commentaries. If they wish to know how I see the truth of God, then they are welcome to read WordExplain.

<sup>212</sup> 15:21 - as it is written: Here Paul quotes the last two lines of Isaiah 52:15, which happen to be the last two lines of one of Isaiah's Servant passages that speak of the Messiah (Isa. 52:13-15). This passage predicts both the exaltation of the Servant and His humiliation, the latter of which would be the means of His sprinkling (redeeming) “many nations.” What Isaiah predicted, and what Paul here confirms, is that many Gentiles (people among the nations) would hear for the first time about this Jewish Messiah who died for their sins, and they would see the truth, perceive it, and believe. Paul used this OT prophecy as a justification for his policy of disseminating the Good News to Gentiles who had never before heard about Jesus. For further discussion of the Servant passages in Isaiah, see “The Identification of the Servant in the Book of Isaiah” (<http://www.wordexplain.com/IsaiahServant.html>).

<sup>213</sup> 15:22 - often been prevented from coming to you: Because of his policy of taking the Good News about Jesus to Gentiles who had never before heard, Paul had been unable to visit the Romans, who had already heard. Now, however, he has plans to sail beyond them to Spain (Rom. 15:24). That will justify his stopping in to visit them en route. But before he could travel to Spain, and thus see the Romans, he had prior obligations in Jerusalem (Rom. 15:25-29). At the very beginning of his letter, Paul had previously expressed his thwarted desire to visit them (Rom. 1:10-15).

Spain<sup>214</sup> 15:24

E1 Intended visit: for I hope to see you in passing,

E2 Hoped for support: and to be helped on my way there by you,

E3 Enjoyable fellowship: when I have first enjoyed your company for a little while –

D4 His interim plan to visit Jerusalem 15:25-28

E1 His purpose – to serve the saints: but now, I am going to Jerusalem, serving the saints. 15:25

E2 His explanation – to deliver a collection to the poor saints in Jerusalem 15:25-28

G1 The Macedonian and Achaian Christians' desire to contribute: For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution<sup>215</sup> 15:26-27a

H 1 for the poor

H 2 among the saints

H 3 in Jerusalem.

H 4 Repetition: Yes, they were pleased to do so, 15:27a

G2 Paul's awareness of their indebtedness 15:27b

H 1 The sharing by the Christian Jews of spiritual realities: For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things<sup>216</sup> 15:27b

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<sup>214</sup> 15:24 - Spain: Paul's previous venture westward had been the province of Illyricum (15:19). Now he had plans to travel clear to Spain!

<sup>215</sup> 15:26 - pleased to make a contribution: It had long been Paul's policy to remember the poor (Gal. 2:10). On several occasions Paul referred to his bringing this contribution from the Gentile Christians of Macedonia and Achaia to poor Messianic Jews in Jerusalem: 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8:13-14; 9:12-13. He had succeeded in delivering the contribution when he was apprehended in the temple (Acts 24:17-18). His arrest in the temple and lengthy incarceration would prevent Paul from visiting the church at Rome (Acts 21-24). Nevertheless, God used Paul's appeal to Caesar to permit him to see the Romans personally (Acts 25-28).

<sup>216</sup> 15:27 - if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things: Paul gives here a correct and Biblical assessment of the relation of the largely Gentile Church to spiritual Israel. The Church has not replaced spiritual Israel. Rather, the Church has *shared* in the *spiritual* benefits of saved Israel. There are *physical* benefits that saved Israel will yet inherit on this earth – the physical land of Israel and the physical blessings of great wealth, along with a position of great *honor* among Earth's nations (see, for example, Isaiah 60-62; 65:18-25; 66:10-24). The prophets have predicted these things, and no NT Scripture ever precludes these promises from being fulfilled. Despite what

- H 2 The obligation of the Christians among the nations to reciprocate materially: they are indebted to minister to them also in material things. 15:27c
- G3 The projected completion of his task 15:28a
- H 1 Therefore, when I have finished this,
- H 2 and have put my seal on this fruit of theirs,
- D5 His projected stopover on the way to Spain 15:28b-29
- E1 Planned layover: I will go on by way of you to Spain 15:28b
- E2 Anticipated blessing: And I know that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ. 15:29

## C 2 His request for the Romans' prayers 15:30-33

- D1 The urgency of his request: Now I urge you, brethren, 15:30a
  - E1 by our Lord Jesus Christ
  - E2 and by the love of the Spirit,
- D2 The intensity of his request – for diligent prayer: to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, 15:30b
- D3 The thrust of their prayers 15:31-32
  - E1 For his protection from disobedient Jews: that I may be delivered from those who are disobedient in Judea,<sup>217</sup> 15:31a
  - E2 For the acceptance of the collection by the Jewish saints in Jerusalem: and that my service for Jerusalem may prove

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amillennialists say, these promises will be fulfilled in Christ's spiritual, political kingdom here on this present earth. See "Characteristics of the Millennium" (<http://www.wordexplain.com/millenniumcharacteristics.html>).

<sup>217</sup> 15:31 - delivered from those who are disobedient in Judea: Paul asked the Roman believers to pray with him that he would be preserved from Jewish people in Jerusalem and Judea who refused to believe that Jesus was their Messiah. As it turns out, God did not answer this prayer in the affirmative. But He did affirmatively answer Paul's desire to meet the Roman believers in person!

Paul did successfully arrive in Jerusalem (Acts 21:15-26), but he was seized by an angry Jewish mob. With his life in danger, he was rescued by the commander of the Roman cohort in Jerusalem (Acts 21:27-22:29). Thereafter, he underwent a succession of trials (Acts 22:30-26:32) before the Sanhedrin (Acts 22:30-23:35); before Felix, the governor (Acts 24:1-27); before Festus, the new governor (Acts 25:1-12); and before Agrippa and Bernice (Acts 25:13-26:32). Having appealed to Caesar, Paul sailed to Rome (Acts 27:1-28:16). It was upon his arrival in the vicinity of Rome that Paul, in the providence of God, finally met in person the Roman Christians he had planned, years earlier, to visit (Acts 28:14-16)! God's sovereignty is amazing to behold as He works it out in our individual and corporate lives!

acceptable to the saints; 15:31b

E3 For his joyful arrival in Romans 15:32

G1 so that I may come to you

H 1 in joy

H 2 by the will of God

G2 and find refreshing rest in your company. 15:32

**C 3 His prayer for the Romans:** Now the God of peace be with you all.  
Amen. 15:33

### **B 3 In His Concern for Others 16:1-24**

#### **C 1 For the letter-bearer 16:1-2**

D1 His commendation of Phoebe 16:1

E1 As a fellow-Christian (sister): I commend to you our sister Phoebe,<sup>218</sup> 16:1a

E2 As a servant in the church at Cenchrea: who is a servant<sup>219</sup> of the church which is at Cenchrea; 16:1b

D2 His request for their help 16:2a

E1 To receive her: that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints

E2 To help her: and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you

D3 The basis for his request: the great help she had been to many 16:2b

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<sup>218</sup> 16:1 Phoebe: “Phoebe, who belonged to the church at Cenchrea near Corinth (16:1), probably carried the letter to Rome” (Ryrie Study Bible, Introduction to the book of Romans). Phoebe’s transportation of the letter from Corinth to Rome illustrates the surprising mobility of first century Christians in the Roman Empire.

<sup>219</sup> 16:1 - servant: The Greek word is *diakonos* (1249), the normal designation for a house-hold servant. It is unlikely that Phoebe was an officer of the church on a par with the “Servants” or “Deacons” in Philippi (Philippians 1:1). This is true for at least three reasons: (1) The qualifications for a deacon as listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 presuppose a male deacon. (How can a woman be a husband of only one wife (1 Tim. 3:12)? The women of 1 Tim. 3:11 are most likely the wives of deacons and would assist their husbands as the need arose.) (2) If ever the church had the opportunity to install a female officer, it was in Acts 6. The Hebrews in charge of distributing food were apparently discriminating against Grecian widows. But the apostles recommended the appointment of seven *men* to supervise a ministry strictly for *women*. (3) God did not create women to rule over men in the very beginning, but to assist them. It seems clear that Phoebe was a diligent and tireless worker in the church, as Rom. 16:2 reveals, helping even Paul, but that she was not an officer. Sadly, the church at large today has been infected with the unbiblical and destructive dogma of feminism. The early church was not so afflicted.

- E1 for she herself has also been a helper of many,  
E2 and of myself as well.

## C 2 For those in Rome whom he knows and wishes to greet 16:3-16<sup>1</sup>

- D1 Priscilla and Aquila: Greet <sup>220</sup> Prisca and Aquila, <sup>221</sup> 16:3-5
- E1 Co-workers: my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 16:3
- E2 Life-riskers for Paul: who for my life risked their own necks, 16:4
- G1 to whom not only do I give thanks,

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<sup>220</sup> 16:3 - Greet: "In his epistles Paul greeted more individuals by name in the churches he had not visited than in those that he had (cf. Col.). He may have wanted to establish more personal contact with congregations that had not seen his face" (Constable, Notes on Romans, 2010 Edition, p. 166). All the instances of "Greet" (*aspozomai*, 782) in Romans 16:3-16a, in which Paul commands the Romans to greet his friends, are plural imperatives. Paul expected all the Christians of the Roman church to greet these individuals he singled out. Thereafter (Rom. 16:16b-23), Paul used other verbal forms (of *aspozomai*) when passing along greetings from others to the Romans. There are 21 occurrences of some form of *aspozomai* (782) in Romans 16!

<sup>221</sup> 16:3 - Greet Prisca and Aquila: Paul now embarks on an astonishing list of Christians who live in Rome whom he knows and wishes the recipients of his letter to greet. Foremost are Prisca and Aquila, whom Paul describes as his "fellow workers in Christ Jesus." "Fellow-workers" translates *sunergos*, 4904. In the entire letter to the Romans, Paul designated only Urbanus (16:9) and Timothy (16:21) also as his fellow-workers. Here is a brief history of the couple. Dates are derived from the Ryrle Study Bible.

(1) **Corinth.** Prisca (a.k.a. Priscilla, the diminutive form of Prisca) and Aquila were a godly Jewish couple whom Paul first met in Corinth (ca. A.D. 50) while he was on his **second missionary journey** (A.D. 49-53). They had been forced to flee from Rome on account of the decree of Claudius, who, for political reasons, had commanded that all Jews leave Rome. This couple had then evidently moved to Corinth. They, like Paul, were tent-makers by trade, so they worked together during the week. Paul taught in the synagogue on Sabbath days, presumably joined by the couple (Acts 18:1-4), who presumably became believers in Christ because of Paul's ministry there in Corinth. After at least 18 months in Corinth (Acts 18:11, 18), Paul sailed for Syria, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila.

(2) **Ephesus.** En route to Syria, the trio arrived at Ephesus. Paul left the couple there while he traveled onwards (Acts 18:18-22). When Apollos arrived at Ephesus, he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. He taught accurately about Jesus, but was acquainted only with the baptism of John. Priscilla and Aquila took him aside and privately instructed him more accurately in the way of God (Acts 18:24-26). On his **third missionary journey** (A.D. 54-58), Paul returned to Ephesus and spent at least two years and three months there (Acts 19:1-10). When Paul wrote 1 Corinthians (A.D. 55) from Ephesus, he sent greetings to the Corinthian believers from the churches of Asia in general and from Aquila and Prisca in particular, along with the church that met in their house (1 Cor. 16:19).

(3) **Rome.** When Paul wrote Romans from Corinth in A.D. 57 or 58, Prisca and Aquila were back in Rome. Paul called them his "fellow workers" (Rom. 16:3). Paul said that they had risked their lives for him (Rom. 16:4). Once again, he acknowledged the church that met in their home (Rom. 16:5).

(4) **Ephesus.** By the time Paul wrote his last letter (2 Timothy, A.D. 67) to Timothy in Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:3), he asked Timothy to greet Prisca and Aquila, also, presumably, in Ephesus (2 Tim. 4:19).

First century Christians had no telephones, no email capabilities, no cars, and no airplanes by which they could circumnavigate the Mediterranean. They did travel by sea, but they were limited to wind power and human oar power. Aquila and Priscilla illustrate the relative ease and frequency with which Christians of that era traveled. Their surprising mobility illustrates the method by which copies of New Testament Scripture would quickly make their way from one part of the empire to another. See "A Case for the Circulation of the New Testament Papyri" ([http://www.wordexplain.com/Papyri\\_Circulation.html](http://www.wordexplain.com/Papyri_Circulation.html)).

- G2 but also all the churches of the Gentiles;<sup>222</sup>
- E3 (Greet also) the church in their home: also greet the church that is in their house.<sup>223</sup> 16:5a
- D2 Epaenetus – beloved first convert in Asia: Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the first convert<sup>224</sup> to Christ from Asia. 16:5b
- D3 Mary – hard worker for them: Greet Mary, who has worked hard<sup>225</sup> for you. 16:6
- D4 Andronicus and Junias: Greet Andronicus and Junias,<sup>226</sup> 16:7

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<sup>222</sup> 16:4 - the churches of the Gentiles: The increasing expansion of the Church outside the state of Israel meant that, increasingly, the composition of the Church as a whole was growing more Gentile than Jewish. Paul implicitly acknowledged that fact here.

<sup>223</sup> 16:5 - also greet the church that is in their house: Though the early church first met in the spacious expanse of the temple (Acts 2:46; 3:1-4; 5:20-21, 24-25, 42), they also early on began to meet in one another's homes (Acts 2:2, 46; 5:42; 8:3; 20:20; Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Philemon 1:2). Paul's reference to the church that met in the home of Prisca and Aquila suggests that there were a number of house churches throughout the first century metropolis of Rome. It has been my own experience that fellowship is best maintained even today if Christians fellowship with a small number of believers some time during the week in addition to a larger, more corporate worship. There is something about the fellowship in a small group of Christians gathered together in someone's home to study the Bible and pray together that contributes positively toward mutual spiritual health. See also the comments on 16:15 for reference to another probable house church, though that term is not there used.

<sup>224</sup> 16:5 - first convert: Epaenetus was a firstfruit (*aparche*, 536 - singular) won to Christ (presumably by Paul) in the Roman province of Asia (the central western region of modern day Turkey). Illustrating the mobility of people in the Roman world, Epaenetus had, since his conversion, moved from Asia to Rome. Paul called him "my beloved" (*agapetos*, 27). MacArthur (in his commentary on Romans) hypothesizes that Epaenetus was Paul's beloved precisely because he was Paul's first convert in Asia. That is possible, of course, but it does not explain why Paul also referred to Ampliatus (Rom. 16:8) and Stachys (Rom. 16:9) as his beloved when neither was also a firstfruit. Nor does it explain why the household of Stephanas was a firstfruit of Achaia but not also considered beloved (1 Cor. 16:15). Paul also called Persis "the beloved" (Rom. 16:12), meaning, perhaps, that he was beloved by others, but not necessarily by Paul himself. It is, therefore, impossible to state with any certainty why Paul called certain ones, but not others, "beloved". Perhaps one day we can ask him. This is the only time in his letter to the Romans that Paul referred to a specific person as being the first convert of a geographic area. Elsewhere, however, as mentioned previously, Paul identified the household of Stephanas as being a firstfruit of Achaia (1 Cor. 16:15). There is a sense in which all Christians of the Church Age *may be* a kind of firstfruit (2 Thess. 2:13 – one early ms reads *firstfruit* instead of *from the beginning*). Certainly, James stated that Jewish Christians of the Church Era *are* a kind of firstfruit among God's creatures (James 1:18, cf. 1:1).

<sup>225</sup> 16:6 - worked hard: The word is *kopiao*, 2872, meaning to exert so much effort that one becomes physically weary or tired. It indicates a more strenuous effort than that signified by being merely a "fellow-worker" (*sunergos*, 4904), the term Paul applied to Prisca and Aquila. Paul was not faulting them (*ergos* is a more "vanilla" term for work), but he was certainly singling out Mary for her diligent effort. *Kopiao* is used in Romans only of Mary (lit. Maria) (16:6), Tryphaena and Tryphosa (16:12), and Persis (16:12). All four were women. Though God has granted to males the role of leadership in the church and family, I'm certain that God takes note of women who work strenuously to serve Jesus in His kingdom. They will be granted their appropriate reward!

<sup>226</sup> 16:7 - Junias: Two questions arise: (1) Is the preferred Greek text Junias or Julia? (2) If it is the former, was Junias a man or woman? (The issue hinges on the accent marks, which were not part of the original Greek text written by Paul.)

In answer to question (1), the Committee of the United Bible Societies' 4<sup>th</sup> edition (UBS4) unanimously opted for Junias ('*Iouinian*) over Julia ('*Ioulian*) "on the basis of manuscript evidence." They were sufficiently convinced to give their decision an "A" rating of probability, the highest possible.

- E1 Relatives: my kinsmen <sup>227</sup>
- E2 Fellow-prisoners: and my fellow prisoners,<sup>228</sup>
- E3 Well known by the Apostles: who are outstanding among the apostles,<sup>229</sup>
- E4 Long-time Christians: who also were in Christ before me.<sup>230</sup>
- D5 Ampliatius – beloved of Paul: Greet Ampliatius, my beloved in the

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In answer to question (2) the Committee was divided over how to accent the name. In fact, the UBS 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (UBS2) had opted for a masculine accentuation of the name. The Committee of UBS4 has opted for a feminine accentuation. Their reasons? First, “the female Latin name Junia occurs more than 250 times in Greek and Latin inscriptions found in Rome alone, whereas the male name Junias is unattested anywhere ...” Second, “when Greek manuscripts began to be accented, scribes wrote the feminine ... Junia” (Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, pp. 475-476). Metzger further cautioned that the “A” decision of the Committee applied only to the spelling of the name, not its accentuation.

Part of the issue is a theological/historical one. How could Junia, a woman, be considered “outstanding among the apostles”? Would a woman be considered an apostle? There is no known precedent. Constable solves this dilemma as follows: “‘Apostles’ (v. 7) here must have the general sense of representatives (traveling missionaries) rather than being a technical reference to one of the 13 official apostles (cf. Acts 14:4, 14; 2 Cor. 8:23; 1 Thess. 2:6; Phil. 2:25).” (<http://www.soniclight.org/constable/notes/pdf/romans.pdf>, Notes on Romans, 2010 edition, p. 166.) Another solution, which I prefer, is to understand Andronicus and Junia, who were more likely husband and wife or less likely, brother and sister, to have been highly regarded by the apostles (see James A. Stifler, *The Epistle to the Romans*, p. 246).

<sup>227</sup> 16:7 - kinsmen: Some believe that Paul was merely identifying Andronicus and Junias as being Jewish. There is some warrant for stating this point of view. In Rom. 9:3-4a Paul wrote, “<sup>3</sup>For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, <sup>4</sup>who are Israelites ...” But other Jewish people in this list (eg., Aquila – cf. Acts 18:2) are not identified as being his kinsmen. Note also that in Rom. 9:3-4, Paul carefully qualified “my kinsmen according to the flesh.” Therefore, Andronicus and Junias, along with Herodion (16:11), and Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater (16:21), are to be identified as Paul’s actual relatives, however distant that relationship might have been.

<sup>228</sup> 16:7 - my fellow prisoners: Paul does not indicate when and where Andronicus and Junias were in prison, but only that they were. It is worth noting that Paul, when referring to himself as a prisoner, typically used the word *desmios*, 1198, (eg. Eph. 3:1; 4:1) rather than the word here, *sunachmalotos*, 4869. This latter word means, literally, “taken with the spear” referring to a prisoner of war. Friberg (*Analytical Lexicon of the Grk NT*) opines that Paul probably used the word here figuratively to describe fellow workers who shared his hardships without having necessarily been in prison. That, however, is a matter of conjecture which cannot be proven.

<sup>229</sup> 16:7 - outstanding among the apostles: I take this phrase to mean that Andronicus and Junias (female) were well-known and highly-reputed among the original apostles, not that they themselves were outstanding apostles. This view is supported by John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, p. 230; James Stifler, *The Epistle to the Romans*, p. 246, acknowledges this view. See the note under Junias in 16:7 for a further discussion of Andronicus and Junias.

<sup>230</sup> 16:7 - in Christ before me: James Stifler (*The Epistle to the Romans*, p. 246) comments, “This note, together with that about Epaenetus in verse 5, shows that regeneration, or the state in which one can be said to be ‘in Christ,’ is a matter of definite date. Between the condition of condemnation and that of ‘not condemned’ (John 3:18) an appreciable interval of time is inconceivable.” I agree. There is a definite point at which one becomes a Christian. Some Christians seem not to know when that point is in their own lives, but God certainly knows. If someone professes not to know when they became a Christian, I ask, “In whom are you trusting now? In yourself, or in Jesus Christ?” If someone is presently trusting in Jesus, he must have done so at some point in the past, whether he can remember or not. The important point, to me, is not to be able to identify when, but to identify if. If I am presently trusting in Jesus, I have forgiveness of sins and eternal life (John 1:12; 3:16-18, 36; 5:24; 20:30-31; Acts 13:38-39; Rom. 3:21-26; 5:1; 8:1-2).

- Lord. 16:8
- D6 Urbanus and Stachys: Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys my beloved 16:9
- D7 Apelles ("approved in Christ"): Greet Apelles, the approved <sup>231</sup> in Christ. 16:10
- D8 Those of the household of Aristobulus: Greet those who are of the *household* <sup>232</sup> of Aristobulus. 16:10
- D9 Herodion (relative) and those of Narcissus' household who are Christians 16:11
- E1 Greet Herodion, my kinsman.<sup>233</sup>
- E2 Greet those of the *household* of Narcissus, who are in the Lord.<sup>234</sup>
- D10 Tryphaena and Tryphosa ("presently working hard in the Lord"): Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, workers in the Lord.<sup>235</sup> 16:12a

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<sup>231</sup> 16:10 - approved: Approved translates *dokimos*, 1384. *Dokimos* is used "as a qualification that results from trial and examination approved, reliable" (*Friberg Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*). This word is used here of Apelles as being someone who has passed the test, someone who is genuine. Here is an explanation by Donald Barnhouse:

In the ancient world there was no banking system as we know it today, and no paper money. All money was made from metal, heated until liquid, poured into moulds and allowed to cool. When the coins were cooled, it was necessary to smooth off the uneven edges. The coins were comparatively soft and of course many people shaved them closely. In one century, more than eighty laws were passed in Athens, to stop the practice of shaving down the coins then in circulation. But some money changers were men of integrity, who would accept no counterfeit money. They were men of honour who put only genuine full weighted money into circulation. Such men were called "*dokimos*" or "approved".

The fact that Paul considered Apelles "approved in Christ" is a weighty commendation, indeed! Apelles is the only Christian in this entire list of whom Paul states that he is "approved." Elsewhere, the Christian who refuses to destroy his Christian brother with his food, and who does not let what is for him a good thing be spoken of as evil, is thereby acceptable to God and approved (*dokimos*) by men (Rom. 14:15-18).

<sup>232</sup> 16:10 - *household*: "Household" does not appear in the Greek text. Literally, Paul wrote, "Greet those of Aristobulus." Paul was greeting those who belonged to Aristobulus' household, possibly including his slaves. Stifler (p. 247) wrote, "Of Aristobulus, whether he was dead or alive, a saint or a sinner, these words give no hint." It was those who were of his household to whom Paul sent greetings.

The same would hold true of those who belonged to Narcissus who were also Christians (16:11).

<sup>233</sup> 16:11 - Herodion, my kinsman: See the note on Andronicus and Junias (16:7).

<sup>234</sup> 16:11 - who are in the Lord: Again, the word "household" does not appear in the Greek text. Literally, Paul wrote, "Greet those of Narcissus – the ones being in Christ." These may have included both family members and slaves. But the wording here is more restrictive than it was for those belonging to Aristobulus. Paul restricts the greeting to those being in Christ. Presumably only a portion of Narcissus' household were Christians.

<sup>235</sup> 16:12 - workers in the Lord: Actually, these two are presently working hard in the Lord. Only regarding Tryphaena and Tryphosa here, along with Mary (Maria) (16:6) and Persis (16:12) did Paul specify that they worked hard (*kopiaio*, 2872) in serving Jesus. All are women. The subtle distinction is that Mary (16:6) and Persis (16:12) worked hard in the Lord (the tense is aorist, suggesting that their labors were in the past), while Tryphaena and

- D11 Persis 16:12b
- E1 Beloved: Greet Persis the beloved,<sup>236</sup>
- E2 Very hard worker in the Lord: who has worked hard <sup>237</sup> in the Lord.
- D12 Rufus ("chosen in the Lord") and his ("motherly") mother: Greet Rufus,<sup>238</sup> a choice <sup>239</sup> man in the Lord, also his mother and mine. 16:13
- D13 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas <sup>240</sup> and the brethren with them. 16:14

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Tryphosa (16:12) are presently working hard. The presumption is that Mary and Persis were older women, while Tryphaena and Tryphosa were younger and still serving Jesus strenuously.

<sup>236</sup> 16:12 - Greet Persis the beloved: Persis was a woman. When Paul greeted men who were beloved, he phrased it, "my beloved." Here he delicately omitted the personal pronoun and simply called her, "the beloved." He added that she "worked hard in the Lord" (*kopiaio*, 2872) aorist tense). This was in contrast with Tryphaena and Tryphosa, two women who were presently "working hard in the Lord." Paul does not berate Persis. It may be that she was getting on in years and simply not able to do as much as once she had done. Or she may have become disabled (Stifler, p. 248). To the contrary, he compliments not only on working hard in the Lord, but on working very hard in the Lord! Of the four women who "worked hard", Maria (16:6) and Persis (16:12) worked *very* hard (emphasis mine). They, two, however, seem to have completed their work. Maria (16:6) had worked very hard in serving the Romans, while Persis had worked very hard "in Christ."

<sup>237</sup> 16:12 - worked hard: See the previous footnote on Persis (16:12).

<sup>238</sup> 16:13 - Rufus: John MacArthur (commentary on Romans) argues that this Rufus is to be identified with the Rufus of Mark 15:21 who was the son of Simon of Cyrene, the one who bore Jesus' cross. Under this theory, Mark, who ostensibly wrote his gospel for the Romans, would have had no reason to mention Rufus if he were not well known. Paul, in his letter to the Romans, here greets him. This identification is possible, perhaps even plausible, but it cannot be proven. In any event, Rufus' mother is known to Paul. She must have shown Paul some "motherly" kindness at some past point in his life.

<sup>239</sup> 16:13 – choice: The Greek text reads, "Greet Rufus the chosen in Lord ...." "Choice" translates *eklektos* (1588), which generally means, "chosen, picked out." Typically *eklektos* refers corporately to those who have been chosen by God (see Rom. 8:33 for Paul's only other use of *eklektos* in Romans). Since *all* those greeted in Romans 16 are believers, Rufus cannot be the only one God chose in the typical sense. It must rather mean, as NASB has translated, that Rufus is a choice man, alluding to "some eminence belonging to Rufus" (Murray, p. 231).

<sup>240</sup> 16:14 - Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas: None of these individuals are mentioned anywhere else in the NT, and nothing is known of them except that they must have come from the same community. In an interesting footnote, when Paul and Barnabas first visited Lystra, Paul healed a man lame from his mother's womb. The excited crowd said that the gods had visited them, and they called Barnabas Zeus, and Paul Hermes because he was the chief speaker (Acts 14:8-12). In Latin, Hermes is Mercury, the chief spokesman for the pagan gods of Greece and Rome (<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+14&version=NASB#fen-NASB-27427h>).

- D14 Greet Philologus and Julia,<sup>241</sup> Nereus and his sister,<sup>242</sup> and Olympas<sup>243</sup> and all the saints who are with them. 16:15
- D15 Each other: Greet one another with a holy kiss.<sup>244</sup> 16:16a
- D16 Greetings to you from all the churches: All the churches of Christ greet you. 16:16b

### C 3 For potential trouble-makers among the Romans 16:17-20

- D1 The urgent request 16:17
- E1 To watch out for ones causing divisions and offences contrary to teaching: Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances<sup>245</sup>

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<sup>241</sup> 16:15 - Philologus and Julia: Never mentioned elsewhere, nothing is known of them except that they came from the same community as the others in 16:15. Presumably they were husband and wife (see the distinction in the next pair of names). “The scribes of C\* F G<sup>sr</sup> mistook *Julian* for *Junian* (compare the contrary error in ver. 7)” (Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., p. 476).

<sup>242</sup> 16:15 - Nereus and his sister: Nereus is never mentioned elsewhere. They came from the same community of believers as the others in 16:15. It is curious that Paul did not mention Nereus’ sister by name. He evidently knew enough about her to know she was a believer. Perhaps he had never known her name or perhaps, like the present writer, his memory had failed him on this occasion. (In the vernacular, was Paul having a “senior moment”? If so, I can certainly identify with him!) It is comforting to know that, though humans forget others’ names, God never does!

<sup>243</sup> 16:15 - Olympas: He is never mentioned elsewhere. From the following phrase, “and all the saints who are with them”, we deduce that everyone listed in 16:15 came from the same community, perhaps the same house church. First century Rome was a large enough city that various groups of Christians could have lived in different suburbs. Presumably they typically worshiped together in their own community (or house church – see 16:5), but occasionally fellowshiped with other believers throughout the city. Certainly, Paul expected that the recipients of this letter would eventually convey greetings to each and every believer mentioned, no matter where they lived or worshiped throughout the city. See the discussion on this subject by John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, pp. 228-229.

<sup>244</sup> 16:16 – holy kiss: This exhortation is repeated in 1 Cor. 16:30; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:26. A kiss was (and remains) the standard greeting among Middle Easterners. It was and is a non-sexual form of greeting, as appropriate among men as among women. In my opinion, the application of this command can differ in different cultures. All Christians in all cultures are to greet one another in holiness of life and motive in a manner appropriate to that culture. In Japan, bowing is an appropriate greeting. In many western countries, a handshake is appropriate. More intimate forms of greetings may be appropriate in individual churches. Whatever those greetings are, they must be holy.

<sup>245</sup> 16:17-18 – keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances: In these two verses, Paul warns the saints at Rome to watch out for potential trouble-makers among their number. Here are the identifying marks of the trouble-makers:

- (1) They cause dissensions (*dicheostasia*, 1370) (16:17)
- (2) They stake out traps (*skandalon*, 4625) to deceive and ensnare the unsuspecting
- (3) They operate outside of the teaching of the apostles which the Romans had learned
- (4) They do not serve our Lord Christ (16:18)
- (5) Rather, they serve their own appetites
- (6) They use smooth talk and flattery to deceive the hearts of the naïve, or unsuspecting

Who are these trouble-makers? Whatever else they are, they appear to be false teachers who make a living by their false teaching (Stifler, p. 249). Murray (p. 235) suggests that some commentators believe these false teachers are libertines – others, that they are Judaizing zealots. Murray attempts to harmonize the two. In reality, Paul does not

- contrary to the teaching which you learned, 16:17a
- E2 To turn away from them: and turn away from them. 16:17b
- D2 The reason for the request 16:18
- E1 Such men don't serve Christ but their own belly: For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Jesus Christ but of their own appetites; 16:18a
- E2 Such men deceive the simple through eloquent and flattering speech: and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting. 16:18b
- E3 Paul doesn't want their present well-known obedience tarnished: For the report of your obedience has reached to all; <sup>246</sup> 16:19
- G1 He rejoices over their well-known obedience: therefore I am rejoicing over you, 16:19a
- G2 He wants them to be 16:19b
- H 1 Wise toward good: but I want you to be wise in what is good,
- H 2 Uncompromising toward evil: and innocent in what is evil.
- D3 The assurance of victory: And the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. <sup>247</sup> 16:20a
- D4 Prayer for Jesus' grace to be with them: The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. 16:20b

#### **C 4 For those wishing to greet the Romans 16:21-23**

- D1 Timothy ("fellow worker") and Lucius and Jason and Sosipater ("relatives") 16:21

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identify what they teach – only that they are divisive, self-serving, and deceptive. Elsewhere, Paul warned of such in similarly general terms in Acts 20:28-31. Paul orders the Romans to turn away from such trouble-makers.

<sup>246</sup> 16:19 – the report of your obedience has reached to all: The saints in Rome have a reputation for being obedient Christians. Paul really had nothing negative to say about them. In contrast, when Paul wrote to the church at Rome, he gave them a brief commendation (1 Cor. 1:1-9), then launched an attack against their ungodly behavior in sometimes blistering terms for most of the remainder of the letter! Paul is filled with joy over the obedience of the Roman believers, but he does ask them to remain watchful (Rom. 16:17), wise, and innocent (Rom. 16:19).

<sup>247</sup> 16:20 – soon crush Satan under your feet: “Paul meant that the Roman Christians would frustrate Satan's work among them soon as they rejected false teachers. His terminology suggests that he had Genesis 3:15 in mind” (Constable, p. 167, *Notes on Romans*, 2010 Edition) (<http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/romans.pdf>)

- E1 Timothy <sup>248</sup> my fellow worker greets you,
- E2 and so do Lucius <sup>249</sup> and Jason <sup>250</sup> and Sosipater,<sup>251</sup> my kinsmen.<sup>252</sup>
- D2 Tertius the letter writer: I Tertius, <sup>253</sup> who write this letter, greet you in the Lord. 16:22

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<sup>248</sup> 16:21 - Timothy: Timothy, whom Paul found in Lystra on his second missionary journey, appears several times in the Acts narrative: (16:1; 17:14-15; 18:5; 19:22; 20:4). Timothy appears several times in the epistles as Paul wrote about his deployment of his assistants: 1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10; Phil. 2:19; 1 Thess. 3:1-2, 6. Paul several times included Timothy in his initial greetings in the letters he wrote: 2 Cor. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1; Philemon 1:1. Paul passed along greetings from Timothy in our present passage (Rom. 16:21). Paul wrote two letters to Timothy (1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2), and twice therein addressed him by name (1 Tim. 1:18; 6:20). Paul spoke highly of Timothy in 1 Cor. 4:17; 1 Thess. 3:2; and Philippians 2:19-22. Timothy seems to have been beset with a somewhat timid, fearful spirit: 1 Cor. 16:10-11; 2 Tim. 1:6-8). But it is obvious that Timothy was blessed with a godly heritage (2 Tim. 1:3-5). Elsewhere, Timothy is mentioned in passing in Hebrews 13:23.

Paul here (Rom. 16:21) described Timothy as his fellow worker (*sunergos*, 4904). There are three references to *sunergos* (fellow worker) in Romans: (1) Paul asked the Romans to greet Prisca and Aquila, the fellow workers of Paul in Christ Jesus (16:3). (2) Paul asked the Romans to greet Urbanus, “the fellow worker of us” (16:9). (3) “Timothy, the fellow worker of me, greets you” (Romans) (16:21). Paul honored those who worked with him or alongside him (as Prisca and Aquila so aptly illustrate), but he seemed to afford special honor to those who worked hard (*kopiao*, 2872) – Maria (16:6), Tryphaena and Tryphosa (16:12), and Persis (16:12).

<sup>249</sup> 16:21 - Lucius: Some (eg. MacArthur) wonder if Lucius is not Luke, the beloved physician (Col. 4:14) who accompanied Paul on certain journeys and his voyage to Rome, and who penned Luke and Acts. Paul did speak elsewhere of Luke in 2 Tim. 4:11 and Philemon 1:24, but in every case the spelling (*Loukas*) is different than the spelling here in Rom. 16:21 (*Loukios*). In my opinion, the different spelling and the absence of any qualifier by Paul make it doubtful that Lucius here was Paul’s traveling companion.

<sup>250</sup> 16:21 - Jason: It is doubtful that this Jason is the same as the Jason whose house in Thessalonica was attacked and who was dragged before the city authorities in Acts 17:5-9.

<sup>251</sup> 16:21 - Sosipater: This is the only occurrence of Sosipater in the NT. We know nothing about him except that he was somehow related to Paul.

<sup>252</sup> 16:21 - kinsmen: There are six who are identified as Paul’s kinsmen (*suggenes*, 4773): Andronicus and Junias (16:7), Herodion (16:11), and Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater here (16:21). I take it they are actual relatives, not merely fellow Jews. See the note on Andronicus and Junias (16:7).

<sup>253</sup> 16:22 - Tertius: A Latin personal name meaning “Third” (perhaps “Third [son]” - so *Holman Bible Dictionary* (HBD)). Somewhere I have heard that Tertius (16:22) and Quartus (16:23) may have been the names assigned to former slaves, perhaps even rowers on a galley ship. But I have seen no commentary that even suggests this. To the contrary, there is no record that Romans of this era used slaves to man the oars, but rather used freemen (see Wikipedia, Galley). HBD states that some have suggested that Quartus was Tertius’ younger brother. There is no way to prove or disprove this theory. In my opinion it is unlikely, for Quartus is separated from Tertius by two names, and Quartus is not stated to be Tertius’ brother, but rather “the brother,” meaning, simply, “the Christian brother.” John Gill, in his *Exposition of the Entire Bible*, commenting on this passage, suggests that the names Secundus, Tertius, Quartus, Quintus, etc. were common Roman names (<http://gill.biblecommenter.com/romans/16.htm>). In modern society, I know personally two males named “Trey.” We do not know anything for certain of Tertius except that he was Paul’s amanuensis (stenographer), and, almost certainly, that he was also a believer, for he took the initiative to greet the Christians in Rome “in the Lord.” According to John Murray (commentary, p. 238), “Paul’s practice of using an amanuensis is attested in other epistles (1 Cor. 16:21; Gal. 6:11; Col. 4:18; II Thess. 3:17).”

- D3 Gaius ("the host of Paul and of all the church"): Gaius,<sup>254</sup> host to me and to the whole church, greets you. 16:23a
- D4 Erastus (the city treasurer) and Quartus (the brother): Erastus,<sup>255</sup> the city treasurer greets you, and Quartus,<sup>256</sup> the brother. 16:23b

## C 5 For the Romans to be continual recipients of the grace of the Lord

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<sup>254</sup> 16:23 - Gaius: Gaius, who sent his greetings to the Romans, was evidently a man of some means. He was evidently a successful enough businessman (or else he had received a sizeable inheritance) to own a home large enough to accommodate not only Paul as an ongoing house guest, but also the entire church (presumably of Corinth). God is pleased with people of means who are willing to share their successes and blessings with other Christians (1 Tim. 6:17-19). Gaius was a fairly common name. Indeed, there are five references to a Gaius in the NT:

(1) In Acts 19:29, Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia, were dragged into the theater at Ephesus in an uproar instigated by Demetrius, the silversmith. This took place on Paul's 3<sup>rd</sup> Missionary Journey.

(2) Acts 20:4. After the uproar in Ephesus (Acts 19), Paul left for Macedonia and then Greece. To avoid a plot by the Jews to kill him as he sailed for Syria, he opted instead to travel by foot back through Macedonia (Acts 20:1-3). "And he was accompanied by Sopater of Berea, the son of Pyrrhus, and by Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia" (Acts 20:4). This Gaius is from Derbe, and thus is to be distinguished from the Gaius from Macedonia (Acts 19:29).

(3) Here in Romans 16:23, Paul, likely writing to the Romans from Corinth, referred to a Gaius who was host to him and to the whole church. This Gaius was evidently wealthy enough to own a home big enough to accommodate the entire church. Paul himself was a prolonged house guest. This Gaius appears to be a settled resident of Corinth. It is unlikely, therefore, that he is to be identified with either Gaius #1 or Gaius #2.

(4) In 1 Corinthians 1:14 Paul referred to a Gaius in Corinth whom he had baptized. It is possible, even likely (so John Murray, Romans, p. 238) that he is the same as Gaius #3, who sent his greetings to the Romans.

(5) In 3 John 1:1, John the Apostle wrote to "the beloved Gaius." Since there is no evidence that John and Paul worked in the same circles, it is unlikely, though not impossible, that this Gaius is to be identified with any of the above.

<sup>255</sup> 16:23 - Erastus: There are three references to an Erastus in the NT:

(1) Paul sent Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia while he himself stayed in Asia (Acts 19:22). This Erastus was teamed up in this instance with Timothy, and was mobile enough to travel to Macedonia.

(2) Erastus here in this passage (Rom. 16:23) is identified as a city official. NASB calls him the city treasurer. F. F. Bruce (see below) calls him "clerk of works." In any event, as a city official, he was probably not mobile enough for Paul to dispatch him to other cities. Therefore it is doubtful this Erastus is the same as the one who teamed up with Timothy in Acts 19:22.

(3) Paul wrote to Timothy that he had left an Erastus at Corinth, but Trophimus was sick and was forced to remain in Miletus. This Erastus well-known to Timothy, is mobile, and therefore likely the same as the Erastus in Acts 19:22, and thus to be distinguished from the Erastus of Rom. 16:23.

The following comment is from F. F. Bruce's commentary on Romans, p. 266, as quoted by Constable, Notes on Romans, 2010 version, p. 168, footnote 492 (<http://www.soniclight.org/constable/notes/pdf/romans.pdf>):

Erastus, the city treasurer "has been identified with the civic official of that name mentioned in a Latin inscription on a marble paving-block discovered at Corinth in 1929 by members of the American School at Athens: 'ERASTVS. PRO. AED. S. P. STRAVIT' ('Erastus, in return for his aedileship, laid this pavement at his own expense'). The aedile ('commissioner for public works') was a responsible magistrate in a Roman city. The office of oikonomos, perhaps 'clerk of works' rather than 'city treasurer', was a much humbler one (Lat. *arcarius*). Since the pavement seems to belong to a later part of the first century, it might be inferred that Erastus acquitted himself so satisfactorily in the inferior office that he was promoted to the higher magistracy, and showed his appreciation of the honour thus done him by presenting the city with a marble pavement. He need not be identified with the Erastus of Acts 19:22 or 2 Timothy 4:20; the name was common enough."

<sup>256</sup> 16:23 - Quartus, the brother: See the note on Tertius, 16:22.

**Jesus:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.<sup>257</sup> **16:24**

**B 4    In His Glorification of God 16:25-27**

**C 1    For His ability to establish the Romans 16:25-26**

- D1    The statement of God's ability to establish them: Now to Him who is able to establish you 16:25a
- D2    The standard according to which God is able to establish them 16:25b-26
- E1    According to Paul's gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ 16:25b
- G1    according to my gospel
- G2    and the preaching of Jesus Christ,
- E2    According to the unveiling of the mystery: according to the revelation of the mystery<sup>258</sup> 16:25c-26
- G1    The time of the unveiling of the mystery 16:25c-26a
- H 1    From eternity past kept silent: which has been kept secret for long ages past, 16:25c
- H 2    But now revealed: but now is manifested 16:26a
- G2    The method of the unveiling – through the prophetic writings: and by the Scriptures of the prophets, 16:26b
- G3    The authority behind the unveiling: the command of the eternal God: according to the commandment of the eternal God, 16:26c
- G4    The purpose of the unveiling: to make known the

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<sup>257</sup> 16:24 – This verse is bracketed in the NASB, and the note is appended: “Early mss do not contain this v”. This verse is omitted in the main text of the United Bible Societies’ 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, but included with its several variants in the apparatus. Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (Second Edition), p. 476, states, “The earliest and best witnesses omit ver. 24. In his comments on 16:20, Metzger states, “Several Western witnesses ... transfer the benediction to follow ver. 23, thus preventing the greetings of verses 21-23 from having the appearance of being an afterthought. Other witnesses ... place ver. 24 following 16:27 (i.e. after the doxology), thus concluding the epistle with a benediction. If, however, it stood in this position originally, there is no good reason why it should have been moved earlier.” My own conclusion is that verse 24 was not in Paul’s original text.

<sup>258</sup> 16:25 – according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past: “The gospel had been hidden in eternity past until God revealed it first in the Old Testament and then fully in the New (cf. 11:25; Gal. 1:12, 15-16; Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:26; 4:3)” (Constable, p. 168, 2010 Edition, Notes on Romans - <http://www.sonlight.com/constable/notes/pdf/romans.pdf>).

obedience of faith to all the nations: 16:26d

H 1 has been made known to all the nations,

H 2 leading to obedience of faith;<sup>259</sup>

**C 2 For His wisdom:** to the only wise God, **16:27a**

**C 3 Through Jesus Christ:** through Jesus Christ, **16:27b**

**C 4 Forever:** be the glory forever. Amen.<sup>260</sup> **16:27c**

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<sup>259</sup> 16:26 – obedience of faith: To believe in the gospel (God’s Good News about Jesus, the Messiah) is to obey God. To disbelieve the gospel is to disobey God.

<sup>260</sup> 16:27 – subscriptions: Several different subscriptions appear in the Greek mss. None of these, to my knowledge, is included in any English version. Here is a sampling: “(a) The earliest subscription is merely ‘To Rome’ .... Other subscriptions include ‘To Rome written from Corinth ...;’ (c) ‘to Rome written through Phoebe from Corinth’ ...; (d) ‘To Rome written from Corinth by means of Phoebe the servant’ ... (e) as (d) but adding ‘the in Cenckrea church’ ... followed by the Textus Receptus. This information appears in Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, Second Edition, p. 477. He printed the Greek text, which I have here translated.

1. **Appendix of Names in Romans 16.**

This appendix lists those greeted or greeting or otherwise mentioned by name (Phoebe) in Romans 16. For those of you are keeping score, this list is segregated by gender:

Men	Indeterminate	Women
Aquila. 16:3 Epänetus. 16:5 Andronicus. 16:7 Ampliatus. 16:8 Urbanus 16:9 Stachys. 16:9 Apelles. 16:10 Herodion. 16:11 Rufus. 16:13 Asyncritus. 16:14 Phlegon. 16:14 Hermas. 16:14 Philologus. 16:15 Nereus. 16:15 Olympas. 16:15 Timothy. 16:21 Lucius. 16:21 Jason. 16:21 Sosipater. 16:21 Tertius. 16:22 Gaius. 16:23 Erastus. 16:23 Quartus. 16:23	Aristobulus. 16:10 Aristobulus is a male, but he himself is not greeted. Only those of his household are. Narcissus. 16:11. Narcissus is a male, but he himself is not greeted. Only Christians in his household are.	Phoebe. 16:1 Prisca. 16:3 Mary (Maria). 16:6 Junia. (NASB lists this person as Junias, a man, but United Bible Societies Greek Text 4 <sup>th</sup> edition (UBS4) acknowledges the feminine spelling. We here opt for UBS4's spelling.) Tryphaena. 16:12 Tryphosa. 16:12 Persis. 16:12 Mother of Rufus. 16:13 Julia. 16:15 Sister of Nereus. 16:15 (Not mentioned by name, but a specific person is meant.)